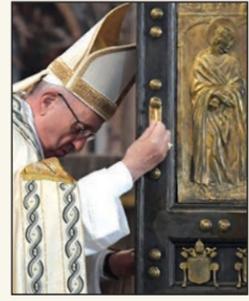




The

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Continuing the mission

Proclaim Christ the king of mercy, pope says at end of Holy Year, page 10.

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An unbelievable moment

On an extraordinary day, an extraordinary man became a cardinal

By John Shaughnessy

VATICAN CITY—In an extraordinary moment like this one, the temptation is to focus just on the honor.

Sometimes, it's especially tempting for the person receiving the honor.

Within minutes—at 11 a.m. Rome time on Nov. 19—Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin will stand near the central altar at St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. There, in a ceremony called a consistory, he will soon be installed by Pope Francis as one of 17 new cardinals in the Church.

At 64, he will become the youngest of the 18 American-born cardinals.

He will also become one of the 120 cardinals from around the world who are eligible to vote, when the time comes in the future, to elect a new pope—or even become a new pope.

Let all of that sink in for a moment—the rareness, the possibility, the honor. Then listen to the answer that Cardinal-designate Tobin gave to a question he was asked on Oct. 10, the day after Pope Francis announced him as one of the new cardinals. Responding to the question, “In terms of your life, is this the most memorable moment?,” Cardinal-designate Tobin said:

“I would tend to say no. ... Becoming a cardinal, as much as I understand it, is an additional invitation to serve. I think there have been other moments in my life as a priest, as a Redemptorist, as a human being, that would supersede it. Perhaps this is a doorway to other great moments of service.”

See **CARDINAL**, page 8

Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin arrives for the consistory in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Nov. 19. Also shown is Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan moderator of the curia. Cardinal Tobin was among 17 new cardinals created by Pope Francis at the consistory. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



No boundaries for love

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin's mother says she would go anywhere in the world to be with her children, page 3.



Bittersweet consistory

Daniel Conway reflects on Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin's continuing call to missionary discipleship, page 4.



Back home

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin shares his first homily as a cardinal at the Church of St. Alphonsus Liguori in Rome, page 9.

Joseph Tobin: A great American success story—with a twist

(Editor's note: This story was written and posted on The Criterion's website on Nov. 18, the day before Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin was installed into the College of Cardinals.)

By John Shaughnessy

ROME—This latest journey of Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin to Italy can be viewed as a great American success story—with a twist. After all, the focus of this story isn't on power, wealth or fame. Rather, it's on the foundation of faith, family and humility. Start with the fact that he was a boy from Detroit who knew the challenges of the streets. Add in the detail that he is the oldest of 13 children who grew up in a family that lived in one half of a duplex for all of his childhood and his youth. Include the heartbreaking element that he lost his father—his role model—at a young age.

Yet instead of derailing his future, those realities and challenges helped to form the strong foundation of his life, leading now to a special moment when he will be elevated to one of the most honored positions in the Church.

That's the Twitter account version of the life of Cardinal-designate Tobin who will be installed as a cardinal by Pope Francis on Nov. 19 at St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

During the ceremony which is called a consistory, Cardinal-designate Tobin will be one of 17 new cardinals to receive his cardinal's ring and a biretta—a four-cornered red hat—from Pope Francis. The pope will also give each new cardinal a scroll with the "title" to a church or parish in Rome, making him an honorary member of the clergy in Rome.

For Cardinal-designate Tobin, his selection initially led him to be shocked and humbled when Pope Francis announced the list of new cardinals on Oct. 9. At 64, Cardinal-designate Tobin will become the youngest of the 18 American-born cardinals.

His selection as a cardinal has also led more than 200 people—including his 93-year-old mother, a large group of family and friends, and a strong delegation of priests, colleagues and faithful from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis—to travel to Rome to be there for him at this special time.

They will also be there for the first Mass he celebrates as a cardinal. With Pope Francis and other cardinals, he will concelebrate the 10 a.m. Mass on Nov. 20 in St. Peter's Square, a liturgy that will close the Holy Year of Mercy that began on Dec. 8, 2015.

As he prays during the Mass, Cardinal Tobin will likely think again of his father Joseph who died during a blizzard in 1977 when he suffered a heart attack after helping people stranded in the snowstorm: "He never once sent me to church. He took me with him. When I was kneeling next to him, I wanted to be like him."

During the weekend, he will also undoubtedly dote on his mother, Marie



New Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin and Pope Francis enjoy a conversation inside St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Nov. 19. (Photo courtesy L'Osservatore Romano)

Tobin, who still had children as young as 5 and 6 when her husband died. Her oldest child knows she has always believed that her husband has been with her through the years, helping her raise their children.

As Cardinal-designate Tobin has noted, "And when people say, 'Mrs. Tobin, how wonderful!—13 children and they all went to college,' her response is, 'How wonderful!—13 children and they all practice their faith.'"

Cardinal-designate Tobin has also often humorously mentioned another bonus of growing up in his close-knit Irish family: "We learned to live with diversity because it's hard to be selfish if you have one bathroom in the house and eight sisters."

Diversity has been a defining element in his ministry since he was ordained as a Redemptorist priest in 1978. He is fluent in five languages—English, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish—and he has traveled to more than 70 countries.

The former leader of the Redemptorist order also has a heart for immigrants and refugees. And when he is installed as the new archbishop of the Archdiocese of Newark on Jan. 6, he will begin to oversee a four-county area of about 1.5 million Catholics where Mass is celebrated in 20 languages each weekend.

