A life-changing journey of faith

Pilgrims experience ‘spirit of peace and joy’ during World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland

By John Shaughnessy

Following the closing Mass of World Youth Day in Poland with Pope Francis on July 31, some young people from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis walked more than eight miles—in the rain—to get back to their buses.

When they arrived at the airport in Prague to begin their return flight to Indianapolis, 35 young adults from the archdiocese learned that their buses had been canceled and rescheduled for a day later because of a strike by employees of Air France airlines.

Yet despite such setbacks and struggles, the enduring memories of World Youth Day for the 104 youths and 64 young adults from the archdiocese are marked by the ‘spirit of peace and joy’ that prevailed during the seven days at the end of July—when more than 1.6 million young people from around the world came together to celebrate and deepen their Catholic faith.

“A lot of things could happen when you get together a group of more than 1.6 million people—chaos, tension, violence, protests, clashes,” said Father Eric Augenstein, the director of vocations for the archdiocese and a leader of the archdiocesan pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Krakow. “But this gathering was marked by a spirit of joy and peace that can only be because it had the Gospel of Jesus Christ at its center.”

Father Augenstein was among six priests from the archdiocese who concelebrated the closing Mass with Pope Francis. The others were Fathers Dustin Boehm, John Hollowell, Jonathan Meyer, Martin Rodriguez, and Dominican Father Raymond-Marie Bryce.

“The first line of Pope Francis’ homily struck me the most,” Father Augenstein recalled. “He said that we have all come to Krakow to encounter Jesus Christ. We might be tempted to think that we were there to encounter the Holy Father, or the many saints of Krakow—like St. John Paul II and St. Faustina—or the young people gathered from all over the world. But those encounters were

Don’t tuck life away, take risks, pope tells young people

KRAKOW, Poland (CNS)—Take risks and do not let life’s obstacles get in the way of encountering the true joy and life that Jesus can give. Pope Francis told more than 1.6 million young people.

“Don’t be afraid to say ‘yes’ to him with all your heart, to respond generously and to follow him,” the pope told pilgrims at the closing Mass on July 31 for World Youth Day. “Don’t let your soul grow numb, but aim for the goal of a beautiful love which also demands sacrifice.”

“When it comes to Jesus, we cannot sit around waiting with arms folded; he offers us life. We can’t respond by thinking about it, or ‘texting’ a few words,” he told the young people, thousands of whom had spent the night camping at an area dubbed the Field of Mercy. “The lack of sleep and morning heat seemed to have little impact as the young men and women energetically waved their flags, and ran as close as possible to the popemobile to greet Pope Francis.

In his homily, the pope reflected on the Gospel story of Zacchaeus, a reviled tax collector who, due to his short height, climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus.”

“The obstacles Zaccharus faced—including his short stature—the pope said, can also ‘say something to us. Today we can risk not getting close to Jesus because we don’t feel big enough, because we don’t think ourselves worthy. This is a great temptation; it has to do not only with self-esteem, but with faith itself,’ he said.

“By not accepting themselves and their limitations, Christians deny their true stature as children of God and see themselves as unworthy of God’s love.

“Today, the pope said, people will try to convince Christians that there are others who are unworthy of God’s love. “People may try to block you, to make you think that God is distant, rigid and insensitive, good to the good and bad to the bad,” he told the young people. “Instead, our heavenly Father ‘makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good.’ He demands of us real courage: the courage to be more powerful than evil by

High school seniors advise incoming freshmen on how to make the most of their experience

By John Shaughnessy

At 17, high school senior Jack Lockrem doesn’t hesitate when he begins to share his advice for helping an incoming freshman make the most of her or his high school experience:

“One of the best ways to make the most of your high school experience is to try, at least once, something completely out of your comfort zone—whether it’s an extracurricular activity, a challenging class or a class you normally wouldn’t think of taking.”

That’s exactly what Jack did at the beginning of his junior year at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis. As someone who has gained the spotlight in leading roles in his school’s theater productions, Jack laughingly acknowledges, “I’ve never been a star athlete.” Still, he followed his friends’ suggestion to join the cross country team.

“It was excellent, and I’m running my senior year. It’s something I proudly wear on my chest.”

For Jack Lockrem, third from right, joining the cross country team at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis led to a new challenge and a source of new friends. For Jack Lockrem, third from right, joining the cross country team at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis led to a new challenge and a source of new friends.
Pope Francis prays for peace, protection from violence, terrorism

OSWIECIM, Poland (CNS)—Sitting with head bowed and eyes closed, Pope Francis paid silent tribute to the victims of one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century.

The pope arrived on July 29 at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi death camp in Oswieczim, an area now blanketed by green fields and empty barracks lined by barbed wire fences, remnants of a horror that remains embedded in history. Used by the Nazis from 1940 to 1945, the camp was the Nazis’ largest and consisted of three parts: Auschwitz I, where many were imprisoned and murdered; the Birkenau extermination camp—also known as Auschwitz II—Hilowitz; and Auschwitz III (Auschwitz-Monowitz), an area of auxiliary camps that included several factories.

In 1942, Auschwitz became the site of the mass extermination of more than 1 million Jews, 23,000 Roma, 15,000 Soviet prisoners of war and thousands of Polish citizens of different ethnicities. Among those killed were St. Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Conventual Franciscan friar, and Edith Stein, a Jewish philosopher who converted to Catholicism and became a Carmelite nun, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Furst, who now lives in Israel, gave the pope a photograph showing him and other inmates imprisoned in the Auschwitz barracks.

Pope Francis also signed a book for Furst before he made his way toward the “death wall” where thousands of prisoners were lined up and shot in the back of the head before their bodies were sent to the crematoriums.

Candle in hand, the pope lit an oil lamp in front of the wall, before praying and laying his hand on the wall. He then turned around and entered the barracks of Block 11.

Also known as “the death block” because the Nazis used it to inflict torture, it houses the cell where St. Maximilian Kolbe spent his final hours, starved and dehydrated before being given a lethal injection of carbolic acid.

Pope Francis entered the darkened cell, illuminated by a faint light from the corridor, revealing a candle, an engraved plaque marking the site of the Franciscan friar’s death, and countless words—even a cross—etched on the walls by those who spent their final moments in the starvation cell.

Once again, Pope Francis sat in silence with his head bowed. Alone in the cell for eight minutes, he occasionally looked up to contemplate his surroundings.

Outside the cell, he signed the visitors’ book, writing a simple message: “Lord, have mercy on your people. Lord, forgive so much cruelty.”

Pope Francis then made his way to the Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz Birkenau, driven in an electric cart on a path parallel to the railroad tracks that carried countless men, women and children to their death. It now leads to a monument that honors their memory.

To the left of the memorial lay the ruins of one of four crematoriums used to incinerate the bodies of those who died of disease or starvation, or who were executed in the gas chambers housed within the extermination camp.

The pope approached the memorial to the victims, lined with plaques, each inscribed with a message in a different language: “Forever let this place be a cry of joy to you, O Lord.”

The event ended with the pope greeting 25 people honored as “righteous among the nations,” a recognition of non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews from the Nazi extermination.

Among those present for the solemn occasion was Rabbi Abraham Skorka, a longtime friend of the pope from Buenos Aires.

Speaking to journalists on July 28, Rabbi Skorka recalled a telephone conversation with Pope Francis in which he asked about the visit to Auschwitz.

“The pope told me, ‘I am going to behave the same way I did in Armenia—I will remain silent,’” he said.

“From a theological point of view and from a biblical point of view, this attitude means a lot,” the rabbi said.

Pope Francis prays for peace, protection from violence, terrorism

KRAKOW, Poland (CNS)—Here is the English-language text of a prayer for peace and protection from violence and terrorism that Pope Francis recited on July 30 at St. Francis Church in Krakow before heading to the World Youth Day prayer vigil.

O almighty and merciful God, Lord of the universe and of history: All that you have created is good and your compassion knows no limits.

We come to you today to ask you to keep in peace the world and its peoples, to keep far away from it the devastating wave of terrorism, to restore friendship and the hearts of your creatures the gift of trust and of readiness to forgive:

O Giver of life, we pray to you also for all those who have died as victims of brutal terrorist attacks. Grant them their eternal reward. May they intercede for the world that is torn apart by conflicts and disagreement.

O Jesus, Prince of Peace, we pray to you for the ones who have been wounded in these acts of inhuman violence: Children and young people, old people and innocent people, all who have been accidentally involved in evil. Heal their bodies and hearts; console them with your strength and, at the same time, take away any hatred and a desire for revenge.

