Supreme Court justices send Little Sisters’ case back to lower courts

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court on May 16 sent the Zubik v. Burwell case, which challenges the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) contraceptive, sterilization, and abortifacient insurance coverage requirement for employers, back to the lower courts.

The justices’ unanimous decision, explained in a nine-page order, was based on the information that both sides submitted a week after oral arguments were heard in the case about how and if contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization insurance coverage could be obtained by employees through their employers’ insurance companies without directly involving religious employers who object to this coverage.

The court made clear that it is not expressing an opinion on the merits of the cases that are challenging aspects of the federal government’s health legislation, and it also was not ruling on the issue of a potential violation of religious freedom. Because of the “gravity of the dispute and the substantial clarification and refinement in the positions of the parties,” the court stated that religious employers and the government should be “afforded an opportunity to arrive at an approach going forward that accommodates petitioners’ religious exercise while at the same time ensuring that women covered by petitioners’ health plans receive full and equal health coverage, including contraceptive coverage.”

The court stressed that this approach is “more suitable” than addressing the refined positions submitted by both sides, and added that “although there may still be areas of disagreement between the parties on issues of implementation, the importance of those areas of potential concern is uncertain, as is the refinement in the positions of the parties.”

Faith courses through the 100th running of ‘The Greatest Spectacle in Racing’

SPEEDWAY—Minutes before 33 race cars roar down the front stretch of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway on May 29 at the start of the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500, silence will envelope the historic track as hundreds of thousands of spectators join Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin in an invocation prayer.

Millions more around the world, listening to or watching radio and television broadcasts of the event known as “The Greatest Spectacle in Racing,” will hear him pray and say “Godspeed” in the mother tongues of all the drivers.

The invocation, which has been offered by a Catholic priest or bishop since 1978, is a prominent public expression of how the Church in central and southern Indiana participates in this race that has become an integral part of the identity of Indianapolis since its first running in 1911.

“Giving the invocation is a thrilling moment, principally because I realize what an important event the 500 is for the people I serve,” said Archbishop Tobin. “I continue to grow in appreciation for what the race represents for the people of Indianapolis and the state of Indiana.”

‘A beautiful witness for the Church’

Yet there are other significant ways that Catholics have made the race a part of their lives and lived out their faith in the midst of it.

“I never had enough sense to go to the Indy 500 and Indy racing in general have been a big part of the life of Father Glenn O’Connor for more than 40 years,” said the former Saint Meinrad College in St. Meinrad when a friend asked him in May 1975 to help rebuild the race car of Eldon Rasmussen, which the driver had wrecked during the first weekend of qualifications for the race.

So, with his academic year just completed, Father O’Connor came to Indianapolis, pitched in and even served on Rasmussen’s rag tag pit crew for the race. From that first experience, he was hooked.

Pope tells women religious Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith will study women deacons

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis told the heads of women’s religious orders from around the world that he would set up a commission to study the New Testament deaconesses, and he also insisted more can and should be done to involve lay and consecrated women in Church decision-making at every level.

Asked if he would establish “an official commission to study the question” of whether women could be admitted to the diaconate, Pope Francis responded: “I accept. It would be useful for the Church to clarify this question. I agree.”

The pope spent more than an hour on May 12 responding to questions posed by members of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), repeatedly asking if they wanted further clarification and making funny asides or rephrasing his responses when it was clear they were not hitting the mark.

“I like hearing your questions because they make me think,” the pope told close to 900 superiors general, representing almost 500,000 sisters around the world. “I feel like a goalie, who is standing there waiting for the ball and not knowing where it’s going to come from.”

Asked about deaconesses in the New Testament and the possibility of the modern Church admitting women to the permanent diaconate, Pope Francis had said his understanding was that the women described as deaconesses in the Bible were not ordained like permanent deacons are. Mainly, he said, it appeared that they assisted with the baptism by immersion of other women and with the anointing of women.

However, he said, “I will ask the [Congregation for the] Doctrine of the Faith to tell me if there are studies on this.”

Pope Francis also promised to have the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments send the UISG a full explanation of why women cannot give a homily at Mass. While women can preach at a Liturgy of the Word when there is not a celebration of the Eucharist, he said, at Mass the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist are parts of a whole and only one who is ordained can
Parishes change Mass times due to holiday weekend and Indianapolis 500 race.

Several parishes in the Indianapolis West Deanery will change their Mass schedule for the Memorial Day weekend on May 28-30 and the Indianapolis 500 race on May 29.

**Holy Angels Parish, Indianapolis—**Saturday anticipation Mass will be held as usual at 4:30 p.m. in the parish center at 740 W. 28th St. on May 28. There will be no Mass at Bishop Chatard Memorial Chapel on the campus of Marian University in Indianapolis on May 29. Instead, Mass will be celebrated with the members of St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., at 11 a.m. on May 29.

**St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 16th St., in Indianapolis—**Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on May 28. No Mass will be celebrated on May 29.

**St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6800 W. 34th St., in Indianapolis—**Mass will be celebrated in English at 5 p.m. and in Spanish at 7 p.m. on May 28. Mass will be celebrated in English at 7:30 a.m. and a bilingual liturgy at 7 p.m. on May 29.

**St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3354 W. 30th St., in Indianapolis—**Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on May 28. Mass will be celebrated at 7 a.m. on May 29.

**St. Anthony Parish, 337 N. Warman Ave., in Indianapolis—**Mass will be celebrated in English at 4:30 p.m. and in Spanish at 7 p.m. on May 29. There will be no Masses celebrated on May 29. For information about Mass changes at other parishes in the area, call the parish offices.

Deacons

continued from page 1

Pope Francis did not say he’d ordain women deacons, spokesman says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis “did not say he intends to introduce a diaconal ordination for women,” and he certainly did not speak about the ordination of women priests, the Vatican spokesman said.

Pope Francis met members of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), the leadership group for superior of women’s orders on May 12, and accepted a proposal that he establish a commission to study the role of New Testament deaconesses and the possibility of women serving as deacons today.

After some news outlets reported the pope was considering ordaining women deacons and comments were made about women deacons leading to women priests, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, issued a clarification on May 13.

The spokesman insisted “it was wrong to reduce all the important things the pope said to the religious women to just this question.”

Women and the diaconate “is a question that has been discussed much, including in the past, and that comes out of the fact that in the early Church there were women who were called deaconesses, who carried out certain services within the community,” Father Lombardi said.

Pope Francis told the sisters that he thought it would be a good idea to form a commission “to take up this question again in order to view it with greater clarity,” Father Lombardi said. “But one must be honest: The pope did not say he intends to introduce a diaconal ordination for women, and even less did he speak of the priesthood of women.”

Parishes change Mass times due to holiday weekend and Indianapolis 500 race.

Parishes change Mass times due to holiday weekend and Indianapolis 500 race.

