Pope, bishops offer prayers for Orlando victims and their families

ORLANDO, Fla. (CNS)—Orlando Bishop John G. Noonan urged people of faith “to turn their hearts and souls” to God and pray for the victims, the families and first responders following the worst mass shooting in U.S. history on June 12.

“A sword has pierced the heart of our city,” he said in a statement.

“The healing power of Jesus goes beyond our physical wounds but touches every level of our humanity: physical, emotional, social, spiritual,” he said.

“Jesus calls us to remain fervent in our protection of life and human dignity and to pray unceasingly for peace in our world.”

The shooting rampage at a crowded nightclub in Orlando left 50 people dead, including the gunman, and 53 wounded.

Police said a lone gunman—identified as 29-year-old Omar Mir Seddique Mateen—opened fire inside the Pulse club in Orlando in the early morning hours. New reports said that Mateen, who pledged allegiance to the Islamic State terrorist group, died in a gun battle with SWAT team members.

Pope Francis also offered prayers for the families of the victims, and expressed hope that people would find ways to identify and uproot “the causes of such terrible and absurd violence.”

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Faith brings Deacon Matthew Tucci to life and a vocation to the priesthood

By Sean Gallagher

Michelle Tucci has had a regular message for her children through the years.

“I still tell them that you can’t get through this life without your faith.”

In the case of her son transitional Deacon Matthew Tucci, he wasn’t able to get into this life without it.

He was born on April 6, 1987, at 26 weeks gestation, weighing only 2 pounds, 4 ounces. Michelle had been suffering from a rare disorder during her pregnancy and was experiencing such regular bleeding that she was constantly anxious about the life of her unborn child.

“I couldn’t take it and just prayed, ‘Lord, I can’t do this anymore. It’s in your hands,’” Michelle said. “And he was born that night.”

After an emergency cesarean section delivery, Deacon Tucci remained hospitalized for nearly three months as he suffered respiratory and cardiac arrests.

The first 24 hours, then there’s a chance for 48 hours, then 72 hours,” Michelle recalled.

“We went through some ups and downs,” said Mike Tucci.

Ready to serve God’s people

2016 ORDINATIONS

(Editor's note: At 10 a.m. on June 25, six men are scheduled to be ordained priests at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis: transitional deacons James Brockmeier, Anthony Hollenwell, Douglas Hunter, Kyle Rodden, Matthew Tucci and Nicholas Ajpacaja Tzoc. This week, The Criterion features profiles of Deacon Tucci and Deacon Tzoc.)

Transitional Deacon Matthew Tucci proclaims the Gospel during an Aug. 11 Mass at St. Mary Church in New Albany during an annual pilgrimage taken by archdiocesan seminarians. Deacon Tucci is scheduled to be ordained a priest on June 25 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

Transitional Deacon Nicolas Ajpacaja Tzoc wears a dalmatic after he was ordained a deacon during an ordination Mass at the Archabbe Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad on April 11, 2015. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbe)

By Natalie Hoefer

Many priests throughout the history of the Church in America have felt the call to be a missionary in this country: Bishop Simon Bruté of France, St. Junipero Serra of Spain and St. Damien de Veuster of Belgium.

Add transitional Deacon Nicolas Ajpacaja Tzoc of Guatemala to the list of missionaries to America.

The 35-year-old transitional deacon did not move to Indiana with his family as a youth or young adult. He chose to come in his late 20s, with a specific purpose.

“I wanted to be a missionary,” he says. “The people that I read about that impressed me were missionaries from Spain. It’s a mission to work in [Hispanic] ministry [in the United States].”

His 2,500-mile journey from Totonicapan in Guatemala to Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in Saint Meinrad has had its twists and turns. From seminary, to teaching, to moving to a country where he did not speak the language, and to seminary again, Deacon Tzoc has pursued his call to serve the Church as a missionary to Latino Catholics in the U.S.

‘touched my heart’

By Sean Gallagher

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Love, not perfection, leads to happiness, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Love and solidarity are what make the world a better place, not a focus on physical perfection and hiding away those who do not fit a privileged few and endangers the dominant model,” the pope said.

“People with such attitudes, he said, "fail to understand the real meaning of life, which also has to do with accepting suffering and limitations."

“In an age when care for one’s body has become an obsession and a big business, anything imperfect has to be hidden away by society—like the woman in the Gospel story—are suffering and limitations,” the pope said.

“It is only when we face the facts that we can understand the real meaning of life, which also has to do with accepting suffering and limitations.”

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Archbishop Lori stresses importance of lay Catholics witnessing to religious liberty

By Sean Gallagher

First of two parts

The U.S. bishops’ fifth annual Fortnight for Freedom will be held from June 21-July 4. Since the first period of prayer, advocacy and education related to religious liberty in 2012, this freedom has come under increasing pressure both here in the United States and around the world.

This year’s Fortnight has “Witnesses to Freedom” as its theme and features men and women from across Church history, from St. John the Baptist to Egyptian Coptic Christians killed for their faith in 2015 by Islamic State militants.

The Fortnight will also include a 10-city tour of relics of the English saints Thomas More and John Fisher. The saints share June 22 as their feast day. Both died in 1535 after refusing to accept Parliament’s Act of Supremacy, which declared that King Henry VIII was the head of the Church in England.

Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori has led the U.S. bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty since the fall of 2011 and so has been closely involved with the planning of each Fortnight for Freedom.

A native of New Albany who grew up in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish there, he recently was interviewed by The Criterion about this year’s Fortnight for Freedom and about current challenges to religious liberty in society, culture, the judicial system and politics.

The following are excerpts of that interview.

Q. Since starting in 2012, this year’s Fortnight for Freedom is fifth in the series. What do you think it has had thus far, what challenges does the Church face in making it more effective, and what hopes do you have for it this year?

A. “The Fortnight for Freedom is mostly an event of prayer. It’s a time to remind everyone that religious freedom is a precious gift that is under challenge in many ways at home and abroad. We must pray for those who are persecuted and the preservation of our own freedom.

“Praying about these matters also raises our awareness of them, not as a partisan political issue, but rather as a gift with which God has given to our humanity. So, I think the Fortnight is very important for doing that.

“This year, the theme is ‘Witnesses to Freedom.’ We will be doing a tour in over 10 cities of the relics of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher, who certainly bore witness to the importance of religious freedom and freedom of conscience.

“As we venerate the relics of these two great saints, we will remember in a very special way those who have given up their lives in our own time in the face of oppression and a denial of religious freedom. Their witness to freedom should prompt us to understand the importance of preserving the freedom that ours in the United States.”

Q. Why do you think it is important in this time and in our current cultural atmosphere to focus on the stories of these witnesses instead of, perhaps, on calling attention to particular issues related to religious liberty?

A. “It’s important that we take inspiration from those who have either given their lives because they have used their freedom to bear witness to God and to the love of Christ or those who have endured suffering or persecution for that reason.

“There is a great danger of our becoming complacent about this, thinking about it as a kind of a partisan issue or even coming to regard religious liberty as code for discrimination rather than a gift that enables us to respond freely to God’s love and to serve those around us.

“To be witnesses to Christ is fundamental to our religion. To be witnesses to the beauty and goodness of religious freedom and to use our freedom well is very important.”

Q. You just mentioned changes in understanding about the nature of religious liberty in some people in society. A growing number of people, especially people who have the opportunity to shape public opinion, see religious liberty as the desire of one group of people to discriminate unjustly against another group. What are your thoughts?

A. “Often it’s the case that opinion makers are not going after religious liberty in any direct or theoretical way. But rather, religious liberty is always embedded in an issue, in a decision to practice one’s faith, in a decision to adhere to moral convictions or in a decision to follow the dictates of natural law.

“Sometimes, when we do that, we get it in the way of other agendas. And that’s when religious liberty gets in the cross hairs of culture. That’s what we’re seeing today.

“It’s playing out one way in the Middle East. And it’s playing out in another way in the West where we are beginning to experience what Pope Francis has called a ‘polite persecution.’”