He definitely has a heart for the people of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. When he became the spiritual leader of the archdiocese in 2012, he viewed "Hoosier Hospitality" as a tourist slogan. After four years in the archdiocese, he has come to know it as a way of life that has connected him to the 225,000 Catholics—and many other people from different faiths—in the 39-county area.

Because he was reassigned to the Archdiocese of Newark before his installation as a cardinal, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will have no historical claim to him as a cardinal. But there is no denying the emotional and spiritual bond that connects Cardinal-designate Tobin and

the faithful of the Church in central and southern Indiana.

On the day after Pope Francis announced him as one of the new cardinals, Cardinal-designate Tobin said, "What four years has done for me is that this wonderful Catholic community spread across 39 counties has gone from 'the archdiocese' to 'my people.' They have a claim on me, and I have a claim on them."

The depth of that relationship was apparent when he learned he was being reassigned to the Archdiocese of Newark. His emotions filled a letter that he wrote to the people of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, sharing his shock and sadness. The letter included this passage: "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."

The thought of his elevation as a cardinal—and then the announcement of his reassignment to Newark—have led people in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to often include the word "bittersweet" in describing their reaction to those two pieces of stunning news. That feeling still lingers at the beginning of the weekend of Nov. 19-20, but

the joy and pride for Cardinal-designate Tobin also swells as his date to become a cardinal is now less than a day away.

"I'm very excited he has been named a cardinal," said Annette "Mickey" Lentz, chancellor of the archdiocese. "I feel in his heart he will make us proud, no matter where he is, no matter where we are."

John and Julie Morand of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis also came to Rome, nearly 3 1/2 years after they joined Cardinal-designate Tobin on an archdiocesan pilgrimage to Italy in the summer of 2012.

"We're happy for him," John Morand said. "He's a holy man. He has a presence about him. When he's talking to you, he's focused on you. You can feel that in a good way."

Carolyn Noone became emotional when she talked about this special weekend that marks the latest chapter in this Catholic-American success story.

"He has become like a family member to all of us, and he's done good, so we can send him on to become a cardinal," said Noone, the director of special events for the archdiocese. "We're so proud of him because he's one of us. He can leave Indianapolis and go to Newark, but he'll always be in our hearts."

It's the deep emotion that pours out for a cardinal who has built his life on the foundation of faith, family and humility. †



Pope Francis' prayer intentions for December

- **Universal: End to Child Soldiers**—That the scandal of child-soldiers may be eliminated the world over.
- **Evangelization: Europe**—That the peoples of Europe may rediscover the beauty, goodness, and truth of the Gospel which gives joy and hope to life.

(To see Pope Francis' monthly intentions, go to www.ewtn.com/faith/papalPrayer.htm.) †



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Marie Tobin: 'I would go anywhere in the world to be where my children are'

By John Shaughnessy

ROME—On the morning when the oldest of her 13 children became a cardinal of the Church, Marie Tobin started her day with a simple prayer.

"I woke up this morning saying, 'This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad'" (Ps 118:24).

At 93, Mrs. Tobin had two main reasons to rejoice as she waited for the start of a memorable ceremony on Nov. 19 in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

Within an hour, her son "Joe" would be installed as one of 17 new cardinals by Pope Francis. And just as meaningful to her, she was surrounded by so many members of her family who had traveled to Rome to do what she says the Tobin clan does best—be there for each other.

"I would go anywhere in the world to be where my children are," she said. "And if they think it's going to be fun, we're all there."

On this day, all but one of her children—he had a scheduled surgery—was there to witness the installation of Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin. Their mother never imagined that scene or that possibility all those years ago when she

and her late husband Joe were married. Back then, their goals were to create a large family, a family based on faith and love.

"I was a teacher," she recalled as she sat mere feet from where her son's red biretta—one of the symbols of being a cardinal—rested on a gold plate, waiting for the moment when Pope Francis would place it on her son's head. "I wanted a whole roomful of kids. And he loved kids, too."

They named their first son Joseph, a boy who was a gift from the beginning, she said.

"He's been loving since day one. He's so proud of his brothers and sisters. When each of them started parochial school, he escorted them to meet their teachers. And even though he was far away, he knew everything about their report cards. He was the leader, and he's still the leader."

It's a role he learned from his father, who died at the age of 54 of a heart attack he suffered after helping people stranded in a blizzard.

"He's here," she said about her husband. "He's residing in heaven. He's looking down on us every day. He's been taking care of us for 40 years since he's been in heaven. I never felt I was raising the kids alone."

"He's been with his oldest son all the time. An old Redemptorist priest told me when he died, 'One of you had to be in heaven because your kids will be all over the world someday.' And that's been true. Their work has taken them all over."

On this day, her oldest son's life has led her to Rome and St. Peter's—a trip she wasn't going to miss.

"It's really brave of her at 93 to cross an ocean," said her oldest child on the evening before he became a cardinal. "Mom always appreciates the times when the whole family is together. And it can be anywhere. I think this is a big deal because she's a woman



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin greets his mother Marie at a Nov. 20 Mass celebrated at the Church of St. Alphonsus Liguori in Rome.



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin spends time with his mother Marie on Nov. 19, the day he was installed into the College of Cardinals, in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. (Photos by John Shaughnessy)



Red birettas are shown on display before the Nov. 19 consistory at St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

of faith. She sees this in the larger picture of her own engagement with God and the Church.

"She's really kind of dazzled by the whole thing because she loves the people I serve in Indiana, and she loves the Redemptorists who are my brothers."

Perhaps the most touching displays of love on this morning started inside St. Peter's before the ceremony—as Cardinal-to-be Tobin waited anxiously for his mother to arrive, followed by how he embraced and kissed her when he found

she was there.

