The transformation of souls
Principal, pastor say new St. Anthony Catholic School eager to share the gift of faith

By John Shaughnessy

Cindy Greer was in full stress mode even before the two strangers suddenly showed up outside her office, carrying a brown box.

“What now?” wondered Greer on that day in July.

As a principal, she already had her hands more than full with having less than a month to do everything she could to get her school ready for undoubtedly the most dramatic change in education in the archdiocese this year: transitioning a school that has been a charter school for the past five years into a new Catholic school.

Yet when the two elderly women stood before her inside St. Anthony Catholic School in Indianapolis, Greer greeted them politely, never expecting the amazing story they were about to tell her or the stunning gift they were about to share.

The two women told Greer they had driven from Ohio to deliver the contents of the box, months after they learned in March that the new St. Anthony Catholic School would open on Aug. 11 for the 2015-16 school year. Since that March day, the women had been working together on the gift they were about to share.

“Inside the box were 300 handmade rosaries,” Greer recalls. “They were so excited we were going back to being a Catholic school. One of them had a sister as stations typically are on permanent display in churches.

As the principal of the new St. Anthony Catholic School in Indianapolis, Cindy Greer proudly displays the gift of 300 handmade rosaries that she received from two strangers who were thrilled to learn the school was making the transition this school year from a charter school to a Catholic school. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Sharing a lasting gift
The rosaries aren’t the only gift of faith

See ST. ANTHONY, page 2

For Year of Mercy, pope extends possibilities for absolution

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In an extraordinary gesture for the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis has extended to priests worldwide the authority to absolve women for the sin of abortion and has decreed the full validity during the year of the sacrament of confession celebrated by priests of the traditional Society of St. Pius X.

“This jubilee Year of Mercy excludes no one,” the pope wrote in a letter to Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of New Evangelization, the office organizing events for the holy year, which opens on Dec. 8.

Pope Francis said one of the most serious problems facing people today is a “widespread and insensitive mentality” toward the sacredness of human life.

“The tragedy of abortion is experienced by some with a superficial awareness, as if not realizing the extreme harm that such an act entails,” while many other women believe that “they have no other option” but to have an abortion, the pope wrote in the letter, released on Sept. 1 by the Vatican.

The pressures exerted on many women to abort lead to “an existential and moral ordeal,” Pope Francis said. “I have met so many women who bear in their heart the scar of this agonizing and painful decision.”

When such a woman has repented and seeks absolution in the sacrament of confession, he said, “the forgiveness of God cannot be denied.”

Although Church law generally requires a priest to have special permission, called faculties, from his bishop to grant absolution to a person who has procured or helped another to procure an abortion, the pope extends possibilities for absolution.

Journeys of faith can lead people across the world—or simply across a parking lot.

Ken Ogorek experienced the latter not long ago in his role as an advisor to a new exhibit at The Children’s Museum in Indianapolis. He received a request to locate a visually stunning set of the stations of the cross that the museum could borrow. Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, knew this would be a challenge, as stations typically are on permanent display in churches.

He decided to take a short walk from his office at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara See MERCY, page 9
More volunteers are needed to help with NCYC in November

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis will host the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in November, and help is needed to make the event a success. Approximately 1,000 volunteers are needed to help support the event, which is expected to draw more than 20,000 young people from across the country to the Indiana Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on Nov. 19-21. The theme of this year’s gathering is “Here I Am Lord” (“Aquí Estoy Señor”). To become a volunteer, log on to www.archindyvm.com/NCYC-volunteer23 and fill out the online application form.

Please note that all volunteers will need to have completed “Safe and Sacred,” the archdiocese’s safe environment training program, or the safe environment program from their diocese in order to volunteer. For more information, contact Kay Seevold, archdiocesan director of youth ministry, at 317-236-1477 or 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1477 or e-mail her at kseevoll@archindy.org, or Scott Williams, youth ministry program coordinator, at 317-236-1442 or 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1442, or e-mail him at swilliams@archindy.org.
Saint Meinrad monk begins service as college seminary president-rector

By Sean Gallagher

When Benedictine Father Brendan Moss was named president-rector of Conception College Seminary in Conception, Mo., earlier this year, he became one of a growing list of priests formed at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad to serve in leadership at seminaries across the country.

Father Brendan, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, began his ministry at the 129-year-old seminary in July. He is the current leader of the Benedictine monastic community, Archibishop Wenski said. “It is my hope that I can continue to honor the good priestly formation that has been going on at Saint Meinrad Seminary for so very many years.”†

Labor Day statement: Reflection, action ‘critical’ for care of workers

WASHINGTON (CNS)—“Individual reflection and action is critical” when it comes to improving the conditions of workers in the United States and elsewhere, said Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, in the U.S. bishops’ annual Labor Day message.

“We are in need of a profound conversion of heart at all levels of our lives. Let us examine our choices,” Archbishop Wenski said in the statement, dated Labor Day on Sept. 7, but issued on Aug. 24 in Washington.

“While Pope Francis’ encyclical has been regarded as an encyclical on the environment, the pope said in it, ‘The analysis of environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts, nor from how individuals relate to themselves, which leads in turn to how they relate to others’ (#14).”

“Not long ago, jobs, wages, and the economy were on everyone’s mind. Unemployment, poverty and foreclosures soared as Americans worked harder, if we could ever recover. Even with some economic progress, things have not truly improved for most American families. We must not resign ourselves to a ‘new normal’ with an economy that does not provide stable work at a living wage for too many men and women,” Archbishop Wenski said.

“Go out and work with them,” Father Brendan said. “I cannot say how exciting and how humbling—and how terrifying—the thought of that is all at the same time.”

His appointment marks the first time that someone who was not a monk of Conception Abbey has served as president-rector of the seminary, which has an enrollment of about 90 seminarians representing about 15 dioceses. Father Brendan said that during his five-year term as president-rector he hopes to help nurture the leadership of some of the younger monks of Conception Abbey so that they might serve as president-rector in the future.

According to Father Brendan, there are four priests formed at Saint Meinrad who are now serving as seminary rectors across the country, and many more in other seminary leadership positions.

Before serving as president-rector at Conception, Father Brendan had served in two leadership positions at Saint Meinrad—most recently as director of enrollment and director of lay degree programs, and previously as director of pastoral formation.

Benedictine Father Denis Robinson, Saint Meinrad’s president-rector, spoke of how the southern Indiana seminary has not only formed future priests, but also seminary leaders.

“Father Brendan’s appointment is a testament to good priestly formation at Saint Meinrad in that we are preparing all of our staff for positions of leadership,” Father Denis said. “I think one of the benefits of a Benedictine school is that almost all of the monks involved can move in and out of positions fairly readily.”

Father Robert Robeson has served as the rector of Bishop Simon Brault College Seminary in Indianapolis since its founding in 2004. He said that the priestly formation he received at Saint Meinrad helped prepare him for seminary leadership.

“It was a great blessing, particularly their emphasis on human formation,” said Father Robeson. “In Pastores Dabo Vobis [an apostolic exhortation on priestly formation] St. Pope John Paul II calls human formation ‘the necessary foundation of priestly formation.’ This is especially true at the college level. With their emphasis on community life, Saint Meinrad does a very good job in this area.”

Father Brendan spoke about how the priestly formation he received at Saint Meinrad and later helped pass on to future priests will serve as an important basis of his ministry among college seminarians at Conception.

“In a way, my experience of formation at Saint Meinrad, both in our [former] college seminary and in our theologicate, was that there was always room for the individual person to be himself and to give himself wholly to serve God and the Church,” Father Brendan said.

