Police officer’s cross-country trek for veterans honors their commitment to United States

By John Shaughnessy

The mothers and the wives of the soldiers who died would grab David Roth’s face and look into his eyes, crying as they begged him to keep going on his journey to honor their loved ones. And the military veterans kept stopping Roth in his 3,100-mile walk across the United States, lowering their heads as they solemnly shared the stories of friends who had been killed during wars—“brothers” who had died too young, too soon.

“I didn’t plan on any of that emotion,” says Roth, a 23-year veteran cop who’s been on the streets most of his career. “I thought I was a big boy, but there were a few tears on this route. And you met them every single day. They wanted you to say their kid’s name so they won’t be forgotten. The mothers are telling you this. The wives are telling you this. When you don’t count on that emotion, it sure slaps you aside your head and changes your life.”

As he shares that thought, the emotion once again returns to Roth. Tears pool in his eyes. His voice cracks. Apologizing, he pauses. When he continues, he says, “But oddly enough, the epic moment of the journey was in Maryland!”

Then Roth shares the story of the grace-filled moment when a 6-year-old boy standing in the middle of a road known as the “Heroin Highway” restored his sense of hope and innocence in the world.

Hope on the ‘Heroin Highway’

The moment unfolded in the beginning stages of Roth’s cross-country walk from Atlantic City to San Francisco to raise money for Helping Hands for Freedom, a non-profit program that plans to build a retreat home for military families.

“...we walked through this town—Hagerstown—and it’s a devastated place. And this is coming from a 23-year veteran cop who’s been on the streets most of his career,” says Roth, a 1991 graduate of the University of Notre Dame. “If you’ve been in law enforcement for an extended period of time—...”

The fundraising event celebrated 10 years of success for the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies (MTCA) in the archdiocese. It also marked the start of a new era this year in which the Notre Dame ACE Academies network at the beginning of this school year.

“We’re more stable—spiritually, physically and the children academically. Things that help you to succeed are an education and college and, of course, your faith. That’s what helps you to get to heaven. Here at the academies, they do instill that in children—to be believers of Christ, to have faith and to press forward. And that, with education, you can’t get anywhere else.”

White’s heartfelt, video tribute was a highlight of the Notre Dame ACE Academies’ “X-Tiravaganza” in Indianapolis on Oct. 27.

The fundraising event celebrated 10 years of success for the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies (MTCA) in the archdiocese. It also marked the start of a new era this year in which the Notre Dame ACE Academies are continuing the MTCA legacy of providing a Catholic education and college and, of course, your faith. That’s what helps you to get to heaven. Here at the academies, they do instill that in children—to be believers of Christ, to have faith and to press forward. And that, with education, you can’t get anywhere else.”

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time and you’ve had the pressure, there’s something you give up on, and maybe that’s true innocence.

Yet as Roth’s dammed spirit turned even more sullen as he slogged through a rain that didn’t quit, an unexpected source of inspiration appeared ahead of him.

“There was a little kid named Ezekiel, and he was asking for money. I saw him standing there and I heard him say, ‘I waited for hours for you,’ ” Roth recalls. “And I’m like, ‘What’s going on? We’re in the middle of nowhere!’ He says, ‘I saw you on Facebook, and I have something for you.’ And he handed me a Snickers bar. I looked at the house that’s behind him. There are sheets over broken-out windows. But the light that came from that 6-year-old kid….”

Roth is asked to elaborate on those words, “Something that you think is dead, and it’s not. It’s very much alive, and it needs to be fought for.”

So Roth became involved with Helping Hands for Freedom, an organization that provides support for children of “the fallen, wounded and deployed” men and women who have served in the United States military.

“I started looking at things through that military service mind,” Roth says. “I’m finding out about neighbors and friends that I’ve known a long time. They never talked about their combat service and what they had to do. I could see them for what they are: their sacrifice, which I couldn’t see before.”

The ‘Route for the Brave’

“Trying to honor that sacrifice, Roth embraced the organization’s goal of building a House for Healing, a retreat home for military families to come together and ‘become whole again,’ a place that would also offer limited counseling for PTSD.”

“My next door neighbor, Daryl Holder, was a combat veteran who suffered from PTSD. Roth says he had sued two years ago this December. If you don’t get home and acclimated correctly, and you don’t get services and you need, you’re going to be dysfunctional for life.”

As a fundraising initiative, he envisioned a walk across America—the “Route for the Brave.”

“There’s always been that adventurous spirit which I think I inherited from my grandfather,” Roth says. “I’ve always been afraid to cross a bridge.”

“Ezekiel re-energized the fight for me. Something that you think is dead, and it’s not. It’s very much alive, and it needs to be fought for.”

Roth starts with a focus on “innocence” before taking a deeper look into sacrifice.

“I met everybody on their level—black, white, Hispanic, Laotian, all across the country,” Roth says. “Hispanic families came up who couldn’t speak English but they had these stories—second generation military ties. We’re on an Indian reservation and they had an American Indian military memorial. If you just met these people, you’d know this country isn’t divided. It’s connected by family, by story.”

Those thoughts on sacrifice lead the 48-year-old stepfather of three and step-grandfather of five back to 2013 when he first envisioned his cross-country trek.

One of the inspirations for the journey was his stepson, Matthew Coleman, a medic in the U.S. Navy who has been deployed overseas five times, including two stints in Afghanistan and one during a relief effort in Haiti.

“Matthew keeps doing his part and making his sacrifice,” Roth says. “It’s not just me.”

“Hispanic families came up who couldn’t speak English but they had these stories—second generation military ties. We’re on an Indian reservation and they had an American Indian military memorial. If you just met these people, you’d know this country isn’t divided. It’s connected by family, by story.”

“Matthew keeps doing his part and making his sacrifice,” Roth says. “It’s not just me.”

So will his changed view of the country. “That resulted in injuries that included a bad hip” and legs that still feel the sensation “of pins and needles.”

“I had a gray-haired Vietnam combat veteran call me. He was a sniper officer who donated a combined phone fundraising. I imagine in a year and a half we’ll be breaking ground, but we don’t know where yet, because we have all these offers [from different areas of the country], and we have to assess them. I wish someone would say, ‘We’d really like this in Indiana and this is what we’re willing to do.’

“Still, the adventure has also stamped his life with a certain validation, a deeper meaning.

“I’ve known his Catholic upbringing and his Catholic faith led him to take this journey and guide him on it.”

“This has been divinely inspired from the beginning. This is not something I was searching for, but I knew there would be no relationship with God. I talk about service to others. This was a true mission. But it didn’t turn out to be service to others. It turned out to be a big present to see the sacrifice that people have made. It’s a present I will take with me the rest of my life.”

So will his changed view of the country.

Understanding the full sacrifice

In walking across the country this summer, Roth says he didn’t have time or energy to get caught up in political campaigns dominated by anger, bitterness and accusation.

The walk also kept him mostly removed from news broadcasts that showed a country dealing with violence, death and conflicts—conflicts that included the ones that involved police officers and protesters inches away from each other, separated by a chant that resulted in the tragic loss of American lives on both sides of the divide.

For 23 years, I was in a world of conflict,” Roth says. “Then I walked 3,100 miles across the country. In my adult life, I’ve never felt such a lack of conflict. It was me meeting the families, hugging the families, eating with people at VFW halls. My view of the world turned upside down. Now, I’m back in this world of conflict. But when you walk across this country, you get a true flavor of what it really’s like.”

Roth shares one more story.

“I had a gray-haired Vietnam combat veteran in Colorado Springs meet us for two minutes and talk to us about his combat experience. And his wife’s jaw is on the ground because he never talked about it. And he’s crying.”

“There’s no Veterans’ Day for me anymore. It’s every day. It’s the veteran I sat across from at lunch. It’s the hundreds and thousands of people I met along the way who didn’t know that each other exist, who all have a shared sacrifice. I’ll be honest. I try to avoid the emotion at times. But it’s changed the world that I live in—understanding that full sacrifice.”