Then came the moment when she watched her son walk up the steps to the central altar where Pope Francis waited to give him his cardinal's ring and place his red biretta on his head.

"Oh, my heaven!" she said later, in recalling that moment. "It's totally unbelievable."

That feeling of joy led her to think of her husband again.

"I married the most wonderful man. All I can say is, 'Thank you, thank you.' God is very good to me." †

Cardinal Tobin will say 'thank you' and 'farewell' with Dec. 3 Mass, reception

By John Shaughnessy

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin will share his gratitude with the people of the archdiocese on Dec. 3, beginning with a Mass at 11 a.m. in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.

The Mass—and the reception that follows it—will also serve as an opportunity for him to say farewell to the Church in central and southern Indiana he has served and grown to love since his installation as its shepherd on Dec. 3, 2012. The date is also the feast day of St. Francis Xavier, principal patron of the archdiocese.

On Nov. 7, Cardinal Tobin shared the news that Pope Francis had reassigned him to become the archbishop of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J.

That news came less than a month after Pope Francis had named him as one of 17 new cardinals on Oct. 9.

Because Cardinal Tobin's reassignment to Newark came before he was installed as a cardinal by Pope Francis on Nov. 19 at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has no official

or historical claim to him as a cardinal. But the spiritual and emotional bond between Cardinal Tobin and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has become deep in the four years he has served as the spiritual leader of the Church in central and southern Indiana.

"What four years has done for me is that this wonderful Catholic community spread across 39 counties has gone from 'the archdiocese' to 'my people,'" Cardinal Tobin said on Oct. 10, the day after Pope Francis announced him as a new cardinal. "They have a claim on me, and I have a claim on them."

Cardinal Tobin plans to celebrate that mutual bond and deep connection on Dec. 3. After the Mass, a reception and a receiving line with the cardinal will follow in the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center across the street from the cathedral. The Mass and the reception are both open to the public.

No tickets or reservations are required for people to attend the Mass and/or the reception, which is being sponsored by Franciscan Health. †

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Editorial



Pope Francis arrives to lead a consistory in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Nov. 19. The pope created 17 new cardinals at the service. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

The virus of polarization

Perhaps we should nominate Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the late Justice Antonin Scalia as models for people who disagree with one another, but who remain friends. While Scalia was still living, the two justices were usually on opposite sides when it came to interpreting the Constitution, but they and their spouses traveled together, attended operas together, and enjoyed one another's company.

With the antagonism and discord that characterize today's society, such people seem to be few and far between.

Pope Francis took note of that in his homily during the Nov. 19 ceremony at which he gave red birettas to 17 new cardinals, including Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin. He told them that they must be ministers of reconciliation in this world of hostility and division, which he called "the virus of polarization and animosity."

Cardinal Tobin was quick to pick up on the pope's message. He told Catholic News Service that the pope's homily was "very timely," and that all Catholics should "examine ourselves and the Church to see whether we have unconsciously appropriated this 'virus of polarization and animosity.' It may hide under the name of truth or the name of orthodoxy or something, when it actually serves to divide. I think probably that is resistance to the acts of the Holy Spirit."

As for the pope's message being "timely," it came shortly after the elections in the United States in which many Republicans won. It was an extremely divisive campaign that has brought protests from those who supported Hillary Clinton. Our divisiveness is such that the protests might have been even stronger if Donald Trump had not won.

We must somehow get back to understanding, as the pope said, that we should not be enemies. All people are embraced by God's love, he said. "We are the ones who raise walls, build barriers and label people." It's hard not to think that he was referring to Trump's campaign promise to build a wall along the United States-Mexico border.

The incoming Trump administration is thought by many to be divisive. That's why the cast of the Broadway play *Hamilton* made a plea to Vice President-elect and Indiana Gov. Mike Pence to remember that the country is composed of a wide diversity of people. It was encouraging that Trump has promised to be president of all the American people.

To his credit, Pence was very gracious in his response to the mixed reaction he received when he and his family walked into the theater, and to the cast's message for him after their performance.

The Catholic Church, too, is composed of a wide diversity of people, as the pope emphasized when he created new cardinals from 14 nations. He stressed that "the Church must be a sign for the world that differences of nationality, skin color, language and social class do not make people enemies, but brothers and sisters with different gifts to offer."

We think differently, he said, but that doesn't make us enemies. "Instead, it is one of our greatest riches."

It would appear that many Catholics in America think differently when it comes to politics. According to exit polls, 52 percent of Catholics who voted selected Trump, 45 percent voted for Clinton and 3 percent voted for others. But there was a wide division between white Catholics and Hispanic Catholics. Sixty percent of white Catholics voted for Trump, while 67 percent of Hispanic Catholics voted for Clinton.

There is plenty of evidence that the Hispanic vote went to Clinton because of Trump's remarks about Mexicans and the immigration policies he espoused. He would like to expel illegal immigrants and prevent Muslims from entering our country.

It's hard to know how many white Catholics voted for him because they support his immigration policies. It seems more likely that they voted against Clinton rather than for Trump, or that they voted for Trump because of the Republican position on abortion and other important moral issues.

Nevertheless, the pope may have had Trump's immigration policies in mind when he said, "We see how quickly those among us with the status of a stranger, an immigrant or a refugee" are seen as threats. But he also realizes fear of immigrants and refugees can be found all over the world. The Holy Father said they are presumed to be an enemy "because of the color of their skin, their language or their social class. An enemy because they think differently or even have a different faith."

If only we could all get along, or treat those we disagree with as Ginsburg and Scalia did.