Holy Spirit Consider, visit the families of the victims of terrorism, families that suffer through no fault of their own. Wipe them in the mantle of your divine mercy. Make them find again in you and in themselves the strength and courage to continue to be brothers and sisters for others, above all for immigrants, giving witness to your love by their lives. Touch the hearts of terrorists so that they may recognize the evil of their actions and may turn to the way of peace and goodness of respect for the life and for the dignity of every human being, regardless of religion, origin, wealth or poverty.

O God, eternal Father, in your mercy hear our prayer which we raise up to you amidst the deafening noise and desperation of the world. We turn to you with great hope, full of trust in your infinite mercy. Make strong by the examples of the blessed martyrs of Peru, Zbigniew and Bogumił, who have rendered courageous testimony to the Gospel, to the point of offering their blood; we entrust ourselves to the intercession of your Most Holy Mother. We ask for the gift of peace and of the elimination from our midst of the sord of terror.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.
It’s not right to equate Islam with violence, Pope Francis tells reporters

ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM KRAKOW, Poland (CNS)—An economy that focuses on the god of money, not human beings, is the foundation of terrorism, Pope Francis said.

Speaking to journalists aboard his return flight from Krakow, Poland, on July 31, the pope also stressed that violence exists in all religions, including Catholicism, and it cannot be pinned to one single religion.

“I do not like to speak of Islamic violence because every day when I look through the papers, I see violence here from Krakow, Poland, to Rome. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Spending about 30 minutes with reporters and responding to six questions, Pope Francis was asked to elaborate on comments he had made flying to Poland on July 27 when he told the journalists that religions are not at war and want peace.

The pope’s initial comment came in speaking about the murder on July 26 of an elderly priest during Mass in a Catholic church in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray, France. Two men, armed with knives, entered the church during Mass. The attackers murdered 85-year-old Father Jacques Hamel, slitting his throat. The Islamic State group later claimed responsibility for the murder.

Although the death of the French priest was committed in the name of Islam, the pope said that it is unfair to label an entire religion violent because of the actions of a few fundamentalists.

“One thing is true. I believe that in almost all religions, there is always a small fundamentalist group. We have them, too,” the pope said. “When fundamentalism goes to the point of killing—you can even kill with the tongue. This is what St. James says, but [you can kill] also with a knife.

“I do not think it is right to identify Islam with violence. This is not right, and it is not true,” he continued.

Instead, the pope said, those who choose to enter fundamentalists groups, such as the Islamic State, do so because “they have been left empty” of ideals, work and values.

The pope was also asked about accusations of sexual abuse made against Australian Cardinal George Pell, prefect of the Vatican’s Secretariat for the Economy.

Pope Francis said the accusations are unclear, but are in the hands of investigators. He also warned against deeming alleged accusations true or false before they are investigated thoroughly.

“If I would give a verdict for or against Cardinal Pell, it would not be good because I would judge prematurely,” he said. “We should wait for justice and not judge beforehand [or] a verdict by the press, a verdict based on gossip.”

Pope Francis was also asked if he was all right after he stumbled and fell during Mass outside the Marian shrine of Jasna Gora in Czestochowa on July 28. He missed a step as he was blessing the altar and an image of Mary with incense.

“I was looking at the Madonna, and I forgot about the step,” he recalled. “I had the thurible in my hand, and I just let myself fall. If I had tried to resist, then there would have been consequences.”

Regarding his ability to speak and relate to young people, the pope told journalists that he likes to talk to them “because they tell me things that I never thought before or that I never thought through.”

“I do not think it is right to identify Islam with violence. This is not right, and it is not true,” he continued.

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It’s been a rarely quarter of century since the American bishops published their 1992 pastoral letter “Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response.” In the intervening years, Catholic dioceses, parishes and schools throughout the United States and many other countries have been teaching the spiritual and material “as a way of life.”

In preparation for the 25th anniversary of the “stewardship pastoral” in November 2017, we should re-examine our assumptions about what stewardship means and the difference it makes in the lives of individuals, families and Christian communities.

Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy (1932-1997) was a principal author of “Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response.” He was a passionate advocate for stewardship who traveled all over North America, giving talks on the pastorate, encouraging clergy and lay leaders to broaden and deepen their understanding of this often misunderstood concept.

Archbishop Murphy frequently posed the question: “What do I own, and what owns me?” He asked牧者 to encourage his listeners to do a examination of conscience on their basic stance toward all God’s gifts—spiritual and material.

Am I owned by (or obsessed with) material things? What do I use? To whom do I give it? What relationships and sexual activity? Or do I recognize that a good and gracious God is truly the owner of all that I possess? And do I understand and accept my role as the steward (caretaker, manager or guardian) of all that God has given me, including my mind, my emotions, my talents and my material possessions?

Archbishop Murphy’s approach was unconventional. Sometimes it was threatening. In 1992, most Catholics, including most clergy didn’t talk about stewardship much. When they did, they used the still popular imagery of “time, talent and treasure.” That meant they regarded stewardship as a means for recruiting volunteers or raising money. They did not consider it to be a practical form of spirituality or a way of living the Gospel.

Archbishop Murphy and the committee of bishops who wrote the stewardship pastoral are a generation from many priests, religious and lay people, including Protestants who had been talking about stewardship for a whole lot longer than (Catholics) were determined to change things.

They wanted Catholics to recognize in stewardship the universal call to holiness, and the Lord’s invitation to us to change things. Their holiness, and the Lord’s invitation to in stewardship the universal call to holiness, and the Lord’s invitation to change things.

It’s a calling that shapes the entirety of one’s life. Conformed to Christ at his ordination in 1958, he was “a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek” (Heb 7:17). He knew that in his heart and soul, selling a fellow priest that he would serve “until my last breath.”

On July 26, Father Hamel did what priests do. He celebrated Mass in the parish church in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray near Rouen in northern France. During that Mass, two men stormed into the church shouting allegiance to the Islamic State. According to an eyewitness, they forced Father Hamel to kneel before the altar and then proceed to slash his throat.

His last breath happened during a Mass, which is at the heart of the priesthood for which Father Hamel had dedicated his life.

The journalist subsequently took the small congregation hostage, severely injuring one of them. They were eventually shot and killed by French police.

Father Hamel, who had been such a faithful witness to Christ in his life, was also a faithful witness to Christ in his death. He now serves the needs of others. Accepting that fact, the parish and the Church ask us to re-examine our assumptions about what ownership means and the difference it makes in the lives of individuals, families and Christian communities.

In the nearly 25 years that have passed, what progress have we made? Do our clergy, religious and lay faithful have a richer understanding of the spirituality of stewardship, or are we still focused on time, talent and treasure? Does the Catholic community as a whole accept its role in the shaping values of 21st-century America? Or are we still troubled and uncertain about how to sustain and use the incredible gifts our generous and loving God has entrusted to our care?

In other words, do we ask ourselves, “What do I own, and what owns me?” Or do we presume that what we have belongs to us to do with as we think best? When we take this stewardship question seriously, our focus shifts from what is self-serving to what serves the needs of others. Accepting the fact that God is the owner— and that we are called to be God’s trusted stewards—changes everything. We see ourselves and the world around us with new eyes. We take what has been freely given to us, and we grow it and share it for the good of all.

Dioceses, parishes and schools who embrace stewardship as a way of life gain a new perspective on the challenges they face carrying out the Church’s mission. Instead of seeking gifts of time, talent and treasure (as important as these are), we seek disciples who are eager to give everything in order to follow Christ wholeheartedly.

Naive? Impossible! Hopeless? It’s often tempting to think so, but 2,000 years of Christian history have proven beyond any doubt that when disciples seek “first the kingdom of God” (Mt 6:33), everything else the Church needs will be given to us.

Stewardship is essential to what Pope Francis calls “missionary discipleship.” We are called to be faithful and responsible stewards of all God’s gifts, including our time, talent and treasure—often much more besides. May the gracious God who gives us everything inspire us to be generous stewards of all that we have and are.

Reflection

Slaun French priest can inspire us all to be witnesses to the Gospel

No one would have blamed Father Jacques Hamel for living in quiet retirement. He was an 85-year-old French priest who had ministered “faithfully and humbly” for 58 years. If he had asked to retire from public ministry, no one would have batted an eye. In fact, he would have been praised for his long-standing fidelity to priestly ministry.

But he, like many other priests around the world, knew that being a priest is more about what one says than what one does. It’s a calling that shapes the entirety of one’s life. Conformed to Christ at his ordination in 1958, he was “a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek” (Heb 7:17). He knew that in his heart and soul, selling a fellow priest that he would serve “until my last breath.”

In the nearly 25 years that have passed, what progress have we made? Do our clergy, religious and lay followers have a richer understanding of the spirituality of stewardship, or are we still focused on time, talent and treasure? Does the Catholic community as a whole accept its role in the shaping values of 21st-century America? Or are we still troubled and uncertain about how to sustain and use the incredible gifts our generous and loving God has entrusted to our care?

