Religious organizations play major role in caring for migrants, refugees

UNITED NATIONS (CNS)—Religious organizations and local faith communities are longtime key providers of effective, compassionate aid to migrants and refugees, speakers said at a U.N. program on Sept. 19.

The work of these groups is an example to the international community, they said, and should be the basis of new partnerships among nations, international organizations and faith-based organizations.

“As time immemorial, people from a wide range of faith traditions have given special attention to the needs of migrants and refugees,” said the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin. The response by Catholic institutions to the needs of large groups of people on the move is guided by the rich body of Catholic doctrine and tradition developed over two millennia, he said.

Cardinal Parolin delivered the keynote address at a forum that considered “Responsibility and Solution Sharing: The Role of Religious Organizations in Responding to Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants.”

The side event was held in conjunction with the U.N. Summit on Large Movements of Migrants and Refugees and sponsored by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations, with the International Catholic Migration Commission and Caritas Internationalis.

“While migration has always been with us, it is becoming an unprecedented phenomenon in our days,” the cardinal said. Many large movements of people are involuntary, and caused by conflict, violence, persecution, discrimination, poverty and environmental degradation, he said.

Migrants and refugees face the dangers of trafficking, starvation and abuse on their journey, but a bad situation gets worse, he said. “Upon arriving at their destination, they face the dangers of separation, imprisonment and abuse.”

“Their suffering is also a test of our compassion and our commitment to human dignity,” he said.

Parolin

The response by Catholic institutions to the needs of large groups of people on the move is guided by the rich body of Catholic doctrine and tradition developed over two millennia, he said.

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First, the good news

As they prepared for their trip to Italy to try to get a special blessing of their marriage from Pope Francis, Scott and Elisabeth Williams kept telling each other that it would be fine if their plan didn’t turn out as they hoped.

After all, their wedding at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on May 28 had been a magical day—a day, Elisabeth says, when “everything came together so beautifully, and I was getting to marry the love of my life.” And no matter what happened with the pope, the couple would still have a week together in Rome.

Yet deep in their hearts, Scott and Elisabeth both thought it would be tremendous to experience a long-standing, wedding-related tradition at the Vatican.

It’s a tradition that holds that if a couple arrives for a Wednesday audience with the pope within six months of their wedding and wears the clothes they were married in (or similar attire), they will be allowed to sit in a reserved section where they will receive a “blessing of newlyweds” from the pope.

There was also one other tradition that Scott hoped to experience—a tradition that would let him leave their potential meeting with Pope Francis with the pontiff’s zucchetto, the white skullcap that a pope wears.

And so in late July, Scott and Elisabeth began one of those amazing adventures of life, love and faith that they hope helps to define their marriage.

First, the good news

Their adventure to Rome began with the extra challenge of trafficking, starvation and abuse on their journey, but a bad situation gets worse, he said. “Upon arriving at their destination, they face the dangers of separation, imprisonment and abuse.”

“Their suffering is also a test of our compassion and our commitment to human dignity,” he said.

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First, the good news

Their adventure to Rome began with the extra challenge

Stay connected to each other and to Jesus, Archbishop Tobin encourages educators

By John Shaughnessy

“The archbishop then shared the story of his own answer to that question—a story that unfolded on “a steamy afternoon at the end of July” as he entered the guest house in Vatican City where Pope Francis lives.

“I didn’t even have time to put on my zucchetto, the white skullcap that a pope wears. He invited me into a sort of television room where there were four or five chairs, and he said: ‘Pick whichever one you want. I’ll take whatever is left.’ And we talked, and shared. And I saw a very human side to him. He said twice, ‘I really don’t know why I was elected. I suspect the Italians couldn’t agree on a candidate.’ Then Pope Francis added, ‘But because I wasn’t looking for this, I accepted it as God’s will. And I believe I’ll have what I need.’ ”

Archbishop Tobin encouraged educators to keep their faith, even in the face of criticism.

“What would you name as the greatest moment of your summer?”

“Stay connected to each other and to Jesus,” Archbishop Tobin told the gathering at the Assumption School in Indianapolis.

“It’s a story of grace, perspective and humility—a story that Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin shared during a special Mass on Sept. 7 when several people from across the archdiocese were honored for their service in Catholic education, youth ministry and catechesis.

As he began his homily two days after Labor Day, Archbishop Tobin looked at the people in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis and asked, “What would you name as the greatest moment of your summer?”
Young Adult Servant of the Year Award to be presented on Sept. 25

Two individuals and a deaconary staff were honored during a special archdiocesan Mass on Sept. 7 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. During the Mass for priests, youth ministers, young adult ministers, Catholic school leaders and parish administrators of religious education, the 2016 Youth Ministry Servant Leader of the Year Award was presented to Maria “Cuquis” Romero of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis. The 2016 Saint Theodora Excellence in Catechesis Award was presented to the Terre Haute Deanery during a special Mass on Sept. 7 in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Pictured in the back row are Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin; Bauman; his wife, Julie; and Gina Fleming, superintendent of Catholic schools for the archdiocese. In the front row are Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and Scott Williams, coordinator of youth ministry for the archdiocese, during a special Mass on Sept. 7 in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Maria “Cuquis” Romero received the 2016 Youth Ministry Servant Leader of the Year Award for her volunteer work as the youth minister of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis. Romero received the honor from Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and Scott Williams, coordinator of youth ministry for the archdiocese, during a special Mass on Sept. 7 in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

The卓越 in Catechesis Award was presented to the Terre Haute Deanery during a special Mass on Sept. 7 in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Pictured in the back row are Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin; Bauman; his wife, Julie; and Gina Fleming, superintendent of Catholic schools for the archdiocese. In the front row are the Bauman’s three children, Annie, left, Betsey and Lucy.

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40 Days for Life campaign starts on Sept. 28, more participants needed

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40 Days for Life is an international campaign that seeks to end abortion through peaceful prayer vigils at abortion centers, and to raise community awareness of the consequences of abortion.

The campaign runs twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall. During the 40-day campaigns, individuals silently pray during one-hour time slots in front of abortion centers around the world.

This year, the fall campaign runs from Sept. 28-Nov. 6, with Indianapolis and Bloomington participating within the archdiocese.

Cities participating near archdiocesan boundaries include Evansville, Ind. (Evansville Diocese); Louisville, Ky. (Archdiocese of Louisville) and Cincinnati, Ohio (Archdiocese of Cincinnati).

All campaigns are in need of volunteers to sign up to pray. For more information or to sign up for a prayer time slot, log onto 40daysforlife.com and click on “Locations.”

For those without computer access, see each location below for a number to call for more information or to sign up.

Bloomington

The Bloomington 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 2314 Auburn Ave. Contact: Monica Siefker, 812-330-1535.

The Bloomington 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 3195. Contact: Kelly Leszczewski, 937-903-3233.

Evansville

The Evansville 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 2314 Auburn Ave. Contact: Cathe Francis, 812-474-3195.

Cincinnati

The Cincinnati 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 2314 Auburn Ave.

There will be several events held at this location during the fall campaign:

• Kickoff rally, 7 p.m. on Sept. 27, featuring Mercy Father Anthony Stephens, director of field education and pastoral internship year at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Cincinnati.
• United for Life rally, 7 p.m. on Oct. 6. This hour-long program will feature local leaders, members of the 40 Days for Life headquarters team, and speakers from the United for Life tour partners.
• Midpoint rally, 7 p.m. on Oct. 21, featuring guest speaker Brad Mattes, president and CEO of Life Issues Institute in Cincinnati.
• Friday evening group prayer vigil, 7:8 p.m. on Oct. 28 and Nov. 4.