—John F. Fink

Reflection/Daniel Conway

The bittersweet consistory

It was a short walk, but the beginning of a long journey. Cardinal-designate Joseph W. Tobin walked from Rome's



Hotel Columbus to St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. He was wearing his brand-new bright red cassock. He called it his "frock." Every few feet, he was stopped by well-wishers and autograph-seekers.

His companions wondered if he would make it to the basilica on time, but the soon-to-be cardinal was not in a hurry. He was serene and at peace. The walk to the Vatican was a short one, but the journey it symbolized will last the rest of his life.

A priest and missionary, former superior general for the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists) and a former Vatican official, in his fourth year as Archbishop of Indianapolis, Joseph William Tobin was "totally shocked" when he learned via social media that Pope Francis had named him as one of 17 new cardinals. There was no advanced warning, no preparation for what nearly everyone agreed was an unprecedented choice of a bishop from a relatively small Midwestern diocese as a member of the College of Cardinals.

Why did Pope Francis choose this particular American archbishop to become one of his advisors and, when necessary, to elect his successor?

The Holy Father has made it clear that he wants the College of Cardinals to more accurately reflect the diverse peoples, cultures, languages and traditions of the universal Church. How would @JoeTobin—as he is identified on Twitter—contribute to the College of Cardinals?

No one can read the pope's mind, of course, but from the things he says and the choices he makes, a pattern begins to emerge.

This "pattern" is nothing like a "profile." There is no fixed set of characteristics, background, style of ministry or even previous Church experience that automatically makes someone "cardinal material."

Diversity is the opposite of uniformity. Its whole purpose is to reflect, as through a prism, the multi-faceted reality of the Body of Christ.

Not unlike the severe earthquake that struck central Italy in October, only two months after previous earthquakes had caused so much destruction in the region, Cardinal-designate Tobin received a second seismic shock when he learned that he was to leave Indianapolis and become Archbishop of Newark, N.J. He was still struggling to accept the fact that he was to become a cardinal. With the new announcement, he had to face the opportunities and challenges of a different, much larger archdiocese. Now, the celebrations that had been planned in Rome and in Indianapolis to congratulate the new cardinal suddenly

became bittersweet occasions of both congratulations and farewell.

Sadness in Indiana was, of course, matched by joy in New Jersey—reminding all who know and love the new cardinal that he is, first and foremost, a missionary disciple who must move beyond his comfort zone and go where he is sent, including to the "peripheries"—which, from a Midwestern perspective, might easily include the four northern New Jersey counties that make up the Archdiocese of Newark.

In fact, Cardinal Tobin's appointment as Archbishop of Newark sheds some light on his appointment to the College of Cardinals. In his homily for the consistory on Nov. 19 that elevated Joseph W. Tobin, two fellow Americans and 14 others from various parts of the world, Pope Francis emphasized that cardinals must be one with their people. They are not to be "raised up, above the crowd," but should be humble, accessible servants who work with the pope to share the most profound hopes and dreams of the People of God.

This is the "pattern." Cardinals must be down-to-earth, easy to connect with and able to share both the pleasures and pain of ordinary people. Simply stated, they must be humble men of God.

@JoeTobin fits this description perfectly. He is a humble man with a great sense of humor. He is a holy man who can laugh, sing and dance at family gatherings.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin will walk with his people. By his words and actions, he will proclaim Gospel joy, and he will share generously God's mercy and forgiveness which, he freely admits, he has experienced personally because he is a sinner.

The clergy, religious and lay faithful of the Archdiocese of Newark are blessed to have @JoeTobin as their new archbishop—just as the Church in central and southern Indiana has been blessed for the past four years.

The Newark archdiocese is a very diverse faith community with Masses celebrated in 20 languages each weekend. Cardinal Tobin's missionary journeys to more than 70 countries around the world on behalf of the Redemptorists make him uniquely qualified to serve as shepherd to this diverse flock. Similarly, the pastoral experience he has gained while serving the Church in Indiana as archbishop of a 39-county region, has prepared him well for the opportunities and challenges of his new archdiocese.

The long journey that Cardinal Tobin has now begun will involve letting go of what is familiar and comfortable in order to walk with those to whom he has been sent.

Let's pray that Cardinal Tobin continues on the journey he has now begun with Gospel joy, hope-filled enthusiasm and no small amount of courage.

May he always remain a humble missionary priest who serves God's people faithfully.

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion's editorial board.) †



Well-wishers ask Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin for a blessing outside the Hotel Columbus in Rome on Nov. 20. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



REJOICE IN THE LORD

ALÉGRENSE EN EL SEÑOR

Waiting in hope with grateful hearts, we begin a new Church Year

“As we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of the great God and of our savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us” Ti 2:13-14.

Just yesterday, we celebrated the popular Thanksgiving holiday. As I’ve mentioned before, I spent 20 years living in Rome and traveling all over the world on behalf of my religious community, the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists).

During my time abroad, I discovered that nothing unites Americans who live away from their homeland more than the annual Thanksgiving celebration. No matter where we are in the world, when Thanksgiving Day comes around, we Americans find a way to celebrate!

Many families, as they gather around the dinner table on Thanksgiving Day, take some time to share with one another what they are grateful for. This is a powerful custom because it gives concrete, verbal expression to things which we may feel in our hearts but do not acknowledge often enough.

My “gratitude list” is a long one. It begins with my family—especially my mother who is 93—and extends

to friends, fellow Redemptorists, co-workers in my ministry to the Church in central and southern Indiana and the universal Church, and all the people I am called to serve as a missionary disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank God for the gift of faith and for the love that has been shared with me so generously by people I’ve met in every region of this great archdiocese and in every corner of the globe—especially since Pope Francis made the two “shocking announcements” of my appointment to the College of Cardinals and to lead the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J.

