Religious liberty threatened in proposed state civil rights legislation

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

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A proposal to expand civil rights protection for sexual orientation and gender identity raises concerns of potential infringement on religious freedom, according to Glenn Tebbe, executive director for the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), who serves as the official public policy spokesperson for the Church in Indiana.

“The Catholic Church has a long history of supporting the dignity of the human person, including those with same-sex attraction. We also oppose unjust discrimination,” said Tebbe. But he explained the current proposals leave too much room for interpretation, which could potentially result in Catholic ministries being forced to support behavior contrary to Church teaching.

“The Catholic Church and its affiliated institutions have a long tradition of service responding to persons of all faiths and those who profess none when they face a crisis or need,” Tebbe added. “We provide opportunities for education and healing and comfort for people of all faiths and situations to live a full and fruitful life.

“In accordance with Catholic teaching, the Church has both the right and the duty to carry out its mission of mercy without having to choose the notion of mercy out of coercion or intimidation,” he continued.

“When seeking to assist someone in need, we do not first ask whether the person is Catholic. We serve others not because they see ICC, page 2.”

Mission of mercy

Franciscan Alliance opens its first inpatient hospice facility, page 15.

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Mother’s life of kindness and mercy inspires daughter in her care for others

(See MERCY, page 8)

As she shares the touching scene, Cathy Lamperski Dearing hopes to make a point about the immense power of a small act of mercy and kindness.

The scene happens regularly as Dearing and Lucian Jones take a walk together at A Caring Place, the Catholic Charities Indianapolis program that provides day care service for older adults—a program that’s housed in a few rooms at Fairview Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis.

Dearing is the physical therapist at A Caring Place, and one of the people she helps is Jones, a husband, a father, a military veteran and a former deacon of a church. He uses a cane to walk, and he has dementia.

“Every session, we go on long endurance walks,” says Dearing, a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis.

“Being housed inside a large church building, we walk from our space through the sanctuary. We always go to the back of the sanctuary where hanging on the wall is an engraved plaque with Psalm 122:1.”

The plaque reads, “I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord” (Ps 122:1).

“I read those words out loud to him,” Dearing notes. “He has significant language impairment because of his dementia, but he is able to repeat the words after I say them. He recites them back clearly, prayerfully. He sounds like a preacher again!

“So I am moved every time by the way he speaks those words with such depth and emotion. I feel I give him something back—of who he was in his life as a preacher, in his love for God and Scripture. And every single time we finish that passage with, ‘let us go into the house of the Lord’ [Ps 122:1], he always says, ‘Thank you.’ I think he’s saying ‘thank you’ to me and to God. In this Year of Mercy, Dearing also finds herself saying…”

Church’s credibility found in showing mercy, Pope Francis says in new book

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Being ministers of God’s mercy, Church members overcome “prejudice and rigidity,” taking risks like Jesus did in order to heal and to save, Pope Francis said.

“In Jesus’ day, lepers were cast out of the community ‘to avoid contamination: the healthy needed to be protected,’ but Jesus, at his own risk, ‘goes up to the leper and he restores him, he heals him,’” Pope Francis said in a new book-length interview on mercy.

“By welcoming a marginalized person whose body is wounded, and by welcoming the sinner whose soul is wounded, we put our credibility as Christians on the line,” the pope told Italian journalist Andrea Tornielli in January 15, 2016
The best legacy children can receive from parents is faith, Pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The best thing parents can pass on to their children is their own faith, Pope Francis said as he baptized 26 babies. Ensure this faith “not be lost, help make it grow, and pass it on as a legacy,” he told the infants’ parents and godparents.

The pope presided over the annual morning liturgy in the Sistine Chapel on Jan. 10, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. He told the parents that when he asked them, “What do you ask of God’s Church?” for their child, and they responded, “Faith,” the ritual was part of “a chain of handing on the faith throughout history.”

“These children, as the years go by, will be taking your place with another child—your grandchildren—and they will ask the same thing: faith,” he said in his brief, unscripted homily.

“Don’t forget that the greatest legacy that you can leave your children is faith,” he added; he hoped they would always be capable of helping their children grow in the faith.

The infants, wearing their Sunday best—chiffon or lace dresses, cotton cardigans or plush overalls—were baptized over a font supported by an ornately detailed bronze olive tree. One by one, the pope poured water from a gilded shell and gently caressed the head of each of the 13 girls and 13 boys.

As he has done in the past, he told the mothers not to hesitate in breast-feeding their babies during the ceremony.

Later in the day, before praying the Angelus with visitors gathered in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Francis said he was baptized with cries of “it’s the responsibility of following Jesus—the obedient servant—and reproducing in us his same likeness, that is, gentleness, humbleness, tenderness.”

“Even though this is not easy, especially if we are surrounded by so much intolerance, degrade, rigidity,” he said, “it is possible with the power that comes from the Holy Spirit.

“The Holy Spirit, received for the first time on the day of our baptism, opens our heart to the truth, to the whole truth. The Spirit drives our lives along the challenging, but joyous path of charity and solidarity toward our brothers and sisters,” he said.

He reminded people to find out the date of their baptism if they didn’t know because it was an important day that merits celebrating every year.

“It is the date of our rebirth as children of God,” he said, “and celebrating that day signifies and reaffirms our belonging to Jesus with the commitment to live like Christians, members of the Church and a new humanity in which all are brothers and sisters.”


ded as protected classes under Indiana’s civil rights laws. It prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, education and access to credit.

Holdman said the bill was drafted to place certain protections against government sanctions on religious institutions. He added that he has done his best to work with staff attorneys to try to think through unintended consequences that would infringe upon the First Amendment right of religious freedom, but conceded that it is difficult to account for everything. He is offering an alternative proposal, Senate Bill 344, which addresses an expansion of civil rights, yet removes transgender persons from the bill to give more time to study the issue and how to address it.

Tebbe said that while he greatly respects

Jan. 20 service in Indianapolis to mark Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

A prayer service for Christian unity will be held at Allisonville Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 7701 Allisonville Road, in Indianapolis, at 7 p.m. on Jan. 20. Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin will participate, as will other Christian denominational leaders. All are invited.

The service, which marks the first week of the Disciples’ Council on Christian Unity. As an ordained minister, he has been involved for more than 30 years in the ecumenical dialogue process in the United States between the Catholic Church and the Disciples of Christ. Rev. Welsh has a unique perspective on ecumenism. His wife is Catholic. A daughter married a Catholic, and they are raising their three children in the faith. His unique perspective on ecumenism. His wife is Catholic. A daughter married a Catholic, and they are raising their three children in the faith.

Attraction, and to accommodate for religious institutions and their affiliated organizations.

“In spite of these efforts, the fact remains that religious freedoms are not guaranteed for all,” Tebbe said of the bills. “Due to concerns about the terms and the effects of the law, we cannot support Senate Bill 100 or Senate Bill 344 in their current form.”

Tebbe said he is hopeful that he and others can continue to work on the proposals. “During the process, we must show mutual respect for one another so that dialogue and discernment can take place to ensure that no one in Indiana will face discrimination—whether it is for sexual orientation or for living their religious beliefs.”