• Rosary Rally to end the campaign, 3-4 p.m. on Nov. 6, with guest speaker and prayer leader Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Binzer of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Contact: Mary Clark, 513-791-4039.

Louisville

The Louisville 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the EMW Women’s Surgical Center at 138 W. Market St.

A kickoff rally will be held there at 3 p.m. on Sept. 24, featuring the personal testimony from a mother who chose life for her twins.

Contact: Laura and Adam Girijalba, 502-475-5403.

Information:

• 800-799-7266, or at lifechains.net.

The archdiocesan annual Respect Life Sunday Mass will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 10:30 a.m. on Oct. 2. The Archbishops O’Meara Respect Life Award and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award will be presented during this celebration.

The Archbishops O’Meara Respect Life Award honors an adult or married couple who demonstrates leadership in promoting the dignity and sanctity of human life in the parish community and in the archdiocese.

The Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award honors a high school student who demonstrates leadership in promoting the dignity and sanctity of human life in the parish community, school community and in the archdiocese.

Life Chain events will also take place throughout central and southern Indiana on Oct. 2.

Life Chain events are peaceful and prayerful public witnesses of individuals standing for 60-90 minutes praying for our nation and for an end to abortion. It is a visual statement of solidarity by the Christian community that churches support the sanctity of human life from the moment of conception until natural death. Learn more about the Life Chain Network and other event locations at LifeChain.net.

The following Life Chain events in central and southern Indiana are listed in alphabetical order by location:

• Bloomington Area Life Chain, 2-3:30 p.m., neighborhood parking and signs available at 16 locations along E. Third Street from College Mall Road west to College Avenue, then south on College Avenue to Planned Parenthood. Information: Carole Canfield, 812-372-5114.

• Columbus Area Life Chain, 2-3 p.m., intersection of Second Street and Washington Street. Information: Donna Dumas, 812-372-0774.

• Greensburg Area Life Chain, 2:30-3:30 p.m., intersection of Washington Street and College Avenue. Information: Patty Hensley, 812-614-4663.

• Central Indiana (Indianapolis) Life Chain, 2-3:30 p.m., Meridian Street from North Street to 38th Street. Parking is available at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., or Knights of Columbus Mater Dei Council 437, 1305 N. Delaware St. The Catholic Center parking lot will be closed during the Life Chain event. Central Indiana Life Chain T-shirts will be available for $8 for adult S-XL, and youth-sized medium, $10 for adult XXL-XXXL, and $15 for adult sweatshirts.

• Milan Area Life Chain, 3-4 p.m., intersection of Highway 101 and Highway 350. Information: Ed King, 812-654-6502.

• Terre Haute Area Life Chain, 2-3:30 p.m., intersection of 3rd Street and Wabash Avenue. Information: Tom McBroom, 812-841-0000.

Contact: Laura and Adam Girijalba, 502-475-5403.

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Like Pope Francis, nurture the light of faith in your lives

Most of us are familiar with the adage, “Actions speak louder than words.” In the case of Pope Francis, we believe both his words and ministry share heartfelt life lessons that people of faith would do well to emulate. Whether it’s during his weekly general audience, visiting a babies’ ward in a hospital or delivering a homily during an early morning Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae at his residence, our universal shepherd’s words and actions always come from the heart. The words of wisdom shared and the insights offered are evidence, we believe, that the Holy Spirit is very much a part of his pontificate. And his actions demonstrate that too. Mercy, of course, has been at the forefront of his prayers and actions during this Holy Year of Mercy. Just last week, according to Catholic News Service (CNS), Pope Francis donned a green hospital gown over his white cassock and entered the neonatal unit of a Rome hospital, peering in at a shelter for former drug addicts, and works of mercy during the Holy Year. (CNS photos/Domenico Romano, handout)

Pope Francis holds a baby as he visits the neonatal unit at San Giovanni Hospital in Rome on Sept. 16. The visit was part of the pope’s series of Friday works of mercy during the Holy Year. (CNS photos/Domenico Romano, handout)

Pope Francis also used strong language to warn about those who plot evil against their neighbors instead of responding to the trust placed in them. Using someone’s trust to trick them or to fool them into doing something they shouldn’t is the “little piece of mafia that we all have in reach,” the pope said. “Profiting from another’s trust in order to do evil is monstrous!”

For some, the Holy Year of Mercy is an opportunity to “try to care for the poor and the needy,” as the pope said in his homily during the Mass in his chapel. However, the pope reminded the people that mercy is not only about doing good, but also about being present to the needs of others. “Mercy is not just giving, but also being present to the needs of others,” he said. “It is not just doing good, but also being present to the needs of others.”

Dear readers,

Like Pope Francis, nurture the light of faith in your lives. At a shelter for women rescued from human trafficking and prostitution, Pope Francis encouraged them to nurture the light of faith in their lives. In his homily during daily Mass on Sept. 19 in his chapel, Pope Francis reminded Massgoers they should not envy the rich and powerful and conspire against their neighbor. He instead encouraged them to nurture the light of faith in their lives.

Reacting to someone in need by thinking, “I’ll take care of it tomorrow” is a classic, recurring form of hiding the light of faith given to each Christian at baptism, he added. Pope Francis also used strong language to warn about those who plot evil against their neighbors instead of responding to the trust placed in them. Using someone’s trust to trick them or to fool them into doing something they shouldn’t is the “little piece of mafia that we all have in reach,” the pope said. “Profiting from another’s trust in order to do evil is monstrous!”

The culture of death continues to cultivate its evil agenda by destroying the virtue of purity, and by deceptively lying to women, scaring them both emotionally and physically for the rest of their lives. Many of these women will carry the heavy burden of guilt, and will lose hope in God’s mercy, a far greater than the sin of abortion. As followers of Christ and his Church, we cannot turn a blind eye and pretend like we have no responsibility in ending the evil of abortion. Too many lives have been destroyed, and souls are being lost. If we do not stand up and voice the need for the unborn child, then who will? The Catholic Church firmly teaches that “human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2254). The culture of abortion continues to attack the protection of the human rights of all people, and the dignity of each person from the moment of conception.

In his homily during the Mass in his chapel, Pope Francis held a baby as he visited the neonatal unit of San Giovanni Hospital in Rome on Sept. 16. The visit was part of the pope’s series of Friday works of mercy during the Holy Year. (CNS photos/Domenico Romano, handout)

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor

Series on 20th-century Church is informative, reader notes

When I receive The Criterion, the first thing I read is the Perspectives column about the 20th-century Church written by Editor Emeritus John F. Fink. These articles are a quick read and informative. The whole series on Church history would make an excellent book—set up just as it is in The Criterion—to be added to any Catholic person’s library.

Sylvia Jurgonski
Terre Haute

Living by example is the best lesson we can share with our children

At the top of each new chapter page of my Latin I book in high school was a different motto. Chapter one told us “experientia docet”—“Experience is the best teacher.” The letter-writer’s response in the Sept. 9 issue of The Criterion to Father Tad Pacolczyk’s column on “Talking to kids about porn and human sexuality” was a refreshing new perspective that living by example in every aspect of our lives is the best teacher for our children. At 68 years of age, I reflect on what examples I set for my own child. I also thought about that old adage, “You’re never too old to learn.” Thanks to the letter writer and the editors of The Criterion for sharing!

