Iraqi archbishop reflects on persecution of Christians during visit

By Sean Gallagher

Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Bashar Warda of Irbil in northern Iraq pauses and places his face in his hands when asked how his faith has been challenged and spurred on in the crisis that he has helped manage over the past year.

In the summer of 2014, Islamic State militants conquered the nearby city of Mosul, with its large and historic Christian community. Later, they took a series of historic Christian villages in the Plain of Nineveh north of Mosul.

The Christians of Mosul and the villages were told to convert to Islam, pay a religious tax, die or leave with nothing. Some 125,000 Christians, including three bishops, 50 priests and 90 religious sisters, chose the last option. Many of them flooded Irbil to the east as refugees.

Archbishop Warda spoke about his experiences of caring for the suffering faithful, his gratitude for the support that Catholics across America and around the world have given to the Church in Iraq, and his hopes for its future in an interview with The Criterion when he visited Indianapolis recently.

Earlier in the month, he took part in the 133rd Supreme Convention of the Knights of Columbus in Philadelphia on Aug. 4-6. The Knights of Columbus has contributed much to support persecuted Christians in Iraq. He came to Indiana to visit Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin. Both were previously Redemptorist priests before being chosen to serve as bishops. During his visit, he also was a concelebrant at the archdiocese’s annual Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass on Aug. 23 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (See related story on page 10.)

NEW ORLEANS (CNS)—It’s calling it “Kat 10”—Hurricane Katrina plus 10 years—which carries with it the double meaning of an ominous meteorological warning.

How could a Category 5 storm that engulfed the entire Gulf of Mexico, but dropped in intensity to a Category 3 just before landfall on Aug. 29, 2005—burying one of the world’s most iconic cities in a flood of biblical proportions—become the watershed moment in New Orleans’ nearly 300-year history?
Archbishop Warda said that 620 families were initially housed on the grounds of the cathedral in Irbil where he lived.

“It was a very difficult moment,” he said. “I was sleeping in a very uncomfortable room while others were there [with nothing]. So, many times I chose to go and just sleep in a hole, in a joke, listen and just change the atmosphere.”

While on the outside he tried to give every day the best possible care to Christians whom he had welcomed to Irbil, within his heart he would frequently have an internal struggle.

“I don’t understand what he is doing when I look at what has happened in the region,” Archbishop Warda said. “I quarrel with him every day. I don’t always understand his decisions, but there is always (with the pope) this unity that takes place within his intimate relationship with God, one that, with the help of grace, withstands even the previously unimaginable challenges to his faith that he has faced in the past year.

“Before going to sleep, I usually hand all my crises, wishes, thoughts and sadness to him, so I can at least have some rest,” Archbishop Warda said. “The next day I don’t have the same question. In his providence that I would never dream about.”

Looking back over the year since thousands of persecuted Christians sought refuge in Irbil, Archbishop Warda said he acknowledged the goodness of God coming to suffering believers more effectively than he could have ever imagined, even in his darkest moments.

“[God] did it in a way that a state could not really offer to its citizens, in such a situation,” Archbishop Warda said. “He did it through the Church and through the generosity of so many people.”

His own faith is bolstered as he sees the unending face of persecuted Christian refugees.

“People come and tell their stories of persecution and how they were really terrified, having to walk eight to 10 hours during the night,” Archbishop Warda said. “In the end, they would tell you, ‘Thank God we are alive.’ I know Allah. We thank God for everything.” That’s the phrase they end with. That’s strengthening, in a sense.

In contrast to the goodness he sees in the suffering faithful that have come to Irbil, Archbishop Warda recites when he describes the Islamic State, which he often refers to by their Arabic “criminal name,” “Daesh.”

“Daesh is evil,” he said. “The way they fight, the way they rape, the way they treat others is brutal. They have a theology of slaughtering people.”

And he knows that the evil that overtook Mosul could strike Irbil.

“It’s quite possible, but the coalition, led by the Americans, has stopped Daesh from advancing,” Archbishop Warda said. “This has given some sense of security to the people. But Daesh is just 40 kilometers from Irbil. It’s not far away. Anything could happen.

This uncertainty and the horrific experiences of the past year have remained with the Chaldean Christians who came to Irbil to move on to refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey with the intention of emigrating out of the Middle East for good—something that saddens Archbishop Warda.

“They lost trust in the land and their neighbors,” he said. “I think I made a bad decision that I did not stay there. I treated them as a treasure to be stolen, took their houses and properties. Their daughters were under threat at any time.”

The thousands who remain in Irbil have moved from makeshift shelters on Church properties and in public schools to prefabricated houses and former existing homes, provided or rented by the Church. Some want to stay in the region, and are seeking jobs to support their families.

“All of them are waiting for Mosul to be liberated so that they can go back again and start their life again,” Archbishop Warda said.

An important step that he thinks could galvanize the international community to help persecuted Christians of Iraq is for national leaders to join with Pope Francis and his cardinals to recognize the crisis happening there as a genocide.

"What is happening in the Middle East against Christians is a genocide," Archbishop Warda said emphatically. "This is very important for us. You cannot accept this in the 21st century while everyone is watching. I would like the Americans to take responsibility.

"Do not wait another 20 years and ask how it happened and say, ‘Well, I’m sorry that we did not do something really serious.’"”

With the actions taken against Christians in the region, Warda said, "Islamic State would rule, if Daesh in the Middle East's help is available, for not the worst thing that they could do. It would go back again to their lands. At least people would have a hope that what they’ve worked all their lives for is still there, protected by the law.

Archbishop Warda also argued that the international community has a duty to stop the Islamic State's violence against Christians throughout the Middle East. Without acknowledging what has happened makes it a problem.

Archbishop Warda spoke in gratitude for the support that Catholics in America and elsewhere have given to the Church in Iraq. He hopes that it will continue, beginning with prayer.

"It is a very powerful help when we receive letters from priests and people and bishops from America and Europe and Australia and Canada telling us that we are remembered in their prayers. We are persecuted, but not forgotten," he said. "We share this news with our people. They tell us that they are praying for us.

Archbishop Warda also wants Catholics in American to be advocates for the Church in the Middle East with their political leaders, seeking from them a clear plan for protecting religious minorities in the region.

“I know that ordinary Americans care. We’ve seen that a lot,” Archbishop Warda said. “But you need to ask your politicians about this, and push the point to name what has happened as a genocide. This is quite important. And I am sure that they will not spare any efforts in helping. I know being a Catholic here is difficult. But there is a witness with blood there.”

One court OKs stay for Little Sisters; another says no to religious agencies

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Two federal appeals courts acted on Aug. 21 in cases brought by the Little Sisters of the Poor and fellow plaintiffs appealing a Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) ruling that forces them to provide contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization coverage to employees as mandated by the Affordable Care Act.

The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Indianapolis, Ind., ruled otherwise. All of the circuit court decisions have come since the seventh federal appeals court to rule against nonprofit religious agencies mandated by the Affordable Care Act.

The 7th Circuit Court ruled against Michigan and Tennessee Catholic Charities and sterilization mandate for employee health insurance.

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electricity. Seeing the city dead just took the inner breath everything was gray—the vegetation. There were no and then walked the city’s empty streets two weeks later.

82, who admits he was stunned when he took a helicopter 1,800 people in their homes and attics, the deaths of family, centuries by storm, flood, fire, yellow fever and the mouth of the Mississippi River by Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne sea level.