Both Senate Bill 344 and Senate Bill 100 have been assigned to the Senate Committee on Rules and Legislative Procedure, which is chaired by Sen. President Pro Tem David Long (R-Fort Wayne). Long said he intends to have the committee hear both bills later this month.

(Brigid Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion. For more information about the Indiana Catholic Conference, its Indiana Catholic Action Network and its role in the Indiana General Assembly this year, log on to www.indianacc.org.)

PRAYERS

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

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Saint Meinrad Archabbey remains rooted in prayer, service to Church

The Criterion Friday, January 15, 2016

Saint Meinrad Archabbey remains rooted in prayer, service to Church by Sean Gallagher

ST. MEINRAD—On Sept. 2, 1887, a fire destroyed the monastery and part of the church of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, a Benedictine monastic community that was founded in 1854. With the smoke still rising from the smoldering ruins of their home and place of prayer, the monks nonetheless gathered later that day to continue to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. Such was their dedication to prayer, their ultimate mission.

The life of Saint Meinrad Archabbey has changed much during its 162-year history, but the community’s commitment to prayer remains the same.

“The basics of the life stay in place,” said Benedictine Archabbot Justin DuVall, O.S.B., Saint Meinrad’s leader since his election on Dec. 31, 2004. “What gets changed is the color, the texture and the expression of them.”

The determination of the monks of Saint Meinrad to continue in their life of prayer is rooted in part in its deep history.

Saint Meinrad was founded by Maria Einsiedeln, a monastery in Switzerland nearly 1,100 years old. And Benedictine life is traced back to the example and Rule of St. Benedict, who lived more than 500 years ago.

Yet over that time and in the many places around the world where Benedictine monasteries have been founded, monks have sought to apply the wisdom of their tradition to the particular needs of their time and place.

“If we only kept a tradition alive for the sake of what it was, then we’d be a museum in a way,” said Benedictine Brother John Mark Falkenhain, Saint Meinrad’s vocation director. “The brilliant thing about monks and Benedictines is that we’ve always managed to take what was essential to our tradition, and continue to make it relevant to our current times.”

The monks of Saint Meinrad did just that by ministering to the German-speaking Catholic immigrants of southwestern Indiana.

Within the first generation of monks at the monastery, though, the community quickly expanded that ministry to include missionary work among Native Americans in the northern plains and the formation of future priests, which still continues at Saint Meinrad Archabbey’s School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

Some 80 percent of the current priests of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis received at least part of their priestly formation at Saint Meinrad.

“It has made a contribution to the Church all across the United States and now internationally around the world,” said Archabbot Justin. “The work has remained. But it has certainly changed in the way that we [now] form... candidates for the permanent diaconate, people in lay ministry and youths in our youth liturgical leadership program.”

The future priests from around the world who receive their formation at Saint Meinrad include monks from its Swiss motherhouse. The last two abbots of Maria Einsiedeln were both students at Saint Meinrad.

Likewise, Saint Meinrad sends some monks in initial formation to Maria Einsiedeln to experience the connection of their monastery that reaches back so far in Benedictine history.

“There’s a real sense of connectedness to our roots that keeps going to Einsiedeln,” said Brother John Mark. “It feels like such a sense of stability and rootedness.”

Stability is at the heart of one of the vows that the monks of Saint Meinrad and all Benedictines profess.

Unlike most men and women religious who profess vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, Benedictines take vows of obedience, stability and “conversatio morum,” which is often translated as “conversion to the monastic way of life.” The last of these vows includes poverty and chastity.

The vow of stability connects a Benedictine to his or her particular monastic community.

For the monks of Saint Meinrad, their tie to their southwestern Indiana monastic community also has meant a bond with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

That is experienced profoundly through its formation of so many archdiocesan priests. And it is also seen in the leadership of Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein, who was a monk of Saint Meinrad and president-rector of its seminary prior to becoming a bishop. He returned there to live in the monastery’s infirmary after retiring in 2011.

At a more grassroots level, the tie between Saint Meinrad and the larger Church.

While the life of faith of these lay people is strengthened at Saint Meinrad, the monks appreciate the witness that they receive from their guests.

“If lay people, who have families, children, soccer games, sometimes two or three jobs, can pursue a relationship with Christ, my hat is off to them,” said Brother John Mark. “That’s a great witness to us. We rely on each other for each other’s witness. I hope that makes a difference to the local Church and the larger Church.”

Benedictine Father Noel Mueller has traveled to several states to help the Oblates of Saint Meinrad grow closer to Christ.

He journeyed even farther in the late 1960s to serve as a missionary in the mountains of Peru in a monastery that Saint Meinrad founded there. It was later closed after an earthquake destroyed it.

The decade that Father Noel spent in Peru was filled with constant activity, but you do what you can. I didn’t sleep a lot in those years. But I was young and full of energy and could channel that energy creatively.

“I have enjoyed every one of my jobs, because if you’re obedient you just pour yourself out in whatever you can do,” Father Noel later taught in Saint Meinrad’s college, which was closed in 1997. He now serves on the formation staff of its seminary.

A growing number of younger monks are joining the seminary’s staff, and the monastery currently has five novices and seven “junior” monks who have professed vows for a three-year period.

“I think they bring an energy and a vitality,” said Archabbot Justin of the novices and junior monks. “They bring a commitment to their faith. They bring a genuine desire to seek God, which, over the long term, will undoubtedly change the way the life at Saint Meinrad is lived out.”

Brother John Mark assists in the formation of the novices and junior monks. And he isn’t too far removed from his own initial formation, having entered the community in 2002.

“I feel like I could spend the rest of my life exploring what this life means and learning about it,” he said. “I love this life.”

(For more information about Saint Meinrad Archabbey, visit saintmeinrad.org)
Students from St. Luke the Evangelist School in Indianapolis pray after Convocation during the Mass of solemn observance of Roe v. Wade at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Jan. 22, 2015. (Criterio file photo by Natalie Forkey)

Stand up for life in nation's capital
at home or on a digital pilgrimage

Pro-life advocates will march again in our nation’s capital next week, sharing a message by the hundreds of thousands of our support for all—life—from conception until natural death.

The theme for the Jan. 22 March for Life—“Pro-Life is Pro-Woman”—will also share an appropriate mantra that too often gets lost or misrepresented in the secular media and through other avenues.

While the starting point of the March for Life moves to the Washington Memorial grounds this year, the new venue will again attract parishioners. Catholic school students and other pro-life supporters from across the country. But they will not be the only ones standing up for life.

As reported in the Jan. 8 issue of The Criterion and again on page 6 in this week’s issue, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will offer two events in solemn observance of the 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

The archdiocesan Secretariat of Pastoral Ministries will host a Vigil for Life on Jan. 21 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.

The event is from 6:30-9 P.M., and will include music, a keynote address by Archbishop Joseph M. Tobin, pro-life speakers, the opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and Benediction.