Alice Price
Indianapolis

Letters Policies

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be submitted, preferably, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect. The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastorial sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters should be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with letters should e-mail to criterion@archindy.org.
Respecting human life: the way to peace

In the weeks leading up to Election Day 2016, I am offering some reflections on the issues that faithful citizens must consider as we exercise our duty to vote at the local, state and federal levels.

As I noted last week, no candidate for political office perfectly represents the positions of the Catholic Church. No political party has written a platform that is in complete agreement with our perspective on morality and social justice. And yet, we are strongly urged to get involved, to exercise our God-given right (and responsibility) to select leaders and affirm policies that are morally responsible and promote the common good.

Two of the Church’s teachings are especially important to consider as we prepare to vote on Election Day. The first is our absolute belief in the sanctity of all human life. The second is our opposition to all forms of unjust aggression against individuals and groups regardless of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, economic, political or social status.

The sanctity of all human life. This includes in a special way the most vulnerable members of the human family—children, the elderly and infirm, and all those who have no means of defending themselves, especially the unborn. Candidates and party platforms that support abortion, euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, capital punishment and any other legal or state-supported assault against the dignity of human life must be held accountable for their anti-life positions.

Church teaching also urges us to avoid war and work for peace—here at home and throughout the world. As the U.S. bishops write in “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” “Nations should protect the dignity of the human person and the right to life by finding more effective ways to prevent conflicts, to resolve them by peaceful means, and to promote reconstruction and reconciliation in the wake of conflicts” (#66).

The Church acknowledges that “nations have a right and obligation to defend human life and the common good against terrorism, aggression, and similar threats, such as the targeting of persons for religious belief or cause of their religion;” but “the use of torture must be rejected as fundamentally incompatible with defending the human person and ultimately counterproductive in the effort to combat terrorism” (#68).

The common denominator here is the respect for all human life. This includes the defense of every life at its beginning and end, regardless of condition, including the dignity of the human person and the right to life. And yet, we are strongly urged to get involved, to exercise our God-given right (and responsibility) to select leaders and affirm policies that are morally responsible and promote the common good.

No political party has written a platform that is in complete agreement with our perspective on morality and social justice. And yet, we are strongly urged to get involved, to exercise our God-given right (and responsibility) to select leaders and affirm policies that are morally responsible and promote the common good.

On Election Day, let’s make choices that respect human life and promote peace. And let’s pray for an end to all violence in our hearts, our homes and throughout the world.

El respeto hacia la vida humana es el camino hacia la paz

Durante las semanas que preceden al día de las elecciones de 2016 estoy ofreciendo algunas reflexiones sobre el tema de cómo los candidatos y partidos políticos se alinean con la perspectiva católica sobre asuntos morales. 

No hay partido político que redacte un programa que esté totalmente coherente con nuestra perspectiva sobre asuntos morales y social. 

Y sin embargo, nos exhorta con vehemencia a que participemos, a que ejerceremos el derecho (y la responsabilidad) otorgada por Dios de elegir líderes y de respaldar políticas que sean moralmente responsables y que promuevan el bien común.

Hay dos enseñanzas de la Iglesia especialmente importantes que debemos tomar en cuenta al momento en que nos preparamos para el día de las elecciones. La primera es nuestra convicción absoluta de la santidad de todos los seres humanos. La segunda es nuestra oposición a todas las formas de agresión injusta contra personas y grupos, sin importar su raza, color, religión, orientación sexual o situación económica, política o social.

Toda la vida es sagrada. Esto abarca de un modo muy especial a los integrantes más vulnerables de nuestra familia humana: los niños, los ancianos y los enfermos, y todos aquellos que no tienen forma de defenderse, especialmente los que no están en condiciones de protegerse. 

Las enseñanzas de la Iglesia también nos exhortan a evitar la guerra y a trabajar en función de la paz, tanto aquí en nuestro hogar como en todo el mundo. Tal como lo expresan los obispos de EE. UU. en Formando la conciencia para ser ciudadanos fieles: “las naciones deben proteger la dignidad de la persona humana y el derecho a la vida buscando maneras más eficaces de prevenir conflictos, de resolverse mediante medios pacíficos y de promover la reconstrucción y reconciliación tras el estallido de los conflictos” (#68).

La Iglesia reconoce que “las naciones tienen el derecho y la obligación de defender la vida humana y el bien común contra el terrorismo, la agresión y amenazas similares, como la persecución de personas por su religión;” pero que “el lusorio de la tortura debe ser rechazado como fundamentalmente incompatible con la dignidad de la persona humana y en última instancia como contraproducente en la lucha contra el terrorismo” (#68).

El denominador común aquí es un respeto para el ser humano y el modo que en nuestro proceso de toma de decisiones políticas, es importante plantearnos la siguiente pregunta: ¿Qué candidatos y partidos políticos verdaderamente defienden la vida y la paz en su significado más profundo y extenso? En esta evaluación también debemos incluir otros aspectos: ¿Cuál es la posición de los candidatos y los partidos políticos en cuanto a su preocupación por los pobres, las familias, los inmigrantes y los refugiados, por el equilibrio del comercio y la cooperación internacional? 

El camino hacia la paz es sencillo, pero no es fácil. En el día de las elecciones, en el momento en que votamos, es importante recordar que somos ciudadanos y que tenemos la responsabilidad de elegir líderes que promuevan el bien común y que defiendan la vida humana y la paz en su significado más profundo y extenso.

El camino hacia la paz es sencillo, pero no es fácil. En el día de las elecciones, en el momento en que votamos, es importante recordar que somos ciudadanos y que tenemos la responsabilidad de elegir líderes que promuevan el bien común y que defiendan la vida humana y la paz en su significado más profundo y extenso.

Para los que votamos, es importante recordar que somos responsables de elegir líderes que promuevan el bien común y que defiendan la vida humana y la paz en su significado más profundo y extenso.

Translated by: Daniela Guapina
Events Calendar

September 26
Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 50th St., Indianapolis. St. Anthony Drive, in Mt. St. Francis, St. Francis Center for Spirituality.

September 27
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Abbey Caskets open house, Abbey caskets and urns on display, staff open house, Abbey caskets information: 317-926-7359, rectory@saintmichaelindy.org.

September 28
Maria University, Evans Center Health Science Building, Lecture Hall 1, 3021 Southport Rd., Indianapolis. “Conflict and Displacement: Catholic Religious Communities’ Emergency Response in Iraq and Turkey,” Erin Attwell presents, first of three talks presenting, first of three talks presenting, first of three talks presenting, first of three talks presenting, first of three talks.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House to offer healing Mass on Oct. 3

A Feast of St. Francis of Assisi Mass of Healing will be offered at Our Lady Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, at 7 p.m. on Oct. 3.

The Mass will include prayers for healing of the world, at home, in one’s own life or for family and friends, for those who are sick, and for those who have died. The Mass will also include readings from St. Francis of Assisi, model of mercy and prayer.

Father Jeffery Gower will conduct the Mass with the assistance of Deacon Joe Safi. Father Gower will offer a homily and lead the celebration of the Eucharist.

Father Gower will also lead a prayer for those who have lost loved ones. The prayer will be based on a prayer that Father Gower developed for his own father, who passed away in 2005.

The prayer will be offered in English and Spanish.

Mount St. Francis to host ‘Mercy and Prayer: A Weekend with Francis of Assisi’ on Oct. 7-9

“Mercy and Prayer: A Weekend with Francis of Assisi” will be held at Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Drive, in Mt. St. Francis, on Oct. 7-9.