In Baton Rouge, Archbishop Hughes, bishop of Archbishop Hughes said God remained present

No sign of life. I mean,“It was like a war zone. No sign of life. I mean, through creating a scrapbook, cards, and bookmarks. This one-day retreat will focus on the art of journal writing within a group setting. This is a tool for prayer, gratitude, and meaningful communication, dialogue, and conflict resolution in our lives. Facilitator: Sister Connie Kramer. Cost: $40 (includes lunch). Register by Oct. 5.


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Save the date! Saint Mother Theodore Guerin FEST, Oct. 17-18, 10 a.m. Saturday to noon Sunday (EDT). Register by Oct. 12. 4:00 p.m. (EDT). Join the sacred experience of treasuring loved ones through creating a scrapbook, cards, and bookmarks. Presenter: Providence Associate Sheila Donis, and Sister Mary Montgomery. Cost: $45 (includes lunch). Register by Sept. 28.

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Divorced and remarried are still part of the Church

We hope you read the article “Divorced and remarried are not excommunicated, pope says” in our Aug. 14 issue. Even if you didn’t read it or you might have heard about it on TV because it made the national news.

You would have thought the pope was changing Catholic doctrine when, basically, all he was doing was stating a fact: Catholics who have divorced and are civilly remarried are not excommunicated. But perhaps the reason his talk got so much coverage was his way of following up: “And they absolutely must not be treated as if they were.” Has the Church unintentionally given the impression that those who divorce and remarry without getting a declaration of nullity of their first marriage are no longer to be considered Catholic? It’s true that those people, in most cases, may not receive holy Communion. That’s because of Christ’s teaching: “Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery” (Lk 16:18).

Thus the divorced and remarried are considered as being in the same situation as any married man or woman who has sex with someone other than his or her spouse, or any unmarried man or woman who has sex with a married person.

This is the Church’s teaching about the indissoability of marriage. But there’s nothing that says that such people aren’t still Catholics.

But why, then, can’t they receive Communion? Because adultery is a serious sin and St. Paul taught, “Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor 11:27). Anyone who has committed a serious sin and has not had it forgiven in the sacrament of reconciliation must refrain from receiving Communion.

The Church teaches that sex outside of a sacramental marriage is also a serious sin. Therefore, those who do that, including cohabitating couples, also should refrain from receiving Communion. Another serious sin is missing Mass on weekends and holy days of obligation without a legitimate excuse, and people who do that also should not receive Communion if they haven’t confessed that sin.

But in none of those cases do we consider the sinners excommunicated. If they were, we’d have an awfully small Church. So why would people think that those who are divorced and remarried outside the Church are excommunicated to such an extent that the pope had to emphasize that they aren’t?

Probably because our parishes haven’t, as Pope Francis said, “opened and coherently demonstrated the willingness of the community to welcome and encourage” divorced and remarried couples and their families to participate in Church life. He said that praying, listening to the word of God, attending Mass, educating their children in the faith, serving the poor and working for justice and peace should be part of their lives.

Divorced and remarried Catholics throughout the world are awaiting October’s Synod on the Family in Rome, hoping that the bishops will find some way to allow them to receive Communion. From comments made by Pope Francis, it seems that this may be possible for some of those couples.

For example, the pope quoted St. John Paul II’s apostolic exhortation “Familiaris Consortio,” which said that there is an obligation, “for love of the truth,” to exercise a “careful discernment of situations,” noting for example “the difference between one who has ended a separation and one who provoked it” (#84).

At the same time, it is important to note that John Paul also taught in that same section, “However, the Church reaffirms her practice, which is based upon Sacred Scripture, of not admitting to Eucharistic Communion divorced persons who have remarried,” and gave several reasons for retaining this practice (#84).

From comments made by participants at last year’s synod, it seems possible that the annulment process may be speeded up. At present, it is often easier for a non-practicing Catholic who married outside the Church to get an annulment than an observant Catholic who followed the rules.

There also could be discussions about the teaching of who should receive Communion. We know that many Catholics who attend Mass only infrequently receive Communion when they do attend Mass without going to confession first. Will the bishops address that problem?

What about cohabiting couples who receive Communion?

No matter what might happen in the future, at present it should still be true, as Pope Francis said, “Everyone can share in some way in the life of the Church.”

—John F. Fink

Ultrasound technology was in its early days when my wife and I were having children. Pictures of your babies in utero always looked like Rorschach blots to me. I couldn’t tell top from bottom. The doctors could, though. It became possible for the first time to tell the sex of the baby before it was born.

I’ve never wanted to know because we thought it would spoil the surprise or the anticipation. Our ignorance of our baby’s sex also kept the notion of names more interesting—at least temporarily.

There were some drawbacks to not knowing. We had a harder time buying clothes and decorating for the baby. We were driven toward the green and yellow parts of the color palette (not one of my favorites). But it all seemed worth it for that moment when we could call our parents and siblings and announce, “It’s a girl!”

Our children have taken the other course. Ultrasound pictures nowadays are almost photographic in clarity. You have to avoid looking too closely if you want the baby to look cute in the dark. And as one of our daughters wisely observed, you are so excited when the baby is born that finding out the sex at the same time doesn’t perceptually increase the sum total of happiness.

This has led to a whole new set of conventions. Two of our girls are pregnant right now, and they discussed having a reveal party when all were on vacation together. (Ultimately, they couldn’t wait that long.) When you know the sex, you also can name your unborn child. Perhaps you inevitably do.

You have seen her picture and shown it to her siblings, and you want some time of talking about her. So she is already Clara or Gabriella.

I really like our children’s choice in this because it is irresistibly pro-life.

Once you have seen your baby, heard her heartbeat, given her a name and introduced her to her brothers and sisters, once you have painted her room and bought her onesies stamped “Clara,” you would have to be some kind of monster to kill her before she could draw her first breath.

The Knights of Columbus have turned this new technology to good use. Half a dozen years ago, they began buying ultrasound machines and giving them to pregnant care centers. No one on any side of the abortion debate could possibly object. Ultrasounds are not so indicated for a variety of diagnostic reasons throughout pregnancy, but once you have one, nature takes its course.

This is why the videos recently released by the Center for Medical Progress have been watched so attentively. The Planned Parenthood officials captured on film seem insensitive to the feelings most people have toward babies. They talk about their organization’s ability to deliver “intact fetuses” or split “the specimen into different shipments,” referring to them as “line items.”

The senior director for medical services at Planned Parenthood explains the technique for harvesting heart, lung and liver: “I’m going to basically crush below, I’m going to crush above, and I’m going to see if I can get it all intact.”

It’s chilling. The public debate has focused on the legality of fetal tissue sales and whether Planned Parenthood is making profit. But aren’t we missing the point? We’re talking about dismembering Clara and Gabriella and sending them to the offal processors.

Our kids have it right. The more pictures people take of their unborn children, the more they will value the lives and make them part of the family, the less likely they are to let them fall into the clutches of Planned Parenthood.

(John Garvey is the president of The Catholic University of America in Washington.)

Poet’s powerful words should inspire us to ‘meet Jesus’ in others each day

This letter is in response to Tom Rillo’s poem, “I Met Jesus Today,” which appeared as the “My Journey to God” submission in the July 31 issue of The Criterion.

