Climate deal must be transformative, papal envoy tells leaders in Paris

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Heads of state discussing carbon emission limits must create a global and “transformative” agreement built on justice, solidarity and fairness, a papal representative told the U.N. climate conference in Paris.

Pope Francis has said “it would be tragic” if special interests “manipulated” information and won out over the common good. Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said on Nov. 30.

The cardinal delivered a speech on behalf of the pope during the Nov. 30-Dec. 11 Conference of Parties, or COP21, in Paris. The Vatican released a copy of the speech on Dec. 1.

A global agreement must have three interrelated goals in mind: “alleviate the impact of climate change, fight poverty and let the dignity of the human person flourish,” the cardinal said in a speech delivered in French.

A meaningful global pact must be guided by a clear ethical vision that sees all of humanity as belonging to one human family, and has “no room for the so-called globalization of indifference,” he said.

“Given the urgency of a situation that requires the broadest collaboration possible in order to reach a common plan,” it is important the agreement recognize everyone’s responsibility to help others and according to one’s abilities and means.

An agreement must send “clear signals” to governments, businesses, the scientific community and local communities on how to adjust or change their behavior and policies in ways that lead to a low carbon economy and integral human development, he said.

Finally, the cardinal said, the COP21 endeavor must be part of an ever-evolving globalization of indifference. “It’s necessary to take into serious consideration the realization of models of sustainable production and consumption and new behaviors and lifestyles,” he said.

“Technical solutions are necessary, but not enough,” he said, adding that teaching and supporting sustainable lifestyles are necessary, but not enough.

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The pope said he was surprised by crowds, joy in Africa

ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM AF RICA (CNS)—Pope Francis told reporters he is well aware that God is a God of surprises, but he had not been prepared for what a surprise his first visit to Africa would be.

“God won’t be outdone,” he said.

“God won’t be outdone in his generosity.”

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Tell us how mercy and forgiveness have made a difference in your life

Please send your stories and responses to assistant editor John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached.

Correction

In the Nov. 20 issue of The Criterion, an article about a plenary indulgence established by Pope Francis for the Holy Year of Mercy incorrectly stated that an indulgence ‘can be granted on behalf of the individual petitioner, another person or for departed souls.’ It is Church practice that an indulgence can only be granted to the individual petitioner or for a departed soul.
At Bangui mosque and Mass, pope prays for ‘salam,’ peace

BANGUI, Central African Republic (CNS)—Pope Francis ended his visit to the violence-torn Central African Republic with cries for peace and pleas for a mercy that seeks and grants forgiveness.

In a country where political and ethnic rivalries also have split the population along religious lines, Pope Francis began on Nov. 30 with a visit to the Koudoukou mosque in Bangui.

After two years of civil war, much of the recurrent violence in the country involves the murder of a Christian or a Muslim, then retaliations from members of the other community. Most areas of Bangui are divided into Christian or Muslim neighborhoods with “buffer zones” between them patrolled by U.N. peacekeepers.

“God is peace, ‘salam,’” the pope said in his speech at the mosque, where armed U.N. peacekeepers monitored the crowd outside from each of the three minarets.

“Christians and Muslims are brothers and sisters,” created by the same God, he said, and they must act like it.

The Catholic archbishop of Bangui, Tidjani Moussa Naibi, the imam of the mosque, assured the pope that Central African Christians and Muslims know that they are brothers and sisters. “Trouble mongers could delay the completion of a particular project of common interest, or compromise for a time a particular activity, but never,” he said, “[God willing] can they destroy the bonds of brotherhood that unite our communities so solidly.”

After the speeches, Pope Francis asked the imam to show him the mihrab, which indicates the direction of Mecca, the direction Muslims face when praying. The pope and imam stood in front of it for several moments of silence.

The Catholic archbishop of Bangui, the president of the country’s evangelical Christian alliance and another imam have been leading a very public campaign of education and cooperation to end the violence. The three were present at the mosque for the pope’s visit.

Afterward, the pope visited the camp for displaced people that has sprouted around the mosque, just as other camps have mushroomed around the city’s Catholic parishes.

To show just how special the visit was, Pope Francis personally opened the Holy Door at Bangui’s cathedral on Nov. 29, nine days before the official opening of the Holy Year of Mercy.

The last event on the pope’s schedule was a Mass in a sports stadium, where he urged the Catholic community to participate in the Year of Mercy by moving forward courageously toward peace and reconciliation.

The country’s bishops chose “Cross to the Other Side” as the theme for the pope’s visit, and he told people in the stadium that even though the elections are only four weeks away, they are still not immune from the habits of sin and division, which can destroy the bonds of brotherhood.

“All Christians, he said, need to break the chains of sin and division. They are ‘ever ready to rise up again at the prompting of the devil. How often this happens in our world and in these times of conflict, hate and war? How easy it is to be led into selfishness, distrust, violence, destructiveness, vengeance, indifference to and exploitation of those who are most vulnerable.”

Pope Francis urged the country’s Catholics to hold fast to their faith, sharing it with all they meet through words and, especially, gestures of care, peace and reconciliation.

At the end of Mass, the pope gave a special greeting “of joy and fraternity” to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, wishing him—from the heart of Africa”—a happy feast of St. Andrew.

“I ask the Lord to bless our sister Churches,” he said. The evening before, after celebrating a Mass with religious and catechists, the pope joined the young people who had watched the liturgy from outside the cathedral. They were holding a prayer vigil into the night, with special permission to stay outside the cathedral beyond the 8 p.m. curfew in the violence-torn city.

The centerpiece of the event, though, was a special Mass of confraternity, which Pope Francis personally administered to five youths. He asked the young people to pray often, to forgive those who hurt them and to be courageous enough to stay in their country and work for peace.

**AFRICA** continued from page 1

leaders are doing their best to help their people return to that situation of peace, coexistence and mutual respect.

Leaders of every religion must teach values, and that is what is happening in Central African Republic, Pope Francis said.

“One of the most-rare values today is that of brotherhood,” a value essential for peace, he said.

“Fundamentalism is a disease that is found in all religions. We Catholics have some,” he said. “I can say this because it is my Church.

“Religious fundamentalism isn’t religion, it’s idolatry,” he told the press. Ideas and false certainties take the place of faith, love of God and love of others.

“You cannot cancel a whole religion because there is a group or many groups of fundamentalists at certain moments of history,” the pope said. As the pope ended his trip, global representatives were beginning the U.N. climate conference in Paris to discuss the possibility of forging a binding international agreement to reduce climate change.

Pope Francis said he was not sure what would happen at the conference, “but I can say this, it’s now or never.” Too little has been done over the past 10-15 years, he said, and “every year the situation gets worse.”

“We are on the verge of suicide, to put it strongly,” he said.

Given his visits to Uganda and Kenya, where new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths continue, Pope Francis was asked if he thought the Church “should change its teaching” about the use of condoms.

Pope Francis responded that an ongoing question for Catholic moral theology is whether condoms in that case are an instrument to prevent death or a contraceptive—in which case they would violate Church teaching on openness to life.

But, he said, the question is too narrow.

People are dying because of a lack of clean water and adequate food. Once the world takes serious steps to solve those problems, then it would be “legitimate to ask whether it is licit” to use condoms to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS.

Pope Francis said that at various moments of his trip, he visited the very poor, people who lack everything and have suffered tremendously. He said he knew that a small percentage of people—“maybe 17 percent”—of the world’s population controls the vast majority of the world’s wealth, “and I think, ‘How can these people not be aware?’ It’s such suffering.”

To say the world’s economy has put profits and not people at the center and to denounce “the idolatry of the god money,” he said, “is not communism. It’s the truth.”

The pope also was asked about the Vatican trial underway in connection with the leak and publication of confidential documents related to Vatican finances.

“I haven’t any sleep” over the leaks and the arrest of a monsignor, his assistant, a woman who served on a former Vatican commission and the two authors who wrote books allegedly based on the material, Pope Francis said.

However, he said, he hoped the trial would be over before the opening on Dec. 8 of the Holy Year of Mercy, but he does not think that will be possible because the defendants’ lawyers need adequate time to defend their clients properly.

As for future trips, Pope Francis was not full of surprises. He said he plans to go to Mexico and visit cities where St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI never went. The trip is expected in late February.

Pope Francis said he has to go to Mexico City, “but if it wasn’t for Our Lady I wouldn’t.” So he will visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, then go to Chiapas, Morelia and “almost for sure, on the way back to Rome,” he will spend a day or part of a day in Ciudad Juarez, “on the Mexican-U.S. border.”