Benedictine Father Brendan Moss, left, Benedictine Abbot Gregory Polan and retired Archbishop Jerome Hans von Duboquis, Iowa, take part in an Aug. 23 inauguration ceremony at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception at Conception Abbey in Conception, Mo.

Father Brendan, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, was formally installed during the ceremony as president-rector of Conception College Seminary, which is operated by Conception Abbey. Abbot Gregory is the current leader of the Benedictine community, and Archbishop Hans previously led it. (Photo by Brian Adams)

BY SEAN GALLAGHER

The Criterion  Friday, September 4, 2015  Page 3

Benedictine Father Brendan Moss speaks on Aug. 23 with his brother, Bob Moss, in the guest dining room at St. Joseph Hall at Conception Seminary College in Conception, Mo.

“Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfillment,” Pope Francis said in his encyclical (#128).

Yet in the United States, according to Archbishop Wenski, “too many marriages bear the crushing weight of unpredictable schedules from multiple jobs, which make impossible adequate time for nurturing children, faith and community. Wage stagnation has increased pressures on families, as the costs of food, housing, transportation and education continue to pile up. Coupes intentionally delay marriage, as unemployment and substandard work make a vision of stable family life difficult to see.”

The archbishop said, “Labor is one important way we honor our brothers and sisters in God’s universal human family. In the creation story, God gives us labor as a gateway into participation with him in the ongoing unfolding of creation.” Quoting Pope Francis, he added, “Human labor, at its best, is a deeply holy thing that ought to honor our dignity as we help God ‘maintain the fabric of the world.’”

Father Brendan said, “It is my hope that I can continue to honor the good work of character formation that has been going on at Saint Meinrad Seminary for so very many years.”†

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Prayer time is a necessity for families in today’s world

The family has been in the news a lot lately. And if Pope Francis has his way, it will no doubt continue to be a topic of discussion not only leading up to his U.S. visit for the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia later this month, but also for October’s meeting of the world Synod of Bishops on the family in Rome, and beyond.

We hear of situations like divorce, single-parent homes, individuals’ careers, and other challenges that families face in today’s ever-increasing secularist society, but our Holy Father has made it a priority to encourage families help build strong individuals and strong societies.

As parents, guardians or mentors of children, we must share ways of how to love him in return. “A heart filled with affection for God can turn even a mundane aspect of ordinary existence into a prayer.”

If you learn as a child to turn to God or “blowing a kiss” when one passes a church or a crucifix or an image of Mary are small signs of that love. They are also prayers.

“When the heart of that family’s life of faith, the Holy Father said, should be time set aside for prayer.

For parents, the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Glory Be are prayers. These simple little prayers, he said, will increase family members’ sense of God’s love and presence and their certainty that God has entrusted the family members to one another.

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The most frequent complaint of any Christian, he said, is that he or she does not have enough time to pray.

“We have become more sensitive to the beauty and goodness around us in the most ordinary things we see everyday as a gift—and each gift points back to God, who has given it freely to us in the first place.”

In short, faith makes us fully human, more grounded in a deeper and brighter sense of reality that transcends the mundane aspects of ordinary existence.

Faith in God helps us realize how sacred we are as human beings. We remember how God’s loving gaze is fixed on us, and how much he desires for us to reach our potential and become all that we are meant to be.

From all eternity, he was thinking of each one of us and wants us to experience his love and live out our unique mission. When we realize our own sacredness and dignity, it touches the core of who we are and fills us with a joy that we cannot help but share with others.

Our faith is a source of radiance into every area of life. It helps us see other human beings as gifts, as persons to be respected and loved for their own sake, rather than as objects to be used or taken for granted.

If we have the internal certainty that we are deeply loved, that each of us has a special purpose in this world, we will carry a joyful confidence wherever we go.

And this light will radiate to others and help us more effectively reflect God’s love to all we meet, building up a culture of life.†
‘Laudato si’: ¿Estamos ante una crisis ecológica?

La encíclica del papa Francisco publicada recientemente —‘Alabado seas’— admite claramente las conclusiones a las que han llegado los científicos, los filósofos y muchos otros de que “se advierte una creciente sensibilidad con respecto al ambiente y al cuidado de la naturaleza, y crece una sincera y dolorosa preocupación por lo que está ocurriendo con nuestro planeta” (#160). Nos encontramos ante una crisis ecológica?

El Papa dice que “sí,” sin lugar a dudas. “Human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: one with God, with our neighbor and with the Earth itself” (#66). Si estamos enfrentando una crisis ecológica, ¿cómo podemos estar en paz? ¿Cómo puede ser real si nuestro corazón falta tendencia, enjuicio con cualquier criatura "es contrario a la dignidad humana," expresa el Papa (#92). "No puede ser real un sentimiento de íntima unión con los demás seres de la naturaleza si al mismo tiempo en el corazón no hay ternura, compasión y preocupación por los seres humanos" (#91) y, siguiendo la más pura tradición franciscana, alabará a toda la creación de Dios.

El papa Francisco nos dice que "le seres humanos no somos meras ocupantes de nuestro hogar terrenal. Estamos destinados a ser uno solo con Dios y con todo lo que Él ha creado. ‘La existencia humana se basa en tres relaciones fundamentales estrechamente conectadas,’ nos enseña el Papa. Estamos íntimamente relacionados ‘con Dios, con el prójimo y con la tierra’ (#66). Si estamos enfrentando crisis políticas, sociales, económicas o ambientales es porque el vínculo sagrado —cuya finalidad era unirnos y que se describe con mucha fuerza en el Libro del Génesis como el estado de la existencia humana en el Jardín del Edén, antes de nuestra caída se ha roto por el pecado. La responsabilidad del Papa de hablar sobre la condición humana corrompida por el pecado es un hecho incontrovertible. La Iglesia no pretende resolver cuestiones científicas ni reemplazar a la política, pero se atreve a hablar contra la injusticia, el abuso y el maltrato cudriguador que ocurren. "Todos entendemos que no cualquier criatura tiene libertad pero al ser humano sí", y que debemos tratan de proteger."

Al mismo tiempo, el Santo Padre reconoce que hay "cuestiones relacionadas con el ambiente donde es difícil alcanzar consensos" (#188). Y prosegue, diciendo: que “la Iglesia no pretende definir las cuestiones científicas ni sustituir a la política” (#188).

Entonces, ¿por qué el papa Francisco desea destacar al mundo la crisis ambiental actual? En ‘Laudato Si’ el papa nos responde que “invito a un debate honesto y transparente, para que las necesidades particulares o las ideologías económicamente o ambientalmente, el papa Francisco deja muy en claro que el desafío fundamental que enfrentamos como personas y comunidad global es una crisis de significado. ‘¿Por qué pasamos por este mundo? ¿Para qué trabajamos y luchamos?’, para qué nos necesita esta tierra?’ (#160). Estas interrogantes tienen implicaciones muy prácticas. El Papa va directamente al grano y pregunta: ‘¿Qué tipo de mundo queremos dejar a quienes nos sucedan, a los niños que están creciendo?’ ‘Esta pregunta no afecta sólo al ambiente de manera aislada, —comenta— pero no se puede plantear la cuestión de modo fragmentado’ (#160).