Corrections

In the “Welcome, New Catholics!” feature in the May 6 issue of The Criterion, those received into full communion of the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford on March 26 are catechumens Helen Amstutz, William Amstutz, Alicia Anderson, Floyd Athosin Jr., Grace Brown, Elias Chandler, Sheila Chase, Lisa Ann Couch, Linda Newbold, John McDon, Anthony Newbold, Nathaniel Reed and Gregory Roland.

Also, St. Michael Parish in Brookville was incorrectly placed under the Converse Deanery heading. The parish is in the Batesville Deanery.
Compassion will guide Bethuram as executive director of Catholic Charities

WASHINGTON (CNS)—At the University of Notre Dame's May 16 baccalaureate Mass, Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl encouraged graduates to rely on their faith as they work to build a better world.

"Your generation faces great challenges to the whole idea we are all part of God's plan—and we have to make this world a better place," Cardinal Wuerl said.

"Remember, always, the power in the Spirit to change the world," he said, recalling Jesus' words, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev 21:5).

"You can make all things new, walking with the Lord and each other. And that is your work," he said.

"You are the main celibate and holmest at the Mass, which was celebrated at the university's basketball arena, the Joyce Center. The Washington Archbishop released a text of his homily, and graduation events also were livestreamed on the Web."

Cardinal Wuerl, who was unable to attend the university's commencement the next day, received an honorary Doctorate at the end of Mass. The citation for the cardinal's honorary doctor of laws degree praised him as "a good and faithful servant of the people of God," and "a persevering and courageous leader of the Catholic Church in the United States."

Cardinal Wuerl also was commended for his role as a teacher of the faith in challenging times. The citation noted that as a teacher, author, a trusted adviser to popes and a shepherd of souls in the nation's capital, he has helped the Church do its thinking on the most contentious issues of our day while upholding the truth that transcends the apparent divides between tradition and our times."

"In his homily, Cardinal Wuerl told Notre Dame graduates that in an age of instant communications marked by texting and other advances, "it is also important that we remember the riveting power of his simple Gospel message, and the way he lived it."

"And since that the graduates' education at Notre Dame had given them "the opportunity for the formation of your mind, heart and spirit," and he encouraged them to rely on their foundation things and go out in life, and be that a light along the way as they pursue their goals. "You are well prepared," he said. "You don't set out on this journey of life unprepared."

Near the end of Mass, 12 Notre Dame students walked to the altar carrying a large American flag, which was blessed and will fly over the campus. Before the flag was sprinkled with holy water, Holy Cross Father John Jenkins, the university's president, said, "May it always remind us of the principles it stands for—liberty and justice for all." 

Obama directive on transgender access to facilities is 'deeply disturbing,' bishops say

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Obama administration's May 13 directive on transgender access to bathrooms—"that treats a student's gender identity as the student's sex" is deeply disturbing," said Bishop Richard J. Malone of Buffalo, N.Y., who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Marriage, Family Life and Youth, and Archbishop George J. Lucas of Omaha, Neb., who is chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Catholic Education.

The statement was released by Bishop Richard J. Malone of Buffalo, N.Y., who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Marriage, Family Life and Youth, and Archbishop George J. Lucas of Omaha, Neb., who is chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Catholic Education. The statement was released by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education. The departments said it applied to all public schools and universities that receive federal funds. The directive "violates a student's Title IX obligations regarding transgender gender identity when interpreting school's policies," the statement said. "Women and men have the right and need to be able to use the bathroom that corresponds with their gender identity," the statement said. "These considerations should be made in a manner that is sensitive to the privacy concerns of all students." 

"In our society, a young and old, in schools, it is important that our children understand the depth of God's love for them and their intrinsic worth and beauty. Children should always be and feel safe and secure and know they are loved," the statement said. "They said that children, youth and parents in "difficult situations," such as the focus of the federal guideline, "do not always have the knowledge they need to make tough decisions." "They do not have the knowledge to make tough decisions," the statement said.

"All of these can be expressed without infringing on legitimate concerns about privacy and security on the part of the other young students," the statement said. "This concern is particularly acute in the context of school safety, including national security and school violence, especially in light of the recent tragic school shootings."

"We pray that the government make room for more just and compassionate approaches and policies in this sensitive area, in order to serve the good of all students and parents, as well as the common good," Bishop Malone and Archbishop Lucas said. "We encourage the guidance further to understand the full extent of its implications." 

"What drives me every day is knowing that what we're doing is making a big difference in the lives of families, children and individuals. It's easy to get discouraged, but when you hear how it truly is lived out—that's the Spirit of the Holy Spirit and you have caring, competent individuals to deliver those services, you can't help but be a person of hope."

―David Bethuram, new executive director of Catholic Charities for the archdiocese
Pentecost reminds us that we are never alone

We’re more than halfway through May in Indiana, and while the early focus of the month was on the Democrat and Republican primaries held throughout the state, many of us are now getting ready for high school graduations and, of course, the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500 on May 29.

But as Catholics, we also identify every May as a month of Mary, and this year, celebrated the Feast of Pentecost in our parishes on the weekend of May 14-15.

Coming 50 days after Easter and only days after the Ascension of Our Lord, Pentecost marks the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles at Pentecost. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Pentecost. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Priests walk across rose petals as they fall from the oculus of the Pantheon at the conclusion of Pentecost Mass on May 15. The rose petals dropped by Rome firefighters symbolize the tongues of fire that came upon the Apostles at Pentecost. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

As high school graduates move into unchartered territory in the coming weeks, months and years, we can pray that the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit—wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord— accompany them on their journey.

Pope Francis reminded us on Pentecost that the gift of the Holy Spirit also gives us the grace to conduct ourselves as children of God, and brothers and sisters to each other.

“The central purpose of Jesus’ mission, which culminated in the gift of the Holy Spirit, was to renew our relationship with the Father, a relationship severed by sin, to take us from our state of being orphaned children, and to restore us as his sons and daughters,” he said on May 15 during Pentecost Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica.

“The Spirit is given to us by the Father, and leads us back to the Father,” Pope Francis said. “The entire work of salvation is one of ‘regeneration’, in which the fatherhood of God, through the gift of the Son and the Holy Spirit, frees us from the condition of being orphans into which we had fallen. “We were made to be God’s children,” he continued. “It is in our DNA.”

As people of faith, we understand that being the Creator’s children means allowing the grace of the Holy Spirit to help us concretely live out our love for God and others. And as his disciples, we must demonstrate that love in all we do.

“For love a person, including for the Lord, is demonstrated not with words, but with actions,” Pope Francis said after reciting the Regina Coeli prayer with visitors to St. Peter’s Square on May 15. “Being Christian is not principally about belonging to a certain culture or adhering to a certain doctrine, but rather binding your life, in every aspect, to the person of Jesus and, through him, to the Father,” the Holy Father added.

Graduates and each of us would do well to remind ourselves that we are a family of faith facing growing trials. We only need look at religious groups challenging the Affordable Care Act’s contraceptive, sterilization and abortifacient mandate and the ongoing struggles concerning end-of-life issues to understand that our faith and its tenets are being continually tested.