(For more information about Helping Hands for Freedom, visit the website www.helpinghandsforfreedom.org)
By Natalie Hoefer

When the speaker’s name was announced at the reception following the Miter Society Mass in Indianapolis on Oct. 18, he received a standing ovation. All in the crowd were familiar with him, and many in the crowd had heard him speak previously.

But this occasion was unique: It was the first time he’d been introduced to them not as archbishop, but as Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin.

Cardinal-designate Tobin first addressed the members of the Miter Society—those who contribute $1,500 or more to the United Catholic Appeal—during a Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

“Four years ago today, I was standing right there,” he told the congregation, pointing to the front of the sanctuary where he was first introduced to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis as its new archbishop on Oct. 18, 2012. “I was grateful then, and I’m even more grateful now.”

He noted that the readings for that day, the feast of St. Luke, “ask us to think [about how we] respond when the world seems to be crashing in on us—when there is no justice or apparent solution, or those we love are in pain or, worse yet, abandon us, [or] when sickness overtakes us.

In the first reading from Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy, the cardinal-designate pointed out that Paul’s frustration with his situation—imprisoned, abandoned by his friends, attacked by his enemies—is evident.

“You may be the first takeaway is that Paul understood that even when his friends lacked the courage to stand with him, God never abandoned him.”

Hindsight is telling, said Cardinal-designate Tobin, noting that “through hindsight, I can easily see God’s presence in guiding me through the challenges in my life. But what makes no sense at all to me … is how easy it is to forget that … “It’s all too easy to begin worrying over how on earth will this challenges [we’re faced with] ever work out, forgetting that they always did, that God was there!”

God’s presence is imperative, he said, in light of the message from the Gospel, that “the harvest is plenty, but the laborers are few” (Lk 10:2).

“Since nothing is more important than helping those God has placed in my life to understand the only way to salvation, life, and true peace and joy is through my Savior Jesus Christ. I should know that God would not leave such an important task up to someone like me without his personal guidance.

“And he doesn’t ask you to do anything that he’s not willing to walk with you and promise to be faithful to you in whatever you face as long as your purpose is to bear fruit, fruit that will remain.”

Later, in his talk at the dinner following the Mass, Cardinal-designate Tobin enumerated the fruitful ministries in the archdiocese made possible by all who contribute to the United Catholic Appeal: seminarian and diaconate formation, retirement funds for priests, Catholic school and religious education for youths, young adult and college campus ministry, pro-life and family life programs, and ministry to the poor through Catholic Charities.

But he first recounted the story of how he heard of his appointment as a cardinal—through Twitter on his iPad early on the morning of Oct. 9 while staying at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad.

“But I’d prefer to talk about what I did two days after,” he said, referring to his celebrating the Mass of Christian Burial for the archdiocese’s oldest priest, Father Hilary Meny, who died on Oct. 7 at the age of 101 after 76 years as a priest.

“I couldn’t help but think, ‘Who’s elevated whom?’ … I want to put a call ‘to widen my stewardship, and I think we’re all stewards in one way or another, because all of us make decisions on how we treat what we have, what we’ve received.

“I think each of us must take what the Lord has given us and do something with it … If you risk what you have as stewards, you don’t lose it. Making decisions about what you have, in light of your faith, you don’t lose it!”

Donations given in stewardship to the United Catholic Appeal are not lost, he said, because they further the merciful works of the archdiocese that no parish or deanery could accomplish on its own.

In speaking of mercy, Cardinal-designate Tobin noted that on Nov. 20, the day after he and the 16 other bishops are inducted into the College of Cardinals in Rome, they will “concelebrate the Eucharist with Pope Francis in St. Peter’s [Basilica], and that will be the big conclusion of the Holy Year of Mercy. They’ll shut the door that symbolizes this particular and special access to God’s mercy. But mercy will continue. The Holy Father said, ‘Mercy is the very foundation of God’s Church. … The Church’s very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love.

‘Thank you for your generosity to the United Catholic Appeal’, which has helped the Church bring mercy here in central and southern Indiana. … I’m confident that all of you will make as generous a response as you can.

‘I’m proud to be your archbishop, and I guess if I have to be a cardinal, I’m proud to be your cardinal.’”

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Pope Francis’ prayer intentions for November

• Universal: Countries Receiving Refugees—That the countries which take in a great number of displaced persons and refugees may find support for their efforts which show solidarity.

• Evangelization: Collaboration of Priests and Laity—That within parishes, priests and lay people may collaborate in service to the community without giving in to the temptation of discouragement.

(To see Pope Francis’ monthly intentions, go to www.ewtn.com/faith/papalPrayer.htm)
The Human Side/Father Eugene Heinrich

Dealing wisely with turbulent times

“If only I had wings like a dove that I might fly away and be at rest. Far away I would flee; I would stay in the desert. I would soon find a shelter from the driving wind and storm” (Ps 55:7-9).

Sadly, many people are fed up with our uncouth political atmosphere and echo the psalmist above. Some have told me that they are thinking of going to Canada or even to Australia. In these difficult times, St. Paul gives us words of hope: “Do not lose heart, for your life belongs to God” (Rom 12:2).

To achieve this, where do we start? The Book of Proverbs is the place, teaching us that “the discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of a fool feeds on folly” (Prv 15:10).

We have entered a new age of information overload that enables us to tap into any subject and, within seconds, receive reams of information on it. With little to no fuss, I have often called up writings of people like Msgr. Romano Guardini, Blessed John Henry Newman and C.S. Lewis for use in a family. Like anything precious, there is always something lurking to turn it into folly.

The “something” is our new “no fuss information age” where something requires fuss, concern, wisdom and challenging questions like: What is the difference between true knowledge and opinion? Is the available information the result of conscientious people doing every effort to be correct? Is it as pure as possible and devoid of selfish prejudice? Nothing is more inspiring than trustworthy knowledge, and nothing is more disturbing than when it is misused and misused wisely.

In speaking of transforming our will, St. Paul tells us to configure our hearts to Christ’s heart. As Christ was different because of others for goodness, so, too, should we desire the good of others. We must wonder today’s outlandish, destructive rhetoric is behind some wanting to leave this country.

Much of our unrest is the result of knowledge deprived of its sacredness. Knowledge is a gift of the Holy Spirit and as such is sacred. As one person commented, “I no longer want to live in this country because nothing is sacred anymore. We have lost our bearings.”

St. Paul urges us to transform our mind: the receptacle of knowledge and values. If one, as two remain sacred, we will keep our bearings.

(Father Eugene Heinrich writes for Catholic News Service.)

Letters to the Editor

At the ballot box, let us remember the most vulnerable among us

The foundation of the freedoms that we enjoy in America is based on the Christian principle that each individual is made in the image of God, and that each person is deserving of life and dignity. This differentiates us from many countries in the world where there is savagery, desperation and sheer lack of regard for human life.

As Christians, we believe the soul to be eternal. Therefore, a Christian’s judgment of greater importance than any state or civilization, whose lifespan is measured in centuries at most. If our country cannot stand up against the abortionism that is abortion and stop the genocide of the unborn, then we will not only continue in our turning away from God, but we will find that additional liberties will be taken away from us by the state. When the primacy of the individual is eroded, the power of the government grows. If we go to the ballot box, finally, after the most contentious election season in a lifetime, let us remember the most vulnerable among us.

Linda and Hank Cooper
Indianapolis

Learn which candidates are pro-life in all areas of human life and dignity, readers say

In a letter to the editor in The Criterion Oct. 28 issue of The Criterion (“Pray above all on politics, promote the common good, and vote for life, reader says”), the writer stated, “As long as a pro-life alternative is available, a Catholic may not, in good conscience, vote for a pro-abortion candidate, regardless of his or her position on quality-of-life issues.”

Yet, in their “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” guide, footnote 30 notes the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops state otherwise in paragraph 34: “A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who favors a policy promoting an intrinsically evil act, such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, deliberately subjecting workers or the poor to subhuman living conditions, defending marriage in a way that violates its essential meaning, or racist behavior, if the voter’s intent is to support that position.” In such cases, a Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in grave evil.”