Aquello que confunden con idealismo la preocupación del papa Francisco por el medio ambiente no logran captar el mensaje esencial de la encíclica. En consonancia con la escritura de sus predecesores inmediatos, el papa San Juan Pablo II y el papa emérito Benedicto XVI, Francisco llama la atención sobre la corresponsabilidad que Dios nos ha dado con toda Su creación para que, junto con Él, seas corresponsables del mundo lleno de maravillas en el que habitamos. De hecho, el papa Francisco nos dice que "le seres humanos no somos meros ocupantes de nuestro hogar terrenal. Estamos destinados a ser uno solo con Dios y con todo lo que Él ha creado. “La existencia humana se basa en tres relaciones fundamentales estrechamente conectadas,” nos enseña el Papa. Estamos íntimamente relacionados “con Dios, con el prójimo y con la tierra” (#66). Si estamos enfrentando crisis políticas, sociales, económicas o ambientales es porque el vínculo sagrado —cuya finalidad era unirnos y que se describe con mucha fuerza en el Libro del Génesis como el estado de la existencia humana en el Jardín del Edén, antes de nuestra caída se ha roto por el pecado. La responsabilidad del Papa de hablar sobre la condición humana corrompida por el pecado es un hecho incontrovertible. La Iglesia no pretende resolver cuestiones científicas ni reemplazar a la política, pero se atreve a hablar contra la injusticia, el abuso y el maltrato que ocurren. "Todos entendemos que no cualquier criatura tiene libertad pero al ser humano sí", y que debemos tratar de proteger."

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa
Right to Life Indy will celebrate 33rd ‘Celebrate Life’ dinner on Sept. 29

Right to Life Indy will host the 33rd “Celebrate Life” dinner at the Indiana Convention Center, 900 W. Massachusetts Ave., at 6:45 p.m. on Sept. 29.

This year’s keynote speaker is Alveda King, niece of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She will serve as a pastoral associate and director of African-American Outreach for Right to Life for Life. She is also a voice for the Silent No More Awareness Campaign, sharing her testimony of two abortions, God’s forgiveness, and healing.

Tickets are $65 per person.

Table sponsorship level information is available at plainpdx.com/events/celebrate-life.

Registration is available at the same site listed above, or by calling Right to Life Indy at 317-582-1526 or sending an e-mail to rtf@indy.org.

Sisters of Providence to offer 12-step Spirituality Retreat on Sept. 19

The Sisters of Providence will offer a 12-step Spirituality Retreat at Providence Hall Community Room in Providence Hall at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Providence Hall, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, from 9:30 a.m. -3:30 p.m. on Sept. 19.

During the retreat, which will be led by Providence Sister Connie Kramer, participants will have time for personal prayer, reflection and journaling, as well as time to pray together and share insights in a group setting.

Retreatants will be given the opportunity to use the principles of 12-step spirituality—as found in such programs as Alcoholics Anonymous—to not only find greater peace with God, with themselves and with others, but also to become peacemakers.

Participants will be encouraged to let God help them deal with anger and accept their powerlessness over persons, places and events in their lives, and to allow God to do for them what they cannot do for themselves.

All faith traditions are welcome. Cost to attend the retreat is $40, which includes lunch. The registration deadline is Sept. 14.

For more information or to register, call 812-353-2952, e-mail frstj@spwomen.org or log on to spwomen.org and click on events.

Pilgrimage to Sept. 27 papal Mass in Philadelphia still has spots available

Peace Love Pilgrimage, LLC, still has spots available for a pilgrimage to the 27 papal Mass in Philadelphia on Sept. 27.

The luxury bus will depart from Guerin Catholic High School, 15300 Gray Road, in Noblesville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, at 8:30 a.m. on Sept. 26. Pilgrims will stay at The Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites in York, Pa., 90 miles from Philadelphia.

Pope Francis will celebrate the closing Mass for the World Meeting of Families at 4 p.m. on Sept. 27. The liturgy will be held outside the Philadelphia Art Museum and is open to the public.

The sacrament of reconciliation will be offered prior to Mass by hundreds of priests attending the gathering. Various musicians and choral groups will perform prior to the liturgy.

Following the Sept. 27 Mass, the bus will drive through the night and return to the high school at approximately 7 a.m.

The conference is free. Lunch is included, and a continental breakfast will be served.*

Tickets are $65 per person.

Prizes to be given away include a raffle of door prizes for teens in attendance. Prizes to be given away include an iPad, a Garmin Vivofit, active fitness tracker and free training sessions at Cook Performance, as well as many other prizes. Teens must present to win.

The talk will be followed by an opportunity for eucharistic adoration and confession.

For more information, contact Wendy Lambert at 812-934-5226.

* For questions, send an email to info@PeaceLovePilgrimage.com.

Jason Evert to speak on ‘Love or Lust?’ at St. Louis Church in Batesville on Sept. 14

Nationally known speaker Jason Evert will speak on the topic of “Love or Lust?” at St. Louis Church, 13 St. Louis Place, in Batesville at 7 p.m. on Sept. 14.

The talk is geared toward teenagers in seventh through 12th grade, and for young adults and parents. Those in sixth grade are also welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult.

The talk is designed to be a message of hope to teens who are struggling with issues such as sexual pressure, pornography, modesty and starting over. Evert has spoken to more than 1 million students on five continents, bringing his message of hope to teens as they make decisions that will impact their future. He and his wife, Cristalina, are the authors of more than 10 books. The free event will also include a raffle of door prizes for teens in attendance. Prizes to be given away include an iPad, a Garmin Vivofit, active fitness tracker and free training sessions at Cook Performance, as well as many other prizes. Teens must present to win.

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Catholic convert, author Deacon Alex Jones speaks at Diocese of Evansville event

Deacon Alex Jones, author of “Responding to God’s Call,” will be the keynote speaker at the Lumen Dei event on Sept. 13, which will be held at Guerin Catholic High School, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis.

The conference is going to be free. Lunch is included, and a continental breakfast will be served.*

* For questions, send an email to life@rtlindy.org.

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WASHINGTON (CNS)—Pope Francis held a “virtual town hall” with Catholics in Chicago, Los Angeles and McAllen, Texas, in advance of his Sept. 22-27 visit to the United States.

The town hall was arranged by ABC News, which was to air portions of the meeting during its “World News Tonight” program on Aug. 31, with an hourlong version of its “20/20” newsmagazine called “Pope Francis & the People” airing from 10-11 p.m. EDT on Sept. 4. ABC News said the event would also be posted in its entirety in both English and Spanish on abcnews.com.

Pope Francis engaged via satellite with students at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago, homeless men and women and those working with homeless people in Los Angeles, and members of a McAllen parish located near the U.S.-Mexico border.

“We were allowed inside the Vatican for an hour with Pope Francis, where he greeted as he prepared for his trip,” said David Muir, “World News Tonight” anchor, in a 90-second “special report” that aired midday on Aug. 31 on ABC.

“He told me he’s ready, and he delivered a couple of messages to the American people before his historic visit, saying, ‘For me, it is very important to meet with all of you, the citizens of the United States, who have your history, your culture, your virtues, your joys, your sadness, your problems, like everyone else. That’s why this trip is important, for me to draw close to you, in your path, your history.’” Muir said of the pope.

Muir added, “He went on to say, ‘I’m praying for you all, and I ask you to please pray for me.’

“The pope allowed us to visit so we could connect him with people in other parts of the country where he won’t be able to visit,” Muir said. “He took questions and heard stories of struggle. He also spoke in English in some of his answers, at one point asking a teenager in Chicago fighting adversity to please sing for him. And she did.” Pope Francis will celebrate Mass in Spanish and other languages during his U.S. visit.