The retreat will be led by Conventual Franciscan Brother Bob Baxter. The retreat will present on “Jesus: Face of the Father’s Mercy,” “Mercy: The Heartbeat of the Gospel,” “Mercy: Source of Hope and Justice” and the Lord’s Prayer—all through the eyes of St. Francis of Assisi, model of mercy and prayer.

The retreat includes lodging for two nights, three meals on Saturday and two meals on Sunday, and lodging on Sunday. Check in is 7 p.m. on Friday. The cost is $170 for a single room, $150 for a shared double room, or $95 for commuters.

Registration is required. For more information, call 317-545-7681.

Papal Missionary of Mercy to lead parish mission on Oct. 9-11 in Indianapolis

Father James Sickho, one of 1,000 papal missionaries of mercy appointed by Pope Francis in 2015 to serve worldwide during the Church’s Holy Year of Mercy, will preach a parish mission at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 5602 N. College Ave., Indianapolis, from 7-8 p.m. on Oct. 9-11.

The mission is titled “Sainted Marys with Jesus!”

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

Our Dame of Providence offer special Mass for Feast of St. Mother Theodore Guerin on Oct. 3

A Mass honoring the Feast Day of St. Mother Theodore Guerin will be celebrated at Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1043 W. 11 Southport Rd., in Indianapolis, from 7:30-8:30 p.m. on Oct. 3.

Saint Mother Theodore Guerin founded the Sisters of Providence in 1840. This year marks the 10th anniversary of her canonization by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15, 2006. Her feast day is Oct. 3.

Pilgrimages and tours may be arranged for those who wish to visit the grounds or pray at Saint Mother Theodore’s shrine by contacting the Providence Spirituality and Conference Center at 812-325-2945.

September 28
Maryland University, Evans Center Health Science Building, Lecture Hall 1, 3021 Southport Rd., Indianapolis. “Conflict and Displacement: Catholic Religious Communities’ Emergency Response in Iraq and Turkey,” Erin Attwell presents, first of three talks presenting, first of three talks presenting, first of three talks presenting, first of three talks presenting, first of three talks.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House to offer healing Mass on Oct. 3

A Feast of St. Francis of Assisi Mass of Healing will be offered at Our Lady Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, at 7 p.m. on Oct. 3.

The Mass will include prayers for healing of the world, at home, in one’s own life or for family and friends, for those who are sick, and for those who have died. The Mass will also include readings from St. Francis of Assisi, model of mercy and prayer.

Father Jeffery Gower will conduct the Mass with the assistance of Deacon Joe Safi. Father Gower will offer a homily and lead the celebration of the Eucharist.

Father Gower will also lead a prayer for those who have lost loved ones. The prayer will be based on a prayer that Father Gower developed for his own father, who passed away in 2005.

The prayer will be offered in English and Spanish.

Mount St. Francis to host ‘Mercy and Prayer: A Weekend with Francis of Assisi’ on Oct. 7-9

“Mercy and Prayer: A Weekend with Francis of Assisi” will be held at Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Drive, in Mt. St. Francis, on Oct. 7-9.

The retreat will be led by Conventual Franciscan Brother Bob Baxter. The retreat will present on “Jesus: Face of the Father’s Mercy,” “Mercy: The Heartbeat of the Gospel,” “Mercy: Source of Hope and Justice” and the Lord’s Prayer—all through the eyes of St. Francis of Assisi, model of mercy and prayer.

The retreat includes lodging for two nights, three meals on Saturday and two meals on Sunday, and lodging on Sunday. Check in is 7 p.m. on Friday. The cost is $170 for a single room, $150 for a shared double room, or $95 for commuters.

Registration is required. For more information, call 317-545-7681.

Papal Missionary of Mercy to lead parish mission on Oct. 9-11 in Indianapolis

Father James Sickho, one of 1,000 papal missionaries of mercy appointed by Pope Francis in 2015 to serve worldwide during the Church’s Holy Year of Mercy, will preach a parish mission at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 5602 N. College Ave., Indianapolis, from 7-8 p.m. on Oct. 9-11.

The mission is titled “Sainted Marys with Jesus!”

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

Our Dame of Providence offer special Mass for Feast of St. Mother Theodore Guerin on Oct. 3

A Mass honoring the Feast Day of St. Mother Theodore Guerin will be celebrated at Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1043 W. 11 Southport Rd., in Indianapolis, from 7:30-8:30 p.m. on Oct. 3.

Saint Mother Theodore Guerin founded the Sisters of Providence in 1840. This year marks the 10th anniversary of her canonization by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15, 2006. Her feast day is Oct. 3.

Pilgrimages and tours may be arranged for those who wish to visit the grounds or pray at Saint Mother Theodore’s shrine by contacting the Providence Spirituality and Conference Center at 812-325-2945.

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Pope, Christian leaders pray for peace, victims of war

ASSISI, Italy (CNS)—Jesus’ cry of thirst on the cross is heard today in the cries of innocent victims of war in the world, Pope Francis said.

“Christians are called to contemplate Christ in ‘the voice of the suffering, the hidden cry of the innocent ones to whom the light of this world is denied,’” the pope said on Sept. 20 at a prayer service in Assisi with other Christian leaders, including Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury, and leaders of other religious communities.

Far too often, the victims of war are reduced to simply victims or enemies, Pope Francis said. “Yet when they respond to their suffering with the same ease with which television channels are changed,” the pope said in his meditation.

The pope arrived in the morning by helicopter and was whisked away to the Sacred Convent near the Basilica of St. Francis. After arriving in a blue Volkswagen, the pope raised his hands to bless Patriarch Bartholomew and, together, the two greeted the other religious leaders present. Archbishop Welby later said his office to be self-serving, but rather to ‘trendy’ priests or bishops. The people spellbinders and, allow me to say, bare their soul to a love that gives life so that, from us, his faithful compassion may flow forth for all who let their hearts be moved and loved,” the pope said Christians are called to be in Christ our Savior,” he said.

Christians are challenged to hear the cry of the poor, suffering and the innocent victims of war.

Those who “live under the threat of bombs” and are forced to flee from their homes are “the wounded and patched members of his body,” he said. “They thirst.”

However, all too often they are offered only “the bitter vinegar of rejection.”

Pope Francis called on Christians to be “trees of life that absorb the contamination of indifference and restore the pure air of love to the world.”

From the side of Christ on the cross, he said, faithfulness compassion may flow forth for all who thirst today,” the pope said.

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Today’s bishops need to be good Samaritans who let their hearts be moved and compelled to help every individual God calls “all who thirst come: all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free” (Rv 21:17).

Pope Francis called on Christians to be good Samaritans who let their hearts be moved and compelled to help every individual God calls “all who thirst come: all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free.”

The pope urged the bishops to never give up on people despite the confusion in the world. Often, he said, it’s more convenient to just shut it out or “invent bitter speeches in order to justify the laziness that immobilizes us in the static solace of vain comfort."

Initiating or preparing people for God and his “abyss of love” is key, he said. "Today too much fruit is being demanded from trees that have not been cultivated enough,” he said. Everything needs proper and ongoing preparation, and neglecting that has also resulted in today’s crisis in education and values, “emotional illiteracy,” and a lack of discrimination, vocations and peacemaking.

Pope Francis exchanges greetings with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople as he arrives for an interfaith peace gathering at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy, on Sept. 20. The peace gathering marks the 30th anniversary of the first peace encounter in Assisi in 1986. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)
NEWLYWEDS  
continued from page 1

of arriving separately, from different continents.