And despite all this noise and chaos surrounding us in today’s ever-increasing secularist world, we must make time to slow down and allow the Spirit to work through us—not in our time, but in God’s time.

Just as important, we must never forget that though we profess our faith inside our churches, we are called to live it out in every aspect of our lives, in every aspect, to the person of Jesus and, through him, to the Father. ”

The mission we are charged with is not easy by any means, but Pentecost reminds us that we are never alone.

—Mike Krokos

Making Sense of Bioethics

Embryos and the ‘14-day rule’

Arguments in favor of research on human embryos typically play off our unfamiliarity with the way that we ourselves once appeared and existed as embryos.

Humans in their tiniest stages are indeed unfamiliar to us, and they hardly look anything like “one of us.” Yet the undeniable conclusion, that every one of us was once an embryo, remains an indispensable scientific dogma. A “fingernails on the challenge” gives us pause every time they choose to experiment on embryos or destroy them for research.

To enable scientists to get beyond the knowledge that they’re experimenting on or destroying fellow humans, clever strategems and justifications have had to be devised, among the most successful of these approaches has been the well-known “14-day rule.”

This rule, as noted in a recent article in the journal Nature, represents a “legal and regulatory line in the sand that has for decades limited in vitro human-embryo research to the period before the ‘primitive streak’ appears. It is a faint band of cells marking the beginning of an embryo’s head-to-tail axis. … The formation of the primitive streak is significant because it represents the earliest point at which an embryo’s biological individualization is assured. Before this point, embryos can split in two or fuse together. So some people reason that at this stage a morally significant individual comes into being.

Most people have an instinctive moral awareness when they reflect on the reality that adults come from embryos. A particular conclusion organically follows, namely, that any decision to interrupt an embryo’s growth and development involves a willingness to destroy a prospective infant, child, teenager and adult. Even the natural potential for the splitting and fusing of embryos does not substantively alter the fact that adults arise from embryos originally segregated back far enough along their particular developmental trajectories. If anything, the possibility that an early embryo might divide and make twins means that a decision to destroy such an embryo might involve “double” the evil, since two future adults are being exploited and exterminated rather than just one.

It is also worth emphasizing that the 14-day rule, despite protestations to the contrary, has not actually restricted world-wide human-embryo research to any appreciable degree because scientists have lacked the ability, until quite recently, to culture human embryos in the lab for any length of time beyond about a week. In fact, it was only in 2016 that several new studies figured out how to grow human embryos beyond what the 14-day rule might forbid.

The rule, thus, was an agreed-upon convention of no practical significance for any scientists who may have been carrying out experiments on embryonic humans in recent decades. Considering the fact that the rule may now actually begin to hamper what some of them are interested in doing, they are pushing, unsurprisingly, to “revisit” and “re-calibrate” the rule.

Historically speaking, the 14-day rule arose largely as a mechanism for justifying what had previously been considered immoral, even unthinkable, research. The rule enabled serious human rights violations to proceed under the pretext of providing restrictions and regulatory limitations.

By feigning that the 14-day rule was somehow an ethical tenet grounded in biological facts, proponents of the rule hoped to deflect the idea that human embryos deserve any degree of protection whatsoever simply by claiming to provide a “ethical” loophole for research. To enable scientists to get beyond the knowledge that they’re experimenting on or destroying fellow humans, clever strategems and justifications have had to be devised, among the most successful of these approaches has been the well-known “14-day rule.”

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The mission we are charged with is not easy by any means, but Pentecost reminds us that we are never alone.

—Mike Krokos

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and should be informed, relevant, well-expressed, concisely worded, courteous and respectful. The editors reserve the right to select and edit the letters based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content. Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld. Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
The face of mercy is the Blessed Trinity

“I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming” (Jn 16:12-15).

Each year on the Sunday following the great feast of Pentecost, the Church asks us to reflect on the marvelous mystery of God’s nature as three persons in one divine being. We call this mystery the Blessed Trinity, the most fundamental and essential teaching in our faith and life as baptized Christians. (See Catechism of the Catholic Church, #234.)

This jubilee year, the Holy Year of Mercy, we are invited to reflect on the Holy Trinity as “the face of love,” and the manifestation of the power and endurance of God’s mercy that will last forever. God’s inner life, his trinitarian nature, has something very important to teach us about ourselves as people who are loved unconditionally, and who are called to love others in the same unconditional way.

St. Paul tells us in the second reading for Trinity Sunday that “Hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5). The love poured into our hearts, is, of course, the love that is God’s inner nature. It is the endless mercy that is given to us without any expectation that we will (or could) earn it or pay for it by our own words or deeds. The only thing expected of us in response to God’s freely given love is that we love ourselves, and others, in return.

Jesus is the merciful love of God incarnate. Jesus is what we are called to be—children of the Father who bear witness to his loving kindness. “No one knows the Son except the Father.” Jesus tells us, “and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Mt 11:27). We baptized Christians are blessed because Jesus has chosen to reveal our heavenly Father to us. “The truth will set you free,” he tells his faithful and frightened disciples. “But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth” (Jn 16:12-15).

The Holy Spirit helps us understand—gradually over time—the central mystery of our faith and life: That God is love and that we have been chosen to proclaim this mystery in our words and in our actions to the whole world.

St. John Paul II taught that mercy is “love’s second name” and that it lasts forever through the power of the Holy Spirit, and “takes upon itself the burden of any need in its immense capacity for forgiveness.” Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis have continued to emphasize the importance of divine mercy for our understanding of who God is, and who we are as women and men made in God’s image and likeness. If God is the face of mercy, we must be also. Otherwise we distort God’s image and fail to give truthful witness to him.

This Trinity Sunday, let’s see God as he really is—the unconditional love who creates, redeems and sanctifies all things visible and invisible. And let’s be merciful to one another as our Triune God has been merciful to us. †

La Santísima Trinidad es el rostro de la misericordia

“Aún tengo muchas cosas que decirles, pero ahora no se puede decirles” (Jn 16:11-12). Pero cuando venga el Espíritu de verdad, “no hablará por su propia cuenta, sino él los guiará a toda la verdad; pero cuando venga el Espíritu de verdad, que reflexionemos sobre el maravilloso misterio de la naturaleza de Dios. Pero ahora no las pueden sobrellevar. Pero cuando venga el Espíritu de verdad, nos ayudará a comprender, gradualmente, la verdad de que el amor jamás se está estancado ni aislado sino que siempre guarda relación con los demás. Dios crea porque no puede reprimirse. Dios es amor derramado en nuestros corazones. Dios ha sido amado por el Padre y españolizado por el Espíritu Santo que nos ha dado” (Rom 5:5). El amor derramado en nuestros corazones es, por supuesto, el amor que representa la naturaleza íntima de Dios. Se trata de la infinita misericordia que recibimos sin expectativa alguna de hacernos merecedores (ni de poder merecerla) a través de nuestras palabras o actos. La única respuesta esperada ante el amor libremente otorgado de Dios es que nos amemos a nosotros mismos y a los demás, como retribución.