“Today was an unforgettable day in the 20-year history of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School,” said a tweet from the school after the town hall ended. Chris Meyer, the school’s director of technology, tweeted, “A glorious moment at Cristo Rey Chicago,” advising in a separate tweet there would be “powerful stories” on the Sept. 4 broadcast.

“The pope did not shy away from some key issues,” Muir added, although he did not disclose what issues they were. inviting viewers to watch “World News Tonight” and the “20/20” installment.

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.

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What in the news on Sept. 4, 1965? Women religious want a voice at the council, penitential ceremonies called for across the world as the fourth session nears opening

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Contemplate, give thanks, protect: Pope prays for creation

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Leading prayers for the safeguarding of creation, Pope Francis prays that people would learn to contemplate God in the beauty of the universe, give thanks and protect all life.

During an evening celebration of the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, the pope prayed that God would “enlighten the lords of power and money so they would not forget their origin, but would love the common good, encourage the weak and care for the world in which we live.”

Pope Francis announced in August that the Catholic Church would join the Orthodox Church in marking the prayer day on Sept. 1 each year.

In his opening prayer, he asked God to fill people with a desire “to protect every life, to prepare a better future so that your kingdom of justice, people, love and beauty would come.”

Although the pope led the service in St. Peter’s Basilica, he asked the preacher of the papal household, Cardinal Francisco Cardinal Raineri Cantalamessa, to give the homily.

In it, homily, Father Raniero referred to both Pope Francis and his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi.

Some environmentalists, he said, have blamed the Bible and Judeo-Christian tradition for the destruction of nature, claiming the idea that human beings have “dominion” over nature gave them permission to use and destroy the Earth.

But, he said, “the map of pollution” covering the globe coincides less with the places where people believe in God, and more in places that underwent “uncontrolled industrialization aimed only at profit” or are subject to rampant corruption.

“No one can seriously serve the cause of safeguarding creation without the courage of pointing a finger at the exaggerated accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few,” the Capuchin friar said.

St. Francis of Assisi, he said, was able to recognize and contemplate God’s beauty in all created things precisely because he owned nothing and recognized that anything he was able to use, especially for food or clothing, was a gift of God.

“Possession excludes, contemplation includes,” he said. If one person owns a lake or park, “all the others are excluded,” but if no one owns it and thousands use it without taking it away from anyone.

Father Raniero said that while the world St. Francis lived in was not facing an environmental emergency people today are facing, he still knew that if he took more than he needed, he was stealing from others.

“We must ask: Am I a resources thief, using more than my due and therefore taking it from those who will come after me?” the preacher said.

Pointing to Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment, “Laudato Si’,” the Catholic social teaching have on a career in public life?

Pope Francis has expressed the view that politics is a worthy vocation, according to John Carr, director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University in Washington.

“We have lots of Catholics who have taken up that vocation, and increasingly Catholics are leaders of both the Democratic Party and Republican Party,” Carr said.

Yet, he said, “there is no such thing today as ‘a Catholic vote.’” Carr said that Catholic voters are influential in elections as perhaps the ultimate swing vote.

“The bad news [is] we are more Democrats or more Republicans than we are Catholics,” he said. “We ought to see a more consistent concern for life, and I hope Pope Francis will ask us to be more clear in our care for the poor, the unborn and the undocumented.

“I think Pope Francis will affirm our leaders and make them profoundly uncomfortable at some moments.”

He noted that Pope Francis’ Jesuit-inspired leadership style and personal priorities will be highlighted by a meeting with homeless people following his speech to Congress.

“He looks at the world from the bottom up. When he had a day off, he would go to the slums instead of the football game or to the opera, and he will bring that [sensibility] to the papacy and to Washington,” Carr said. “This is not the center of his world.”

Observers expect Pope Francis to affirm and challenge politicians during visit

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (CNS)—Two high-profile Catholic politicians—the visual of Pope Francis’ Sept. 24 address to Congress will signal an evolving narrative.

The improbability of a pope standing before a joint meeting of Congress comes in era of wider acceptance of the Catholic faith as it intersects with public life and U.S. politics, and indicates a comfort level between the two that wouldn’t have been imaginable several decades ago, observers said.

Times have changed whereby politicians do not have to wall off their faith from the office they hold, unlike how President John F. Kennedy had to defend his Catholic faith more than half a century ago, said Father Christopher Collins, assistant professor of theological studies and head of mission and identity at Jesuit-run St. Louis University.

“More and more, there seems to be a willingness for people being out front with their religious commitments while in public office, for both Democrats and Republicans,” Father Collins told Catholic News Service.

“We are in a new phase of that, and that is a good thing,” he said. “It is a kind of a moving along the spectrum from privatization to a coherent synthesis of the faith of those who serve in public office.”

Pope Francis’ speech to Congress—where about 30 percent of lawmakers are Catholic—“may be the most closely watched of the pope’s talks during his visit Sept. 22-27 to Washington, New York and Philadelphia.”

The pope also is scheduled to meet with President Barack Obama at the White House before heading north to give a separate address at the United Nations in New York, and joining an interfaith service set for the Sept. 11 memorial at ground zero.

Father Collins, who sees Pope Francis’ Jesuit-inspired leadership style and inclusive and consider a governance and structures, financial management. Through example, he encourages public leaders to be servant leaders: “not in it for their own ego, or personal advantage or agenda, to see themselves as servants of society,” she added.

“Unfortunately, Catholics in America appear compelled to public service despite the challenge of a spectrum of Church teaching which refuses to fit neatly into an S-1 political platform.”

But what bearing does Church doctrine and
Catholic Center in Indianapolis to the archives of the archdiocese, which he had never visited previously.

pope said he decided “to concede to all priests for the jubilee year the discretion to absolve of the sin of abortion those who for various reasons choose to attend churches officiated by priests” belonging to the traditionalist Society of St. Pius X. Although the society is no longer considered to be in schism and the communication of its bishops was lifted in 2009, questions remain whether the sacraments they celebrate are valid.

pope's decision was “taken with the faithful in mind” and is limited to the holy year, which runs through Nov. 20, 2016, Father Lombardi said. The spokesman also confirmed that the Vatican's contacts with leaders of the Society of St. Pius X have continued.

In his letter, Pope Francis also granted another exception to Church rules out of concern for “those faithful who for various reasons choose to attend churches officiated by priests” belonging to the traditionalist Society of St. Pius X. Although the society is no longer considered to be in schism and the communication of its bishops was lifted in 2009, questions remain whether the sacraments they celebrate are valid.

The celebration of God's mercy, he said, is “linked, first and foremost, to the sacrament of reconciliation and to the celebration of the holy Eucharist with a reflection on mercy. It will be necessary to accompany these celebrations with the profession of faith and with prayer for me, and for the intentions that I bear in my heart for the good of the Church and of the entire world.”

Those who are confined to their homes can obtain the indulgence by offering up their sickness and suffering, he said. Pope Francis also included special consideration for people who are incarcerated, touching on the Old Testament tradition of a jubilee year as a time for granting prisoners amnesty. Those who, “despite deserving punishment, have become conscious of the injustice they committed,” may receive the indulgence with prayers and the reception of the sacraments in their prison chapel, he wrote.

(Programming is available in the archdiocese for those suffering from abortion at www.archindy.org/projectracheal or by calling 317-432-0054.)

Above, worshippers surround the altarcade of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The church, believed to be the location of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus, is a major pilgrimage site for Christians.