As the coordinator of youth ministry for the archdiocese, Scott helped lead 104 youths on a 12-day pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland, in late July—a journey of faith that climaxd with more than 1.6 million young people from around the globe taking part in a Mass celebrated by Pope Francis on July 31.

When World Youth Day ended, Scott began the trip from Krakow to Rome to meet Elisabeth, who was flying from Indianapolis with her wedding gown and his tuxedo. Fortunately, they caught up on each part of her 12-hour journey made a place for her to hang the clothes.

On Tuesday, Aug. 2, Scott and Elisabeth were reunited and heading toward the Pontifical North American College in Rome for an orientation meeting about the papal audience. There, the couple was told some good news and some potential bad news.

First, the good news.

“We were told the Wednesday audience was being moved inside because it was so hot,” Scott recalls. “I thought I would be sitting in my tux for hours on end, sweating bullets, while Elisabeth was going to be on the ground.”

Yet there was also the reminder that the Wednesday audience could be cancelled at the last minute, and even if it was held, there was no guarantee that every newlywed couple would meet Pope Francis and to.

To help increase their odds, Scott and Elisabeth awakened very early that Wednesday morning for the audience that began at 10 a.m.

“Rome is the only place in the world where you can walk around in wedding attire at five in the morning and no one thinks it’s weird,” Scott says. “We arrived at 5:30, which if you’ve been to Rome at 5:30, which if you’ve been to Rome at that time, it’s still dark. But there are some crazier people in the world than us, and they were already in line in front of us. I thought, ‘We’re not going to meet the pope now?’”

Hope begins to soar as the pope ... 

As they waited in line for the security gates to open, the crowd—which often numbers tens of thousands for a general papal audience—began to swell. When they made it through the metal detectors, they ran toward the reserved section for newlyweds, joining about 60 couples from around the world.

“It was so cool to see these different people from different countries and what they wore—and how beautifully each bride looked,” Elisabeth recalls. “In the crowd, people were waving flags. It was really neat.”

During the audience, a reading about the Beatitudes was shared in seven languages. Then Pope Francis talked about his experience during the World Youth Day.

“At the end of the audience, the pope gave a papal blessing to everyone there,” Scott says. “Then he extended to you immediate family and anyone you know is who is sick. He also greeted about 100 people in wheelchairs who there were for physical blessings.”

Then Pope Francis made his way to the reserved section for newlyweds, where Scott and Elisabeth believed they had positioned themselves well to meet the pope.

Standing together, second in line at one end of the newlywed group, they watched as Pope Francis turned away from their end and started greeting couples at the opposite end. As much as they wanted to meet the pope, they tried to put it all in perspective.

“I really was content with whatever would happen because God has blessed us so much in our lives,” Elisabeth says. “We were already in the pope’s presence, and God was here.”

They noticed how Pope Francis took time with the first few couples at the opposite end of the line. They also smiled as they saw each couple radiate with joy in the pope’s presence. And their hopes began to soar as they watched Pope Francis greeting and shaking hands with every couple in line, getting closed close and to them.

Suddenly, Pope Francis was in front of them smiling. And just as suddenly, the plan they had rehearsed in the hope of meeting the pope went up in smoke.

“I felt like such a dope”

“We had a whole plan worked out,” Scott says with a smile.

Elisabeth and Scott know that the native language of Pope Francis is Spanish. So Elisabeth, who is fluent in Spanish, was prepared to speak in that language to the pope. But she became flustered when Pope Francis finished his conversation with the previous couple by asking them—in English—to pray for him.

“Now, I’m thinking Pope Francis is in English mode, so I speak English, which totally confuses Scott,” Elisabeth says with a laugh.

When Elisabeth’s switch of languages, Scott was ready to tell Pope Francis that he was delivering “a message from our Archbishop of Indianapolis to the Holy Father.”

“When I ended up saying was, ‘Hello, Archbishop, Pope Francis says, Scott says, ‘I put my head down. I felt like such a dope’”

Elisabeth didn’t mind her husband’s blunder: “Yeah, but because you did that, I spent more time holding his hand, which was nice.”

Scott adds, “On the bright side, he is the bishop of Rome, so I wasn’t completely wrong. I ended up saying, ‘Hi, Pope Francis.’”

He also ended up with the pope’s zucchetto, the white skullcap the pontiff wears—which is a story in itself.

“I’m really going to do this!!”

At a previous World Youth Day in either Madrid or Rio de Janeiro—Scott isn’t certain—he witnessed a moment where the pope exchanged the zucchetto he was wearing for a zucchetto that someone in the crowd offered him.

Intrigued, Scott returned home from that World Youth Day, did some research and learned there is a long-standing tradition about the cap exchange, at least when it happens in Rome.

It starts with going to the pope’s tailor in Rome, a shop named Gammarelli, and buying a white papal zucchetto that matches the same size as the one the current pope wears.

“It’s a standing tradition that if you have the same size of zucchetto as the pope, he will trade you,” Scott says. “We went to the pope’s personal tailor, and we got a zucchetto. Scott said to me, I said in Spanish, ‘Do you want to exchange your zucchetto?’ I’m not sure I could say it, but he saw it in my hand.”

Scott was the only one among the newlyweds to make the exchange offer to Pope Francis.

“There was this moment of silence. ‘Is he really going to do this?’” Scott recalls.

“He tried on our zucchetto that we purchased, looked at his guides, and he gave him our zucchetto. Now we have the pope’s zucchetto.”

Scott beams and says, “When he traded, it was like scoring a touchdown at the Super Bowl.”

‘A wonderful adventure’

So Scott and Elisabeth have a zucchetto that Pope Francis wore. They also have a special blessing from him for their marriage, some terrific photos with the pope, and an abundance of other great memories and moments from their week together in Rome.

“It was once-in-a-lifetime experience,” Elisabeth says. “It was a wonderful adventure to start our marriage.”

Their trip to Italy also gave them one more gift that they hope carries through their marriage for the future.

“You can feel Pope Francis’ joy radiating from people,” Elisabeth says. “They look happy and they’re so excited for that. The more we’re in relationship with God, the more that will bring us fulfillment and peace. We want to mimic the relationships that Pope Francis has with God, and be in that kind of relationship, too. The pope lives out the Gospel. And we dearly want to live out the Gospel. That’s what Scott and I want to do in our marriage.”

(For information on papal audiences, visit the website, www.episcopalians.org or www.episcopalians.org/papalaudiences.)
High stakes for religious freedom seen in U.S. election

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (CNS)—With every passing U.S. election cycle, First Amendment and religious freedom- minded voters and watchtowers might be tempted to think, “This is the election that will matter most in our lifetimes.”

By now, recent years have brought a wave of religious liberty court battles and the federal contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization mandate striking on an array of operations by Church entities—along with a U.S. Supreme Court vacancy to be filled—2016 might be a seminal electoral year.

“I have been doing this 25 years, and I have to say I call the same level of concern,” said Mark Harrington, executive director of the Ohio-based Created Equal, a nonsectarian pro-life organization, who spoke with Catholic News Service (CNS) about the upcoming religious liberties landscape in light of the presidential campaign.

Harrington pointed out he was part of an audit in 2009 by the Internal Revenue Service following comments he made about one of the presidential candidates. He said he speaks as a private individual when he asserts that he worries about the pace at which federal government has been chipping away at freedom of speech and religious liberties under the current administration.

