



The Criterion

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Bridging the racial divide

Bust of Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter is unveiled at Irish coffee event, page 7.

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Rejoice in the Lord

Good Friday is the pathway to Easter joy, page 5.



Faith Alive!

Christ's Resurrection is God's 'ultimate act of mercy,' page 11.



He is risen

The Risen Christ is depicted in the painting "Resurrection" by 15th-century Italian master Andrea Mantegna. Easter, the chief feast in the Church's liturgical calendar, commemorates Christ's resurrection from the dead. Easter is on March 27 this year. (CNS/Bridgeman Images)

In his passion, Jesus reveals the God of mercy, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Just as the crowds and government officials tried to dodge responsibility for Jesus' fate after he was arrested, so today too many individuals and countries want someone else to care for refugees fleeing violence and migrants seeking a better life, Pope Francis said.

Preaching about the story of Jesus' passion and death on Palm Sunday, March 20, the pope said that in addition to betrayal and injustice, Jesus experienced indifference as the crowds who had hailed his entry into Jerusalem, Herod, Pilate and even his own disciples washed their hands of him.

"This makes me think of so many ... migrants and refugees for whom many do not want to assume responsibility for their fate," the pope said in his homily.

Greece and other European countries have been overwhelmed by refugees, particularly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. An agreement between Turkey and the European Union went into effect on Palm Sunday to prevent refugees from attempting dangerous sea crossings from Turkey, and to stem the continuing flow of refugees into Europe. Under the agreement, most refugees arriving in Greece will be returned to Turkey. For each refugee returned, one who has not left Turkey should be resettled in the European Union.

Carrying a woven palm branch, known as a "palmurello," Pope Francis led the Palm Sunday Mass with more than 60,000 people gathered on a warm spring morning in St. Peter's Square.

Young people from Poland and around the world assisted at the Mass, carrying long palm branches in the procession and proclaiming the Scripture readings. With Krakow, Poland, set to host the international gathering of World Youth Day with Pope Francis in July, the day's second reading was in Polish.

At the end of Mass, before reciting the *Angelus*, Pope Francis expressed his hope that in July many young Catholics would converge on Krakow, "homeland of St. John Paul II, who began World Youth Day."

The Palm Sunday liturgy began with a commemoration of Jesus entering Jerusalem to acclamations of "Hosanna" from the crowd. In his homily, the pope said, "We have made that enthusiasm our own; by waving our olive and palm branches, we have expressed our praise and our joy, our desire to receive Jesus who comes to us."

The commemoration is not just about a historical event, the pope said. "Just as he entered Jerusalem, so he desires to enter our cities and our lives. As he did in the Gospel, riding on a donkey, so too he comes to us in humility."

Pope Francis prayed that nothing would "prevent us from finding in him the source of our joy, true joy, which abides and brings peace; for it is Jesus alone who saves us from the snares of sin, death, fear and sadness."

On the cross, at the height of his humiliation, Jesus reveals God's identity as the God of mercy, Pope Francis said, adding that the cross is God's "cathedra," the place from which he teaches people all they need to know about him.



Pope Francis carries palm fronds in procession during Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on March 20. (CNS photos/Paul Haring)

"He forgives those who are crucifying him, he opens the gates of paradise to the repentant thief, and he touches the heart of the centurion," he said.

Jesus' life and death, the pope said, was a story of how, out of love, he "emptied and humbled" himself to save humanity.

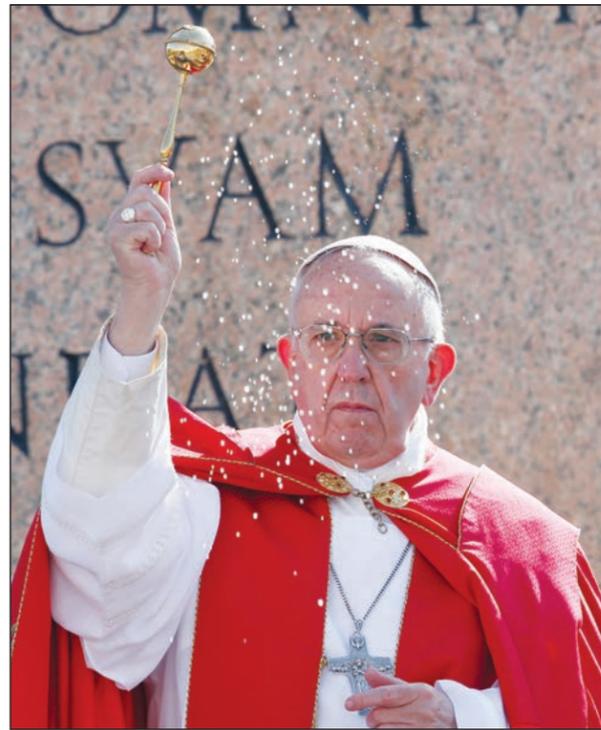
In Holy Week, he said, the first sign of Jesus' endless love is the scene of him washing the disciples' feet, "as only servants would have done."

"He shows us by example that we need to allow his love to reach us, a love which bends down to us," Pope Francis said. People must accept Jesus' love, experience his tenderness, and give witness to the fact that "true love consists in concrete service."

"Hanging from the wood of the cross," the pope said, Jesus faced his last temptation, which was to come down from the cross, "to conquer evil by might and to show the face of a powerful and invincible God."

Instead, Jesus "takes upon himself all our pain that he may redeem it, bringing light to darkness, life to death, love to hatred," the pope said. †

Right, Pope Francis blesses with holy water as he leads a service at the obelisk at the beginning of Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on March 20.



Easter liturgies are set at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and Saint Meinrad Archabbey

Easter liturgies at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, and the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad are open to the public.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin is scheduled to be the principal celebrant at the Easter Vigil Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis at 8:30 p.m. on March 26.

Starting times for all liturgies at the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad are Central Time.

Due to space constraints, *The Criterion* is only able to

list these Easter liturgical schedules. For information about liturgies at parishes or other religious communities, contact them individually.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

- March 26, Holy Saturday—8:30 p.m. Easter Vigil.
- March 27, Easter Sunday—10:30 a.m. Easter Sunday Mass.

Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln

- March 26, Holy Saturday—5 p.m. Vespers; 8 p.m. Easter Vigil.
- March 27, Easter Sunday—8:30 a.m. Lauds; 11:30 a.m. Midday Prayer; 5 p.m. Vespers.
- March 28, Easter Monday—9:30 a.m. Mass; 5 p.m. Vespers.
- March 29, Easter Tuesday—7:30 a.m. Mass; 5 p.m. Vespers. †



Pope Francis' prayer intentions for April

- **Universal: Small Farmers**—That small farmers may receive a just reward for their precious labor.
- **Evangelization: African Christians**—That Christians in Africa may give witness to love and faith in Jesus Christ amid political-religious conflicts.

(To see Pope Francis' monthly intentions, go to www.ewtn.com/faith/papalPrayer.htm.) †



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Interfaith panelists say environment is ‘an issue that affects all of us’

By Natalie Hoefler

Christianity, Islam and Judaism may have different theology and doctrines, but there is one tenet these and other faith traditions hold in common: care for creation.

This was made clear during the Interfaith Voices for the Earth: Our Common Home panel discussion on March 12 at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin served as one of the panelists.

He was joined by Rabbi Paula Winnig, executive director of the Jewish Bureau of Education in Indianapolis, and Hazem Bata, general secretary of the Islamic Society of North America, headquartered in Plainfield. Rev. Dr. Matthew Myer Boulton, president of Christian Theological Seminary, served as the moderator for the discussion.

Each spoke about their faith tradition’s teaching on the environment, then fielded questions from the audience.

In explaining the role that care for the environment plays in Islam, Bata stated that the Quran—the sacred book of Islam—contains more than 700 “direct and indirect references to the care of the environment.

“God says he has created us as trustees for the Earth,” Bata continued. “That’s what it says in the Quran. There are rights and responsibilities that come with that. We have to preserve the Earth. It is our obligation.”

Bata shared a traditional Muslim story that embodies his faith’s approach to overconsumption. In the story, a man was using much water to clean up before one of the

five times Muslims pray during the day.

“So the prophet [Mohammed] walked by and he said, ‘What are you doing? You are using so much water!’ And [the man] said, ‘Can there be excess in something so noble?’ The prophet said, ‘Yes. Just use what is enough and nothing more.’”

Rabbi Winnig spoke next, first mentioning how the Sabbath—Saturday, the day of rest and worship in the Jewish faith—demands rest for all of God’s creatures.

“That is the fundamental beginning of the Jewish environmental view, that everything has a reason of purpose and is a being of importance,” she said.

She pointed out that the Bible “actually has a blueprint in it for being a good farmer, for being a good steward and taking care of the Earth. If you follow most of the biblical guidelines for caring for trees, animals and land, you’re going to be pretty safe as a good steward of the Earth.”

One unique aspect of care for creation to the Jewish faith, said Rabbi Winnig, is the concept of kosher food.

“Kosher is translated as clean or unclean,” she explained. “But clean does not mean clean versus dirty. It means clean as in proper, suitable to eat. ...

“The most famous of those [kosher laws] is the area of kosher slaughter of animals. It is a very different act to have someone who is carefully trained to look an animal in the eye, as they must do in order for the procedure to be kosher, understanding where that animal came from.”

She, too, shared a story from her faith tradition that addressed care for creation. It involved an old man planting a carob tree—a tree whose nutrient-rich fruit does not come to bear for 70 years.

“[A man] asked him, ‘Why are you bothering planting this tree? You’re not going to see its fruit.’ And the old man says, ‘As my ancestors planted for me, so I plant for the generations to come.’ May we all be planters for the generations to come,” she concluded.

During his address, rather than discuss Catholic social teaching on care for the creation in general, Archbishop Tobin identified four main contributions of Pope Francis’ recent encyclical, “*Laudato Si’*,” on Care for Our Common Home.”

First, he explained to the interfaith audience what an encyclical is, and how it

is received “as an authentic teaching of our faith tradition.”

“Oftentimes, it is simply to those in the Catholic community,” Archbishop Tobin said. “This one he’s addressing to everybody, all people of good will ... because we’re talking about an issue that affects all of us.”

The first of the four contributions of “*Laudato Si’*” that the archbishop identified is that “the spiritual perspective is now part of the discussion on the environment. ... Up until now, I think it’s been framed mainly from political, scientific and economic language. ... [The encyclical] invites others to at least listen to the religious point of view, particularly its understanding of creation as holy and a precious gift from God to be revered by all men and women.”

Next, he noted how the encyclical emphasizes that the poor are far more affected by climate change than those of other classes.

“One of my favorite analogies for today’s discrepancy is the jet plane,” Archbishop Tobin said. “There are people on the plane who live very well in the smaller part of the front of the plane. But that living well is predicated on the misery of us in cattle class.”

He used a real-life example to demonstrate how climate change negatively affects the poor by pointing to the Philippines, where people “suffer such a natural disaster from a very unnatural cause, the cause being the deforestation of the country.

“Where did those trees disappear? A lot of them went to first-world countries for their lumber industries.”

In his third point, Archbishop Tobin said that the encyclical confirmed the place of the environment in Catholic social teaching, a teaching informed by both Catholic theology and scientific findings.

“Against those who argue that a papal encyclical on the environment has no real authority—and these are Catholics who are arguing that—Pope Francis states that this encyclical is now added to the body of the Church’s social teaching. Again, an encyclical has a certain weight, and that’s why people were fighting against its authority.”

The final contribution of “*Laudato Si’*” that the archbishop identified was that it is not just for Catholics.

“A global dialogue is needed because there are no uniform recipes,” Archbishop Tobin said. “What works in one region may not in another. Catholics must act in solidarity with others,” including “politicians, economists and more.”

When the panel was asked by a member of the audience to identify steps that can be taken to address environmental issues, Bata was the first to respond.

“In America, we live in a consumer-driven society,” he said. “We need to change how we think as a country. We have to apply it first individually in our own lives ... then start applying it on a larger scale. ... We have to start passing laws on this issue. This is where interfaith coalitions can do a lot.”

Rabbi Winnig agreed, noting that “the problem is the will. ... It’s a readjustment of our thinking of what’s enough and what is just.”

Along those lines, one practical step Archbishop Tobin identified is fasting.

“We need to say ‘no’ to this notion that we never have enough,” he said. “All of our traditions have the tradition of fasting. ... Maybe we want to fast from overconsumption, or at least ask ourselves, ‘How much do I really need to live a human life?’”

Archbishop Tobin also encouraged individuals and faith communities to go to the website of Hoosier Interfaith Power & Light (H-IPL)—a co-sponsor of the event along with the Sisters of St. Francis in Oldenburg—to find out how they can implement best “green” practices.