Q. How can ordinary Catholics in their daily lives counter such perceptions, especially when they don’t have the megaphone in our society that some opponents of religious liberty in popular culture, politics and the media have?

A. “First of all, it’s important for us to have confidence as Catholic Christians that we are being directed, not to discriminate against people, but to try to embrace the full truth about human life and human dignity, the beauty, joy and goodness of marriage, and that these teachings are not directed against anybody. They are directed toward fundamental human goods.

“If we grow in our understanding of that, we can then bear witness as good and loving people who are seeking to build a good and just society where human beings can flourish and grow. I think that’s an important thing to remember.

“An ordinary Catholic—and I don’t think there’s anything ordinary about any of us Catholics—can do a couple of things. We can certainly pray. And the Fortnight is certainly a prayer event.

“We can also try to understand the nature of religious liberty more deeply. The Church has a lot of resources to do this. They’re a click away on the bishops’ conference website, usccb.org. There’s a video there on religious liberty. There are many resources. And it’s important for us to understand what the Church really does teach about religious freedom.

“Then I think it’s important for us to remain all forms of unjust discrimination, because there are instances where religion is used to discriminate unjustly. At the same time, we should resist having our teaching on marriage, sexuality and medical ethics be portrayed as discriminatory. They are not. They are expressions of the value of human life and our human dignity.”

Q. Since he was a layman, a lawyer and a statesman, how might St. Thomas More provide challenges to lay Catholics today to value religious liberty in their own lives and take steps to defend it?

A. “Certainly, St. Thomas More was a man of great learning, a man of great culture. A man who was very devoted to his country. He loved his country. And he sought to see his country to the very end of his life. He became the point of understanding that martyrdom was one of the ways he would serve his God first and his country second.

“Thomas More is, not only for lawyers but anyone in their professional and working life, a model of integrity. He’s a model of following one’s conscience where it leads. The fact that this witness was given precisely as a layman is very important.

“On the other hand, John Fisher was a bishop and a cardinal. He’s a model for those of us who are ordained, that we must show some courage and leadership.

“It’s not easy to speak about religious freedom in our culture today. It’s not easy to address some of the hot button issues in which religious liberty issues are wrapped. And we know that, when we do, we will meet inevitably with criticism to our opposition.

“Yet, St. John Fisher would urge us not to be afraid of the criticism that we might receive.”

Q. He was the only bishop in England who refused to accept the Act of Supremacy.

A. “He was the only one. So, he also shows us that this kind of leadership is sometimes quite lonely.

“In part two of his interview, Archbishop Lori reflects on lay Catholics involved in defending religious liberty, the U.S. Supreme Court’s recent decision regarding the Affordable Care Act’s abortifacient sterilization and contraception mandate, and how religious liberty relates to the current presidential election campaign. In part two of the interview we will feature in an upcoming issue of The Criterion.”
Religious liberty should be the most cherished of American freedoms

"We are Catholics. We are Americans. We are proud of both, grateful for the gift of faith which is ours as Christian disciples, and grateful for the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens. To be Catholic and American should mean not having to choose one over the other. Our allegiances are distinct, but they need not be contradictory, and should instead complement one another. That is the teaching of our Catholic faith, which obliges us to work together with fellow citizens for the common good of all who live in this land. That is the vision of our founding and our Constitution, which guarantees citizens of all religious faiths the right to contribute to our common life together."

So begins "Our First, Most Cherished Freedom," a 2012 statement on religious liberty by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty released a few months before the first Fortnight for Freedom that June.

Four years later, the Church in America is remembering those words and observing June 21-July 4 as its fifth annual Fortnight, with this year’s theme being “Witness to Freedom.” The USCCB this year, according to Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the USCCB’s ad hoc committee for religious liberty, is asking us to lift up for reflection the stories of 14 women and men—one for each day—who bear witness to freedom in Christ, such as Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher, Blessed Martin de Porres, the Little Sisters of the Poor, the Martyrs of Compiègne, and the Egyptian Christians who were killed for their faith by Islamic State militants last year.

Archbishop Lori shares in this week’s issue of The Criterion his insight on the purposes of the fortnight and what we and the faithful can do from this year’s observance.

"Don’t let anyone tell you any different: Religious liberty continues to be under attack on our home soil and abroad. We only need look at the continued legal wrangling concerning Zubik v. Burwell, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization mandate being challenged by the Diocese of Providence, Pa., and, Erie, Pa., the Little Sisters of the Poor, the University of Notre Dame and several other efforts to understand how religious liberty can no longer be taken for granted. We hope and pray that the lower courts order these cases be heard by the Supreme Court to review their decisions come to a more favorable result for believers and believers alike.

Overseas, Christians are being persecuted and even killed by the Islamic State and other groups who fail to see people of different faith traditions as their brothers and sisters. And we continue to be told by many in today’s society that it’s OK to practice our faith in our church buildings, but we must refrain from living it and sharing it in the public arena.

During the next two weeks, we ask all people of faith to make a concerted effort to choose one—or more—of the USCCB’s five ways to celebrate the Fortnight for Freedom. They include:

1) Pray for religious freedom;
2) Learn more about religious freedom by forming a study group or hosting a religious freedom movie night;
3) Get together and celebrate religious freedom with a picnic or barbecue;
4) Share photos of Fortnight celebrations in Facebook, Twitter or Instagram;
5) Make a pilgrimage to Washington to take part in the closing Fortnight for Freedom Mass at noon on July 4 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

In conjunction with Stonyhurst College in England, the bishops have also initiated a U.S. tour of relics of Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher, two exemplary Christians who bore witness to freedom in the face of a government that sought to violate the conscience rights of its citizens. Stops on the tour include Miami, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Denver, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and six cities in Minnesota—St. Paul, Cloquet, Bemidji, St. Cloud, New Ulm and Rochester.

More in-depth resources for the annual Fortnight are available at www.fortnight4freedom.org.

Archbishop Lori shared in the 2012 statement, “This is not a Catholic issue. This is not a Jewish issue. This is not an Orthodox, Mormon or Muslim issue. It is an American issue.”

May we each do our part to protect this most cherished of American freedoms.

(Mike Krokos is the editor of The Criterion.)

Letter to the Editor

Seminary experience offered great lessons about spiritual life and prayer

"A tip of the hat to former seminarians and their vocations. I thought I’d never hear or read that!" Kudos to Bill Dodds for his “Your Family” column in the June 3 issue of The Criterion.

I entered a missionary order in 1969. Did I not experience the “minor seminary.” I experienced a “confused seminary.”

Discipline seemed irrelevant. Of my class of 22, 11 were gone after novitiate. Only one fellow was ordained a priest. I left with this explanation, something about “immaturity.” I think

Reflection

Mike Krokos

Religious liberty should be the most cherished of American freedoms

Americans woke up to devastating and heartbreaking news on Sunday morning, June 12. Once again, a lone gunman had taken the lives of innocent victims. Early indications were bad enough, but as the day wore on, the gruesome count grew to 50 dead, and the incident in Orlando was proclaimed to be the worst mass-shooting in American history.

Pope Francis immediately offered his prayers for the families of victims. He also expressed the profound hope that we will “find ways to identify and uproot the causes of such terrible and absurd violence.”

Louisville Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, called the killings “unspeakable violence.” He prayed “that the merciful love of Christ would call us to solidarity with the suffering and to ever greater resolve in protecting the life and dignity of every person.”

We have been here before. Unspeakable violence has become so common that we risk losing our perspective on it. The fact that the victims were homosexual and the perpetrator was Muslim has given rise to a new form of sympathetic hatred. This, however, can cause us to lose sight of what Pope Francis calls the root causes of this terrible and absurd violence.

What are the root causes? And more importantly, what can we do about them? As Christians, we have no difficulty identifying the root causes of this and all violent acts as sin. But we do not simply mean the sins of the disturbed and angry man who committed this unspeakable violence. We also mean the sins of the world, the sins that are found in our culture and in the logical ideologies that oppose our freedom, our religious beliefs and our way of life.