**Above:** Pope Francis sits next to Imam Tidjani Moussa Naibi during a meeting with the Muslim community at the Koudoukou mosque in Bangui, Central African Republic, on Nov. 30. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

**Left:** Pope Francis arrives in procession to celebrate Mass at Barthelemy Boganda Stadium in Bangui, Central African Republic, on Nov. 30. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)}
Mandate cases reach U.S. Supreme Court

An editorial we published two weeks ago was about things for which we Catholics should be grateful. We ended, though, with the observation that there’s a movement in our secular society to put obstacles before Catholic institutions to force them to do things that are against our religion. Therefore, we must be diligent to retain our freedom of religion.

As we reported in our Nov. 13 issue, the U.S. Supreme Court has announced that it will hear important cases that could well determine, one way or the other, whether religious services now provided by the Church will be allowed to continue. In March, it will hear seven cases challenging the mandate that religious organizations must provide contraception, sterilization and abortifacient drugs as part of their health care plans. The Court’s decisions probably will be announced next June.

Among the cases the Court will hear are those involving the Little Sisters of the Poor, the Archdiocese of Washington, the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Priests for Life, and several Protestant colleges and universities.

These cases have been going on for five years, ever since the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services posted its rules for the Affordable Care Act. In June of 2014, the Court ruled that “closely held” companies whose owners have religiously based objections, like Hobby Lobby stores, did not have to provide the coverage.

Now the Court will decide what to do about religious employers. Besides the seven cases that will be heard, about 100 religious organizations object to the mandate, including several service organizations that are under the umbrella of Catholic Charities. Parishes and other houses of worship are exempt, but not Catholic colleges and universities, hospitals, and other entities affiliated with the Church.

One would think that this would be an easy victory for religious rights because religious institutions should not be forced to participate in what they consider immoral. However, as these cases have made their way to the Supreme Court, all the appellate courts except one have ruled against the religious groups.

We Catholics, unfortunately, are becoming accustomed to being forced to accept our society as it has become highly secular. We have seen the breakdown of traditional marriage as cohabitation and same-sex unions have become more acceptable. There is a concerted effort to undermine religion, and the so-called contraception mandate has been part of that effort.

That’s why the cases to be heard next year are so important. A victory for the religious institutions would mean that they can continue to function as they have been. A victory for the government, though, might mean that some services provided by the Church will have to cease. At the very least, the Church will have to figure out how to deal with morally objectionable laws.

The U.S. bishops, under the leadership of Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, have been defending religious liberty ever since the mandate was announced. Archbishop Lori, a native of New Albany, said that we must pray that the basic freedom in our Constitution that guarantees “that no one in this country, has to violate their religious convictions” will prevail.

That’s exactly what all Catholics should want. Unfortunately, it seems that many of us have become indifferent to issues such as this. We have assimilated into the mainstream to such an extent that we are no different from our secular peers.

This is evident on the Supreme Court. Six of the nine justices are Catholics, so you would think that they would be guided by the same understanding of the Constitution that promotes the common good and is in harmony with the Catholic faith. That, though, has not been the case, and we don’t expect all six Catholics to vote in favor of the religious institutions in this present case.

It’s even less the case in the U.S. Congress where a sizeable majority of Catholic Democrats have a pro-choice voting record.

Little Sisters of the Poor’s mother provincial, Sister Loraine Marie Maguire, has shown just what will be at stake when the Court hears the cases. She said, “For over 175 years, we have served the neediest in society with love and dignity. All we ask is to be able to continue our religious vocation free from government intrusion.”

—John F. Fink

Learnings from Mom’s humility

Some people are naturally funny and good storytellers. I wish I were one of them. I have to speak in public often, and at times I have no choice but to wing it. I’m not funny or especially quick-witted, though. So when I’m called on to speak extemporaneously, it’s a bit scary. I launch into sentences like a man walking down a blind alley, not knowing quite how he’ll get out the other end.

Usually, it works out. But the other day I drew a blank. I was trying to remember the name of a historian—Michael Burleigh, as it turns out—whose book I wanted to recommend. I ended up blushing, my cheeks out like a goldfish out of water.

My first thought was that I looked like a dummy. My second thought—a much scarier one—was that maybe I was losing my fastball the same way my mother did.

Over the last 10 years of her life, Mom remained mentally keen, but she gradually lost the ability to speak. At first, her brain’s proper noun file seemed to fail. Then, it was more common words.

For a few years, she had enough residual vocabulary to substitute equivalent phrases. When that didn’t work, she could still make herself understood to us—we knew where her sentences were going and could finish them, much like smartphones do nowadays when you start typing an e-mail or text message.

It had to be frightening for her. I remember having a talk with her one night, a few years after Dad died, about her increasing difficulty with words. I told her how much I admired her grace and good and is in harmony with the Catholic faith.

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—John F. Fink

Source: 2012-2015 American Family Survey

John Garvey

Learning from Mom’s humility

John Garvey is the president of The Catholic University of America in Washington.
Mary born without sin is sign of God’s mercy

Each year during Advent, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was infallibly proclaimed by Pope Pius IX in 1854—nearly 1,900 years after the birth of the humble woman from Nazareth, who is the only person ever to receive this singularly important gift from God.

Catholics believe that, from the moment of her conception, God blessed Mary with the gift of her redeeming grace. Although she was a descendant of Adam and Eve, and therefore a member of our sinful human race, the mercy of God preserved her from the sinful inclinations that affect every human being and from every personal sin.

Mary was sinless from her conception because she was called to give birth to God’s only Son, the new Adam, who represents a radical break from the guilt-ridden history of humankind. In Mary, we see fulfilled the promise of our redemption. She was not born sinless because she was a meritist, but because God chose her to be the bearer of his Word incarnate.

Mary was the first person to be redeemed by Christ. This singular act of mercy came before she accepted the vocation that God intended for her. Mary’s immaculate conception made her a perfect steward of God’s gift of self. In her womb, the one who was destined to be our redeemer was nurtured and formed by God’s grace.

We hear a lot about mercy these days, especially in the teaching of Pope Francis. Mercy does not minimize the weakness of our human condition, and allows for the possibility that we sinful human beings can—with the help of God’s grace—overcome even our most grievous sins and return to our rightful places in the one family of God. Mary was granted this merciful redemption in advance, and therefore was strengthened by God’s grace in the face of every temptation. As a result, she was able to make the right choices in her daily life. Mary is, therefore, the supreme example of redeemed humanity. She is what each of us is called to be. She was sinless and ready to follow Jesus—with the help of God’s grace. It’s tempting to say that Mary had an unfair advantage over the rest of us. She was born without sin, whereas you and I have only our weakened human nature. But Mary’s life shows that she struggled mightily to accept situations she couldn’t possibly understand. The old man Simeon predicted that a sword would pierce Mary’s heart. She needed the help of God’s grace—as we do—to handle life’s most challenging moments and to say “yes” to God’s will, even when it seemed to promise only pain and sorrow.

Mary was a woman of Israel. As we hear in the first reading for the Second Sunday of Advent, God leads his people “in joy by the light of his glory, with mercy and justice for company” (Bar 5:9). Mary believed this. She knew that the journey she was called to undertake would include much sorrow, but she also believed with all her heart that God’s justice and mercy would lead ultimately to everlasting joy.

Mary was the first Christian, the first disciple of her son. Throughout her life, God’s mercy and justice were with her and as her love increased she was able to reach out to others—especially the weak and fearful disciples who struggled to follow their Lord in the face of grave obstacles.

The power of God’s grace allowed Mary to become what she has been throughout Christian history, a source of comfort, encouragement and strength for all who seek to avoid sin and live holy and blameless lives.

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is truly an Advent feast. It reminds us that Mary, our mother, is ready to help us prepare for the coming of her son. She is a clear and consistent advocate for the redeeming mercy of God who urges us to turn to her son for forgiveness of past sins and hope for a better life.

In her joyful exuberance, the Church assigns to Mary many exalted titles such as the Immaculate Conception, and all of these speak to some aspect of her singular place in the history of salvation. But we should never forget that this simple woman accomplished greatness with humility through her faith-filled acceptance of God’s will, and her willingness to allow God’s grace to sustain her through the test of every obstacle.

Immaculate Mary, pray for us sinners. Show us the way to your son, Jesus. Amen. †

**Tradicado por:** Daniela Guamapa

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Maria, concebida sin pecado original, es una señal de la misericordia de Dios

Cada año, durante la época de Adviento, la Iglesia celebra la Soledad de la Inmaculada Concepción de la Virgen María. El dogma de la Inmaculada Concepción fue proclamado infaliblemente por el Papa Pío IX en 1854, casi 1,900 años después del nacimiento de la humilde mujer de Nazaret, la única persona que ha recibido este obsequio singularmente importante de Dios.