On Jan. 22, two Roe v. Wade observances within the archdiocese will take place, one in Indianapolis and one in Terre Haute.

The annual archdiocesan solemn observance of the Roe v. Wade decision will be held in Indianapolis at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral on Jan. 22. It will begin with a noon Mass celebrated by Archbishop Tobin, followed by a prayerful procession along Meridian and Pennsylvania streets.

There will be exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for those who wish to remain in the cathedral.

The observance will conclude with Benediction at 2:30 p.m. in the cathedral.

A Roe v. Wade event in Terre Haute will be a peaceful, prayerful, pro-life gathering at 1 p.m. in front of the Vigo County Courthouse located at 3rd Street and Wahsah Ave.

While we commend archdiocesan parishioners traveling to Washington to take part in the national rally, we know getting to our nation’s capital for the annual gathering is not possible for everyone.

Like that rally, the archdiocesan gatherings also offer each of us opportunities to show others how embracing all life is at the heart of our faith.

Those aren’t the only ways we can show our support for life in the coming days. The U.S. bishops are asking people to participate in 9 Days for Life—a digital pilgrimage from Jan. 16-24.

You can download a novena online, or receive it through Facebook, e-mail text message or an app. Each day you’ll be able to access new intentions, brief reflections, suggested actions and more.

Sign up at 9daysforlife.com.

As part of 9 Days for Life, the bishops are also asking you to share with others what it means to embrace a culture of life. One way you can do this is by posting on social media a video—five to 15 seconds in length—of why you are participating in 9 Days for Life, how you participated that day, or what being pro-life means to you.

You can also print out a sign from the website, fill in the sentence, “Being pro-life means …,” and post a selfie with your sign.

Whether you share a video or picture, use the hashtag #9DaysforLife, and if you’re posting on Instagram, Facebook or Twitter, be sure to tag it #USCCB—they’ll pick the best to share!

The ultimate goal of 9 Days for Life, the bishops note, is that these prayers and actions will last well beyond January.

The digital pilgrimage is another way for us to build a culture that values every life—from conception until natural death. At the same time, it serves as a reminder that when it comes to changing hearts and minds, nothing is more powerful than prayer.
All are called to holiness, the fulfillment of Christian life

"All the people who had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased" (Lk 3:21-22)."

Last week, we celebrated the Baptism of the Lord. This powerful story of the emergence of Jesus of Nazareth from a private life into the public ministry that would end in both the tragedy of his death and the joy of his resurrection commands our prayerful attention. The Trinity God is at work here in ways that are amazing to behold!

First, we see the intense longing of God’s Chosen People for the Messiah (the “anointed one”) who was to save his people from their bondage. Might John the Baptist be the one? John denies this emphatically. “I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

How are we to understand this new form of baptism? How is it different from the baptism of John? Water remains the sacramental sign of the new baptism, so what distinguishes the baptism of the Messiah from the baptism of John? The baptism of Jesus was the work of the Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It was an act of divine intervention in human history that changed the course of all our lives, making it possible for each of us “to die with Christ in order to live with him forever.” (Rm 6:3-11).

The baptism of John was a symbolic cleansing of sin. The new baptism is a symbolic pouring out of the old self in order to be reborn in the Spirit and united with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

John knew that he could not accomplish this kind of radical transformation simply by a symbolic baptism by water. What was needed was the power of the Holy Spirit that changes the sacramental sign (water) into a profound conversion of mind, heart and daily living that is powerful enough to set the world on fire! St. Luke tells us that after all the people were baptized by John, Jesus entered the river Jordan and was baptized as well. At this moment, “heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased’” (Lk 3:21-22). What a rare, and powerful, depiction of the Holy Trinity at work in the world. What a profound affirmation of the importance of baptism in the life of Jesus and in our lives as well.

The Second Vatican Council stressed that “All Christians in any time or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of charity” (“Lumen Gentium,” the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” #40). This is the universal call to holiness—the call to die with Christ in order to be reborn by the Holy Spirit and fire! To accept this call, we must be humble like John. We must recognize that “one mightier than I” has come and has invited us to share in his own holiness. Above all, we must open our minds and hearts to let the power of God transform us.

When more than 1,000 people were welcomed into our own local Church at the Easter Vigil last year, the story of the Lord’s baptism was relived right here in the parishes of our archdiocese. Water was poured out on the newly baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And once again, the Triune God intervened in human history to change the lives of those who received this great sacrament. God willing, this same miracle will be repeated at this year’s Easter Vigil!

May each of us recall that we have been baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire. May we choose to die with Christ so that we can live with him in glory!
Discerning a vocation to religious life?

Attend Indy’s Got Sisters weekend retreat

The archdiocesan Vocations Committee is sponsoring Indy’s Got Sisters, a retreat for women discerning a vocation to the religious life, starting at 6 p.m. on Feb. 19.

The free retreat, which is for single Catholic women ages 18-40, provides participants an opportunity to pray and share with sisters from different religious communities in the Indianapolis area to help in vocalization discernment.

The weekend is a great opportunity to serve and be a part of community life, while asking questions about discernment and getting answers in real time.

For more information, call 812-963-7556 or e-mail sistertheresa.sullivan@indoc.org.

Jan. 20 lecture focuses on St. Mother Theodore Guérin’s early letters

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods will offer a luncheon lecture on St. Mother Theodore Guérin’s early letters from 1841-43 at the Providence Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, from noon to 1 p.m. on Jan. 20.

This is the third of five lectures led by Providence Sister Jan Craven. All are invited—attending past lectures in the series is not required.

The cost is $12 per session, which includes lunch. Upcoming sessions are on March 16 and May 18.

For more information or to register, call 812-535-2946, e-mail ProvCtr@spsmw.org or register online at events.sisterofprovidence.org.

Right to Life of Indianapolis Memorial Service for the Unborn set for Jan. 17

Right to Life of Indianapolis (RITL) will host its annual Service for the Unborn at the Indiana War Memorial, 431 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, from 2:30-3:30 p.m. on Jan. 17.

The keynote speaker is Jennifer Trappuzano, widow of slain pro-life activist Jonathan Trappuzano.

The memorial commemorates the lives of those lost through abortion since 1973, and acknowledges the impact of that loss.

It will be followed by a brief march for life around the Soldiers and Sailors Monument.

Volunteers are needed for the traditional Rose Ceremony. If you are age 43 or younger, or if you would like to carry a rose to represent one of the babies between 1972 and 2015, please call the RITL office at 317-582-1526, or e-mail life@ritindy.org.

Applicants sought for ‘GIVEN: Catholic Young Women’s Leadership Forum’

The council of Major Superiors of Women Religious in collaboration with the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, is seeking Catholic women applicants for “GIVEN: Catholic Young Women’s Leadership Forum.”

The event is a weeklong immersion in faith formation, leadership training and networking to be held at The Catholic University of America's Center of Ethics. The Forum will provide a platform for what St. John Paul II called “the feminine genius,” and a response to Pope Francis’ plea for a deeper understanding and activation of the unique gift of women in the Church and the world.