Jesus es el amor misericordioso del Dios encarnado. Jesús representa aquello que estamos llamados a ser, los hijos del Padre que dan testimonio de Su generoso amor. “El Padre me ha entregado todas las cosas, y nadie conoce al Hijo, sino el Padre. Ni nadie conoce al Padre, sino al Hijo, y aquel a quien el Hijo lo quiera revelar” (Mt 11:27).

Los cristianos bautizados somos bendecidos porque Jesús nos ha elegido para revelarnos a nuestro Padre celestial. Mediante la vida, la muerte y la resurrección de Jesús sabemos que el Padre y cuánto nos ama. También sabemos que tenemos un representante de dios—el Espíritu Santo. Este último siempre nos acompaña para guiarnos y enseñarnos a medida que seguimos el camino de Jesús en la jornada de nuestra vida de resurrección al Padre misericordioso, quien nos recibirá con brazos abiertos y amorosos.

La Trinidad es el misterio central de nuestra fe y nuestra vida: que Dios es amor y que hemos sido elegidos para proclamar su misterio a todo el mundo a través de nuestras palabras y acciones. San Juan Pablo II nos enseñó que la misericordia es “el segundo nombre del amor” y que esta dura para siempre por el poder del Espíritu Santo “que alivia la carga de toda necesidad gracias a su inmensa capacidad de perdón.” El papa Benedicto XVI y el papa Francisco han seguido haciendo énfasis en la importancia de la divina misericordia para poder llegar a comprender quién es Dios y quiénes somos nosotros, hombres y mujeres hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios. Si Dios es el rostro de la misericordia, nosotros también debemos serlo. De lo contrario, estamos distorsionando la imagen de Dios y seremos incapaces de dar fiel testimonio sobre Él.

En este domingo de la Santísima Trinidad, procuremos ver a Dios como realmente es: el amor incondicional que crea, redime y santifica todo lo visible y lo invisible. Y seamos misericordiosos los unos con los otros, al igual que el Dios Triino ha sido misericordioso con nosotros. †

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa
Mary's Garden Party Camp set for June 17-19 in Greenfield

Little Flowers Girls' Club will host its annual Mary's Garden Party Camp at Our Lady of the Apostles Family Center, 2844 N. 700 W., in Greenfield on June 17-19.

All Catholic girls ages 5 and older as well as their parents are invited, whether they have any previous involvement in Little Flowers Girls' Clubs or not. Girls under the age of 10 must be accompanied by a chaperone older than 21 who will be responsible for her during the duration of the camp.

The Mary's Garden Party Camp is an opportunity for up to 100 girls to come together for a weekend centered on the Blessed Mother, building virtue and making friendships. Girls will have the opportunity to earn badges and have a fun camp experience in a completely Catholic environment. Moms and leaders will have the opportunity to share wisdom on raising young girls, exchange advice on running their Little Flowers Club and have the opportunity to collaborate on a more effective program.

The cost is $75 for a mother/daughter pair or $50 per individual (God attends). Registration is available by logging on to www.benedictinn.org, expanding on raising young girls, exchange advice on running their Little Flowers Club and have the opportunity to collaborate on a more effective program.

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Archbishop Tobin to lead pilgrimage to Notre Dame

By Natalie Hoefer

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin will lead a one-day pilgrimage to the University of Notre Dame near South Bend on July 19. The archbishop cites several reasons he chose to lead this pilgrimage.

First, I like the idea of pilgrimage, which I see as a metaphor for our lives, which begin in a concrete place and are heading to a sacred destination,” he says.

Next, he notes that he is “aware that many in the archdiocese cannot consider a pilgrimage to Rome, the Holy Land or even the California missions because of time and cost.” As with the one-day pilgrimage he led two years ago to Vincennes—the cradle of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis—the archbishop hopes “that some of my brothers and sisters in faith will benefit from another single-day excursion.”

Finally, Archbishop Tobin states that “while Notre Dame is associated with high academic standards and championship teams, it is also a place where the Catholic faith is treasured and celebrated. I look forward to presiding at the Eucharist with my fellow pilgrims in the stunningly beautiful Basilica of the Sacred Heart.”

Notre Dame was established near South Bend in 1842 by eight priests of the Congregation of the Holy Cross. The land for the university was donated by then-bishop of the Vincennes Diocese, Bishop Giles O’Gormery de la Hailandière.

During the pilgrimage, participants will enjoy guided tours of some of the university’s more famous structures: the golden-domed Main Building, Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, Hesburgh Library and the Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

The day will begin at 7:15 a.m. at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, where pilgrims will receive a bag breakfast and board a coach bus for the 7:30 a.m. departure.

Upon arrival at the northern Indiana Catholic university, a guide will lead the pilgrims on an hour-long tour of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Built between 1871-88, the Basilica was designed in the Gothic Revival style. Its impressive bell tower supports a 12-foot golden cross and a carillon of 24 bells, 23 of which comprise the oldest carillon in the United States. Carmelite nuns from France designed and created the 116 stained-glass windows in the Basilica starting in 1873. Inside, the Basilica has three altars, seven chapels and a crypt.

After the tour, pilgrims will participate in a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Tobin in the basilica at 11:30 a.m.

Pilgrims will next enjoy lunch at the campus’ Morris Inn, then embark on a one-hour-and-fifteen-minute walking tour of Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, the Main Building and Hesburgh Library. Please note that the guide-led tour of these beautiful sites will be taken on foot rain or shine, so pilgrims should wear comfortable shoes.

The grotto, built in 1896, is one-seventh the size of the shrine in France that marks the location where the Blessed Mother appeared to St. Bernadette le Soubirous in 1858. Below the statue of Mary at the Notre Dame grotto is a stone from the original shrine in France.

Another hallmark feature of Notre Dame’s campus is the Main Building with its gold-domed top. The building, which stands next to the Basilica, was constructed in 1879 after a fire destroyed what had been the main building housing nearly the entire university. The dome was added in 1882 and re-gilded in 2005. Gracing the dome is a 19-foot, two-ton statue of Our Lady—“Notre Dame”—in French.

A little to the east of the Main Building is the Hesburgh Library, built in 1963 and named for Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh, president of the university from 1952-1987. The library is most known for its “Word of Life” mural facing the football stadium. The mosaic mural depicts saints and scholars through the ages, with the predominant figure being Christ with his arms raised in an open blessing—a gesture whose visibility from the football stadium has caused it to be unofficially christened “Touchdown Jesus.”

The tour of these three well-known sites will last from 2-3:15 p.m., followed by a visit to the university’s bookstore. The bus will depart from Notre Dame at 4:15 p.m. and is scheduled to return to the Catholic Center by 7 p.m.

The cost is $99, which includes transportation, breakfast, lunch and the tour. There are 50 spots available.