According to its website www.hoosieripl.org, H-IPL works with all faith communities to educate on means and resources to promote care for creation,



Rabbi Paula Winnig, left, executive director of the Jewish Bureau of Education in Indianapolis, and Rev. Dr. Matthew Myer Boulton, president of Christian Theological Seminary, listen as Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin addresses participants in the Interfaith Voices for the Earth: Our Common Home panel discussion on March 12 at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)



Hazem Bata, general secretary of the Plainfield-based Islamic Society of North America, smiles as Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin answers a question during the Interfaith Voices for the Earth: Our Common Home panel discussion on March 12 at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin talks with Sharon Horvath, a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, after addressing a multi-faith audience at the Interfaith Voices for the Earth: Our Common Home panel discussion on March 12 at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. Horvath is also a member of her parish’s Creation Care Ministry, which encouraged Hoosier Interfaith Power & Light to co-sponsor an interfaith panel discussion on care for the environment with the Sisters of St. Francis in Oldenburg.

offers tools and programs on how to conserve and monitor energy in homes and church buildings, and advocates at the state and local level for environmentally sustainable policies and actions.

“H-IPL was wanting to find a forum where we could bring together people of various faith traditions, where we could interact to try to find clarity for those things we have in common, and to identify the uniqueness of each faith tradition so that we might gain information and insight from those [traditions],” said Larry Kleiman, H-IPL executive director and an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. “Pope Francis’ encyclical was a motivating force. That [encyclical] said this is the right time to try to make this [interfaith discussion] happen.”

The idea for the event was presented to Kleiman by members of the Creation Care Ministry at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis. One of the members is Diane Liptick, who is an associate of the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg and a member of the order’s Ecology Committee. Through her involvement, the sisters were led to co-sponsor the event.

“Care of the environment is heavily

connected to our faith,” said Liptick. “It’s just part of our calling as God-loving people. The idea that we can just continue to overconsume and live with polluted water and air and still have quality of life is just outrageous.”

She found the interfaith panel discussion to be “enriching—people seemed to come out feeling uplifted and very inspired.

“I think we planted seeds, and I think there will be more work in the ecumenical community in the area of ecology.”

Archbishop Tobin agreed, as evidenced by the closing comments of his address to the interfaith audience.

“We’re invited to seize this moment to go forward boldly in hope and confidence that the spirit of God has filled the universe with possibilities,” he said. “Therefore, from the very heart of things, something new can always emerge.”

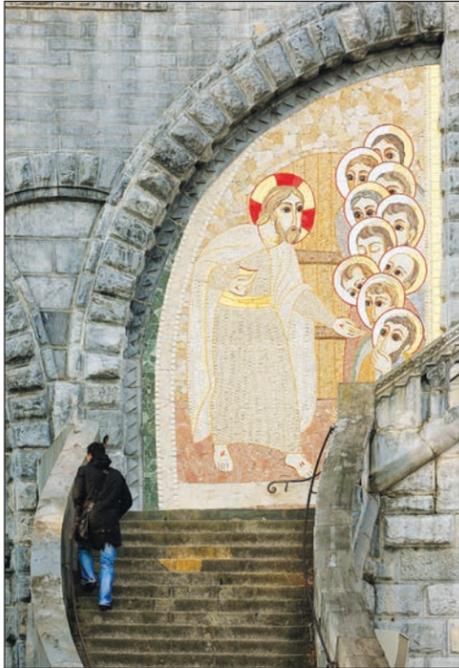
(For information on how H-IPL can help your congregation address best environmental practices, log on to www.hoosieripl.org. For more information on caring for the creation, log on to www.archindy.org/creationcare/index.html.) †



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Editorial



A depiction of the Risen Christ appearing to his disciples is seen in a mosaic at the shrine in Lourdes, France. Easter, the chief feast in the liturgical calendars of all Christian churches, commemorates Christ's resurrection from the dead. Easter is on March 27 this year. (CNS file photo/Nancy Wiechec)

Searching for Jesus' dead body

Perhaps you've seen the new movie *Risen*, which tells the story of Jesus' resurrection from the viewpoint of a Roman tribune who was commanded by Pontius Pilate to find the dead body of Jesus after the Apostles supposedly stole it.

While we didn't particularly like some parts of the movie, we are confident that the Roman soldiers did indeed search for Jesus' dead body to refute the ridiculous idea that he rose from the dead. They failed, of course, because Jesus did indeed rise from the dead.

This is our belief, which is attested to by our historically reliable Scriptures. Jesus—after dying the cruel death by crucifixion, being wrapped in a shroud and laid in a tomb, and while his tomb was being guarded by soldiers—rose from the dead. He then appeared to Mary Magdalene and other women, to the Apostles, to disciples on the road to Emmaus, and to 500 people at one time.

Nevertheless, there are people who don't believe it actually happened because it's not possible for someone who is dead to come back to life. Well, of course not. That's why Jesus' resurrection is miraculous.

We don't doubt that Pilate instructed the soldiers to find the corpse, and even Matthew's Gospel says that they were instructed to say that Jesus' disciples stole his body while the soldiers were asleep (Mt 28:11-15). But can you imagine what would have happened to the soldiers if they had, indeed, fallen asleep?

It would have been a deep sleep, too, to think that they wouldn't have been awakened by the scraping of the boulder as it was being pushed away from the entrance. The story that the chief priests and the elders instructed the soldiers to tell only reinforces the evidence that the tomb was empty.

But we've heard people say that maybe Jesus didn't actually die; he only appeared to be dead. That means that he awoke in the tomb in a severely weakened condition, somehow was able to get out of the shroud that

bound him, had the strength to push back the boulder in front of the tomb without the soldiers noticing it, and then make his appearances as a healthy man. Right.

Then there's the hallucination theory: the Apostles only thought that Jesus appeared to them; it was all a hallucination. Sure. They all had the same hallucination, and that hallucination kept recurring for 40 days. The fact is that Jesus felt that he had to prove to the Apostles that he wasn't a ghost by telling them to touch him and by eating some food (Lk 24:36-43) and by telling Thomas to examine his body (Jn 20:27).

Of course, hallucination theories explain only Jesus' appearances after his resurrection. They don't explain the empty tomb, the rolled-away boulder, or the fact that nobody could produce the corpse.

There's still the possibility that the Apostles made up the whole story. The fact that the Apostles refused to believe the report of the women to whom Jesus first appeared contradicts that theory. Thomas wasn't the only Apostle to doubt the Resurrection; all the Apostles did until Jesus appeared to them: "Their story seemed like nonsense and they did not believe them" (Lk 24:11).

If we were to believe that the Apostles made up the story, we'd have to believe that, after Jesus' death, they got together and plotted how they could deceive everyone. Somehow they'd have to get Jesus' body where it was buried and hide it. Then they could claim that he had been raised from the dead and appeared to them. Then they could fan out and preach about Jesus, even while knowing that doing so could mean that they'd be killed as Jesus was.

From what we know about the Apostles—fishermen, a tax collector, other simple men—can we really believe that they could do what they did while knowing that it was all a lie? When it came down to their martyrdom, wouldn't at least one of them admit that they made it up? Quite the contrary. They preached Jesus as risen from the dead because they knew full well that it was true.

—John F. Fink

Reflection/The Commission for Creation Care Ministry Responding to Pope Francis' call to action to care for creation

"Stewardship of creation is more than something we just do. Stewardship of creation is a response. It is a way of being and understanding our place in the world. Stewardship of creation is integral to what we are all called to do as Catholics: To respond in love to God who loved us first. ... For people of faith, this environmental crisis is more than just a scientific or technological problem. It is a moral problem. It is not a marginal matter, but a fundamental priority that must be addressed now and not left to our children or grandchildren to resolve."



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin spoke these words nearly a year ago during a prayer breakfast on Stewardship of Creation held at Marian University in Indianapolis. His presentation could not have been more prophetic in preparing his audience to receive Pope Francis' encyclical letter, "Laudato Si", on Care for Our Common Home," only a few months later. (The document is available on our web page at www.archindy.org/creationcare.)

The archbishop's remarks were particularly significant to several of us who have been concerned about and actively working on creation care issues for a number of years and in a variety of ways. His passion ignited in us a renewed hope that the archdiocese can engage in creation care ministry in a meaningful way. His reflections on possible next steps served to bring a group of us together to consider how we might be of service in helping make creation care ministry a reality throughout the archdiocese.

Drawing from our diverse backgrounds and experiences, our group has developed a vision of a sustainable archdiocese.

Letter to the Editor

No reason to 'rejoice' about Vice President Biden receiving Laetare Medal from Notre Dame, Criterion reader says

I was disappointed to read in the March 11 issue of *The Criterion* that Vice President Joseph Biden was one of two who will be honored on May 15 with Notre Dame's Laetare Medal. ("Notre Dame to honor Biden and Boehner with 2016 Laetare Medal").

In the meantime, the local bishop, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, said the controversial choice of Biden could "provoke scandal" by giving the impression "that one can be a 'good Catholic' while also supporting or advocating for positions that contradict our fundamental moral and social principle and teachings."

Bishop Rhoades went on to say of Vice President Biden, "I also question the propriety of honoring a public official who was a major spokesman for the redefinition of marriage. The Church has continually urged public officials, especially Catholics, of the grave and clear obligation to oppose any law that supports or facilitates abortion or that undermines the authentic meaning of marriage. I disagree with awarding someone for 'outstanding service to the Church and society' who has not been faithful to this obligation."

"Laetare" means "rejoice," but this further Notre Dame scandal gives serious Catholics little to rejoice about.

Let us all keep Bishop Rhoades, as well as Vice President Biden in our prayers.

**Ron Greulich
Fortville**

(Editor's note: A follow-up story about Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades' reaction to Notre Dame's Laetare Medal decision appears on page 9 of this week's issue of *The Criterion*.)

We have a vision of an archdiocese that is committed to the principles and values set forth by Pope Francis in his encyclical, "Laudato Si", and demonstrates that commitment by supporting efforts of parishes and parishioners to become more sustainable.

We have a vision of parishes that are mindful of their use of energy and resources. We have a vision that all parishioners make good environmental choices in their homes and daily lives, and understand that their choices affect the lives of others. They know the joy of living more simply and understand that creation care is a moral imperative.

This vision was shared with Archbishop Tobin, who encouraged us to continue our efforts. Deacon Michael Braun, director of the Secretariat of Pastoral Ministries, is now serving as the archdiocesan liaison for Creation Care Ministry.

Learn more about "Laudato Si" and ways we can respond to the call to care for our common home on the Creation Care Ministry webpage at www.archindy.org/creationcare. On the website, you'll find resources in English and Spanish from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for liturgy, preaching and taking action.

Future columns in *The Criterion* will explore how we can know the joys of living more simply and sustainably. Our group can assist parishes that wish to begin their own Creation Care Ministries. We welcome your input and ideas.

"God does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our Earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. Praise be to him!" ("Laudato Si", #245)

(*Creation Care Ministries is part of the Office of Pastoral Ministries. For more information, contact Deacon Mike Braun at 317-236-1531 or mbraun@archindy.org.) †*

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and should be informed, relevant, well-expressed, concise, temperate in tone, courteous and respectful.

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO JOSEPH W. TOBIN



REJOICE IN THE LORD

ALÉGRENSE EN EL SEÑOR

Good Friday is the pathway to Easter joy

The publication date for this column is March 25, 2016, Good Friday.

Why do we call this day “good”?

For Christians, it is the worst day in human history, a day of unspeakable evil, when God’s love incarnate was utterly rejected and made to suffer insults, torture and one of the cruelest forms of capital punishment, death on a cross. Why do we call this day “good” when so much that is not good is associated with it?

There are conflicting theories about the origin of the name Good Friday. Some say it was originally called God’s Friday. Others argue that the proper name should be Holy Friday (just like Holy Thursday, which comes before it and Holy Saturday which comes after it). Most Christians in the English-speaking world stay with “good” for the simple reason that we believe something incredibly good came as a result of the unspeakable evil that occurred on this day more than 2,000 years ago.

What is the good result that we celebrate today during this Holy Year of Mercy 2016? The good that resulted from Jesus’ death on the cross was, of course, his resurrection. We believe that his death

was an expiation (atonement) for human sinfulness, a true redemption that flowed from the infinite love and mercy of God.

The crucifixion was not a good thing in and of itself. No murderous act can ever be considered good. But the Lord himself tells us that no greater act of love can be given than to lay down our life for another (Jn 15:13). Self-sacrificing love, especially the witness of martyrdom, is profoundly good because it is the greatest form of love.

This is why we call this day good. Something profoundly good happened on this day. God’s mercy was expressed in the ultimate way. Jesus died for us. He forgave our sins and washed away centuries of guilt and evil—throughout the whole of human history—and made it possible for us to forgive the sins committed against us by others just as God our Heavenly Father has forgiven us.

Good Friday is the day that unspeakable evil was overcome, once and for all, by the unconditional love of God. It is a day of mercy unparalleled in the 365 days of the calendar year!