Applicants must be between the ages of 20-30 as of June 7, 2016, and an American citizen who is practicing the Catholic faith; has received the sacraments of initiation or is currently preparing to enter the Church and is attending Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults classes; has a bachelor’s degree or is in the final year of an undergraduate program; and desires to grow in faith and develop her leadership skills.

Women who are accepted will receive a scholarship covering the cost of the Forum, including food, lodging and travel. The deadline for applications is Feb. 28.

For more information or to apply, log on to www.givenforum.org.

Mr. Koetter to lead St. Agnes Parish mission on Feb. 7-8 in Nashville

All are invited to a parish mission at St. Agnes Church, 1608 McPherson Road, Nashville, in one 7 a.m.-8:30 a.m. Mass on Feb. 7, and at 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Mass on Feb. 8.

The theme of the mission is “The Joy of the Gospel,” based on Pope Francis’ first apostolic exhortation. The document will be available for purchase in bookstore form at the church for $3.

There will be a light lunch at noon preceding the first session, which lasts from 1-2:30 p.m. on Feb. 7. Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m. before the second session, which goes from 10:30 a.m. until noon on Feb. 8.

The sacrament of reconciliation will always be available, and will be offered before the third session, which lasts from 7-8:30 p.m. on Feb. 8.

Mr. Koetter is currently the pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis. He served as administrator of St. Agnes Parish from 1985-97.

For more information, call the parish office at 812-968-2778 or e-mail stagnes3@agsnet.net.
Few life insurers in North America have more than $100 billion of life insurance in force.

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The Name of God Is Mercy

The book was scheduled for worldwide release on Jan. 12.

In the interview, the pope spoke about experiencing an overwhelming sense of mercy during confession when he was 17 years old, provided more details about stories he has recounted in homilies, explained his comment, “Who am I to judge?” about a homosexual person seeking God, and discussed the news he saw to invoke a jubilee Year of Mercy.

He also talked about the relationship of mercy and justice, and addressed criticism that his focus on mercy amounts to watering down Church doctrine and criticism that his focus on mercy amounts to tolerating sin.

Pope Francis said a similar attitude by the Church today “provokes angry mutterings from those who are only ever used to having things fit into their preconceived notions and ritual purity.

Caring for outcasts and sinners does not mean letting the wolves enter the flock, or jumping into the darkness with sinners, he said. It means being aware of the tragedy of sin and sharing the reality that God always is ready to forgive the sinner.

When the grace of God begins to help a person recognize his or her sin and need for forgiveness, the pope said, that person “needs to find an open door, not a closed one. He needs to find acceptance, not judgment, prejudice or condemnation. He needs to be helped, not pushed away or cast out.

Jesus sends forth his disciples as holders of power or masters of a law, the pope said. “The Christian message is transmitted by embracing those in difficulty, by embracing the outcast, the marginalized and the sinner.”

Obviously, he said, the Church cannot and does not pretend sin is unimportant.

But “God forgives everyone, he offers new possibilities to everyone, he showers his mercy on everyone who asks for it.”

As for his “Who am I to judge?” remark to reporters in July 2013 when asked about the Church’s attitude toward homosexual persons, Pope Francis said, “I was paraphrasing by heart the Catechism of the Catholic Church where it says that these people should be treated with delicacy and not be marginalized.”

Speaking to Tornielli, Pope Francis made no comment on homosexuality as such, rather than to insist that “people should not be defined only by their sexual tendencies.”

“I prefer that homosexuals come to confession, that they stay close to the Lord, and that we all pray together,” he said. “You can advise them to pray, show goodwill, show them the way and accompany them along it.”

Pope Francis并对一位意大利记者Andrea Tornielli的访问，关于怜悯的主题。

The interview is contained in a new book titled The Name of God is Mercy.

At work.

“As a confessior, even when I have found myself before a locked door,” he said, “I have always tried to find a crack, just a tiny opening, so that I can open that door and grant forgiveness and mercy.”

For his “Who am I to judge?” remark to reporters in July 2013 when asked about the Church’s attitude toward homosexual persons, Pope Francis said, “I was paraphrasing by heart the Catechism of the Catholic Church where it says that these people should be treated with delicacy and not be marginalized.”

Pope Francis said: “We are the ones who do not know how to forgive.”

The pope told Tornielli he is convinced that God’s mercy is Jesus’ most important message, and that it is a message people today urgently need to hear.

“Humanity is wounded, deeply wounded,” he said. “Either it does not know how to cure its wounds, or it believes that it’s not possible to cure them.”

To preach the Gospel, the Church must counter an attitude that says there are sins that cannot be healed or forgiven, the pope said.

“The Church does not exist to condemn people, but to bring about an encounter with the vulnerable love of God’s mercy.”

He said, “Priests, especially in the confessional, must do all they can to communicate God’s love and mercy. If they cannot offer absolution to someone, the pope said, they should at least offer a blessing. The fact that the person entered the confessional is a clear sign of God’s grace already at work.

As a confessior, even when I have found myself before a locked door,” he said, “I have always tried to find a crack, just a tiny opening, so that I can open that door and grant forgiveness and mercy.”

In response to assistant editor Shane Hendrix by e-mail at shane.hendrix@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 11 W. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached.

**Book continued from page 1**

**Mercy continued from page 1**

Jesus sends forth his disciples not as holders of power or masters of a law. The Christian message is transmitted by embracing those in difficulty, by embracing the outcast, the marginalized and the sinner.

——Pope Francis

Dearing recalls how her mother would make a special dinner for her family of nine, fix an extra plate of food, and then drive to her mother’s house to spend the day in prayer and a visit with a woman who was a shut-in and lived alone.

She also recalls how her mother and father were extraordinary ministers of holy Communion into their early 80s, bringing the sacrament to people who were homebound and in nursing homes.

“She always made it about the other person. Always,” Dearing says. “My mom was very aware of the mercy of Jesus in her life. Here is a story: When I took my mom to a retreat day, I brought my Bible, books to read, my journal, pencils and paper for poetry writing, and inspirational music. My mom brought her crucifix.

“When we gathered in a prayerful space and sat down, I had all my wares with me while my mom just gazed up lovingly at the crucifix and silently entered into deep prayer. That is the example of prayer that I remember from childhood, and how out of her prayer life flowed her life of kindness, mercy and love.”

——Cathy Lammerski Dearing

Their faith inspires my faith

Dearing tries to follow her mother’s example—living life as a prayer.

“My faith and hope wanted to emulate her in the way she lived,” Dearing says. “It was the primary reason I became a physical therapist. I felt called to a profession where I could show mercy and compassion because it was so integral to how I grew up, and who I was as a Catholic.

“The participants here at a Caring Place are all people of joy. We laugh and smile a lot. As I work with them individually to improve their strength, balance and safety, I demonstrate mercy through patience, active listening, affirmation, encouragement, respect and understanding. I feel the presence of God in these treatment sessions. This draws me closer to the person I am working with, and that in turn draws me closer to God.”

Dearing’s connections with the people she cares for in the stories they share with her.