To keep saying this is the most important election in my lifetime and this one really is, because of the Supreme Court. But, Harrington said, referring the vacancy left this year by the death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, the leading conservative voice on the court.

“What is decided [this year], these two issues—religious liberty and abortion—hang in the balance, and if the Supreme Court would tilt to the left, we would see an entire generation pass before we get back to a place where the courts protect life and religious liberty,” he said.

“It is clear First Amendment liberties are being threatened.”

Without endorsing candidates or parties, Harrington said he predicts that if elected president, Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton would continue with President Barack Obama’s domestic policies of curtailing religious liberties. Harrington was quoted in Republican nominee Donald Trump’s recent statements, saying that Trump, if elected, would consider doing away with the Affordable Care Act. Harrington said, adding that “the Supreme Court may not be as receptive to this as it was under Chief Justice John Roberts.”

“Any time you have a Supreme Court justice who in a major opinion has written about the importance of the First Amendment and the Supreme Court, it was a major point of discussion in the ongoing election campaign. It has been taken off the table as a wedge issue, and you don’t see the Republicans running on that,” created Equal’s Harrington said, adding that “the Christian community is not pressuring hard to make it illegal as much as it had in the past after opposition has died off a bit.”

The U.S. bishops have noted that religious liberty is much more than freedom of worship, asking aloud: Can the Church do the good works our faith calls us to do, without having to compromise that very same faith?

“Without religious liberty properly understood, all Americans suffer, deprived of the essential contribution in education, health care, feeding the hungry, civil rights, and social services that religious Americans make every day, both here at home and overseas,” the bishops wrote in a 2012 statement.
God specializes in second chances, NCCW speaker says

By Victoria Arthur
Special to The Criterion

At an early age, she suffered sexual abuse. As a senior in high school, she lost her mother without warning to a heart attack. She spiraled into drug and alcohol addiction, battled an eating disorder, “broke every commandment” and contemplated suicide.

But on Sept. 9, the mother of four electrified an audience of hundreds in downtown Indianapolis with her personal witness to God’s abounding mercy.

Judy Hehr, a Wisconsin resident and radio host, wanted those gathered for the National Council of Catholic Women’s (NCCW) convention to know that God specializes in second chances.

“God has given me a new heart, and he has turned my mess into a message,” said Hehr, who now travels the country as a motivational speaker.

A cradle Catholic, Hehr says her family never missed a Sunday Mass or holy day of obligation when she was growing up. But she felt there was something missing.

“I had religion . . . I had rules . . . I had tons of regulations. But I did not have a relationship with Jesus,” she said during an impassioned talk at the downtown Indianapolis Marriott.

It was “difficult to see God” as she endured abuse by those she should have been able to trust, Hehr said. “As I continued to grow, I was starving to be known and to know, starving to love and be loved.”

With the sudden death of their mother, Hehr and all five of her siblings left the Church.

“My mother was that one who knew me and loved me,” she recalled. “I didn’t know about Mary yet.”

As she reeled from her devastating loss, Hehr said that she found herself in increasingly risky situations, spiraling into a “pit” that seemed impossible to escape.

“I didn’t understand that dignity was something that God gave me, and no one could take away from me,” she said. “I didn’t understand that I was loved and chosen and forgiven. When my mom died, nobody spoke Romans 8:28 into my life and said, ‘Girlfriend! God works all things out for good for the sake of those who love him.’

Her years of self-pity and self-condemnation led to a self-imposed prison, she said. But over the course of years, after successful treatment for her addictions and a gradual reawakening of her faith, Hehr said she realized that God had a plan for her life all along. Even her rocky relationship with her husband was transformed by faith through the Catholic Retrouvaille program for troubled marriages.

“I can now look back and see the hand of God in every facet of my life,” she said. “I consider many of my hardships to be the greatest gifts he ever gave me.”

Her faith further blossomed with a new understanding that “Mary leads us to Jesus,” and with her discovery of the Divine Mercy message and devotion.

Hehr’s talk dovetailed with the NCCW convention theme of “Catholic Women: Instruments of Mercy.” That theme was inspired by the Holy Year of Mercy called by Pope Francis that began on Dec. 8, 2015—the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary—and will conclude on Nov. 20.

Other speakers included Sue Ellersperm, former lieutenant governor of Indiana, who currently serves as president of Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis; author Katarina Rosenblatt, Ph.D., a survivor of human trafficking; Cuban-born author and CatholicMom.com blogger Maria Morera Markham, chief executive officer of Catholic Charities USA; author Katariina Johnson; and Dominican Sister Donna Markham, chief executive officer of Catholic Charities USA. Workshops on spirituality, leadership and service provided attendees with information and resources to take to their home parishes and dioceses.

Now in its 96th year, the NCCW has a long history of orchestrating events that have lasting impact. At the 1960 convention in Las Vegas, a relatively unknown Mother Teresa was a guest speaker during her first trip to the United States. Her message had such a powerful effect that following her speech, donations began pouring in to her mission in India.

St. Teresa of Calcutta was canonized on Sept. 4.

In concluding her remarks on Sept. 9, Hehr proclaimed that NCCW members are “changing the world, one person at a time.”

“Give without measure . . . you give without cost,” she said. “Keep doing what you’re doing!”

As the ballroom erupted into applause, a longtime NCCW member could hardly contain her enthusiasm.

“That’s why we come to these events,” said Jane Schiszik, a member of Holy Rosary Parish in Medford, Wis. “It can be a life-changing experience.”

Schiszik was among 60 people at the convention representing the NCCW’s Province of Milwaukee, including four priests who serve as spiritual advisors. She estimates that she has attended at least 18 conventions, and says she always brings back valuable insights and ideas for action.

“You have to open your mind and heart,” she said. “There is so much need out there—from the parish level to internationally, and I am going home with a lot of food for thought and ideas for projects that we can do.”

She praised the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, this year’s host, for a well-planned and executed convention.

“It was so educational,” she said. “And very motivational and spiritual.”

(Victoria Arthur is a freelance writer for The Criterion)
Permanent diaconate has encouraged service to others

By David Gibson

At the beginning of the day, I like to have some idea on how I want to get done during the waking hours ahead: where I need to be and when; what I must accomplish to retain some semblance of order in my existence; and, of course, what I can safely put off until tomorrow.

It’s not that I require a rigidly controlled schedule. But in modest ways, I aspire to establish some mastery over my days. I want my days shaped by a few set objectives.

“One who serves cannot hoard his free time; he has to give up the idea of being the master of his day,” the pope said. Those who serve, he continued, must be “ready to deal with the unexpected” and remain “ever available” to their “brothers and sisters.”

If the pope directed these comments on service particularly to deacons, he also had the rest of the Church in mind. This is not surprising. The deacon’s role is closely connected to the Apostles and their successors, the bishops who have been appointed as their successors.

The permanent diaconate was restored in the Church soon after the 1962-1965 Second Vatican Council. Now, more than 50 years after the council, many Catholics are accustomed to seeing deacons, many of whom work in parishes. Permanent deacons fulfill roles in Sunday worship, such as baptismal action and in certain cases as parish administrators.

The permanent diaconate made headlines on May 12, though not the diaconate of men. During a meeting in Rome of superiors of women’s religious orders around the Church, Pope Francis was at pains to distinguish the issue of women in the diaconate from that of men. He suggested they had roles assisting other women during baptism by immersion, for example, and in other contexts.