To register for the pilgrimage, log on to www.archindy.org/pilgrimage. For questions or more information about the pilgrimage, call Carolyn Noone at 317-236-1428, or 800-382-9836, ext. 1486, or e-mail her at cnoone@archindy.org.
The chaplains make sure to get to each team and say, “Guys, how about a prayer?” It’s brief. But when they hear that call, they all come over and put their hands together right around the car, and we pray together.”

—Father Joseph Feltz, archdiocesan vicar for clergy, who also volunteers with IndyCar Ministry

Father Glenn O’Connor works as a team member for driver Josef Newgarden in 2015 at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, the 40th year he had been involved in IndyCar racing.

INDY 500

continued from page 1

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Archbishop Tobin notes ‘good stewards understand anything we have is a gift’ at Miter Society Mass, reception

By Natalie Hofer

As Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin addressed the nearly 200 United Catholic Appeal: Christ Our Hope (UCA) Miter Society members on May 5, two major events were approaching: the Kentucky Derby on May 7, and the Indianapolis 500 on May 29.

“Every jockey in the Derby and every driver in the 500 have one goal—to be the first one across the finish line,” he said. “Athletic metaphors can help us understand what it means to live a Christian life. St. Paul knew this.”

But what differs between the race competitors and Christian stewards is that “no matter how hard we compete, we cannot achieve our goal or win the race on our own. We need Jesus Christ. If I were to be a good steward, I would understand this, because good stewards understand that anything we have is a gift, and the decisions we make are approached through faith.”

The members of the Miter Society gathered for a Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis and a reception afterward at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in appreciation for deciding through faith to give their gifts back to God through the annual UCA in the amount of $1,500 or more.

During the reception, the archbishop reported on the success of the latest UCA effort. In total, $6.4 million was raised, to be distributed among ministries throughout the archdiocese and southern Indiana to aid in proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacrament and responding in charity.

In the most recent annual appeal, 98 Miter Society members contributed $2.64 million of the $6.4 million raised, comprising 41 percent of the total dollars given to the United Catholic Appeal.

The total raised for the appeal has increased from $5.1 million two years ago, to $6.2 million last year, to $6.4 million this year. Overall, 18,697 people donated to the UCA this year.

Of the archdiocese’s 133 parishes, 86 made or exceeded their UCA goal, compared to 83 last year. Additionally, 15 parishes raised 100 percent of their goal.

“Much of this success can be attributed to pastors continuing to embrace the in-pew appeal,” said Archbishop Tobin. “We had UCA pledge cards and information in the pews for people to fill out, and pastors talked about the ministries supported by the appeal. More than 4,600 people gave $1.8 million during the in-pew appeal this year.”

Father Patrick Beidelman, rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization, utilized the in-pew approach in his parish.

He also contributed himself at the Miter Society level.

“I believe it’s important to give to the UCA for two reasons, primarily,” he explained. “First, a good shepherd of the faith community at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, I need to set a good example, also contributing from the blessings I’ve received from God.”

“The other very important reason for me to give is that when I make a sacrificial gift to support the shared ministries of the archdiocese, it’s a reminder that what I have really doesn’t belong to me. It’s given to me by God to accomplish some good in the world.”

—Father Patrick Beidelman, rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin greets Linda Bolerjack, a member of St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute, during a Miter Society reception at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis on May 5. (Photos by Natalie Hofer)

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin delivers a homily during the Miter Society Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on May 5.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin addresses Miter Society Members during a reception at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis on May 5.

For more information on the “United Catholic Appeal: Christ Our Hope” and the Miter Society, or to contribute to the appeal, log on to www.archindy.org/ChristOurHope.

For questions, contact Joenda Moore, director of annual major giving, at 317-236-1492 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1462.
Mass honors all married couples, where ‘Jesus is present in marriage’

By Natalie Hofer

Seventy-one years ago, Elbert and Mildred Grannan professed their marital vows in the sacrament of marriage. Four months ago, Daniel and Gabriela Ross did the same.

On April 25, the Grannans and Rosses again professed those vows—along with 89 other couples from parishes across central and southern Indiana—during the Marriage Day Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. The Mass and reception that followed were sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life and Family Life to recognize the presence of Christ in the sacrament of marriage.

“I see this [event] as a witness of love, and how marriage as sacrament means that Jesus is present in marriage,” said Scott Seibert, archdiocesan coordinator of marriage and family enrichment. “That presence is beautiful, too—[the couples’] resilience, love, patience, endurance, loyalty and the richness of love. That’s what we’re celebrating today. And when you encounter it, you know it. There’s a beauty in it.”

Among the 91 couples in attendance at the Mass, that beauty added up to 4,090 years of marriage, 370 children, 478 grandchildren, 182 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren. All couples married more than 60 years were invited to stand for recognition.

The Grannans and the Rosses were also recognized in a special way as the longest married couple and the most newly-married couple at the Mass. Both couples received flowers and a papal blessing from the Vatican on behalf of the Holy Father.

In his homily during the Mass, Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan vicar general, addressed the question, “What does love look like?” He provided a three-part answer.

“If you think about it, it really means willing to be inconvenienced,” he said. “That means we are not always going to get what we want, and things are not always going to work out just as we like. Sacrifice at its essence is really about giving. It’s about giving over.”

“What’s even more important is doing a simple act and not allowing ourselves to become resentful. Sacrifice means being willing to focus on others and put ourselves aside.”

Msgr. Stumpf next pointed out that “love works as being tolerant of others’ imperfections,” and lastly that “love does not insist on being right, but rather insists on making things right.”

Love invites us to discern what is really important, and what is largely about our egos. “Love always involves forgiveness.”

The Marriage Day event evolved from a desire to return the annual Golden Wedding Jubilee to a celebration of those celebrating 50 years of marriage. The event had also included recognition of those married more than 50 years, as well as honoring all married couples on the anniversary of the celebration of their marriage. “I’ve had people married 25 years, 40 years, come up to me today and say, ‘Thank you so much for including us’”, said Msgr. Stumpf. “It’s nice to have something to celebrate all marriages.”

Sally Stovall, a member of Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis, agreed. She and her husband, Derrick, have been married for 27 years.

“I need to support those people who are married,” said Stovall. “It looks like marriage is falling apart—all you hear [about] is people getting divorces, but there are a lot of people who are still committed to the institution of marriage.

“For me, it is a good thing, being here and seeing someone married for 71 years. It is an inspiration for the younger people.”

For the Stovalls, said Sally, “our faith is everything... If you don’t have that trust and communication and God at the center of all you do, it’s not going to work. That’s how we have survived for 27 years—because of our faith in God.”

It was a mutual faith in God and similar family values that brought Daniel and Gabriela Ross together.

The couple met at Maran University in Indianapolis when she was a senior and he was a freshman. As the two got to know each other, they saw in each other a common set of values and outlooks on life.

“Our families brought us strong in the faith, and we recognized that in one another,” said Gabriela. “The rest was just part of God’s plan unfolding.”

Daniel graduated in mid-December last year. He had proposed to Gabriela the previous May.