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—Daniel Conway

Lessons for countering today’s malaise with simplicity

When I was anxious about disturbing events, my Italian grandfather would say, “Gini, it all is in the Bible. Not only does it contain the same information of today, but also the wisdom needed to cope with them.”

St. Matthew’s Gospel contains the wisdom of which my grandfather spoke. Christ prays, “I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and Earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, you have revealed them to the childlike.” (Mt 11:25).

In childlike simplicity, Christ exalts the virtue of simplicity that is wisdom par excellence for our times. What does simplicity mean? It’s being free of things, and therefore not trying to follow Christ wholeheartedly. That’s what my Italian grandfather meant when he said, “Gini, it all is in the Bible.”

Undoubtedly, today’s life is very complex. Would, however, things be different if it was simplified according to the Bible, if there was less waxing over the flaws in marble? As a consequence, the folk tale goes that as demand for marble increased, the demand grew, craftsmen couldn’t keep up with wax. As a consequence, wax began to melt, exposing the marble’s simplicity mean? An example from popular culture: The virtue of simplicity that is wisdom par excellence needed to follow Christ wholeheartedly.

Father Eugene Hemrick

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Father Eugene Hemrick
Love heals old wounds, prevents new ones

E n su exhortación apostólica “Amoris Laetitia" (“La alegría del amor"), el papa Francisco enfatiza el valor de la misericordia, no mostrarnos sentenciosos con los pecadores que no han logrado cumplir, a veces por mucho, con los elevados estándares que los casados están llamados a mantener. Sólo se toma en cuenta la voluntad de hacer reformas. Fray Pedro reafirma la enseñanza tradicional acerca de la indisolubilidad de la matrimonio, pero nos pide que no condenemos a aquellos cuyos matrimonios han fracasado. Esta es la paradoja de las enseñanzas del propio Jesús: proponía una adherencia al compromiso para toda la vida y que el hombre y la mujer se hicieran y rechaza el compromiso que permita Moisés en casos de divorcio. Pero Jesús no condenaba a quienes no podían cumplir con las leyes de Dios. En cambio, los perdonaba y los instaba a que buscaran sanación. El amor, el perdón, la sanación y la reconciliación en sus vidas y sus comunidades no deben ser excluidos. Los hijos de los que los hijos, en estas situaciones, ya tienen que cargar! (#246).

Con esto, el Papa nos dice que debemos acogerlo mal que representa el divorcio pero amar a quienes han sufrido esa experiencia. Debemos sanar a las heridas creados (o exacerbados) por el divorcio y esforzarnos en prevenir la aparición de otras heridas más profundas que aquejen a las familias, especialmente a los niños inocentes. Es por ello que el Papa nos recuerda que si bien hay personas hablando de divorcio y han formado nuevos matrimonios, algunos no están excomulgados. No se han convertido en partícipes de la comunidad de fe y por consiguiente, no deben ser excluidos. "Estas personas" (o están excomulgadas) y no son tratadas como tales, porque siempre integran la comunidad eclesial. Estas situaciones "exigen un atento discernimiento y un acompañamiento con gran respeto, evitando todo lenguaje y actitud que las haga sentir discriminadas, y promoviendo su participación en la vida de la comunidad. Para la comunidad cristiana, hacerse cargo de ellos no implica un debilitamiento de su fe y de su testimonio acerca de la indisolubilidad matrimonial, es más, es ese cuidado expresa precisamente su caridad" (#243).

Una vez más, el Papa Francisco nos recuerda que no rechacemos a quienes se han divorciado, aunque hayan formado nuevas uniones. El amor, el perdón, la sanación y la reconciliación en sus vidas y sus comunidades no deben ser excluidos. Los hijos de los que los hijos, en estas situaciones, ya tienen que cargar! (#246).

Incluso los educadores que se han separado, pero que han mantenido el amor y el respeto, los deberemos acompañar y apoyar, "como si estuviesen excomulgadas" (#246). Con esto, el Papa nos dice que debemos acogerlo mal que representa el divorcio pero amar a quienes han sufrido esa experiencia. Debemos sanar a las heridas creados (o exacerbados) por el divorcio y esforzarnos en prevenir la aparición de otras heridas más profundas que aquejen a las familias, especialmente a los niños inocentes. Es por ello que el Papa nos recuerda que si bien hay personas hablando de divorcio y han formado nuevos matrimonios, algunos no están excomulgados. No se han convertido en partícipes de la comunidad de fe y por consiguiente, no deben ser excluidos. "Estas personas" (o están excomulgadas) y no son tratadas como tales, porque siempre integran la comunidad eclesial. Estas situaciones "exigen un atento discernimiento y un acompañamiento con gran respeto, evitando todo lenguaje y actitud que las haga sentir discriminadas, y promoviendo su participación en la vida de la comunidad. Para la comunidad cristiana, hacerse cargo de ellos no implica un debilitamiento de su fe y de su testimonio acerca de la indisolubilidad matrimonial, es más, es ese cuidado expresa precisamente su caridad" (#243).

El amor cura viejas heridas y previene las nuevas
August 19-21
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, Saint Meinrad. Diocesan Spiritual Richness in the Liturgies of Father Eugene Hensell, presenter, $255 single, $425 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

August 26-28

August 27

September 4-24
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, Saint Meinrad. Saint Meinrad: Simplicity: To Have is Not to Be, Benedictine Father Vincent Tolin, presenter, $255 single, $425 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

IVPs
Dr. Edward and Nancy (Hancock) Cummins, members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 30. The couple was married on July 16, 1966, at the Old Cathedral in Vincennes, Ind. They have one child, Tiffany Cummins Weiss, and one grandchild.

John and Karen (Shoemaker) Kane, members of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 30. The couple was married on July 30, 1966, at St. Mark Church in Gary, Ind. They have three children, Kimberly Huff, Teresa Jones and John R. Kane. They also have six grandchildren.

Aug. 23 is deadline to register for National Council of Catholic Women gathering in Indy

The National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) will host its annual convention this year at the Downtown Marriott, 350 W. Maryland St., in Indianapolis, on Sept. 7-10. The deadline to register is Aug. 23.

NCCW acts through its members to support, educate and promote the spiritual, leadership and service. NCCW programs include Masses with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, speaker and human trafficking survivor Katariina Rosenblatt. Other opportunities during the conference include Masses with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, speaker and human trafficking survivor Katariina Rosenblatt. Other opportunities during the conference include Masses with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, speaker and human trafficking survivor Katariina Rosenblatt. Other opportunities during the conference include Masses with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, speaker and human trafficking survivor Katariina Rosenblatt. Other opportunities during the conference include Masses with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, speaker and human trafficking survivor Katariina Rosenblatt. Other opportunities during the conference include Masses with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, speaker and human trafficking survivor Katariina Rosenblatt.
Seymour parish welcomes former members of Brownstown faith community

By Sean Gallagher

The former Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown helped bring Linda Jackson back to the Church. She had grown up as a member of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour. But when she was in her 40s, she stopped practicing her faith—until her elderly father needed her help to get to church.

So Jackson, 62, took him to Mass at Our Lady of Providence, which at the time was near where he lived and had a Sunday Mass time that was convenient for him.

She soon discovered that the small Seymour Deenaty faith community—made up of 43 households—rejuvenated her faith.

“If they needed anything, they would call me, because I lived so close to it,” Jackson said. “It was a lot of responsibility, but I loved it.

“It strengthened my faith because I didn’t look at it as something I had to do. I looked at it as something I got to do. I looked forward to doing it and being there.”

When Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin announced in February that Our Lady of Providence Parish would be closed and merged with St. Ambrose on July 1, Jackson was angry.

“It was very difficult at first,” she said. “It was a hard journey. But through prayer, I found peace.

“You can’t lose anything unless you let it be lost. I’m not losing Our Lady of Providence. It will always be there in my heart and my memories.”

The closure of Our Lady of Providence Parish and its merger with St. Ambrose was part of the archdiocese’s Connected in the Spirit planning process, which began in November 2014 for the Bloomington, Connersville and Seymour deaneries.

Members of St. Ambrose Parish, led by its pastor, Father Daniel Staublin, are working to welcome the former members of Our Lady of Providence into their faith community.

For St. Ambrose parishioner Sylvia Rust, this is an important task—and a personal one. Living in the middle of Jackson County about halfway between the two churches, two of her six children were baptized at Our Lady of Providence.

“It’s very important to welcome those people properly,” Rust said. “They were deeply rooted in that church.

“Things happen in life that we might not understand. We need to rely on the providence of God and see that there’s something in store for us. We need to be welcoming.”