We live in a culture that is saturated with violence—in our games, our entertainment and our media coverage. A visitor from another planet might well conclude that we Americans are obsessed with violence. It surrounds us and fascinates us at the same time that we allow its consequences in real life. As a society, we need a radical conversion to turn us away from violence to true peace. As the Quakers say, “There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.”

It’s also clear that we are confronted with ideologies that see God as angry and vindictive. To please this angry God, disciples are encouraged to destroy the lives of innocent people. This view of an angry, vengeful God is not authentic to Judaism, Christianity or Islam. We must all work tirelessly to eradicate this abomination in order to prevent anyone from committing horrific crimes in God’s name.

Unfortunately, our political leaders appear to be unable or unwilling to act in any truly effective way to enforce existing laws, or pass new ones, that respect our freedom while at the same time safeguarding individuals and communities. Bipartisan, common sense initiatives are desperately needed to break the cycle of violence that repeatedly forces us to deal with situations like the recent Orlando massacre and so many other horrific instances of mass violence.

Finally, we find ourselves today in the grips of a misguided “political correctness” that fails to make the important distinction between the human rights and dignity of every person, regardless of his or her religious views, political affiliation or lifestyle, and actions or speech that are hateful, vindictive and violent.

It’s true, as some have reported, that the gunman in Orlando had repeatedly threatened violence against gays or others, but this situation is even more disturbing. U.S. citizens are entitled to the presumption of innocence, and no one should be hashed just because they are Muslim or because they say inflammatory things. Still, we have to do a better job of identifying potential terrorists before they commit heinous crimes. That means that no one should hesitate to report suspicious activities to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. As in this case, the FBI may not be able to charge the individuals with a crime until one occurs, but they can (and should) maintain a level of vigilance that can help prevent unspeakable crimes from occurring.

Archbishop Kurtz is right to pray for “ever greater resolve in protecting the life and dignity of every person.” The root causes of this and so many other terrible and absurd tragedies include our inability to recognize and defend the inalienable rights of all women and men—whether gay or straight, Muslim or Christian, American, Afghan or any other nationality. We are all God’s children, and the God we believe in wants us to love, respect and defend the human dignity of all.

We are right to be outraged by yet another—even more terrible—act of absurd violence. But outrage alone is not helpful. As a people of faith, we must pray. And as citizens of a free country, we must act without hesitation or fear to defend our freedom. Let’s say no to violence, to terrorism and to intolerance.

Let’s protect and defend the human dignity and rights of all.

—Daniel Conway

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I entered a missionary order in 1969. Did I not experience the “minor seminary.” I experienced a "confused seminary." The immaturity was the post-Vatican II structure.

Thanks to God, so much has improved and has had a positive impact on seminarians today. I agree with Dodds that, of those who have "walked the seminary trail for a time," some truly are dedicated laymen who serve the Church and society in many, many ways. I also find it interesting that there is a vocation to be in the seminary for a while. It gave me many great lessons about the Church and prayer.

How many laymen can say: “My novice master said...” I always get that "look!" “Your who?” they ask. I smile and say a prayer of thanks!

Norbert Schott

Greenacres

Reflection

Mike Krokos

Religious liberty should be the most cherished of American freedoms

"We are Catholics. We are Americans. We are proud of both, grateful for the gift of faith which is ours as Christian disciples, and grateful for the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens. To be Catholic and American should mean that we need not have to choose one over the other. Our allegiances are distinct, but they need not be contradictory, and should instead complement one another. That is the teaching of our Catholic faith, which obliges us to work together with fellow citizens for the common good of all who live in this land. That is the vision of our founding and our Constitution, which guarantees citizens of all religious faiths the right to contribute to our common life together."

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We only need look at the continued legal wrangling concerning Zubik v. Burwell, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) contraceptive, abortifacient and
Para ayudar a las familias a afrontar los desafíos de lo que verdaderamente es: “un camino que no se sienta peso a soportar toda la vida,” en lugar de la “herméticamente sellada eternidad” como la samaritana o la mujer adúltera. (“Especially when it occurs in places where they ought to be the most safe”), migration, persecution and injustice, drug abuse and other forms of addiction (alcohol, gambling and sex) and the “breakdown in families torn apart, the young uprooted and the elderly abandoned, children who are orphans of living parents, adolescents and young adults confused and unspotted” (#51). The list goes on.

No one can think that the weakening of the family as that natural society founded on marriage will prove beneficial to society as a whole, Pope Francis warns. “The contrary is true.”

The experiences and challenges of families

Realidad y desafíos de las familias

En su exhortación apostólica Amoris Laetitia (“La alegría del amor”), el papa Francisco dedica un capítulo (#31) a la “Realidad y Desafíos de las Familias.” Resulta una verdadera hazaña describir en tan solo 23 páginas las realidades –tanto positivas como negativas— que enfrentan las familias hoy en día.

Fiel a las enseñanzas de Cristo miramos la realidad de la familia hoy en toda su complejidad, en sus luces y sombras” (#32). El papa Francisco insiste en que afrontemos la realidad: no se trata de situaciones y prácticas, sino de “un camino de amor que nos lleva a la realidad de la familia hoy en día” (#38).

Lo que más nos llama la atención es la cercanía compasiva con los desafíos del futuro. La “intradita familia” está conmovida por las realidades —tanto positivas como negativas— que enfrentan las familias hoy en día. “Fieles a las enseñanzas de Cristo de ir acompañado del planteamiento de la realidad de la familia hoy en día? Por cuestiones de espacio en esta columna, me limitaré a nombrar solo algunos de los movimientos migratorios, las persecuciones y las injusticias, la drogadicción y otras formas de adicción (alcoholismo, adicción a la droga) y la “ruptura en familias destrozadas, hijos desarrapados, ancianos abandonados, niños huérfanos de padres vivos, adolescentes y jóvenes desorientados y sin reglas” (#51). La lista es extensa.

No se puede pensar que debilitar a la familia como sociedad natural fundada en el matrimonio es algo que favorece a la sociedad “advierte el papa Francisco. “Ocurre lo contrario,” afirma. “Sólo la unión exclusiva e indisoluble entre un varón y una mujer cumple una función social plena, por ser un compromiso estable y por hacer posible la fecundidad.” (#52). Ésta es la contundente verdad que no podemos diluir. Pero también se trata de un ideal que muchos hoy en día, al igual que en la época de Jesús y a lo largo de toda la historia, no reconocen en toda su dimensión, ni siquiera en sus dimensiones más extremas.

El Santo Padre concluye su capítulo sobre “Realidad y Desafíos de las Familias” agradeciendo a Dios por las numerosas familias “que están lejos de considerarse perfectas” pero que “viven en el amor, realizan su vocación y siguen adelante, aunque caigan muchas veces a lo largo del camino” (#57). Yo crecí en una familia así. A lo largo de mi ministerio sacerdotal y de mi servicio como obispo he conocido a “casi un sinfín” de familias que Dios ha usado para que la verdad y la bondad florezcan en medio de la adversidad. No son perfectas, pero son amables y están dispuestas a perdonar (casi siempre), como Cristo nos enseñó.

Demos gracias a Dios por nuestras familias, aquí en el centro y en todo el mundo. Que nuestro Señor las bendiga con su gracia y su misericordia, ahora y siempre. ----

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa

Archbishop/Arzobispo Joseph W. Tobin

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Retreats and Programs

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

July 1-3
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad.

July 6
Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Bick Grove.
Personal Retreat Day, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m., $35 includes a room for the day and lunch, spiritual direction available for an additional fee. Information and registration: 317-788-7581, www.benedictinn.org.

July 8-10
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Twelve Step Weekend Retreat for Women: Information: 731-753-8527

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. AA retreat, “Powerlessness, Weakness and Strength in Recovery,” Benedictine Father Colman Gruber, presenter, $255 single, $425 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or muelle@stmeinrad.edu.

July 12-14

VIPS

Bob and Mary Pat (Dallmann) Tully, members of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on June 25. The couple was married June 26, 1966, in St. Augustine Church in Jeffersonville. They have two children, Leigh William and Michael Tully. They also have five grandchildren.