How inspirational! I challenge parents to ask their children at dinner each evening, “Where did you meet Jesus today?”

Perhaps teachers in our Catholic schools could have the students keep a journal for a week to answer this question.


Reader: Christians are called to care for the poor, the hurting and the sick

This is in response to the letter to the editor printed in the Aug. 21 of The Criterion. To put it bluntly, I am appalled at the letter writer’s response. I cannot imagine what his “take-care-of-yourself” attitude would mean to babies born with birth defects through no fault of their own or their mothers.

Who decides which baby receives care? Who decides which veteran gets a prosthetic leg, and which one does without?

I guess the letter writer knows you only get cancer or multiple sclerosis or muscular dystrophy if you don’t take care of yourself—but I sure don’t.

Who decides who gets treated for cancer and who doesn’t? Does the cost of the operation mean someone sits with a big book and checks who gets care and who doesn’t? In a family of eight, do only the first five get care?

It seems callous and cruel and I will paraphrase it: Unless you are willing to do what Jesus asked, take care of the poor, the sick, the sick, the sick, the sick. And I don’t think disenchanted, then let’s all admit that we’re not really Christians at all.

Sandie Neidigh

Letters Policy

The editors reserve the right to select and edit letters for space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content.

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

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‘Laudato si’: un himno de alabanza para toda la creación divina

‘Laudato si’, mi ‘Signore’ — "Alabado sea, mi Señor."

El lector puede aludir este hermoso cántico, San Francisco de Asís nos recuerda que nuestro hogar común es como una hermana con la que compartimos a nuestra preciosa madre quien nos abre sus brazos y nos recibe: "Alabado seas, mi Señor, por la hermana nuestra madre tierra, la cual nos sustenta, y nos produce diversas frutos con coloridas flores y hierba" (Laudato Si, #1).

Estas son las primeras oraciones de la encíclica del Papa Francisco titulada "Laudato Si" (Alabado seas, mi Señor). Con estas palabras el Santo Padre resume todo lo que sigue a continuación. Nuestro mundo, efectivamente la creación de Dios, no es un objeto que debe ser manipulado por nosotros. Es como una hermana, nuestra ‘madre tierra’ que debemos tratar con reverencia, respeto y cariño.

Ojalá tengamos la oportunidad de leer ‘Laudato Si’ por completo, pues descubrirá que los pequeños fragmentos que probablemente haya leído o escuchado en las noticias no le hacen mérito.

‘Laudato Si’ no es un tratado sobre política, economía o ciencia. Es una encíclica, una ‘epístola profunda’ escrita por el Papa y dirigida a los líderes de la Iglesia, a los fieles y a todos los hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad.

Un asunto de enorme importancia para la Iglesia y para el mundo. En este caso, el Papa Francisco se dirige a toda la comunidad internacional y hace un llamado a la responsabilidad para cultivar y proteger todo lo que Dios ha creado.

Esta encíclica está profundamente arraigada en el himno de alabanza cuyo verso final trata sobre la Hermana Muerte, compuesto por San Francisco de Asís en su lecho de muerte en el año 1256. Este magnífico himno franciscano se llama el Cántico de las criaturas, y a menos que apreciemos su importancia como una expresión de la auténtica ecología cristiana, no podemos comprender a plenitud la importancia de las enseñanzas del Santo Padre en ‘Laudato Si’.

El papa Francisco nos dice: “No quiero desarrollar esta encíclica sin acudir a un modelo bello que puede motivarnos. Tomé su nombre como guía y como inspiración en el momento de mi elección como Obispo de Roma. Creo que Francisco es el ejemplo por excelencia del cuidado de lo que es débil y de una ecología integral, vivida con alegría y autenticidad. Él es el santo patrón de todos los que estudian y trabajan en torno a la ecología, amado también por muchos que no son cristianos.

El manifestó una atención particular hacia la creación de Dios y hacia los más pobres y abandonados. Amaba y era amado por su alegría, su entrega generosa, su corazón universal. Era un místico y un profeta; un pensador que siempre mantuvo en maravillosa armonía con Dios, con los otros, con la naturaleza y consigo mismo. Él se advierte hasta qué punto son inseparables la preocupación por la naturaleza, la justicia con los pobres, el compromiso con la sociedad y la paz interior” (#10).

‘Laudato Si’ explora el lazo inseparable que existe entre cuidar del medio ambiente y el amor por la humanidad, aspectos que por sí mismos hacen que la paz y la justicia sean posibles. El Papa nos dice que no podemos ser verdaderamente solidarios con el medio ambiente a menos que amemos desinteresadamente y seamos justos en nuestro trato con los demás seres humanos, especialmente con los más vulnerables, los pobres, los enfermos y los que no han nacido.

La profunda reverencia y el respeto por todas las criaturas divinas (por todo lo visible e invisible) es un derecho de la filosofía inmune en la ciencia, sino que el profundo amor que cada uno de nosotros está llamado a sentir por nuestro Dios Creador. Porque amamos a Dios, amamos todo aquello que Él ha creado.

Y de esta forma, cantamos junto con San Francisco y el papa Francisco un himno de alabanza al Hermano Sol y a la Hermana Luna, a la tierra y al cielo, al viento y al agua, y a nuestros hermanos y hermanas, especialmente a la única familia de Dios. Ofercemos este himno con la conciencia de que, sin la ayuda de la gracia de Dios no seríamos dignos de estar en la presencia del Señor y agradecerle, puesto que somos pecadores que hemos maltratado los obsequios que Dios nos ha dado, inclusive el obsequio de la tierra y del cielo, del agua y del viento.

En el corazón de ‘Laudato Si’ se encuentra el tomar conciencia de nuestra condición de pecadores y de nuestra porción de culpa en los graves desafíos ambientales que enfrentamos. El papa Francisco no evade su responsabilidad de hablar con un tono profético cuando es necesario, para recordarnos que la indiferencia es un pecado y que todos y cada uno de nosotros será llamado a rendir cuentas por su cuota de corresponsabilidad para con la creación divina.

Leamos ‘Laudato Si’ con recogimiento, pero con una mente y un corazón abiertos. Entémonos junto con San Francisco y el papa Francisco en este verso del Cántico de las criaturas: "Alabado seas, mi Señor, por la hermana nuestra madre tierra, la cual nos sustenta, y nostra y generosa produce diversos frutos con coloridas flores y hierba."

—traducido por: Daniela Guanipa

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Porque amamos a Dios, amamos todo aquello que Él ha creado.

Y de esta forma, cantamos junto con San Francisco y el papa Francisco un himno de alabanza al Hermano Sol y a la Hermana Luna, a la tierra y al cielo, al viento y al agua, y a nuestros hermanos y hermanas, especialmente a la única familia de Dios. Ofercemos este himno con la conciencia de que, sin la ayuda de la gracia de Dios no seríamos dignos de estar en la presencia del Señor y agradecerle, puesto que somos pecadores que hemos maltratado los obsequios que Dios nos ha dado, inclusive el obsequio de la tierra y del cielo, del agua y del viento.

En el corazón de ‘Laudato Si’ se encuentra el tomar conciencia de nuestra condición de pecadores y de nuestra porción de culpa en los graves desafíos ambientales que enfrentamos. El papa Francisco no evade su responsabilidad de hablar con un tono profético cuando es necesario, para recordarnos que la indiferencia es un pecado y que todos y cada uno de nosotros será llamado a rendir cuentas por su cuota de corresponsabilidad para con la creación divina.