The couple was headed to Evansville to visit friends. Before heading off, they worshiped at daily Mass, where the Gospel reading for the day recalled Jesus asking Peter three times, “Do you love me?”

On the way to Evansville, the couple stopped to enjoy the grounds of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. After they prayed at a shrine on the grounds, Daniel mentioned the morning’s Gospel. When Gabriela couldn’t recall the topic, he said, “Well, Gabby, do you love me?”

Gabriela, unaware of the pending proposal, said, “Oh, yeah! ‘Do you love me?’ That’s right.”

When Daniel again asked, “Gabby, do you love me?” Gabriela “thought Peter was just being sweet,” and said, “Aww, yes, Daniel, I love you so much.”

Daniel then asked a third, slightly different question, on one knee with a ring in his hand: “Gabby, will you marry me?”

The couple was married on Dec. 27 last year. They are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. They have many years of marriage to enjoy before they match the Grannans’ 71 years as husband and wife.

Elbert recalled how he and Mildred, both originally from the Diocese of Evansville, met in Indianapolis in 1943. “She was working on the west side of town for the same grocery I was working for, and they transferred her to our store,” he said. “When she knocked on the door, I let her in—she walked right into my life right then and there!”

The couple was married on April 10, 1945. The grocery store was not the only place the Grannans worked together. In the 1960s, Mildred started Cardinal Mealning Services. Elbert retired from his job early to join her in 1989.

Although they now reside in an assisted living facility to accommodate Mildred’s wheelchair, the two still work together making bingo cards for their parish, St. Lawrence in Indianapolis, where they have been members since 1955.

“(Working together) definitely brought us closer,” said Mildred. “We’re a team.”

As a team, the Grannans also raised four children. They now enjoy their eight grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

They credit their 71 years of happy marriage to a few basic rules.

“Never to go to bed mad,” said Mildred. “And if you’ve got a problem to discuss, don’t yell at each other. Sit down like human beings and talk it out. And go to church!”

Elbert added to the list of rules the importance of saying “I love you” several times a day, noting that either spouse can say it first.

Daniel is open to such advice, including advice that Msgr. Stumpf gave him.

“We’re finally just starting to get to the point where yeah, we’re newlyweds, but past the point where everything is just starry bliss,” said Daniel. “I think [Msgr. Stumpf’s] advice to not let little things become big things.”

Gabriela appreciated the archdiocesan offering the Marriage Day Mass and reception.

“Right now, four months after getting married, we’re getting over the whirlwind of the big day and still sending out thank-you notes,” she said. “This [event] is a good reminder of the mission of marriage and the mission of families, and why we’re living the vocation we’re living.”

(Next the Marriage Day Mass will take place at 10:30 a.m. on Feb. 12, 2017, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Registration for this event will not start until the fall. The next archdiocesan celebration of marriage is the Golden Wedding Jubilee for couples celebrating their 50th anniversary. It is set for Aug. 14 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis with a reception to follow. For more information or to register for the event, log on to www.archindy.org/plfl/ministries-weddingcelebration.html or call 317-236-1521 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1521.)

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Human and theological virtues aid in showing mercy to others

By Mike Nelson

Marcus Tullius Cicero, one of the great Roman statesmen and philosophers, is credited with first declaring that “virtue is its own reward.”

Who and how many lent Cicero their ears is unclear. But less than a century later, thousands gathered in Galilee, far from Rome, to hear Jesus of Nazareth say something quite similar.

“Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them,” Jesus told the crowd. “Otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father” (Mt 6:1).

In the late 1000s, Blessed John Henry Newman expounded on Cicero’s observation, and Christ’s teaching:

“Virtue is its own reward, and brings with it the truest and highest pleasure,” Cardinal Newman said. “But if we cultivate it only for pleasure’s sake, we are selfish, not religious, and will never gain the pleasure, because we can never have the virtue.”

Virtue, the Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us, “is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions” (#1803).

What qualifies as a virtuous person? Catholic teaching defines four human and three theological virtues.

The three theological virtues are faith, hope and charity (or love), inspired in part by St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians. And the four human, or “cardinal,” virtues—prudence, justice, temperance and courage (or fortitude)—are rooted in the theological virtues.

Put another way, we act out of faith, hope and love when we practice the cardinal virtues. Faith, hope and love guide us to defend the right to life, to feed and house the poor, to welcome the stranger, to forgive willingly, to bear wrongs patiently, in summary, to perform the corporal and spiritual works of mercy that Pope Francis has promoted in this Holy Year of Mercy.

Practicing such virtuous behavior, of course, is easier said than done. Yet our baptismal calling leads us to grow in virtue by the help of God’s grace. We’re also to teach others by word and example, especially the young, how to live a virtuous life.

Pope Benedict XVI spoke to that point, and to parents, during a Jan. 13, 2008, Mass at the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican, which he celebrated with the baptized infants. “As you offer them what they need for their growth and salvation,” the pope said in his homily, “may you always be committed, helped by your godparents, to developing in them faith, hope and charity, the theological virtues proper to the new life given to them by the sacrament of baptism.”

Pope Benedict, in his first two encyclicals—“Deus Caritas Est” (“God Is Love”) and “Spe Salvi” (“Saved by Hope”)—to the theological virtues of love (or charity), inspired in part by St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians and the Old Testament’s wisdom books—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, Sirach—give sage advice, and offer deep reflection on how to live a virtuous life.

By Daniel S. Mulhall

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us about virtues, defined as a “habitual and firm disposition to do the good. … The moral virtues are acquired through human effort aided by God’s grace; the theological virtues are gifts of God.”

The catechism also says that a “virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions” (#1803).

Much of what the catechism teaches about virtue is drawn from the reflections and witness of the saints and from the Scriptures.

There are numerous scriptural passages that emphasize the importance of living a virtuous life. The Old Testament’s wisdom books—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, Sirach—give sage advice, and offer deep reflection on how to live a life of virtue.

For example, in Wisdom we hear that righteousness, “whose works are virtues,” can teach us moderation, prudence, as well as fortitude, “and nothing in life is more useful than these” (Wis 8:7).

The Book of Proverbs also tells us about virtue this way: “Whoever walks honestly walks securely, but one whose ways are crooked will fare badly” (Prv 10:9).

St. Paul sees virtuous living as “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control,” but warns that the “works of the flesh” (immorality, rivalry, jealousy, envy, etc.) lead to death. (Gal 5:19-23)

Those who live by the Spirit, he says, “await the hope of righteousness” (Gal 5:5). Paul addresses the same ideas in Ephesians when he calls on the Church in Ephesus “to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received” (Eph 4:1).

St. Paul also succinctly explained what it means to live a virtuous life in Philippians:

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you” (Phil 4:8-9).

In the Second Letter of Peter, Christians are encouraged to “make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, virtue with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with devotion, devotion with mutual affection, mutual affection with love” (2 Pt 1:5-6).

As the Scriptures, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the saints make clear, living virtuously means being shaped by all that is good and holy. We are told to focus on God to find virtue and to follow the path of eternal life.