I also thank God for the gift of hope. Without it, I would be unable to move forward in my new responsibilities when confronted by doubts, uncertainty and the truth of my own sinfulness. Hope enables courage, perseverance and confidence in the future.

Advent, which begins this Sunday, is the season of joyful hope. It is also the beginning of a new Church Year, a year of hope and joy.

We pray about “waiting for the blessed hope” every day in the Mass, and in a special way during Advent. Our faith teaches us that the Lord will come again.

And we’re told that his coming will be a time of great rejoicing, a time when every tear will be wiped away and all our hopes will be fulfilled.

We believe this. It is an integral part of Christian hope. One day, the Lord will come again and the redemption of the world (and our personal redemption) will be complete.

As a Redemptorist, I have a keen awareness of this fundamental truth of our faith. The process that was initiated by God’s promise to his chosen people, the Jews, and that was realized in the fullness of time by Christ’s incarnation and by his passion, death and resurrection, will be brought to fulfillment on the last day. This truth was taught to Redemptorists in a powerful way by our founder, St. Alphonsus Liguori.

We wait for the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, with a profound sense of gratitude for all that he has done for us. And we thank God that we have hope—the ability to overcome doubt and despair—which leads invariably to joy!

We begin each Church Year with this season of waiting, this time of expectation and longing. Advent prepares

us to celebrate Christmas without falling into the trap of superficial or unrealistic expectations. It teaches us that the greatest gift of Christmas is the Lord himself.

Advent shows us that a personal encounter with Jesus Christ is what we truly hope for at this time of year (and always). It reminds us that all the joys of Christmas and of the Lord’s second coming can truly be ours—if we learn to wait for them with gratitude and with hope.

Waiting in hope requires patience, trust and a firm belief that God will hear and answer our prayers. We hope that the Lord will give us everything we truly desire and need and that his coming again—this Christmas and at the end of time—will be our greatest source of joy.

A couple of weeks ago, I made the connection between gratitude and holiness. Holy people give thanks to God for all their blessings. But they also look forward in hope regardless of the tragedy and sorrow they must confront in their lives.

Let’s thank God for all his gifts. And let’s move forward in joyful hope as we await the coming of our Lord! †

Comenzamos un nuevo año litúrgico con expectante esperanza y corazones agradecidos

“Mientras aguardamos la bendita esperanza, es decir, la gloriosa venida de nuestro gran Dios y Salvador Jesucristo” (Ti 2:13-14).

Justo ayer celebramos la popular festividad del Día de Acción de Gracias. Tal como comenté en otro momento, pasé 20 años viviendo en Roma y viajando por todo el mundo en nombre de mi comunidad religiosa, la Congregación del Santísimo Redentor (la Congregación Redentorista).

Durante esa época en el extranjero descubrí que nada unía más a los estadounidenses que viven fuera de su patria que la celebración anual del Día de Acción de Gracias. Sin importar en qué parte del mundo nos encontremos, cuando llega el Día de Acción de Gracias, ¡los estadounidenses buscamos la forma de celebrarlo!

Al reunirse en torno a la mesa en el Día de Acción de Gracias, muchas familias dedican tiempo para compartir todo aquello por lo que se sienten agradecidas. Esta es una costumbre muy poderosa porque constituye una expresión verbal y concreta de aquello que sentimos en el corazón pero que no llegamos a reconocer con la debida frecuencia.

Mi “lista de agradecimiento” es muy larga: comienza con mi familia, en especial con mi madre de 93 años, y se prolonga a amigos, compañeros

redentoristas, compañeros de trabajo en mi ministerio en la Iglesia del centro y el sur de Indiana, así como de la Iglesia universal, y abarca a todas las familias a las que estoy llamado a servir como discípulo misionero de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo.

Le doy gracias a Dios por el obsequio de la fe y por el amor que han compartido tan generosamente todos aquellos a quienes he conocido en cada región de esta gran arquidiócesis y en cada rincón de la Tierra, especialmente desde que el papa Francisco realizó los dos “anuncios impactantes”: primero de mi designación al Colegio de Cardenales y, segundo, de convertirme en pastor de la Arquidiócesis de Newark, en Nueva Jersey.

También agradezco a Dios por el don de la esperanza ya que sin ella no podría seguir adelante con mis nuevas responsabilidades al enfrentarme a dudas, incertidumbre y la verdad de mi propia condición de pecador. La esperanza nos infunde valor, perseverancia y confianza en el futuro.

El Adviento, que comienza este domingo, es la época de alegre esperanza. También marca el inicio de un nuevo año litúrgico, un año lleno de esperanza y alegría.

Todos los días durante la misa, y de un modo especial durante la temporada del Adviento, oramos sobre “aguardar la bendita esperanza.” Nuestra fe nos enseña que el Señor vendrá nuevamente

y nos dice que su venida será una época de gran alegría, un momento en el que toda lágrima será enjugada y que veremos realizadas todas nuestras esperanzas.

Creemos en esto ya que es un componente integral de la esperanza cristiana. Un día, el Señor vendrá otra vez y la obra de redención del mundo (y nuestra propia redención personal) se completará.

Como redentorista, me encuentro plenamente consciente de esta verdad fundamental de nuestra fe. El proceso que comenzó con la promesa que realizó Dios al pueblo elegido, a los judíos, y que llegó a su plenitud mediante la encarnación de Cristo y su Pasión, muerte y resurrección, concluirá en el día final. Esta verdad ha sido transmitida de una forma muy poderosa a los redentoristas a través de nuestro fundador, san Alfonso Liguori.