The bishops continue, “At the same time, a voter should not use a candidate’s opposition to an intrinsic evil to justify indifference or inattentiveness to other important moral issues involving human life and dignity (#34).”

So, whenever we Catholics vote for, if it is not our intent to support the evil of abortion, the bishops tell us that our vote is acceptable.

Likewise, the bishops tell us should we support a candidate who turns a blind eye to other important moral issues involving human life and dignity, such as, the destruction of life, income inequality, immigration, capital punishment simply because the evil of abortion is the one is against abortion.

We urge our fellow Catholics to study and compare which candidate/party is truly pro-life—and not just against abortion—in all areas involving human life and dignity.

Linda and Hank Cooper
Blowin’ in the Wind

Monks vow to rebuild following devastating earthquakes in Italy

The men and women who follow St. Benedict and his spiritual heritage. Their ancestors in the Benedictine way of life rebuilt western civilization after it fell into ruins following the collapse of the Roman Empire. For some 1,500 years, Benedictine monks and nuns have been building and rebuilding monasteries, churches, schools, and institutions dedicated to caring for the poor, the sick and the homeless in all regions of the world.

The Monastery of St. Benedict in Norcia, Italy, the birthplace of St. Benedict, began a serious rebuilding effort following the earthquake in August 2016 that did serious damage to the town. The ruins of the Basilica of St. Benedict in the ancient Italian city of Norcia are seen on Oct. 31, following a devastating earthquake in Italy. The church had been the place of worship of a community of Benedictine monks led by Benedictine Father Cassian Folsom, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, Ind. (Reuters/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

The ruins of the Basilica of St. Benedict in the ancient Italian city of Norcia are seen on Oct. 31, following a devastating earthquake in Italy. The church had been the place of worship of a community of Benedictine monks led by Benedictine Father Cassian Folsom, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, Ind. (Reuters/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

By following this roadmap we can climb by the humility of this present life. Let us faithfully, St. Benedict says, we will “quickly arrive at that perfect love of faith, and this love is to grow to maturity, and the great love of faith will faithfully, St. Benedict says, we will “quickly arrive at that perfect love of faith, and this love is to grow to maturity, and the great love of faith will...” (Ps 37:4).

For the monks of Norcia, like their Benedictine brothers and sisters everywhere, there is much to teach us about the challenges we face in our own world. At the same time, the monks of Norcia, their founder’s hometown has suffered a serious setback. This community of monks is relatively young. Founded by Benedictine Father Cassian Folsom, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, the monks of Norcia come from a world of modern values. Their desire is to plant roots in a particular place and to seek God through a way of prayer and work and holy reading (lectio divina). The monks of Norcia have gained recognition in recent years through their popular chant recording Birra Nursia.

Another earthquake last week—the worst Italy has experienced in many years—demolished the basilica and most of the town. The monks of Norcia are safe, living in tents on mountain property they own just outside the city limits. But the way of life they were rebuilding in their founder’s hometown has suffered a serious setback.

Like their Benedictine sisters and brothers in Indiana and throughout the world, the monks of Norcia take a vow of stability, a commitment to their monastery and its physical location. That makes a Benedictine community very much about devoted to one’s vocation, family and work. Benedictines are not defined by their work, whether by human neglect, political unrest, worldwide economic uncertainty and continuing conversion of life are needed in the church. And so it goes with the church: allowing his grace to help us start afresh. In such cases, a Catholic cannot vote for a candidate, regardless of his or her position on quality-of-life issues.”

Yet, in their “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” guide, footnote 30 notes the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops state otherwise in paragraph 34: “A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who favors a policy promoting an intrinsically evil act, such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, deliberately subjecting workers or the poor to subhuman living conditions, defending marriage in a way that violates its essential meaning, or racist behavior, if the voter’s intent is to support that position.” In such cases, a Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in grave evil.”

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We urge our fellow Catholics to study and compare which candidate/party is truly pro-life—and not just against abortion—in all areas involving human life and dignity.
Mi reflexión final sobre nuestra condición de ciudadanos fieles en esta temporada electoral

Durante los dos meses anteriores he dedicado mi columna semanal en The Criterion a presentar reflexiones sobre los temas fundamentales que nosotros, como católicos y fieles ciudadanos de los Estados Unidos expresamos que: “Al tomar estas decisiones, es esencial que los católicos estén guiados por una conciencia bien formada, y que las ideas de los demás impidan que todos los prejuicios y las emociones la diluyan. No debemos dudar de este dogma. Ahora no debemos dudar de este dogma. Deberemos usar la conciencia formada por la doctrina moral de la Iglesia en todas nuestras decisiones, y nuestra conciencia y acciones deberán ser serias y respetuosas y se nieguen a permitir que los prejuicios y las emociones la diluyan. Nuestros comportamientos deberán reflejar con gratitud a Dios por la libertad que tiene un ser humano. Finalmente, estas son decisiones que cada católico debe tomar guiado por una conciencia formada por la doctrina moral de la Iglesia” (#37).

Así que debemos rezar. Deberemos tomar decisiones y, seguidamente, votar en congruencia con nuestras conciencias bien fundamentadas. Y lo que tal vez es más importante, debemos tener la determinación de reformar continuamente nuestro sistema político para que siempre se nos presenten opciones viables para defender la vida humana y promover el bien común.

Pero si los desafíos que enfrentamos, deberemos abordar las próximas elecciones con gratitud hacia Dios por la libertad que tenemos para ejercer nuestro derecho a elegir nuestros funcionarios públicos y participar en definir el rumbo de nuestro local, estatal y federal.

Resulta muy fácil adoptar una actitud cómoda o sentirse desanimado, pero ninguna de ellas favorece a la causa de la libertad. Nuestra fe nos dice que Dios nos proporcionará lo que necesitamos para cumplir su voluntad. Ahora no debemos dudar de este dogma. ¡Confiamos en que las decisiones que tomemos se basen en una conciencia bien formada que nos dirija hacia el camino correcto! 

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 176th Ave., Beach Grove, Ave Maria Gulch, 12:30 p.m., Mass for deceased Guild members at 11 a.m. in the chapel. Information: 317-223-3687, vglmimi@aol.com.

November 10 Marian University, Bishop Sharratt Memorial Chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. Catholic High School Choral Fest, choirs from Catholic high schools in the Indianapolis area, Oldenburg and Lafayette, Ind., plus Marian University Sacred Choir and the Bishop Simon Brault College Seminary Schola Cantorum Choir, 7 p.m.

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Cenacle (house on parish grounds), Indianapolis. Hope and Healing Survivors of Suicide support group, 7 p.m. Information: 317-851-8344.

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Cooking 101. Veggie Basics, learn different techniques like Blanching, steaming, boiling and more, 5:30-8:30 p.m., $35, registration deadline Nov. 7. Information: 812-535-2931, avwc@spsmw.org, events@sistersofprovidence.org.

St. Matthew Catholic School, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Open House, kindergarten through eighth grade, 6-8 p.m. Information: 317-251-3997, nashbrowns@skiamansion.com.

November 11 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 1752 Scheller Lane, New Albany. Future Full of Hope. Honoring Children We Have Entrusted to the Lord, Mass for families and individuals giving pregnancy loss, infant loss, stillbirth, ecopic pregnancy, abortion, miscarriage, and infant and early childhood loss, 6:30 p.m., RSVP by Nov. 8. Information and RSVP: 812-944-2065, hamilton@olphma.org.

St. Philip Neri Parish, 550 N. Rural St., Indianapolis. Coffee House Social Gathering, 6:30-9 p.m., coffee and pastries, entertainment and fellowship, to get to know neighbors from surrounding churches, second Friday of each month. Free. Information: 317-373-6271, karinmor@gmail.com.

Slovak National Home, 2717 W. 100th St., Indianapolis. The Grape Arbor Dance, 5 p.m., live music, food and drinks, open to the public, $7 with meal, children 16 and under with adult free. RSVP appreciated: 317-632-0619 or stevenjungmann@comcast.net.