“They share joyful memories and some painful ones, and I listen,” says the mother of three. “I allow them to tell their stories, and their stories touch me deeply. In them, I recognize their acceptance of how life unfolded, accepting the good and the bad, and they entrust it all to God. Their faith inspires my faith. Their acceptance of God’s will helps me accept God’s will in my life. In many of the Gospel stories, Jesus saw people’s faith, and he was moved by it.”

Dearing is also moved by the families and caregivers of the people who come to a Caring Place.

“They have inspired me by the way they continually demonstrate unconditional support, care and mercy toward their loved ones. I know that much of what they do for their loved ones probably goes unseen and is unheralded. But our heavenly Father ‘who sees what is done in secret will reward them’” (Mt 6:4).

She stresses that approach of mercy and compassion is something she learned from physical therapy students, viewing it as the foundation of every encounter with patients and their families.

“IT’s the approach she hopes everyone will embrace during this extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy.”

“My prayer during this Year of Mercy is that each of us discovers how to actively show mercy in very concrete ways in our daily lives. Often it is in those small acts of mercy that we can make all the difference.

“We will come to recognize and discover that these small acts of mercy aren’t so small after all.”

(The Criterion continues to invite our readers to share their stories of how their lives have been graced by the mercy of God and other people—and how that mercy has made a difference.

We are also seeking stories from our readers who have shown mercy and forgiveness to others—and how that act of mercy and forgiveness has made a difference to the person offering it.

Please send your stories and responses to assistant editor James Shangraw by e-mail at js@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 11 W. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached.)
U.S. bishop says Palestinians in Cremisan Valley ‘have lost hope’

**BEIT JALLA, West Bank (CNS)—A U.S. bishop says the land seized by Israelis in this agricultural valley adjacent to the village of Beit Jalla to make room for the Israeli separation barrier ‘have lost hope.’**

“My hope is they have the space and energy to work and live in peace and flourish,” he said. “Their hope is to be photographed with the bishops.”

Bishop Cantu. The prayer visited the site where construction has started and a smoothened road snaking across part of the valley. Meeting with Cremisan Valley landowner Nahileh Abu Eed, 76, who had 15 trees uprooted and lost free access to his remaining agricultural land, the bishop acknowledged the situation was not “simply politics,” but “about people’s lives and about their dignity,” said Bishop Cantu.

“They had held out hope the land would be saved,” he said. “Getting their hopes up (only to have them broken) does no good.”

Bishop Cantu. The elder Abu Eed told the bishops their visit was a sign of hope they were sharing in the difficult situation of the Palestinians.

“The violence has not hurt tourists and pilgrims. They have stayed here and there, but generally pilgrimages are very safe. It is most important to come on pilgrimage to support the local community here when tourists are staying away,” he said.

“Christians are effectively being squeezed out and understandably at any opportunity they can, they [leave] because of the checkpoints, their inability to reach their jobs so they can make a living. In Gaza they can’t get out to visit family,” he added. “One job is to encourage them to stay here if they can, and to advocate for them politically so they have the space and energy to work and live in peace and flourish.”

Among the other bishops who took part in the Holy Land Coordination were Bishop Declan Lang of Bristol, England; Auxiliary Bishop William Kenney of Birmingham, England; Bishop Lionel Gendron of St. Jean-Longueuil, Quebec; Bishop John McAravey of Dromore, Ireland, and Bishop William Nolan of Galloway, Scotland.

After two days of visits in the West Bank, the bishops left on Jan. 10 for Jordan, where they were to meet and celebrate Mass with Iraqi and Syrian refugees.

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**What was in the news on Jan. 14, 1966? A new name for the Rhythm Service, prayer in public schools discussed, and the Index of Forbidden Books**

**By Brandon A. Evans**

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

Here are some of the items found in the Jan. 14, 1966, issue of The Criterion:

- **Commissions established to implement the council**
- **Addresses diplomats: Pope Paul VI pledges all-out peace effort**
- **Mission ‘project’: Seccina students aid refugee families**
- **Rhythm Service expands programs, changes name**
- **Editorial: Prayer furor**
- **Pontiff ordains 62 priests in rare ceremony**
- **Wounded priest faces prosecution**
- **Obituary: St. Meinrad monk scores plastics breakthrough**
- **Holy Name vies with St. Gabriel for Quiz title**
- **Cardinal Wyszynski denies Red charges**
- **Cardinal Spalding declares ‘no more’**
- **Nothing official on Fr. De Pauw, Baltimore says**
- **Holy Name vies with St. Gabriel for Quiz title**
- **Two universities given Ford grants**
- **Cardinal Wyszynski denies Red charges**
- **Cardinal Spalding declares ‘no more’**
- **Nothing official on Fr. De Pauw, Baltimore says**

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**CATHOLIC DOCTRINE**

‘VATICAN CITY—The Index of Forbidden Books as it now stands may become ‘simply an historical document,’ an official of the recently renamed Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith said. The official said that in giving a new shape and name to the former Congregation of the Holy Office, Pope Paul VI abolished the office of the center of books. However, he did specify that the reorganized congregation would still examine books, and if necessary disapprove of them formally.”

- **Asks interfaith effort on behalf of the laity**
- **Pontiff ordains 62 priests in rare ceremony**
- **Indianapolis Brother serving unique educational internship**
- **Wounded priest faces prosecution**
- **Missionary bishop ‘saddened by queen’**
- **Parish to host Rights session**
- **No approval given: Did not back Traditionalists, Catholic Spellman declares”**
- **PONTIFF MAY STILL VISIT POLAND, OFFICIALS FEEL**
- **Cardinal Wyszynski denies Red charges”**
- **Cardinal Spalding declares ‘no more’**
- **Nothing official on Fr. De Pauw, Baltimore says**
- **Holy Name vies with St. Gabriel for Quiz title**
- **Two universities given Ford grants**
- **Cardinal Barrett McGurn is speaker at the Woods**
Pharmacists Ask Supreme Court for review of conscience on contraceptives

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Two pharmacists and a family-owned pharmacy have asked the Supreme Court to review a Washington state law that would force pharmacists to sell abortion-inducing contraceptives.

The pharmacists, Margo Thelen and Rhonda Mesler, and the Stormans family have been battling the issue in court since 2007, at first blocking the law’s implementation the day before it was scheduled to go into effect.

The case in July when a three-judge panel of 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a 2012 court victory that would have permitted them to refuse to fill prescriptions for emergency contraception drugs such as Plan B and ella, and to refer customers to other pharmacies that would fill them.

At the time, the pharmacists said they would appeal the ruling to the full 9th Circuit. But the request before the high court, submitted on Jan. 4, asked the justices to look at the case.

“The Ninth Circuit reversed, ignoring the district court’s extensive factual findings and adopting an exceptionally narrow interpretation of the free exercise clause. It held that any law can satisfy the free exercise clause, no matter how clearly it targets religious conduct in practice, as long as it might also be applied to non-religious conduct in theory,” said the petition.