Los católicos creen que, desde el momento de su concepción, Dios bendijo a María con el don de Su gracia. Si bien ella era descendiente de Adán y Eva y, por consiguiente, miembro de nuestra raza humana pecadora, la misericordia de Dios la preservó de las inclinaciones pecaminosas que aquejan a todos los seres humanos y la protegió contra todos los pecados individuales.

María se encontraba libre de pecado desde el momento de su concepción porque fue llamada a dar a luz al único hijo de Dios, al nuevo Adán que marcaría una ruptura radical en la historia atestada por la historia humana: una fuente de consuelo, aliento y fortaleza para quienes procuran evitar el pecado y vivir de forma santa e inmaculada.

La Inmaculada Concepción de la Santísima Virgen María es una verdadera festividad de Adviento que nos recuerda que María, nuestra madre, está lista para ayudarnos a prepararnos para la venida de su hijo. Ella es, sin lugar a duda, la abogada constante de la misericordia redentora de Dios y quien nos exhorta a que acudamos a su hijo para recibir el perdón por pecados cometidos y la esperanza de una vida mejor.

En su alegre exuberancia, la Iglesia le asigna a María muchos títulos excelsos como el de la Inmaculada Concepción y todos ellos, de una u otra forma, reflejan algún aspecto del lugar exclusivo que ocupa en la historia de la salvación. Pero jamás debemos olvidar que esta mujer sencilla alcanzó la grandezza con humildad, a través de su ferviente aceptación de la voluntad divina y su disposición para permitir que la gracia de Dios la sostuviera frente a cada obstáculo que encontró.

***Immaculada María, ruega por nosotros pecadores.**

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**Traducido por:** Daniela Guamapa
December 4
Marian University Chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. Liturgy of the Word, 11:30 a.m.; Mass, 11:45 a.m. Confession, 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Adoration, 12:30 p.m.-1 p.m.; Vespers, 3 p.m. Information: 317-537-2701 or lumen.dev@comcast.net.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. First Friday devotion, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 5:30 p.m. Information: 317-963-4854.

Winter Market at the Assumption Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Indianapolis. Most Holy Name of Jesus Mass and healing prayer, 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-899-0045 or lumen.dei@comcast.net.

December 5
Helpers of God’s Precious Infants Prayer Vigil, Terre Haute. 7:30 a.m. Mass at the Carmelite Monastery at 59 Allendale, 9:30 a.m. parking on Ohio Blvd., 9:30 a.m. assemble on sidewalk in front of Planned Parenthood at 30 S. 3rd St. for prayers, 10 a.m. a travel to St. Patrick Adoration Chapel at 1807 Poplar St. for Divine Mercy Chaplet, assembled around 10:30 a.m. St. Michael Church, 145 S. Michael Blvd, Brockville. First Saturday Devotional Prayer Group, Mass. Information: 765-647-5462.

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration Advent Day of Reflection for Single Catholic Women, ages 16-30, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. includes lunch, adoration, confession, vespers. Information and registration: stf.org/retreats.

Dec 5-6
Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. Nativity open house, “Come On Open to Bethlehem.” Dec. 5-7 p.m.; Dec. 6, 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 7-9:30 p.m. no charge. Children may visit with St. Nicholas following 10 a.m. Mass. Information: 317-881-2861 or stgreenwood.org.

December 6

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration Advent Day of Reflection for Single Catholic Women, ages 16-30, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. includes lunch, adoration, confession, vespers. Information and registration: stf.org/retreats.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, 130 Union St., Indianapolis. St. Nicholas dinner and Indianapolis Maennerchor Concert, 6 p.m., $5 per person. Tickets are prepaid at the door. Information: 317-638-5551 or stnicholasindy.com.

Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 21 N. 16th St., Beech Grove. Christmas bazaar, craft and holiday booths, white elephant booths, chili luncheon, 12:30-4:30 p.m. Information: 317-784-6680 or elcmaster@thechallengers.net.

December 7
Monument Circle, Indianapolis. St. Nicholas Day prayer event, Right to Life of Indianapolis and Orthodox Christians for Life, 5 p.m. Information: life@tobinindy.org.


St. Rose of Lima and Holy Trinity parishes, Northwest Side. Mission, “Keeping Christ in Christmas,” Franciscan Fathers, BBPS. Dec. 6 at St. Rose of Lima, 114 Lancilot, Franklin, 7 a.m., Dec. 7 at St. Rose of Lima, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., Dec. 8 at St. Rose of Lima, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., Dec. 9 at Holy Trinity, 100 Keeley St., 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. Information: 317-738-9299 or 317-926-9460.

December 8
St. Paul Hermitage, 301 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. Ave Maria Guild, Christmas party and pitch-in luncheon, noon. Information: 317-888-7625 or rljemi@ad.com.

December 9
St. Augustine Home, 2345 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. Sisters of Providence, First Annual CYO Wrestling Coaching Symposium, 3 p.m. Information: 317-926-0516 or kadams18@gmail.com.

December 10
St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Cenacle (house on Ohio Blvd.), Indianapolis. Hope and Healing Survivors of Suicide group, 7 p.m. Information: 317-851-8344.

December 12
Benedict Inn Retreat Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Beach Grove Inn-Spired Christmas celebration, 6 p.m. Information: 317-787-3287.

December 15
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3352 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Former St. Mary-of-the-Rocks Parish, 17440 S. Mary’s Road. Baskets, Preservation Society, while hot dog, buns and potato breakfasts. 7 a.m.-noon, free-will donation. Information: 317-934-6348.

December 16-10
St. Rose of Lima and Holy Trinity parishes, Northwest Side. Mission, “Keeping Christ in Christmas,” Franciscan Fathers, BBPS. Dec. 6 at St. Rose of Lima, 114 Lancilot, Franklin, 7 a.m., Dec. 7 at St. Rose of Lima, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., Dec. 8 at St. Rose of Lima, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., Dec. 9 at Holy Trinity, 100 Keeley St., 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. Information: 317-738-9299 or 317-926-9460.

December 17
Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Benedictine Room, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Archdiocese of Indianapolis Health Ministry, “The Empty Chair Workshop,” 10:30-8:30 a.m. Information: 317-865-8911 or JFrost@spsmw.org.

December 18
St. Nicholas Church, 15176 Blessed Mother Blvd., in Fishers, Ind., in the Diocese of Lafayette, at 2 p.m. on Dec. 18. Information and registration: 317-860-1000, ext. 171, by Dec. 7.

December 21
Host Pastor Prayer Breakfast on Dec. 15
Providence Cristo Rey High School in Indianapolis, in partnership with The Oaks Academy, will host a Pastor Prayer Breakfast at the school, 75 N. Bellevue Pl., in Indianapolis, from 8:30-10 a.m. on Dec. 15. Pastors from throughout the Indianapolis area are invited to join in fellowship and learn about faith-based educational options available to local families.

The keynote speaker for the event is Indianapolis City-County Council President Maggie Lewis. A graduate of Indiana State University, she has dedicated her career to serving the public and those in need. She is the first African-American woman in council history to hold the position of president.

Those interested in attending the Pastor Prayer Breakfast can make reservations by calling 317-860-1000, ext. 171, by Dec. 7.
Director brought ‘different cultures within archdiocese together’

By Natalie Hooter

When Franciscan Brother Moises Gutierrez was given permission by his order three years ago to pursue a doctoral degree, the timing wasn’t right.

He had only worked a few years as the archdiocese’s coordinator of Hispanic ministry, starting in the fall of 2010. And shortly after receiving permission to continue his studies, Brother Moises became the archdiocesan director of the Office of Intercultural Ministry in August 2013.

“I was enjoying my job, and I kept postponing and postponing [pursuing a doctoral degree],” he said. “And not only that, I was afraid I wouldn’t be accepted to a Ph.D. program."

But a new thought occurred to him this year.

“I thought, ‘I’m 51. If I don’t do it now, I won’t do it.’ ” Brother Moises said. So this year, he applied to Gonzaga University’s doctoral program of philosophy in leadership in Spokane, Wash.

Despite his earlier fears of rejection, he was accepted. His last day working for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis was on Nov. 30.

The move for him is bittersweet.

“It's going to be hard, but it’s been my dream,” he admitted. “When I got my master’s in intercultural ministry, it really opened a door of the world of research, and I loved it. You learn about others and go deeper into a culture. It was just so life-giving for me.”