Michael Witka, archdiocesan director of parish financial services, director of property insurance, and risk manager, was elected to serve a three-year term on the board of directors for Bishops’ Plan Insurance Company (BIPC).

The company serves all of the participating dioceses, including the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The mission of the member-owned BIPC is to strengthen stewardship by providing a collaborative, stable property and casualty insurance and risk management solution to meet the unique needs of each participating Roman Catholic diocese.

In his new role with BIPC, Witka will also serve as the chair of the board of directors, an important part of the risk management process.

Office of Pro-Life and Family Life seeks nominations for Respect Life awards

Each year, the archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life and Family Life honors an adult or married couple and a high school student at the annual Respect Life Sunday Mass, which is held the first Sunday in October. "God's Mercy" will be held on Oct. 2 this year.

Please consider nominating an adult or married couple whom you believe should be recognized for their leadership in promoting the dignity and sanctity of human life in the parish community and the archdiocese for the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Respect Life Award.

Please consider nominating a high school student whom you believe demonstrates leadership in promoting the dignity and sanctity of human life in the parish, community and the archdiocese for the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award. A downloadable nomination form is available online at www.archindy.org/rls. Completed nomination forms can be returned to the Office of Pro-Life and Family Life, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, or e-mailed to mwhitney@archindy.org by no later than Aug. 31.

More information about the awards and a list of past recipients is also available at www.archindy.org/rls.
What was in the news on June 17, 1966? Playing God, smearing a good woman, Catholic schools run by lay people and the Index again.

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 June 17, 1966, issue by logging on to our archives.

- Rule Index no longer has the force of law "VATICAN CITY—The Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith announced last week that the Index of Forbidden Books 'no longer has the force of ecclesiastical law.' But, it said, the Index "preserves its moral force insofar as it teaches the conscience of the Christian faithful to avoid, as the natural law itself demands, those writings which can put faith and good morals in danger." A term rather than full out enforcement is decreed. Last week, however, justice triumphed. A high court decreed that the original ruling was 'arbitrary' and un-called for. … Has American society become so beguiled by expedience that it will countenance attempts at enforced sterilization as a remedy for social ills?"

- Editorial: Why are they that way? "It was not the best way to start the week. We opened the neatly typed but unsigned letter and read: 'To the Editor of The Criterion: For shame that you should say that you are members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville. She completed the seventh grade at St. Anthony of Padua School last spring, and is the seventh-grade division winner in the Indianapolis Serra Club's 2016 John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest.""

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- Center, left coalition wins election in Rome "Card. Ritter urges study of papacy "UTRECHT, The Netherlands—Cardinal Bernard Alfrink of Utrecht announced that the Dutch bishops have given up their exclusive responsibility for Catholic education, assigning it to the parents of school-going children, the teachers' unions, and the school boards. … Today your bishops lay the full responsibility for the well-being of the Catholic schools on your shoulders: on you, parents; on you, teachers; on you, school boards; who together constitute our faithful, over whom we have been appointed as helpers and whom we wish to serve with our pastoral care."

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Deacon Douglas Nicolas Apajaca Tzoc

- **Age:** 35
- **Parents:** Manuel Apajaca and Antonia Tzoc
- **Home Parish:** Holy Family Parish, New Albany
- **College:** Universidad Rafael Lavidar, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- **Seminary:** Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad
- **Favorite Scripture:** Matthew 20:29, “Do not hide your face from me.”
- **Favorite saint:** St. John Bosco.
- **Favorite prayer:** Rosary
- **Hobbies:** Walking where he’s surrounded by nature, reading about culture and people
- **Mass of Thanksgiving:** Holy Family Church in New Albany, 11:30 a.m. on June 26

**Deacon Nicolas Apajaca Tzoc**

**Wanted**

Women and Men with culture

Our mission is to foster, affirm, and promote religious vocations to ministry in the Catholic Church by encouraging a culture among the laity that recognizes and supports religious vocations.

We work within our parishes and Archdiocese to achieve religious vocations through prayer, active personal involvement, and club-sponsored activities while growing in our faith and fellowship.

**Come and See**

Wednesday, June 29, 5:00 PM
Bishop Simon Brute College Seminary
2500 Cold Spring Road
Dinner and Fellowship provided

RSVP to Michael Kirk
mkirk@archindy.org or call 317.775.9710

The Serra Club of Indianapolis
www.serraindy.org

**Deacon Nicolas Apajaca Tzoc**

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** TZOC continued from page 1**

‘She was serving, ... I wanted to do the same thing’

Deacon Tzoc first felt a call to serve in the Church in the sixth grade when he attended his cousin’s first profession of vows as a Franciscan sister.

“I asked what she was doing,” he recalls. “She was serving the people, working in an orphanage. When I heard about service and what she was doing, I wanted to do the same thing.”

After his confirmation at age 16, Deacon Tzoc was selected to be involved with a special Catholic youth group in Guatemala.

“I got to be more involved in service then,” he says. “I got to see the faith in action, and I got to know priests and bishops. We traveled around the country, did youth ministry and encounters and retreats. We had meetings like NCYC [National Catholic Youth Conference]. I really got to see people living their faith in different ways and doing different ways of serving.”

He also got to see the leadership of Augustinian Father Valerio Baines Sanz, who worked with the group and also served as pastor of Deacon Tzoc’s parish.

“He supported us in so many ways,” says Deacon Tzoc. “He really listened, and he helped people. Our parish had 90,000 people, but he still made time for us. He told us to follow Jesus in our own way. Out of the 25 of us, 15 went on to pursue a religious vocation. He was a role model for me.”

St. Augustine sponsored activities while growing in our faith and priestly formation.

“[He] didn’t fulfill my expectations, especially in academics, at that time,” he says. Perhaps as a foreshadowing of his future call as a missionary, Deacon Tzoc wanted to study abroad. The school he applied to that would accommodate his desire to venture from Guatemala required a degree from outside the seminary before he could be accepted. So he entered Universidad Rafael Landivar in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, working toward a psychology degree, while also working for a government scholarship institute and teaching at a high school.

Deacon Tzoc went on to study abroad—but not as he initially expected.

**Something about the mystery of a vocation**

Through a friend in Guatemala, Deacon Tzoc met a priest from the Diocese of Owensboro, Ky. From the priest, he says he learned that in the U.S., “it’s a mission to work in [Hispanic] ministry. The need [he] told me about for Hispanic ministry here touched my heart.”

He felt a call to the priesthood again, but this time he looked outside of Guatemala, sending applications to Germany and Spain. He also applied to Saint Meinrad, where the Diocese of Owensboro sends its seminarians.

“The better one for me would have been Spain because I wouldn’t have had to learn a new language,” he says, with Spanish being his second language and K’iche’, a native language in Guatemala, being his first. “But there’s something about the mystery of a vocation. I told myself I would go wherever I was accepted first. My first letter came from America.”

When he arrived in the U.S. in 2011 to become a seminarian for the Owensboro Diocese, he “had no idea how it would be, no relatives here, knew no English,” Deacon Tzoc recalls.

Before starting at Saint Meinrad, he was required by the Diocese of Owensboro to spend his first year at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., learning English.

By 2012, he was studying at Saint Meinrad in the far southwest corner of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to be a priest for the western third of Kentucky.

**Archdiocese of Indianapolis was a better fit**

As he studied at Saint Meinrad, though, something changed for Deacon Tzoc.

“He got to know other seminarians and priests in the archdiocese and saw the need for ministry among the Latino community in Indianapolis,” says Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan vocations director.

“He also saw an organized effort and intentional focus on reaching out to and ministering with the Latino communities of the archdiocese that he wanted to be a part of.”

After about two years, says Father Augenstein, Deacon Tzoc “felt that the Archdiocese of Indianapolis was a better fit for him” than the Diocese of Owensboro.

By the summer of 2013, Deacon Tzoc became a seminarian of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, continuing to study at Saint Meinrad. He spent his first year as an archdiocesan seminarian completing a pastoral year at Holy Family Parish in New Albany.

Father Daniel Atkins, pastor of Holy Family, was impressed.