Members of St. Ambrose have made personal phone calls and visits to former members of Our Lady of Providence.

They have also invited them to become involved in various ministries at St. Ambrose.

A welcome dinner for former members of Our Lady of Providence Parish took place at St. Ambrose on July 9.

Reminders of Our Lady of Providence can also be found at St. Ambrose. The Book of the Gospels that was used at Our Lady of Providence Church is now used at Masses in the church in Seymour. And a votive candle stand from the former Brownstown parish that features an image of Our Lady of Providence is now being used at St. Ambrose Church.

“They’re opening their arms, their hearts, their prayers and their thoughts to us,” said Jackson. “Father Dan has done the same thing. They have really made us feel welcome.”

Father Staublin also noted that while Our Lady of Providence Parish has been closed, its church remains open for occasional liturgies, including a wedding that is scheduled to take place in October.

“The church hasn’t closed,” he said. “It’s changed. But it’s still there, and it will still be used as a worship site for funerals, weddings, baptisms and other kinds of special liturgies.”

He recognizes, though, that the closure of the parish is difficult for many of its former members.

One of them is Maureen Pesta, who had been a member of Our Lady of Providence for 45 years and was “deeply disappointed” by Archbishop Tobin’s decision.

“My faith is not affected by what people say or do,” Pesta said. “I cope with this unfortunate development in my usual ways—feeling gratitude for family and friends, creating artwork and praying for a bit of wisdom.”

Father Staublin and the members of St. Ambrose have also been praying for wisdom to seek the best way to move forward after the merger of Our Lady of Providence into St. Ambrose.

There is now one parish in Jackson County made up of members from diverse backgrounds. Father Staublin said.

“We’re all part of the Catholic community of Jackson County, whether we’re from the old Our Lady of Providence Parish, whether we’re Latinos, whether we live in Seymour or out in the county. We’re all still one faith family.”

(For more information on the Connected in the Spirit planning process, visit www.archindy.org/connected.)

—Father Daniel Staublin, pastor of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour

The former Our Lady of Providence Parish in Brownstown sit in the church on June 26 during the final Sunday Mass celebrated there. The parish was merged July 1 into St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour as part of the archdiocese’s Connected in the Spirit planning process. (Submitted photo)
is to never, ever put things off. If you have a task that has a deadline or is important, just get it done. Turning in a project or a paper the night before reflects your talent—because you waited until the last minute—is never worth it. You will do yourself a favor giving yourself enough time to work on homework and other projects, and your grades will definitely reflect your hard work."

Jacqueline Kennedy has seen the "rewards of that "high focus, hard work" approach" in her first three years at Father Thomas Scecin Memorial High School in Indianapolis.

"I want all freshmen to know that they need to take every opportunity to improve themselves, and that the effort in all that they do, and to always hang onto their faith, as it will help them personify the pope's words. "Even if all their hard work doesn't produce immediate effects, it will all pay off in the end, sometimes in the most unexpected ways."

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"The source and summit of the Catholic faith is the Catholic family. The priority of the 10 Commandments a priority—especially 'Keep holy the Sabbath.' "

Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis.

"I was taking a variety of courses—mostly math and science courses—and I checked the mail one day over the summer. I got a letter from the Denver Archbishop saying that I won an award as Secenia's recipient for the 2016 Catholic Academic Achievement Award for High School Students. I did not know that this award existed, so it came as a surprise to me and an effect of my hard work." Even as a senior, Jonathan Anderson of St. Francis High School in Indianapolis remembers one of the most difficult challenges that most incoming freshmen face. "It can be intimidating entering a new school with new people, especially at the beginning of the year, "

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"It's not too late for our families to celebrate this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy," says Mindy Ernstberger, principal of Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. "Sports, clubs, programs, student council—no, involved in any of these, and I do not regret it one bit," says Carson Hambrick, a senior at Father Michael Shaeve Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. "When I joined cross country, it was the best thing I could have done, "

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Connie Lockrem
only significant and lasting if they led us to encounter Jesus Christ.

“And it seems that many of us did have profound encounters with Jesus Christ during our days in Krakow. There was a heavy emphasis on the sacraments and on mercy, and the joy of the multitude gathered from all the nations wasn’t just a party or a concert or a meeting place. The Holy Father and the events of World Youth Day really helped direct our focus to Jesus and the Church.”

“A poignant reminder of what heaven is”

The closing Mass was “a poignant reminder of what heaven is,” according to Father Hollowell, who led 26 youths from Annunciation Parish in Brazil and St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greenscastle to World Youth Day.

Father Hollowell recalled some of the defining experiences for the group in the last 24 hours of World Youth Day—“walking in for five miles as the crowd continues to grow, spending a night in the field in a vigil of adoration and song, and then waking up and having Mass with Pope Francis”—with people and flags as far as he could see.

“It was a poignant reminder of what heaven is—people from every tribe and language gathered around the altar of the Lamb,” Father Hollowell noted. “Now my prayer is that all of our attendees accept Christ’s call, and the Church’s call, to be a saint.

The experiences of the closing weekend had a lasting impact on the young pilgrims from the archdiocese.

“It was amazing to see that kind of crowd—that many people around my age together. And still, during prayer and Mass, they all were so reverent,” said Matt Del Busto, a 19-year-old student at Butler University in Indianapolis.

“It was clear that they took their faith seriously,” said Scott Williams, coordinator of youth ministry for the archdiocese.

“Seeing the universal Church kneeling before the Lord was really profound,” said Fleszewski, 24, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “I loved the multi-lingual Divine Mercy Chaplet, just knowing that the Lord’s mercy is universal, and for everyone and open to everyone. All we have to do is humble enough to accept it. Once we choose joy and trust in the Lord, his mercy is just going to flow into our hearts in a beautiful way.”

“Aimprint on our hearts”

Scott Williams also recalled the beauty of that scene, even with all the hardships of walking for eight hours to arrive at the field where everyone converged for the Saturday night vigil and the Sunday morning Mass with Pope Francis.

“It was a beautiful reminder that in life there will be some suffering along the way, but we are all in it together,” said Williams, coordinator of youth ministry for the archdiocese.

“That Saturday evening, we knelt in silent adoration with young people covering each horizon. The magnitude of the gathering was awe-inspiring. It was not only the number of young people; it was clear to see that the magnitude of God came alive as volunteers passed out candles to each pilgrim. The light of our young Church shined bright for miles.”

Sunday’s Mass was just as powerful.

“Mass with our Holy Father left an imprint on our hearts,” Williams said. “As our group gathered around small radio transmitters to hear the interpretation of the homily, we were inspired by our Holy Father’s words of encouragement to be advocates for change in our culture. We were sent off with a mission—to integrate hope into our home parishes.

Katie Sahn recalled another “beautiful moment” from earlier in the week when Father Augenstein led a small group of young adults from the archdiocese on a walking tour of the life of St. John Paul II.

“We visited the house that he and his father lived in when they moved to Krakow,” said Sahn, associate director of the archdiocese’s Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry. “These were very formative years for St. John Paul since he was a young adult at the time and discovering his priesthood. It was also a time when he lost his dad.

“After we went into the house, we gathered in the front garden area and decided to pray a Divine Mercy Chaplet and offer it for the repose of the soul of Father Eric’s father who recently passed. As a group, we have so much love for Father Eric and his family. He has been such a gift to us that in our gratitude to him, all we could think of to do in return was to offer this prayer.”

“A life-changing journey of faith”

The 104 youths from the archdiocese also had a memorable moment early in the week when their pilgrimage led them to Rome, where Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin was visiting at the same time on official Vatican business. Archbishop Tobin celebrated Mass with the youths near the tomb of St. Peter in St. Peter’s Basilica.

“Having our chief shepherd with us to celebrate Mass in St. Peter’s had a profound impact on them,” said Father Meyer, who led 34 young people from All Saints Parish in Dearborn County on the pilgrimage.

He also won’t forget the example of one of the youths from All Saints as they walked miles to the open field on a day when the sun blazed, there was no shade, and temperatures rose to 90 degrees.

“We talked a lot about this being a pilgrimage and not a vacation, and how it will entail suffering and hardship,” Father Meyer recalled. “One of our youths has rheumatoid arthritis. It was so bad for her on the walk that she cried. But she wouldn’t complain, and she wouldn’t give up. She was a witness to the other youths. She was a witness to me.”

Combine such moments with the memories of the Mass with Pope Francis and the World Youth Day theme of “Blessed are the Merciful,” and the impact on the pilgrims from the archdiocese is life-changing, say two local leaders of the journey.

“We did quite a bit of reflecting on the way home,” Father Meyer said. “From their experiences and their exposure to the universal Church, they now know they’re not alone. Their faith is so much bigger than themselves, than their parish, than they ever imagined.”