During his doctoral studies, Brother Moises said he hopes to “explore leadership in different cultures and countries to get the good traits of leadership, and to build up a global leadership approach to ministry in the Church."

His role as archdiocesan director of Intercultural Ministry provided him with his own experience of leadership with a global connection.

“When I came here, it was like a white canvas,” said Brother Moises. “We were able to really explore possibilities.

“One of the things that I’m proud of that we’ve done is to really help the archdiocese to become more aware of the diverse presence here. We wanted more visibility for the different Catholic communities and cultures, and we accomplished that, showing the beauty of the diversity.“

Brother Moises, his staff and volunteers raised awareness of the various ethnic Catholic communities in the archdiocese in a number of ways.

Among the many activities that occurred under Brother Moises' leadership were the expansion of the intercultural pastoral leadership programs for Catholics of black, Burmese and Hispanic background; the initiation of an ethnic dinner series spotlighting African, Burmese, Korean, Mexican, Filipino and Vietnamese food and cultures; the highlighting of special cultural Masses, such as the Asian and Pacific Islander Mass and the Vietnamese Lunar New Year Tet Mass; and the creation of the Intercultural Pastoral Institute (IPI) at the former St. Bernadette Parish in Indianapolis.

“Other dioceses may have Hispanic institutes, but [the IPI] is the only one of its kind in the nation,” Brother Moises said with pride. “When new people get the position of director of intercultural ministry in their diocese and they call the USCBI [U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops] Office of Diversity in the Church, they tell them to call the Archdiocese of Indianapolis! Some [people] from other cities have come to see how we do it.”

Brother Moises credits the archdiocesan leadership with his ability to succeed.

“They could have said, ‘No, that’s not important,’ or ‘Why bother’; but that wasn’t the case,” he said. “In different dioceses, the directors complain about not getting support from their leaders, but that’s not our case.”

Those served by his efforts are grateful.

“We appreciate all that he has done with helping the Burmese community, especially engaging in training, events and letting the other communities know that the Burmese community exists,” said Ritu Si Si Lwin, a native of Burma who is a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis and serves on the Intercultural Ministry’s Burma committee.

“He has empowered us to keep working on breaking down culture barriers and focusing on unity in the spirit,” she said.

Dabrice Bartet, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis and a participant of the Intercultural Ministry’s committee for French-speaking Catholics, said that Brother Moises’ “energy, enthusiasm and his positive level of thinking brought energy and positive influence to the Office of Intercultural Ministry and the various communities. He has been instrumental in bringing forth the various cultures and promoting diversity in our archdiocese."

The gifts that Brother Moises brought to his role will be missed, said Sally Stovall, a member of the Black Catholics committee and a member of Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis.

“I will definitely miss his sense of humor, his laugh, his hard work, and his ability to bring all the different cultures within the archdiocese together to share their different gifts,” she said. “I’m going to miss a lot,” Brother Moises admitted. “I’ve been all over the place in different ministries and different cities, but leaving this one has been the hardest. I’ll miss the people, the approach of the archdiocese to this ministry, and my staff.”

He spoke of a trip to Chicago that he and his staff took in November to hear a popular mariachi band.

“They played this song called ‘100 Years,'” he recalled. “As I listened to the song, I thought of my time in the archdiocese, and I thought, ‘In 100 years, memories of this place will still be in my heart.’

As Brother Moises prepared to go forth “on the path that God will show me,” the Mexican native reflected on his love for intercultural ministry in the Catholic Church, a passion he hopes to transmit to others.

“God gave me this gift to be passionate about what I do,” he said. “I’ve been transformed by the American culture, enriched. But I’ve been transformed by the Vietnamese and the Burmese and the Koreans. That’s my passion—the beauty of interculturalism, that we become better people, better communities, a better Church just by opening ourselves to the challenges of being enriched.”

“My leaving is a good chance for new beginnings here, new opportunity. It’s going to be good.”

The first graduation class of the Hispanic Pastoral Leadership Institute listens as Franciscan Brother Moises Gutierrez speaks during a graduation reception at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis on May 11, 2013. (File photo by Natalie Hooter)
Sisters, activists want new inquiry into 1980 Churchwomen deaths

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (CNS) — Representatives of U.S. religious and human rights organizations called for the Salvadoran government to reopen the investigation of the 1980 killing of three U.S. religious sisters and a lay missionary.

It is important to “ask the Salvadoran government and prosecutors to open this case, so that the masterminds of this crime do not walk free,” with impunity,” said Claire White, who came on behalf of her father, former Ambassador Robert White, who died in January.

White told Catholic News Service (CNS) the U.S. government should pressure the Salvadoran authorities to do a proper investigation, and not let those who let the attacks go forward go unpunished.

On Dec. 2, 1980, Maryknoll Sisters Maena Clark and Ida Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and lay missionary Jean Donovan were abducted, raped and murdered by members of the National Guard, when the North Americans traveled by car from the airport. Civil war in El Salvador had erupted earlier that year. The Churchwomen were in El Salvador to work with refugees of that conflict, but were regarded as leftist by the government.

The U.N. Truth Commission, established in 1992 to investigate cases of political violence during the civil war, concluded that then-Col. Eugenio Vides Casanova, director of the National Guard, knew that a unit from his command had carried out the assassinations and facilitated the concealment of the facts, which hampered the investigation.

In 1984, four guardsmen were found guilty of the killings and convicted to 30 years in prison, but those who planned the murders and gave the orders have never been brought to justice, said some of the more than 100 North Americans who traveled to El Salvador to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the murders.

“There may be justice if we North American women go back and do what we need to do in terms of strategizing to make that happen,” Ursuline Sister Janet Marie Petersworth of Louisville, Ky., told CNS during a Nov. 30 memorial service held in San Salvador’s Parque Cuscatan.

She recalled the last letters she received from Donovan from El Salvador and added, “It’s cold and rainy in December in the States, and I can’t stop thinking of Jean Donovan and what she said in one of her last correspondences: ‘I would come home, but where else can you find roses in December?’”

She did not come home, she decided to stay,” she added, with tears rolling down her cheek.

Sister Janet said Donovan used to say that the Salvadoran military would not kill “an American blond.”

“But they did,” Sister Janet added.

Isabel Hernandez, El Salvador office director of the SHARE Foundation, said: “We don’t want revenge because we are Christians, but we do want justice, the truth. We want to know who gave the order.” She said the 1992 Salvadoran amnesty law was repealed because it protects those responsible for the murders of the Churchwomen and many other victims.

In 2002, Vides-Casanova and former Defense Sergeant Jose Guillermo Garcia, who were both granted residence in the United States, were found responsible by a Florida jury in a federal civil case for the torture of three Salvadorans. In April 2015, Vides-Casanova was deported to El Salvador for participating and assisting the torture and assassination of thousands of victims, including the four Churchwomen.

The four guardsmen were convicted because they were not eligible for amnesty, as their case was regarded as nonpolitical.

During the recent visit, U.S. delegates visited the tomb of Blessed Archbishop Oscar Romero, assassinated in March 1980. They also went to Central American University, where six Jesuit priests and two women were killed in November 1989 by a military unit.

On Dec. 2, they were to travel to Santiago Nonoacual, a small town in La Paz department, to attend a memorial service at the very spot where the three nuns and the lay missionary were shot dead.

What was in the news on Dec. 3, 1965? The pope to join historic unity service, theologian calls the council a breakthrough, and warnings that birth control rules are still in place

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

Here are some of the items found in the Dec. 3, 1965, issue of The Criterion:

• Pope, observers will join in historic unity service “VATICAN CITY—Pope Paul VI announced during the November 30th meeting of the Vatican Council that on December 4 he will take part in an historic unity service with non-Catholic Christian council observers. The event, which will take place at the basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls, will mark the first time since the Reformation that a pope has joined non-Catholic Christians to pray for unity in a major Roman basilica. At the same council session, the 165th general meeting, the proposal to completely reorganize the Church’s top office for missionary activity was rejected, but the modification approved by the council Fathers still establishes a new body to handle specific problems submitted to it by the pope.”