For the past six weeks, we have been reflecting on the concept of “mercy,”

which Pope Francis says is the bridge between sinful humanity and our loving God. Central to our reflections is the parable of the Prodigal Son that the Holy Father holds up as a supreme illustration of the unconditional love and mercy of God (cf. Lk 15:11-32). In the parable, the Father rejoices because the son who has rejected him and, by his own admission, “sinned against heaven and against you” (Lk 15:21) has returned.

In a recent article in *America* magazine, Msgr. Peter J. Vaghi writes:

“The depth of the father’s feelings are found in his words: ‘This son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found’ (Lk 15:24). Even though the son has squandered his inheritance, his humanity has been saved by his father’s love. The father is the human face of what we call mercy.”

“In reference to this parable, St. John Paul II wrote in his second encyclical letter, *Dives in Misericordia* (“Rich in Mercy”):

“This love is able to reach down to every prodigal son, to every human misery, and above all to every form of moral misery, to sin. When this happens,

the person who is the object of mercy does not feel humiliated, but rather found again and ‘restored to value’ (# 6).

“Mercy is a restorative power. The prodigal son is restored to new life by the loving embrace and celebratory joy of his father.”

The passion and death of Jesus, which we celebrate in a special way on Good Friday, demonstrates the restorative power of God’s mercy in the most profound way imaginable. The result is the celebratory joy of Easter, the day when Love’s victory over death was revealed once and for all.

We Christians are joyful people because we have experienced the mercy of God through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His self-sacrificing love has saved us. It has restored us to our full dignity as children of God and brothers and sisters of all humanity—deceased, living and yet-to-be born.

Good Friday is the pathway to Easter joy. Let’s sing “alleluia!” with joyful hearts. God’s mercy has restored us and set us free! Let’s forgive others as we have been forgiven. Let’s share the joy of Easter! †

El Viernes Santo es el camino a la alegría pascual

La fecha de publicación de esta columna es el 25 de marzo de 2016, Viernes Santo.

A diferencia de lo que ocurre en español, en inglés llamamos a este día “Viernes Bueno.”

Para los cristianos, se trata del peor día de la historia de la humanidad, un día plagado de una maldad indescriptible en la que el amor de Dios encarnado fue completamente rechazado y sufrió insultos, torturas y una de las formas más crueles del pecado capital: la muerte en la cruz. ¿Por qué en inglés le decimos entonces “bueno” si se le atribuyen circunstancias que nada tienen de buenas?

Existen teorías encontradas en cuanto al origen del nombre de este viernes en inglés. Algunos dicen que originalmente se llamaba Viernes de Dios. Otros argumentan que el nombre adecuado debería ser, como lo es en español, Viernes Santo (tal como sucede con el Jueves Santo que le precede y el Sábado Santo que viene después). La mayoría de los cristianos angloparlantes tienen la costumbre de llamarlo “bueno” por el simple motivo de que creemos que a consecuencia de la maldad indescriptible que sucedió ese día hace más de 2,000 años, surgió algo bueno.

¿Cuál es el buen resultado que celebramos hoy durante este Año Santo de la Misericordia de 2016? Lo bueno

que ocurrió a consecuencia de la muerte de Jesús en la cruz fue, por supuesto, su resurrección. Creemos que su muerte sirvió para expiar el pecado humano, una verdadera redención que emanó del amor y la misericordia infinitos de Dios.

La crucifixión en sí misma no fue algo bueno; jamás un asesinato podrá considerarse bueno. Pero el propio Señor nos dice que no hay amor más grande que el de dar la vida por sus hermanos (cf. Jn 15:13). El amor abnegado, especialmente el testimonio de los mártires, es algo profundamente bueno porque representa la máxima expresión del amor.

Es por ello que en inglés llamamos a este día “Viernes Bueno.” Ese día ocurrió algo profundamente bueno: la misericordia de Dios se expresó en la forma más suprema. Jesús murió por nosotros; perdonó nuestros pecados y borró siglos de culpa y maldad acumulados durante toda la historia de la humanidad y nos dio la posibilidad de perdonar los pecados que otros cometan contra nosotros, tal como nuestro Padre celestial nos ha perdonado.

El Viernes Santo es el día en el que el bien prevaleció sobre la maldad indescriptible, de una vez por todas, gracias al amor incondicional de Dios. ¡Es un día de misericordia sin igual entre los 365 días que componen el año calendario!

Durante las seis semanas anteriores

hemos reflexionado sobre el concepto de la “misericordia” que, según lo explica el papa Francisco, es la vía que comunica a la humanidad pecadora con nuestro Dios amoroso. En el núcleo de nuestras reflexiones se encuentra la parábola del Hijo pródigo que el santo padre considera como la suprema ilustración del amor y la misericordia incondicionales de Dios (cf. Lc 15:11-32). En la parábola, el padre se alegra porque el hijo que lo ha rechazado y que, según él mismo reconoce, ha “pecado contra el cielo y contra ti” (Lc 15:21), ha regresado.

En un artículo publicado recientemente en la revista *America*, el Mons. Peter J. Vaghi escribió:

“La profundidad de los sentimientos del padre se reflejan en sus palabras: ‘este hijo mío estaba muerto, y ha revivido; se había perdido, y lo hemos hallado’ (Lc 15:24). Aunque el hijo había despilfarrado su herencia, su condición humana se había salvado gracias al amor de su padre. El padre es el rostro humano de lo que llamamos misericordia.”

“En referencia a esta parábola, San Juan Pablo II escribió en su segunda encíclica titulada *“Dives in Misericordia”* (Sobre la misericordia de Dios):

“Tal amor es capaz de inclinarse hacia todo hijo pródigo, toda miseria humana y singularmente hacia toda miseria moral o pecado. Cuando esto ocurre, el que

es objeto de misericordia no se siente humillado, sino como hallado de nuevo y ‘revalorizado’ (#6).

“La misericordia tiene un poder restaurador. El hijo pródigo recibe una vida nueva en virtud de la acogida y la celebración jubilosa de su padre.”

La pasión y la muerte de Jesús que conmemoramos de una forma especial el Viernes Santo, demuestra el poder restaurador de la misericordia de Dios de la forma más profunda que podamos imaginar. El resultado es la alegría jubilosa de la Pascua, el día en el que el amor triunfó sobre la muerte de una vez por todas.

Los cristianos somos un pueblo alegre porque hemos vivido la misericordia de Dios a través de la vida, la muerte y la resurrección de Jesucristo. Su amor abnegado nos ha salvado; ha restituido nuestra dignidad en pleno como hijos de Dios y hermanos de toda la humanidad —tanto vivos como difuntos, y aquellos que están por nacer—.

El Viernes Santo es el camino a la alegría pascual. Cantemos el *Aleluya* con corazones alegres. ¡La misericordia de Dios nos ha restituido y nos ha liberado! Perdonemos a otros como nos han perdonado a nosotros. ¡Compartamos la alegría de la Pascua! †

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa

The Criterion announces change to Events Calendar and event submission policy

Beginning with the April 1 issue, *The Criterion* will begin its weekly Events Calendar with events starting on the Monday after the publication date.

While the amount of events included each week varies based on the number of submissions, an effort is made to always include at least one week's worth of calendar events. However, a list of one month's worth of events is always available by logging on to www.archindy.org/criterion/local/archive/events.

Events can be submitted to *The Criterion* by logging on to www.archindy.org/criterion/local/forms3/event-form.html, or by going to www.archindy.org, selecting the Newspaper tab, then selecting "Send Us Information" from the menu, then selecting Events.

If using the online form is not an option, please send events information to The Criterion, Events Calendar, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, or fax it to 317-236-1593. Please include the name of the event, when and where it will take place, cost if applicable, a brief description of the event, and contact information both for publication and if *The Criterion* staff needs clarification.

Event information must be received by 5 p.m. on the Thursday two weeks prior to the desired publication date.

There is no charge to run events in the Events Calendar.

For questions on submitting events, call the office at 317-236-1585, or toll free at 800-382-9836, ext. 1585. †

Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/events.

March 25

Annunciation Parish, 19 N. Alabama St., Brazil. **St. Ambrose Schola Cantorum Tenebrae Service**, candlelit service of Psalms and Scripture for Good Friday, 8 p.m., free. Information: Edward Atkinson at 812-448-1901.

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Way of the Cross**, noon. Information: 317-784-4439 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Way of the Cross**, noon. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

March 28

Marian University, Marian University Theater, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Faith and Idea Series: "Dr. Patch Adams—Lead from the Heart Professional Ethics Lecture,"** founder of Gesundheit Institute and subject of the film *Patch Adams*, Dr. Patch Adams speaking, 6 p.m., reception following, free but registration is required at goo.gl/sjFOTI. Information: 317-955-6136 or troberts@marian.edu.

March 28-April 3

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, Sacred Heart Chapel, 8210 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Traveling missionary image of Our Lady of Guadalupe**, 6 foot by 4 foot image. Information: 317-923-6246.

March 30

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Health Ministry Speaker Series: "Bridges of Hope—The Faith Community and the National Alliance on Mental Illness,"** Carole Wills of Wellspring Mental Health Ministries presenting, 7-9 p.m., free. Information: Joni LeBeau, 317-236-1475, 800-382-9836, ext. 1475, or jlebeau@archindy.org.

March 31

Marian University, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Michael A. Evans Center for Health Sciences, Indianapolis. **Richard G. Lugar Franciscan Center for Global Studies Speaker Series, "The Future of Iraq,"** Ambassador Feisal Istrabadi, presenter, 6 p.m. Information: maple@marian.edu or 317-955-6775.

April 1

Marian University chapel,

3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Lumen Dei Catholic Business Group**, Mass and monthly meeting, 6:30-8:30 a.m., breakfast, \$15 per person. Information: 317-435-3447 or lumen.dei@comcast.net.

Most Holy Name of Jesus, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove.

First Friday devotion, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 5:30 p.m.; reconciliation, 5:45-6:45 p.m.; Mass, 7 p.m.; Litany of the Sacred Heart and prayers for the Holy Father, 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass, 5:45 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass until 9:30 p.m., sacrament of Reconciliation available. Information: 317-888-2861 or info@olgreenwood.org.

April 2

St. Vincent Hospice, 8450 N. Payne Road, Suite 200, Indianapolis. **Introductory Centering Prayer Program**, hosted by the Indianapolis Chapter of Contemplative Outreach, 9:15 a.m.-2 p.m., \$15, bring

sack lunch, snacks and coffee and water will be provided. Information and registration: Mary Kendall, 317-883-0457 or mkendall@iu.edu.

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Bicycle blessing**, 10 a.m. Information: 812-535-2952.

Helpers of God's Precious Infants Prayer Vigil, Terre Haute, 7:30 a.m. Mass at the Carmelite Monastery at 59 Allendale, 9:25 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. travel to St. Patrick Adoration Chapel at 1807 Poplar St. for Divine Mercy Chaplet, completed around 10:30 a.m.

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville. **First Saturday Devotional Prayer Group**, prayers, rosary, confession, meditation, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462.

April 3

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Divine Mercy Service**, adoration 2-3 p.m.,

Divine Mercy program 3 p.m., reception 3:30 p.m. Information: 317-888-2861 or Information: parish office at 317-359-7147, or Kppielsticker@gmail.com.

April 6

Marian University, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Michael A. Evans Center for Health Sciences, Indianapolis. **Richard G. Lugar Franciscan Center for Global Studies Speaker Series, "The Indianapolis 500 Mile Race: A Century of Global Impact,"** Mark Miles, presenter, 6 p.m. Information: maple@marian.edu or 317-955-6775.

Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

April 7-8

Mary, Queen of Peace Church 1005 West Main Street, Danville. **Women's Club Rummage Sale**. Information: Anna Wray, awray@mqpdanville.org or 317-745-4284.

April 9

Holy Name Parish Life Center,

21 N. 16th St., Beech Grove. **Holy Name Altar Society Rummage Sale**, linens, knick-knacks, clothes, electronics, dishes, jewelry and more, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., proceeds benefit school and church.

April 10

St. Malachy School Gym, 7410 N. 1000 East, Brownsburg. **St. Malachy Altar Society Fundraiser Bingo**, all prizes are Longaberger products, drinks and snacks available for purchase, \$10 for bingo, \$20 for bundle package. Information: 317-268-4238 or altarsociety@stmalachy.org.

St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Mass in French**, 1 p.m. Information: 317-523-4193 or acfadi2014@gmail.com.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Class of '63 monthly gathering**, 6 p.m. Mass, optional dinner afterward. Information: 317-408-6396. †

Retreats and Programs

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

Seasons of Hope sessions for the bereaved begin on March 28 in Greensburg

If you're in need of consolation after losing a loved one, come to Seasons of Hope, a Christ-centered faith sharing group, at St. Mary Parish, 208 S. East Street, in Greensburg, in the parish's Education Center.