Father Augenstein added, “The Polish people are proud to be Catholic—and that pride was contagious. I think many of us from the United States want to bring that Catholic pride and joy back to our own communities.”
Catholics urged not to give in to hatred after French priest’s death

WASHINGTON (CNS)—While Catholics mourn the senseless killing of a beloved French priest, Church leaders have emphasized that shock and grief over this attack cannot fuel hatred against Muslims or immigrants.

“Whoever makes this choice, profanes Christian martyrdom,” said Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Louis Sako of Baghdad, warning that responding with hatred or increased suspicion is “sacriligious blasphemy” of the priest’s death.

“These people betray and disrespect Father Jacques more than those who inspired their killers,” he told the Vatican Insider two days after the 85-year-old priest was killed during Mass in St.-Etienne-du-Rouvray. The attackers, who slit the priest’s throat, claimed allegiance to the Islamic State and the group later claimed responsibility for the priest’s murder.

Paris Cardinal Andre Vingt-Trois’ immediate reaction to the attack was to urge Catholics to “overcome hatred that comes in their heart,” and not to “enter the game of the blasphemy” of the Islamic State that “wants to set children of the same family in opposition to each other.”

Boston Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley echoed that sentiment nearly a week later, telling reporters at World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland, that it is a great danger to divide the population after such an attack. “We are talking here about fanatic terrorists who are persecuting Christians, and we have to be very clear: we are not painting everyone with the same brush,” he said.

Basilian Father Thomas Rosica, CEO of Canada’s Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation, likewise stressed in a July 27 Facebook post: “ISIS is not Islam. ISIS and Islamophobia is an aberration of religion.”

Father Rosica, who also is the English-language assistant to the Holy See Press Office, said: “We must distinguish between true religion and the twisted religion used to justify hatred and violence.” He also stressed the need “now more than ever” for Christian-Muslim dialogue.

Muslim and political leaders similarly called out the Islamic State for its ploy to provoke religious hostilities. France’s Prime Minister Manuel Valls said Islamic State militants aimed to “attack one religion with hatred a war of religion.”

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, the nation’s largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, condemned the attack, and also said the “apparent goal of the cowardly murderers is to create divisions between faiths, and to breed hostility between the followers of different faiths. We must not allow the terrorists to achieve their twisted goal.”

But messages not to give in to hate commonly appeared on social media linking Muslims and immigrants as a group to the act of terror in France and other recent terrorist attacks.

“Attacks like what we saw in Rouen have the potential to harm relations between Christians and Muslims so do our own responses,” said Jordan Denari Duffner, a research fellow at Georgetown University’s Bridge Initiative studying Islamophobia.

Duffner, in a July 28 e-mail to Catholic News Service, said she been “disappointed by a number of comments made by Catholics, even clergy, on social media who are reacting to this tragedy in a way that blames Muslims and their religion and that seems to sow more division than bonds.

“As Catholics, our response to Father Jacques’ murder in Normandy must be to open our arms wider to our Muslim brothers and sisters,” she added, adding that the priest, who was friends with the town’s imam, “would want that.

She also said Christians should “stop calling on Muslims to condemn these murders and attacks” because they have already been doing so. She also noted that the “vast majority of Muslims have no more to do with terrorist groups than Christians do.”
Celebrations, ministries highlight St. Lawrence Parish’s upcoming 175th anniversary

By Mike Perleberg

LAWRENCEBURG—The bricks that were fired on site and serve as the walls and foundations of St. Lawrence Church in Lawrenceburg withstood the deadly flood of 1937. Now 175 years since the parish was founded in 1842, when Mass was celebrated in a 60-foot by 40-foot house in the heart of the southeastern Indiana town of St. Lawrence, Ohio, the people are flooded with pride and anticipation of the parish’s anniversary celebration of their treasured—past, present and future.

“The challenge that I’m presenting to the parish is that we have received this legacy. What is the legacy that we are going to pass on to the next generations?” said Father Peter Gallagher, the parish’s pastor since 2010.

Father Gallagher and a small group of the parish’s leaders have planned several events and ministries to mark the start of the celebration of the parish’s 175th anniversary during the Holy Year of Mercy.

The ministries include Breaking Bread, a free community breakfast for those in need. It is held every Saturday morning in the basement of the church.

“Breaking Bread is a simple way that our parish is reaching out to help those in need. Some come to make breakfast because they need to serve, others come to enjoy breakfast because they need food, company or a glimmer of hope,” said Eileen Weisenbach Keller, one of the ministry organizers.

Father Gallagher and other dedicated parishioners are also taking the Good News to inmates at the local Dearborn County jail every week.

A new ministry called Homes from the Heart is partnering with Habitat for Humanity to build a home for a local family. Those members who can enjoy the fellowship of Mass and other events at the parish have been bringing updates from the parish, food, and companionship to sick and homebound parishioners.

“When you talk with older people, they like to reminisce about the school and how things happened then, how they walked to school or went home for lunch said parishioner Sherri Horn.

St. Lawrence Parish’s first 175th anniversary event exhibits the parish’s sense of humor. Parishioners will gather on Aug. 10 for the first activity—a grill-out and pitch-in dinner for the feast of St. Lawrence.

The parish’s name was a prayer for the faith who was punished by being roasted over an iron grill, but according to legend still gapped to his tumor “in one ear over,” and “I’m done on this side.”

The celebration continues on Sept. 24 with a tour of stained-glass windows at churches throughout Lawrenceburg. St. Lawrence Church’s 12 windows were donated in 1899 by parishioners and organizations including the Knights of St. Lawrence and St. Ann’s Ladies Sodality. They depict scenes ranging from Jesus Christ’s resurrection to the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary to 14-year-old St. Bernadette Soubirous in Lourdes, France.

“Sources such as articles from the newspaper and Ancestry.com have allowed us to research the stories of the families who also donated windows,” said Horn, who has been researching the stories of the families behind each window for a booklet to be published.

In October, the long-time parish will recognize the Sisters of St. Francis based in Oldenburg for their many years of service to St. Lawrence. Their efforts were instrumental in the founding of St. Lawrence School, which opened in 1927.

Details of a parish mission in November and a cultural food festival in March 2017 remain in the planning stages, with more to be shared in the coming weeks and months. St. Lawrence Parish’s 175th anniversary celebration will culminate in August of 2017 with a novena celebrated by Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin.

In addition to the events, the 175th anniversary of St. Lawrence Parish will be commemorated with a time capsule, special books, shirts, banners, prayer cards and more.

“To have accomplished 175 years of a parish and its history continuing is significant,” Father Gallagher said.

(Mike Perleberg is a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg.)

Facts about St. Lawrence Parish

• The parish was considered mission territory when families started holding Masses in a rented home in 1840. The parish was founded in 1842.

• There was one of the first parishes founded after the then-Diocese of Vincennes, which later became the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, was founded.

• The cornerstone of the first church was laid in 1842, on the west side of Walnut Street, near where U.S. 50 exists today. It was dedicated in 1847.

• The foundation work of the current St. Lawrence Church was started on April 9, 1866, at a lot on the east side of Walnut Street just across from the original church site. It was dedicated on June 2, 1867, with a large crowd of visitors traveling from Cincinnati and Indianapolis by steamboat or train.

• During the parish’s 150th anniversary in 1992, Father Carmen Petrone, the parish’s pastor at the time, successfully led a fundraising campaign to complete updates to the church.

• Father Petrone died suddenly in 1993, and the new street-level entrance and handicaped accessible elevator were named “The Carmen Connection” in his honor.

• St. Lawrence Parish is now exploring the addition of a community gathering space and other building improvements.

Catholics urged to fast, pray for peace; group plans novena for nation

MANCHESTER, N.H. (CNS)—Bishop Peter A. Libasci of Manchester, N.H., is urging Catholics to pray and fast for peace, and to support a group that plans a novena for the nation.

“Regardless of our differing religious beliefs, or differences in culture and background, the ongoing bloodshed in our country and abroad unites us in shock, horror and outrage. Let us turn to Almighty God with acts of atonement and reparation and ask him to grant to our world his healing peace.”

—Bishop Peter A. Libasci of Manchester, N.H.

The letter, addressed to New Hampshire Catholics, was published in The Criterion, the diocesan newspaper.

In his letter, Bishop Libasci also asked “religion leaders in all persuasions, and all people of good will” to join Catholics in solidarity “as a visible sign of hope in our time.”

“I am calling on all people to pray for an end to violence. Regardless of our differing religious beliefs, or differences in culture and background, the ongoing bloodshed in our country and abroad unites us in shock, horror and outrage. Let us turn to Almighty God with acts of atonement and reparation and ask him to grant to our world his healing peace.”