• Father Hans Kueng: Sees council scoring a major breakthrough “ROME—No ecumenical council in the history of the Church has accomplished a breakthrough into a new era as far-reaching as the one achieved by the Second Vatican Council. This opinion was voiced in an interview by Father Hans Kueng, Swiss-bom dean of the theology faculty of Germany’s Tuebingen University and a council expert. ‘The breakthrough is evident,’ Father Kueng said, ‘not only in the relations of the Church with Protestants, Orthodox, the Jewish people and other major religions, but also in respect to the modern world, to the whole of contemporary society. Formerly, we maintained a defensive attitude and engaged mainly in polemics aimed exclusively at asserting our own point of view. Now we are prepared to search our own conscience and to admit the mistakes we made. We are willing to develop an understanding for the views of those who differ with us.’

• Birth control laws are still applicable “VATICAN CITY—Although theological teaching on birth control is still in doubt on a theoretical level, in practice Catholics are bound to follow the Church’s present legislation unless the pope decides to change it. This opinion on the birth control controversy’s present status was agreed on by three theologians and a Church historian who is also a member of Pope Paul VI’s special commission on the subject. … Father John L. King, O.M.I., superior of the Oblate Fathers’ Rome house of studies, said the current questioning of the Church’s traditional view ‘has not a sufficiently intrinsic value or sufficiently wide acceptance among theologians to date to constitute a practical doubt.’ This means, he continued, ‘that thus far, after years of questioning, we have not yet arrived at the point where the doctrine of the Church on contraception can be considered theologically doubtful. The Church must therefore propose according to its present lights, a norm for all Catholics to follow. This does not mean, however, that the Church has closed the subject to further discussion.’

• Open drive for tuition in arrears “Unity move niffs Greek Primate

• Summary of decree on the lay apostolate “Behind scenes’ work marks council action

• Married man, 33, seeks diaconate “Legion of Deecy Pledge

• Second round slated in Council Quiz

• Film on liturgy now in preparation “ Topic announced for Catholic Hour

• Stability of dogma stressed by pontiff “Name body for revision of Vulgate

• Catholics, Orthodox discuss ‘Great Schism’ 

• New Huntingburg hospital planned “Population study grant from Ford tops $14 million

• Aid UN group, Pope Paul urges “Traditionalist pledges obedience to pope, council

By Brandon A. Evans

Read all of these stories from our Dec. 3, 1965, issue by logging on to our website at www.CriterionOnline.com.
St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities opens new resource distribution center

By Patricia Happel Cornwell

NEW ALBANY—Rain could not dampen spirits on Nov. 16 when 45 staff, volunteers and supporters of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities (SECC) held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open a new location for their Marie’s Ministry resource distribution center at 305 E. Seventh St. in New Albany.

St. Elizabeth’s, which opened in 1989 as a crisis pregnancy center, merged with Catholic Charities in 2004 to form a non-profit organization that serves the various physical, emotional and spiritual needs of clients in southern Indiana and the metro Louisville area.

Marie’s Ministry was originally established at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Jeffersonville, but was later moved to the basement of the SECC maternity home in New Albany. The new building on Seventh Street will provide more than 2,000 square feet of additional space for the service.

In 2014, Marie’s Ministry helped 560 families with donations of diapers, baby wipes, formula and baby food valued at more than $30,000. The new space is expected to allow the center to double the number of families it assists.

The late Marie Robertson wanted a daughter for many years, and she vowed that if God gave her one, she would make it her mission to help the less fortunate. When a baby girl was placed with her and her husband, she made good on her promise, founding Marie’s Ministry and spending the rest of her life helping those in need.

When the baby was 7 months old, Marie passed away. Msgr. William F. Stumpf, vicar general, blessed the exterior of the new building last November. The baby saw her mother laid to rest and she would cry throughout Msgr. Stumpf’s remarks. As an unhappy baby cried throughout his remarks, Siler said, “I think the rain is Marie crying for joy in heaven that her work is being continued,” he said.

Holy water mingled with raindrops as Msgr. William F. Stumpf, vicar general, blessed the exterior of the new building before the official ribbon-cutting. Praying for staff, volunteers, residents and families, he added, “Lord, hold them all gently in your hand.”

Marie’s Ministry gives free baby food, diapers and formula any day of the week to families who provide a form of identification and proof they have one or more children. Once a month, they also distribute blankets, baby and maternity clothing, and larger items such as car seats and baby beds to those in need.

SECC’s other services include a residential maternity program, transitional housing for mothers and children, and affordable supportive housing for families facing homelessness.

The agency also provides adoption services, supported living for developmentally-delayed adults, court-ordered, supervised visitation between parents and children, and outreach counseling to individuals or families on a sliding fee scale or through insurance.

Information about SECC services may be obtained by contacting them at 812-949-7305 or by visiting www.stecharities.org.

(Patricia Happel Cornwell is a freelance writer and a member of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon.)

Pope Francis: Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch’s commitment to care of creation is ‘exemplary witness’

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis conveyed his gratitude to Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople for his commitment to peace and reconciliation between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, as well as his commitment to the care of creation.

“I wish to express my deep appreciation for your holiness’s fervent commitment to the critical issue of care for creation, for which your sensitivity and awareness is an exemplary witness for Catholics,” the pope said in a written message delivered on Nov. 30 to the patriarch in Istanbul.

The pope’s message was given to Patriarch Bartholomew by Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, who led a Vatican delegation to Istanbul for the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, the patriarchate’s patron saint.

In his message, the pope recalled his visit to Turkey last year in which he celebrated the liturgical feast with the Orthodox patriarch, saying that it was “a moment of grace” that renewed “the bonds of friendship with you and with the Church over which you preside.”

Although there are differences that have not yet been resolved, Pope Francis noted that there is no obstacle “which cannot be overcome through prayer, the purification of hearts, dialogue and the affirmation of truth.”

— NCatholic News

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Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

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

Batesville Deanery
- Dec. 4, 10:00 a.m./10 p.m. at All Saints, Dearborn County, at the Yorkville campus
- Dec. 6, 1:30 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Millikin
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel, Brookville
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Catherine of Siena, Decatur County, at the Enochsburg campus

Connersville Deanery
- Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Church, Connersville
- Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
- Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude, Spencer
- Dec. 17, 6:45 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington
- Dec. 20, 1:30 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington

Indianapolis East Deanery
- Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenwood
- Dec. 14, 7 p.m. for Holy Angels and St. Rita at St. Rita
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Mary

Indianapolis North Deanery
- Dec. 13, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist
- Dec. 14, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist

Indianapolis South Deanery
- Dec. 7, 2 p.m. at Good Shepherd
- Dec. 9, 6 p.m. at St. Barnabas
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. for St. Mark the Evangelist and St. Roch at St. Roch
- Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Jude
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m., for St. Joseph and St. Ann at St. Ann
- Dec. 19, 9 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood
- Dec. 21, 7 p.m. Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery
- Dec. 4, 7 p.m. at Holy Angels
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Ann
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel
- Dec. 21, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas More, Mooresville
- Dec. 22, 7 p.m. at St. Monica

Knights of Columbus
- Dec. 23, 7 p.m. at St. Rose of Lima, Knightstown

New Albany Deanery
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
- Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
- Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m. for St. John Paul II, Clark County, at St. John Chapel, Sellersburg
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany
- Dec. 20, 4 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Seamour Deanery
- Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m. for St. Ann, Jennings County, St. Mary, North Vernon; and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County
- Dec. 13, 2 p.m. for Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, and St. Rose of Lima, Franklin, at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Providence, Brownstown, and St. Ambrose, Seymour, at St. Ambrose, Seymour
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus
- Dec. 20, 4 p.m. for American Martyrs, Scottsburg and St. Patrick, Salem, at American Martyrs, Scottsburg

Tell City Deanery
- Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m. at St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad
- Dec. 13, 2 p.m. at St. Paul, Tell City

Terre Haute Deanery
- Dec. 9, 1:30 p.m., deanery service at St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute
- Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m., deanery service at St. Joseph University, Terre Haute
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m., deanery service at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle
- Dec. 16, 7 p.m., deanery service at Sacred Heart, Clinton

Advent resources are available on archdiocesan Web site

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

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

By Effie Caldarola

we might be an agent of healing.

us, in the next pew or the house next door or in the

confidence.

listens nonjudgmentally and would never, ever betray a

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rather than a foe.

may keep us from looking at another person as a friend

be waging, but we seek to bring a healing response.

As Christians, we seek to develop patience and empathy.


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our faith propels us to be healers of others who might

share our faith or through prayer and closeness to God.

Healing through the power of God is a prominent theme in the Bible

by Daniel S. Mulhall

People have suffered from afflictions to the mind, body and spirit from the earliest moments of human history. While modern medicine can do a lot to cure us from dreadful diseases, extend our lives by replacing joints and organs, and even prevent illnesses from happening through vaccinations, it is not an exact science.