Left, Our Lady of Guadalupe, the little girl given to the Virgin Mary for her appearance before Native American peasant St. Juan Diego in 1531 at Tepeyac Hill, is a major religious and cultural symbol of Mexico. This collection of the Sacred Journeys exhibit demonstrates that her image can be found almost anywhere—from candles to cowboy boots.

Below, Jews pray at the Western Wall of the Holy Wall in Jerusalem. (Photo courtesy of The Children's Museum of Indianapolis)

Sacred Journeys exhibit, which opened on Aug. 29 at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, showed the exhibit for the first two days before its opening, Ogorek displayed the kind of wonder and awe that he hopes will be shared by everyone who visits the museum in the coming months.

“I have goose bumps—myself and everyone,” said, strolling through the 7,000-square-foot exhibit that includes fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls, a stone replica of the Western Wall and a life-size replica of the Shroud of Turin.

“I think all people of good will would agree that decisions about faith and religion should be informed decisions,” Ogorek said. “The big idea [behind the exhibit] is that when we have accurate information about religion presented in respectful ways, bridges of understanding can be built.

Years in the making, Sacred Journeys combines artifacts from the world’s major religions with spectacular images from National Geographic magazine that serve as backdrops to the displays. Visitors follow the personal journeys of five young people representing the Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist faiths, following their stories is told in video clips that guide museumgoers through the exhibit.

“With each of these guides, we see joy,” Ogorek said. “People of faith should be people of joy. And I do think the beauty and the joy of the life of faith comes through loud and clear in this exhibit.”

Luis is the fictional guide who embarks on pilgrimage to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. He wants to better understand why this Marian shrine—one of the most visited in the world—is so important to his grandmother and to millions of others.

The young man’s journey leads to a corresponding display of artifacts and artwork that enlightens museum visitors about this monumental place in the Catholic faith.

All of the guides have questions about faith and their family traditions. Those instrumental in planning the exhibit hope that “Sacred Journeys” will in turn provoke important questions and discussions among museum guests.

“Most of our visitors come here as families,” said Christian Carron, director of collections for The Children’s Museum. “We’re always focused on asking, ‘How do families learn together?’

With this exhibit, it’s not our job to tell you what you should believe. People receive instruction from their own families of faith. What we’re trying to do is provide a safe place that people can go to have a conversation about their own faith and about the faith of their neighbors.”

Other highlights of the exhibit, made possible by Lilly Endowment Inc., include:

• A pamphlet by Protestant reformer Martin Luther published in 1523.
• A letter penned by Pope Gregory XVI in the 19th century.
• A Bible published in 1845 and owned by Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the oldest African-American church in Indianapolis and an important part of the Underground Railroad.

• Items used in the Jewish faith that astronaut David Wolf, an Indianapolis native, took to the International Space Station.

• Artwork of the Golden Temple, a Sikh holy site, by Indianapolis artist K.P. Singh.

• A 500-year-old handwritten Quran.

• A throne built for the Dalai Lama on a 2010 visit to India.

“Some of the items come from our own collection, some we commissioned or purchased, and others come from about 20 different lenders,” Carron said. “Part of the curation of an exhibit like this is finding those things that have meaning for people and that tell the story.”

One example is a sash worn by Victor Gales Salomone, who as a 12-year-old in 1974 spent his summer assisting as an altar server at the Vatican. Years later, he was a fraternity brother of Carron, who recently called to ask his friend if the museum could include the sash in the exhibit. “It was a great formative moment in his life, and something he has held onto,” Carron said. “Advisors from around the country—and locally—including leading voices in academia and from various faith communities—were instrumental in shaping the exhibit, according to Carron.

“We’re very good at preserving objects and presenting objects,” he said. “But we really needed to rely on experts, who were our academics and our community practitioners, to tell us the particulars.”

As director of curation for the archdiocese, one of my main goals is simply for the Catholic faith to get a fair hearing,” he said. “And I have to tell you, the Children’s Museum has done a masterful job of presenting the diversity and complexity within the Christian faith in ways that are accurate, and, I would say, profoundly respectful.

From the perspective of the Catholic Church, we would hope that families will have fun [at the exhibit] … that they will experience beauty and joy together, and that they will just learn more about their neighbors and in turn learn more about themselves,” he continued. “In a way, this will be a gift that keeps on giving. Conversations that start here will bear a lot of fruit in families’ lives.”

(The exhibit is included with general admission. Victoria Arthur is a freelance writer and a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownstown.)

Coinciding with the “National Geographic Sacred Journeys” exhibit will be two lectures by Shroud of Turin expert Barrie Schwortz.

The lectures will take place at the museum on Sept. 19. The 11 a.m. lecture is recommended for ages 10 and older. A second lecture at 2 p.m. will last longer with scientific information geared toward adults.

The lectures are free with museum admission, but require advance registration through The Children’s Museum website at www.childrensmuseum.org.

For more information about the exhibit, log on to www.childrensmuseum.org, choose “Exhibits” then “Future Exhibits.”
By Carol Nathan
Special to The Criterion

BROWN COUNTY—Each summer, teenagers from St. Agnes Parish in Nashville and young people from Terre Haute’s youth ministry program come together with adult leaders to help needy persons in Brown County. This summer, the Indiana Nazareth Farm Service camp celebrated 20 years of assisting its brothers and sisters in need in southern Indiana.

The annual service camp is sponsored by St. Agnes and five Terre Haute parishes which have combined their youth ministry efforts—St. Benedict, Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. Patrick, St. Margaret Mary and St. Joseph University. The camp is based on four cornerstones—community, prayer, simplicity and service.

The outreach effort occurred on July 24-28 and included 20 teenagers, two young adults and 14 adults. The youth directors for the project included Adrienne Spahr from St. Agnes Parish, and Tom Gattuso and Augusto McMonigal, youth ministers for the Terre Haute area parishes.

The youths and their leaders reached out to the community of Brown County and provided their spiritual and physical strength to make the lives of some Brown County residents easier, and to help them manage their homes. Some of the work this year related to recent storm damage and flooding in Brown County.

The projects included weeding, laying down several pounds of mulch, woodworking, hauling and stacking, packing boxes for a move, yardwork, painting, constructing a ramp and steps, and digging out a culvert.

Each teenager and adult leader averaged 36 hours of intensive hard labor in just four days, totaling 1,296 person hours. In addition, the youths and leaders shared prayers and reflections each day.

Since the camp was initiated 20 years ago, teenagers and their adult chaperones have provided more than 26,000 hours in service.

The original Nazareth Farm was formed as an association of the Catholic Church and is located in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, W.Va. Its purpose is to provide volunteer service to the people of Appalachia.

The program was started in Brown County by Benedicntine Sister Mildred Wannemuehler, then parish life coordinator at St. Agnes Parish, former youth ministry coordinator Janet Roth at St. Benedict and Sacred Heart of Jesus parishes in Terre Haute, and Mike Lewis, then youth ministry coordinator at St. Agnes Parish in Terre Haute. Dee and Kelli Suding continue their family’s tradition of providing camp space and support.

The appreciation of the people served by these outstanding youths and adult leaders is impressive and heartfelt, youths leaders said. They added the spirit of warmth and caring was so sincere that it was “vibrant and magnetic.”

The Nazareth Farm project is held each summer at the end of July.

Brown County residents who need assistance are encouraged to keep this outreach in mind for themselves, or if they know of others who might benefit from the gift of service provided by these youths and their leaders.

(Carol Nathan is a member of St. Agnes Parish in Nashville. For more information about Nazareth Farms, contact Adrienne Spahr, youth ministry coordinator at St. Agnes Parish in Nashville, at 812-535-2952 or provctr@spsmw.org.)