—Bishop Peter A. Libasci of Manchester, N.H.

The bishop said the day of fasting for adults should be one full meal and two smaller meals and should be considered as a time to make communal penance for the current civil unrest and to pray for conversion of hearts.

For the Aug. 14 Mass, he suggested that prayers be taken from the Roman Missal’s Masses for various needs and occasions—“In Time of War or Civil Disturbance.” He also suggested that Catholics make every effort to attend Mass on Aug. 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, which is not a holy day of obligation in the U.S. this year since it falls on a Monday.

He said churches throughout the state will have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and recitation of the rosary, which historically is prayed during times of war and unrest as a special appeal to Mary for peace. Some parishes will also have a procession with a picture, statue, banner or icon of Mary.

U.S. Cardinal Raymond L. Burke, patron of the Knights of Malta, has endorsed the “Novena for Our Nation” and a national rosary rally planned for the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on Oct. 7 in Washington, sponsored by a group of Catholic laity and priests supported by the Holy League and Men of Christ.

“There is no doubt that our beloved nation is in one of the worst crises which it has ever experienced, a profound moral crisis which generates division on all levels,” Cardinal Burke said in a statement. He is spiritual adviser to the Holy League.

“We have to find ourselves in a spiritual battle. Government actions and court rulings are in conflict with God’s law,” Father Richard Heilman, Holy League president, said in a statement. “Persecution of traditional religious belief and practice is unprecedented. In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we are called upon to help turn our country back toward God.”

“... There is no stronger weapon in this spiritual battle than the rosary.”

(For more information about the novena and rosary rally, go to novenaformation.com)
August is upon us, which means the start of a new school year. Our household is excited about the change in our typical amount of back-to-school anxiety, particularly since my children are changing schools this year and every little detail is new to us.

From start times and bus routes to new teachers and cafeteria presentations, both kids are nervous about the changes ahead.

"What if I have a hard time with my locker combination?"
"What if I don’t know the locker combination, out of nowhere, on the way to the grocery one afternoon."

"I forgot how the lunch line works!"
"What if I have a hard time with my locker combination?"

"Managing the role of caregiver. With the best way to deal with life’s challenges, the caregiver begins to focus on tasks have increased to the point where the caregiver now defines the role or continues to "just do it." The caregiver helps the person being cared for by learning new skills and improving on others. The caregiver also protects the loved one. In many ways, the caregiver has needed care.

I told my kids about the gentleman to whom I came across during the caregiver's broken time.

Recognizing the stages of caregiving and your new role

More and more people in the U.S. are becoming caregivers for family members. A 2015 report by the National Alliance for Caregiving and the American Public Policy Institute notes, "The estimated prevalence of caregiving for an adult is 16.6 percent, or 39.8 million Americans." Approximately 34 million people grow into this role, it is important for them to realize that there are stages in the caregiving process. The four stages of caregiving that some researchers have identified, although individual caregivers vary in terms of the issues that follow this exact sequence:

- Pre-caregiving: The caregiver sees himself or herself as a bystander, and tends to lend a hand with a limited amount of tasks, but doesn’t identify as a "caregiver." While the tasks that the caregiver performs have increased to the point where the caregiver realizes and says, "I am a caregiver." The caregiver no longer has the role of a friend, but the caregiver wants to know and understand a loved one's condition or illness, including the symptoms and prognosis. The caregiver begins to learn about resources for stress management and for informal support, such as family and friends. The caregiver begins to see change, but the caregiver begins to feel more stress. It is the time the caregiver most clearly sees the true value of caregiving, and the love and care the caregiver has for the person who has needed care.

- Moving on after death. The caregiver understands that the core of caregiving will end with the death of the loved one. In many ways, the caregiver begins to grieve the loss of both the "once healthy beloved" and the person needing care. The caregiver's emotional strain for both the family member and the caregiver, the family member's resistance to accepting help and the caregiver's own exhaustion, anxiety and depression.

- Getting help. The caregiver acknowledges the need for help. The emotional strain of the caregiver begins to become more apparent, and the caregiver incorporates prayer and the awareness of God into the caregiver's daily life. The caregiver begins to see the对接er's need for acceptance to accept help and includes the extended family, more friends and the parish community.

- Preparing for the end of caregiving. The caregiver understands that the role of caregiving will end with the death of the loved one. In many ways, the caregiver begins to grieve the loss of both the "once healthy beloved" and the person needing care. The caregiver's emotional strain for both the family member and the caregiver, the family member's resistance to accepting help and the caregiver's own exhaustion, anxiety and depression.

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Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time/
Msgr. Owen E. Campion

Sunday Readings
Sunday, August 7, 2016

• Wisdom 18:6-9
• Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19
• Luke 12:35-40

The Book of Wisdom is the source of the first reading for this weekend. The Hebrews’ flight from Egypt, where they had been enslaved, began at night. They saw God as their protector, assuring that their escape would succeed. Moses was God’s servant. Very much a part of the story, therefore, was the people’s recognition of God as their deliverer. Hebrew tradition never forgot God’s role in the Exodus. Thus, this reading from Wisdom proclaims the might and mercy of God.

This reference gives a logical basis for the Jewish belief in God, a purpose in all the wisdom literature in the Bible. The second reading for this weekend is from the Epistle to the Hebrews, written for Jewish converts to Christianity who faced persecution because they were friendly to Jews than it was to Christians. Christians faced persecution because they defied laws requiring worship of the Roman gods and goddesses, including the emperor.

This epistle encouraged and challenged Jewish converts to Christianity. The reading literally sings about the majesty and power of faith, continuing one of the themes in the previous reading. By acknowledging God and by receiving Jesus, the Son of God, believers affirmed the fact that God is in human history, just as he had been throughout the centuries. Abraham realized this. God gave him and his wife Sarah a child. Their prayers were answered. From this child, their son Isaac, descended the Hebrew people.

St. Luke’s Gospel provides the last reading. It is always important to realize that the Gospels were composed not during the Lord’s time on Earth, but in the decades after Jesus lived and preached. (Biblical scholars think that Luke’s Gospel relied heavily upon Mark’s, but used other sources as well. It may have been written around 80, a half century after Jesus’ time.)

The author of Luke knew very well the stresses facing Christians at the time when the Gospel was composed. He witnessed the living persecution, and certainly he experienced the struggle between the Gospel and the pagan culture.

So, the words of Jesus chosen by the Evangelist, and read during this weekend’s Masses, are encouraging. They are.

The Lord urged disciples to be prepared, but also reassured them that he will take care of them. Still, surviving on Earth is not the ultimate goal. Believers will be vindicated by Jesus in the heavenly kingdom. Jesus is the bridegroom. The wedding banquet is the celebration of love and life in heaven.

Reflection

Only two things are certain in life, so they say, namely death and taxes. People spend much time thinking about taxes, filing returns on time, paying what is due, watching withholding statements, and resisting political efforts to raise taxes. If they are healthy, few people think very much about death. We all know, even though death is the fate of every living being. It is too frightening to consider. It is easy to turn a blind eye to this reality.

These readings are blunt and utterly realistic. Death awaits us all. Aside from final death, we can only fear grosses the living death of hopelessness and despair.

God wills that we live with peace in our hearts now, and that we live forever. He gave us Moses and Abraham. He gave us Jesus, his only Son. Jesus will come again to take us to the eternal wedding banquet in heaven.

As the Gospel tells us, as the Hebrews longed for deliverance, we too must prepare ourselves to live with Jesus by being faithful and by loving God above all. God alone is our security and hope. He has proved it.

Where He Will . . .

By Jenifer Tolle

Where do you go when life is troubling?
To your Father’s arms where He will . . .
Lift you up and shower you with love and hold His arms to take your heavy load.
He will say – Let me help, child.

Where do you go when life is joyous?
To your Father’s arms where He will . . .
Laugh with you and be playful
And share in your stupendous happiness!
He will say – Life is good, child.

Where do you go when life is frightening?
To your Father’s arms where He will . . .
Hear your desperate cries
And wash your stenciled fears
He will say – You are safe, child.

Where do you go when there is a need?
To your Father’s arms where He will . . .
Remind you to pray for all
And watch the way you will come.
He will say – I hear you, child.

Where do you go when life on earth is finished?
To your Father’s arms where He will . . .
Meet your eyes with all knowledge
And you will kneel for your Crown of Glory!
He will say – Welcome home, child.