“He has a passion for the vocation of lay people in the Church,” he says. “He has this sense of, ‘Let’s go out into the field and work together. I’ll take one or you and you take the other.’”

Deacon Tzoc’s trilingual skills came in handy in helping Father Daniel Staublin, pastor of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Seymour, minister to a large community of Guatemalan Catholics.

“He was able to help with both our Spanish and English Masses,” says Father Staublin. “Both Anglos and Latinos responded very well to him. I’m just very happy we’ll have another [priest] in the parish. It’s nice to have another priest fluent in Spanish for our growing ministry in the archdiocese.”

Father Augenstein noted Deacon Tzoc’s gift for working with both English and Latino Catholics.

“One of his greatest skills is being able to navigate a variety of great people—different cultures and languages and backgrounds—as if it’s the most natural thing,” he says. “He is able to move between English and Spanish, Anglos and Latino people, and communicate back and forth, back-to-back naturally.”

**‘He’s a bridge builder’**

As Deacon Tzoc approaches his ordination, he looks forward to beginning his life as a missionary priest at his first assignment as an associate pastor at St. Simon the Apostle Parish and helping with Hispanic ministry at St. Lawrence Parish, both in Indianapolis.

And he looks forward to starting his life as a priest in general.

“He very much wants to be with the people,” says the priest. “He has a very easygoing kind of demeanor to him, a calming presence. I think that will serve him well. He commandes respect from people in a very quiet way.”

Father Atkins agrees.

“He made many, many friends while he was here at Holy Family,” he says. “He definitely seems himself as a servant-leader.

“He’s very caring of people, very savvy in terms of relationships. He picks up on emotional, physical and psychological things. When he’s communicating with people. He doesn’t miss much when he’s in a conversation with someone.”

The combination of a desire to be a missionary with his passion for people will make Deacon Tzoc a blessing to the Church in central and southern Indiana, says Father Augenstein.

“He’s able to bring together people from different perspectives, different ideas and different backgrounds to find some common ground,” he says. “He’s a bridge builder.”
Tucci
continued from page 1
Deacon Tucci's father. "But once we got through it, I think we both thought that he survived all of that for a reason."

The Tuccis now believe that their son’s vocation to the priesthood was at the heart of the reason he survived the difficult circumstances of his birth.

Deacon Tucci and five other transitional deacons are scheduled to be ordained priests for the Archdiocese of Chicago and southern Indiana on June 25 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Going away, coming back to the faith
Mike and Michelle Tucci moved several times while raising their family. Normally where they lived, they were active in their parish and passed on their faith to their children.

E. "There were great people in every parish we were in," said Michelle, who, along with Mike, is currently a member of a St. Aloysius Parish in Louisville, Ky. "There was always the opportunity to be involved. You just had to take that step."

That made an impression on Deacon Tucci. "We were expected to be involved," he said. "That was something that affected me.

Father Daniel Atkins, pastor of Holy Family Parish in New Albany, was the Tucci family’s priest about 20 years ago when they moved to Bloomington and joined the St. Paul Catholic Center there.

As Deacon Tucci grew from childhood into his teenage years, Father Atkins began to think that the youth might have a vocation to the priesthood.

"He was just a young man," Father Atkins said. "He was very faithful to the Sunday Eucharist. He always seemed like he really was glad to be there with his mom and dad and brothers and sisters." When Deacon Tucci went to college at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., his faithfulness was put to the test.

"You’re kind of confused," he said. "You’re opened up to this new world that you’ve never been in before. And kind of fell away a little way. Then when I realized, as a college was going on, that there was something missing in my life. That missing part was not only his faith, but the forgiveness of God he received in the sacrament of penance."

"After I made my first confession after a few years, I kind of realized the length our Lord goes through to show us his love and mercy," Deacon Tucci said.

He soon became active in the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center at Purdue.

In the fall of 2008, Deacon Tucci went on a retreat sponsored by the center that ended up being a turning point for him.

"I realized that God was trying to tell me something and proving strongly," he said. "That’s when I decided that God may have been calling me to be a sacred minister, to be a priest, to bring the Lord in a sacramental way."

A ‘heart of service’
After graduating from Purdue in the fall of 2009 with a bachelor’s degree in advertising and public relations, Deacon Tucci became an archdiocesan seminarian and lived for a semester at Bishop Simon Brutte College Seminary in New Albany while ministering near St. Anthony Parish and the former Holy Trinity Parish.

"That was when I realized that this was really what I was called to do," he said. "God comes at the most intimate moments of our lives. And the sacraments are involved in that. You see that God comes at [the start of] life, at death, at marriage, when we need forgiveness."

Father John McCallin, the pastor of both parishes, was impressed by this fledgling seminarian who had little knowledge of Spanish, yet was fearless in reaching out to the Hispanic community on the near west side of Indianapolis.

"He has a heart of service," Father McCallin said. "He was open, attentive and listened well to people. He was fearless in being willing to try things. He had a great openness to the immigrant community and really everybody in the parish."

Deacon Tucci went on to receive two years of priestly formation at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and four more at the Pontifical North American College and the Pontifical Gregorian University, both in Rome.

In his first year in Rome, starting in the fall of 2012, Deacon Tucci had some struggles in his discernment, pondering the importance of the family to more than one vocation.

"What kind of family could I have—in both the sense of having a wife or was God calling me to this family of a parish and the people of God?" Deacon Tucci recalled.

Witness to history and his own vocation
In the spring of his first academic year in Rome, Deacon Tucci was a witness to history as Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation and Pope Francis was elected.

He and fellow seminarians from the North American College were at the front of St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican when Pope Francis came out on the balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica for the first time.

"I can’t describe how much joy there was in the square," Deacon Tucci said. "There we were—the leader of our Church has just been elected—and we were waiting to get to know him.

"And, boy, have we gotten to know him over the past three years."

Deacon Tucci has also had the chance to know himself and his vocation better.

Through his formation and opportunities for ministry both in Rome and in his visits back to the archdiocese, he embraced his call to the priesthood and realized it is at the heart of who he is, not simply the things he would be asked to do as a priest.

"It went from function to person," Deacon Tucci said. "If I can save one person by who I am, if I can bring one person to God just because of who I am, then it’s all worth it."

He compares his experience for the priestly life and ministry he’ll begin with his June 25 ordination to the reaction of St. Peter when he was in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, saw the risen Lord on the shore and jumped in the water to get to him as quickly as possible.

"Just like Peter, I’m jumping into that sea, and the Lord is on that beach waiting for me," Deacon Tucci said.

"Whatever the swim there is like and whatever I experience, I know that the Lord is there looking out for me and for the people."

Deacon Matthew Tucci
• Age: 29
• Parents: Mike and Michelle Tucci
• Home Parish: Holy Family Parish in New Albany
• College: Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., bachelor’s in advertising and public relations
• Seminary: Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad; Pontifical North American College and the Pontifical Gregorian University, both in Rome
• Favorite Scripture verse: “I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39)
• Favorite saints: St. Francis de Sales, St. Catherine of Siena and St. Edward the Confessor
• Favorite prayer or devotion: Visiting St. Catherine of Siena’s tomb under the high altar at the Basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome
• Favorite movie: Jaws
• Favorite authors: Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Dostoevsky
• Favorite books: The Brothers Karamazov, The Glass Key, The Long Goodbye
• Hobbies: drawing, walking, coffee

Michelle Tucci holds her son Matthew Tucci on May 2, 1987, for the first time after he was born prematurely three weeks earlier at 26 weeks gestation. At the time Michelle held him, he weighed two pounds, six ounces. (Laura Helm)
‘Kid at heart’ leads parish festival for 26th straight year

By John Shaughnessy

Ask anyone what they enjoy most about parish festivals in the archdiocese and the answers—and the smiles—come easily:

• The delight that spreads across the faces of children playing games and enjoying rides.
• The satisfying sensation of sinking your teeth into crispy fried chicken, a juicy, straight-off-the-grill hamburger or a lip-licking slice of pie.
• The joy of savouring a drink and a good time with friends as music floats across the parish grounds on a beautiful evening.