The sessions occur on six consecutive

Mondays from 6:30-8:30 p.m. from March 28 through May 2.

To register, call the parish office at 812-663-8427 and leave your name and phone number. A member of the Bereavement Ministry Team will return your call. †

Sisters of Providence accepting applications for Providence Associates

Applications to become a Providence Associate of the Sisters of Providence are being accepted through June 30.

Providence Associates are women and men of faith ages 18 years and older who share their unique gifts and talents with others while walking with the Sisters of Providence.

Accepted applicants spend a year meeting one-on-one with a Sister of Providence or another

Providence Associate companion on a regular basis. During the meetings, the candidate-associates and their "companion" learn and share about Providence spirituality.

The program began in 2006. Currently, there are more than 220 Providence Associates.

For more information, contact Debbie Dillow at 317-994-6821 or e-mail ddillow@spsmw.org.

Archbishop Tobin to celebrate Annunciation Parish's 150th anniversary Mass on April 4

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin will celebrate Annunciation Parish's sesquicentennial Mass at the parish church, 19 N. Alabama St., in Brazil, at 6 p.m. on April 4. A reception will

follow the Mass.

All are invited to the Mass and reception to help the parish celebrate its 150th anniversary as a faith community in central western Indiana. †

Friars at Mount St. Francis invite all to attend special event on April 3

The Conventual Franciscan Friars at Mount St. Francis are celebrating 40 years of offering retreats by hosting a special event called "Door's Open. Coffee's On." The event will be held at their retreat center, 101 St. Anthony Drive, in Mt. St. Francis, from 2-4 p.m. on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 3.

During that time, people of all faiths are welcome to come to the Mount and have a cup of coffee or hike with a friar and have a heart-to-heart talk. The event is designed to encourage those who have drifted away from the Church, or have spiritual questions regardless of faith

background. It is intended to be a path to healing, allowing those who attend to re-connect with God.

The chapel will be open for prayer, with prayer partners available to pray for those talking with a friar if desired.

Information about local resources—such as Catholic Charities, foodbanks, St. Elizabeth Home, pregnancy resources and more—will be available as a way to reach out in mercy to the local community.

For more information, log on to MountSaintFrancis.org or call 812-923-8817. †



K of C state winner

Natalie Lovell of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg poses with the trophy she won for the 10-year-old age group in the annual Knights of Columbus statewide free throw shooting contest on March 6 at St. Theodore Guérin High School in Noblesville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. The free throw championship is the largest Knights of Columbus youth event in the state. Contestants had to advance through the council, district and regional competitions to make it to the state championship. (Submitted photo)

Bust of Cardinal Ritter is unveiled at Irish coffee event

By Patricia Happel Cornwell

Special to The Criterion

NEW ALBANY—When a crowd of about 50 gathered for the fourth annual Irish coffee lecture at the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace in New Albany on March 14, they were treated to more than the traditional Irish beverage.

Dr. Cecilia A. Moore of the University of Dayton gave an energetic presentation on “Cardinal Ritter, Black Lives Matter, and Bridging the Racial Divide.” In the corner of the community room stood a surprise for those in attendance—a clay bust of New Albany native Cardinal Joseph



Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter

E. Ritter by southern Indiana sculptor Guy Tedesco.

Moore, the evening’s speaker, is associate professor of religious studies at the University of Dayton and adjunct professor for the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University of Louisiana.

She is working on a history of black conversion to Roman Catholicism in the 20th century.

Moore said, “I love what Cardinal Ritter said when he announced he would desegregate the Catholic schools in Indianapolis: ‘The cross on the top of our schools must mean something.’ I love that!”

As bishop, Ritter desegregated Indianapolis’s then-diocesan schools from 1937 to 1943. He faced opposition from many Catholic parents and from the Ku Klux Klan. In 1947, as archbishop of St. Louis, he ordered desegregation of that archdiocese’s Catholic schools as well. This was accomplished years before the U.S. Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* made desegregation the law of the land in 1954.

“Cardinal Ritter believed segregation was not only anti-Christian, but also anti-American,” Moore said. “He based his decisions on justice. Once he did this, other bishops had the courage to do the same. Cardinal Ritter proved that nothing bad happens when we [blacks and whites] live together and learn together.”

She said the Catholic bishops provided the model for public schools that had to integrate after the Supreme Court decision.

Moore described today’s Black Lives Matter movement, begun by four young black women, as a campaign for justice, accountability and transparency regarding police actions, failing schools, unsafe housing, income disparity and other issues of inequality.

“Black Lives Matter is a black, white and Latino movement,” she said. “The Church is part of the movement. It is not anti-white, it’s anti-white supremacy. There is still racial division today, but we don’t talk about it anymore. It is real, and it is in our Church, not just in our country.”

Moore focused on a pastoral letter dealing with race—published in 2015 by Bishop Edward K. Braxton of Belleville, Ill., in which he developed a program of reflection for communities to begin to heal “the racial divide.”

She quoted Bishop Braxton’s pointed reminder from his pastoral letter: “Never forget that racism is a sin. It keeps us from being who God intends us to be.”

The influence Cardinal Ritter had on race issues may soon be celebrated in a very public manner. David Hock, board president of the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, revealed that the board is working with the Indiana State Museum in Indianapolis to create an exhibit there about the life and work of the cardinal.

Representatives of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Ritter family members and others are involved in the discussions, although as yet there is no timeline for the project. A bronze bust made from the clay “study bust” unveiled during the evening event would be a likely anchor for the display.

Ray Day, board secretary, said the board has been “brainstorming” with sculptor Tedesco about the creation of a life-size bronze sculpture of Cardinal Ritter, perhaps surrounded by children, to serve as the centerpiece of a planned rose garden at the property at 1218 Oak St. in New Albany. The garden would honor the cardinal’s hobby of rose gardening and provide a contemplative space for the site.

Tedesco has a studio at Mount St. Francis in Floyd County and is known for his 15-foot “cruciform” sculpture at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in



Dr. Cecilia A. Moore, featured speaker, and sculptor Guy Tedesco pose with Tedesco’s clay bust of Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter, which was unveiled at the Cardinal Ritter House Irish coffee event in New Albany on March 14. The “study bust” will later be cast in bronze. (Photos by Patricia Happel Cornwell)



Dr. Cecilia A. Moore of the University of Dayton speaks at the fourth annual Irish coffee lecture at the Cardinal Ritter House in New Albany on March 14. She spoke on “Cardinal Ritter, Black Lives Matter, and Bridging the Racial Divide.”

Jeffersonville, in which Jesus is shown crucified on one side and “rising” on the other. He said he is excited about the prospect of creating a life-size sculpture of the cardinal.

“I like to have students work with me,” he said. He added that “it would be wonderful to work on it” with art students from Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville, and even possibly Cardinal Ritter High School in St. Louis.

“Cardinal Ritter’s life is such a great story to tell,” Tedesco continued. “When

you create a significant work of art like this [sculpture of the cardinal], you’re not just representing history; you’re creating history. The art will be remembered because it’s saying something about our society. How do we tell the story of this person who was part of the change that we are still involved in today?”

(For more information about Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, log on to cardinalritterhouse.org. Patricia Happel Cornwell is a freelance writer and a member of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon.) †

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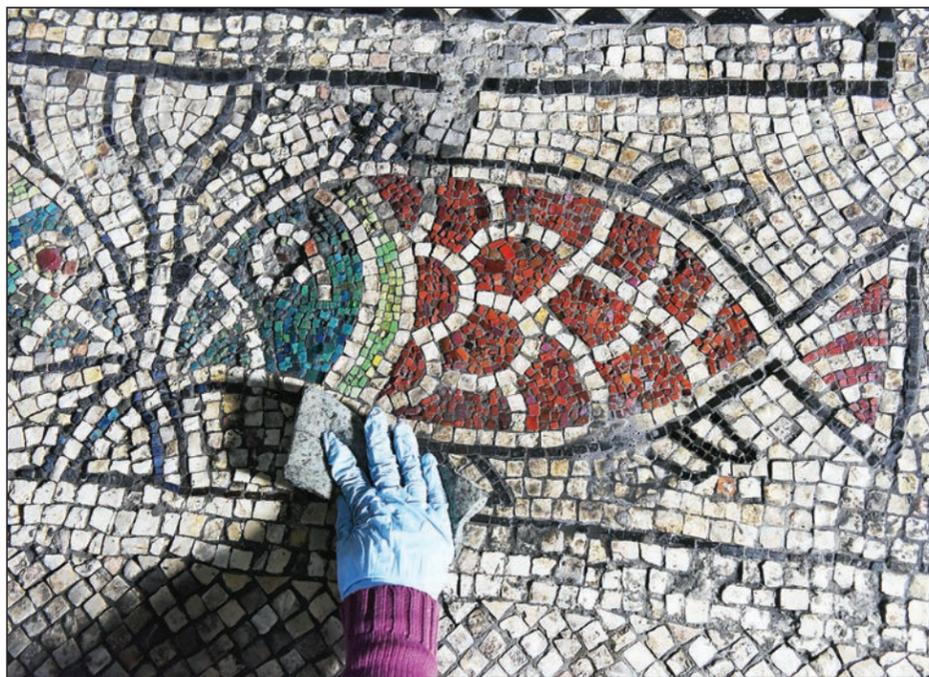
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Dana Hamdan cleans a marble stone in the Franciscan section of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the Old City of Jerusalem on March 17. (CNS photos/Debbie Hill)



A student from the Jericho Mosaic Center cleans a mosaic in the Franciscan section of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the Old City of Jerusalem on March 17.

Muslim restorers feel history in work on mosaics above Jesus' burial site

JERUSALEM (CNS)—It's quiet and dark in the cavernous gallery above Jesus' burial place in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Raed Khalil and his small team of trained restorers have been patiently and methodically cleaning off centuries of soot and dirt from 39 ancient mosaics and two carved marble pieces, some of which may date back to the Byzantine period. All but one of the restorers are Muslim.

The framed mosaics hang from the thick stone walls of the Franciscan gallery, and some include both tiny stone and glass pieces. Some of the mosaics are missing big chunks; all have been brought to the church from different places, at different times. The true history of the works will not be known until they are fully researched, a process that will take about two years.

This is the second restoration project at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher the team has taken part in this year. Workers have

just completed restoring the colorful 1926 mosaics in the small Franciscan chapel at the 11th station, next to the spot where tradition holds the crucifixion of Jesus took place. They began that work in 2001.

"Before, people would come visit here but did not care about our work. I did not feel a reaction. But now they see the results, and I feel a reaction to what we are doing. The guides with pilgrims start talking about it, and are so happy to see it," Khalil said of the completed project.

The current project is being done in collaboration with the Association pro Terra Sancta and the Mosaic Center of Jericho.

"This is a very interesting job to work with our history," said Dana Hamdan, a Muslim from Jerusalem who was been studying and working with the Mosaic Center for four years, as she meticulously washed off a layer of dirt from a piece of marble hanging on the wall. "Before I started here, I didn't know anything about

the Christian religion, but now I have more information. Before, I did not feel any connection to any of this, but now I do. These are historical places, and we are protecting them."

"I am very happy I can secure a holy place," added Anas Abutir, 23, also from Jerusalem.

Khalil said he appreciates the opportunity to work in such an important place of another faith.

"This is history. We must save it," said Khalil. "This is important. Putting aside all the politics, the heritage remains. There are layers of history here. Before the Muslims there were Christians here, before the Christians there were Jews, before the Jews there were Canaanites. There were all these people living here in this place. Some people left, but the land remains, the culture remains. History is history. You can't make a part disappear and say I am the only heritage."

Khalil was among the first students of a three-year restoration course at the Mosaic Center of Jericho. The center, funded by an Italian nongovernmental organization in cooperation with the Palestinian Department of Antiquities, opened in 2000 under the scientific supervision of Franciscan Father Michele Piccirillo of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. One of the goals was to instill young Palestinians with pride and strengthen their identity with their national heritage.

"I started to understand our identity as Palestinians," said Khalil. "I started to think in a different way. Whether it is Muslim or Christian, it is all Palestinian. I

don't think in terms of Muslim, Christian or Jewish. It is all cultural heritage."

The students have worked on the restoration of mosaics in ancient synagogues in Jericho, West Bank, with the same care, he said.

Having received his master's degree in mosaic restoration at Al-Quds University in Jerusalem, Khalil said he has had the privilege of being also able to work in restoration projects in Jericho and in the Syrian cities of Sweida and Aleppo. He said it has been very painful to watch not only the human loss in Syria, but also the destruction of all the country's national heritage in the form of its antiquities. Many of the projects he worked on have been destroyed by the Islamic State group, he said, shaking his head.

"They have destroyed the culture of Arab countries," he said. "It is terrible. It destroys your mind to think of all that the people of Syria have lost."