Daily Readings

Monday, August 8
St. Dominic, priest
Ezekiel 1:2-3, 24-28c
Psalm 148:1-2, 11-14
Matthew 17:22-27

Tuesday, August 9
St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, virgin and martyr
Ezekiel 2:8-9, 23-25
Psalm 119:14, 24, 72, 103, 111, 131
Matthew 18:1-3, 10, 12-14

Wednesday, August 10
St. Lawrence, deacon and martyr
2 Corinthians 9:6-10
Psalm 112:1-2, 5-9
John 12:24-26

Thursday, August 11
St. Clare, virgin
Ezekiel 12:1-12
Psalm 78:36-39, 61-62
Matthew 18:21-19:1

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Most parishes set up territorially, but OK to go to Mass elsewhere

We have always had a great fear of confession. Once I got in a confessional, I would be so scared that I would just say the first thing I could think of, in order to get it over with. As a result, I have never really made a good confession in my entire life.

I am now 70 years old, I have asked God to forgive me, but I wonder if that’s enough. Our parish is small; the priest knows everyone, and that is part of the problem. But don’t tell me to go to another church for confession, because that wouldn’t help; I would still just clam up.

Can Jesus forgive me for this? I try to do my best and have a good Catholic. (Iowa)

In the words of the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the sacrament of penance “requires each penitent to confess to a priest all mortal sins ... after a diligent examination of conscience.”

Why not visit outside of the sacrament of penance with a priest you know and explain your situation? You could help him to come to enough ease with the sacrament that you would then be able to make a good confession.

I would also encourage you to consider seeking out counseling from a mental health professional, hopefully one who understands the role of the Catholic faith in your life.

Such a person might help you overcome your deep-seated fears and anxieties enough for you to experience the mercy God you to show you all of us in the great sacrament of penance.

I have a question about the Church’s understanding of parish membership and its effect on a person’s life of faith.

Some dioceses seem to set the sacraments with rigid territorial boundaries and require you to join a certain parish based on your address. You aren’t permitted to join another one without the permission of the pastor of your territorial parish.

If he won’t grant permission—which does occur—and you don’t support/attend your mandated parish, you are a “man without a country” when it comes to permission notes to be godparents or sponsors, to get married or have a child baptized, attend a Catholic school, even to arrange a funeral, etc.

My family has been caught in this loop. There are so many things that are not a viable option. Any recommendations?

A Canonically, most parishes are set up territorially (Canon 518). There is no canonical obligation to register formally in a particular parish, although this is helpful to a parish administratively and to a parishioner seeking needed permissions. Without doing a single further thing, you automatically belong to the parish where you live.

You are, of course, free to go to Mass wherever you want, and flexibility on this is a growing phenomenon in our nation of ever-increasing mobility.

Your territorial pastor does have certain jurisdiction over faith and sacramental life. A Catholic marriage, for example, must take place in the territorial parish of one of the Catholic parishes or with that pastor’s permission (Canons 1110 and 1111.1).

Theoretically, whether you can join a different parish is at the discretion of the local bishop, but very few are strict about this. In general, bishops—and pastors—and are happy and grateful that someone wants to join any parish. So all you need to do is find a pastor willing to accept you. I can guarantee you that there will be plenty.

(Readers may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at ask padre Doyle@gmail.com and 406 Howewell St., Albury, N.Y. 12208)"

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith, experiences or prayers for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column.

Seasonal reflections are also appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, 1415 St. Mary’s Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46202 or e-mail to shofer@archindy.org.
Under motto ‘Unity and Charity,’ Catholic Daughters holds convention

PITTSBURGH (CNS)—Epitomizing their motto, “Unity and Charity,” 800 members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas gathered on July 20-24 in downtown Pittsburgh for their national convention.

The ballroom of the Wyndham Grand hotel located more like a political convention than a meeting of Catholic women, who rubbed elbows throughout the day designating delegations from different states, nations and territories.

With more than 1,300 courts, or chapters, in the United States, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Peru, Guam and the Virgin Islands, the Catholic Daughters has become an international organization.

After a priest in Kenya, Father Peter Wambulwa, watched an Eternal Word Television Network program about the group, he became its U.S. leaders, who traveled there. More than 100 Kenyan women now belong to the Catholic Daughters.

Father Wambulwa was in Pittsburgh to speak at the convention, and receive a sizable donation from the Catholic Daughters to aid the fledgling group. Again, charity is part of being a Catholic Daughter.

“I have to say this: To be a Catholic Daughter, you have to have a very generous heart,” said Peg Rafferty, a member of St. Bernadette Parish in Monroeville, who is first vice state regent for Pennsylvania and helped with preparations for the convention. “We’ve had people that hadn’t been there, then they say, ‘My goodness, they’re constantly giving,’ and I’m like, ‘Sorry, that’s what we do.’”

She said prospective members should “be willing to give time, talent or treasure.”

“If you don’t have the money, then give of your time. We eat as fast as we can, that’s the treasure,” Rafferty told the Pittsburgh Catholic, the diocesan newspaper.

“We do have fun. It’s not all work, work, work. We’re a fun group,” she said.

The biennial convention featured a keynote speech by Bishop Donald J. Kettler of St. Cloud, Minn.; business meetings; baccalaureate presentations on Catholic Daughters of the Americas’ national charities such as the Labour Society, Holy Cross Family Ministries, Smarter Choice for the Sea and the National Center on Sexual Exploitation.

Outgoing national sergeant Shirley Seyfried welcomed the newly elected national officers, who were installed at a Mass and ceremony on July 23 by Pittsburgh Bishop David A. Zubik at St. Paul Cathedral in the city’s Oakland neighborhood.

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas was founded in Utica, N.Y., in 1903 as a women’s auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus. They were called the National Order of Daughters of Isabella. The organization has about 68,000 members now.

Many of the current members started out as members of the Junior Catholic Daughters, girls ages 8-18 who learn charity, spirituality and teamwork.

“It’s just a hands-on group, getting the girls to work together for the good of the Church because we support the Church and the efforts of the Holy See,” Rafferty said. Joanne Tomassi, a past national regent from Florida, said, “The juniors are a great, great way to start the girls. It’s a really good opportunity for them to be in a group that is faith-based, that is common in their faith, and yet they have fun while they’re learning that. And they learn service as part of that.”

The Catholic Daughters is also hoping to start more campus courts at colleges.

“There are, guess匡ing about 14 campus courts, and they serve the purpose in colleges and universities of giving a Catholic context,” said Tom Panas, Catholic Daughters’ national public relations chairman. “It’s like a mini Catholic daughters. But it’s important, I think, because [for] young Catholic women, it can be difficult on campus. There’s a very secular push, and it gives them a haven, a way to be Catholic with other Catholic girls.”

Those attending the convention appeared to be a mixture of demographic groups pertaining to age, race and ethnicity, which bodes well for future growth.

“We try to include everyone,” said Libby Ramirez, a past national regent from Texas, “We try to include the young and the old because some of us are getting older and we need someone to follow behind us.”

“But we also need the diversity of the age because the very young can’t do it by themselves, and the very old can’t do it by themselves,” Tomassi added.
In June, Pope Francis told reporters that he had asked Cardinal Gerhard Muller, prefect of the doctrinal congregation, and Sister Carmen Sammut, president of the superiors’ group, to suggest scholars to include in the study group.

At least one of the members Pope Francis named to the commission—U.S. scholar Phyllis Zagano—has written extensively on the role of women deacons in the early Church, arguing that they were ordained ministers and that deacons in the New Testament were not ordained as male deacons. While his understanding was that the women described as deaconesses were serving as co-workers of the church leaders, “it would be useful for the Church to study deacons as today, “it would be useful for the Church to study deacons as they were understood in the early Church,” he said.

The pope set up the commission at the request of the Vatican’s doctrinal congregation, and Sister Carmen Sammut, president of the Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family and member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission.

The International Theological Commission, a body that advises the doctrinal congregation, included the question of women deacons in a study on the diaconate almost 20 years ago. While its report, issued in 2002, did not offer recommendations for the future, it concluded that biblical deaconesses were not the same as ordained male deacons.

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis has appointed six women and six men to a commission to study the issue of women deacons, particularly their ministry in the early Church.

In addition to the 12 members named on Aug. 2, the pope tapped Archbishop Luis Ladaria Ferrer, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and seven female deacons to be members of the commission.

The pope set up the commission at the request of the International Commission for Religious on Women’s religious orders around the world. Meeting the group in May, Pope Francis said that while his understanding was that the women described as deaconesses in the New Testament were not ordained as male deacons today, “it would be useful for the Church to clarify this question.”

The International Theological Commission, a body that advises the doctrinal congregation, included the women deacons in a study on the diaconate almost 20 years ago. While its report, issued in 2002, did not offer recommendations for the future, it concluded that biblical deaconesses were not the same as ordained male deacons.