Leamos ‘Laudato Si’ con recogimiento, pero con una mente y un corazón abiertos. Entémonos junto con San Francisco y el papa Francisco en este verso del Cántico de las criaturas: "Alabado seas, mi Señor, por la hermana nuestra madre tierra, la cual nos sustenta, y nostra y generosa produce diversos frutos con coloridas flores y hierba."

—traducido por: Daniela Guanipa
August 28
St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. Ave Maria Guild rummage sale, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-888-7625 or lvmg@indysvdp.org.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, Prior Hall, 520 Stovall St., Indianapolis. Pro-Life Film Series, Anonymous Father’s Day film 6-30 p.m., panel discussion 7:30-8:30 p.m., no charge. Information: 317-408-0528 or hbrseury1.pro@gmail.com.

August 29

August 29
St. Patrick Parish, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. Catechesis training for Spanish-speaking catechists, 8:30 a.m.-noon, free, registration required. Information and registration: Sister Karen Darius at kdurliat@thedome.org or call 317-563-5842.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 5693 N. Central Ave., Indianapolis. Stk Run/Walk, 9 a.m., $15 pre-registration, $20 pre-registration family of 4-6 people, children 16 and under no charge. Fall Kick-Off Fest, 4-11 p.m., food, music, games, adults $1 admission, under 21 free. Information: 317-257-2266.

Mount St. Francis Retreat Center, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis. Pie Sale, 11 a.m.-midnight, chocolate, chicken, ham, apples, quilts, Mass 4 p.m. Information: 812-923-8817.

September 2
Archbishop G. Lora Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable and socializable events, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.


September 3
Marian University chapel, 2300 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. Lumen Del Catholic Business Group, Mass and monthly meeting, 6:30-8:30 a.m., breakfast, $15 per person. Information: 317-353-3447 or lumen.dtl@comcast.net.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. First Friday celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mass, 5:30 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass 10 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-888-2661 or info@olgreenwood.org.

St. Lawrence Church, 88 N. 46th St., Indianapolis. Charismatic Mass, prayer and worship, 7 p.m. Mass and healing prayer, 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-366-4854.

September 4-6
St. Joseph Parish, 2675 S. Mckleavy Ave., Indianapolis. Fall Festival Fri. and Sat. 5-11 p.m., Sun. 3-11 p.m., food, rides, kid’s games, Indy Car simulator, poker, blackjack, raffle, silent auction. Information: 317-244-9002.

CYO Camp Rancho Frasiao, 2235 Clay Lick Road, Nashville. CYO Family Camp, family weekend, full weekend, $50 per child, $75 per adult, $225 per maximum family, Saturday only $30 per child ($55) per adult, $165 per maximum family for deadline registration for Sept. 3. Information: 317-988-2839, ext. 122 or registcr@comcast.net.

September 4-7
St. Ambrose School, gym, 5558 Nobles N. Church, Indianapolis. Spaghetti Dinner, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Information: 317-822-8468.

September 5
Helpers of God’s Precious Infants Prayer Vigil, Terre Haute, 7:30 a.m. at Mass and 1 p.m. at Blessing of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass 10 a.m. on sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-888-2661 or info@olgreenwood.org.


September 6
St. Catherine of Siena Parish, 9995 E. Base Road, Greenburgh, Parish Festival, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., famous Friesdale Inn fried chicken dinner. Information: 812-934-2880.

September 6
St. Anthony Parish, 1207 East Road, Brookville. Fall Festival, 10 a.m.-10 p.m., family style chicken dinner. Information: 317-623-5670, ext. 122 or registcr@comcast.net.

St. Anthony Parish, 4781 E. Morris Church St., Morris. Labor Day Festival, 10 a.m., food, live entertainment. Information: 317-934-6218.

September 8
St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. Ave Maria Guild meeting, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-888-7625 or lvmg@indysvdp.org.

Sisters of Providence offer series on St. Mother Theodore Guerin starting on Sept. 16

The Sisters of Providence will offer a five-session “Lunch and Lecture” series on their founder and Indiana’s only saint, St. Mother Theodore Guerin, in the Providence Commons Conference Center conference room, 1 Providence Place, at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, from noon-1:30 p.m. on Sept. 16 and on Nov. 18, Jan. 20, March 16 and May 18 in 2016. The sessions, by Providence Sister Jan Craven, will use the journals and letters of St. Mother Theodore Guerin, who is known in the greater Church as St. Theodora.

For more information or to register, call 317-535-2022 or e-mail frost@uspovm.org.

St. Vincent de Paul Friends “Walk/Run to take place on Sept. 26

The Indianapolis Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul will take part in the organization’s national “Friend of the Poor” Walk/Run at Indianapolis 10 a.m. on Sept. 26 at St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 9995 E. Base Road, Indianapolis. The event raises funds for local parish St. Vincent de Paul conferences, and to support the organization’s local ministries: a food pantry feeding more than 10,000 people per week; a distribution warehouse providing clothing, furniture and household items to about 100 needy families per week; and the Changing Lives program, which offers life skills to clients to help them help themselves and end the cycle of poverty.

For more information or to register, please contact the nearest parish of the St. Vincent de Paul organization in Indianapolis are operated entirely by volunteers. All funds collected by the event go directly to operate the programs and serve those in need.

To participate in the event, log on to www.indywalker.org and click on "2015 Walk/Run Registration Instructions & Forms” link. For those who wish to participate but do not have access to a computer, call Natalie at 317-295-1697. Walk-ups are also welcome to the day of the event for a $25 fee.

Once registered, participants seek donations and give any cash, check, or online via credit card.

The event will take place at the front porch of Washington Park near the Community Center Check-in and turning in collected pledges at 9 a.m., and running in the Community Center Check-in at 10 a.m. The course is a one-mile loop, which participants can walk or run from one time or for 100 miles. Information: 317-564-3604.

For more information, e-mail Natalie@indywalker.org. For organizations or businesses interested in sponsoring the event, contact Jennifer@indywalker.org.
The joy of being together shows in the interaction of the organizers of the upcoming 50-year reunion involving all nine Indianapolis Catholic high schools that had graduating seniors in 1965. Steve Gutzwiller, left, Dottie Powell, Nancy Whitfield Rasmussen, Kevin Farrell and Carolyn Perrin McMahon share a laugh on the steps of the old Cathedral High School, now the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Memories and fun will flow at 50-year ‘All-City, All-Catholic’ high school reunion on Sept. 11

By John Shaughnessy

The stories flow easily. So does the laughter—especially when it comes at their own expense.

And the humor is definitely apparent to the organizers of the upcoming 50-year reunion involving all nine Indianapolis Catholic high schools that had graduating seniors in 1965.

When they held this first-ever, one-of-a-kind ‘All-City, All-Catholic’ reunion 25 years ago, it was an extravaganza—complete with a buffet dinner at the Indiana Roof Ballroom in Indianapolis, video presentations, and four hours of dancing that continued into the early morning hours.

When the 50-year reunion is held on Sept. 11 at the biergarten of The Rathskeller restaurant, 401 E. Michigan St., in Indianapolis, it will begin at 5 p.m., and the loosely-formed committee will just provide name tags and some balloons for the tables.