As for Bill Kidwell, he loves his parish festival so much that he takes a week’s vacation for it. And that comes after he’s spent months planning and coordinating one of the largest parish festivals in the archdiocese. In fact, the St. Jude Parish Festival on June 23-25 will be the 26th year that Kidwell will lead the event that enlists about 400 volunteers and draws as many as 25,000 people.

“One of the things that’s great about the festival is that you get to know so many members of the parish, and they get to know you,” Kidwell says. “No matter what generation you are, you work together, and everyone is your friend. That’s why Father Gerry Kirkhoff started the festival 30 years ago—for the parishioners to get to know each other. And that hasn’t wavered since.”

Nur does Kidwell waver in his desire to deflect the spotlight from him and shine it on the parish staff and all the volunteers who help at the festival.

As an example, he raves about Ruth Purifoy, who has been in charge of the festival’s “Coke booth” for 30 years. Eight years ago, she retired and moved to Cincinnati, but she returns to help every year, working every hour of the festival from Thursday afternoon to Saturday night.

“She just won’t give it up,” he says admiringly. “To me, that’s dedication.”

That word also describes Kidwell, says Father Stephen Banet, St. Jude’s pastor.

“Few volunteers would even take on the commitment of chairing such a mammoth event as a summer festival, let alone do so for 26 consecutive years,” Father Banet notes. “We have in Bill a wonderful example of a servant leader, and he has inspired dedication from countless volunteers along the way. He is a true gift to our parish.”

At 63, Kidwell shares his secret for his longevity in leading the festival.

“I’ve never grown up,” he says with a laugh. “I’m still a kid at heart. I love to have fun, and I love to see people have fun. And I love the parish. Why wouldn’t I do it?”

He pauses before his voice takes a more serious tone, “I won’t kid you, it’s a lot of work, and a lot of phone calls. It wouldn’t work if it wasn’t for my wife, Denise. She supports me 100 percent in this.”

So have their three children—T.C., Mary and Kevin—who have helped through the years. And now Kidwell gets what he considers the best experience of all of the festival—sharing it with his three grandchildren, Liam, Olivia, and London, 5.

“They call it ‘Papa’s Festival,’” he says with delight. “They love every minute of it. They’re there all three nights. I take time out to spend time with them as they play the games and ride the rides. It’s not a lot of time, but I take time to enjoy my grandkids.”

That emphasis on fun is the guiding principle in Kidwell’s approach to the festival. At the same time, his leadership has created financial benefits to St. Jude and its sister parish in Indianapolis, St. Philip Neri.

“Our festival annually nets about $75,000, which helps fund capital projects not allotted for in our annual operating budget, such as air conditioning in our school, the church roofing project, and so much more,” says Kimberly Pohovey, the parish’s communications coordinator. “And annually, we tithe 10 percent of our festival income to St. Philip Neri.”

As the festival nears, Kidwell will continue his prayers. “We ask for good weather, but the main thing we ask for is a safe and happy festival,” he says. “When it’s over, it’s always a feeling of relief that we’ve had a good festival.”

The festival is scheduled to end on Saturday night at 11 p.m., but Kidwell and his crew are usually still on the parish grounds at 2 a.m. Sunday, wrapping up details. At the end of the exhilarating and exhausting weekend, it would seem natural that Kidwell would get a few extra hours of sleep on Sunday. Instead, he will be back at the parish at 5:30 a.m., opening the church and making sure everything is just right for the 7 o’clock Sunday Mass—just as he does every week.

The love of faith that leads him to direct the parish festival also guides him as an extraordinary minister of holy Communion and as the head usher at St. Jude. “My faith is very important to me,” Kidwell says. “I believe that everything I’m given, God gives it to me. So if you have a chance to do a lot of things, you do it.”

And when one of those things is a parish festival that brings great joy and builds bonds with a lot of people, it doesn’t get much better for Kidwell. †

—— Use this form to furnish information ——

If you are planning your wedding between June 30 and Feb. 1, 2017, we invite you to submit the information for an announcement on the form below.

E-mailed photos
Photos should be saved in jgp format and be a minimum 300 dpi resolution. Color photos are preferred. We recommend if possible, to have a photo where the couple’s faces are close to each other. Please send your photo as an attachment to the e-mail bhober@archindy.org. Subject line: Fall Marriage (Last name). In the e-mail, please include the information in the form located at the bottom.

If you are unable to e-mail a photo, you may mail us a photo to scan with the bottom form. Please no photocopy photos. If you want the photo returned, please include a return addressed envelope with a postage stamp on it.

Deadline
All announcements and photos must be received by 10 a.m. on Monday, July 1, 2016. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date.)
Faith!

Scriptures show how to rise above crises in family life

By David Gibson

The parable of the prodigal son ends happily when the wayward young man returns home. But stories like this do not usually begin on a happy note. Parents typically feel distressed when a rebellious child leaves home.

This biblical parable, along with others, shows how to rise above crises in family life or “fall prey to violence” (#21). It is the sort of thing that prompts us to ask, “What woman having 10 coins and losing one would not light a lamp and sweep the house, searching carefully until she finds it?” All of this illustrates, the pope writes, “that the word of God is not a series of abstract ideas, but rather a source of comfort and companionship for every family that experiences difficulties or suffering” (#22).

The happy ending of the parable of the prodigal son tells of his father’s decision to celebrate his son’s homecoming with a fine banquet. However, the father’s older son testily objects, complaining that the celebration seems to devalue his steadfastness and faithfulness, and instead honors waywardness.

Many of the discussions in the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32) edify parents or leave them wondering whether shortcomings on their part contributed to his decision? Parents often feel something like this in situations like this, worried that their home life is not good enough.

Pope Francis says that Jesus, by example, teaches us that such love begins with the recognition of God’s family. It is the kind of love that appreciates rather than criticizes, “aggravated by fears about steady employment, finances and the future of children” (#50).

But the family is a unique setting. Yes, says the pope, a family is challenged daily “to come up with new ways of appreciating and acknowledging its members” (#276). But there is goodness in the challenge of “being concerned about everything that affects us, helping one another with ordinary little things” (#276).

It is in the family, Pope Francis emphasizes, that everyone learns about “closeness, care and respect for others” (#276). In a family, he remarks, “we break out of our fatal self-absorption and come to realize that we are living with and alongside others who are worthy of our concern, our kindness and our affection” (#276).

“This biblical parable,” concludes the pope, “shows that in family life, we need to cultivate that strength of love that can help us fight every evil threatening it. Love is a love that must likewise be present and practiced in all of God’s family members, and the God-given uniqueness of each family member.

It is the kind of love that appreciates rather than disparages differences, that, in the face of injustice and violence, turns the other cheek, and practices healing and reconciliation rather than revenge and retaliation.

It is a love that must likewise be present and practiced in our relationships with all of God’s family members, all of them created in God’s image. Jesus, by example, teaches us that such love begins with an attitude of service, fostered by humility, as he showed his disciples—in a real sense, his earthly “family”—by washing their feet (Jn 13:5). In families, we put the needs of others ahead of ours.

—Pope Francis

Faith Alive!

A painting titled “The Return of the Prodigal Son,” by an unknown artist, is pictured at the Museum of Biblical Art in New York. Families in the Bible can remind today’s families how to focus on the loving times that the love that binds them together.

By Mike Nelson

Right from the get-go (think Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel), Scripture is filled with examples of what it means to be in a family—be it big or small.

Few had it worse than Joseph, son of Jacob, whose older brothers—consumed by jealousy—tossed Joseph into a cistern, considered killing him and finally sold him into slavery in Egypt. Then they let their father believe Joseph was dead.

Years later, Joseph—who, because he could interpret Pharaoh’s dreams, had become Egypt’s second in command—came face to face with his famine-plagued brothers, who feared Joseph would take revenge on them. But Joseph, though upset by his brothers’ treatment, showed them kindness. “Do not fear. Can I take the place of God?” (Gn 50:19). And then he added: “I will provide for you and for your children.”