In order to receive a plenary indulgence by visiting one of these pilgrimage churches, Catholics need to fulfill the following conditions:

• Pray for the pope’s intentions and the pope himself.
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What was in the news on August 5, 1966? Church opposition to prayer in public school, and clergy helping quell race violence

By Brandon A. Evans

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

Here are some of the items found in the August 5, 1966, issue of The Criterion:

• Stand up and speak out, U.S. religious tell school prayer amendment draws strong opposition
• What council said on Catholic action

Members of the archdiocese are invited to join Msgr. William F. Stumpf, vicar general, on an 11-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land coordinated by Tekton Ministries on Jan. 23 through Feb. 2, 2017.

The pilgrimage to this region, the birthplace of the Christian faith, includes Mass each day and stops at sites in many towns and cities noted in the Bible, including Bethlehem, Caesarea, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Cana, Jericho, Jerusalem and others.

Msgr. Stumpf traveled to the Holy Land in 2010, and is thrilled to be going back. "The Scriptures just become more alive after visiting the land where Christ lived and died, he says. "You never read the Scriptures the same way after visiting that land." While a pilgrimage is enjoyable, he notes, it is different than a vacation.

"On a pilgrimage, we step out of our daily lives to renew ourselves in our faith, to deepen our relationship to God," Msgr. Stumpf says. "To do that, we go away to a place that is holy and draw us even more into the experience.

Pilgrims always go on a pilgrimage feeling that there’s something that God is going to reveal or teach me and help me to see through the experiences. You’re going on a pilgrimage with an open heart, and a sense of, ‘I’m going into this openly, Lord. Grace me with whatever you need me to bring about in my life.’ And God is always provisioned—he’ll make that happen.’"

Msgr. Stumpf stresses the importance of accompanying him on the pilgrimage will depart from Indianapolis on Jan. 23.

After arriving in Tel Aviv, Israel, on Jan. 24, the group will drive along the Mediterranean coast to Haifa to spend the night.

In Haifa, pilgrims will visit a Carmelite monastery and the cave where the prophet Elijah lived. After Mass there, the group will travel to Cana, where Christ performed his first miracle.

Couple will have the opportunity to renew their wedding vows before traveling on to Nazareth.

This old city, located on the banks of the Sea of Galilee, will serve as home base for two days and three nights. While there, pilgrims will visit numerous sites of biblical note in the lush region of Galilee.

The pilgrimage will visit the town of Nazareth, where Mass will be celebrated at the Church of the Annunciation, honoring the site where “the Word was made flesh” (Jn 1:14).

In this church, pilgrims will see the underground room where Mary said “yes” to the Archangel Gabriel when she was asked to consent to become the mother of God’s Son.

After seeing other sites in Nazareth, the pilgrims will travel Mt. Tabor, where Christ revealed his divine nature to Peter, James and John in the Transfiguration.

On Jan. 27, pilgrims will experience a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee—also known as Lake Tiberias—the body of water which figured so greatly in the lives of the Apostles both before and after becoming Christ’s disciples. Pilgrims will visit a church along the shores of this inland sea commemorating Christ’s call there to Peter “to feed my sheep,” a founding moment for the papacy.

Pilgrims will also visit towns along the shores of the Sea of Galilee—Capernaum, the center of Christ’s ministry for three years and the place where he called seven of his disciples; Tabgha, where Christ multiplied loaves and fish; and the Mount of Beatitudes, where he proclaimed the Sermon on the Mount.

Pilgrims will visit the Mount of Beatitudes again on Jan. 28 for Mass, then travel around the Sea of Galilee to Kursi, where Christ drove out a legion of demons from a man, releasing them into a herd of swine.

As they make their way toward Jerusalem, which will serve as home base for the remainder of the pilgrimage, pilgrims will have the opportunity to renew their baptismal vows at the site of Christ’s baptism in the Jordan River.

The first day in Jerusalem will begin with a trip up the Mount of Olives, taking in the spectacular view of Old City Jerusalem.

On the Mount of Olives, pilgrims will visit the Church of Pater Noster, marking the traditional site where Christ taught his disciples the “Our Father.”

Then, they will walk down the Palm Sunday Road for Mass in the Church of All Nations at the Garden of Gethsemane. The day will end with a trip to Ein Kerem, birthplace of St. John the Baptist and where Mary visited Elizabeth and proclaimed the “Magnificat” (Lk 1:46-55).

The pilgrimage continues honoring Mary the next day with a trip to the Church of St. Anne, believed to be the birthplace of the Blessed Mother. Also on this day the pilgrims will walk the powerful “Via Dolorosa,” the Way of the Cross, through the stone streets winding through Old City Jerusalem, ending at Mt. Calvary in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Mass will be celebrated.

The day also includes visits to several sites within the Old City, including the “Wailing Wall,” which is all that remains of the ancient Jewish Temple that was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D., the Pool of Siloam, and the Upper Room—the traditional site of the Last Supper. The day ends again honoring Mary with the praying of the rosary in the Church of the Dormition.

On Jan. 31, pilgrims will visit Bethlehem and celebrate Mass in a cave at the Shepherd’s Field. In the city of Bethlehem, pilgrims will visit numerous sites, including the Church of the Nativity, built by the order of Emperor Constantine in the fourth century of the traditional site of Christ’s birth. They will also gain a sense of the struggles for the Palestinian Christians who live within the Israeli-built wall around the town.

On the last full day of the pilgrimage, two famed sites of the Bible will be visited. The day will begin with Mass in Bethany, home of Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead. Pilgrims will then drive to Jericho, an ancient city known to have existed as far back as 1200 B.C. It was there that God, through the leadership of Joshua, brought down the city walls with blasts of trumpets as described in the Old Testament (Jos 6). Christ himself endured his 40 days of temptation looking down upon Jericho from what is now called the Mount of Temptation, a site the pilgrims will visit.

The day will end with a trip to Qumran, where pilgrims will explore the caves where the famed Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. The final day, Feb. 2, will be spent in transit back to the United States.

The cost per person is $3,320 for double occupancy, or $4,045 for single occupancy, plus airline taxes and fuel surcharge. The cost includes roundtrip economy class airfare from Indianapolis to Tel Aviv, accommodations for nine nights, hotel and airport transfers, breakfast and dinner daily, sightseeing with a licensed Christian guide, entrance fees, land transportation, gratuities and portage of one piece of luggage at airports and hotels.

Lunch, drinks, hotel extras and other personal expenses are not included.

“If you ever talk to anyone who’s been to the Holy Land,” says Msgr. Stumpf, “they always say the same thing: ‘I’m so glad I made that pilgrimage. It was such a powerful experience for me.’

‘It does affect you profoundly. Don’t let yourself miss out, because it is a wonderful opportunity.’

(For more information or to make a reservation contact Tekton Ministries at 317-574-4191, 866-905-3787 or pilgrimage@tektonministries.org)†

†

Pilgrims joining Msgr. William F. Stumpf on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land will see the room where Mary said “yes” to the Archangel Gabriel, a site now enshrined in the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth.

On the Mount of Olives, pilgrims will visit the Church of Pater Noster, marking the traditional site where Christ taught his disciples the “Our Father,” and then walk down the Palm Sunday Road for Mass in the Church of All Nations at the Garden of Gethsemane. The day will end with a trip to Ein Kerem, birthplace of St. John the Baptist and where Mary visited Elizabeth and proclaimed the “Magnificat” (Lk 1:46-55).

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On the last full day of the pilgrimage, two famed sites of the Bible will be visited. The day will begin with Mass in Bethany, home of Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead. Pilgrims will then drive to Jericho, an ancient city known to have existed as far back as 1200 B.C. It was there that God, through the leadership of Joshua, brought down the city walls with blasts of trumpets as described in the Old Testament (Jos 6). Christ himself endured his 40 days of temptation looking down upon Jericho from what is now called the Mount of Temptation, a site the pilgrims will visit.

The day will end with a trip to Qumran, where pilgrims will explore the caves where the famed Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. The final day, Feb. 2, will be spent in transit back to the United States.

The cost per person is $3,320 for double occupancy, or $4,045 for single occupancy, plus airline taxes and fuel surcharge. The cost includes roundtrip economy class airfare from Indianapolis to Tel Aviv, accommodations for nine nights, hotel and airport transfers, breakfast and dinner daily, sightseeing with a licensed Christian guide, entrance fees, land transportation, gratuities and portage of one piece of luggage at airports and hotels.

Lunch, drinks, hotel extras and other personal expenses are not included.

“If you ever talk to anyone who’s been to the Holy Land,” says Msgr. Stumpf, “they always say the same thing: ‘I’m so glad I made that pilgrimage. It was such a powerful experience for me.’

‘It does affect you profoundly. Don’t let yourself miss out, because it is a wonderful opportunity.’

(For more information or to make a reservation contact Tekton Ministries at 317-574-4191, 866-905-3787 or pilgrimage@tektonministries.org)†

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