“It’s a reflection of another 25 years,” says a smiling Carolyn Perrin McMahon about the the low-key, informal celebration where people are asked to just show up. “No one is responsible for everything. They can just go and enjoy the people.”

Steve Gutzwiller, another organizer, laugh and adds, “Even though we still have energy, we don’t have that much energy to do it like that again.”

If the energy level has declined just a little for the members of the Class of 1965, the enthusiasm and appreciation for the high school period of their lives continue to grow—even though only three of the nine high schools involved are still open: Bishop Chatard, Cathedral and Father Ryan.

The Latin School have closed since 1965. “The kids who went to those Catholic schools feel bonded to those schools,” says Kevin Farrell, a 1965 Scicena graduate. “Catholic school kids all have a common bond. I’m still friends with all the guys I went to school with.”

Dottie Powell, a grade of Sacred Heart, nods in agreement: “We had a club when we formed like we were sophomores. To this day, I still go to lunch with some of those friends every month. We’ve stayed together.”

“The word that comes to my mind is ‘pride,’” says Nancy Whitfield Rasmussen. “There was a pride in what we accomplished in high school. There was that pride in walking down the aisle on graduation. I was proud to be a Catholic. I thought our life was simple and happy.”

Their high school years were also a time of change. MASSES in Latin were no longer the norm as they were celebrated in English, just one of the changes from the Second Vatican Council. The reality of the first Catholic to become president of the United States—John F. Kennedy—showed them their dreams could come true. And the assassination of Kennedy revealed the loss and the heartbeat they could feel—a sense of loss that continued when some of their classmates were later killed as they served during the Vietnam War.

As the years have passed, more classmates have died, but the memories of them live. When members of the Class of 1965 have reunions at their respective high schools, there is often a time set aside for remembering deceased classmates.

“The bond was so special that you think of the people who are missing when you get together,” Rasmussen says. “We memorialize them in a ceremony. It’s very much in people’s minds. It speaks to the bond that exists and doesn’t go away.”

There’s that same feeling for their Catholic faith and education.

“It’s helped me to try to deal with people in a Christian way,” Powell says. “It taught me to value people in the way the sisters taught us to value people.”

Farrell notes, “When people say, ‘I used to be Catholic,’ I say, ‘Oh, no, you’re still a Catholic.’ They may not be practicing the faith, but I don’t think you can stop being a Catholic. It’s your background, how you were raised, your life.”

Rasmussen, a St. Agnes grad, adds, “Faith is the most important thing in my life. It has sustained me through all the things that have happened in my life. I don’t know what I’d be without it.”

The members of the Class of 1965 also don’t know where the years have gone. “We’re beginning to realize how mortal we are, how fragile everything is,” says Gutzwiller, a Cathedral grad. “Because of that, all those silly reasons there were cliques in high school, all of that goes away.”

What stays are the memories that come rushing back when the radio plays a song from the 1964-65 school year—such as “My Girl” by the Temptations, “Oh, Pretty Woman” by Roy Orbison, “Help Me, Rhonda” by the Beach Boys, “A Hard Day’s Night” by the Beatles and “Stop! In the Name of Love” by the Supremes.

“What also remains are the friendships that were formed in those high school years—the bonds that endure.”

And that alone is worthy of a celebration.

“I love to see these people,” Farrell says. “It’s like seeing your sister, they are so happy.”

But the stories flow and the laughter, especially when it comes at their own expense.
The Konescos flash a huge smile during a recent moment with their son Camden, 6. "Sometimes you get sent home by the immigration official, and sometimes you’re in line for hours," Jan said. "And to think that we’re just here because they allow us to have a dream," Marc said. "It’s a very surreal feeling.

Marc and Jan Konesco are all smiles as they take a ride down a 17-month ocean journey into the world. 

25th
Great
French
Market
St. Joan of Arc Church
4217 Central Avenue
Passenger drop-off on 42nd Street
FREE ADMISSION!
Saturday, September 12, 2015
12:00pm – 10:00pm
Mass at 5:30pm
FREE LIVE ENTERTAINMENT!
• French Axe
• The Tides
• Fernando Tanago & The Wickersham Brothers
• The Bishops
ACTIVITIES FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!
• Raffle - Something for Everyone!
• Artisans!
• Bake Sale!
• Children’s Games until 5:00pm
GREAT FRENCH CUISINE!
Anthony Labor Day Picnic
St. Anthony Church
99th Annual Labor Day Festival and Chicken Dinner on Sept. 7th
Air Conditioned Hall w/ Children or Plant Sale Dining served 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Lettuce Strudel Tavern 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. FREE Soft Ice Cream/Carrot Cup available
Contact the Konescos for more information on their dream or if you have questions about immigration.

The adventure begins.

The Konesco family made their junior high school running from Florida and
during the Atlantic Ocean south from Florida and
the Bahamanians. Marc and Jen were helping children. Marc and
no weapons—everything was packed
the Bahamanians. Marc and Jen were helping children. Marc and
no weapons—everything was packed
Aboard the ship were four months of
In February of 2014, they left the
The Konescos moved to Florida in
from Florida and
the Bahamanians. Marc and
the Bahamanians. Marc and Jen were helping children. Marc and
no weapons—everything was packed

During the trip, we met people...
Couples lauded for their ‘rich tapestry of love’ at Golden Wedding liturgy

By Sean Gallagher

A month before Catholic married couples and families from around the world will gather with Pope Francis in Philadelphia for the World Meeting of Families, 103 husbands and wives from across central and southern Indiana who have been married for 50 years worshipped together on Aug. 23 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

The occasion was the annual archdiocesan Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass. Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, the principal celebrant of the liturgy, greeted them warmly.

“All these young brides and grooms have come back after 50 years to say ‘yes’ to each other in the Lord Jesus,” said Archbishop Tobin with a laugh. “What a great sign for us as we make our pilgrimage way home to God.”

In years past, the Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass, organized by the archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life and Family Life, has honored couples married for at least 50 years, and included many husbands and wives married for 60 or more years.

But the number of couples celebrating such longstanding faithfulness has grown so much that it was decided that the Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass would be open only to couples married for 50 years and members of their family. Another Mass, to be celebrated on April 24, 2016, at the cathedral, will honor all married couples in the archdiocese, with special honor to be given to couples married for 60 or more years.

During his homily, Archbishop Tobin referred to the second reading from St. Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians in which Paul compared the relationship of husband and wife to the mystical relationship of Christ and the Church.

Paul, Archbishop Tobin noted, taught in this passage that “marriage is divinely instituted and, we might have to add today, not simply a civil right, much less, the concession of any government.”

Archbishop Tobin went on to thank the golden jubilarians for their faithfulness to their vocation to married life.

“Brothers and sisters, we give thanks to God for the choice you made, which has enriched not only your families but your parishes and the whole archdiocese,” he said. “The ‘I do’ that you pronounced on your wedding day was decisive, but no less important are the recommitments you have made since.

“Because of your choice, the Lord has been able to weave all the ‘I do’s’ of your life—the ‘I do’ pronounced in financial insecurity, physical ailment or emotional pain, as well as the ‘I do’ shared in the birth of a child, career success and the warmth of friendship—into a rich tapestry of love. You remind us of the faithful, life-giving love that Christ has for the Church.”

In concluding his homily, Archbishop Tobin praised the jubilarians for their witness of permanence in marriage in the midst of a society where so much, including marriage, is treated as temporary and changeable.