It added, “For over 40 years, Congress and the states have protected the right of pharmacists, doctors, nurses and other health professionals to step aside when asked to participate in what they consider to be an abortion. The [federal appellate court] decision ... authorizes a dangerous intrusion on this right, which can only exacerbate intense cultural conflict over these issues.”

“The law is absurd to force a pharmacy to sell drugs against their conscience when there are over 30 pharmacies within five miles that already sell the exact same drugs,” said a Jan. 4 statement by Luke Miles that already sell the exact same drugs. “This law does nothing but punish people of faith.”

By an 8-0 vote, the appellate court in November rejected the state’s argument that it was not the law itself, but the instructions regarding interpretation of the state law, that was at issue. The instruction approved by the court allowed pharmacists to refuse to fill a prescription if they believed it would cause a patient to have an abortion.

But in the pharmacists’ case, it added, they are “Christians who believe that life is sacred from the moment of conception. Because of their religious beliefs, petitioners cannot stock or dispense the morning-after or week-after pills—collectively, ‘Plan B’—which the FDA has recognized can prevent implantation of an embryo. ... Dispensing these drugs would make them guilty of destroying human life.”

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—Luke Goodrich, deputy general counsel of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty

WATSON (CNS)—Go out and seek the signs God is offering everyone, he said.

“It is only by receiving this divine light that Christians can be true to their vocation of proclaiming the Gospel, which is not proselytism, not a mere profession and ‘not simply one option among many,’ but an obligation, he said.

‘I am the Bread of Life’

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“It is only by receiving this divine light that Christians can be true to their vocation of proclaiming the Gospel, which is not proselytism, not a mere profession and ‘not simply one option among many,’ but an obligation, he said.

‘I am the Bread of Life’

Pope Francis

Pope Francis says

Seek out signs God offers everyone for finding Jesus, Pope Francis says

‘It is absurd to force a pharmacy to sell drugs against their conscience when there are over 30 pharmacies within five miles that already sell the exact same drugs. This law does nothing but punish people of faith.’

—Luke Goodrich, deputy general counsel of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty

If your Medicare Advantage plan is leaving the area, consider the value of Humana.

Humana is a Medicare Advantage HMO, PPO, and HFS competitor of a Medicare prescription drug plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in all Humana plans depends on contract renewal. Each salesperson will present alternative plans. For information about a Medicare Vacations plan, call the Plan’s Customer Service Department at the phone number above.

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Humana Medicare Advantage plans may help you save money on local and national prescription drug costs. After nearly 30 years offering Medicare plans, our first priority is to still help you get the benefits you want at an affordable price.

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Faith Alive!

Alleviating forms of hunger is a key work of mercy

By David Gibson

Hunger as a byproduct of war and conflict all too often helps to drive individuals and families out of their homelands, and into unfamiliar, unfriendly territories where they rediscover themselves as homeless, lost refugees. Their struggle continues in this new environment. Will they be left to feel not only unwanted but also degraded? The physical hunger that gnaws away inside people is tragic. Other human hungers demand to be fed too, such as the hunger for an education that enables people to find their way in 21st century societies and generates a new sense of hope in life. People hunger for a secure home, good friends, an answer to heartfelt prayers and love. How is mercy shown to people whose lives are dominated by a great hunger? This is a basic question of the Church’s current Holy Year of Mercy. I suspect that in the face of profound human hunger, Christians tend to feel not so much merciless as powerless. They wonder whether the little they can do will matter at all. Merciful people do not have the solution for every large, painful problem they encounter. But this does not suggest that people intent on living mercifully should give up on that goal. There is a path of mercy that Pope Francis encourages believers to follow. It is an essential path for Christians, he believes. “The mercy of God is his loving concern for each one of us,” the pope wrote in an April 2015 document called a “Bull of Indiction” proclaiming the Holy Year of Mercy. God “feels responsible; that is, he desires our well-being, and he wants to see us happy, full of joy and peaceful,” the pope said. That, he stressed, “is the path that the merciful love of Christians must also travel. As the Father loves, so do his children. Just as he is merciful, so are we called to be merciful to each other.”

Thus, the steps along the path of mercy point in the direction of “loving concern” for others, a sense of responsibility for their situations and a desire for their well-being and happiness. Perhaps this path of mercy represents a sort of starting point for living mercifully. Right from the start, however, it is clear that the call of mercy is demanding and that its demands are not easily met. If people of faith travel the path of mercy intent on assuaging the physical hunger that weakens bodies and shuts many millions off from the promise of the future, they are bound in a world like ours to encounter obstacles. Physical hunger wreaks disastrous consequences. According to 2015 statistics from the United Nations’ World Food Program, 795 million people in the world do not have enough food to lead a healthy active life, and up to 3.1 million children die each year because of poor nutrition. Naturally, malnutrition is hunger’s companion. Malnutrition’s wretched effects mean that some 17 million children “are born underweight annually, the result of inadequate nutrition before and during pregnancy,” according to the World Food Program. The World Food Program observes that “a hungry mind cannot concentrate, a hungry body does not take initiative, a hungry child loses all desire to play and study.” It concerns Pope Francis that our planet’s citizens might grow acclimated to the hunger and poor nutrition that are the common lot of so many. In a January 2015 interview, he described two adjacent parts of Buenos Aires in his native Argentina, one where hunger was common, the other where food, to say the least, was abundant.

There was, he explained, a “new area called Puerto Madero, up to the train station, and then the start of the Villas Misericors, poor people, one after another. On one side, there are 36 upscale restaurants. If you eat there, you pay dearly. Yet over there, there is hunger. One right next to the other. And we have a tendency of getting used to this.” Do people slide unwittingly into indifference when it comes to the truth about hunger? In his message for the 2016 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis warned that “indifference and silence lead to complicity whenever we stand by as people are dying of suffocation, starvation, violence.”

Mercy calls for action. But surely any action I take today or tomorrow will be a mere drop in the ocean of human hunger. Do I care? Yes. Do I really know what I could or should do? Maybe not. But mercy needs to begin somewhere. I could begin walking with others along the path of mercy that Pope Francis describes in order to see where it leads. Isn’t this what the Holy Year of Mercy suggests?

Consider something else Pope Francis said in his World Day of Migrants and Refugees message: “Today, more than in the past, the Gospel of mercy troubles our consciences, prevents us from taking the suffering of others for granted and points out ways of responding which, grounded in the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, find practical expression in works of spiritual and corporal mercy.”

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.)

The Bible shows that God calls his followers to feed the hungry

By Daniel S. Mulhall

Feeding the hungry is one of the corporal works of mercy. This teaching of Jesus comes from the Gospel of St. Matthew where, in a parable, Jesus identifies himself with those who suffer from hunger: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink” (Mt 25:35).

The responsibility to provide food and drink for those in need is found throughout the Old and New Testaments. For example, in Deuteronomy, God instructs the Israelites to share freely the gifts of the land with those in need: “The land will never lack for needy persons; that is why I command you: ‘Open your hand freely to your poor and to your needy kin in your land’” (Dt 15:11).