He asked: “What were these deaconesses? Were they ordained or not?”

“I cannot predict where a study of women in the diaconate might lead. Pope Francis did not speak of ordaining women deacons.”

Notably, the International THEOCOMmission, an advisory body for the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, concluded in a 2002 study that the ministry of deaconesses in the early Church “was not perceived as simply the feminine equivalent of the masculine diaconate.”

Also notable was that during his session with the religious-order superiors, Pope Francis was at pains to distinguish the roles of women in the diaconate from other issues related to women’s leadership roles and the necessity of including women in Church decision-making.

“Women see things with an originality different from that of men, and this is enriching in consultation and decision-making,” said Pope Francis. “We must move forward with making women’s voices heard in ‘decision-making processes,’” he stressed.

Pope Francis remarked that a woman fulfills roles in the Church as a “right”—her “right as a baptized person with the charisms and gifts that the Spirit has given.”

The impact of a study of women in the diaconate undoubtedly will be felt throughout the Church. Why is that? Because whenever the diaconate is scrutinized, the roles of service of every member of the body of Christ tend to receive renewed attention.

The International THEOCOMmission concluded its 2002 study of the diaconate by noting that “ever since Vatican II the active presence” of a permanent diaconate “has aroused ... a more vivid awareness of the value of service for Christian life.”

As Pope Francis said to the religious-order superiors, “Your work, my work and the work of all of us is one of service.”

(Daniel S. Mulhall served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.) †
Perspectives

20th-century Church: The Holy Spirit guides Vatican II
(Ninth in a series of columns)

Last week, I wrote about the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962. I’ll continue that story this week.

After calling the council and laying our hopes on the table, Pope John XXIII was content to let it proceed with some constant intervention. He was convinced that the Holy Spirit would guide the participants.

He was undoubtedly right, although when the first two bishops had been appointed by Pope Pius XII, it turned out that the “progressives” who had come to be called the “intransigents.”

At times, it was a battle between the members of Pope Pius’s curia and the other bishops. The curia was dominated by intransigents, who immediately tried to guide the council. Pope John XXIII would draft documents for the council to consider by selecting the commissions’ chairman. They failed in that when Cardinal Achille Ratti ( Cardinals of France) suggested that the bishops be allowed to elect the chairman. Those elected represented the bishops from various parts of the world.

The bishops soon discovered that most of the time the agendas set by the council did not say what they wanted to say, and had to be completely rewritten. The first document to be rejected was on divine revelation. It dealt with fundamental theological ideas, its presentation was not thought to be better than the other that the bishops intended to find new expressions for the Church’s teachings instead of changing the form of already formulated centuries in the past.

When the first session ended on Dec. 8, 1962, documents had been approved. But it was clear in what direction the council was headed. Pope John XXIII told the bishops that he was sure the Holy Spirit would continue to guide the council.

Unfortunately, John XXIII did not live to see the results. He died on June 3, 1963. He was succeeded by Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini, whose election was widely expected, and who took the name of Paul VI.

Pope Paul was determined not only to continue John XXIII’s council, but to move it even more open. He wanted to be more ready to serve as advisers, and some women were invited as “listeners.” And he laid down the law that anyone prepared to be a member of this curia, telling them to cooperate with the bishops instead of being obstaclisticians.

The first two documents to be approved, in 1963, were the “Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy” and the “Decree on the Media of Social Communications.”

The first completely reformed the liturgy, giving special emphasis to saying Mass in the vernacular language. The second stressed the need for active participation by the entire congregation. Of all the council documents, this one probably had the most effect on the most Catholics.

The “Decree on the Media of Social Communications” encouraged Catholics to use the media, and was particularly strong in its espousal of freedom of the press and opposition to any forms of censorship.

Next week: the third session.

Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Erin Jeffries
‘Take it to the Queen: Embracing the Mother of Mercy’

At a recent evening of reflection with our SPRED (Special Religious Development) catechists, we explored our relationship with the Blessed Mother.

The responses were very moving, as folks recalled daily rosaries with their dying parents and processes and Mary crowning, and fervent petitioning.

I remembered words spoken to me when I first made a consecration to Our Lady when I was 13. “You might forget about her over the years, but she will never forget you.” We can’t do anything to help the fact that this relationship, this mother, is someone who needs to be shared with others. One catechist, who is a master’s degree in pastoral ministry, in particular of two participants in her group whose mothers have passed away, and who still experienced great sadness at that loss.

It is very easy to put the Blessed Mother on a pedestal—beautiful, perfect and safely untouch. What struck me first was the word “notions,” which tells you what the writer thinks of religion. In his mind, apparently, God is just one fleeting idea on our radar, to be replaced at any time with a better one. There is almost like the ongoing “conflict” noted by some between scientific and religious beliefs. Laypeople tend to ignore or not recognize the original creation behind such things as to see it in a factual event. They can understand and describe the workings of things like chlorophyll and human reproduction, but the original creation behind such things seems to be lost on them.

Each side of the question often feels rather sorry for the other. The writer who thinks religious faith is just a notion seems to think believers are pathetic, if not naive or a bit dimwitted. And those who believe in the Creator think the other aren’t too bright because they don’t seem able to appreciate the bountiful divine graces poured out on them daily. Each faction thinks the other is not seeing the big picture.

Still, it’s consider what we think are the facts. Believers see God’s hand behind everything in life: the way nature works, including human nature, among other things. They believe God has given us free will to make choices, which also allows for failure or bad results. It’s up to us. It’s a little more literal than one fleeting idea on our radar, to be replaced at any time with a better one.

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For the Journey/Effie Caldarola
What does God want me to do?

Should I or shouldn’t I? What does God want me to do? What should I do? Sometimes these are the questions you wished you had a direct line to God.

Lately, we’ve learned a lot about the life of St. Teresa of Calcutta. The founder of the Missionaries of Charity was destined to be both a Nobel Peace Prize laureate and a canonized saint.

But she didn’t know that when she boarded a train from Calcutta to Darjeeling many years ago. As a Sister of Loreto, she taught in a girls’ school. But on the train, she experienced her famous “call within a call,” an inner vision and movement so powerful that she could not turn her life.

She felt Christ asking her to work exclusively with the poorest of the poor. She left the order of the Loreto. A whole world would watch the result.

Now, most of us are not destined to be saints in the calling of Saint Teresa. But all of us want to do God’s will. We pray for that all the time. But how do we feel certainty? So often, I muddle along feeling like a giant question mark.

Sometimes, I think we do experience certainty, without the voices of the visions, of course. Occasionally, we have a strong interior sense of rightness.

I made a list of the other day things in my life that seemed so absolutely right that I had to do the things that I thought of several.

It’s a good exercise, and I encourage you to do it. It may help you think more times you heard and answered a call. And it’s good to ask yourself, What sense of decision/decision promised that strong consent?

When I was a young teacher, I sent for a pamphlet called “Invest Yourself.” This was long before the Internet with its ready access to information. My pamphlet was promoted by all the famous women: Sister Agnes Kennedy, founder of the Special Olympics, and in it was listed, in very fine print, just about every single thing.

Halfway through the pamphlet, I arrived at something called the Jesus Volunteer Corps. I was compelled to apply and never really looked back, even when JVC asked me to go to a remote village in Alaska to teach.

It was a life-changing decision, but one that involved so little “should or shouldn’t.”

Much later, I wanted to take a writing course from a woman who was the first female chairman of the Associated Press. I just knew it was for me. But after I applied, word came back—sorry, class is full.