The writer Annie Dillard once said that we receive grace like a person standing at a waterfall with a tin cup. That’s us, sometimes, at the Eucharist: being offered grace and healing abundantly poured out, and there we stand, with our meager tin cup.

Community is essential to faith and healing. Joining a prayer group or making a retreat can be a source of healing. I’ve seen resources, such as Rachel’s Vineyard, a healing ministry for those who have experienced abortion, help heal great pain.

Likewise, Marriage Encounter or retreats for troubled marriages can offer healing and growth on many levels for those seeking to be cured of hurtful actions or events. Prison ministries, too, can bring healing to the incarcerated.

No matter who we are, we’ve all been wounded. We are not alone. We even share that reality with Christ, who was wounded for us. We turn to him for healing and to know that we, too, can be wounded healers.

(Effie Caldarola is a freelance writer and columnist for Catholic News Service. She lives in Nebraska.)

(†)

Although wounded, we can be channels of God’s healing

No one escapes this life without needing to be healed in some form. Whether it’s the toddler scraping her knee as she begins to walk or the older person recovering from knee replacement, we learn physical and emotional pain and hurt accompany the human condition.

Physical pain is often surpassed by the psychological, mental or spiritual anguish that besets us at various times in our lives. We can be hurt by a lack of love, hurtful words or actions, by people we love and even family members. No matter how hard we pretend to be tough, hurtful words and actions can wound the soul.

When this happens, where do we turn to when we need to be healed?

Like the toddler who runs to Mom or Dad, we seek the comforting arms of those who are ready to pick us up, dust us off and send us back on the road to peace and healing. Some of us find it in faith, with those who share our faith or through prayer and closeness to God.

Just as we find healing in our lives of faith, so, too, our faith propels us to be healers of others who might be wounded. Recently, during an interfaith gathering in New York City, leaders of various faiths prayed at the site of great destruction—the former World Trade Center—for peace in the world.

One of those leaders was Pope Francis, who, without mentioning the word healing, pronounced, “In the depths of pain and suffering, you also witnessed the heights of generosity and service. Hands reached out, lives were given. In a metropolis that might seem impersonal, faceless, lonely, you demonstrated the powerful solidarity born of mutual support, love and self-sacrifice.” Those are actions that have provided greatly needed healing for those affected on Sept. 11, 2001.

Many people in pain reach out in anger or frustration. As Christians, we seek to develop patience and empathy. We do not know the battle that a person or group might be waging, but we seek to bring a healing response.

This means keeping dialogue open or encouraging others to look beyond words of division and hate that may keep us from looking at another person as a friend rather than a foe.

How do we, individually and as a faith community, bring healing? We step forward at times of illness or death with food, with prayers, with our simple presence at a bedside or a grave. We are the kind of friend who listens nonjudgmentally and would never, ever betray a confidence.

We reach out to others—even those who are shunned. We become mindful of unseen pain that may be around us, in the next pew or the house next door or in the country nearby. We can begin by asking ourselves how we might be an agent of healing.

When we need healing, we have to acknowledge it, confront it truthfully and seek the best help or instruments of healing available to us. A heartfelt prayer can bring tears of healing. Each of the sacraments brings untold grace and healing. The sacrament of penance can be a profound channel of God’s healing for the soul.

We can offer others a kind ear and time, or we can offer our contrition to someone who will listen to us without reproach. That, too, can bring about healing.

Sometimes, we overlook these important instruments and resources in the Church. Sometimes, listening to the troubles of someone we barely know in our parish can help them get through a difficult situation. We can inform ourselves about the lives of faith of the saints, including those who found holiness and grace as the product of healing during difficult times.

We also are offered enormous healing in the Eucharist. But how often do we receive it thoughtlessly, mindlessly, conscious of the time on our watch or the clothes of the lady sitting next to us or the groceries we need to pick up after Mass?

The writer Annie Dillard once said that we receive grace like a person standing at a waterfall with a tin cup. That’s us, sometimes, at the Eucharist; being offered grace and healing abundantly poured out, and there we stand, with our meager tin cup.

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(†)

Healing through the power of God is a prominent theme in the Bible

People continue to suffer and die, and sometimes doctors are left unable to intervene in any meaningful way.

Perhaps this is why the theme of healing is so prevalent in the Bible. Medicine then was very limited in what it could do to treat illness. Healing then was understood to be a gift from God. And those who could offer the gift of healing to others were seen as agents of God because only God was capable of providing healing.

Moses was one of these healers. In Numbers 21:9, we see that at God’s command, Moses created a bronze serpent and placed it on a pole. If anyone was bitten by a snake, all he or she had to do was look at the bronze serpent to be healed. The Bible makes it clear that it is God who does the healing through the serpent.

The prophet Elisha was renowned because of his ability to heal. In 2 Kings, Chapter 5, the story is recorded of how Elisha healed Naaman of leprosy by having him wash himself seven times in the Jordan River. One of the interesting aspects of this healing is that Naaman, who was an army commander for the King of Aram, an enemy of Israel, felt slighted because Elisha didn’t personally treat him.

The Bible says that Naaman’s servants had to convince him to do what the prophet said. “But his servants came up and reasoned with him: ‘My father, if the prophet told you to do something extraordinary, would you not do it? All the more since he told you, “Wash, and be clean”’” (2 Kgs 5:13).

Upset, being healed, Naaman offered to pay for his healing, but Elisha rejected it because healing was a gift from God.

In Chapter 4 of 2 Kings, Elisha cures a woman of her inability to have children and then raises the child after he had died. The Book of Psalms also is a treasure trove for those seeking to understand how healing comes from God.

For example, Psalm 147:3-4 proclaims the power of the Lord, who in addition to numbering and naming the stars, heals the brokenhearted and binds their wounds. Psalm 103 proclaims that God “purses all your sins, and heals all your ills,” and “redeems your life from the pit, and crowns you with mercy and compassion” (Ps 103:3-4).

The New Testament records more than 50 incidents when Jesus healed people, and other times when his disciples were instruments of healing. Each time, the healing was a sign of God’s power in the world. No illness, not even death, was beyond the power of God.

(Daniel S. Mulhall is a freelance writer and a catechist for adults. He lives in Laurel, Maryland.)
Shining a strong light on the goodness of others

Medieval Church: Francis and Dominic found orders

Last week, I wrote about Pope Innocent III, the most powerful pope in the medieval Church when it came to the secular politics. He considered himself “beneath the pope above man,” and he acted like it. When it came to the Church, he did it literally, calling a crusade against the Albigensians in southern France, an anti-Catholic Crusades against the Muslims in Spain.

However, he also did a lot for the Church. As I wrote last week, he called the Fourth Lateran Council, the most important council in the Middle Ages, which defined the Eucharist, using the word “transubstantiation” for the first time, and issued 70 decrees to reform the Church.

It was also Pope Innocent III who approved the Order of Friar Minor, commonly known as the Franciscans, which was founded by St. Francis of Assisi. Francis was born in 1181 and died in 1226 at age 44. He has always been one of the most popular figures in the Catholic Church because of the way he took the Gospel literally and followed all that Jesus taught. He is known for his joyful love of nature and devotion to Christ crucified. Most Catholics are familiar with his
disciple St. Dominic.

When Francis had only a few followers, they thought they had better go to Rome to seek permission from Pope Innocent to found a new religious order. This was important because it recognized the pope’s authority and prevented any of those followers from being accused of heresy.

After meeting with Francis and eleven of his followers, the pope went to his office and had his doubts. However, he apparently had a dream in which he saw Francis holding up the Basilica of St. John Lateran (the cathedral of Rome), so he gave verbal approval to the Franciscans on April 16, 1210.

Three years later, Francis and St. Clare founded the Second Order of Franciscans, the Poor Clares, and in 1212, Francis founded the Third Order of St. Francis for lay people. By that time, Pope Innocent had died and Pope Honorius III is the only one who gave definitive approval to St. Francis’s orders.

St. Dominic lived roughly at the same time as St. Francis. He was joyful, but different, in a different part of Europe. Dominic was born in Castile, Spain, in 1170, and died in 1221. On a trip to France with his bishop, he came face to face with the Albigensian heresy.

Two months later, before sending that crusade into southern France, Pope Innocent sent priests to try to convince the heretics. As a result of those missions, it is said that he was more successful than the others who were sent because he lived simply, unlike some of the others.

He continued this work for 10 years, during which time his band of preachers gradually became a community. Formal approval of a rule for the Order of Preachers—or Dominicans as they would be called—was given in 1216, also by Pope Honorius III since Pope Innocent III died earlier that year.