In Deuteronomy, we are also told that a part of every harvest belongs to the poor: “When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it. . . . When you knock down the fruit of your olive trees, you shall not go over the branches a second time. . . . When you pick your grapes, you shall not go over the vineyard a second time; let what remains be for the resident alien, the orphan and the widow” (Dt 24:19-21).

This practice is known as gleaning. We do this, Deuteronomy says, “so that the Lord, your God, may bless you in all your undertakings” (Dt 24:19).

There are moments in Scripture where feeding the hungry takes on a miraculous nature. For example, in 1 Kings 17:10-15, the prophet Elijah repays a woman’s generosity by promising that her “jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry” (1 Kgs 17:14) until a famine ends.

In 2 Kings 4:42-44, the prophet Elisha feeds the masses on 20 barley loaves. Then, of course, there is the example of Jesus feeding 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish (Lk 9:10-17).

What is important to understand in all of these readings is that there is more going on than simply providing nourishment to someone in need. Each of these events shows God’s amazing power at work. When we feed the hungry, we come in touch with the divine. We participate in God’s ongoing work of mercy, which each of us experiences in some way.

When we open our hearts and act with generosity toward those in need, we allow God to work through us. And when that happens, amazing things occur far beyond our own limited imaginations, as Abraham discovered when he fed two travelers in Genesis 18:1-15 and became the father of a nation. The person you are feeding is a representative of God.

As Jesus says in the Gospel of Matthew, “Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mt 25:40).

Now that is food for thought.

(Daniel S. Mulhall is a catechist. He lives in Laurel, Maryland.)
From the Editor Emeritus John F. Finck

Medieval Church: Seven popes lived in Avignon

(Twenty-first in a series of columns)

Catholics in the 14th century became accustomed to having the seat of the Church reside in Avignon, modern France, instead of in Rome. The seven popes who did so, from 1309 to 1377, are known as the Avignon Popes.

Pope Clement V, who moved the curia to Avignon, is usually said to have placed the blame for what King Philip IV of France wanted.

He conscripted the nucleus of the College of Cardinals, creating 10 new cardinals, nine of them French (including found him doing penance). After Clement died in 1314, it took the cardinals more than two years to agree on a successor, finally choosing a man who took the name John XXII, a friar who nevertheless reigned for 18 years.

During this time, King Louis IV of Bavaria marched into Rome, had himself deposed, and had the Roman clergy elect a successor, finally choosing a man who had been bishop of Avignon.

Pope Benedict XIII was an Englishman and was declared Pope John XVII. He was forced to return to Avignon by the papal curia, which wanted him to remain a successor, finally choosing a man who had been bishop of Avignon.

Pope Gregory XII also lived in Avignon.

Carmen/Royal Times Sometimes we can learn from what’s not exactly true

Some time ago, there was an article in the local newspaper about Dick the Bruiser, a popular professional wrestler who was acclaimed as a national television icon in loud, violent and often funny matches against hated opponents. One of the wrestlers was an extraordinary good guy, and one the bad guy, and their contest followed an up-and-down battle.

They were supposed to be fights-to-the-death, in which the two guys would destroy each other permanently. Until next time. The thing was, there was always a next time with a loser rising from the dead. Until last year. This past Christmas.

10-year-old grandson from my late wife Monica’s aunt, and all the recipes, dishes and dinner favorites that have been handed down from one generation to the next.

I have to come to realize there’s more to family’s good health than just the food. There are memories, too. There are stories. Histories. Legends. It seems a family tree can’t be pruned, except by pruning from nearly every branch.

Sharing them, or at least talking about them, is important. It’s an obligation, that I want to continue so that my grandchildren know something about their parents and grandparents. It’s not just the childhood, about my life more than half a century ago. And about their grandmother’s parents and grandparents, of their childhood and her life.

My grandchildren seem amazed and amused that as a child, I never tasted sweet and sour pork or a quesadilla. On the other hand, I know they’ll never take for “true” cake because at some point (my family thinks), the company altered Cool Whip’s ingredients.

And my grandchildren will never know the hot, greasy, sweet goodness of my grandmother’s fried in lard (yes, lard) with bacon fat added for extra flavor.

I explain to them that I was born and spent my early formative years in Iowa (probably of the Snickers salad, which includes cubed Granny Smith apples, Cool Whip and chunks of Snickers), while my parents were growing up eating Japanese dumplings. With all this in mind—and before I have to go back to the good old days: a few points to keep in mind when cooking and baking with your children and grandchildren, your parents, and your nephews. First, a battered recipe box or nearly-failing-apart cookbook is a wonderful conversation piece, and a source for an old favorite dish or dessert you haven’t thought of in years.

Kids seem learn that knowing how to cook (and bake) is a practical skill with delicious rewards. Children in a kitchen are more or less like a happy mess, a memorable mess, a mess your children or grandchildren may one day be describing to their children or grandchildren as they try to duplicate your famous family recipe.

(Bill Dodd writes for Catholic News Service.)
Sunday Readings

Sunday, Jan. 17, 2016

- Isaiah 62:1-6
- 2 Corinthians 12:4-11
- John 2:1-11

The Book of Isaiah furnishes this weekend’s Liturgy of the Word with its first reading. Knowing the history of ancient Israel helps in understanding this reading. The Kingdom of Israel, carefully crafted by King David and given glory by David’s son, Solomon, split after Solomon’s death in a power duel among would-be successors. Two kingdoms then formed. Weakened, dismembered and chronically assure as to national mission, the two kingdoms were easy prey to aggressive outsiders. In the east such was the great Babylonian Empire, centered in Babylon, located in modern Iraq, no longer an important city. Militarily strong, with aggressive ambitions, the Babylonians easily overwhelmed God’s people in both their kingdoms. Mary died too soon to be taken to Babylon, not exactly as hostages but certainly not as honored guests. These displaced Hebrews, and then their children, yearned to go home. Generations passed. Finally, Babylonia itself fell to its more powerful neighbor, the Persians. Cyrus, the Persian king, allowed the Hebrew exiles to go home. The author of this section of Isaiah saw the defeat and exile of God’s people as the direct result of their sins. Yet he also assured them that God still loved them. He provided for them in their exile, and used Cyrus as an instrument to give them new life.

St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians

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St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians

By Thomas J. Rillo

The Church has no objection to people having hyphenated surnames

God is Hope and Optimism

By Thomas J. Rillo

Our God is both hope and optimism for us.

God is Hope and Optimism

Hope in God is the harmony of our soul with God’s life, and it will not abandon us. Optimism in that God is omnipotent in all things.

Peace in the hope God gives us is like music to us. God is Hope and Optimism.

Hope that if we listen to God’s voice is as well in optimism in that we wait for God to act in His time. We learn to act not in haste in hope that God will listen. We are optimistic in the waiting in God’s own time.

God is Hope and Optimism.

Hope in that we are at the moment is His will. Optimistic in that God knows what is best for us.

Hope that our journey to God will bring us to heaven.

Hope that we put the heavenly realm first and trust in God.

God is Hope and Optimism.

(Thomas J. Rillo is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington and a Benedicite oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad.)