I am not usually a pushy person, but I wrote a letter to the instructor telling her about all the exception and let me into her class. I got in—to that one and several more.

There were a few other “have to” moments on my list, some personal and some professional, like deciding to pursue a master’s degree. What does that mean? What does it entail? What do I need to do to get that Master’s degree? What does God want me to do?

I write this after spending a few days with a friend who has been suffering with cancer. She is strong in its espousal of freedom of the press and opposition to any forms of censorship.

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There were a few other “have to” moments on my list, some personal and some professional, like deciding to pursue a master’s degree. What does that mean? What does it entail? What do I need to do to get that Master’s degree? What does God want me to do?
The Book of Amos is the source of this weekend's first reading. The book itself states that it was written during the reign of King Uzziah, or between 783 and 742 BC. Amos wrote during a time when there were two Hebrew kingdoms, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. They were at peace and most people were prosperous, but many were not so fortunate. Tranquility and ease had dulled the people's collective mind and their sense of needing God. Along with this, many were apparently lax in their observances. Amos rebuked them, condemning their sluggishness in religion and morally careless living. More than a denunciation of utter vice, Amos blasted their lukewarmness and their living as if nothing good, noble and of God mattered. Along with all the prophets, Amos saw in such circumstances clear signals that the society was weakening, and as it weakened, peril awaited.

St. Luke's Gospel furnishes the message vividly presents a setting for the straightforward in its message. The Jesus will come again in triumph and victory, and all his enemies will be humbled. People can wreck their lives and their eternal lives, but their doom is their own choice. God wanted them, showing them the right way.

The Healing Hands of Jesus are manifested in prayer and rest and patience. The Healing Hands of Jesus guide the knowledgeable and skilled technique of a kind and gentle touch.

The Sunday Readings
Sunday, September 25, 2016

- Amos 6:1a, 4-7
- 1 Timothy 6:11-16
- Luke 16:19-31

The Healing Hands of Jesus are in the timely visits of dear ones, the pretty floral arrangements and greeting cards sent by friends. They are in the cheery phone calls from family and loved ones.

The Healing Hands of Jesus are in the loving care and understanding of a precious spouse. They are in the frequent visits of a concerned son and his sympathetic dog.

The Healing Hands of Jesus are manifested in prayer and rest and patience and the everyday gifts of kindness from others.

My Journey to God
By Jené Hartman

The Healing Hands of Jesus guide the knowledgeable and skilled technique of a kind surgeon. They are present in the dedicated care of attentive nurses and therapists.

The Healing Hands of Jesus are in the timely visits of dear ones, the pretty floral arrangements and greeting cards sent by friends. They are in the cheery phone calls from family and loved ones.

The Healing Hands of Jesus are in the loving care and understanding of a precious spouse. They are in the frequent visits of a concerned son and his sympathetic dog.

The Healing Hands of Jesus are manifested in prayer and rest and patience and the everyday gifts of kindness from others.

(Djené Hartman is a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.)

Daily Readings

Monday, September 26
St. Cosmas, martyr
St. Damian, martyr
Job 1:6-22
Psalm 17:1b-11, 2-3, 6-7
Luke 9:46-50

Tuesday, September 27
St. Vincent de Paul, priest
Job 3:1-3, 11-17, 20-23
Psalm 88:2-8
Luke 9:51-56

Wednesday, September 28
St. Wenceslaus, martyr,
St. Lawrence the Deacon
companions, martyrs
Job 9:1-12, 14-16
Psalm 88:1b-15

Thursday, September 29
St. Michael the Archangel
St. Gabriel the Archangel
St. Raphael the Archangel
Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14 or Revelation 12:7-12a
Psalm 138:1-5
John 1:47-51

Friday, September 30
St. Jerome, priest and doctor of the Church
Job 42:1-3, 5-6, 12-17
Psalm 119:66, 71, 75, 91, 125, 130

Saturday, October 1
St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church
Job 42:3-7
Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9
2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14
Luke 17:5-10

Sunday, October 2
Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2-2:4
Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9
2 Timothy 1:7-8
Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9
130

Question Corner
Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Dialysis is not a required medical procedure in every circumstance

My Dad is almost 89 years old. In 1987, he had a double bypass. Right now, he has slow-growing prostate cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure. He is also suffering from depression (my mom passed away in 2010), and he looks forward to dying. He found out recently that he has only 35 percent kidney function. If dialysis is prescribed from a Catholic point of view, would he have to undergo it? (Indiana)

A short and simple answer is No! In your father's circumstances, he would be under an obligation to start dialysis. Catholic moral teaching does not require us to use every possible treatment to preserve and prolong life. Dialysis, in this case, could surely be judged an "extraordinary" or "disproportionate" means in terms of the benefit it might offer.

This moral principle is most clearly expressed in the "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services" published in 2009 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, which states: "A person may forgo extraordinary or disproportionate means of preserving life. Disproportionate means are those that in the patient's judgment do not offer a reasonable hope of benefit or entail an excessive burden, or impose excessive expense on the family or the community" (#57).

Your father can make the best opt instead for what is sometimes termed "medical management without dialysis," involving palliative care to keep him as comfortable as possible. Any moral decision depends, of course, on the attendant circumstances. If, on the other hand, your father were 30 years younger, with no life-threatening diseases, and dialysis were likely to offer him many more years of life—and if, while in the throes of depression, he were motivated chiefly by a desire to end his life—then dialysis would be the proper moral choice.

I am looking at your father's situation from afar and based on the information supplied. For your father's peace of mind, it may make sense for you to discuss his individual situation with a priest, Catholic ethicist or chaplain—who, I am confident, would offer him this same comforting advice.

A couple of weeks ago, a clean but scuffy fellow came into Mass and sat on the floor in the back of our church. When it came time for the sign of peace, he came forward to shake hands and people were a little put off. Then, when Communion came, he approached the altar before anyone else had left their pews. An usher quickly got behind him and led him to the back of the church. I thought this was un-Christian and felt sorry about the man and the way he was treated.

What if it were Jesus? (Wisconsin)

With any group setting, there is a natural awkwardness when someone's appearance or behavior departs from the ordinary. As you rightly indicate, though, the Christian community is not about appearances. When you think that things are out of line, you can act on your own discretion. It is a reasonable expectation to offer him assistance should he need it. I hope, too, that the usher, having followed the man to the back of church, engaged him in conversation to help determine his needs and to assure him that he was welcome.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbus Circle Dr. Albany, NY 12201.)
exorcism or other prayers to liberate people from the Cross, Bright, Sept. 4.


PATTERSON, Betty Lou, 88, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Aug. 23.


LUCAS, John, 84, St. Augustine, Indianapolis, Sept. 11. Brother of Dan, Frank and Louise Lucas. Great-grandfather of nine.

MCCARTHY, Thomas, 80, St. Thomas’ of Canterbury, Indianapolis, Sept. 3. Father of Tim and Jim McCarthy. Great-grandfather of 25.


Educational Progress

Short-Term Job Opportunity with the National Assessment of Educational Progress

NAEP Assessment Administrators
Seeking motivated individuals to proctor assessment sessions with 4th- and 8th-grade students in schools across the nation. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only national assessment of educational progress that reflects the diversity, richness and values of the States and the Precious Blood and that strive to meet unmet needs of the time.

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Applications will be accepted until December 15th, 2016.

Interested candidates are to send a cover letter, resume and salary history to mmcmullen@cppsadmin.org by October 6, 2016.
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