Visit the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods and be inspired!

Plan on attending the following events on the motherhouse grounds (just 70 miles southwest of Indianapolis):

**Sept. 8 - Taizé Prayer at the Woods, 7 p.m. (EDT).**
This hour-long service held every second Tues. of each month, includes prayer, simple beautiful music, a time for silence, Scripture reading, and silent prayer. Free to attend.


**Sept. 16, Lunch and Lecture Series, Noon - 1:30 p.m. (EDT).** Come for one or all five sessions and feast on the words of Saint Mother Theodore Guerin. Delve deeply into the Journals and Letters of Mother Theodore, using the lens of the words of Saint Mother Theodore Guerin. This 5-month series will be introduced and Wednesday sessions!

**Sept. 19, 12-Step Retreat, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (EDT).**
This one-day retreat will focus on 12 Step Spirituality within a group setting, where serenity and peace await those willing to accept their powerlessness over persons, places and events in their lives. Facilitator: Sister Connie Kramer. Cost: $40 (includes lunch). Register by Sept. 14.

**Sept. 26, In the Light of Providence Retreat: A Photographic Journey, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (EDT).** Participants will view photography of nature, meet award winning photographer, Sharon Woods; hear from National Geographic photo journalist, DeWitt Jones via video; journey into “the Woods” to take photographs. Bring your own camera. Presenters: Sharon Woods, Sister Evelyn Owle, and Sister Mary Montgomery. Cost: $40 (includes lunch). Register by Sept. 21.

**Oct. 3, Paper Crafting: Scrapbooking, Card Creation Bookmarks and Family Collage, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (EDT).** Join the sacred experience of treasuring loved ones through creating a scrapbook, cards, and bookmarks. Facilitator: Providence Associate Sheila Donahue. Cost: $45 (includes lunch). Register by Sept. 28.

**Oct. 10, The Art of Journal Writing, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** 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.

**Events are open to all faith traditions!**

**Save the date! Saint Mother Theodore Guerin FEST, August 1, 17-18, 10 a.m. Saturday to noon Sunday (EDT). Register by Oct. 12.**

**Contact: 812-535-2952 or provctr@spsmw.org**

www.ProvCenter.org

** Providence Spirituality & Conference Center**
A ministry of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods
Inmates received into the Church say faith will guide them

By Sean Gallagher

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin has identified ministry to people incarcerated in correctional facilities across the archdiocese as one of six doors through which Catholics in central and southern Indiana can pass through to be missionaries of Christ to people on the margins of society and the Church. On April 22, he witnessed to the importance of this priority by celebrating a Mass at the Putnamville Correctional Facility in Putnamville. During the liturgy, he received six inmates into the full communion of the Church. Father John Hollowell, pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle and Annunciation Parish in Brazil and the Catholic chaplain at the prison, was a concelebrant at the Mass.

“Archbishop Tobin is a person who does what he says,” Father Hollowell said. “It’s one thing to talk about the need to respect the dignity of people in prison. But to go there and show people that this is actually a priority of the whole archdiocese is a huge statement. He genuinely wanted to be there, and was excited to be there. He told them that, and you knew that he meant it.”

For their part, the inmates who participated in the Mass, especially those who were received into the Church, were excited that Archbishop Tobin took time to worship with them. “To me, it showed that the Church cares about me just as Christ does,” said inmate Frank Wederzak, who was received into the Church during the Mass. “Archbishop Tobin coming shows that God is just not where things are good, but everywhere, good or bad.”

Many members of St. Paul Parish are involved in ministry at the prison throughout the year, and helped form the inmates to be received into the Church. St. Paul parishioner Teresa Batto helps lead the faith community’s prison ministry, and organized the April 22 Mass and has seen its effects, noting that more Catholic inmates are bringing friends in the prison to Bible study sessions, Masses and other liturgies.

“It energized the men to invite others to come,” said Batto of the Mass.

Batto, who has ministered at Putnamville for 20 years, said the ministry has affected her life of faith in many ways. “They have been told by the courts and by society that they have to change,” she said. “I see them moving from this life that they had before [being incarcerated] to what they want to do when they get out. Seeing how they grow are beautiful moments.”

Wederzak said coming to know and embrace the Catholic faith has helped him rediscover peace in his life. “I think in coming home [in the Church], I have found that peace that I had as a child,” he said. “And in reclaiming that peace, I can pass it on to others, not only here, but everywhere.”

Inmate Donald Foncannon, who was also received into the Church during the Mass, sees the faith formation he has received as a means to live a good life when his time in prison is over. “I think developing a closer relationship with God is what is going to help me successfully transition and adjust into society, and help me with structuring a life once I’m released,” he said. “I believe these studies are pieces of the foundation for my faith and religion.”

Batto said seeing the men that she and other members of St. Paul Parish helped form in the faith being received into the Church was “a wonderful moment, a very triumphant moment.”

“But it was also very touching to see that they were so excited about entering the faith,” she said. “And they’ve continued to come. To see them continue to come is a very satisfying thing for me.”

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin baptizes Frank Wederzak during an April 22 Mass at the Putnamville Correctional Facility in Putnamville. Wederzak is an inmate at the prison. He and five other inmates were baptized and received into the full communion of the Church. Father John Hollowell, left, chaplain at the facility and pastor of Annunciation Parish in Brazil and St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, assists in the rite of baptism. Bernie Batto, right, a member of St. Paul Parish, serves as Wederzak’s sponsor. (Submitted photo)

“It’s one thing to talk about the need to respect the dignity of people in prison. But to go there and show people that this is actually a priority of the whole archdiocese is a huge statement. He [Archbishop Tobin] genuinely wanted to be there, and was excited to be there. He told them that, and you knew that he meant it.”

—Father John Hollowell, Catholic chaplain at Putnamville Correctional Facility in Putnamville
Keep an open mind in prayer, knowing God’s blessings await

I just went to the kitchen for a cheese stick and noticed a neon piece of construction paper on the refrigerator door. The fluorescent page had been placed over a permission slip and some other important notes from school. That’s right! My daughter Margaret turns 8 years old next month, and she’s already composed a wish list to commemorate the occasion. This was her priority, despite the fact that her birthday is more than 30 days away, and she still hasn’t finished her math homework. She indicated that she had to add it to the list, which could have a chance of coming true.

The fluorescent page was Margaret’s “Birthday Wish List.” At the top of the list is a request that, in the end, love always wins and our goodness always triumphs. Come October, Margaret will not be getting monkey bars installed in her bedroom for her birthday. And she still hadn’t finished her math homework with Andrew Luck out of the question. (I’m pretty sure this is busy season.) But Margaret and I do have some special little surprises to make her birthday a happy one. None of the little treasures she has planned yet made it on her wish list, although I’m working on the camouflage socks. I hope we will keep an open mind, and not be disappointed when her wish list isn’t fulfilled. As a parent, I only want her happiness.

Margaret’s list reminded me that I must keep an open mind in prayer, knowing that God, our Father and divine parent, has greater blessings in store than we might even think to ask for ourselves. Few of those, however, will be revealed in this human life. This is why we need to be open to the unravelling in our lives sometimes very contrary to our petitions. But we must remain confident that God hears us, and he will give us the grace to get by until we enter his kingdom when he can grant us full and eternal happiness.

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

Our role in shaping the biography of another person

Over the past few months, I started reading a variety of biographies and nonfiction. I’ve been reading about World War II U.S. Army Gen. Lucian Truscott and Annie Leibovitz’s portrayal of John Belushi.