It’s All Good/Patti Lamb

Model the example of the Holy Family, true royalty

I’m not exactly proud to say that I recently tackled my husband recently in an effort to regain the remote control. He was about to change the channel on a segment focusing on the royal family. Not only do I want to observe whether the television piece added to my stress, but I also wanted to see what Kate Middleton, Duchess of Cambridge, was wearing. I pulled myself together and calmly explained my position to my husband. I said that when I think of royalty, my mind sums images of grandeur, perfection and the way things are in fairy tales. Ironically, just a few days later, we celebrated the feast of Christ the King at Mass.

The priest’s homily helped me to understand my fascination with royalty. It turns out that our expectations of royalty haven’t changed much in the past 2,000 years, when God sent his only Son to redeem this broken world. Everyone was aware of the differences between her and us. Raised on family farms in eastern Iowa, stories around our family dinner table, it was sometimes more of a dream than a reality.

“Mom wasn’t lying. She did her share to see. You were so good at making pies!” My mother said to her childhood friend who was visiting who was visiting. “Oh, pies, she basked in the glow of Mom’s generosity.

What if I became a year-round Fruit Scientist? What a gift that would be for a person who was rejected and paid homage to society’s expectations of royalty. It is a statement issued by Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the Church’s international humanitarian agency.

For centuries, violence against violence has not rooted out the root of the issue requires us to root out the evil. Like St. Paul implored the Ephesians, I envision with “the prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit” (Eph 6:18).

Our king was rejected and paid homage to his bishop, he came face to face with the Albigensian heresy.

But I find great hope in the message of Jesus’s birth. When we just don’t measure up to this world’s standards, we should revere. We are in partnership with Christ, the King, who was also never good enough. I take comfort in the fact that we can go in our broken and imperfect state. Our King, however, was the supreme servant. He washed the feet of his disciples. He didn’t play the part of warrior, but instead, was the ultimate peacemaker.

Kings typically travel with a royal entourage. The disciples Jesus chose, however, were poor, common fishermen. Jesus ate with sinners and wasn’t afraid to reach out to society’s marginalized, like the lepers he healed.

Most kings are respected and honored. Our king was rejected and paid homage to a crown of thorns. Then they hung him on a cross to die.

Our king knew that the anguish of the cross and the darkness of the tomb. During this season of Advent, many of us may find ourselves heavy with heavy or may find ourselves shrouded in despair of peace, if one builds justice. ‘”

Our sister organization in the Caritas network—Secours Catholique (Cardia France)—is calling for prayer to foster solidarity and peace.

For those who wish to support their efforts, Secours Catholique is accepting donations for donations to support the poorest people and territories in France. CRS has agreed to channel donations to Secours Catholique, a Catholic charity in France, sent to CRS, P.O. Box 17900, Baltimore, MD. 21297-0303. Please put “Secours Catholique” in the memo line.

Thank you for your thoughts, prayers and gestures of solidarity for our brothers and sisters in France.

(Bill Dodds writes for Catholic News Service.)

Perspectives

Faith, Hope and Charity

David Siler

French victims need our prayers, donations

Not that we needed yet another reminder, but the terror attacks in Paris gave us another horrific example of how we all live in the world.

It is human nature to want to blame when we witness such hideous acts of inhumanity toward man so we can have a target for our own frustrations. I suggest that our anger and disgust is most appropriately directed toward the source and root of the problem.

Whatever name we assign to the source of evil, Scripture reminds us that “our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens” (Eph 6:12).

As Catholics, we have to look upon acts of violence and terror for what they are—acts of pure evil. Therefore, our battle has to be fought on the terrain which it originates—the spiritual realm.

For centuries, violence against violence has not rooted out the problem. It is not to say, of course, that we do not have the right to defend ourselves from these acts of violence, but to get to the root of the issue requires us to root out the evil.

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Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 6, 2015

**Baruch 5:1-9**
**Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11**
**Luke 3:1-6**

The Book of Baruch provides the first reading for this Second Sunday of Advent. Baruch is not one of the major prophets. Having only five chapters, it is considerably shorter than the long books of Ezekiel, Isaiah and Jeremiah are considered. It is also among the Old Testament books which Protestants do not accept as having been divinely inspired, and so are excluded from their Bible.

It is also not included in the Jewish Scriptures used today.

One reason for its omission from these versions is that at one time it was presumed to have been written originally in Greek. It was thought that Old Testament books could not be considered authentic revelation unless composed in Hebrew. Actually, scholars now believe that Baruch first was written in Hebrew, but that only Greek translations survive.

For Catholics, however, most important is the fact that God’s justice and mercy will prevail over all.

In any case, when Baruch was written, great problems beset God’s people. This book encouraged the suffering, reassuring them that God would not forsake them, and that God’s justice and mercy will prevail over all.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians furnishes the next reading. Sent to the Church officially long ago recognized it as such.

My Journey to God

By Ken Ogorak

Ken Ogorak is a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis and is direct descendant of the archdiocese. A man blows away seeds of collected milkweed pods in front of a 30-foot sculpture of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in Washington on Jan. 19, 2014. (CNS photo/Jonathan Ernst, Reuters)

My Journey to God

We are sowers of God’s peace. We are bearers of God’s Word. May our efforts never cease Till the earth’s Truth has heard. May our voice His Reign increase. We are sowers of God’s peace.

Peace unlike the world can give Lives in us, our hearts contribute. “Seek, forgive, give generously.” Words of pardon, love and light. Love to light the path we tread As we sow the peace of God. May our sowing serve to yield Grains and fruits a hundredfold. Glory ever more revealed To your young and to our old Woman to whom His love will grow As the peace of God we sow.

Philosophy

We need to reflect on and understand the Church’s teaching on the death of the dead. The Church teaches that remains of the dead must be cared for with respect and reverence.

Church teaching requires that remains of the dead be treated with respect and reverence. The Church does not permit the scattering of cremated remains. Cremation is allowed, but the remains of the dead must be given due respect and reverence.

The Peace of God We Sow

By Ken Ogorak

Baruch 5:1-9

Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Luke 3:1-6

Daily Readings

**Monday, December 7**
St. Ambrose, bishop and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 85:9ab, 10-14
Luke 5:17-26

**Tuesday, December 8**
The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Genesis 3:9-15, 20
Psalm 98:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Luke 1:26-38

**Wednesday, December 9**
St. Juan Diego Cauhtlatotzin
Isaiah 40:23-31
Psalm 103:1-8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

**Thursday, December 10**
Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 143:1-9, 13b
Matthew 11:11-15

**Friday, December 11**
St. Damasus I, pope
Isaiah 48:17-19
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Matthew 11:16-19

**Saturday, December 12**
Our Lady of Guadalupe
Zechariah 2:1-15
Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 119:1-16a, 19b
Luke 1:26-38
Or Luke 1:39-47

**Sunday, December 13**
Third Sunday of Advent
Zechariah 3:14-18a
(Responsorial) Philippians 1:4-7
Matthew 3:10-18

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

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Readers may submit prose or poetry relating to faith or religious experiences for publication in the “My Journey to God” column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions. Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, 40 Hopewell St. Albany, NY 12208.

(Responses may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St. Albany, NY 12208.)
Shooting at Colorado clinic is antithesis of pro-life movement, says priest

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (CNS)—A priest who celebrates Mass every Friday morning on a sidewalk near the Planned Parenthood clinic said they did not recall ever having seen or spoken to the shooter, Robert Lewis Dear, 57. The clinic also said they did not recall seeing Dear at any pro-life events.

The clinic sits near a busy shopping center that includes a grocery store, a bank and several other businesses. After the attack began around 11:30 a.m. local time, patrons and employees of the businesses “sheltered in place” for nearly six hours while police tried to contain the alleged shooter, Robert Lewis Dear, 57. The standoff ended with Dear’s arrest five hours later.

Among those killed was Garrett Swasey, a police officer at the University of Colorado Springs, “The pro-life movement has no place for violence.”

The clinic is the frequent site of prayer vigils and other activities, in addition to the officer, and nine others reported. The attack began around 11:30 a.m. local time, while police tried to contain the alleged shooter, Robert Lewis Dear at any pro-life events.

“We were long gone” before the attack started, Father Carmody told The Criterion, the diocesan newspaper started, Father Carmody told The Criterion, the diocesan newspaper.

The unlawful use of violence is directly contrary to that goal.”