“In the throwaway culture that drives and dominates this world,” he said, “you testify that what was given to you 50 years ago was not a fakes, but rather a plan, a tapestry prepared for you by God, a path for your salvation.”

Ralph and Sandy Pinnick were married at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church in Floyd County 50 years ago, and have been members of the New Albany Deanery faith community for much of their married life. They are the parents of three sons and have three grandchildren.

Sandy was pleased to have worshipped with so many other couples who were married around the same time that she and Ralph exchanged their wedding vows.

“It was a blessing, an absolute blessing to be in the presence of the commitment that people had and continue to have,” she said. “Hopefully, we’ll pass it down.

Ralph and Sandy noted that their shared Catholic faith has been crucial to their faithfulness over half a century.

“Without it, I don’t think that we would have made it,” said Ralph.

“I know I can depend on him just as I can depend on God to get us through,” Sandy said. “Without faith, nothing is possible.

The couple had simple advice for couples preparing for marriage.

“Be very patient with each other and forgive each other,” Sandy said.

“Be understanding and forgiving,” Ralph added.

Jim and Loretta Miller exchanged their wedding vows on Aug. 14, 1965, and have been members ever since of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis. They raised six children and have 18 grandchildren.

“A great deal of love for God and knowing how he loves us makes us feel a lot of joy in our life,” Loretta said. “It’s got us through hard times. You just feel that he’s there helping you all the time.”

The advice that Loretta had for couples preparing for marriage was marked by faith—and some fun.

“The most important thing is to keep God first in your life, be best of friends, communicate and accept each other’s shortcomings,” she said with a laugh as she tapped her husband’s arm.

“What’s she mean by that?” Jim asked with a smile.

“Try to have fun in life if you can,” Loretta replied. “Don’t take yourself too seriously. He has a great sense of humor.”

(For more photos from the Aug. 23 archdiocesan Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass, visit www.CriterionOnline.com)
Golden wedding jubilarians come from throughout central and southern Indiana

On Aug. 23, 103 married couples from 50 parishes across central and southern Indiana who are celebrating 50 years of marriage in 2015 were honored at a Mass at St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis during the annual archdiocesan Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass. Following are the names of the golden jubilarians.

- Robert and Barbara Aemmer
  - Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, New Albany
- Steve and Karen Baltner
  - St. John the Baptist Parish, Sunbright
- James and Joyce Bandy
  - St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington
- Ronald and Sheryl Barnes
  - St. Simon the Apostle Parish, Indianapolis
- Leroy and Elizabeth Batenhaus
  - St. Susanna Parish, Plainfield
- Irvin and Joyce Bitter
  - All Saints Parish, Dearborn County
- Sherman and Joyce Black
  - St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis
- John and Rita Botta
  - St. Mary Parish, North Vernon
- Isaac and Joyce Brooks
  - St. Monica Parish, Indianapolis
- William and Sallie Bruns
  - St. Barnabas Parish, Indianapolis
- David and Cheryl Campbell
  - St. Roch Parish, Indianapolis
- Robert and Jan Campbell
  - St. Simon the Apostle Parish, Indianapolis
- Ottie and Janice Capshaw
  - St. Philip Neri Parish, Indianapolis
- Al and Marcia Caputo
  - St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis
- Elvin and Kathy Cassity
  - Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Danville
- Michael and Marcia Cleary
  - Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Beech Grove
- Ken and Judy Cobert
  - St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis
- John and Pat Dalidowicz
  - St. Michael Parish, Greenfield
- Joe and Cathy Dezelan
  - St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis
- Bernard and Jerry Dielkof
  - Immaculate Conception Parish, Millhouse
- Beam and Shirley Dricks
  - St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Bloomington
- Jim and Beverly Donnelly
  - St. Malachi Parish, Brownsburg
- Robert and Rose Marie Faust
  - Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Beech Grove
- Andrew and Darlene Frank
  - St. Gabriel Parish, Connersville
- Floyd and Alexandra Frema
  - SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, Greenwood
- Jerry and Jill Guyer
  - St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis
- Thomas and Elizabeth Gawklik
  - St. Benedict Parish, Terre Haute
- Philip and Rita Glassley
  - St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis
- Robert and Loren Grahek
  - St. Mary Parish, Navillon
- Joe and Nancy Green
  - Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, Indianapolis
- John and Ellen Griffin
  - SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, Greenwood
- Gary and Sandra Grose
  - St. Simon the Apostle Parish, Indianapolis
- Bruce and Linda Hammerschmidt
  - St. Barbara Parish, Indianapolis
- David and Joyce Haufeld
  - Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, New Albany
- Ronald and Rosalie Hawthorne
  - Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, Indianapolis
- Bernard and Anita Hayes
  - St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis
- Ted and Rita Heerde
  - Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Beech Grove
- Charlie and Carol Helton
  - Immaculate Conception Parish, Millhouse
- Michael and Kathryn Hickman
  - St. Susanna Parish, Plainfield
- Joseph and Eleanor Hingtgen
  - St. Joao of Arc Parish, Indianapolis
- Stephen and Linda Hoag
  - All Saints Parish, Dearborn County
- John and Pat Huter
  - St. Mary Parish, Lasalle
- Ted and Joyce Kaminski
  - Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood
- Thomas and Patricia Kincses
  - St. Martin of Tours Parish, Martinsville
- Robert and Nancy Kluger
  - St. Susanna Parish, Plainfield
- Richard and Martha Knecht
  - St. Michael Parish, Greenfield
- Joseph and Danielle Korson
  - Holy Trinity Parish, Edinburgh
- Robert and Margaret Kress
  - St. Benedict Parish, Terre Haute
- Thomas and Marie Kress
  - St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Indianapolis
- Merle and Dorothy Krueger
  - St. John the Baptist Parish, Sunbright
- Joseph and Ida Lambert
  - St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis
- Paul and Mary Loner
  - St. Malachi Parish, Brownsburg
- Don and Marie Long
  - Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood
- Ted and Sue Mandabach
  - Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Beech Grove
- Larry and Marlene Mason
  - St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish, Brazil
- Bill and Teresa Masson
  - St. Joseph Parish, Indianapolis
- Walter and Margaret McCarthy
  - St. Susanna Parish, Plainfield
- Charles and Helen McGuire
  - St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis
- Bernard and Elizabeth McGuirk
  - St. Mary Parish, Navillon
- Richard and Maribeth McKaig
  - St. John the Apostole Parish, Bloomington
- Clement and Carol Miller
  - St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis
- Jim and Loretta Miller
  - St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, Indianapolis