 Daily Readings

Monday, January 18
1 Samuel 15:16-23
Psalm 50:8-9, 16b-17, 21, 23
Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday, January 19
1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 89:20-22, 27-28
Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday, January 20
St. Fabian, pope and martyr
St. Sebastian, martyr
1 Samuel 17:22-33, 37, 40-51
Psalm 144:1b, 2, 9-10
Mark 3:1-6

Thursday, January 21
St. Vincent, deacon and martyr
1 Samuel 18:6-9, 19-17
Psalm 56:2-3, 9-13
Mark 3:7-12

Friday, January 22
Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children
1 Samuel 24:23-31
Psalm 57:2-4, 6, 11
Mark 3:13-19

Saturday, January 23
St. Vincent de Paul and martyr
St. Marianna Cope, virgin
2 Samuel 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27
Psalm 80:2-3, 5-7
Mark 3:20-21

Sunday, January 24
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Nehemiah 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19:8-9, 10-11
1 Corinthians 12:12-30
or 1 Corinthians 12:14-27
Luke 1:1-4, 14-21

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Church has no objection to people having hyphenated surnames

Q

My Journey to God

God is Hope and Optimism

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God is Hope and Optimism.

(Thomas J. Rillo is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington and a Benedicite oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad.)

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Brother of Elinor Kelnhofer.

Immaculate Conception, Aurora, BISHOP, Michael

Susan Hendrickson and Roberta Crum-Hieftje, Stephanie Eberle, of Jennifer Barnes, Courtney 75, St. Charles Borromeo,

Lawrence and William Becht.

St. Mary, Navilleton, Dec. 25.

nine. Great-grandfather of five.

Dec. 27. Husband of Phyllis 78, St. John the Baptist, Starlight,

Those are separate obituaries on elsewhere in this Criterion.

have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

Sisters and brothers are

included here, unless they are

asked.

BODENBENDER, Norman.


KAVANAUGH, V. Leo, 90, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Indiana. Nov. 29. Son of Thomas and Anna (Oglesby) Kavanaugh. Grandfather of two.


HOLLAND, Kathryn, 55, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Nov. 29. Aunt of two.


Franciscan Alliance opens its first inpatient hospice facility on south side of Indianapolis

By Sean Gallagher

The day after the Church’s Holy Year of Mercy was inaugurated on Dec. 8, a new effort to show mercy to the dying and their families began when the first patient was admitted to Franciscan Hospice House on the south side of Indianapolis.

It is a ministry of Franciscan St. Francis Health and is located on the network’s Indianapolis campus.

On Jan. 6, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin praised the mercy that is at the heart of the facility’s mission when he blessed its chapel, celebrated the first Eucharist there, and visited with its staff and some of its patients and their relatives.

“I think [Pope] Francis would really be happy, because in his letter on mercy he says that mercy has to be concrete,” Archbishop Tobin said in closing remarks at the Mass. “It’s not a theory. We have to practice it. And this is a place of mercy.”

Franciscan Hospice House was made possible through the generosity of many donors who contributed over the past decade to a campaign guided by the Franciscan Alliance Foundation Central Indiana that raised $10.3 million.

The facility features 12 patient suites, a chapel and rooms for the families of patients, including a large kitchen, living rooms and a play room for children and youths.

Franciscan Alliance, a Midwest health care network that includes three hospitals in central Indiana, is a ministry of the Mishawaka, Ind.-based Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration.

It has been involved in hospice care for more than a century, but Franciscan Hospice House is its first inpatient hospice facility.

Kristina Basicker, director of the facility, said it can serve hospice patients who do not have caregivers at home that can provide the level of care that they need. The facility can also house hospice patients for five days as a respite for caregivers who are friends or relatives.

Franciscan Hospice House, however, primarily cares for patients near the end of life who need hospital-level care.

“They have symptoms that are out of control and can’t be controlled in the patient’s home environment,” Basicker said. “They might have agitation or seizures or pain that is out of control, nausea or vomiting.”

Although an inpatient hospice facility is new to Franciscan Alliance, Basicker said that it is in harmony with its original mission.

“It certainly meets the mission as far as us being stewards of Christ and giving that type of loving care,” Basicker said. “Our staff, with our chaplains, supports the [patients] and their families. That’s a huge part of what hospice is.”

In his homily during the first Mass in the facility’s chapel, Archbishop Tobin noted that “God will reveal himself in this house.”

“God will reveal himself in the particular care that is given to people who will come here,” he said. “They recognize that they’re not a piece of meat or a motor. They’re a human being made of body, soul, mind and spirit, calling for a pastoral care that recognizes and embraces all of those facets.

“God will reveal himself because preparing for death is often a time for healing of relationships in families and restoring family unity. God will reveal himself to the people who work here, because the dying teach us so much about acceptance, about trust and, finally, hope in the final revelation of God when we meet God face to face.”

After the Mass, Franciscan Sister Marcene Franchez, vice president of mission integration for Franciscan St. Francis Health, spoke of the hospice facility and the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi.

“This is what we’re here for, to see babies being born and now to provide a place where the terminally ill can be with their families,” said Sister Marcene. “I think this is what St. Francis would want us to do, to be here at the end of life, especially in these days when you hear so much negativity about how we should live and die.”

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Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin tours Franciscan Hospice House on Jan. 6 in Indianapolis with Beth Keultjes, chief operating officer and vice president for Franciscan Visiting Nurse Service, which oversees hospice programs for Franciscan St. Francis Health.
Bishops’ conference files amicus brief on behalf of Little Sisters of the Poor

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The general counsel for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in support of the Little Sisters of the Poor, who have asked the court to determine whether the Little Sisters of the Poor and other religiously oriented non-profit religious entities may choose to avoid the federal contraceptive mandate without imposing a requirement to provide contraceptive, sterilization and abortifacient coverage in employee health insurance.

The USCCB brief argues that the mandate not only damages religious freedom, but society as a whole.

“If the petitioners abide by their religious beliefs, they are standing up not just for themselves and the elderly poor they serve, but for the rights of all people of faith,” the brief said. The brief also highlighted the major contributions made by Catholic and other religious charities and social services by assisting millions of people every year. Seven other Catholic and non-Catholic organizations signed onto the USCCB brief: Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities; Catholic Relief Services; Family Research Council; Institutional Religious Freedom Alliance; The Cardinal Newman Society; Thomas More Society; and World Vision.

Other amicus briefs were filed by leaders from other faiths and members of Congress.

“We have great admiration for the Little Sisters who are standing up not just for themselves and the elderly poor they serve, but for the rights of all people of faith, including Jews,” said Rabbi Mitchell Rocklin in a statement. “Their courage is an example to all of us.”

Archbishop Joseph M. Tobin on Jan. 5 blessing the Office of Catechesis in the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis using a prayer recalling the magi. Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, looks on as the archbishop writes Dóxα συμβραγμός εἰς τῷ Νέῳ Χριστῷ, a prayer for the New Year. Follow the Office of Catechesis on Twitter at @indycatechesis. (lanedipted photo)