Esperamos la segunda venida de nuestro Señor y Salvador Jesucristo con un profundo sentido de agradecimiento por todo lo que ha hecho por nosotros. Y le damos gracias a Dios por tener esperanza—la capacidad para superar las dudas y la desesperación—¡y esto conlleva indefectiblemente a la alegría!

Comenzamos cada año litúrgico con una temporada de espera, un momento de expectativas y de añoranza. El Adviento nos prepara para celebrar

la Navidad sin caer en la trampa de las expectativas superficiales o poco realistas. Nos enseña que el obsequio más grande de la Navidad es el Señor mismo.

El Adviento nos enseña que lo que verdaderamente ansiamos en esta época del año (y siempre) es un encuentro personal con Jesucristo. Nos recuerda que realmente podremos disfrutar de todas las alegrías de la Navidad y de la segunda venida del Señor si aprendemos a esperarlas con gratitud y esperanza.

La esperanza expectante requiere paciencia, confianza y la creencia firme de que Dios escuchará y responderá nuestras súplicas. Esperamos que el Señor nos conceda todo aquello que verdaderamente deseamos y necesitamos, y que su venida, tanto en esta Navidad como en el día final, sea nuestra máxima fuente de alegría.

Hace un par de semanas planteé la relación que existe entre el agradecimiento y la santidad. Las personas santas agradecen a Dios por todas las bendiciones que reciben, pero también aguardan con esperanza, sin importar las tragedias y el dolor que deban enfrentar en sus vidas.

Agradezcamos a Dios por todos los dones que derrama sobre nosotros ¡y avancemos con jubilosa esperanza mientras esperamos a nuestro Señor! †

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa

Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/events.

November 28

Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Serra Club Dinner Meeting and Program**, 6-8 p.m., \$15, Father Eric Augenstein to discuss vocations advocates. Information: 317-748-1478 or smclaughlin@holyspirit.cc.

November 29

St. Joan of Arc Parish, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **The Empty Chair Workshop: Coping with Grief and the Holidays**, sponsored by St. Vincent Hospice, 6-8 p.m., no fee or registration required. Information: 317-283-5508.

December 1

Logan's Roadhouse, 970 E. Lewis and Clark Parkway, Clarksville. **Theology on Tap**, sponsored by New Albany Deanery Catholic Youth Ministries, "Left to Tell," Conventional Franciscan Father John Bamman presenting, ages 22-39, 6:30-8 p.m. Information: 812-923-8355, sandy@nadyouth.org.

December 2

Marian University chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Lumen Dei**

Catholic Business Group, Mass and monthly meeting, 6:30-8:30 a.m., breakfast, \$15 per person. Information: 317-435-3447 or lumen.dei@comcast.net.

Most Holy Name of Jesus Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **First Friday devotion**, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 5:30 p.m.; reconciliation, 5:45-6:45 p.m.; Mass, 7 p.m.; Litany of the Sacred Heart and prayers for the Holy Father, 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454.

St. John Paul II Parish, St. Joseph Church, 2605 St. Joe Road, Sellersburg. **First Friday devotion of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, noon Mass, followed by litany and consecration to Sacred Heart of Jesus. Information: 812-246-2512.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass, 5:45 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass until 9:30 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation

available. Information: 317-888-2861 or info@olgreenwood.org.

St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Charismatic Renewal Praise and Mass**, praise and worship 7 p.m., Mass 7:30 p.m. Information: srcalpe@yahoo.com.

Holy Spirit Church, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis. **Serra Club, Mass for Vocations**, 8:30 a.m., regular school Mass, followed by coffee and donuts. Information: 317-748-1478 or smclaughlin@holyspirit.cc.

December 3

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville. First Saturday Marian Devotional Prayer Group, Mass, prayers, rosary, confession, meditation, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462.

December 3-4

Our Lady of the Greenwood, Madonna Hall, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **"O Come, O Come to Bethlehem" Nativity Open House**, nativity displays,

music, refreshments, Sat. 4-7 p.m., nativity blessing after 5:30 p.m. Mass; Sun. 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 5-7:30 p.m., children's giveaways and visit from St. Nicholas after 10 a.m. Mass, open to the public. Information: 317-888-2861 or www.olgreenwood.org.

St. John Paul II Parish, St. Paul Church, 218 Schellers Ave., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m. reflection on mysteries of rosary, recitation of the rosary, litany, consecration prayer to Mary, Mass at 8:30 a.m. Information: 812-246-3522.

Terre Haute Helpers of God's Precious Infants, 7:30 a.m. Mass at the Carmelite Monastery, 59 Allendale, Terre Haute; 8:45 a.m. car pool from St. Patrick Parish, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute, to Bloomington Planned Parenthood, 421 S. College Ave., arriving 10:15 a.m.; return to St. Patrick Parish around noon. Information: Tom McBroom, 812-841-0060, mcbroom.tom@gmail.com.

Holy Name of Jesus Parish Altar Society, 89 N. 17th

Ave., Beech Grove. **Annual Christmas Bazaar and Chili Luncheon**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., crafts, exhibitors, baked goods, and raffles, free admission. Chili lunch begins at 11 a.m., adults \$6, kindergarten to eighth grade \$4, preschoolers free. Information: 317-784-6860, p108cmaster@sbcglobal.net.

December 4

All Saints Catholic Academy, 9798 North Dearborn Road, New Alsace. **K-8 Open House and St. Nicholas Breakfast**, 8:00 a.m.-noon, sausage, eggs, pancakes, hash browns, baked apples, pastries, 9-11 a.m. pictures with St. Nicholas, adults \$9, children ages 5-10 \$4, ages 4 and younger free. Information: 812.623.2631 or sandygill@stpauledu.com.