- Eugene and Norma Miller
  - St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, Indianapolis
- Rogelio and Helfa Mirasol
  - St. Michael Parish, Indianapolis
- Charles and Beverly Morgan
  - St. Christopher Parish, Indianapolis
- Dennis and Norone Murphy
  - St. Mary Parish, Indianapolis
- Paul and Betty Nicholas
  - St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis
- Francis and Marianne Neone
  - St. Leon Parish, Indianapolis
- John and Janice O’Brien
  - Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Indianapolis
- Gregory and Nancy Olter
  - St. Louis Parish, Batesville
- Steven and Mary Kay Overbeck
  - St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis
- Victor and Carla Pagani
  - St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Bloomington
- Joe and Barbara Payne
  - St. Joseph Parish, Corydon
- William and Visitation Perkins
  - St. Andrew Parish, Richmond
- John and Alice Perry
  - SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, Greenwood
- Ralph and Sandy Pinnick
  - St. Mark of the Isles Parish, Floyd County
- Vernon and Theresa Poole
  - St. Malachi Parish, Brownsburg
- Paul and Sharon Primavera
  - St. Joseph Parish, Clay County
- Richard and Jane Remien
  - St. Peter Parish, Indianapolis
- Ed and Paula Roessler
  - Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Beech Grove
- Leonard and Kaye Romney
  - St. Margaret Mary Parish, Terra Haute
- Michael and Susan Sample
  - St. Lawrence Parish, Indianapolis
- Paul and Gay Scherrer
  - St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis
- Frank and Roseann Schoufled
  - St. Joseph Parish, Sheehyville
- Richard and Linda Schubert
  - St. Malachi Parish, Brownsburg
- Jack and Dorothy Smith
  - St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis
- Ray and Chere Smith
  - St. Susanna Parish, Plainfield
- Tim and Linda Stapleton
  - St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, Indianapolis
- Harry and Bobbie Steele
  - Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood
- Anthony and Donna Steinmetz
  - Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, Brownsburg
- Raymond and Linda Strewing
  - St. Gabriel Parish, Connersville
- Robert and Helen Talbot
  - St. Joseph Parish, New Castle
- Francis and Mary Jane Tellez
  - St. Louis Parish, Batesville
- Bruce and Mary Timberman
  - St. Simon the Apostle Parish, Indianapolis
- Leonard and Martha Werner
  - Holy Family Parish, Columbus
- Robert and Wilma Werner
  - St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish, Bridgetown
- Don and Sharon Wickerson
  - St. Mary Parish, Greensburg
- Jim and Barbara Williams
  - St. Augustine Parish, Jeffersonville
- Darvin and Mary Winters
  - Holy Spirit Parish, Indianapolis
- James and Carol Wise
  - St. Michael Parish, Bradford
- John and Donna Wirth
  - Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Beech Grove
- Alex and Nancy Yovanovich
  - St. Malachi Parish, Brownsburg

Please join us for this fun and charitable event as we help heighten national awareness of the challenges faced by the nation’s poor and raise significant funds for our valuable services. All funds raised locally will be used locally.

Location: Washington Park, 3130 E. 30th Street
Time: Registration 9 AM, walk/run starts at 10 AM
Distance: Choice of 1/2 mile or 5K Run
Register: Go to www.indysvdpwalk.org to register or to help one of the four neediest SVdP conferences this year were honored during the Mass. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)
Life’s struggles can really be a blessing. Twenty years ago, I was diagnosed with cancer. The lymphoma was in its early stages, so the oncologists suggested we delay treatment and monitor its progression to determine the best time to begin chemotherapy.

“In any case, all of us are faced each day—with or without the reality that this day could very well be our last in this life. However, this irrefutable fact should, indeed, not shield our days...”

With faith in Christ, the knowledge that one day we will die and that this day may be today should help us appreciate more intensely the blessings we have here and now, and remind us that they are but a shadow compared with the infinite happiness that awaits us in heaven.

Emmaus Walk/Debra Tomaselli

A hope, a life and a prayer that my struggles glorify God

Life is about being ready for big changes

As I write this column, morning light has me contemplating the dark and the darkness of night. It’s about 7:15 a.m. No one else in my family is up; it is almost my 2-year-old son Colin’s bedtime, or he’d gotten into too much trouble yet.

Yet outside the house, I see lots of cars driving down the street, muffled by the usually quiet streets by my family’s home in Indianapolis. Many parents are driving their kids to school or a few blocks to the west. And other parents and some teenagers themselves are driving to a high school a few blocks to the north.

The academic year at these two schools, just as schools across central and southern Indiana began classes earlier this month or in late July.

And they will begin in a few days at the school where my four older sons are enrolled. I feel blessed that my boys are enjoying at present, to paraphrase St. Paul, “will be soon be over in the twinkling of an eye.” Many adults might need the last trumpet to get them out of bed in time.

We who live in the adult world may think that such rapid changes in our daily lives are a thing of the past. Now we work day in and day out to keep our bodies in good condition, and we all notice it. Of course, we were all reading some technical device or other, but we were reading.

For a wonderful few days, we took the time to appreciate some of the many gifts God has given us, just as the long-ago Bay View residents must have done. It’s easy to believe that the “old days” were better than now, but in this case I think it may be true.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.)
**Sunday Readings**

**Sunday, August 30, 2015**

- Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
- James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27
- Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

The Book of Deuteronomy provides this weekend’s first reading. In this reading, Moses presents to the people the revelation that he received of God’s law. It is God’s law, revealed by God, not the invention of Moses given on the authority of Moses. While a towering, indeed unsurpassed, religious history, Moses was only human. As are all humans, Moses was limited, lacked insight, knowledge and a view into the future. He was therefore impaired from making decisions wisely, and was open to mistakes and their consequences.

The good news in the face of these universal human limitations is that God continues, and lavishly gives guidance and forgives. The “law” in this context is not an arbitrary edict. It is not relative. It is not necessarily a test. Instead, it is like the “law of gravity.” It is reality. To violate God’s law introduces confusion, or worse, into life. So when humans behave in ways counter to God’s law, they upset things. They create the punishment that befalls them.

The Epistle of St. James furnishes the second reading. Several men in the New Testament bear the name of James. Any of these men, or another, could have been the author of this book, but scholars today tend to think that the author was James, possibly a foster brother of Jesus. St. Mark’s Gospel is the source of the last reading. In this assaying, some bystanders notice that some of the Lord’s disciples were careless in observing the law of Moses. It should be remembered that this law provided for virtually every circumstance a human would encounter, great or small. Jesus replied that some gave God more lip service or went through the motions of obedience. Instead, the Lord called for a true conversion of the heart, founded upon love for God and others, and manifesting itself in actual deeds and words. Jesus’ comments indicate that he, as God, the law-giver, could and did interpret the law.

**Reflection**

These readings repeat a theme. Theologians say that the most devastating effect of Original Sin was leaving humans convinced that they are much more self-sustaining than others. Every generation thinks that it possesses the final answers to the questions of life. New generations come, and indeed they improve on the past, but so very often notions taken once as state-of-the-art are considered as old fashioned as the steam engine is regarded today. In their conceit, humans have blundered much. They have brought into human history extraordinary destruction, such as in the Holocaust. They have brought into individual lives untold instances of heartbreak and worse. We are quite fallible, even foolish, but God does not leave us to our doom. His greatest gift was, and is, Jesus, the “way, the truth and the life” (Jn 14:6). °

**Mental illness can decrease the culpability of people who take their own lives**

By Ann Wolski

Up is down. Down is up. Impossible to tell. What is right could be wrong. Impossible to tell. What is up, what is down. Impossible to tell.

Then a quiet God whispered in my head, “Listen with your heart, whispering in my head, then a quiet God voice leaving me confused.”

“Then the world has gone too crazy,” I thought. “It is not relative.”

“Then the world has gone too crazy,” I thought. “It is not relative.”