In his recent apostolic exhortation titled “Amoris Laetitia” (“The Joy of Love”), Pope Francis says that in “family life, we need to cultivate that strength of love that can help us fight every evil threatening it. Love does not yield to resentment, scorn for others or the desire to hurt or to gain some advantage.” The Christian ideal, especially in families, is a love that never gives up” (#119).

“Love, in other words, ‘for better or worse,’ “ a love tested by the challenges of daily family life—including, as in Joseph’s family, jealousy and competitiveness (admittedly, more extreme than in most families). Such, too, was the case we see in the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32).

When the young man shamefacedly returned from squandering his father’s inheritance, his joy-filled father threw a lavish “welcome home” party that enraged his older brothers—consumed by jealousy—tossed Joseph into a cistern, considered killing him and finally sold him into slavery in Egypt. Then they let their father believe Joseph was dead.

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Catholic News Service.

Pope Francis embraces the Walker family of Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Sept. 27, 2015, in Philadelphia during the World Meeting of Families. Families tend to be well acquainted with the severe stress that results from getting “more caught up with securing their future than with enjoying the present,” Pope Francis suggests in his April 2016 apostolic exhortation on marriage and the family, “The Joy of Love.”

David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years. (CNS photo/David Gibson via Reuters)

Families in the Bible illustrate the priority of love and mercy in times of crisis

Faith Alive!


One of the things children need to learn from their parents is not to get carried away by anger.

—Pope Francis
Coming of Age/Maria-Pia Negro Chin

Opening new paths that help us grow in health, faith and love

Summer is almost upon us, as graduation season is marked by ceremonies, memories and speeches. Now is the time of the year classes close a chapter in your life and signals new beginnings. At my college graduation from Loyola University Maryland, my classmates and I were reminded of life’s ultimate end. Are we one door closes, God opens another one leading to a new path. That is the role of religion: to be exciting and terrifying for a new graduate—or anybody about to start something new. Commencement speeches can remind graduates, and students just behind them, that we are all on one road, and God opens one door, another leads to a new path.

Father Brian F. Linnane, our college president, said that he hoped our education and experiences gave us the tools to have a transformational connection to something larger than ourselves. This, he said, would serve the betterment of the world and also take us closer to our purpose in life. His parting words were “God bless you” and “be happy.” But what does ultimate happiness look like to you and your loved ones? There does not seem to be a single answer. That’s because the path to happiness take different forms for each of us, because of our different experiences and combinations of values and priorities that guide us,” Father Linnane said back then.

He later cited a study of what made individuals happy. And even though happiness can vary from one person to another, there were some constants. Leading a healthy lifestyle, spiritual connectedness and lasting human relationships were main elements in the lives of those who were happy. Trying to be both faithful to God and caring with our loved ones may seem simple, but to cultivate these gifts, we need a commitment. Nurturing a spiritual life and giving and receiving love are not endeavors that you can do by yourself. They require you to get out of yourself and show your vulnerabilities and weaknesses. To achieve rewards of faith, health and love make our sojourn enjoyable for others as well as for us. For instance, I grow this while working with senior high school students. By leading lives that helped them to grow in health, faith and love, my students seemed happy. They were hopeful for the future and had the drive to reach their goals and change the world. One of them cited George Eliot: “Loops and zigzags, we now and then arrive just where we ought to be.”

This bit of wisdom was a reminder that the path through the different stages of life is seldom linear. But the journey takes us where God wants us to be. Certain chapters in life help us grow. But each milestone has a purpose. For God, every new door—no matter how narrow—eventually leads to his ultimate goal for us: salvation. We can work on being happy and making others happy. The final purpose is to love.

May we grow in health, faith and love as we walk toward the next door.

(Maria-Pia Negro Chin writes for Catholic News Service.)

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

Today’s technology can lead us to finding humor in contradiction

Agitated over all the bizarre happenings in today’s life? How about reducing them to satire and enjoying the humor they produce.

Consider that even though we have time-saving air travel and superhighways, we find ourselves frequently in endless lines in stop-and-go traffic with cranky horns. Ironically, our so-called speedy life is more often than not a drag and a hurry-and-wait existence.

Smartphones should be called superphones because they help save lives, keep us in contact with dear friends and, in many cases, save money. Ironically, we often turn loved ones into strangers even though they may be nearby.

Even if people walk side by side, they might as well be apart because people are glued to the phones instead of being glued to the person next to them. Smartphones are the latest addiction with which compulsive chatterers need to fill their days. They are the newest neighbors. Phone rings may be music to the ear of some, but they don’t sound so sweet to those who have to endure the endless, annoying sounds coming from them.

A while ago, what some called home “entertainment districts” were truly an enjoyable form of entertainment. The sad side of them was that they produced an army of couch potatoes. Generations grew up sedentary, only knowing how to gaze at screens. Also consider that some feel we’ve reached the heights of freedom of speech because anyone is able to post on the Internet whatever comes to mind. But not everything that is posted has worth, and in many cases, it may not be true. It also may be used for evil purposes.

Music is intelligence in that it mimics speech, and its ultimate purpose is raising the nobility of the human spirit. Yet much of today’s music sounds narrow-minded. This is an affront to intelligence and especially to God. Caring for human rights, multiculturalism and solidarity offer amazing promise for the future. Ironies are still face tall, age-old opponents of self-righteousness, racism, intolerance, bigotry and narrow-mindedness. These knock downs blow to progress. These are enjoyable ways to understand the absurd and it reminds us that, as the Book of Ecclesiastes says, there is a time to laugh.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.)

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

Make ‘resourcing’ of faiths part of your summer to-do list

An old folk song is running through my head: “It’s summer, summer, sun-summer-sunsummer...” It beemocks to memory and more summer afoot. The summer was about also enjoying languid, hot summer days, and curled up with a good book. And oh, how that irritated my younger brother! “Come on Richard, come on out and play!”

That was in the days before the Internet, the times when human interaction was not about also enjoying languid, hot summer days, and curled up with a good book. And who, at least, would encourage you to absent yourself for a while from the humidity and heat. Curl up with your laptop or tablet. Set aside the meaningless chatter that you find online, the time-devouring distraction of surfing, and alight upon ecumenical and interreligious resources.

Set your browser to www.usccb.org, the official website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Click on the far-left link on the home page to the directory of offices at the bottom. Click on “Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs” and then check out the length and depth of 50 years of dialogue, outreach and cooperation.

Here’s the “Ecumenical link” on the far left side of the page. Click on this to capture a brief definition, and links to video resources and prayers. Please browse down the list of ecumenical partners. Click on any one of them to uncover good information on the progress of dialogues and partners in the dialogues. Learn about each of the varied Christian Churches and ecclesial communities that we are in dialogue with, and how they are, who we are related in faith, how they relate to our lives. And explore our interreligious partners: Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism. Gain for yourself a basic knowledge of each. How can we express that? What are the origins of these world religions? How can we connect to our Jewish brothers and sisters? Witness how committed we are to encounter the many expressions of Judaism, and their commitment to engage with us.

Finally, spend some time exploring the links at the bottom of the “Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs” page.

There are Vatican resources: the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and the Pontifical Council for Culture.

There is the national organization which the archdiocese belongs, the Catholic Association of Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Organizations.

And of course, connect to our Jewish brothers and sisters! Witness how committed we are to encounter the many expressions of Judaism, and their commitment to engage with us.
Jesus is the “Messiah of God” (Lk 9:21). St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians. It states and Redeemer, loyal to God to the end.

This reading refers to an unnamed fatherhood. He also reminded the people of God’s faithfulness and to obedience to God’s law. The first reading was from Zechariah. Born when Jews were held in captivity in a foreign, hostile environment, Zechariah benefited from being in the generation that was released from this captivity, and was able to return to the Jewish homeland. He and his contemporaries may have seen this release as the result of mere luck or coincidence. Rather, in their minds, God rescued them.

Gallatians obviously refers to God’s love. God sent Jesus to humanity. In Jesus, humans can become nothing less than heirs to eternal peace. In Jesus, humans become brothers and sisters of the Son of God, with God their Father in a most special sense.