(Daniel S. Mulhall is a catechist living in Laurel, Maryland.)

Advice and encouragement on living a life of virtue are found throughout the Bible

A boy holds the Scriptures aloft in a procession during Sunday Mass at St. Joseph Church in Mutunguru, Kenya, on Feb. 20, 2011. There are numerous passages within the Scriptures emphasizing the importance of living a virtuous life. (CNS photo/Patrick Yechez)
From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Finn

Imperiled Church: The 18th century was a disaster

(Sixth in a series of columns)

If there’s anything that demonstrates just how imperiled the Catholic Church was during the 18th century, it’s the fact that the rulers of Europe, who were the ultimate protectors of the Church, were at war with one another for so many years. But before we get to that next week, let’s review the state of the Church during that time.

In France, the combined reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV were more than 130 years—from 1643 to 1774. Louis XIV reigned for 72 years and Louis XV for 59. It’s the latter’s reign, though, from 1715 to 1774, that was a disaster as far as the Church was concerned.

It was a period when Catholicism itself was satirized (especially by Voltaire) because of the unbelieving and immorality of prominent Catholics at the time. Louis XV kept a series of mistresses (the most famous of which was Madame de Pompadour and Madame Du Barry). He also ruled the Church, appointing bishops whose only qualifications were that they were of noble birth. The pope had nothing to say about the appointments.

At the same time, in Spain, the first Bourbon king, Philip V, ruled from 1700 to 1746. He imposed the Inquisition and began making ecclesiastical appointments, and disputes with the papacy grew to such an extent that a papal nunciature in Madrid was closed in 1709. The bishops of Spain were openly antagonistic toward the Roman Curia.

Two concordats between Spain and the papacy (1717 and 1753) brought some peace, but also established Spain’s control over ecclesiastical appointments. (So the Church’s modern dispute with China over appointment of bishops is hardly unprecedented.)

In Portugal, King John V (1706-1750) was a Catholic who also authorized Spanish control over ecclesiastical appointments. He was known for his scandalous lifestyle. That, plus the general demoralization of the nobility, did much to weaken the faith of the Portuguese people.

To put all this in context, this was also the time of some of the most important parts of Europe. In Germany and Austria, the rulers, respectively, were Frederick the Great (1740-1786) in the former and Maria Theresa (1748-1780) in the latter. Both were true 18th century English, the Catholic Church reached its lowest point. There were no bishops, only vicars apostolic who were answerable to Rome and not to Spain. Catholic civil rights were severely curtailed. They could not vote and their right to own property was greatly restricted.

In Russia, Peter the Great had tried to make his country like Western Europe. He intended to unify the country by making all his subjects Orthodox rather than Catholic. After his death in 1725, the country was ruled by women for most of the rest of the century.

The most powerful was Catherine II (known as Catherine the Great), the German wife of Peter III, who reigned very briefly in 1762. After he quarreled with his wife and was murdered, she came to power. She was 43 years old and had been in power for 30 years. Like Peter the Great, she oppressed the Catholic Church but, as we will see next week, she was far from being a monster. She was truly one of the most important figures in the Church during that time.

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Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 22, 2016

- Proverbs 8:22-31
- Romans 5:1-5
- John 16:12-15

The Church celebrates Trinity Sunday this weekend, and it uses the celebration to teach us about the mystery of three Persons in the one God which lies at the heart of our faith.

For its first reading, the Church offers us a passage from the Book of Proverbs. Proverbs is one of a series of books in the Old Testament described as wisdom literature. The purpose behind the writing of all these books was to reassure pious Jews that their belief in the one God of Israel, a divinity of mercy and eternal faithfulness, was in harmony with sound human reasoning.

This reading reveals the essential link between God and the quality of wisdom. Wisdom is of God. “The Lord begot me,” Wisdom declares in the reading. “From of old” it continues to say, “I was poured out upon the Earth” (Pv 8:22-23).

In other words, God gives us wisdom, another gift of divine mercy and love. Without this wisdom, we cannot fully understand reality.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans furnishes the second reading. As so often appears in the writings of the Apostle Paul, the realities of Jesus and of life in Jesus, are majestically presented. Humans are at peace with God through the Lord Jesus and the sacrifice accomplished by him in the incarnation and in the redemption.

God’s love comes to us through the Holy Spirit. This statement affirms the Spirit’s divine identity. Love is dynamic. It is not a commodity. Love is something essential to the lover. It is not incidental. St. John’s Gospel provides the last reading. As is typical of all the parts of the Old Testament, the reading literally glows with eloquence and grace.

This passage is a direct quotation from Jesus. In it, the Lord powerfully reassures the Apostles that the Holy Spirit will come to strengthen and empower them. “He will guide you to all truth,” the Lord tells the Twelve (Jn 16:13).

So the reading establishes the place of the Apostles in the unfolding of salvation. It testifies to the esteem in which the Church continues to hold the Apostles and their successors today.

The reading also reveals the Trinity, albeit obliquely. The Holy Spirit will come, the Lord says, “Father send the Spirit. The Father, Son and Spirit are one.”

Reflection

The Church teaches that the Holy Trinity is among the greatest and deepest of the revelations of God. As such, the Church presents this teaching in its pronouncements and in prayer, including this great feast. The Church will never compromise this teaching. It is at the root of Catholic belief.

From the moment that Catholic parents teach toddlers the sign of the cross, through extensive studies at the highest levels of education, Catholics hear of the Trinity, and they know that it is basic to the Catholic tradition.

Even so, even for those who believe, it can seem abstract, an academic statement of a reality that has little relevance.

To the contrary, it is relevant to everything we are and to everything that we do. It explains creation. It explains salvation. It explains God. It even explains who and what we are, and what is our purpose in life.

God is love. God is all-wise. God is with us. We belong to God. ^

Daily Readings

Monday, May 23
1 Peter 1:3-9
Psalm 111:1-2, 5-6, 9, 10c
Mark 10:17-27

Tuesday, May 24
1 Peter 1:10-16
Psalm 98:1-4
Mark 10:28-31

Wednesday, May 25
St. Bede the Venerable, priest and doctor of the Church
Psalm 8:1-5, 9-17
Ps. Marty Magdalene de’Pazzi
Virgin
1 Peter 1:18-25
Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20
Mark 10:32-45

Thursday, May 26
St. Philip Neri, priest
1 Peter 2:2-5, 9-12
Psalm 100:2-5
Mark 10:46-52

Friday, May 27
St. Augustine of Canterbury, bishop
1 Peter 4:7-13
Psalm 96:10-13
Mark 11:11-26

Saturday, May 28
Jude 1, 20-25
Psalm 63:2-6
Mark 11:27-33

Sunday, May 29
The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)
Genesis 14:18-20
Psalm 110:1-4
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Luke 9:11b-17

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Assisted suicide violates the sacredness of life and a person’s natural dignity

Two years ago, my daughter was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer. We understand that the disease is considered terminal, but pray for a healing. Two of her friends died of cancer, so she has witnessed firsthand the stages of dying and the profound sadness which leaves in its wake. Based on those experiences, my daughter has said more than once that, when her own death draws near, assisted suicide is her wish. (Her husband has promised her that he will comply.)