November 12 The Woods, 6729 Westfield Blvd, Indianapolis. Marriage on Tap, Stephanie and Ray Engelmann presenting, $40 per couple includes dinner, cash bar available, 7-9:30 p.m., registration by Nov. 5. Information: 317-295-4733. Father Michael Hoyt presenting “Finding Peace in the Middle of Suffering,” following 5 p.m. Mass, bring a side dish to share. RSVP requested: margaret@fridays4peace.org.

St. Monica Parish, Parish Ministry Center, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. Marriage in Focus, Fatho Michael Hoyt presenting “Finding Peace in the Middle of Suffering,” following 5 p.m. Mass, bring a side dish to share. RSVP requested: margaret@fridays4peace.org.

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. The Grape Arbor Dance, 5 p.m., live music, food and drinks, open to the public, $7 with meal, children 16 and under with adult free.

Veggie Basics, learn different techniques like Blanching, steaming, boiling and more, 5:30-8:30 p.m., $35, registration deadline Nov. 7. Information: 317-251-3997, nashbrowns@skiamansion.com.

November 13 Thumper Club, 5630 W. 100th St., Indianapolis. Mass for the deceased, 12:30 p.m., Mass for deceased Guild members at 11 a.m. in the chapel. Information: 317-223-3687, vglmimi@aol.com.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church, 4720 E. 136th St., Indianapolis. A Walk in the Woods. Dinner and silent auction, 6-9 p.m. Information: 317-523-4493 or cndunab2014@gmail.com.

St. John the Baptist Church, 8310 St. John Rd., Floyds Knobs. Community Bingo. Benefiting New Albany Deanery Catholic Youth Ministries, 8:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Information: 812-923-3355, sardy@nadyouth.org.

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/retreats.
Honorees committed to providing faith-based education for students

By John Shaughnessy

From the beginning, Tony and Carole Watt viewed their efforts as a way to share an incredible gift with children. Through their time, involvement and financial support, the couple wanted to help provide a Catholic education to thousands of children in some of the poorest areas of Indianapolis.

“The Mother Theodore Catholic Academies have a special place in both of our hearts,” says Tony Watt about the archdiocese’s efforts to make a difference in the education of children whose families otherwise couldn’t afford a Catholic education.

“Carole and I strongly believe that the quality of education that students get in these schools is really critical to helping break the cycle of poverty. Kids need to have a good education, an education that opens doors for them.”

Tony Watt served as the first executive director—as a volunteer—of the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies (MTCA) in the archdiocese. Based upon that commitment during the first 10 years of the MTCA, Tony and Carole were among seven couples and four individuals honored on Oct. 27 during a celebration in Indianapolis.

Six Vincentian Care was also honored during the event, which was called the Notre Dame ACE Academies’ X-travaganza.

The fundraising event celebrated the MTCA’s 10 years of success. It also marked the start of a new era this year in which the Notre Dame ACE Academies are continuing the MTCA legacy of providing a Catholic education to children in Central Catholic Holy Angels, Holy Cross Central, St. Anthony and St. Philip Neri schools.

In addition to the Watts, seven other couples and one individual were honored for their 10 years of dedication to the MTCA: Bill and Jane Drew, Marc and Jennifer Konesco, Tim and Jane McGinley, Charles and Jacqueline Pechette, Bill and Eileen Polian, George and Connie Zittnan, and Richard Rowe.

Three Leadership awards were also presented during the celebration.

Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein was honored for his dedication to the MTCA, including committing $1 million per year toward the academies.

Annette “Mickey” Lentz, the chancellor of the archdiocese, also received a Leadership Award. She was saluted for her “innovative-minded, collaborative approach and growth mindset” in establishing the MTCA when she served as the archdiocese’s executive director of Catholic education and faith formation.

Msgr. Joseph Schaedel, now the pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, also received a Leadership award. At the time of the MTCA’s inception, Msgr. Schaedel served the archdiocese as vicar general and moderator of the curia. He was recognized for his “tremendous support of the change from parish schools to a consortium model of the Catholic schools themselves.”

The St. Vincent health care system received the MTCA’s “Business Partner of the Decade” award. The award saluted St. Vincent for providing “millions of dollars to support the health and wellness of our students and families since the inception of the MTCA, and has committed to another $1 million over the next five years.”

Eleven honored couples, including Carole and Tony Watt, honored the MTCA’s 10-year anniversary celebration on Oct. 27. Seated from left are Richard Rowe, Connie Zittnan, George Zittnan, Catherine Elder and Tim McGinley. Standing from left are Art and Ann Wilmes (accepting for Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein), William Drew, Jane Drew, Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin, Annette “Mickey” Lentz, Msgr. Joseph Schaedel, Carol Watt and Tony Watt. Honorees not pictured are Marc and Jennifer Konesco, Charles and Jacqueline Pechette, Bill and Eileen Polian, and Jane McGinley. (Photo by Rob Banayote)

Kevin White has already seen the difference that partnership has made to her family.

“I’m grateful for programs such as this, so families can get the catapault—just something they need to help them get where they need to be, so we’re able to give back as well,” said White, who has a job and will move her family into a house in the next few months. “I just praise God that we’re able to do that at this time.”

(To learn more about the Notre Dame ACE Academies, visit ace.nd.edu/academies.)

CELEBRATION continued from page 1

education to children in Central Catholic, Holy Angels, Holy Cross Central, St. Anthony and St. Philip Neri schools.

The archdiocese has partnered with the University of Notre Dame to provide a broader pool of resources and support to serve the children who attend those five schools, according to Gina Fleming, superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

During the fundraising event, Fleming made a question-and-answer session between Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin and Holy Cross Father Timothy Scully, co-founder of Notre Dame’s ACE (Academic Choice Education) program.

“We are committed to partnering with you to make these academies a shining light,” Father Scully told the audience of about 350 people. “Indianapolis can be a place where we can prove you can have very deep Catholic, extraordinarily strong academic, and financially sustainable schools for the poor.”

Cardinal-designate Tobin noted, “I don’t think of a better way for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to look out of itself than to support the Notre Dame ACE Academies and to enable them to flourish—not merely survive but flourish.

“One in a while, someone asks me, ‘Why do you want those schools there if they’re not all Catholic?’ I say, ‘We don’t have those schools because the students are Catholic. We have those schools because we’re Catholic.’ That’s how we do it. We look out for ourselves.

The data confirms the importance of Catholic schools in the lives of its students and alumni, Father Scully added.

“If you graduated from a Catholic school, you are half again as likely to graduate from a high school, and you’re 2 1/2 times more likely to graduate from college,” he said.

You hold political views that are more tolerant of other people, and you’re much less likely to get to jail. You’re three times more likely to become a priest or religious. Just from a civic, from a community, and from an ecclesiastical perspective, these schools are essential to our American Catholic life.

The schools also represent “the secret of Catholic education,” Cardinal-designate Tobin asserted.

“That’s the formation of community,” he declared. “It’s not simply the obvious community that forms between the parents, the students, the faculty and the administrators. There’s also that vibrant community that supports them.

“In areas where there are all sorts of factors in a community that drive it apart, it’s absolutely necessary for the Church to be there with an alternative. The alternative for fragmentation, dissolution and dissipation is the community that forms around a Catholic school.

“In becoming part of the Notre Dame ACE Academies, the five center-city Catholic schools in Indianapolis have joined a network that includes schools in Tucson, Ariz., Tampa, Fla., and Orlando, Fla.

Those schools have already begun to close the achievement gap that many inner-city students experience, Notre Dame ACE officials note. From fall 2011 to spring 2015, on average, students improved in math from the 31st percentile to the 67th percentile, moving from the bottom third to the top third in the nation.

In 2015, the Notre Dame ACE Academies network was recognized by the White House as an outstanding resource of educational excellence for Hispanic students.