But while in Syria there is continuing strife and bloodshed, here, in the silence of the gallery, he and his team have been witness to the preparations for Easter and the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. Clergy and pilgrims of various Christian faiths come to venerate the traditional site of Jesus' burial. It has made the restorers feel a part of the celebration, Khalil said.

"Everybody is cleaning, everything smells nice. I feel like I am a part of this. I am cleaning. I am preparing," he added. "This is the first time I have seen these preparations. To sit here in this place, to look down and see all this, is beautiful." †



'There are layers of history here. Before the Muslims there were Christians here, before the Christians there were Jews, before the Jews there were Canaanites. There were all these people living here in this place. Some people left, but the land remains, the culture remains. History is history.'

—Raed Khalil

What was in the news on March 25, 1966? An historic meeting with the archbishop of Canterbury, and a light-hearted take on the Batman sitcom

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 March 25, 1966, issue of *The Criterion*:

• **Historic meeting enlarges Rome, Canterbury dialogue**

"VATICAN CITY—In an atmosphere carefully compounded of friendliness and formality, a pope and an Anglican archbishop of Canterbury met officially for the first time since the Reformation. Archbishop Michael Ramsey, spiritual leader of the worldwide Anglican Communion of 17 independent churches and 45 million members, arrived at Rome's

Fiumicino airport [on March 22] for his historic three-day visit. The overworked word 'historic' rings clear and strong in this case for several reasons. The previous visit of the then archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, to Pope John XXIII, symbolized a new era of good feelings, but was strictly personal and unofficial. Archbishop Ramsey's visit was formal and official. The archbishop himself said he would get down to business with the pope, speaking to him of the relations between the two churches and the impact of these relations upon feelings and consciences."

- **Theologians agree: 'People of God' concept seen as major council contribution**
- **St. Meinrad will host conference**
- **Ecumenical overtones: Vatican revises rules for 'mixed' marriages**
- **Bible 'no longer barrier' among Catholics, others**
- **Cardinal Eugene Tisserant: Top prelate once aspired to military**
- **Text of Church in Modern World schema**
- **Notre Dame will inaugurate graduate theology program**
- **Crowleys will received ND's Laetare Medal**
- **Editorial: Batty, what?**

"Unlike the hula hoop and swallowing goldfish, television's Batman show sets no age limits. Grade schoolers and grandmas seem to be equally addicted. Nor are the pillars of the community immune to the nuttiness. Reports have it that lodge meetings, bridge games, and even Lenten church services have been rescheduled so as not to interfere with the midweek

adventures of the super-hero. Besides driving a large segment of the public batty, the show has crystallized a new philosophy of success, American style. There are now two ways of getting ahead—being exceptionally good or unbelievably bad. Only a cynic would say that the latter is a less painstaking process. Painting soup cans and composing rock 'n' roll is no cinch. Nor was the Batman program born without travail. Network executives battled falling ratings with one bad show after another before they discovered the right formula, a show so awful it couldn't miss."

- **New Apostolic Center will have lay leader**
- **Cincinnati reports 90 percent return of first graders**
- **One-act play contest enters the semifinals**
- **Report challenges schools in Britain**
- **Vietnam criticism not CU consensus, rector declares**
- **Church in Holland to begin renewal**

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Read all of these stories from our March 18, 1966, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com. †

Bishop Rhoades disagrees with Notre Dame's decision to honor Biden

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (CNS)—Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend said he disagreed with University of Notre Dame officials for honoring Vice President Joe Biden with the Laetare Medal for outstanding service to the Catholic Church and society.

He said Biden's stance of not opposing abortion and his support of same-sex marriage make him ineligible to receive the award.

Biden, along with former Speaker of the House John Boehner, will be honored on May 15 during Notre Dame's 171st commencement ceremony. Both men are Catholic.

While not calling upon Holy Cross Father John Jenkins, Notre Dame's president, to reverse the decision, Bishop Rhoades said in a lengthy March 14 statement that "it is wrong for Notre Dame to honor any 'pro-choice' public official with the Laetare Medal."

Bishop Rhoades explained that although a public official has had many positive accomplishments in public life, that person's stance on fundamental Church teaching disqualifies him or her for any Catholic honor.

Father Jenkins offered a brief statement in response to the bishop's concerns, saying, "While Bishop Rhoades and

I do not always agree, I'm gratified that he acknowledged, in his words, 'Notre Dame's efforts to encourage civility, dialogue, mutual respect and cooperation in political life.'"

Bishop Rhoades said he met with Father Jenkins months before the announcement on who would be honored was announced, and they discussed the possibility of honoring Biden, a Democrat, and Boehner, a Republican, for their public service and not for either leader's stance on specific issues.

"I know this honor is also an attempt to recognize two Catholics from different political parties at a time when our national politics is often mired in acrimonious partisanship. I appreciate Notre Dame's efforts to encourage civility, dialogue, mutual respect and cooperation in political life," the bishop's statement said.

Still, Bishop Rhoades said, he disagreed with the decision to honor Biden in any way.

"I realize Notre Dame is trying to separate or distinguish conferral of the Laetare Medal upon the recipients from their positions on public policies. I do not think this is realistically possible or intellectually coherent," he said.

He suggested that the university would



Students wait in line outside the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the campus of the University of Notre Dame in this March 3, 2015, file photo. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., said he disagreed with University of Notre Dame officials for deciding to honor Vice President Joe Biden with the Laetare Medal for outstanding service to the Catholic Church and society. (CNS photo/Barbara Johnston, University of Notre Dame)

better promote civility, cooperation and dialogue in politics to host both men in a program on American politics "rather than bestow an honor that can provoke scandal."

"My principal concern about this whole matter is scandal," Bishop Rhoades said. "In honoring a 'pro-choice' Catholic who also has supported the redefinition of marriage, which the Church considers harmful to the common good of society, it can give the impression to people, including Catholics in political office, that one can be a 'good Catholic' while also supporting or advocating for positions that contradict our fundamental moral and social principles and teachings."

The statement said that before any Catholic institution honors a Catholic public official, "we should make sure there is a basic consistency between their political decisions and sound Catholic

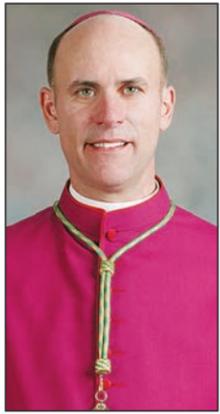
moral and social teaching.

"We should not honor those who claim to personally accept Church teaching, but act contrary to that teaching in their political choices," he said.

The bishop called on institutions to reflect on the meaning and significance of honors in relation to Catholic identity and mission, encouraging them to "raise the bar" when considering whom to honor. "I believe a higher standard is needed," he said.

The Laetare Medal has been given annually since 1883 to a Catholic "whose genius has ennobled the arts and sciences, illustrated the ideals of the Church and enriched the heritage of humanity."

The honor is so named because its recipient is announced each year in celebration of Laetare Sunday, the fourth Sunday of Lent, which this year was celebrated on March 6. †



'My principal concern about this whole matter is scandal. In honoring a "pro-choice" Catholic who also has supported the redefinition of marriage, which the Church considers harmful to the common good of society, it can give the impression to people, including Catholics in political office, that one can be a "good Catholic" while also supporting or advocating for positions that contradict our fundamental moral and social principles and teachings.'

—Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend

Secretary Kerry says Islamic State is committing genocide against minorities

WASHINGTON (CNS)—U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said that atrocities carried out by the Islamic State group against Yezidis, Christians and other minorities were genocide, the first U.S. declaration of genocide since Sudanese actions in Darfur in 2004.

Kerry said he was not judge and jury, but the Islamic State had self-defined itself as genocidal because of its actions against Yezidis, Christians, Shiite Muslims and other minorities.

A 66-member coalition is "working intensively to stop the spread of *Daesh*," Kerry said, using the Arabic acronym for Islamic State. He said the world must "marginalize and defeat violent extremists, once and for all," so they were not replaced by another extremist group with a different acronym.

"We must recognize and hold the perpetrators accountable," Kerry said in a March 17 statement that included a litany of atrocities such as rape and murder. He said Christians often were given the choice of converting to Islam or death, which was a choice



People gather in Minya, Egypt, on Feb. 16, for the funeral of Coptic Christians kidnapped and killed by Islamic State rebels in Libya. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said atrocities carried out by the Islamic State group against Yezidis, Christians and other minorities were genocide, the first U.S. declaration of genocide since Sudanese actions in Darfur in 2004.

(CNS photo/Alaa Elkamhawia, EPA)

between two types of death.

Kerry said military action to defeat Islamic State was important, but so were other actions. He said the coalition against Islamic State was working to strangle the group's finances and to ensure that people who fled would someday be able to return.

Reaction was swift from two organizations and a religious community with ties to the region.

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, CEO of the Knights of Columbus, welcomed the declaration, saying it is "correct and truly historic." The Knights and In Defense of Christians released a report on March 10 detailing accounts of rape, murder, torture, kidnapping and forced removals experienced and witnessed by hundreds of Christians.

"By joining its voice to that of the House of Representatives, the American people and the international community, the United States today makes clear to ISIS that its attempt to stamp out religious minorities must cease," he said in a statement. "The United States and the world are united on this, and simply will not look the other way."

In Defense of Christians said in a statement that Kerry's declaration "used the word that has the moral authority to raise the international consciousness and compel the international community of responsible nations to act."

By acknowledging that religious and ethnic minorities are victims of genocide, the organization said, "the United States has done a great justice to the victims of the atrocities committed by ISIS, including the over 1,100 Christians who have been killed because of their faith."

The Iraq Coordinating Committee of the North American Dominicans' Justice and Peace Promoter's office also hailed the declaration in a statement, saying it gives "moral weight" for the organization's years-long call for increased protection of refugees, and the responsibility of countries around the world to fund and staff refugee programs to internally displaced Iraqis.

The Dominican order has been committed to justice in Iraq for more than 20 years after the United Nations adopted economic sanctions against the regime of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, and has sent delegations to

work alongside suffering and displaced communities.

On March 14, the House of Representatives, in a bipartisan 393-0 vote, approved a nonbinding resolution that condemns as genocide the atrocities being carried out by Islamic State militants against Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities in the areas it occupies in Iraq and Syria. They gave Kerry until March 17 to decide whether to make a formal declaration of genocide.

The European Parliament passed a similar resolution in February.

State Department spokesmen had said Kerry was studying volumes of information before deciding on the genocide information. Last October, they hinted that a genocide designation was coming for the Yezidi minority in the region, but not for Christians. The comments led to a firestorm of protest from Christian groups that resulted in the congressional action.

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, asked U.S. Catholics to sign a pledge calling for an end to the slaughter of Christians and members of other religious minority groups in the Middle East.

"As a people of faith, we must convince the U.S. Department of State to include Christians in any formal declaration of genocide," he said on March 14, just days before Kerry's deadline.

In his remarks, Kerry said the U.S. government did not have total access to everything going on, but was basing its decision on intelligence and military sources and outside groups.

The Knights and In Defense of Christians issued their 278-page report in Washington. It contained dozens of statements collected from Feb. 22 through March 3 from witnesses and victims of atrocities carried out by Islamic State forces. The incidents included torture, rapes, kidnappings, murder, forced conversions, bombings and the destruction of religious property and monuments.

In Beirut, Syriac Catholic Patriarch Ignace Joseph III Younan commended the "courageous and clear resolution." He said adopting the resolution would "help the [world's] first Christian communities survive in their homeland of the Middle East." He made the remarks before leaving on March 17 to visit Homs, Syria, his fourth visit since the liberation of the city. †

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE



Students from Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Indianapolis add a splash of green and an extra "O" to their school name as they march in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Indianapolis on March 17. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



Father Kenneth Taylor, right, pastor of Holy Angels Parish and St. Rita Parish, both in Indianapolis, dons the green and waves to the crowd as he walks with Holy Angels School student Sa'Niyah Boyd during the St. Patrick's Day parade in downtown Indianapolis on March 17. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



Above, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin poses for a photo with his Irish "fan" club on St. Patrick's Day: Benedictine Sister Mary Luke Jones, left, Benedictine Sister Juliann Babcock, Benedictine Sister Maureen Therese Cooney, Benedictine Sister Jennifer Mechtild Horner and Margy Nierman, a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. The sisters made the fans in the image of Archbishop Tobin as a joyful sign of their support for his selection as "Indy's 2016 Irish Citizen of the Year." (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin waves to the crowd while serving as the grand marshal of the St. Patrick's Day parade in Indianapolis on a sunny March 17. The archbishop served as grand marshal because of his selection as "Indy's 2016 Irish Citizen of the Year." (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



Above, standing with Indy Sports Foundation president Bob Welch, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin holds the plaque marking his selection as "Indy's 2016 Irish Citizen of the Year." The archbishop received the honor during St. Patrick's Day festivities in downtown Indianapolis on March 17. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



Left, Ella Stone, a first-grader at SS. Francis and Clare School in Greenwood, poses with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin after the St. Patrick's Day parade in Indianapolis on March 17. (Submitted photo)

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Christ's Resurrection is God's 'ultimate act of mercy'

By Mike Nelson

As a country, we celebrate Thanksgiving in late November. As a Church, we celebrate Thanksgiving every time we worship at Mass.