Marian University, Evans Center Health Science Building, Lecture Hall 1, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **"America and the World,"** retired Sen. Richard G. Lugar presenting, part of the Richard G. Lugar Franciscan Center for Global Studies Speaker Series, free, 7 p.m., reception to follow.

Information: Pierre Atlas, 317-955-6336, patlas@marian.edu.

St. Mary-of-the-Rock Church, 17440 St. Mary's Road, Batesville. **Annual Sausage and Pancake Breakfast**, 7 a.m.-noon, free-will offering, public welcome, Christmas Corner. Proceeds benefit the St. Mary of the Rock Preservation Society. Information: Elaine Amberger, 812-623-3257.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Thank You and Farewell Open House for Father Elias Mary Mills of the Franciscans of the Immaculate**, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., light refreshments. Information: 812-825-4642, ext 1.

December 6

Mission 27 Resale, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. **Senior Discount Day**, every Tuesday, 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260. †

Retreats and Programs

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

Director to show and speak on Divine Mercy image documentary in New Albany on Dec. 11

Daniel Disilva, director of a documentary called *The Original Image of Divine Mercy: the Untold Story of an Unknown Masterpiece*, will offer a free viewing of the film and answer questions at the Calumet Club, 1516 Spring St., in New Albany, from 2-5 p.m. on Dec. 11.

The 100-minute film tells the story of the design and creation of the Divine Mercy image. The film follows a team as they travel through Europe and the United States uncovering the answers to many questions about the little-known original image of Divine Mercy.

In secret and at the request of Jesus himself, St. Faustina Kowalska and her confessor, Father Michal Sopocko, worked with a relatively unknown artist

to duplicate on canvas her mystical vision of the Merciful Jesus. But after all the corrections and touch-ups at the insistence of St. Faustina, the violently anti-Catholic Soviet occupation of Vilnius, Lithuania, forced the painting into hiding. It now resides in a shrine in Vilnius.

The film addresses questions such as how so many other renderings of St. Faustina's vision become more well-known, and what qualities about the original image are integral to the devotion and are unique to the original image of Divine Mercy.

For more information on the documentary, log on to www.divinemercyfilm.com.

For questions on the New Albany event, call 502-523-3524. †

VIPs



Gary Williams and Jane (Kiesle) Williams, members of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 26.

The couple was married in St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis, on Nov. 26, 1966.

They have two children: Barbara Ott and Gary Williams. The couple also has five grandchildren. †

Join Cardinal Tobin at fundraiser and dinner for Little Sisters of the Poor on Dec. 9

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin will celebrate Mass and speak at a dinner and fundraiser for the Little Sisters of Poor's St. Augustine Home for the Aged at The Willows, 6729 Westfield Blvd., in Indianapolis, on the evening of Dec. 9.

Mass begins at 5:30 p.m., followed by cocktails at 6:30 p.m. and dinner at 7:30 p.m. A live "needs auction" will also be held.

The cost is \$175 per person. Sponsor tables are \$2,500.

The deadline for registration is Dec. 2. For more information or to register, visit www.littlesistersofthepoorindianapolis.org/a-christmas-celebration/ or contact Nathan Buonanno at 317-415-5767 or devindianapolis@littlesistersofthepoor.org. †

Sisters of Providence to host Christmas Fun at the Woods on Dec. 10

The Sisters of Providence will host their annual Christmas Fun at the Woods gathering at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of Providence, in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, 1-4 p.m. on Dec. 10.

The event will feature rides by carriage, bus, wagon and trolley; a display of Nativity sets, a Christmas doll house and Christmas village; plus cookie decorating, face painting,

Christmas sing-a-longs, story time with Mrs. Claus, Christmas bingo, tours of the Saint Mother Theodore Guerin shrine, a bake sale, and crafts and a chance to visit with Santa at the White Violet Center for Eco-Justice.

The cost is \$5 per person, and free for children ages 3 and younger.

For more information, call 812-535-2952 or email jfrost@spsmw.org. †



Holy Year of Mercy art

Members of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis enjoy works of art depicting mercy created by fellow parishioners at their Holy Year of Mercy Art Show on Oct. 16. The parish held the event on Oct. 15 and 16 to celebrate the Holy Year of Mercy, which ended on Nov. 20. (Submitted photo by Jenny Bowles)

Cardinal Tobin to celebrate African Mass in Indianapolis on Dec. 4

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin will celebrate the annual archdiocesan African Mass at St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., in Indianapolis, at 3 p.m. on Dec. 4.

The Mass is celebrated with rhythm, dance and languages from a variety of African countries.

Following the Mass, there will be

a farewell reception for Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Reparatrix Sister M. Christine Nantaba, outgoing superior of the order's local convent. The reception will feature authentic African and African-American foods.

For more information, call 317-236-1443 or e-mail interculturalministry@archindy.org. †

Cardinal will leave lasting impressions, memories in Indiana

By John Shaughnessy

ROME—The stories have flowed easily.

Some melt your heart. Others bring a smile or a laugh. All share an insight into the qualities that make Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin respected and loved by many people.

As friends and family members have traveled to Rome this weekend to witness him be installed as a cardinal by Pope Francis on Nov. 19, here are some of the memorable stories that were shared about Cardinal Tobin.

An unexpected song of joy

The smile keeps growing across Carolyn Noone's face as she recalls the remarkable moment from the evening of Dec. 3, 2012—when Cardinal Tobin was installed as the archbishop of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

As director of special events for the archdiocese, Noone had arranged a dinner for the archbishop, his family and some of his friends at a downtown Indianapolis hotel. So Noone and Annette "Mickey" Lentz, chancellor of the archdiocese, went to the hotel to make sure the dinner was enjoyed by everyone.