The partnership between the archdiocese and Notre Dame follows a similar blueprint for success—drawing from the resources of the university, the archdiocese, the Indiana parental choice program and local community support. ACE faculty and staff also work closely with school and archdiocesan leaders in Indianapolis.

“Our children have the opportunities they deserve to break the cycle of poverty and to share the richness of the gifts with which God has blessed them,” Fleming said. “As I witness the faith, innovation, service and grit of our children, it is obvious to me that there is hope for our world.”

CELEBRATION continued from page 1

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For more information, visit www.archindy.org/oca

"Every single dollar is needed in love and Mercy"

"Every single dollar is needed in love and Mercy"
I-C C plansed for school choice, and continues fight for issues of life

By Victoria Arthur

The ICC was still finding its way as the public policy voice of the Catholic Church on a wide range of issues. That analysis and arguments and has become a public face. ICC efforts have focused on

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

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If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, you know what providers who have a history of such misconduct, you can get the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator, Fred Everett, who along with his wife, Lisa, also is the executive director of Family and Pro-Life in the diocese. "The ICC enjoys a certain reputation throughout the state as not only the voice of moderate, but an entity that can be trusted."

Focusing on the common good

Everett and Wood both recall how in the 1970s the ICC was receiving a lot of questions about living wills. In this case, it was advances in medical technology that caused the need for the Church to clarify its position.

Catholics were wondering what the Church had to say about the quality of life and discontinuing life support in various circumstances, for example. The ICC took the issue up and after much deliberation and consultation with the bishops, as well as medical experts and ethicists. The result was a standard form of a living will, also known more formally as an "advance directive."

Wood added that many Catholic hospitals in Indiana now have a priest on staff to address matters of faith and morals.

Also during the 1990s, Everett said that the ICC, under the leadership of then-executive director M. Desmond Ryan, helped to block an attempt in the legislature to push for the legalization of the removal of nutrition and hydration for people in persistent vegetative states. Again, Everett said, the voice of the Church had an impact.

Regardless of the issues and ever-changing technology, the ICC’s overarching mission remains the same, according to Everett: “We just do our best to make things better. "To that end, we’ve always been about focusing on issues of the common good, and about getting people to acts."
Parish helps Catholics, Muslims know each other through dialogue

By Sean Gallagher

Islamic State militants persecute Christians, other non-Muslims and Muslims who disagree with their beliefs in the Middle East and elsewhere.

Small groups of people in the U.S., including some Christians, publicly show disapproval of Muslims living in their communities.

Secular European governments limit the religious freedom of both Muslims and Christians.

These actions grab headlines around the world.

But a different way of Muslims and Christians relating to one another was on display on Oct. 19 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis.

On that night, more than 50 Muslims and Catholics from across central Indiana attended a Catholic-Muslim panel discussion among a Muslim scholar, a Franciscan priest and a cardinal-designate.

The discussion, co-sponsored by the Plainfield-based Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and Sacred Heart Parish, was the final event of a three-day gathering of members of the sponsoring groups.

The panel members were ISNA senior Islam scholar John Morrow, Catholic Health Association senior director of ethics Franciscan Father Tom Nunn, and Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin, archbishop of Indianapolis.

Before the panel discussion, the attendees shared a meal of Middle Eastern food. Muslims in attendance then prayed together. And the Catholics prayed together a prayer composed by St. Francis of Assisi, who met and had a respectful dialogue with a Muslim sultan in the 13th century.

It was that incident in the earliest days of the Franciscans that led Sacred Heart Parish—which has been led by Franciscan friars since its founding in 1875—to co-sponsor the three-day Catholic-Muslim dialogue event.

The first two days featured prayer and presentations by Father Tom and Morrow.

In his opening remarks at the panel discussion, Cardinal-designate Tobin made reference to the first title that Muslims give to God and how this is common ground with Christians.

“This is a wonderful encounter in which we can learn from each other,” he said. “And hopefully, those who surround us will learn from us that the way of God is not a way of division, of hatred, of harsh words. The way of God is peace. And God’s first name is mercy, the merciful one.”

Morrow explained numerous practices of traditional Islam that have many similarities to Christianity, including the honoring of and praying to deceased holy believers and of pilgrimages to shrines and other holy places.

He noted, however, that “extremists” in the Muslim community from a movement known as either Salafism or Wahhabism see such practices as forms of polytheism that they want to stamp out.

This interpretation of Islam, combined with reactions of some Muslims to attacks upon their faith community from the outside, has led in the past and in some places now to a “hardening of positions.”

Morrow said that this defensiveness led “some Muslim jurists to become a lot stricter and a lot more severe with the Christians in the Middle East because they were viewed as a kind of column that might support the enemy.”

In order to promote greater religious liberty for all together, Cardinal-designate Tobin encouraged people of faith first to “gain knowledge of each other.”

“I believe that, if you want to do horrible things to someone else, you have to take away their humanity,” he continued. “You have to call them something else.”

Father Tom added, “We begin by listening. Sadly, I tend to think that we sometimes begin by talking. It is by listening, I think, that we begin to grow in respect. And once we start respecting each other, all sorts of barriers break down.”

Once barriers are broken down, bridges can be built, Morrow said.

“I think it’s imperative that we build bridges of understanding between different faith communities and to pose a united front,” he said. “I think it’s very important to educate other people in our communities, and that we should express solidarity for each other as much as possible.

“We have to learn from one another and educate the Christians and Muslims about our mutual humanity, and what we share in common.”

One common point between Christians and Muslims, Cardinal-designate Tobin suggested, is that both communities put a higher value on their faith than any national identity.

“For believing people, it sounds a little idolatrous to say that your national relationship is superior to your relationship with God,” he said.

Hazam Bata, ISNA’s secretary general, added a point to the panel discussion by recalling how Christians and Muslims in his country’s revolution in 2011 were threatened during the country’s revolution in 2011.

“This is religion at its best, bringing people together,” Bata said.

“Religion can push you to extremes. But it’s up to us to choose whether it’s extreme good or extreme bad.”

After the panel discussion, Bata spoke with The Criterion about the significance of the event and of promoting dialogue between Muslims and Catholics.

“Ultimately, it’s creating relationships,” he said. “You can’t hate somebody that you have a relationship with.

“To me, this is religion. Whenever we hear about religion, it’s generally in a negative context nowadays. But this is religion. Religion brings out the best in people.”

Veronica Sauter, a member of Sacred Heart Parish who helped organize the Catholic-Muslim dialogue, hoped the event would bring out the best in her fellow parishioners.

“My hope is that, from this experience, if we could soften one person’s heart or change one person’s attitude about our Muslim brothers and sisters, then it would be a good experience for all of us,” she said.

Cardinal-designate Tobin afterward recalled how Blessed Paul VI described dialogue between Catholics and people of other faiths as “‘the new name of charity.’”

“I think that we dialogue with others because of the love that’s within us, and that love includes love for them,” Cardinal-designate Tobin said. “We learn about them and respect them because of the love that motivates us.”

Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin, archbishop of Indianapolis, speaks with Rabia Khan, ISNA’s secretary general, during a Catholic-Muslim panel discussion on Oct. 19 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)
Catholics, Lutherans agree to serve the poor together

MALMO, Sweden (CNS)—The sheet of ice and the penalty boxes were gone from Malmo Arena on Oct. 31 as Catholics and Lutherans filled the stands and promised to work together for peace—particularly in Syria—and for justice—especially for refugees.

Pope Francis

Pope Francis and leaders of the Lutheran World Federation continued their ecumenical commemoration of Reformation Day in an arena that usually hosts hockey games. But kicking off a year of events to culminate in the 2017 commemoration of the Protestant Reformation, the arena was transformed into a venue for song and witness.

Chaldean Bishop Antoine Audo of Aleppo, Syria, called on all Christians to join their voices in prayer, and in pressing their governments to stop the bloodshed and destruction in his homeland.

The bishop, who is president of Caritas Syria, announced that Christian humanitarian work in his country would follow the motto: “Become Christians Together,” focusing on how serving Christ must include serving others, especially the poorest and most needy.