And never more so than on the holiest of all days, Easter Sunday, as we are reminded in the opening of the Easter sequence: "Christians, to the Paschal Victim/Offer your thankful praises!"

This, like much of the teaching of the Church, can be a challenge when we look at the world around us: conflict, violence, terrorism, poverty, oppression, economic injustice, ecological abuse, family discord, social upheaval—and arguments, judgments, castigations, fault-finding and blame-casting that never seem to end.

Didn't Pope Francis declare this as the Holy Year of Mercy? A year in which to focus on being loving and compassionate? A year in which we listen to one another?

"We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy," the pope said in "*Misericordiae Vultus*" ("The Face of Mercy"), his document that officially proclaimed the Holy Year of Mercy that began in December. Mercy "is a wellspring of joy, serenity and peace," he said. "Our salvation depends on it" (#2).

Yes, our salvation depends on it—on offering to one another the mercy that Christ himself offered to those who put him to death: "Father, forgive them" (Lk 23:34).

"At times how hard it seems to forgive!" Pope Francis admits in "*Misericordiae Vultus*." "And yet pardon is the instrument placed into our fragile hands to

attain serenity of heart. To let go of anger, wrath, violence and revenge is a necessary condition to living joyfully" (#9).

This is a tall order for most of us, who—and sometimes with good reason—allow ourselves to be consumed with anger and the desire for "getting even" based on hurts or injustices cast our way: an overbearing boss, a disgruntled employee, an obstinate child, an irresponsible neighbor—the list goes on.

And very often at the root of our anger is the belief (again, often justified) that we are not properly appreciated for who we are and what we have done for the one persecuting us. "What about all that I ...?" "What about the time I ...?" "Did he forget about ...?"

In times like that, it's a good idea to go back to Jesus on the cross, and especially the people who put him there and then stood around the cross, jeering and castigating him. What about all that Jesus did for the people? What about the times Jesus healed their family members and relatives? Did they forget about Jesus' message of forgiveness?

Did they even thank him? Do we?

The readings of the Easter Vigil, by their sheer length and number, cover a lot of theological territory, but each of them offers something significant for us in terms of what it means to be merciful and thankful.

The first three readings alone—the story of creation, the granting of favor to Abraham, the deliverance of the Jews from slavery—provide powerful moments for meditation and reflection on God's mercy, and how we are called to share it in praise and thanksgiving.

So do the responsorial

psalms: "The Earth is full of the goodness of the Lord" (Ps 33:5); "You will show me the path to life" (Ps 16:1); "I will sing to the Lord" (Ex 15:1).

And in the fourth reading, Isaiah declares: "Though the mountains leave their place and the hills be shaken, my love shall never leave you nor my covenant of peace be shaken, says the Lord, who has mercy on you" (Is 54:10).

To which the psalmist responds: "I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me. Sing praise to the Lord, you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger lasts but a moment; a lifetime, his good will" (Ps 30: 2, 5-6).

Most of the time, we must admit, our anger—however justified—lasts a great deal longer than a moment, and letting go of anger—forgiving those who angered us—is not easy. Nor is substituting that anger with giving thanks to God.

Yet that is what being a disciple of the Lord means, allowing the love that is placed into our hearts by God to be shared with all we encounter.

In "*Misericordiae Vultus*," Pope Francis expresses his hopes that, when the Year of Mercy ends on the solemnity of Christ the King on Nov. 20, "we shall be filled above all with a sense of gratitude and thanksgiving to the most Holy Trinity for having granted us an extraordinary time of grace. We will entrust the life of the Church, all humanity and the entire cosmos to the lordship of Christ, asking him to pour out his mercy upon us like the morning dew, so that everyone may work together to build a brighter future" (#5).

In raising Christ from the dead, God performs his ultimate



Miami Catholics hold lit candles at the start of the Easter Vigil on April 19, 2014, at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Miami. The Scripture readings of the Easter Vigil richly recount the mercy of God throughout salvation history. (CNS photo/Tom Tracy)

act of mercy upon the world, an act for which we give thanks not only at Easter but at every celebration of the Mass.

Or, as the Easter sequence concludes: "Christ indeed from death is risen, our new life

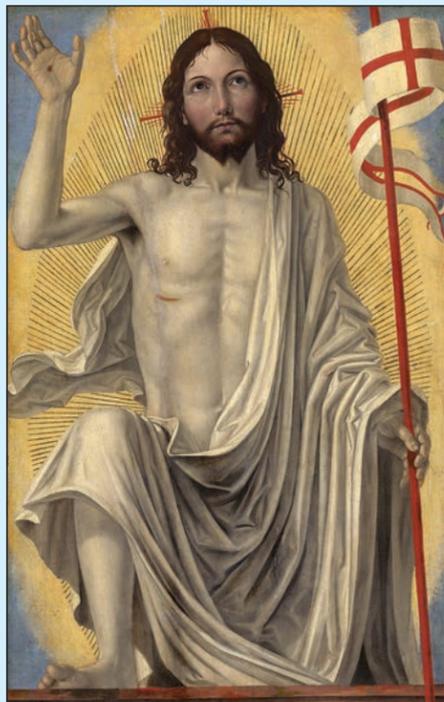
obtaining. Have mercy, victor King, ever reigning! Amen. Alleluia!"

(Mike Nelson is former editor of *The Tidings*, newspaper of the archdiocese of Los Angeles.) †

Easter Scripture readings show the Resurrection's eternal implications

By Fr. Lawrence E. Mick

Christmas and Easter are the two biggest feasts in the Church's



liturgical year. Even those who rarely gather for worship tend to show up on those two days.

The two feasts are quite different in character. Christmas might be seen as a rather intimate feast, with the focus on the Holy Family and the birth of a child. The manger scenes tend to evoke tender emotions in us, and "Silent Night" seems like the dominant anthem.

Easter, on the other hand, is a feast with a vast scope. It encompasses all of history and beyond. Many people may think of Easter as simply about the Resurrection of Christ from the tomb (which is certainly central!), but the readings assigned to this great feast depict a much broader view.

The primary celebration of Easter is the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night. There the readings begin by recalling

The Resurrection is depicted in "Christ Risen from the Tomb," a painting by Italian Renaissance artist Ambrogio Bergognone. The Scripture readings for Easter liturgies reveal how Christ's Resurrection has effects throughout all eternity. (CNS photo/courtesy of the National Gallery of Art)

the creation of the universe (Gn 1:1-2:2). The subsequent readings then guide us through the history of God's dealings with humanity, with Abraham and Isaac, Moses and the Exodus, and several readings from the prophets of Israel.

The vigil readings culminate, of course, with the proclamation of the Resurrection, with accounts from Matthew, Mark and Luke assigned to the three different cycles of the *Lectionary*.

So, in a brief time, we move from the creation of the universe to the new creation that begins with the Resurrection. But this new creation doesn't stop there.

Even before the proclamation of the Gospel at the vigil, St. Paul reminds us that Resurrection is not an experience only for Jesus: "We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life" (Rom 6:4).

In the midst of the vigil liturgy, we celebrate the baptism, confirmation and first Eucharist of those who have been prepared through the catechumenate, revealing in their own lives the power of the Resurrection to bring us to new life.

New life that comes out of death is a

basic theme of the Christian life. Through baptism, we share in Christ's death and Resurrection. But we must embrace that mystery throughout our lives, dying to sin and selfishness in order to rise to fuller life in Christ.

On Easter Sunday morning, the reading from Colossians puts it this way, "For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory" (Col 3:3-4) It is a lifelong process that culminates in our final death and Resurrection to life that lasts forever.

The final reading for Easter Sunday is an option for afternoon and evening Masses. The story in Luke 24 of the two disciples whose eyes are opened to see the Risen Lord "in the breaking of the bread" at Emmaus reminds us that we encounter Christ and embrace his death and Resurrection in every celebration of the Mass (Lk 24:35).

The Eucharist sustains us on our journey through all our dying and rising in Christ.

(Father Lawrence E. Mick is a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Renaissance Church: Finally reacting to the Reformation

(Eighth in a series of columns)

It took the hierarchy of the Catholic Church a long time to try to repair



the damage done by the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. It's true that Pope Adrian VI, who succeeded Pope Leo X, admitted that blame lay primarily with the curia of the Church

and that reform was needed, but he lived only 20 months in office.

When Paul III became pope in 1534, the disintegration of the Church seemed near. Much of Europe, especially Germany, Switzerland and England, had broken with Rome. Christians had followed Martin Luther and other Protestant reformers because the Church leaders in many places were, frankly, corrupt.

In his personal life, Pope Paul, too, was hardly exemplary. Before he became pope, his mistress bore him three sons and a daughter, and after he became pope he made two of his grandsons cardinals at the ages of 14 and 16.

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us

Pope Francis has declared this to be a Holy Year of Mercy. Sounds familiar, and even easy to do, but while it may be a familiar theme, it's often not easy to accomplish.



The parable of the Prodigal Son comes to mind. We once knew a family in which a teenage son rebelled and

ran away for a few months. When he finally returned unexpectedly, the entire family wept together and embraced him. And, as in the parable, another son went to his room and slammed the door. He was disgusted at the warm reception for someone who had caused so much distress.

Luckily, the sacrament of reconciliation is ready and waiting to help us show mercy to others and gain mercy for ourselves. During Lent, as in the rest of the year, our pastor provided many opportunities for confession. Even we elderly laggards availed ourselves of it.

As a convert to Catholicism, I didn't know what to expect when going to confession for the first time. But it turned

Emmaus Walk/Debra Tomaselli

If you are feeling stressed, these words are meant for you

As Lent unfolded, a particular Scripture passage kept coming to mind. It's one



where Jesus addresses Simon Peter, and says Satan has asked to sift him like wheat ... but that's all I could remember.

It came to mind because that's how I feel ... attacked by Satan on all sides.

I've been battling cancer. The chemotherapy was successful, but the road to recovery remains a struggle.

While we won the physical war, I'm fighting another battle. One I didn't expect. It's a spiritual conflict with frustration and fear on the front lines.

It didn't start out this way.

Initially, I didn't feel Satan's assault. Rather, I felt bubble-wrapped in the love of God. I found much to be thankful for.

When the chemotherapy treatments began, I devoted time to reading my Bible and praying the rosary. I'd listen to Laudate podcasts, Scripture readings and worship music. It was like a mini-retreat.

To his credit, though, he realized the gravity of the religious situation and started a thorough cleansing of the Church and its members. He stopped the granting of indulgences in return for money, prohibited arbitrary sentences of excommunication, and appointed cardinals (other than his grandsons) known for their piety and ability.

In 1536, Pope Paul established a commission of four cardinals and five other prelates to study the question of Church reform. On March 9, 1537, the group made its report, saying, in effect, that much of what Martin Luther had been complaining about—at least in terms of Church practice—was true. It gave the pope a blueprint for reform. It included plans for a general council.

First, though, Pope Paul did something that proved to be extremely important: he approved the constitutions of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1540.

The Jesuits' founder, St. Ignatius of Loyola, was born in 1491 in Spain and died in 1556. A military man, he had his leg shattered by a cannon ball. While recovering, he read a life of Christ and lives of saints. He then made a pilgrimage to Mary's shrine at Montserrat, near

Barcelona, and stayed for almost a year at nearby Manresa. He began to write his greatest work, *The Spiritual Exercises*.

He spent the next 11 years studying in various European universities. Then, in 1535, at age 33, he and six others formed the Society of Jesus, offering themselves to the service of the pope. After Pope Paul approved the society, Ignatius remained in Rome overseeing the new venture. He also founded the Roman College and homes for orphans, catechumens and penitents.

His society was to play a prominent part in the Counter-Reformation, and would eventually become the largest religious order of men in the world. (However, the several separate religious orders that trace their origin back to St. Francis of Assisi are larger when their numbers are combined.)

Meanwhile, when Pope Paul III announced that he would convoke a general council, beginning on May 13, 1537, the idea didn't go over well with some of the secular powers. After failing to reach agreement, the pope postponed the council. It was eventually convened in Trento (Trent), Italy on Dec. 13, 1545. †

Now, it's very hard to be the one asking for mercy because of a wrong we've committed. First, we must admit our guilt and own it, and then (we feel) lower ourselves to beg forgiveness. But it's a necessary requirement for continuing on our spiritual journey, as well as healing our relationships and allowing others to be merciful. It's one of those extremely human things that are so hard to do, and so satisfying when we do them.