My Journey to God

**When the World Has Gone too Crazy**

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**Blessed Teresa of Kolkata**

1910-1997

September 5

One of 14 Marian feasts set by the universal Church in the 1969 revision of the Roman Calendar, Mary’s birthday has been celebrated by the faithful since the seventh century. This feast was brought to Rome from the East by Christian communities that had been banished by the Arians. Like other ancient Marian feasts such as the Presentation and Assumption, this one commemorates an event in Mary’s life. Later Marian feasts honor her intercessions, often occurring through private apparitions. The feast does not celebrate the where and when of Mary’s birth, which are unknown, but reminds Christians of God’s fidelity to old and new covenant promises, especially their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, her son.

**Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Seventh century feast – Sept. 8

By Ann Wolski

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**Daily Readings**

**Monday, August 31**

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Psalm 96:1-3, 11-13
Luke 4:16-30

**Tuesday, September 1**

1 Thessalonians 5:1-6, 9-11
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14

**Wednesday, September 2**

Colossians 1:1-8
Psalm 52:10-11
Luke 4:38-44

**Thursday, September 3**

St. Gregory the Great, pope and doctor of the Church
Colossians 1:9-14
Psalm 98:2-6

**Friday, September 4**

Colossians 1:15-20
Psalm 100:1b-5

**Saturday, September 5**

Colossians 1:21-23
Psalm 54:3-4, 6, 8

**Sunday, September 6**

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 54:11-13
Psalm 146:7-10
James 2:1-5
Mark 7:31-37

**Question Corner**

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Mental illness can decrease the culpability of people who take their own lives

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


ENDRIS, Mark K., 60, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Aug. 5. Brother of Jackie Robbins.


LANNING, Mary, 86, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Aug. 15. Mother of Beth, Bill, Danie, Mike, Tim and Tony Lansing. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of eight.


WILLIAMS, Rosie Marie, 75, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Aug. 7. Mother of Missy Hall, Annie Lickliter, Mandy and Troy Williams. Sister of Judy Carmer, Rita Dell and Dwayne Petry. Grandmother of five. †

Rest in peace

Provide Sister Margaret Kern taught, provided financial and spiritual leadership

In this report, we will discuss three main points: the influence of Sister Margaret Kern on the Iona Community, her contributions to archdiocesan leadership, and her impact on the archdiocese.

**Influence on the Iona Community**

Sister Margaret Kern had a significant influence on the Iona Community. As mentioned in the text, Sister Margaret Kern was a member of the Iona Community and served in various capacities within the community. She played a crucial role in shaping the community’s values and mission.

**Contributions to Archdiocesan Leadership**

Sister Margaret Kern also made significant contributions to archdiocesan leadership. She served as the director of finances for the Diocese of Covington, Ky. In 1993, she entered into training for spiritual direction and served as a spiritual director for many people around the motherhouse. Sister Margaret also helped lead the Pence Spirituality and Conference Center and served as the director of the O’Lorien Community Shriners in northern Indiana.

**Impact on the Archdiocese**

During her 64 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Margaret served as a leader and mentor to many women in the archdiocese. She was known for her wisdom, guidance, and dedication to the community.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, Sister Margaret Kern’s legacy continues to inspire and influence the community. Her contributions to archdiocesan leadership and her impact on the Iona Community will be remembered for generations to come.

**Endnotes**


**References**


Priest says program illustrates pope's emphasis on serving poor

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Gospel of St. Matthew records Christ telling his disciples that whatever they do for “the least of these” (Mt 25:40), they do for him.

One way Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington is trying to help the “least of these” is through hot meals to homeless and other disadvantaged people every Wednesday evening outside the agency’s headquarters in downtown Washington, adjacent to St. Patrick’s in the City Catholic Church.

The St. Maria’s Meals program serves between 300 and 500 individuals in the church, beginning around 4 p.m. and wrapping around the building. Robert Dolan, a homeless man who has lost two homes through foreclosure, was among those getting a meal on a recent Wednesday evening.

He told Catholic News Service (CNS) he is so grateful for the weekly meal and Catholic Charities.

Some days I don’t eat at all because I don’t have any food, but this is wonderful. I would starve if I did not have this on some days,” he said. Shelters provide meals to their residents, but those meals cost an average of $1.10 per person, per meal, per day and are not as robust as what Catholic Charities provides, according to Msgr. John Enzler, president and CEO of the agency.

“We serve ... a real good meal” prepared by staff and volunteers, he said. A typical dinner is a chicken sandwich with potatoes, salad and “like our own old Sunday meals when we were kids,” he added. “They love coming here because they get a good meal once a week.”

In September, the dinners will have a special guest—Pope Francis.

The pontiff will pay a visit on Sept. 24, the second of two full days he will spend in the nation’s capital.

“We can’t wait till he comes and blesses our efforts to reach out and take care of the poor,” Msgr. Enzler said. “The bottom line is for him he’s coming because he truly believes our ministry is our call as [the Church]. Our Church is called to take care of those in need, the vulnerable.”

The priest said the pope will “bless this program, people who come for meals, volunteers, the staff.”

Beforehand, the pope will address a joint meeting of Congress in the Capitol, or as the priest described it, “He’s gonna see all the people this country [in] Congress, then he’s gonna get to know there and come here to Catholic Charities [and have] a chance to see the poor.”

“I’m convinced it’ll be his chance to really celebrate all he believes he knows: Make sure that you’re in solidarity with the poor, in solidarity with those in need,” Msgr. Enzler said. “We talk about basically being a Church that [gives] a preference for the poor and ... before he leaves, he makes sure the poor are taken care of.”

He thinks the pope is “going to walk among the people and greet them... We don’t know for sure, but we’ve been convinced he’ll do that because once he sees people, he can’t stop talking to him, he wants to get in among the people, greet them.”

Kristen Vibbert, a frequent volunteer at the meal service, said Pope Francis “is going to see a really good community of engaged individuals who are responsible and willing to reach out.”

She added that St. Maria’s Meals is just one of many services the archdiocesan Catholic Charities agency provides to those in need. Pope Francis hopefully will be quite impressed with what he sees, and how engaged Catholic Charities is in the community here.

“We’re really trying to make a difference, to create a little more wholesome, a little more authentic life for those in the community,” she said.

Enzler, the director of communications of the Catholic Charities location, echoed the comments that the meals program is living out the mission that Pope Francis is trying to promote.

“I think we are definitely a Church on the street, or a field hospital, or any of the wonderful metaphors he has used about the Church. We are out here, we are working with people, we meet them where they are, and we serve them. I think that’s 100 percent what Pope Francis is all about,” he told CNS.

When the pope comes to St. Patrick’s, the street where meals are served will be closed and Secret Service agents will be present—but not other than that, what takes place will be similar to the weekly protocol.

“Our hope is that he is going to have a few minutes to spend with folks, hear their story, and see it the way it is [in their lives],” Salam said. We often say the United States is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, but “it’s very clear that there are a lot of people who are suffering as there are anywhere else in the world.”

What was in the news on August 27, 1965? Opposition to a federal program serves between 300 and 500 individuals in the city.
Solemn Evening Prayer with Archbishop Tobin
Reception to Follow

Those living in Consecrated Life
(Although all are welcome)

Sunday, September 13, 2015 4:00-7:00 PM

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral 1347 N. Meridian Street

To celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life and special recognition of those celebrating 25, 50, and 75 jubilee years

“Heart must be attractive. Wake up the world! Be witnesses of a different way of acting, of living!
It is possible to live differently in this world.... It is this witness I expect from you!”  - Pope Francis

For more information, please visit HearGodsCall.com