It is interesting to see how a parent or grandparent can strongly influence someone’s life even after that older family member has passed away.

The foundation stones of life are laid, the seeds that have sown an incredible impact for the good and sometimes for the not-so-good.

We all know this on some level, of course. We’ve seen it in our lives or at play in the life of a relative or friend. Even so, it can be helpful to be reminded of it from time to time. We have to remember that just as toddlers seem to pick up language by “osmosis,” they also can absorb attitudes and values. They mimic our ways and opinions of doing things. They can mimic our beliefs, blind spots, ethics and actions.

Some of what we do gives them a boost; some of it hobbles them. In a sense, they are watching us as we see them, and can love themselves as we love them.

The flip side of this coin is that having children or grandchildren can goad us into being better people because of those little eyes watching us. Seeing ourselves taking their cues from us. Those still-forming minds and consciences are absorbing what we do and who we are.

In the biographies I’ve been reading, that pivotal role isn’t limited to a parent or grandparent. That role can be set by the example of an older sibling, aunt or uncle, teacher, coach or mentor. It can be a close friend who comes along late in our life.

In so many ways, both known and unknown, more than just playing a role in someone’s story, we’re helping another person shape his or her own story. In some of those lives, we don’t affect the personal moment, but to offer a lifetime of actions. Those actions might extend beyond the life of one person. For some, they may set the path to a profession or unspoken prayer.

Throughout our time on Earth, God sends us into our lives, and he sends us into the lives of others. He offers us opportunities to help fill a void, to nurture the soul and talent, to take our talents and use them to help another person.

Our United States will highlight his role as a model and should serve to boost efforts to mend relations after more than 50 years of bitterness.

The pope’s visit, along with the proposed changes to the U.S. trade and travel embargos which the Vatican helped broker, may just be what is needed to open up a new era of friendship and cooperation. I have seen firsthand how the U.S. embassy has only served to add to the poverty and hopelessness of the Cuban people.

The U.S. Conference of Bishops said when the new Cuba policy was announced publicly, “We believe it is long past due that the United States establish full diplomatic relations with Cuba.” Having been born and raised in the United States, I never truly appreciated the importance of freedom until I traveled to Cuba. I long for the day when any of you who wish will have the freedom to travel to this beautiful island filled with beautiful people who long for our friendship.

The isolation that the Cuban people feel from our country, only 90 miles away, is tremendous. I will never forget the time when my traveling companions from Indiana and I met with a group of neighbors in a remote rural area. They welcomed us with painted signs, hugs and kisses. Just one woman pulled aside, took both of my hands and said to me, “Please, please, my dear brother, in Cuba.”

I have never forgotten that woman and her neighbors as I pray for them every day. I ask you to join me in prayer for our brothers and sisters, who have no voice of their own.

(David Siler is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Cuban Families. E-mail him at dsiler@archindy.org.)

Faith, Hope and Charity/
David Siler
A prayer to never forget our Cuban brothers and sisters

I have had the rare privilege of traveling to Cuba three times as an archdiocesan representative of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and my heart is forever grateful for this partnership with the Archdiocese of Havana.

By far, the most talked about and the most important day in Cuba’s history that I heard about multiple times during my journeys was the visit by Pope John Paul II in 1998. This was the first-ever visit of a pope to Latin America and an indelible mark by the re-opening of churches that were formerly shut by Communist Fidel Castro. I know that Pope John Paul II had a private meeting with Castro. I would have loved to be there, to listen to the words that the pope uttered in that conversation!

Now, anticipation is building for the pope to return to Cuba in a mid-September. I can only imagine the hopefulness in the hearts of the Cuban people as they think of the pope’s “Francis’ stop in Cuba on his way to the United States will highlight his role as a peace broker between our two countries, and should serve to boost efforts to mend relations after more than 50 years of bitterness.

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Peregrinations

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Finn

Medieval Church: Turbulent period for the papacy

The Catholic Church today is fortunate to have a pope who is respected by all. That hasn’t always been the case, especially during the medieval Church. And popes weren’t always chosen, they have been in recent centuries.

The Council of Chalcedon (451) ended the long dispute between Constantine’s death in 337 and the election of Pope John in 855 was a particularly turbulent period for the papacy. During those 44 years, there were nine different popes, some of whom reigned for very brief periods.

Emperor Louis the Pious succeeded Charlemagne in 816. However, anti-Frankish feelings between Louis and Pepin the German. Gregory supported Lothair, antagonizing the Frankish bishops by doing so. Louis the Pious was deposed by his sons in 840, but regained the throne a year later and reigned until his death in 840. Then Louis strengthened him.

When Gregory IV died, the populace of Rome proclaimed a deacon named John as pope, and the Lantair palace and enthroned him. The arisocracy, though, elected a fellow Roman aristocrat, Sergius II, crushed the opposition, and confined the antipope John in a monastery. While Sergius was pope, simple (the buying of ecclesiastical preferment) flourished.

Pope Leo IV, who succeeded Sergius, was a strong pope in civic affairs who strengthened Rome’s city walls, organized a fleet of ships that defeated the Muslims in a sea battle, and rebuilt what is now Civita Castellana, a port city northwest of Rome.

Leo died in 855, and the clergy and people of Rome elected Benedict III. However, a group loyal to the emperor preferred Anastasius, a cardinal whom Leo had consecrated, they dragged Benedict from his throne, imprisoned him, and installed Anastasius. Anastasius reigned for three days. When it became clear, though, that Benedict had wide support, the imperial螄 were driven from the Lateran, but Pope Anastasius was expelled from the Lateran, and is considered an antipope. Amazingly, though, he was spending Benedict’s money in obscurity, he was to become an important counselor to the next three popes.

Benedict, however, died after only two-and-a-half years as pope. Pope Nicholas I was elected in 855. He proved to be an exceptionally strong pope. He firmly believed the pope to be God’s representative in Earth with authority over the whole Church, as he acted accordingly. The “whole Church included the Church in the East, as we will see next week.”

It’s All Good/Patti Lamb

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Sunday Readings
Sunday, September 6, 2015

- Isaiah 35:4-7a
- James 2:1-5
- Mark 7:31-37

The first reading for this weekend, from the Book of Isaiah, speaks of the blind, the deaf, and the lame. Today’s culture is different from that in which this section of Isaiah was written. Physical impairments now can be managed in most cases. Medicine today works wonders. People with physical impairments have physical explanations. It is understood that genetics, disease or injury cause such difficulties.

Times have changed. When Isaiah lived, the inability to walk was a critical disadvantage. Even more a disadvantage was being unable to hear or see. Communications for almost everyone was verbal or visual. Immobility, blindness, lameness or deafness therefore severely isolated people. Then, as much as at any time in human history, being alone was a fearful thought. More fearful than being alone was being alone and helpless.

Furthermore, physical impairments were seen as the consequence of sin. It was an ancient Jewish belief that sin upset God. Sin was an impurity that upset God’s holiness. No one, anywhere, is beyond the scope of this consequence.

In these readings, the Church confronts us with our sins, the source of ultimate weakness. Sin separates us from God. It blunts and leaves us deaf. It renders us helpless. We cannot free ourselves. We are doomed.

God forgives us, and we are restored, refreshed and strengthened. We can see. We can hear. We can find our way. Sin is our burden as humans, with all its dire effects. God, in Christ, is our hope. No one, anywhere, is beyond the scope of God’s love and mercy. He offers life to all.