A centerpiece of the Malmo event was the signing of a “declaration of intent” by the leaders of Caritas Internationalis, the Vatican-based confederation of Catholic charities, and the Lutheran World Federation’s World Service. The two organizations promised to “witness and act together,” supporting one another, including by serving the victims of war in Syria and Syrian refugees in neighboring countries.

The stories told in Malmo include those of a young Indian woman working to educate people about climate change, the Sudanese refugee runner who carried the flag for the Olympic Refugee Team, the head of Caritas Colombia working for peace, and a woman from Burundi who adopted and sheltered seven children during her country’s genocidal rampage in the 1990s.

Lutheran Bishop Munih Younan, president of the Lutheran World Federation and bishop of Jordan and the Holy Land, co-hosting the event with the pope, also spoke as a refugee, the son of Palestinians from Beersheba. “All refugees are my brothers and sisters,” he said.

“I ask each of you to pray for my country, and for the just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” he said. “Pray that God’s will of justice will be done. Pray that Jerusalem would be a city shared by three religions—Judiasm, Christianity and Islam—and two peoples—Palestinians and Israelis.”

Pope Francis told the crowd in the arena that the ecumenical agreement is a fruit of 50 years of Catholic-Lutheran dialogue and its affirmations of a common faith and a common baptism in Jesus.

The best description of the saints—in fact, their “identity card”—the pope said, is found in the beatitudes from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, which begins, “Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Mt 5:3).

New situations require new energy and a new commitment, he said, and then he offered a new list of beatitudes for modern Christians.

• “Blessed are those who remain faithful while enduring evils inflicted on them by others and forgive them from their heart. • “Blessed are those who look into the eyes of the abandoned and marginalized and show them their closeness.

• Blessed are those who see God in every person and strive to make others also discover him.

• Blessed are those who protect and care for our common home.

• Blessed are those who renounce their own comfort in order to help others.

• “Blessed are those who pray and work for full communion between Christians.”

“The best description of the saints—in fact, their ‘identity card’—the pope said, is found in the beatitudes from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, which begins, “Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Mt 5:3).

And, he said, as Christian saints have done throughout the ages, Christ’s followers today are called “to confront the troubles and anxieties of our age with the spirit and love of Jesus.”

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• Blessed are those who renounce their own comfort in order to help others.

• Blessed are those who pray and work for full communion between Christians.”

“In all these are messengers of God’s mercy and tenderness,” Pope Francis said. “Surely they will receive from him their merited reward.”

Pope Francis offers new beatitudes for saints of a new age

MALMO, Sweden (CNS)—The saints are blessed because they were faithful, meek and tender to educate people about climate change, the Sudanese refugee runner who carried the flag for the Olympic Refugee Team, the head of Caritas Colombia working for peace, and a woman from Burundi who adopted and sheltered seven children during her country’s genocidal rampage in the 1990s.

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Palliative care offers a dignity-affirming alternative to assisted suicide

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien

Concern for human life and dignity from conception to natural death is a core tenet of Catholic teaching. But new challenges continue to crop up for those at the end of their lives, as another human life is being closely and wrongly morally wrong," said Archbishop Terrence Prendergast of Ottawa, Ontario, as Canada prepared for the legalization of assisted suicide earlier this year.

He cited the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which in its magisterium on human freedom, directly euthanasia consists in putting an end to the lives of handicapped, sick or dying persons who are morally acceptable” (#2029). The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops addressed the issue with the 2011 statement, “To Live Each Day with Dignity,” which takes on many of the arguments used to justify assisted suicide.

“One cannot uphold human freedom and dignity by devaluing human life,” the statement says. “A choice to take one’s life is a supreme contradiction of one’s freedom and dignity by devaluing human life,” he continued. And a society that devalues some people’s lives, he says, will quickly and facilitating their lives, will ultimately lose respect for their other rights and freedoms.”

“Here is why suicide is a failure to address people’s very real fears about overly burdensome medical treatments and intractable pain at the end of life, as well as the depression and guilt that sometimes fuel decisions to commit assisted suicide.”

But opponents of assisted suicide see the palliative care offers a dignity-affirming alternative to assisted suicide

But opponents of assisted suicide see the palliative care offers a dignity-affirming alternative to assisted suicide. “Palliative care implements a holistic, interdisciplinary care plan that identifies, assesses and addresses the comprehensive needs of the seriously ill patient, including pain and other symptom management, psychological, social, emotional support and spiritual care,” according to a brochure from the Supportive Care Coalition, composed of the Archdiocese of Boston, the Catholic Health Association and 17 Catholic health care ministries serving in 43 states.

“The coalition—based in Oregon, where assisted suicide has been legal since 1997—sees palliative care as “a hallmark of Catholic health care.” It carries us to the lives of handicapped, sick or dying persons who are morally acceptable” (#2029). The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops addressed the issue with the 2011 statement, “To Live Each Day with Dignity,” which takes on many of the arguments used to justify assisted suicide.

One of his predecessors, St. John Paul II, wrote in his 1987 encyclical “Evangelium Vitae” (“The Gospel of Life”) that “To concur with the intention of another person to commit suicide and to help in carrying it out through so-called ‘assisted suicide’ means to cooperate in and at times to be the actual perpetrator of an injustice that can never be removed even if it is requested” (#86). He also criticized laws that “legitimize the direct killing of innocent human beings through abortion or euthanasia” (#72).

One cannot uphold human freedom and dignity by devaluing human life,” he continued. And a society that devalues some people’s lives, he says, will quickly and facilitating their lives, will ultimately lose respect for their other rights and freedoms.”

“The U.S bishops’ 2009 “Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services” state that Catholic health care institutions “may never condone or participate in euthanasia or assisted suicide in any way” (#60). “Dying patients who request euthanasia should receive loving care, psychological and spiritual support and appropriate remedies for pain and other symptoms so that they can live with dignity until the time of natural death,” the directives add in the same section.

But part of the Church’s role in fighting assisted suicide is in educating people that Church teaching does not require the continuation of aggressive or extraordinary medical treatments when their benefit is outweighed by the burdens placed on the patient and his or her family. In addition, many Catholics are unaware that suffering patients may receive as much pain medication as needed, even if it might hasten the patient’s death, as long as the intention is not to cause death but to relieve pain. But in nearly every U.S. state, efforts continue in the legislatures, the courts or the court of public opinion to make assisted suicide a legal option.

The Indiana State Medical Association voted on Sept. 25 to formally oppose physician-assisted suicide. The vote, strongly affected by members of the Catholic Medical Association, makes the introduction of physician-assisted suicide legislation in Indiana “much less likely,” says Glenn Tebbe. As executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, Tebbe serves as the public policy and legislative voice for the Catholic Church in Indiana.

(Nancy Frazier O’Brien is retired deputy editor of Catholic News Service and is freelance book review editor for CNS.)

Faith Alive

Scripture, Church teaching provide a broad perspective on the end of life

By David Gibson

Perspective matters. If I encounter a big problem or challenge, my perspective on the underlying issue at hand plays a key role in whatever action I decide to take.

Sometimes, I am reasonably confident that my perspective on the issue is fine. Other times, I worry that my angle of vision is too limited or overlooks some essential consequence.

Think of a photographer attempting to capture the image of a stunningly beautiful fall flower. Chances are good that he or she will take multiple photos from various angles.

A flower can be viewed from many perspectives. Does its beauty show best from a particular one? Maybe, but maybe not.

Similarly, sometimes a conviction that shapes the way people live can be understood first from one perspective, then from another. Often, enough of these perspectives complement each other.

An example of this is found in St. John Paul II’s 1995 encyclical “Evangelium Vitae” (“The Gospel of Life”). An encyclical forcefully affirms the dignity of all human life from conception to natural death and encourages heightened commitment to supporting and caring for it.

In the context of abortion, assisted suicide, illnesses and other concerns, he examines this pertinent biblical commandment. “You shall not kill” (Ex 20:13). “In the first place that commandment prohibits murder,” but as will be “brought out in Israel’s later legislation, it also prohibits all personal injury inflicted on another,” the pope explains (#40).

From one perspective, he indicates, the commandment is “negative”—a commandment opposing something. From another perspective, it is positive, implicitly demanding respect, love and care for life.

In this way, the pope fleshes out a customary perspective on the commandment. Its “overall message, which the New Testament will bring to perfection, . . . culminates in the positive commandment that obliges us to be responsible for our neighbor as for ourselves,” he states (#40).

Thus, listening to God’s word in this case means learning “not only to obey the commandment” against killing human life, but to revere, love and foster life, and when someone’s life is “weak or threatened” to offer “a helping hand of love” (#77).

Not surprisingly, given these words of St. John Paul, discussions of assisted suicide in the Church today often pit it view it both in light of the commandment against taking life and the same commandment’s implicit call to give loving, continuous attention to suffering people.

“Dying patients who request euthanasia should receive loving care, psychological and spiritual support and appropriate remedies for pain and other symptoms so that they can live with dignity until the time of natural death,” the directives add in the same section.

But part of the Church’s role in fighting assisted suicide is in educating people that Church teaching does not require the continuation of aggressive or extraordinary medical treatments when their benefit is outweighed by the burdens placed on the patient and his or her family. In addition, many Catholics are unaware that suffering patients may receive as much pain medication as needed, even if it might hasten the patient’s death, as long as the intention is not to cause death but to relieve pain. But in nearly every U.S. state, efforts continue in the legislatures, the courts or the court of public opinion to make assisted suicide a legal option.

The Indiana State Medical Association voted on Sept. 25 to formally oppose physician-assisted suicide. The vote, strongly affected by members of the Catholic Medical Association, makes the introduction of physician-assisted suicide legislation in Indiana “much less likely,” says Glenn Tebbe. As executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, Tebbe serves as the public policy and legislative voice for the Catholic Church in Indiana.

(Nancy Frazier O’Brien is retired deputy editor of Catholic News Service and is freelance book review editor for CNS.)

The Second Vatican Council changed the Church forever, but not always in ways that the bishops who participated in it had foreseen. While Catholicism divided in ways it had not been before, at the same time, we had liberal or progressive Catholics opposed to conservatists or orthodox Catholics as members of the Church. Each took a lesson from the council that they could disagree with one another.

Catholics reflected those views in ways that they didn’t prior to the council, so we suddenly had liberal and conservative partisans. That was true to some extent prior to the council, but differences became more widespread afterward.

Most Catholics liked the new liturgy, with the altars turned around so the priest was facing the people and the priesters no longer used Latin with the modern languages instead of in Latin. People were encouraged to participate in the Mass, unlike pre-Vatican II. Priests and altar servers said their prayers in Latin while the congregation often sang their own prayers, bells alerting the congregation that this was about to take place. Lay people assumed new roles as lectors and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion was introduced.

But not all Catholics liked the changes. Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who participated in Vatican II, said there was so much with many of its pronouncements that he founded the Society of St. Pius X, and ultimately led millions of followers into schism. The priests of the society continued to celebrate the Mass according to the Roman Missal of 1962, which was issued before the council’s reform of the liturgy. Many lay Catholics sought to maintain as much of the Latin Mass as possible which caused quite the unrest in our home.

When his crew did occasionally appear, they repeatedly neglected to show up for work. “This is an opportunity to change some of the things up, and to see the space in a whole new way,” she said. She pulled out multiple paint samples and pictures of “inspiration rooms,” along with her notebook, full of sketches. She suggested moving the furnishing around and lightening the paint to let the hand-stained wood take center stage. She provided many other tips to enliven the space.

She told me that I was starting with a blank slate, and encouraged me to see what she could do.

“I know it’s a mess now, but have hope for the transformation,” she told me. Three months after the flood, I sit writing this column in a home that finally has ceilings, walls and flooring again. I never thought that something as bad as the room could be made whole—and beautiful—andAgain.

It’s November, and this Holy Year of Mercy, as declared by Pope Francis during the 600th anniversary of the first appearance of Our Lady at Fatima, has reminded me that everyone is worthy of God’s mercy. This Holy Year of Mercy, I’ve been reminded that God’s grace, even the darkness of life and both of our parents had helped build with their own hands was in ruins. I thought maybe we should just knock down a couple walls and build again.

I expressed these thoughts to a friend, who quickly came by to give me a pep talk. “You have a friend who has taught me more about mercy than I can articulate. You have to believe in charity, not charity’s husband, and she says she prays for the conversion of the convict’s heart.”

She encouraged me to pray for those who have wandered from God’s love. Jen has reminded me that everyone is worthy of God’s love. As Pope Francis says, we must “meet people where they are,” and help them make their way to God, whose arms are wide open. We must also forgive ourselves.

Despite mean-spirited occurrences happening around us, this Year of Mercy is the only lovely thing I have. “The merciful long for justice, but mercy is more,” I pray for them to do with the knowledge that God’s grace, even the darkness of life and both of our parents had helped build with their own hands was in ruins. I thought maybe we should just knock down a couple walls and build again.

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The Sunday Readings

Sunday, November 4, 2016

- 2 Maccabees 7:1-2, 9-14
- 2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5

This weekend, the 32nd Sunday of Ordinary Time, the Church presents as the first reading a section from the Second Book of Maccabees. The Maccabees. First or Second, rarely appears as a reading at Mass. These books date from a period only two centuries before Christ. They rose from a very dark period in the history of God’s people. After the death of Alexander the Great, who had conquered much of the present-day Middle East, his generals scrambled to succeed him. One of them, Ptolemy, became the pharaoh of Egypt and was an ancestor of Cleopatra.

Another of them, Seleucus, became king of Syria. A successor of Seleucus, Antiochus IV, believed himself to be divine. He demanded that his subjects, including the Jews, worship him. Anyone who refused this demand paid dearly. These two books of Maccabees lionized these pious Jewish martyrs, who refused to forsake the one God of Israel.

This weekend’s reading describes quite vividly the penalty Antiochus IV reserved for those who denied that he was a god. Heroism, therefore, is one lesson. Another is about the after-life. The reading mentions the after-life as a reward for holy living on Earth. The reward for holy living on Earth. The readings teach us, and they console and inspire us. They teach us that human sin, turning away from God, can bring upon people enormous injury and destruction. If we follow God, we will find the better way to life, harmony and wholeness. Even so, life on Earth, although we must endeavor to make it good and productive, is not the end in itself. As the bishops at the Second Vatican Council saw it, earthly life is a pilgrimage. All humans move from birth to death. Everyone dies. True believers move not to death, but they pass death as a milestone on their way to eternal life. These readings also remind us that the allurements that so often drive humans to hurt themselves and others inevitably will pass away. God will endure. His goodness will triumph.

Reflection
War has tormented every generation of Americans since the Revolutionary War. Americans died in the War of 1812, the Civil War, World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the continuing war against terrorism. In a sense, then, catastrophe and death fill our own history, just as such horror was part of Hebrew history. For us, and even as we fight our personal wars, with whatever foes assail us, it is easy to be discouraged. These readings teach us, and they console and inspire us.

We are humans, nothing less but nothing more. We are nothing less in that we can decide to live so as to receive as God’s gift eternal life itself. We are nothing more in that we need God.