Ultimately, all forgiveness is given by God. God even forgives our human desires to belittle our own faults and transgressions. After all, we think, we're not axe murderers or rapists. So what's the big deal about being nasty to a clerk when we're upset about something else, or fudging a little on the taxes we owe? The childish excuse of "everyone else does it" is so tempting.

Pope Francis was certainly inspired by the Holy Spirit when he proclaimed a Year of Mercy. We need to think about how simple, yet profound, that concept can be in our lives and the lives of others.

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

verse about being sifted like wheat persisted. I was definitely being sifted.

Finally, I found the passage and read it.

In it, Christ is speaking to Simon Peter, but he may as well have been speaking directly to me. Throughout the passage, Christ's words hit home.

The Scripture came alive. I was stunned to think that, in the midst of our trials, Christ pleads on our behalf. I was humbled by the simplicity of his prayer.

Christ addresses Simon Peter, but I'm pretty sure his words are meant for each one of us.

So, if, like me, you are being sifted like wheat, fill your own name in and listen to the words of Jesus:

"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to have you, to sift you like wheat. But I have pleaded in prayer for you that your faith should not completely fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen and build up the faith of your brothers" (Lk 22:31-32).

(Debra Tomaselli writes from Altamonte Springs, Florida. She can be reached at dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Live close to Calvary and the empty tomb in your daily life

An ordinary family home in central or southern Indiana today can seem a world



away from the hill of Calvary outside Jerusalem where Christ was crucified 2,000 years ago, and the tomb where he was buried—and rose from the dead—a few hundred feet away.

Yet this place is of central importance

for Catholics and all Christians, since it was where humanity's redemption was completed when the Lord showed his infinite love for us by dying on the cross and then rising again in glory.

When we gather to worship on Palm Sunday and on Good Friday, we're spiritually drawn to the foot of that cross on Calvary to mourn the death of our Savior at the side of his sorrowful Mother, and to give thanks for his boundless mercy that flowed from his pierced side. On Holy Saturday night or on Easter Sunday, we stand with Mary Magdalene, Peter and John at the entrance of the empty tomb, filled with awe and a growing joy at knowing our Lord lives.

But, at least at first glance, it can seem hard for Catholics living in the U.S. today to identify themselves with both the overwhelming horror of Christ's death and the transcendent joy of his resurrection, two experiences that are so far removed from our daily lives.

St. Paul would have us take a second look at our everyday lives. He thinks they're closer to Calvary and the empty tomb than we might at first think.

We hear his perspective on this dilemma, found in his Letter to the Romans, proclaimed during the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night: "Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life" (Rom 6:3-4).

It's fitting that this passage begins with a question. For it's easy for us to be oblivious to the profound reality that is the subject of Paul's question as our lives, 2,000 years and half a world away from Calvary and the empty tomb, become in their busyness more and more focused on the here and now.

However, if we take a moment to step back on solemn days like Good Friday or joyous ones like Easter Sunday to see the bigger picture of our lives, our eyes can be opened to just how Calvary—and Christ's empty tomb found so close by—can be found in the heart of our homes.

Parents are baptized into Christ's death when, dying to their own preference for a good night's sleep, they rise in the middle of the night to comfort a crying baby. Years later, they're baptized into Christ's death when, dying to their preference for quiet time at home, they spend many an afternoon, evening and weekend driving their children to and from sporting events, parish activities or music lessons.

At the same time, parents live in newness of life when they appreciate the tender beauty of the baby lying on their shoulder, even if it's at 2 a.m., or joyfully watch their growing children deepen their faith and nurture their God-given talents.

For their part, children are baptized into Christ's death when, instead of throwing a fit like young children are wont to do, they learn to humbly accept that their every desire will not be fulfilled the moment they express it. And they live in newness of life when, as children so often do, they take joy in the small things in life—coming home after a long day at school, playing in the backyard on a sunny spring day or seeing their favorite dessert placed on the dinner table.

Receive with an open heart the grace of the Easter season that we'll soon begin, and let it help you live close to Calvary and the empty tomb in your daily life. †

Easter Sunday/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 27, 2016

- Acts of the Apostles 10:34a, 37-43
- Colossians 3:1-4
- John 20:1-9

The Church celebrates the Easter Vigil late in the evening on Holy Saturday.



These readings are those read during Masses on Easter Sunday itself.

For its first reading on this extraordinary feast of Christian faith, the Church presents us with a passage from the Acts of the Apostles. Acts is, in effect, a

continuation of St. Luke's Gospel. Scholars say that this Gospel and Acts were the work of the same author. Beginning with the Ascension, Acts reports what life was like for the infant Church in Jerusalem, and then it recalls the initial spread of Christianity.

Important in the early chapters of Acts is a series of sermons delivered by St. Peter. He spoke for the Church as the leader, chosen by Christ himself, of the Apostles. In this reading, Peter briefly gives a synopsis of the life of Jesus. Sent by God, Jesus was crucified, the victim of human scheming. He rose after death. He commissioned the Apostles to continue the work of reconciling God and humanity. The Apostles learned from Jesus.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, the second reading, places Christ at God's right hand. Paul says that Christians already have "been raised" because they have taken Christ into their hearts (Col 3:1). Having given themselves to Jesus, they have died to earthly things and to earthly ideas. In the process, they have been drawn into the eternal life of the risen Lord.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last reading. It goes into some detail about the Resurrection and its aftermath. The first figure mentioned in the story is Mary Magdalene. She was a beloved figure in early Christianity because she was an intense follower of Jesus. Indeed, according to John's Gospel, she stood

beneath the cross of Calvary rather than abandon the dying Lord. It was a risky act that might have construed her to be an accomplice in treason against the Roman Empire. Despite this danger—and the Romans were unforgiving—she remained.

She went to the tomb before daybreak. Finding it empty, she hurried to Peter and the disciple whom Jesus loved. (Tradition long has assumed this disciple to be St. John, although this Gospel passage never identifies the disciple by name.)

Peter and the disciple then rushed to the tomb themselves. They were overwhelmed. Grasping what exactly had happened at the tomb was not easy. Love and faith made the process easier. The beloved disciple saw that the tomb was empty. He believed that Jesus had risen.

Reflection

The Church joyfully tells us that the Lord lives. He rose from the dead. It is a proclamation of the greatest and central belief of the Church, namely that Jesus, the Son of God, overcame even death.

More than simply affirming once again the Church's trust in the Resurrection of Christ, these readings call upon us to respond. Such was the message in Colossians, the second reading. Such is the important lesson in the references to Mary Magdalene, Peter and the disciple whom Jesus loved. They believed regardless of the costs, and in spite of the seeming impossibility of rising from the dead.

We too must believe. Such belief is so demanding. First, we must admit our limitations, confronting the fact that sin has weakened and blinded us. Then, we must submit ourselves to God, ready to be healed and strengthened. Hopefully, Lenten penances these past weeks have helped us in this process.

All this requires following the Lord. How do we know the Lord? Where do we meet the Lord? We hear Jesus in the testimony of Peter and the Apostles. We meet Jesus in the Church that they formed in Jerusalem, and then, beyond so long ago, the living, visible Church of God here and now. †

Daily Readings

Monday, March 28

Monday within the Octave of Easter
Acts 2:14, 22-23
Psalm 16:1-2a, 5, 7-11
Matthew 28:8-15

Tuesday, March 29

Tuesday within the Octave of Easter
Acts 2:36-41
Psalm 33:4-5, 18-20, 22
John 20:11-18

Wednesday, March 30

Wednesday within the Octave of Easter
Acts 3:1-10
Psalm 105:1-4, 6-9
Luke 24:13-35

Thursday, March 31

Thursday within the Octave of Easter
Acts 3:11-26
Psalm 8:2ab, 5-9
Luke 24:35-48

Friday, April 1

Friday within the Octave of Easter
Acts 4:1-12
Psalm 118:1-2, 4, 22-27a
John 21:1-14

Saturday, April 2

Saturday within the Octave of Easter
Acts 4:13-21
Psalm 118:1, 14-15b, 16-21
Mark 16:9-15

Sunday, April 3

Second Sunday of Easter
Divine Mercy Sunday
Acts 5:12-16
Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19
John 20:19-31

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Church does not require a Mass of Christian Burial for deceased Catholics

Unless illness prevented it, I have attended daily Mass most of my life. (I love starting the day with the Lord in his house!) Now in my late 80s, I have already paid for my funeral arrangements. Because I have only a few relatives still living, I have requested that there not be a wake.



For the same reason, I do not want a funeral Mass. I would like only a private committal service at the grave site. Does the Catholic Church require both services? (New York)

Catholicism is a strong part of my identity, and all my friends and loved ones know that. But on the other hand, few of my family and friends are practicing Catholics. Since they would be unable to participate fully in the Mass, I am thinking that I would prefer a non-Mass funeral service (in my parish church if possible), followed at some point by a memorial Mass. Does this choice make sense, given my circumstances? (Minnesota)

Strictly speaking, the Church's Code of Canon Law does not mandate a funeral Mass, which is known in the Church as a "Mass of Christian Burial." Having said this, rarely should there not be a funeral Mass. The Eucharist is the central prayer of Catholics.

It is the act of worship that gives praise and thanks to God for the victory of Jesus over sin and death, and it commends the deceased to God's tender mercy. This is the most powerful prayer that can be offered on a deceased person's behalf. Why should a Catholic who has died be deprived of that benefit?

A funeral Mass can also be inspirational and educational for those in attendance, including non-Catholics as well as Catholics who may have fallen away from regular practice of the faith. Of course, one's family and friends are not the only ones invited to a funeral Mass. Members of one's parish may also participate in a funeral Mass to pray for the repose of the soul of the deceased.

Each element—the scriptural readings, the homily, the music, the prayers, especially those centered on the Eucharist

itself—reminds those in attendance that God conquers all things, including death. I would think long and hard before deciding not to have a funeral Mass—especially for myself!

In my diocesan newspaper, I read recently that in 1966 Pope Paul VI reduced the Lenten days of fasting and abstinence to two: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

I am a cradle Catholic, still practicing and now 75 years old. I have fasted all 40 days of Lent for years and years, as I understood was prescribed. How is it that I am just hearing now about the lifting of that rigorous rule? For many years, fasting—with only one full meal a day—was extremely difficult for me. Why was there no broadcast of the change? (Indiana)

I have just read online an Associated Press story from Feb. 17, 1966, which ran on front pages of newspapers across America. The article leads by saying that "Pope Paul VI decreed major changes today in the centuries-old rules of fasting and abstinence for Roman Catholics." It goes on to explain that "days of fasting during the Lenten season were reduced to two—Ash Wednesday and Good Friday."

This does not mean, of course, that the change was explained well and thoroughly from every Catholic pulpit in America, so you may well have missed it through no fault of your own. But looking back now, what have you lost?

You made a greater sacrifice, in memory of the sufferings of Jesus, than you were required to do—and I can only believe that you have stored up, with the help of God's grace, merit where it matters most.

I should add, though, that if fasting might prove harmful to someone's health, any reasonable priest would dispense that person immediately. In any case, the Church today only requires fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday for Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 59. Therefore, you are not obliged to fast on these days, but still may do so if you wish and if your health permits it.

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

My Journey to God

I Was Thinking of You

By Greg Hublar

When I prayed in the garden and sweated drops of blood
I was prayerfully thinking of you.
When my heart was broken with the betrayal of a kiss
I was devotedly thinking of you.
When my friends turned and ran away in fear
I was courageously thinking of you.
When my enemies brutalized me and took me away in chains
I was mercifully thinking of you.
When I was jeered, despised, spit upon and falsely accused
I was justly thinking of you.
When my flesh was ripped from my bones and my blood poured out
I was sacrificially thinking of you.
When a crown of thorns was pierced deep into my brow
I was peacefully thinking of you.
When I carried my heavy cross on legs that could no longer stand
I was physically thinking of you.
When nails were driven through my hands and feet and I was lifted up on the cross
I was eternally thinking of you.
When insults were hurled in an attempt to get me to think of my own pain and suffering
I was selflessly thinking of you.
When I struggled to take my last painful breath
I was resolutely thinking of you.
When I descended into the depths of hell
I was protectively thinking of you.
When I rose from the dead and ascended into heaven in glorious victory
I was joyfully thinking of you.
Today, as I continue to rule over all things great and small for eternity
I am still lovingly thinking and singing over you.

(Greg Hublar is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany.)

Rest in peace

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

ARROW, J. Bruce, 76, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Feb. 29. Husband of Chloe Arrow. Father of Peggy Chinn, Diane Curry and Mary Ellen Arrow. Brother of Robyn Reinhard. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of two.

BECKER, Zenon, 80, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, March 8. Father of Stefanie Gilles and Paul Becker. Brother of Irene Lebherz. Grandfather of three.

BORUCKI, Irene C., 93, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Feb. 18. Mother of Diane Borucki.