I have prayed about this, but don’t know how to approach my daughter without alienating her. She believes in God but doesn’t worship formally. Please give me your thoughts. (New York)

A life comes to us as a gift from God, and God alone has the right to decide when it is time for him to draw us to eternity. This is the fundamental reason why the Church opposes assisted suicide. It violates the sacredness of human life.

But even without that theological basis, there are many who find the notion disgusting. Among them are a host of physician groups, including the American Medical Association, because it violates a doctor’s oath, which is to heal and to do no harm.

Disability advocates also are strongly opposed because it seems to equate human worth with social utility. (One danger is that people who are seriously ill might feel “obliged to die” because they have become a burden to their family, either emotionally or financially.)

Palliative care and, in the final stages, the merciful ministry of hospice, can do much to relieve a patient’s pain while also providing emotional and spiritual support. You might assure your daughter of that, along with the pledge that you will be with her all the way through to helping to ease her burden.

I can only imagine how difficult it must be for you to speak with her about this matter. The New York State Catholic Conference in Albany has some helpful material that you might want to pass on to her, perhaps with the assurance that you have come across this information and wondered what she might think of it.

Be sure that she understands, too, that the Church does not require burdensome treatment that offers little benefit and would simply prolong the dying process. Please know that I will pray for your daughter and for the healing you so fervently desire.

O was married to my husband in a traditional tribal ceremony. He is not a Catholic, but I allowed him to practice my Catholic faith. All of our children have been baptized in the Catholic faith, and two years ago my husband and I went through a Catholic course of marriage preparation with the plan of marrying in the Catholic Church. But we were not permitted through that ceremony because my husband feels strongly that the ancestral wedding ceremony was more important. I suffer greatly because I cannot receive holy Communion. I would even like to leave the Church because of this. I would not be able to return to my hometown because everyone there thinks that I am married and would not accept me back as a single woman. I still love my husband but cannot continue living in sin. Please help me because I do not want to do anything that is against God’s will. (South Africa)

A from what you have told me, it would seem that there is already a solution for your problem in the Church’s Code of Canon Law (#1161- 65). The technical name for the process is “radical sanation” (which means “healing in the root”), and it can be applied when the non-Catholic partner is unwilling to have the marriage “blessed” in a Catholic ceremony.

It involves a retroactive validation, i.e., a decree by the bishop of the diocese in which the wedding took place. In this way, the Church accepts the original consent as valid, without having to go through a new marriage ceremony. There are some conditions that must be fulfilled, including: There is no previous marriage by either partner that could be valid; the consent of the parties to the marriage still exists, along with the essential requirements for a valid marriage: the intent of monogamy, fidelity, permanence and openness to children; and, the Catholic party intends to remain a Catholic and to do all that he or she can to see that any children of the marriage are baptized and brought up as Catholic.

There is also a provision that “for a grave cause” the non-Catholic partner need not even be informed of the Church’s decision. For example, if the non-Catholic were likely to have an extremely negative reaction to the sacrament process. In your situation, you would best be advised to consult with your local diocese. If your circumstances qualify you and the marriage were to be granted, you would be able to receive the Eucharist. +

The Most Holy Trinity/Msgr. Owen F. Campion
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stvincent.org
Women hope seminar spurs interest to start local Nursing Honor Guard

By John Shaughnessy

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backwater overlooking the Gulf of Mexico, Maderia Beach. Owner: Sue photos, 317-506-8516.

Health Care

MINISTER SPECIAL

Employment

Maintenance Supervisor

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is looking for an experienced Maintenance Supervisor. This is a full-time position with some evening and occasional work on the weekends as needed. The nature of this job requires a great deal of diversity of experience. The person performing this job must be in good health and have a good personality to handle all of the challenges and situations that might be present. This position is labor intensive and involves physical labor. A lot of lifting, bending and other movement is required; must be in good physical condition.

This person works with and oversees the custodial and maintenance staff; performs and assists with preventive maintenance/routine/normal upkeep of the buildings and grounds, as well as conducts and performs all janitorial work at the parish; works outside contractors, parish committees and volunteers who work on various parish projects from time to time; develops and maintains a department budget; serves as 1st response person for building alerts & security systems and more.

Skills required: Supervisory experience. Experienced with HVAC systems, mechanics, electrical and plumbing. Must have knowledge of communication skills, reliable, honest and hardworking; Eligible for Disability Benefits (Health, Retirement, etc.); Salary commensurate with experience.

For more information please contact Sid Hayden, Parish Business Manager at 317-846-3850 or sid.hayden@seas-carmel.org or see the detailed job description of the Maintenance Supervisor on the church’s website under Job Openings. Pick up an application at the parish office or from the website. Or mail to St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church, 11063 Havensrock Road, Carmel, Indiana 46033.

By Kathy Helleck

Kathy Helleck stood in the packed auditorium, paying her respects to a woman she had never met—a woman she believed she knew so well.

The setting was a recent memorial service at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis for a nurse who had died. While family, friends and colleagues tried to cope with their loss, Helleck and Jan Bronnberg formed a Nursing Honor Guard as a tribute to the woman.

The two nurses lit a candle inside a Florence Nightingale lamp, a symbol of their profession. The candle was lit by a founder of modern nursing who was known for her compassion, charity and courage. They also announced a last roll call for the deceased nurse, relieving her of her duties in caring for the sick and the dying. Then they extinguished the candle and presented it to the woman’s family. And they closed the tribute by reciting “A Nurse’s Prayer,” which says:

Give me gentle healing hands,
For those left in my care,
A blessing to those who need me,
A blessing to those who need me.

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The 183 members of Bishop Chatard’s 2016 graduating class have collectively earned more than $21.5 million in scholarships and grants to attend colleges and universities throughout the United States.

The faculty, staff and administrators of Bishop Chatard High School are very proud of all that these young men and women have accomplished during their high school years. As our graduates begin new chapters in their lives, we are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead, and we wish each Godspeed.

CLASS OF 2016  TOP 10 PERCENT:
Mason Atha - St. Maria Goretti
Timothy Good - St. Matthew
Anthony Agostino - Christ the King
Lily Bardol - St. Luke
Kristen Battilato - St. Simon
Sarah Cavender - Saints Francis & Clare
Rebecca Coan - Immaculate Heart of Mary
Aidan Foran - Immaculate Heart of Mary
Anna Giudice - St. Simon
Catherine Gore - St. Matthew
Samuel Guymon - St. Simon
Jenna Hedlund - Christ the King
Ann Marie Matheny - St. Matthew
Caroline Metzger - St. Luke
Zoe Schrader - St. Pius X
Valerie Schultz - St. Lawrence
Allison Scruggs - St. Matthew
Victoria Toetz - New Augusta North

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