“We abhor and condemn all acts of terrorism, all acts of savagery against the innocent—born and preborn—and we call for a return to peaceful dialogue, ” Bishop Michael J. Sheridan of Colorado Springs said in a statement. “As Pope Francis recently reminded us, “The path of violence and hate can never solve the problems of humanity.””

The National Right to Life Committee’s president, Carol Tobias, said her organization “unequivocally condemns unlawful activities and acts of violence regardless of motivation. The pro-life movement works to protect the right to life and increase respect for human life. The unlawful use of violence is directly contrary to that goal.”

Judie Brown, president of American Life League, said that “despite aggressive attempts of some news media to twist this brutal and egregious act to pro-life causes, there is no evidence supporting their case—and these attempts are simply irresponsible.”

“We abhor and condemn all acts of terrorism, all acts of savagery against the innocent—born and preborn—and we call upon our fellow Americans to do likewise,” she said in a Nov. 30 statement.
Bishop Chatard earns record 13th state football crown
By John Shaughnessy

On the night before his team won a state championship, Bishop Chatard head football coach Vince Lorenzano shared a special moment with the 30 seniors on the team.

“I told them, ’I know I get crazy at times, but I love you.‘” Lorenzano recalls. “I also told them that I knew they would leave everything they have on the field.”

The coach added a different approach the next day in his pre-game talk before the state championship. After instructing the team to “be yourself, stay the course and do the things you’ve done,” he added a few comments that made the players laugh.

“They’re just teenagers,” the coach says. “You don’t want them to feel the stresses of life, at least not too many of them. They were loose going into the game, and they felt good about themselves. When teenagers feel good about themselves, that’s where you want them to be.”

By the early evening of Nov. 27, the Bishop Chatard players felt downright ecstatic. The Trojans danced, sang and celebrated their 31-7 win over the team from West Lafayette High School in the Class 3A Indiana High School Athletic Association football championship.

It was a record-setting 13th state football championship for the archdiocese’s Indianapolis North Deanery high school.

“It’s a testament to the whole group of great coaches who have come through here,” Lorenzano says about the record. “It’s the combination of great kids, great assistant coaches, great families, the leadership of the school, and a great student body.”

The coach especially praised this year’s student fans, who received the “best spirit” award from one of the Indianapolis television stations. He also heaped praise on his team.

“It was very exciting to see these guys achieve what they did,” he says. “People weren’t sure where this team was headed earlier in the season, including me. We had a lot of injuries, and it was a tough schedule on top of that. I thought that’s where the resiliency and toughness of the group shined through.”

The seniors set the standard, including in the classroom.

“They have outstanding academics,” Lorenzano notes. “Ten of those guys have a 4.0 [out of 4.0 grade point average]. Eight or nine were academic all-state. They’re also athletic. There are a lot of kids in that group who play multiple sports. Overall, it’s just a real smart group of kids. They played smart football. I was really appreciative of that.”

He also appreciates how their Catholic faith is ingrained in their approach to the game and their lives.

“We’re a faith-driven school,” Lorenzano says. “We go to Mass before each game, and we pray before and after every practice. Faith is deep down in the core of this group. After every practice, we had intentions. There were always 20 to 25 kids praying for someone. They really understood what it was for, and they were comfortable with it. That was nice to see.”

As much as he praised his team, Lorenzano downplayed earning his seventh state title at Bishop Chatard.

“For me, it’s a great feeling for the kids and the school. Somewhere along the line, my ego got checked,” he says, citing the effect of the deaths of a brother and a few friends. “If I hadn’t won any state championships, I’d still think I was doing what was right for the kids, and modeling what I think is right for them. We’ve made mistakes, like all people do, but you always try to do the right thing, no matter what.

“It’s not winning as much as getting them ready to play and staying true to yourself. I want them to remember the good things—and for them to learn. There are going to be tough moments, and they have to work through them. It’s to have them become better men.”

Lorenzano believes that goal has been reached with the members of this year’s championship team. He’s grateful for the opportunity to coach them.

“I just want to thank the school, the administrators and the archdiocese for always being supportive of me,” he says. “I’m a Catholic school guy at my roots. I’ve been in public schools, and there was something missing to me. What happens at these schools is important. It’s not about state championships. It’s seeing a kid grow. And the leadership at these schools is outstanding.”

Mother Angelica remains on feeding tube, confined to bed at monastery

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Mother Angelica, who spearheaded the founding of the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), has been placed on a feeding tube as she continues to battle lingering effects of two strokes she suffered 14 years ago.

A spokesman for her order, the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration at Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Hanceville, said the 92-year-old nun is doing as well as can be expected for someone her age who remains partially paralyzed.

“From what I’ve been told, it’s not that she’s completely unable to eat. It’s assisting her to get the nutrients she needs,” said Luke Johnasen, director of pilgrimages at the monastery.

Johnasen told Catholic News Service that she was fitted with the tube in recent weeks.

She’s had some up and downs the last few months,” he said. “She’s a fighter.”

Johnson added that Mother Angelica remained confined to bed, but that she acknowledges visitors to her room in the monastery.

“She’s able to communicate with a squeeze of a hand, make gestures with her eyes. She acknowledges people when they’re there. The nuns say she does sleep a lot,” he said.

A native of Canton, Ohio, Mother Angelica launched EWTN on Aug. 15, 1981. The initiative was met with doubt from television executives who felt there was little demand for Catholic programming. The network’s website reports that it transmits programs 24 hours a day to more than 200 million households in 144 countries via cable and other technologies.

On her 92nd birthday in April, the sisters at the monastery said in a statement that Mother Angelica offers her suffering “all up for the Church.”

For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry
Anglican ordinariate’s incoming bishop, predecessor discuss transition

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Bishop-designate Steven J. Lopes is not a former Anglican, and has never heard to the Anglican tradition. But he may be as conversant with Anglicanism as any Catholic cleric can be.

From his work over the past 10 years at the Vatican Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, he helped guide the process for American and Canadian Anglican and Episcopalian congregations wishing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church with the establishment of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, based in Houston and similar ordinariates in England, Wales and Australia.

The Houston-based ordinariate includes all former Anglicans and Episcopalians in the United States and Canada.

On Nov. 24, Pope Francis appointed Bishop-designate Lopes, a priest of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, as the North American ordinariate’s first bishop. His episcopal ordination and installation will take place on Feb. 2 in Houston.

Bishop-designate Lopes, 40, succeeds Msgr. Jeffrey N. Steenson, himself a former Episcopal bishop in Texas and New Mexico who became a Catholic in 2007, and was appointed four years ago to head the ordinariate created by the Vatican to serve former Anglicans living in full communion with the Church.

Despite having the title of monsignor, Msgr. Steenson himself is married. He said during a Nov. 24 teleconference with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, he had the full rights as a member of the ecclesiastical body that created the ordinariate—“for ill health or some other grave cause”—to explain Msgr. Steenson’s departure from his role.

“The one thing that’s necessary for that kind of identity is crucial to allow that kind of particular patrimony to flourish in the Church.”

One of those Anglican communities is based in Indianapolis. The St. Joseph of Arimathea Anglican Use Society is led by Father Wattson and celebrates its liturgies at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis.

Bishop-designate Lopes joked that his first job as bishop will be “to get on a plane,” while Msgr. Steenson, a licensed private pilot, said that perhaps the “grave cause” requiring him to step down was that he’d “only been able to fly my plane for three hours this year.”

Msgr. Steenson said the experience of Father Paul Watson, a U.S. Episcopal priest who became a Catholic and led members into the Catholic Church more than a century ago, can be instructive.

“Father Watson—this is a magnificent story—is the one who brought the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity into existence. At first, the bishops were not interested in this,” Msgr. Steenson added. “It took a pope to bring all the bishops on board. There’s a parallel with our life, too. It took a point of view that an ordinariate could represent [departing Anglicans], and it made him happen.”

During her first year of teaching, Precious Blood Sister Ann Hipp, 95, had 40 students in four grades. “It was only by the grace of God that I got through that first year,” she recalls, laughing. Sister Ann had 40 students in four grades. “It was only by the grace of God that I got through that first year,” she recalls, laughing. Sister Ann had 40 students in four grades. “It was only by the grace of God that I got through that first year,” she recalls, laughing. Sister Ann had 40 students in four grades.

 Msgr. Steven J. Lopes, center, talks with Msgr. Jeffrey N. Steenson, left, and retired Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza of Galveston-Houston on Nov. 24 in Houston. On that day, Pope Francis named Msgr. Lopes to be the first bishop of the Catholic Church’s U.S. ordinariate for former Anglicans living in full communion with the Catholic Church. (CNS photo/courtesy Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter)