Cardinal-designate Tobin gives thanks to archdiocese as he heads to Newark

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

One of my favorite descriptions of the experience of faith is “a willingness to be surprised by God.” By that standard, the last weeks have been exceptionally “faith-filled.”

The first jolt came on Oct. 9, when I learned that Pope Francis had named me to the College of Cardinals. The second tremor arrived on Oct. 22, when I received a phone call from the ambassador of the Holy See to the United States, the papal nuncio, who informed me that Pope Francis had appointed me as the Archbishop of Newark, N.J. This assignment was announced publicly today (Nov. 7), and I will be installed in Newark on Jan. 6, 2017.

Receiving that second shock, I immediately thought of you, the people of this great Archdiocese whose pastoral care was entrusted to me four years ago. I remembered how you welcomed me, offered your support in so many ways, forgave my mistakes and limitations and always assured me of your love and the precious backing of your prayer. The thought of leaving you devastated me. I have had many sleepless nights and shed more than a few tears.

I had always understood my vocation as that of a missionary disciple, one whom Jesus called to be with Him so that He might send me out to preach and heal. Becoming your archbishop, I realized that this missionary also had to become a pastor. The model for all pastoral ministry is Jesus the Good Shepherd, who “knows his own” and his “own know him” (Jn 10:14). Since Oct. 18, 2012, all of you, the beloved People of God, became “my” people.

God created among us bonds of love, mercy, forgiveness and joy. Together we formed a mission and became a church. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is one of the most beautiful in America. It is not a new assignment for me, as I have been archbishop here since Nov. 7, 2012.

The Lord commanded us to love, forgive and heal, and His mission continues. We will say goodbye in faith. We will remain united in the breaking of the bread. We will also be a moment for us to say goodbye in faith. We will remain united in the communion of saints as well as in the breaking of the bread.

Your brother in Christ the Redeemer,

+ Joseph W. Tobin, C.S.C.

Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin addresses the media during a Nov. 7 press conference at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, N.J., in which he was introduced as the new shepherd of the Archdiocese of Newark. (Photo by Sharon Al Frank, Archdiocese of Newark)

‘God’s will’ leads Cardinal-designate Tobin to new post in Newark, N.J.

By John Shanughnessy

Referring to “my beloved Archdiocese of Indianapolis,” Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin continued to express his love and gratitude for the people of central and southern Indiana even while he noted that he believes “God’s will” has led him to become the new archbishop of the Archdiocese of Newark.

Cardinal-designate Tobin’s emotions were captured in remarks he made at the beginning of a press conference in Newark, N.J.

“The news of my appointment to the Archdiocese of Newark evoked both shock and sadness,” Cardinal-designate Tobin said.

“I recently marked four years as the Archbishop of Indianapolis and had come to love deeply the people of central and southern Indiana. It is gut-wrenching to think of leaving the wonderful clergy, religious and faithful of the local Church, as well as the many friends I have among people of other faiths and those of no faith.

“At the same time, the 64-year-old cardinal designate accepted his assignment to Newark as God’s plan for him.

“I have understood that God has called me to live my baptism as a missionary disciple: one who is called by Jesus to be with Him and to be sent forth to preach and to heal,” he said. “I accept this assignment to Newark and understand it as God’s will for me. God’s grace has sustained me so far, and I trust I will have what I need to serve well the people of God in this great archdiocese.”

The press conference was part of the whirlwind that has been Cardinal-designate Tobin’s life since he was appointed.

See Newark, page 8

Local Church will miss caring shepherd and his ‘humble and joyful servant’s heart’

By Natalie Hoelter

The word crept through the social media grapevine during the first weekend of November, rumors that Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin was being reassigned to head the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J. The rumors proved to be true. On the morning of Nov. 7, a statement from Cardinal-designate Tobin appeared on the Archdiocese of Indianapolis’ website confirming the news.

The Criterion reached out to Catholics throughout the Church in central and southern Indiana to gather reaction to the news: priests, religious, lay Catholics, and those who work closely with Cardinal-designate Tobin.

The responses ran the gamut of emotions, but a common thread appeared: the Catholic community here is praying for Cardinal-designate Tobin in his new missionary field.
Local Holy Doors of Mercy close on Nov. 13, other means of plenary indulgence are still possible through Nov. 20

Pope Francis issues new statutes for Pontifical Academy for Life

Mercy plenary indulgence required for each plenary indulgence. However, reception of Communion and in the sacrament of penance can apply to Indianapolis or the SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis or throughout the world will be closed on Nov. 13. Plenary indulgences are still possible via the other means listed below. For more information on indulgences, consult paragraphs 1471-1479 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Local Holy Doors of Mercy close on Nov. 13, other means of plenary indulgence are still possible through Nov. 20

Four ways of receiving a Holy Year of Mercy plenary indulgence

Visiting a pilgrimage church
Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin has designed new rules for Indianapolis and for St. Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, and the Archdiocese of Our Lady of Einsiedeln 200 Hill Drive, in St. Meinrad, as the two pilgrimage churches for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The hours the holy doors are available are as follows:
- SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral: Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat. 4-6:30 p.m. and Sun. 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For a large group or to request a special time, call the parish office at 317-634-4519. The doors will be closed at the end of the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Nov. 13.
- Archdiocese Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln: 5 a.m.-10 p.m. every day, bearing in mind that prayer services and Mass take place in the archdiocese multiple times a day. The doors will be closed at the end of the 9:30 a.m. (CT) Mass, attended by students wishing to reinstate Seminary and School of Theology.

In order to receive a plenary indulgence by visiting either of these pilgrimage churches, Catholics need to fulfill the following conditions:
- Pass through the holy doors of the pilgrimage church.
- Make a profession of faith in the church (either the Apostles’ or Nicene Creed).
- Pray for the pope’s intentions and the pope himself.
- Meditate on mercy while receiving Communion during a period either 20 days before or after visiting the pilgrimage church.
- Participate in the sacrament of penance during a period either 20 days before or after visiting the pilgrimage church.

The sick and elderly who are unable to visit a pilgrimage church
- Make a profession of faith (either the Apostles’ or Nicene Creed).
- Pray for the pope’s intentions and the pope himself.
- If receiving Communion is not possible, then a person may also participate in a televised Mass or one shown on the Internet.
- Only if possible, participate in the sacrament of penance during a period either 20 days before or after making the profession of faith and praying for the pope and his intentions.

Perform a spiritual or corporal work of mercy
- Spiritual works of mercy:
  - Counsel the doubtful
  - Instruct the ignorant
  - Attend the sick
  - Give drink to the thirsty
  - Clothe the naked
  - Shelter the homeless
  - Visit the sick
  - Visit the imprisoned
  - Bury the dead
- Corporal Works of Mercy:
  - Feed the hungry
  - Clothe the naked
  - Shelter the homeless
  - Visit the sick

Incorporated people who are unable to visit a pilgrimage church
- Make a profession of faith (either the Apostles’ or Nicene Creed).
- Pray for the pope’s intentions and the pope himself.
- Fulfill the above conditions in a jail or prison chapel. If they cannot do this or if the facility does not have a chapel, they can be carried out in a prisoner’s cell.
- Only if possible, receive Communion and meditate on mercy during a period either 20 days before or after making the profession of faith and praying for the pope and his intentions.
- Only if possible, participate in the sacrament of penance during a period either 20 days before or after making the profession of faith and praying for the pope and his intentions.

Pope Francis issues new statutes for Pontifical Academy for Life

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—After expressing his hope for renewed energy and a broader scope of research and activities, the new statutes of the Pontifical Academy for Life, Pope Francis has issued new statutes for the research and advisory body.

The main goal of the academy, as founded in 1994 by St. John Paul II, is still “the defense and promotion of the value of human life and the dignity of the person,” according to the new statutes, which were published on Nov. 5 at the Vatican.

The new statutes add, however, that achieving the goal includes studying ways for the protection of human life and the spiritual value with a view to an authentic “human ecology” and the “real indifference” to any work of mercy that a person does in order to receive an indulgence.†

The new rules also repeated the requirement that members “undertake to promote and defend the principles regarding the value of life and the dignity of the human person expressed in conformity with the magisterium of the Church.” However, the new rules remove a requirement that members sign the “Declaration of the Servants of Life,” a statement geared particularly to members who are physicians and medical researchers. The statement provided explicit Church teaching on the sacredness of human life, including an obligation not to perform “detrimental research on the embryo or fetus, elective abortion, or euthanasia.”†

Offical Appointment

Effective Nov. 4, 2016

Rev. Jeffrey Godecker appointed Director of Ongoing Formation for Priests for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

(This appointment is from the office of the Most Rev. Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archishop of Indianapolis.)†

The Criterion

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Canon law provides for the governance of the archdiocese during transition

By Sean Gallagher

The Nov. 7 announcement of the appointment of Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin as Archbishop of Newark, N.J., has left the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for the time without an archbishop. But the Church’s Code of Canon Law provides for the steady day-to-day leadership of the archdiocese until the pope appoints a new shepherd to lead the Church in central and southern Indiana.

Father Joseph Newton, who leads the archdiocese’s Metropolitan Tribunal as vicar judicial, said that the guidance canon law gives the archdiocese in this situation is a blessing. “The law tells us that it is going to be all right, there are real and practical mechanisms in place that see to it that the people of the archdiocese are taken care of, that their needs are met, and that the sacramental life of the Church continues,” he said. “We are sad at the loss of [Cardinal-designate] Tobin, but the law gives us the room to grieve, to process, to heal and to hope, knowing that we are in the good hands of an archdiocesan administrator as we await our new local shepherd.”

Father Newton explained how the archdiocese will be governed during the time from the announcement of Cardinal-designate Tobin’s appointment to Newark and the choosing of a new archbishop of Indianapolis.

The following is a summary of that explanation:

At the time of the announcement of Cardinal-designate Tobin’s appointment to the Archdiocese of Newark, he ceased to be the archbishop of Indianapolis and became its archdiocesan administrator.

Cardinal-designate Tobin’s authority as such is more limited than when he served as archbishop. The main canonical principle that governs the archdiocese in the absence of an archbishop is that “no innovation is to be made” (Canon 428 §1).

For example, Cardinal-designate Tobin cannot make any significant changes to the archdiocese that should be left to the discretion of the next archbishop.

At that time, the archdiocesan administrator has the authority of a bishop, overseeing the day-to-day governance of the archdiocese, but making no significant changes that should be left to the discretion of the next archbishop.

For example, he may celebrate the sacrament of confirmation and may also appoint priests to serve in parishes as associate pastors or administrators. He may not appoint them as pastors or deacons of the archdiocese.

In general, the archdiocesan administrator ceases from his office in ordinary circumstances when a new archbishop is installed.

F.E. Feltz

The cathedral, the ceremonial seat of the archbishop of Indianapolis, sits empty in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Nov. 8, the day after Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin was announced as the new archbishop of Newark, N.J. While the cathedral will remain unused until the appointment of a new archbishop of Indianapolis, the Church’s Code of Canon Law provides for the steady day-to-day governance of the Church in central and southern Indiana in the interim. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)
Cardinal-designate Tobin thanks for your faith-filled leadership

“I remember how you welcomed me, offered me support in so many ways, forgave my mistakes and limitations and always assured me of your love and the precious backing of your prayer. The thought of leaving you devastated me. I have had many sleepless nights and shed more than a few tears.”

—Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin, in his letter dated Nov. 7 to the faithful of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis announcing his appointment as shepherd of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J.

Like many of us, we are still trying to digest the stunning news that our shepherd, Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin, has been appointed to lead the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J.

To say we are shocked and saddened only begins to describe the way we feel as we prepare to say goodbye to the apostolic shepherd the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has been in place. The cardinal-designate is a shepherd’s heart, and he has indeed been a shepherd of more than 1 million religious women and men.

The archdiocese has had a prayerful and respectful preparation for this appointment, and I believe it is evident in the way Cardinal-designate Tobin has been able to lead the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

It is important to remember that this is a time of great transition and change. We must be patient as we welcome Cardinal-designate Tobin to our archdiocese and pray for his success in his new role.

—Mike Krokos, Editor

Refection/John Shaughnessy
Archbishop Tobin’s legacy: Sharing his best ‘gift’

Leave it to a mother to give perspective—and even a touch of comfort.

In preparing for The Criterion’s coverage of Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin being installed as cardinal by Pope Francis on Nov. 19 in Rome, I began reflecting on how the story of our staff has written about him in the four years he has served as shepherd of the archdiocese.

That research led me to a story about Marie Tobin, the now-93-year-old mother of 13 children, including her eldest child whom she calls “Joe.”

The story—written at the time her son was appointed as archbishop in 2012—mentioned the special devotion she has to Jesus, Mary, St. Joseph and St. Thérèse of Lisieux, who is also known as the “Little Flower.” It also included this quote from Mrs. Tobin, “My favorite saying of the Little Flower is, ‘Suffering is a gift.’ ”

Then in a recent interview about her son being named a cardinal on Oct. 9, she noted: “He loves Jesus. I would be afraid that he wouldn’t have heart left [if he had to leave]. I couldn’t imagine how sad he would be. It’s too hard to imagine.”

She then added: “I gave him to God a long time ago when he was ordained. And I know the Lord loves a cheerful giver. So I would be happy wherever he is, because I can’t go back on that.”

Her words reveal a great deal about her deep faith—and the strength of all mothers. A woman gives life to a child, and then spends years nursing, caring, agonizing, comforting and praying for that child—all the time knowing that one day the child will leave her to start a new path in life. And when are the words this mother lives by? “Everything is a gift.”

I’ve tried to embrace that sentiment during my time as staff writer since Pope Francis announced that Archbishop Tobin—our archbishop—would become a cardinal.

The joy that was felt for him throughout the archdiocese—and the hope that he would be the first cardinal to lead the archdiocese—as profound and palpable as his reaction was humble and shocked. Then came the second shock, that Cardinal-designate Tobin was being reassigned to lead the Archdiocese of Newark.

In between those bookings of stunning news were two moments that showed the amazing impact that Archbishop Tobin has had on many people in the archdiocese, moments that also revealed the profound impact that the people of the archdiocese have had on him.

The first moment occurred a day after Archbishop Tobin learned that Pope Francis had named him as one of 17 new cardinals.

At a press conference on Oct. 10, Archbishop Tobin talked about the archdiocese being his teacher in the last four years, how it’s helped to form him. But the most telling moment came in a one-on-one interview following the press conference when he was asked: “When you look at these four years of your life in the archdiocese, leading up to today, what does it mean to you?”

To say we are shocked and saddened only begins to describe the way we feel as we prepare to say goodbye to the apostolic shepherd the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has been in place. The cardinal-designate is a shepherd’s heart, and he has indeed been a shepherd of more than 1 million religious women and men.

It is important to remember that this is a time of great transition and change. We must be patient as we welcome Cardinal-designate Tobin to our archdiocese and pray for his success in his new role.

—Mike Krokos

Sharing his best ‘gift’

Reflection/Natalie Hoefer
Comfort is found in viewing his departure through lens of mercy

I was devastated when I heard the news that Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin was being moved to Newark. Nothing about the move made sense to me. The last time I had this reaction was in 2012 when Pope Francis knew how much his friend loves it here, loves his flock in central and southern Indiana, loves being close to “the mother of all Tobins.” And to move him after only four years? And to set the date of his new appointment such that our archdiocese will have no claim to his being a cardinal? It seemed like such a sour note upon which to end the Holy Year of Mercy.

But God’s ways are not our ways. When has God not made a plan that flies in the face of human logic? What greater lesson have we learned from this holy year, but that our God is a God of mercy?

The human realities of this decision are not our ways. When has God not made a plan that flies in the face of human logic? What greater lesson have we learned from this holy year, but that our God is a God of mercy?

All the human reasons that argue against this decision fail. How can Cardinal-designate Tobin to Newark, they all fade in light of the mercy of this decision: mercy for our Catholic brothers and sisters who are in need of the presence of the shepherd the Archdiocese of Newark. Their archdiocese has struggled with some hardships. They are in need of the pastoral, spiritual leadership that Cardinal-designate Tobin can offer. Through the sorrow, comfort can be found in viewing this decision through the lens of mercy.

We may be truly grieving to see him go, but his own motto comes to mind when considering how to move forward: “Rejoice in the Lord.” These are the words St. Paul wrote to the Philippians while he was enoch in prison. Certainly, God rejoiced: having been blessed by Cardinal-designate Tobin’s pastoral leadership for four years, surely he can offer a week in his column in The Criterion. The knowledge of giving the feeling of the only person in the room when he’s talking with you, even if a long line of people await their turn. Having his example of mercy in ignoring the governor’s ban on Syrian refugees by providing a home for a young couple and their two small children. These are a cause for rejoicing in the Lord, who loved us this shepherd for a time!

Our sadness in having to send him off is shared. But so was the sorrow of the first Christian communities in saying farewell to the missionary Apostles. The departing Apostles always asked for the prayers of the community for the prayers they were leaving. So, too, we pray for Cardinal-designate Tobin, for God’s grace to help him be the shepherd the Archdiocese of Newark needs. And for the Newark Catholic community, that their faith shines and furthers the kingdom under Cardinal-designate Tobin’s leadership.

Cardinal-designate Tobin has been unrelentless about not to worry. So than be anxious about the situation, let us rejoice in the Lord, pray for God’s grace to help him be the shepherd the Church needs. —Mik

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, we entrust Cardinal-designate Tobin to your care.

(Natalie Hoefer is a reporter for The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis)
November is a special time of thanksgiving

I don’t know who first coined this phrase, but I like the term “gratitude month” which is often applied to the month of November—perhaps because it’s the month when we observe the uniquely American holiday of Thanksgiving.

November is also the month that many thousands of religious and other non-profit organizations send out their year-end giving appeals. We may not be always grateful for the number of solicitations we receive, but we should thank God for all the good works that are carried out by our nation’s diverse and effective network of charitable organizations.

November could also be called “holiness month” because it’s the time of year when we remember all the hidden saints, the holy men and women who lived exemplary lives of closeness to God and their neighbors without being officially recognized by the Church or anyone else as saints. We give thanks for these unselfish but very real saints because their lives inspire us, and because their good works live on long after they have joined the company of saints in heaven.

I believe there’s a connection between gratitude and holiness. A grateful person is not self-centered. That’s because he or she recognizes that we are all indebted to God and to many other people (living and deceased) who have made it possible for us to live, to be healthy and happy, and to share in the freedom that comes from being human beings made in the image and likeness of God.

When I am grateful, my eyes are open and I recognize the truth about myself and our world. I am not the center of the universe. I am a member of the family of God, and I give thanks for all the gifts I have received from a generous and loving Father.

Holy people are grateful people. They are also humble and forgiving, always ready to help others, always conscious that they are called to follow in the footsteps of the holy people who have gone before us, including Jesus, his mother Mary and all the saints.

It’s difficult to imagine a saint who is bitter, angry, resentful or totally focused on self. Holiness requires an awareness of our giftedness and the desire to give thanks for all the blessings God has given us in spite of our genuine sufferings, sorrows and fears in this life. Saints are not perfect, but they desire perfection and they pursue it with open and grateful hearts.

Earlier this month, we observed The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls Day, Nov. 2). This is the one day in the Church Year that calls particular attention to those who have died, but who are still struggling to attain for their sins and become holy enough to enter into the fullness of God’s eternal love. All Souls Day reminds us that everyone is called to holiness—to become a saint—and that our opportunities for growing closer to God don’t automatically end when we die. God’s mercy is stronger than death, and through our prayers on their behalf his grace reaches beyond the grave to the “poor souls” who repent their sins and deeply desire to see the face of God.

Leon Bloy, the French novelist who was quoted by Pope Francis during his first homily as pope, said that the only real failure, the only great tragedy in life, is not to become a saint.

This doesn’t mean that we’re all condemned to failure or tragedy. On the contrary, it means that God gives us the grace during our years on Earth to live good lives and to become holy. None of us is perfect in our response to the Lord’s invitation to follow him on the way to holiness, but all of us are called to be grateful for the opportunities we are given to achieve some degree of holiness in accordance with God’s call.

Put another way, we might say that the greatest tragedy in life is our failure to take advantage of all the opportunities God gives us to be grateful, loving and generous people. Considering the extraordinary length, breadth and depth of God’s mercy, which is extended to us at every conceivable moment in our lives, it’s a tragedy indeed if our hearts remain hardened and we fail to grab onto the Lord’s outstretched hand.

Gratitude and holiness are signs that we are close to God. This November, let’s pray for the strength to be grateful in the face of life’s challenges. Let’s pray also that our opportunities for achieving success in life will always be more than sufficient to fulfill our obligations to the Lord. Amen.

November is a special time of thanksgiving

November is a special time of thanksgiving
November 16
Martha and Marie honorees

November 17

November 18

November 19

November 20

November 21

November 22

November 23

November 24

November 25

November 26

November 27

November 28

November 29

Weekend retreat and divorced and separated Catholics for set for Oct. 18-20

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

Planned giving seminar for Nov. 18 at St. Mary Parish in New Albany

Catholic Community Foundation, Inc., in conjunction with St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities and the New Albany Deanery, will offer a free educational session on the basics of estate planning at St. Mary Parish cafeteria, 415 E. Eighth St., in New Albany, from 11:15 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. on Nov. 18. The session will address options available for leaving a legacy, including information on permanent charitable IRA rollovers. Attorney Tim Naville will offer the presentation. An overview of Catholic Community Foundation will also be given. At the end of the session, an optional tour of the St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities campus will be available at 1:15 p.m. Register for the event by Nov. 18 by contacting Mark Sesky at msesky@archindy.org or 812-949-7305, or Joanna Feltz at jfeltz@archindy.org or 317-236-1588.

Sisters of Providence to celebrate Nov. 9 Mass on Feast of Our Lady of Providence

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods will offer a special Mass in honor of Our Lady of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary of the Woods, at 11 a.m. on Nov. 19.

In May 1925, the Sisters of Providence established the National Shrine of Our Lady of Providence. In 2014, the shrine was rededicated in the vestibule of the church. The Sisters of Providence and others gather at the shrine to pray for the many intentions sent to it. Special prayers are offered for the needs of all families, asking for the protection and intercessions of Our Lady of Providence as Queen of the Home. For more information, call 812-535-2952 or e-mail frost@spcm.org.

Donation cards available at Mejier to help St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry

Thru Dec. 31, $10 “Simply Give” donation cards are available for purchase at the Mejier store located at 5550 N. Keystone Ave., in Indianapolis. The cards will be used to replenish the shelves of the Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, which feeds 11,000 people each week.

For more information, log onto www.meijercommunity.com or call 317-441-5733.

Events Calendar

VIPS

Thomas and Jane (Peter) Huber, members of St. Michael Parish in Plainfield, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 12. The couple was married in St. Paul Church in Tell City on Nov. 12, 1966. They have three children, Julie Bishop, Emily Lieb and Laura Noble. They also have eight grandchildren.

Planned giving seminar for Nov. 18 at St. Mary Parish in New Albany

Sisters of Providence to celebrate Nov. 9 Mass on Feast of Our Lady of Providence

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

Weekend retreat and divorced and separated Catholics for set for Oct. 18-20

"Being and Belonging," an annual retreat for divorced and separated individuals that is open to all faiths, will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, on Nov. 18-20.

Participants are invited to relax and enjoy others, with others, listening to their stories and exploring a common loss. The program helps deepen participants’ understanding of the healing process and increase their sense of belonging. They discover and affirm that God is present in both struggles and in hope.

For more information, including pricing, contact Deb VanVleete at 317-236-1586, 800-382-9836, ext. 1586, or CenterforReligiousLife@archindy.org. To register, call Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House at 317-545-7681.

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Donation cards available at Mejier to help St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry

Through Dec. 31, $10 “Simply Give” donation cards are available for purchase at the Mejier store located at 5550 N. Keystone Ave., in Indianapolis. The cards will be used to replenish the shelves of the Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, which feeds 11,000 people each week.

For more information, log onto www.meijercommunity.com or call 317-241-5733.

Sisters of Providence to celebrate Nov. 9 Mass on Feast of Our Lady of Providence

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods will offer a special Mass in honor of Our Lady of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary of the Woods, at 11 a.m. on Nov. 19.

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Thompson takes pride in ICC's work to aid the poor, vulnerable

By John Shaughnessy

Nel Thompson's face lights up when she tells the story about her parents.

“They were up in years, and it was a day where it was 30 below with the wind chilling. And there was snow,” she recalls about her mom and dad, Katie and Ed Lamperski. “We called them up to check on them. They were gone. They went to church.”

Thompson shares that story to show the foundation and inspiration for her 42-year—and counting—career of dedication and commitment to the archdiocese and the broader Church.

“My mom was ahead of her time,” Thompson says, administrative assistant for the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), the public policy voice of the Church in Indiana regarding state and national matters. “She was ahead of that saying, ‘What would Jesus do?’ She would always tell us that. That’s always in the back of my mind.”

While that consistency marks Thompson’s life and her faith, it’s also the quality she appreciates most about the work of the ICC.

“The one thing that sticks with me about the ICC and the Catholic Church in general is, it’s always constant,” says Thompson, a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “We work year after year for the poor, the vulnerable, and the common good and well-being of the people of Indiana.

“Even though other things change, that remains the same. And the conference’s dedication to getting that word out to the legislature is always constant. The Church’s position is not always the popular position or what the legislature will go with, but that’s what I pride the conference on—the dedication.”

Thompson personifies that dedication, according to Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the ICC.

“I could not function without her,” says Tebbe, who has led the conference and represented the bishops of Indiana in public policy concerns for the past 13 years. “She has the same regard and respect for the three executive directors she has worked with through the years, including four archishops of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

This favorite moment unfolded when she reached her 10th anniversary of work for the conference. To mark the occasion, then-conference director Des Ryan and other staff members were taking her to lunch. But before the meal, Ryan had a meeting with then-Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara. As the meeting ended, both men talked about their lunch plans.

“The archbishop said, ‘Oh, I’ll meet you there,’ to Des,” Thompson says. “Des came back to the office and told me about it. I said, ‘That will be fine.’ So we went to lunch, and I remember the archbishop ordering barbecued ribs, and there was barbecue sauce and everything. To me, I thought, ‘Wow, what a human way to see a bishop. That’s kind of an honor to see him in that light as well as a bishop.’ ”

Thompson smiles again as she continues, “A lot of Catholics probably can’t say that the bishops of the state know them by their first name. It’s been a privilege to work with the bishops. I’ve always enjoyed working with them.”

She has the same regard and respect for the three executive directors she has worked with during her 42 years.

“All three have provided very good leadership, and they’ve been so faith-filled and dedicated, and they love the Church and what they do at the Statehouse. Each had their own different personality and their different way of coming about it, but their dedication is always the same. They’ve been good bosses to work for.”

It’s been a career that began in an era of carbon paper, typewriters and bulk mailings, a career in which she has handled the changes to Facebook, electronic communications and websites. It’s also been a time when she and her husband, Dan, have been married for 39 years.

Now, the Indiana Catholic Conference is marking 50 years.

“My hope for the conference is that it continues on with the good work it’s been doing, and that more people will become more aware of the conference, and be involved in what we do,” she says.

At 62, Thompson hopes to be a part of that effort for a few more years.

“I just enjoy what I do. There came a time when I thought, ‘You know, it’s really a neat thing that my job can also be a ministry.’ The Church and the work coincided. That’s always been an added plus for me. You go to work every day, but you also go to work for the Church every day.

“You’re part of something larger than yourself.”

“I depend on her to handle the operations and the general daily matters. She has been the constant for three directors—Ray Rufo, Des Ryan and me. She has put up with an Italian, an Irishman and a German. Who else can do that and still keep smiling and happy in one’s job?”

—Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference
named as one of 17 new cardinals by Pope Francis on Oct. 9. Thirteen days later, he was told he would be reassigned from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to the Archdiocese of Newark.

Before appointing Cardinal-designate Tobin, Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Archbishop John J. Myers, who has served as Newark’s spiritual leader since 2001. Archbishop Myers is 75, the age at which canon law requires bishops to submit their resignations to the pope.

Cardinal-designate Tobin is only the second shepherd of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to be reassigned to another archdiocese. Archbishop Joseph E. Ritter, born in New Albany, was appointed to lead the Archdiocese of St. Louis in 1946 after having led the Church in central and southern Indiana since 1934.

The demographic differences between the archdioceses of Indianapolis and Newark are dramatic.

Cardinal-designate Tobin is moving from an archdiocese that has about 224,000 Catholics in 39 counties to an archdiocese that has 1.5 million Catholics in four counties.

In the background, behind the empty podium from which Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin usually speaks at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis, he is seen on a live-feed addressing those assembled during a press conference in Newark, N.J., on Nov. 7. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

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A ‘humble and joyful servant’s heart’
Moving into an archdiocese where
he has been celebrated in 20 languages
Cardinal-elect Tobin will be able to use
the skills he’s developed in working with
catholics from around the world, as well as
those in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis
who hail from numerous countries.
We know the archbishop as being a really
good supporter of the Interultural
Ministry, opening his heart to people
from all over the world, says Sally Stovall,
a leader of the African Catholic community.
I don’t think the pope would have
selected him if he didn’t feel he could
make a connection, that he could handle
that [assignment], but it is a loss for us.
Stovall expressed her gratitude
to Cardinal-designate Tobin, too, as
a member of Holy Angels Parish in
Indianapolis, a predominantly African American parish which has been without
a church building for several years.
“His support and dedication to
helping everyone, that was the best thing,”
she says of his decision to allow the parish
to build a new church. “We wish him
well there, but it was obvious that what they’re
going—they’re so blessed.”
Gabriela Ross, archdiocesan
coorindor of catechetical resources,
says she is grateful for Cardinal-designate
Tobin’s “humble and joyful servant’s heart”
with which she has worked for 10 years.
“It’s amazing how open he is to other
cultures and understands the need for
people to worship taking their language and
culture into consideration,” she says.
“He worked to help all the [ethnic]
Catholic communities come together and
be integrated into the parishes.”
Msgr. Stumpf cites the cardinal-
designate as a “model to emulate.”
“Serving on the Archdiocesan
Pastoral Council. ‘Serving on the Archdiocesan
Pastoral Council has been a privilege
for me. Cardinal-elect Tobin genuinely
appreciated the advice and counsel I
was given at these meetings. I am sorry
that he will not be the one to see the
Pastoral Plan developed and implemented,
but I trust that his successor will also
desire input from all sectors of the archdiocese.
A marvelous servant to priests!’
Cardinal-designate Tobin was a “very
faithful priest and a faithful bishop,” not
just to the lay Catholics of the archdiocese
but also to its priests, says retired Father
Michael Welch.
“He’s just been a marvelous servant
to the priests, taking care of his priests,” he
says.
“I think that the archbishop would probably say
himself that there were a lot of us in the archdiocese thought that,
were hoping it was not so soon.”
“I was watching the feed [from the
Newark press conference] this morning,
and I think I sensed a little bit of sadness
and a little bit of anxiety. But also, as he
said in his letter to us, that’s the challenge
of faithfully following Christ and
following where he needs us to go, because
he’s very faithful.”
Father Jonathan Meyer, pastor of All
Saints Parish in Jennings County, says
Cardinal-designate Tobin’s “heart goes out to”
(Cardinal-designate Tobin). “I know what it’s like to have
challenges, a serious challenge coming at some point,
but I trust that his successor will also
reinvigorated everybody. His love of
God is just so real, and his humility and humaneness have been so captivating for
everyone of us.”
Mgr. Stumpf cites the cardinal-
designate as “the first bishop I’ve ever
known that really causes us to start
thinking about what is our contribution
globally,” and that “he’s so aware of those
who are marginalized and who are in
need. We’ve always been aware of that,
but he helped us to see that more to the
front of our minds, for that’s the core to the
Church.”
Ultimately, we need to continue to be
the Church, and we need to be called to be
the Church.”
“I think we can each try to keep
doing those things, too, we’re going to
find better ways to look at the Church,
not only in our backyard but around the
world.”
—(Sean Gallagher and John Shaughnessy
contributed to this article)
Clergy deliver history of black Catholic movement to Notre Dame

By John Shumuey

When Jeannine “Andy” Murphy drove to Oldenburg with three friends from high school, the Indianapolis writer thought the trip would just be fun time to connect with one of their old teachers. But in an intimate setting, she would be drawn to homesickness for her own past, and a character of goodness, a character of women in people’s minds.”

“New film captures history and lives of Franciscan sisters in Oldenburg

By Jeanne "Andy" Murphy

New film captures history and lives of Franciscan sisters in Oldenburg

When Jeannine “Andy” Murphy drove to Oldenburg with three friends from high school, the Indianapolis writer thought the trip would just be fun time to connect with one of their old teachers. But in an intimate setting, she would be drawn to homesickness for her own past, and a character of goodness, a character of women in people’s minds.”

Father Kenneth Taylor, president of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, pushes a cart of archival material earmarked for the Theodore Hesburgh Library on the campus of the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., on Oct. 25. Assisting him is Holy Cross Brother Roy Smith of Notre Dame. Brother Roy is a native of Indianapolis. (CNS photo/courtesy Catholic African World Network)
Faith-filled women played key role in early growth of the Church

By Marcellino D'Ambrosio

In recent years, some have charged that the role of women in the early Church was glossed over or, even worse, deliberately suppressed. The best-selling novel The Da Vinci Code is a case in point of such a mindset. But anything beyond a superficial reading of the New Testament shows the important place women had in the early Church.

Women in the early Church did not generally leave behind descriptions of themselves. But their lives had such a powerful impact that their stories were written, recited and sung from their day down to ours. One of the most powerful evangelistic forces in the first few centuries was the extraordinary care given by Christians to the poor and the sick. Two of the most powerful evangelistic forces in the first few centuries was the extraordinary care given by Christians to the poor and the sick. Two of the most powerful evangelistic forces in the first few centuries was the extraordinary care given by Christians to the poor and the sick. Two of the most powerful evangelistic forces in the first few centuries was the extraordinary care given by Christians to the poor and the sick.

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20th-century Church: Pope Paul issues ‘Humanae Vitae’

The reaction the encyclical received was unprecedented in the Church. Though many dismissed talk of priests beginning advising husbands and wives to use their own judgment in matters of birth control, today, polls indicate that most Catholics ignore the ban on contraception.

The decades following the publication of “Humanae Vitae” were marked by bitter disagreements among theologians, some faithfully upholding the papal decisions and deciding to reject it. Soon, dissent from traditional Catholic teachings became commonplace.

Eventually, even those who are pro-choice on abortion have come to consider themselves faithful Catholics. Eventually the expression “caferital Catholic” entered the lexicon, meaning a Catholic who chooses only those teachings of the Church that he or she wishes to accept. “Humanae Vitae” put an end to the authority of the popes in matters of birth control. Pope Paul clearly did not expect this reaction. Although he lived another 10 years, he never again wrote another encyclical.

It’s great when we’re literally kissing cousins in families. From the Editor Emeritus/ John F. Fink

I’m so-and-so’s child” because they help support their families, educate their kids, and are satisfied with their work. They do like to drink, however, and enjoy a lively social life. It began with Grandpa taking his farm family to town for a Saturday night mountain movie. Everyone went home happy, but safe.

This family is neither unique nor especially gifted, but they represent the typical immigrant desire to prevail in a new country and a new life. When they came here from Norway, they spoke no English and had to farm a poor acreage to make a living. But they trusted in God’s love, worked hard and inspired their kids to do the same.

I like to think of my cousins and our family as a microcosm of our country. We’re all different, but we’re all made in God’s image and likeness. And if we keep on trusting in God’s love and working hard and valuing family, we’ll stay on the right path.

Parish community should help us build up our spiritual life

There are two things to remember about your spiritual life: 1) It extends way beyond your prayer life to the way you treat others, the way you spend your money, the way you conduct yourself, your self-respect and even your politics; 2) It IS about the way you relate to God through your local parish.

As a community of faith, hope and love, the parish community teaches the parishioners how to live in the Holy Spirit. It exists as a sign of the kingdom of God in the world. The parish also points to and advocates for the needs of those from parish life or ministry, but still, parishes are called to strive for holiness. One way we do this is by treating our neighbors the way we would like God to treat us.

For Catholics, the parish includes help to individuals carry out the mission that Jesus proclaimed for his followers—namely, to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to become living examples of Christ in our world.
The Book of Malachi is the source of this weekend’s first reading. Malachi was not a proper name for a person in ancient Israel. Rather, it was an abbreviation of an ancient title, “Messenger of God.” This prophet is thoroughly in step with all the other prophets whose writings we now possess in saying that humans are responsible for their own misery and disappointment in life. Their selfishness or indifference to God leads them into trouble.

Sins take its toll. One day, sinners will have to pay the price. Part of the vice of their temperament is that we are lulled into diminishing the effects of the sins of our sins.

St. Paul’s Second Epistle to the Thessalonians supplies the next reading. Paul must have had an interesting personality. He hurriedly was withdrawing and quiet, yet, for all his assertiveness, he had the humility that rises from genuine wisdom and true faith. He knows that he owes everything to God’s mercy, and he knows that the greatest reward in life is to be at peace with God. He offers himself as an example, because God will save those who trust in God will triumph.

Reflection

The Church is concluding its year of instruction and worship. Next weekend, it will rejoice that God’s salvation and mercy has been poured forth on the world, in and through Christ the King.

So, the Church’s last statement of this(fading) year is its excited proclamation that, despite all the negative forces in the world, despite the attacks of the devil, even despite all the sin, Christ is king, standing as a rock of security on the edge of a raging sea.

These grim realities should teach us. As the prophets warned, as Paul emphatically declared, sin brings us death. None of us can forestall the future including our own, with exactitude. Our deaths may not come as the result of such evil, terrifying circumstances, but we will die nevertheless.

Come what may, however, if we are in Christ, we are with God, we shall live. If we are in Christ, we will live forever. It is Christian redemption.

Why then should we fear? Where, death, is your victory? Where your sting? ?

My Journey to God

Don’t Give Up

By Mary Beth Hand

I am sad that you’re not here. Left with lots of fear.

Where to go, what to do—

Want to ask that of you.

Left with lots of fear.

Learn to how to deal

With life without you around.

Keep my feet on the cross. God will help day-to-day.

Take some of the pain away.

In time there will be peace,

The hurt will cease. Don’t give up.

(From Mary Beth Hand is a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis. She wrote this poem in 2009 in coping with the death of her father. Franciscan friars pray in the cemetery at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in Washington to mark All Souls’ Day on Nov. 2.)

John the Baptist may have been cleansed of original sin while in his mother’s womb

Recently, I heard a priest say on television that some theologians now believe that John the Baptist was born without original sin. This was new information for me but then I looked at the Gospel of Luke where the angel Gabriel tells Zechariah that his son John will be “filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother’s womb” (Lk 1:15).

I asked my local priest and he said that many people are great and holy, but only Mary was born without original sin. What is the current thinking of the Church? Is there something new that I missed? (New Jersey)

Another than Jesus, only the Virgin Mary was conceived without original sin. That is the defined doctrine of the Church, which is celebrated on the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. With regard to John the Baptist, there has never been any definitive declaration by the Church (by way of a conciliar statement or infallible papal pronouncement) that he was born free of original sin.

However—and it may not be generally known by Catholics—there is a common and long-held belief within the Church that John may have at least been cleansed of original sin at a very early point in his life. That belief is based on the scriptural passage that you cited (Gabriel’s words to Zechariah) and also in Luke 1:41 where, upon Mary’s visiting Elizabeth, the baby (John) recognized Jesus and “leaped” in Elizabeth’s womb. The Catholic Encyclopedia says: “As the presence of any sin whatever is incompatible with the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the soul, it follows that at that moment John was cleansed from the stain of original sin. It should be noted, however, that “this moment” took place after the conception of John the Baptist and he was still being formed in his mother’s womb. Therefore, if he was indeed cleansed of original sin at that point, he still would not have been conceived free from it.

Nearly every saint’s feast day is celebrated on the day of the person’s death, the day presumed to mark that saint’s entrance into heaven. The only two exceptions are Our Lady and John the Baptist, who both have feast days marking their births; Long ago, St. Augustine noted that the reason for this is the Church’s common belief that John entered the world freed (in the womb) from original sin.

Q My husband was an officer in the Vietnam War, and I wonder if he probably killed several of the enemy. He says that, if he had to do it over, he would do it again; he was serving his country. He doesn’t expect to ever go to heaven. Is he right? (North Carolina)

A At the time of the Vietnam conflict, opinions varied as to its moral propriety, although Blessed Paul VI argued strongly for the cessation of the conflict by negotiation and consistently tried to bring the warring parties to the table. In 1968, the U.S. Catholic bishops issued a pastoral letter calling upon Congress to allow selective conscientious objection. At the same time, Catholics were never prohibited from participating in the hostilities. So it could well be that your husband felt that the war, and his own participation in it, was morally justified in preserving freedom and preventing Communist aggression. The Catechism of the Catholic Church does say that even in a just war, “non-combatants, wounded soldiers and prisoners must be respected and treated humanely. Actions deliberately contrary to the law of nations and to its universal principles are crimes, as are the orders that command such actions. Blind obedience does not suffice to excuse those who carry them out” (2313).

The My Lai massacre, for example, fails any moral test, but it does not seem, from what you say, that your husband was involved in any such atrocity. He sought only to protect the men in his charge who were under attack. It saddens me that he feels he has forfeited any chance of eternal salvation. I can’t even imagine what a heavy burden that must be. Why not suggest that he talk with a priest, be assured of God’s mercy and perhaps confess any moral misjudgments he may have made, if there were any? (Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbus Circle Dr: Albany, New York 12203.)

The Criterion Friday, November 11, 2016
Speaker urges ‘ethical alternatives’ to use of fetal DNA

By Patricia Huppert Cromwell

Special to The Criterion

SELLERSBURG—The St. Gianna Culture of Life Group at St. John Paul II Parish in Clark County hosted a speaker on Oct. 25 on the commercial use of “electively aborted” human DNA in the creation of childhood vaccines. Dr. Theresa Deisher presented a technical explanation of her premise to an audience of adults and children.

Deisher’s talk centered on the question of whether commercial vaccines made from the cells of aborted human fetuses, which the speakers in the talk—“human anti-vaxxers”—are both unethical and unnecessary. She said that vaccines made from animal cells are less profitable to manufacture than vaccines made from aborted human fetuses.

“‘There is continued interest in harvesting tissue from aborted babies for research and clinical trials,’ Deisher said. "‘Some organs are taken from fetuses between 16 and 26 weeks of gestation. Scientists have moved from using cell lines from animals to those of [voluntarily aborted] human babies.’

The speaker urged parents in the audience to ask their pediatricians what vaccines are made from and if there are ‘moral alternatives’ available, such as vaccines made with non-fetal cells. Deisher believes that some vaccines are ‘contaminated’ with fetal DNA and may cause genetic mutations in some children who receive them.

‘Most families are being given these [fetal DNA-based] vaccines, and are not being told that there are alternatives,’ Deisher said.