St. Luke’s Gospel further describes Jesus as God’s gift. And by Peter, the Lord is the Messiah. He frees us from our sin.

God loves us as a perfect, loving, forgiving and providing Father, but God’s love does not render us helpless, unable to decide for ourselves. We must turn to God, with true conviction, even if it means carrying our own crosses.

Even if we carry our cross, our loving Father will assist us with the divine help of Jesus and will give us everlasting life at the end of our earthly struggle.†

Reflection

This weekend in the United States is Father’s Day. The readings provide an idea of the goodness to us of God, the eternal Father. The first reading was from Zechariah. Born when Jews were held in captivity in a foreign, hostile environment, Zechariah benefited from being in the generation that was released from this captivity, and was able to return to the Jewish homeland. He and his contemporaries may have seen this release as the result of mere luck or coincidence. Rather, in their minds, God rescued them.

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My Journey to God

My Rosary By Catherine M. Szakel

I say my rosary every day. My words turn into thoughts Of Jesus and his sorrows And the pain my sins have wrought.

I’m there along with Mary As she gets the joyful word And has the child that God has sent To be our saving Lord.

I walk along with Jesus As He trudges down the path Where cruel men torment him As they dole out their wrath.

And on the cross I gaze at him, This man who died for me. Oh, Lord, forgive my every action That brings you balm.

Help me to carry my own cross, Your burden let me share. So I can someday be with you. Lord, let that be my prayer.

My Rosary

(Catherine M. Szakel is a member of St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis. Women pray the rosary during the 2016 Indiana Catholic Women’s Conference in Indianapolis on March 19.) (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)
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. Obits of archdioecesan 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; these are separate obituaries on this page.


HARTMAN, Alvina, 86, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, June 2. Grandmother of Andrea Stiegler. Grandfather of four.


STRANGE, Clara, 93, St. Roch, Washington, May 31. Sister of Ralph and Roy Miller.


Jesus wants people to strive for ideal, but settle disputes, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A “my way or the highway” attitude is not Catholic—it’s heretical, Pope Francis said.

“Jesus always walks with us, he gives us the ideal, he accompanies us toward the ideal, he frees us from this cage of rigidity of the law,” the pope said on June 9 during a morning Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Jesus teaches “a healthy realism,” he said, one that endorses a peaceful resolution over a war of entrenched, opposing interests.

The pope’s homily focused on the day’s Gospel reading (Mt 5:20-26), in which Jesus tells his disciples to settle with their opponents and be reconciled with their brothers because they will be judged for harboring anger and lodging insults.

“We are so used to [certain] adjectives, and we have a very creative vocabulary for insulting others,” the pope said, according to Vatican Radio.

“Swear words, he said, are often spoken ‘with much charity, but we say them to others.’”

Insulting others is “killing, because it is giving a slap to their soul’ and dignity, he said.”
Speaker talks about men, women and ‘The Feminine Genius’

WASHINGTON (CNS)—When Helen Alvaré first read that Jesus did not “count equality with God a thing to be grasped” (Phil 2:6), she was shocked.

“This is why I wanted to end my talk by asking women to collaborate has become controversial,” and that Christians need to confirm God’s intention for men and women to be different but equal.

In modern society, “we are encouraged to reject things that are associated with women and instead to be either like men or androgynous or sexually fluid,” Alvaré told the all-female audience, yet “the two sexes symbolize all that can happen when different things work together. They create, they grow, they give new life.”

She continued, “An environment stacked against the twoness of the sexes is also an environment against diversity of every type, coexistence in perfect equality in the eyes of God.”

Alvaré, who is a family and religion law professor at George Mason University and a consultant for the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for the Laity, serves as a Holy See delegate to various United Nations conferences on women and family issues.

She said that women need to recognize their feminine gifts and assert them in collaboration with men rather than “grabbing at” an equality that they already have in the eyes of God. Practically and theologically, she said, the sexes working together are better than either men or women working alone.

She cited studies showing that mixed-gender marketing teams are effective because the men tend to develop strong marketing systems while the women are often better at figuring out how the system will practically be applied, and how to pitch the system in an appealing way.

She also explained theologian N.T. Wright’s view of creation as a means of union, not competition. She said that while women cannot forget that they are heirs to a long struggle for equal rights, “as Christians, this model of not deeming sexual equality something to be grasped at means that we assert it. We live it. We can be lawyers seeking to get it in the law; we can be laywomen seeking to assert it in a group or at our job, but the end goal that we’re seeking is not I am better than men, I reject men, I don’t trust men, et cetera. It is to assert and achieve this equality but not by harming the opposite sex.”

She said that she would have liked to see this equality represented in Church decision-making, for example, at the Synod of Bishops on the family or in the sexual abuse scandal.

“I would have said that you needed a great deal more women and families at the synod on the family. I really didn’t understand the absence of a significant number of more women,” she said.

Alvaré chaired the commission that investigated the abuse scandal in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

“If someone had come in and complained to a mother that this had happened to her son, I think things would have changed quite a bit earlier,” Alvaré told CNS, saying there may be a difference between the sexes in understanding “what that violation means to a child.”

She also pointed out that women are skilled in the humanitarian work Pope Francis has emphasized, like housing Syrian refugees and providing showers for the homeless in Vatican City.

“The people who are actually doing that kind of work in the world and who want to do it—they’d like to be paid more fairly, but they want to do it—are women,” Alvaré said, noting that women’s representation in the Church shouldn’t be a matter of meeting quota.

She told CNS that she wanted to end her talk by saying women must be the ones to speak out in favor of femininity and increased collaboration between the sexes.

“No male can say the things that I said today,” she said. “If it’s going to be said at all, it has to be said by women.”

The June 7-12 Given conference was held at The Catholic University of America in Washington. It was sponsored by the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious.
Criterion staff honored for excellence in journalism

Staff members of The Criterion were recently honored for excellence in journalism by two organizations. The recognition included awards from the Catholic Press Association (CPA) and the Woman’s Press Club of Indiana (WPCI).

For the CPA, The Criterion won awards for two stories. One was a story about the Syrian refugee family that arrived in the archdiocese, which was awarded first place in the Individual Reporting category. The newspaper also received an award for its Holy Land blog, which was awarded first place in the Best Newswriting Originating with the Paper on a National or International Event category.

For the WPCI, The Criterion received recognition for work completed in 2015. The newspaper won a total of nine awards from the CPA and WPCI's Woman's Press Club of Indiana (WPCI) for 2015.

Assistant editor John Shaughnessy was awarded first place in the Individual Excellence for writers’ category. Writers were asked to submit up to five examples of their work. Shaughnessy has a knack for finding inspiring stories about the human condition and God’s hand in our lives,” judges wrote. “His reporting is excellent, his storytelling is compelling, and he truly is a treasure to his community.

Shaughnessy also earned a third-place award in the Best Sports Journalism/Sports News category for his story, “The powerful theological message of forgiveness as a fundamental of Christian life and practice permeates this editorial,” judges wrote. “The message is clear that violent tragedies like the one in the church in Charleston do not need to end in more violence. The writer makes a strong case for a different response born out of the life and action of Christ. What better response could be made in this [Holy] Year of Mercy.”

Editor Emeritus John F. Fink received third place in the Best Editorial on a National/International Issue category for “Take a look inside ‘the waiting room’ at the issue of doctor-assisted suicide.”

By stepping back in time to recall the premonition of a Catholic journalist more than 50 years ago,” judges said, “the author brings the issue of assisted suicide front and center, reminding readers of the fundamental and unique belief system the Catholic Church holds. The sanctity of life remains the pre-eminent issue. The position is well stated.”

“More than ever, our culture needs the voice provided by The Criterion staff and other Catholic journalists. These powerful and transforming stories about faith are often overlooked by today’s secular media,” said Greg Otolski, associate publisher of The Criterion. “We’re grateful to be able to serve the people of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis by reporting on the local Church, as well as bringing their news of the Catholic faith from around the world.”

The newspaper recently won a total of nine awards from the CPA and WPCI’s Woman’s Press Club of Indiana (WPCI).