Question Corner
Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Despite theological differences, Christians and Muslim seek to worship the same God

Q: am a practicing Catholic who reads the Catechism of the Catholic Church daily. I also read the Quran to try to understand what the Islamic faith teaches. The catechism, in #841, states that the Creator of the heavens and the Earth is the same Creator as the Islamic faith worships (Allah). But in the Quran, in Surah 18, it says that Allah has no sons or daughters and (by implication) can be no part of a trinity. Can you explain to me, then, how the catechism came to that conclusion? (Georgia)

A: The section of the Catechism of the Catholic Church that you reference (#841) quotes the Second Vatican Council’s “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church” in saying that Muslims “profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day.” As you validly point out, the Quran has no vision of God as Trinitarian, and states specifically that Allah has no sons or daughters. But for two people to describe an object differently does not mean that they are describing two different objects. So to say that Judaism, Christianity and Islam are all Abrahamic religions does not mean that they are equally true, or speak of God with the same degree of accuracy, or that God’s care what we call him. It means instead that all three faiths are pointing to, offering worship to and attempting to describe the same reality, namely Abraham’s God: One God alone who is sovereign Lord, to whom all must be obedient and who embodies what is ultimately most important for someone’s life. It should also be noted that, despite significant differences in understanding of the nature of God between Christians and Muslims, the use of the Arab word “Allah” in reference to God is not problematic for the Church. Arab-speaking Catholics and other Christians in the Middle East, whose ancestors professed faith in Christ centuries before the emergence of Islam, have long used and still use today the word “Allah” to refer to God as Christians have traditionally understood him.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 20 Columbia Circle Dr. Albany, New York 12203.)

Daily Readings

Monday, November 7
Titus 1:1-9
Psalm 24:1b-4h, 5-6
Luke 17:1-6

Tuesday, November 8
Titus 2:1-8, 11-14
Psalm 37:3-4, 18, 23, 27, 29
Luke 17:7-10

Wednesday, November 9
The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica
Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12
Psalm 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9
1 Corinthians 3:14-11, 16-17
John 2:13-22

Thursday, November 10
St. Leo the Great, pope and doctor of the Church
Philémon 7-20
Psalm 146:7-10
Luke 17:20-25

My Journey to God

We are Sinners All, at the Door of Mercy

By Katie Rahman

Do not look up to us in our glassy hues of reds and blues or as unsmiling, plaster piety. See our tepidness. See our arrogance. See our humanness. And be encouraged.

We are holy, not perfect. Shame clinging to us for we were raw, exposed. And yet. And yet. We came to the door of mercy. And He. He is open.

And we. We walk in.


The Catholic group honors Justice Scalia posthumously for faith witness

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Noted law professor Robert George, while serving as the master of ceremonies for the Catholic Information Center’s annual dinner in Washington on Oct. 26, said that night, “We honor two great men—Antonin Scalia and St. John Paul II.”

The center posthumously honored Justice Scalia with its fifth annual St. John Paul II Award for the New Evangelization. Scalia was an associate justice on the U.S. Supreme Court from 1986 until his death on Feb. 13 at age 79.

The award was presented to Maureen Scalia, his widow, and to one of their nine children, Father Paul Scalia, a priest of the Diocese of Arlington, VA.

“We need to remember that we are brothers and sisters in the family of the Church and that we share the Church’s mission,” Father Scalia said.

Justice Scalia will be remembered for being a good man, a good person, a good priest and a good judge,” Father Scalia said. “His great legal mind was not the only thing that made him great. He was a great soul.”

Following the award presentation, a video was shown of a speech Scalia gave to law students on the church’s role in public life.

In closing, Whelan encouraged Catholics to emulate Scalia. “May we all be inspired by his example to live Catholic lives of integrity. May we see not with the eyes of men but with the eyes of faith. May we be wise in Christ. And may we, too, have the courage to suffer the contempt of the sophisticated world.”

Justice Scalia’s legacy

The keynote speaker said the impact of Scalia’s legacy could be seen by the “thousands of thousands of mourners who waited for hours in cold weather to pay their respects as his body lay in repose at the Supreme Court.”

Whelan noted the similarities that Scalia had with the justice’s favorite saint, Thomas More. Scalia’s official Supreme Court portrait showed a painting of the saint on his desk.

Both had great legal minds that carried them to the heights of governmental power. Both were noted for their wit and their capacity for friendship. Both were imbued in controversies over the nature of marriage and religious liberty. Both were men of faith and of prayer, he said.

Whelan noted that Scalia admired St. Thomas More for being a “tool for Christ” in the eyes of the world, as that statesman was executed by the order of King Henry VIII after refusing to publicly support the king’s divorce and second marriage out of fidelity to the pope and Catholic teaching.

The keynote speaker said that Scalia’s rulings on cases involving issues such as abortion, marriage and religious freedom were guided not by his Catholic faith, but by his adherence to the text of the Constitution, and he noted that the justice once said, “I don’t think there’s any such thing as a Catholic judge. There are good judges and bad judges.”

Whelan also praised Scalia as a family man. “We celebrate Justice Scalia for his 55 years of devoted marriage to his wonderful wife. And we take delight in the visible fruits of that marriage: their nine remarkable children—one priest, four husbands and fathers, four wives and mothers, [and] their 36 grandchildren born so far.”

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Praying for the king

Thai Catholic students pray as they participate in tributes honoring Thailand’s late King Bhumibol Adulyadej on Oct. 27 at St. Dominius School in Bangkok. King Bhumibol, one of the world’s longest-reigning monarchs, died on Oct. 13 at age 88. (CNS photo/Narong Sangnak, EPA)
Massive earthquake destroys churches, including basilica, in Norcia

ROME (CNS)—Priests in central Italy were instructed to celebrate Mass outdoors following another devastating earthquake that rocked and brought one of its most spiritually and historically significant churches tumbling down.

Cardinal Guatier Bassetti of Perugia-Citta della Pieve advised priests to not celebrate Mass indoors over the next several days, including on Nov. 1, the Solemnity of All Saints, which is also a national holiday in Italy.

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Massive earthquake destroys churches, including basilica, in Norcia

ROME (CNS)—Priests in central Italy were instructed to celebrate Mass outdoors following another devastating earthquake that rocked and brought one of its most spiritually and historically significant churches tumbling down.

The 6.5 magnitude earthquake struck Norcia in the early morning on Oct. 30 and destroyed the Basilica of St. Benedict. The pope said the Church's existing norm of the Church 'the best and most sacred norm for all. ' It is the law of God much more than our authority, a supreme concern for humanity considered in its integral fullness, dignity and destiny much more than any partial concern,' he said, which makes this existing norm of the Church "the best and most sacred norm for all."

"After offering spiritual support to the people in town following this morning's intense earthquake, the entire monastic community is together again in our mountain monastery which overlooks a now fractured Norcia," the monks said in a message posted on their blog.

The quake was felt along much of the Italian peninsula, including Maderia Beach, Fl., 2BR/2BA, pool & 25ft photos, maps. Call Robin at 317-506-8516.

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 November 4, 1966, issue of The Criterion:

- Pope defers decision on birth control
- Vatican City—Pope Paul VI said he is delaying his long-awaited decision on abortion, birth control and sterilization for another year because the conclusions of the international commission that has been working on the problem lack "the necessary definitiveness." He promised that Catholics that the Church's existing norm for all. "This means that he considers the current situation not binding as if the teaching authority [magisterium] of the Church were in a state of doubt.” That means that, however, "rather in a moment of study and reflection, concerning matters which have been put before us as most of the attentive consideration. It is the 'law of God much more than our authority, a supreme concern for humanity considered in its integral fullness, dignity and destiny much more than any partial concern,' he said, which makes this existing norm of the Church 'the best and most sacred norm for all.'"
- Dedicated to Pope John: New Madison school seeks four fund donors
- MADISON, Ind. — Tangible evidence of lay leadership coming to grips with basic issues is evidenced in the construction of the new consolidated elementary school being completed here which will serve four parishes in the area. The Pope John XXIII School, now ready for occupancy, will replace present facilities at St. Mary’s [built in 1976] and St. Michael’s [1965] parish schools and ‘downtown’ Madison. Four hundred youngsters from those two parishes, St. Patrick’s parish and St. Anthony’s parish in nearby China, will move into the 16-classroom, two-story building very soon.

- New state Conference will meet
- "The first general assembly of the newly-formed state-wide bishops’ conference will meet Tuesday, Nov. 29, in Indianapolis. Archdiocese (Pope C.)" Schulte announced this week. Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House will host the Indiana Catholic Conference in its organizational meeting.

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What was in the news on November 4, 1966? A delay in the decision on birth control, a new school in Madison and the first session of the ICC