Deisher also said that the independent National Bioethics Coordinating Council in Philadelphia “proposes that all vaccines be manufactured with animal DNA, that there be disclosure [to the public] of the sources of vaccines in their packaging, to be used in the model legislation be written and that alternative vaccines be made available.”

The St. Gianna Culture of Life Group is a pro-life organization that is not affiliated with St. Gianna Beretta Molla, an Italian doctor and mother, who chose to have a hysterectomy in order to save the life of her mother. St. Gianna was canonized in 2004. Catholic teaching would allow for a hysterectomy in such a case in order to save the life of the mother, but Deisher chose to save the child instead of herself.

The parish’s St. Gianna group, formed in the early 2000s, has about 15 members, according to Phyllis Burkholder, its president. The group has an activity nearly monthly, including speakers and selling roses to Respect Life Sunday. A future project will be to knit baby booties to line the sidewalk in front of an abortion center in Louisville.

“Our mission is to protect life from both its natural death,” she said. “As St. John Paul II taught in his encyclical ‘The Gospel of Life,’ we need to have a well-formed conscience in order to build a new culture of life.”

St. Gianna member Esther Endris introduced Deisher, who has a Ph.D. in molecular and cellular physiology from Stanford University in California, and has worked in "commercial biotechnology" for 20 years. In 2008, she founded both a for-profit corporation and a nonprofit biomedical research organization to deal with stem-cell research.

(Patricia Huppert Cromwell is a freelance writer and a member of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon.)

Speaker Theresa Deisher discusses how commercial vaccines made from the cells of aborted human fetuses are both unethical and unnecessary during an Oct. 22 presentation at the St. Paul campus of St. John Paul II Parish in Clark County. (Photo by Patricia Huppert Cromwell)
ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS

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Foundation of faith: Religious patch crafts left in wake of disaster

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—When the Benedictine monks in Norcia led residents in prayer before the ruins of their medievally built abbey, they showed one way the Church steps into action in times of crisis.

First responders encouraged the religious to stand near the ruins they should do their job better when the distraught received emotional or spiritual rescue, too. SOS, said Father Anthony Hollowell, who is still connected to “souls in prayer before the ruins of their medieval city, they showed one way the Church steps into action in times of crisis."

For information about rates for classified advertising, call (317) 236-1454.

As central Italy quaked, a city further away was also suffering, the loss on the Florentines’ faces” was unforgettable. Italian Cardinal Giuseppe Betori of Florence, who was 19 at the time, said seeing “the faces” was unforgettable. The natural disaster had been “mud angels.”

Oct. 30 tremors that the people he talks to listen to people vent and dry their tears.”

“One trait that intimately connects them and stands above all others is the priority of relationships. They respect the mysterious uniqueness of each individual, regardless of where they come from. That focus shined through in nearly every encounter that Archbishop Tobin has had an archdiocesan event or a visit to a parish. People have lined up to meet him and talk with him, and he has often stayed late, taking the time with them because they mean that much to him.

It also shined through in his approach to helping the Seminarians’ efforts to make a difference in people’s lives.

Speaking for so many people who worked with him and became friends with him, the chancellor Annette “Mickey” Lentz once noted, “I feel I work alongside him, not for him. You don’t always get those kinds of relationships. It’s very special.”

And it shined through during a pilgrimage to Italy in 2013 as he led a group of pilgrims from the archdiocese up the steep inclines of Siena on the way to the town’s cathedral for Sunday Mass. When he crossed an Italian woman struggling to make it up one of the hills, the archbishop stopped to talk with her. Then he picked her up and carried her up the hill.

While “everything is a gift” is a way of life for Marie Tobin, her oldest son’s approach to life has always seemed to the goal of leading people closer to each other and ultimately closer to God.”

In terms of Archbishop Tobin’s four years in the archdiocese are far too short for many of us. The gift is that we have had the great blessing of sharing these four years together.

(John Shaughnessy is assistant editor of The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.)
Emotional shepherd celebrates last Mass as archbishop at Jennings County parish

By Sean Gallagher

JENNINGS COUNTY—It seemed fitting that an emotional Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin celebrated his last Mass as archbishop of Indianapolis at St. Anne Parish in Jennings County, which lies close to the geographic heart of the Church in central and southern Indiana.

The Mass took place on Nov. 6, less than a day before it was announced at the Vatican and in Washington that Pope Francis had named him the new archbishop of Newark, N.J.

Although unable to confirm his appointment during the Mass because it had not yet been officially announced, Cardinal-designate Tobin acknowledged during the final moments of the liturgy that many of the worshippers may have heard media reports about him over the weekend.

“I have to tell you this—if I was to celebrate my last Mass as the archbishop of Indianapolis, I’d be really blessed to celebrate it with you,” he said, his voice marked by emotion.

He continued close to tears when giving the final blessing of the Mass to the approximately 200 worshippers who had gathered that day to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Seymour Deanery faith community.

St. Anne Parish reaches back to the earliest days of the Church in Indiana, being founded in 1841, just seven years after the establishment of the Diocese of Vincennes, which later became the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Nestled in the rolling hills of southern Indiana and surrounded by farms, many of which are cultivated today by the descendents of the original German Catholics who first settled the land, the parish is also emblematic of the distinct character of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Cardinal-designate Tobin had originally been scheduled to celebrate the anniversary Mass during the summer, but a scheduling conflict brought about its postponement.

He remained close to tears when learning that he was called elsewhere, but will keep good memories of him.

“It was a little disappointing, because he’s such a great leader for the archdiocese,” he said. “He’s very personable in the way he makes eye contact with you. He’s a great servant for us here in Indiana. He’ll be missed.”

Father Jerry Byrd, pastor of St. Anne Parish as well as St. Joseph Parish in Jennings County and St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, was filled with emotion after the liturgy, knowing that he was losing his spiritual father.

“It was very powerful,” said Father Byrd of the Mass. “I don’t have a lot of words. There’s a lot going through my mind right now. I’m honored to be the pastor here and to have the archbishop here.”

Looking back on the rescheduling of the anniversary Mass to Nov. 6, Father Byrd said in amazement, “It’s God’s providence.”

An emotional Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin speaks at the end of a Nov. 6 Mass at St. Anne Church in Jennings County. The liturgy, which celebrated the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Seymour Deanery faith community, was the last celebrated by Cardinal-designate Tobin as archbishop of Indianapolis. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)