Reflection

The Church for weeks has called us to discipleship. It also has warned that we are shortsighted and weak.

Self isolation or union with God and with each other.

My Journey to God

Let Love Rule

By Sandy Biery

Let love rule in our hearts, putting away our worldly thoughts. Let us keep our eyes on Jesus, as he hung upon the cross. Dying so that we can live. Redeeming us for our sins.

Jesus, who was sinless, took on the sin of man, as he hanged upon the cross of life, asking the Father to forgive us before giving up his spirit, loving us to the end.

Help us to understand

The great love of this man, God’s only begotten Son, who gave his life for us so that we may live. And spend eternity with him.

(Sandy Biery is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. In the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, a crucifix and candles mark the spot where it is believed Christ was crucified on Calvary. A group from the archdiocese, led by Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, visited the church on Feb. 14.)

(Translated by Natalie Hoefel)

Daily Readings

Monday, September 7
Colossians 1:24-2:3
Psalm 62:6-7, 9
Luke 6:6-11

Tuesday, September 8
The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Micah 5:1-4a
or Romans 8:28-30
Psalm 13:6abc
Matthew 1:1-16, 18-23
or Matthew 1:18-23

Wednesday, September 9
St. Peter Claver, priest
Colossians 3:1-11
Psalm 145:2-3, 10-13ab
Luke 6:20-26

Thursday, September 10
Colossians 12:17-13:4
Psalm 150:1-6

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Church offers latitude in disabled Catholics receiving the sacraments

Over the past few years, my husband has suffered a traumatic brain injury and, more recently, has been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. I would like him to participate in all the sacraments as he has done faithfully since he was a child. He attends Mass with me, but does not remember any prayers, cannot read them from a missal and needs assistance when receiving the Eucharist.

Is it appropriate for him to participate in the sacraments when he doesn’t fully understand their significance?

A

The answer to your question is a resounding “yes.” Your husband’s participation is absolutely appropriate. He should be encouraged to share in the sacraments for whatever spiritual and personal blessings they might bring him.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has called repeatedly for broader integration of people with disabilities into the full life of the Church, particularly through the sacraments. The canonical requirements for reception of the sacraments are quite modest. For holy Communion, there is a requirement about the use of reason, but that is to be interpreted liberally. In a USCCB document entitled, “Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments With Persons With Disabilities,” the document notes that all that is necessary is that “the person be able to distinguish the body of Christ from ordinary food, even if this recognition is evidenced through manner, gesture or reverential silence rather than verbally” (20). I must say that I am edified by your care for your husband and for his continued spiritual nourishment. To me, it stands as a beautiful example of fidelity to the marriage vow.

Q

Human remains have been found that are 50,000 years old. But Christ came to Earth only 2,000 years ago. Are all those people before Jesus now in purgatory? And why did he wait so long to come to Earth, that is a matter of perennial speculation—to be answered, I suppose, only in heaven when we can ask the Lord ourselves. One theory is that the Roman Empire provided the optimal setting because by then common roads and a common tongue united the known world, and the message of the Gospel could spread more quickly.

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

Father Thomas Weise prepares to kayak off the shoreline of the Shrine of St. Therese in Juneau, Alaska, on April 21, 2014. In terms of Catholic population, the Diocese of Juneau is small, with 10,600 Catholics. Yet it covers an area of about 53,000 square miles, which is 17,000 square miles larger than Indiana. Priests often travel by sea plane, and sometimes even kayak, to get to remote locations. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)
Pilgrimage takes Marian group in footsteps of Saints Francis and Clare

By Daniel Conway
Special to The Criterion

Sixteen pilgrims from Marian University in Indianapolis recently traveled to Italy to follow in the footsteps of Sts. Francis and Clare.

Sponsored by Franciscan scholars from diverse regions of the United States, the Marian pilgrims (comprised of faculty, staff, students and spouses) spent eight days in Assisi and three days in Rome in June.

For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry

The 2015 Marian pilgrims have committed themselves to sharing their experiences with the Marian University community through a variety of means.

Jennifer Waning, who represents the Franciscan values, and what better classroom to deepen one’s understanding of these values than the streets and hills of Assisi. (Daniel Conway is senior vice president at Marian University in Indianapolis.)
Maryland priest, editor to pace pilgrimage to Philadelphia papal Mass

PHILADELPHIA (CNS)—As the Archdiocese of Baltimore and Catholic Review Media finalized preparations in early summer to transport hundreds of pilgrims to the only public Mass Pope Francis will celebrate on his first trip to the U.S., the wheels turned. Planners thought about the possibility embarking on the ancient concept of pilgrimage, and walk from Baltimore to Philadelphia in September.

Hours after the idea was bounced off Father John J. Lombardi, pastor of St. Peter and St. Patrick parishes in Washington County, Md., he was on board. He is a veteran of dozens of such walks, most recently in Ireland, and in 2012 from St. Peter Parish in Hancock, to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore to promote awareness of the inaugural Fortnight for Freedom.

Father Lombardi and Paul McMullen, managing editor of the Catholic Review, newspaper of the Baltimore Archdiocese, will lead a group of as many as 20 pilgrims, departing from that same Baltimore basilica on Sept. 20, through Baltimore City, Baltimore, Harford and Cecil counties, and then into Pennsylvania on the way to the Sept. 27 papal Mass in Philadelphia.

“One on hand, there is the ancient tradition of walking, like the original Camino,” Father Lombardi said. He, of the Camino de Santiago, the Way of St. James, in France, Spain and Portugal, a portion of which he walked in 2008. “On the other, there is a unique difference, with our fast-paced lives, of getting out of our boxes and walking.”

“Remember, our Lord walked to all of his appointments … That, and we will be feeding Pope Francis’ call to help the poor.”

While few can drop what they are doing and walk 104 miles over the course of a week in what is being called a Pilgrimage of Love and Mercy, named for the upcoming Jubilee Year of Mercy, anyone can join its main outreach, Feet for Francis, a fundraiser being coordinated by Florida-based Funds2Orgs. It partners with nonprofit organizations, collecting unwanted shoes and sending them overseas, where they are needed. Parishes, schools and Catholic institutions can gather gently worn or new pairs of shoes. Funds2Orgs will supply promotional materials and bags to collect the shoes, and collect them at locations throughout in the Baltimore Archdiocese.

Details were to be posted at www.CatholicReview.org.

Funds2Orgs will ship the shoes to one of its 26 partner nations, among them Haiti, Pakistan and Togo, where they support micro-enterprises which sell the shoes for a profit.

“By repurposing unwanted shoes, people in the Archdiocese of Baltimore will empower those in the developing world,” said Tom Henderson, executive vice president of Funds2Orgs. “This all goes back to teaching a man to fish, as opposed to feeding him one.”

Based on the total weight of the shoes collected in the archdiocese, it will receive a check from Funds2Orgs. The more shoes collected, the larger the check that will be presented to Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori in October.

The pilgrimage itself will require considerable logistical support. The walkers will be accompanied by vans, which will transport pilgrims from each night’s shelter to daily starting points. Participants will spend their overnights at schools, parishes and shelters along the planned route.

“We’ll get tired, face hardships and have to work as a team,” Father Lombardi said. “It will be a mini slice of life.”

Argentina Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio washes and kisses the feet of residents of a shelter for drug users during Holy Thursday Mass in 2008 at a church in a poor neighborhood of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The cardinal took the name Francis after being elected pope on March 13, 2013. (CNS photo/Enrique Garcia Bedoya, Reuters)