BRINKWORTH, Carolyn P., 79, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Feb. 14. Wife of David W. Brinkworth. Mother of Susan, Brian and James Brinkworth. Sister of Ellen Borkins and Marilyn Mattingly. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of two.

CHILDERS, Louise, 91, St. Mary, Rushville, March 12. Mother of Janie Sosbe and

Joseph Childers, Jr. Grandmother of six.

HAWKINS II, Grant, 34, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Feb. 25. Son of Grant and Carol Hawkins. Brother of Kathryn Hawkins. Grandson of Mary Cline.

HOFFMAN, JoAnn, 67, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, 67, March 12. Wife of Peter J. Hoffman. Mother of Edward and Fred Hoffman. Sister of Shelby Hammonds and Devonne Profit. Grandmother of four.

JONES, Helen L., 83, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Feb. 29. Mother of Nancy Boman, Kathy Hughes, Mary Beth Lawson, Kim Palmer, Bobby, Chris and Joey Jones. Sister of Olivia Montgomery and Joseph Hinton. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of three.

KERN, Lucy M., 90, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, March 13. Mother of Deborah Lane, David, Dean Jr. and Dennis Kern. Sister of Ann Forno and Joseph Raimondi. Grandmother of three.

KESTLER, Helen B., 85, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, March 1. Mother of Patricia Dallas, Laura Fain, Dennis and Stephen Kestler. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of one.

KIDDIE, Ann I., 84, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, March 6. Mother of Carole Dempe, Craig and Thomas Kiddie. Sister of Mary

Nichirco. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of two.

MOREY, Thomas F., 62, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, March 9. Father of Tracey Morey-Olive. Brother of Mary Crider, Patricia, Robert Jr. and Stephen Morey. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of one.

MULGREW, John, 82, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, March 4. Husband of Anne Mulgrew. Father of Lynn Fink, John and Michael Mulgrew. Brother of Jeanne Mulgrew. Grandfather of six.

MULROY, Patrick, 83, St. John the Baptist, Osgood, March 11. Husband of Carolyn Holman, Catherine Pratt, Christopher, Kevin, Michael and William Mulroy. Brother of Geraldine Wise. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of two.

OWENS, Mary Jane, 87, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, March 11. Mother of Janet McNabb and Richard Owens. Sister of Joanne Hutchinson, Donna Monahan, Marge Rieser, Dan and Joe Brosnan. Grandmother of five.

PHIELER, Jacqueline M., 59, St. Mary, Lanesville, March 13. Daughter of Elsie Phielier. Sister of Betsy Conklin, Kathleen, David, Glenn and Michael Phielier.

PROST, Beverly, 69, St. John the Baptist, Osgood, March 7. Wife of Donald Prost. Mother of Sharon Barnhart, Susan Voriel, Jeannette, Donald, Matthew and Michael Prost. Sister of Bonita, James and Richard Wilkening. Grandmother of eight.

QUIGLEY, Daniel T., 71, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, March 8. Husband



'Sign' of faith

Members of the deaf community use sign language to participate in the Stations of the Cross held on March 11 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Green Bay, Wis. (CNS photo/Sam Lucero, *The Compass*)

of Sheila (Pehler) Quigley. Father of Erin, Michelle and Ryan Quigley. Brother of Kitty Holmes, Jerry, Joe and Mike Quigley. Grandfather of five.

RICHMER, Edward, 84, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 14. Father of Marcia, Anthony and Edward Richmer. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of seven.

SANTOS, Jose L., 90, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 14. Husband of Masako Santos. Father of Alex, Angelo, John and Phil Santos. Brother

of Norma and Abel Santos. Grandfather of six.

STUBER, Joseph F., 64, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, 64, March 11. Husband of Kelly A. Huber. Father of Laura Neal, Tess, Clayton and Jackson Stuber. Brother of Pam McClinton and Danny Stuber.

SUPAN, Mary A., 79, Christ the King, Indianapolis, March 10. Wife of Bob Supan. Mother of Michelle Bonjour, Cheryl Mears, Mike and Steven Supan. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of six.

VIERLING, Gary, 64, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, March 10. Husband of Sue (McKinney) Vierling. Father of Mariah Martinez and Jordan Vierling. Son of Bernice Vierling. Brother of Sue Barnhardt, Therisa Taggart, Dixie Vogel, Bill and Jim Vierling. Grandfather of five.

VINCO, Katherine, 97, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Feb. 14. Mother of Kay Smock. Sister of Joyce Gibson. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of one. †



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THE SPIRIT OF CARING®

Pope condemns 'blind violence,' offers prayers after Brussels attacks

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—

Pope Francis, condemning the "blind violence" of the terrorist attacks in Brussels, offered his prayers to the victims, the injured, their families and all those offering assistance in the aftermath of the bombings.

Cardinal

Pope Francis
Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, sent the pope's condolences on March 22 to Archbishop Jozef De Kesel of Mechelen-Brussels.

"The Holy Father again condemns the blind violence which causes so much suffering, and he implores from God the gift of peace," the message said.

The pope "entrusts to God's mercy those who died and, in prayer, he shares the pain of their loved ones," the message said. "He expresses his deepest sympathy to the injured and their families, as well as for all those providing assistance, asking the Lord to give them comfort and consolation amid this ordeal."

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told reporters the attacks in Brussels would not lead to any changes in Pope Francis' Holy Week and Easter schedule. Already for the Holy Year of Mercy, especially after the November terrorist attacks in Paris, the Italian police presence at the Vatican has been increased.

Three nearly simultaneous attacks—two at the Brussels airport and one on the Brussels area of Maalbeek, near where much of the European Union is based—left at least 31 dead and dozens more injured. At least one of the airport attacks was attributed to a suicide bomber.

The Associated Press reported that a spokesman for the Brussels Metro said 20 people were killed and more than

100 injured in an explosion on a train, and Belgian media reported at least 11 dead in two explosions at the airport, with many others injured. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks, but European security officials had been bracing for an attack for weeks, AP reported.

After the attacks, Belgium raised its terror alert to the highest level.

Belgium's Catholic bishops said they shared "the anguish of thousands of passengers and their families, aviation professionals and aid teams called to the breach once more."

The bishops said airport chaplains were "at the daily service of all," and would "offer the necessary spiritual service," adding that it counted on the whole country to "live through these days with great civic responsibility."

Brussels Auxiliary Bishop Jean Kockerols told the Church's Cathobel news agency he was shocked by the savagery of the "completely absurd attacks."

"We must support the efforts of the public authorities we've elected and mandated to serve the common good and maintain law and order—it's not for us to start polemicizing and making accusations today as to whether they fulfilled their duties and did all they could," Bishop Kockerols said.

"It's a great mystery that this has all happened on the threshold of Holy Week, the most sacred time for Christians, when we are about to mark Good Friday and Easter. In the face of such madness, we should adopt the courageous attitude of Mary, who remained at the foot of the cross in silence."

Cathobel issued an emergency number for those seeking information about missing family members, and said it had been in contact with Father Michel Gaillard, the Brussels airport chief chaplain.

Meanwhile, German Cardinal Reinhard Marx, who heads the



People evacuate Zaventem airport after explosions near Brussels on March 22.

(CNS photo/Laurent Dubrulle, EPA)

Brussels-based Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community, or COMECE, said Catholics would be "praying especially in Holy Week" for victims of the violence.

In a statement, he said he had been concerned about COMECE staffers, who later issued a message confirming that all personnel were safe.

A bishops' conference staffer, Father Geert Lesage, told Catholic News Service he expected Catholic clergy to visit sites of the attacks to offer pastoral care, as well as to organize special Masses as soon as security conditions permitted.

However, he added that all mobile phone connections were now down in Brussels, making it impossible to obtain news of Catholic victims or damage to Church property.

Father Charles De Clercq, a Brussels priest, told Cathobel he had been in the first car of the bombed Metro train, which had been "plunged into darkness and

filled with smoke" after the explosion.

"Smashed windows fell on my knees—there was light, smoke and shouts. The driver arrived after two minutes with a lamp and made the passengers leave via an emergency window," the priest said.

"On the floor, passengers were curled up, obviously in pain, who could have been crushed by those in flight. I knew there'd been two explosions in the morning at Zaventem [airport], so I knew there was a real possibility this was also an attack."

A day earlier, gunmen in Bamako, Mali, targeted a hotel that was serving as the headquarters of EU troops who were there to train the country's military. Mali and other West African countries have been under attack by Islamic extremists.

Catholic Relief Services, which has programs in Mali, announced on March 22 that its staffers were safe after the attack. †

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Robotics team at St. Thomas Aquinas earns spot in world championship

By John Shaughnessy

The six students from the small Catholic school on the north side of Indianapolis kept hoping and dreaming that all their efforts at the Indiana state tournament would earn them a place in the world championship.

And now that the final results were about to be announced—on a day of competition that began at 7:30 in the morning and now neared 5 p.m.—their nervousness began to overflow.

They crossed their fingers, they closed their eyes, and they shifted from leg to leg—waiting, waiting, waiting.

In the end, the wait was far more than worth it for the team from St. Thomas Aquinas School. The students' dream became a reality as it was announced that they had earned a place in the 2016 Vex Robotics World Championship in Louisville, Ky., where they will compete with teams from as far away as China, New Zealand and Brazil on April 20-23.

At the time, the five sixth-graders and the one fifth-grader on the St. Thomas team didn't know that they are the only Catholic school from Indiana that qualified for the world competition. At the time, they jumped, cheered, hugged and cried tears of joy. And they kept celebrating on the ride back to school, singing all the way.

"We were so excited," said Grace

Gerdenich on a recent morning at the school where she was surrounded by her teammates, Bradley Basile, Julia Dugan, Maggie Gonzalez, Jackson Herrera and Maggie Timpe. "None of us had done this before. The trophy was so tiny, but it meant so much to us."

Actually, there is one more member of the team—their robot that they affectionately named "Fluffy Sylvester."

"They think of their robot as a personality, not a machine," said Sandy Hoy, a St. Thomas science teacher who coordinates the school's robotics program. "Some of the kids wanted to name it Fluffy and some wanted to name it Sylvester, so we just combined the two. The name indicates what it's all about—having fun. I want them to learn some things, explore some things, and go through the engineering process, but it has to be fun for them."

Fun is definitely built into the competition as teams played a game

called VEX IQ Bank Shot.

Plastic balls are set up on a ramp at one end of a small court. Team members have to drive their robot up the ramp to dislodge all those balls. Then the robot has to scoop the balls up one at a time and take them to the opposite end of the court, where they earn one point for flinging each ball over a fence and three points for shooting a ball into a basket. And they have a minute to score as many points as possible.

'One of the things the judges do is to make sure the participants can talk about the process, to make sure they're the ones who are doing the work and not adults. Our kids did a really excellent job in fielding the questions. They were enthusiastic and knowledgeable. I was really proud of them.'

—Sandy Hoy, a St. Thomas science teacher who coordinates the school's robotics program



A robotics team at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis is the only one from a Catholic school in Indiana to earn a place in the 2016 Vex Robotics World Championship in Louisville, Ky., on April 20-23. Members of the team in the first row are Bradley Basile, left, Maggie Gonzalez (holding the team robot "Fluffy Sylvester") and Julia Dugan. Team members in the second row are Jackson Herrera, left, Grace Gerdenich and Maggie Timpe. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

There are also other components of the competition, including a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) project. The St. Thomas team earned a special award at the state tournament in February for its STEM project, comparing the climate-friendly use of alternative energy—wind and solar technology—to fossil fuel energy.

"One of the things the judges do is to make sure the participants can talk about the process, to make sure they're the ones who are doing the work and not adults," Hoy said. "Our kids did a really excellent job in fielding the questions. They were enthusiastic and knowledgeable. I was really proud of them."

The team members hope to continue their success with a good showing in the world championship.

"We're the only Catholic school in Indiana going to worlds," said Maggie Gonzalez. "We just want to show people we can do it."

So far, the experience has taught them lessons that extend beyond an understanding of robotics and knowledge of programming skills.

"I've learned how to communicate with other people, to set goals," said Maggie Timpe.

"Everybody on the team contributed to where we are," said Julia Dugan. "We've really bonded from this experience, working together through all the ups and downs."

Grace Gerdenich nodded in agreement and added, "If one of us wasn't there, I don't think we would have made it to worlds." †




The Faith and Ideas Series

The Faith and Ideas Series strives to provide unique and creative opportunities for Marian University students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends to promote intellectually informed and robust experiences regarding important issues at the intersection of faith, reason, and culture.

“Spirituality and Mental Health”
Thursday, April 14 | 7 p.m.
 Fr. Michael Hoyt, Pastor of St. Michael's Parish
 Ruth Lilly Student Center, Community Room

“Mercy and the Franciscan Charism”
Wednesday, April 20 | 3 p.m.
 Sr. Barbara Leonhard, OSF
 Michael A. Evans Center for Health Sciences, Lecture Hall 1

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