"After dinner, most of the family went into the foyer," Noone recalls. "There was a grand piano there. His sister, Ann, went back into the banquet hall and said, 'Joe, you have to come out to the foyer right now!' He said, 'I always do what my sisters tell me to do.' Then he sat down at the piano and began to play.

"They were spiritual songs. Mickey and I were looking at each other and said how beautiful it was. Then he stopped, he got a twinkle in his eyes, and he started playing 'Great Balls of Fire.' He sang every word. Mickey and I said, 'We have a winner.'"

Noone paused as her smile gave way to her emotions. "He put a lifetime into four years with us."

A position of service

Holy Cross Father Joseph Corpora became friends with Cardinal Tobin "a few summers ago" at the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind., for an event involving the college's Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) program.

"I had the good fortune of being his host," Father Corpora notes. "One evening, we sat and talked for about two hours. Since then, we've had several lengthy conversations. On two occasions, he and I went out to eat at a Mexican restaurant in Indianapolis. He made a point of talking personally with the waiters and the staff. In everything that he says and does, he is very human. His very person invites confidence and trust.

"He has taught me that power does not have to go to one's head, as obviously it has not in his case. He truly sees his position as one of service. He gives me great hope for the life and future of the Church."

A moving story

Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan moderator of the curia, recalls a conversation he had with Cardinal Tobin shortly after it was announced on Nov. 7 that Pope Francis had reassigned him from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J.

'I can't believe it!': Strategic move helps missionary of mercy meet Pope Francis

By John Shaughnessy

ROME—Holy Cross Father Joseph Corpora couldn't contain his excitement—which seemed a most natural reaction just minutes after he met Pope Francis, hugged him and gave him a kiss.

"I'm ecstatic!" said Father Corpora, a close friend of Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin who lives and works at the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind. "It's an incredible thing to meet the pope, but it was more incredible for me to meet *this* pope. He validates my life as a priest—just the way I am and how I think about mercy.

"I've always thought I'd rather have God's mercy than his love. Maybe because I think I need it more."

He then shared the story of how he met Pope Francis shortly after the Nov. 20 Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican that closed the Holy Year of Mercy that began on Dec. 8, 2015. Father Corpora was one of the hundreds of priests from around the world who concelebrated the Mass with Pope Francis on a gorgeous, blue-sky morning. He is also one of the priests from around the world who the pope has designated as a missionary of mercy, with the ability to forgive certain sins.

During the Mass, Father Corpora was also one of the priests who distributed Communion to the tens of thousands of Catholics inside St. Peter's Square. After he finished, he returned the Communion hosts to inside St. Peter's Basilica as he had been instructed. But instead of returning to his seat, he decided to stay close to the platform where Pope Francis, Cardinal Tobin and the other cardinals were.

"I told myself, 'I'm going to stay up here near the pope,'" he recalled. "I began inching up. And when Mass was over, I somehow ended up in the very first row. The



Father Shaun Whittington, left, Father Jerry Byrd, Msgr. William F. Stumpf, Father Jonathan Meyer and Father Eric Augenstein, all priests of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, pose in Rome on Nov. 18, the day before Pope Francis inducted Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin and 16 other new cardinals into the College of Cardinals. (Photos by John Shaughnessy)

"I said, 'We'll get you moved out to Newark.' He said, 'That's so kind of you. I was thinking I'd probably just rent a U-Haul and take it out there.' I said, 'We'll get you moved.'

"It just shows his absolute humility. He's a true servant, just like Pope Francis."

First impression, lasting memory

First impressions often last, and Loral Tansy will never forget the first impression that Cardinal Tobin had on him. The moment occurred during the first Mass that Cardinal Tobin celebrated in one of the parishes of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis after he became the archbishop.

In his role as master of ceremonies, Tansy is responsible for making sure the Mass runs smoothly when the archbishop celebrates the liturgy. So he was intent on getting the Mass started right as he and the archbishop processed up the main aisle. Yet halfway up the aisle, something happened that changed Tansy's plan.

pope was greeting every cardinal, one by one. I just stood there with the other priests and bishops who were standing there, hoping to meet the pope.

"Sure enough, the pope comes our way, one by one. And he comes to me! I grabbed his hand, kissed him on the cheek, hugged him and we started speaking in Spanish. I said, 'Thanks for sending me out as a



Greg Otolski, left, archdiocesan director of communications; Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin; Theresa Brydon, executive assistant to the cardinal; and Loral Tansy, who has assisted Cardinal Tobin as master of ceremonies during liturgies in the archdiocese, are pictured in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Nov. 19.

"There was a handicapped boy in a wheelchair midway up the aisle," Tansy recalls. "As the archbishop started to go by, the child raised his hand, and the archbishop took his hand. The child started talking to him. The archbishop got down on one knee, and carried out this conversation with him.

"In that moment, I knew how blessed we were to have him, and how much I was going to love him." †

missionary of mercy.' He said, 'It's not over. Keep it up.' I said, 'I will.' And then I said, 'Thank you for everything. I love you.'

"I had a rosary in my hand, he picked it up, and he blessed it for me."

Father Corpora beams a smile again and says, "I can't believe it!" †

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CARDINAL

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He then shared a thought that was as unexpected as his selection as a cardinal was to him: “Perhaps yesterday’s news was an indication that God thinks I don’t love the Church enough. So he’s given me an even more profound way to love it more.”

Now consider this story from Loral Tansy, who has assisted Cardinal-designate Tobin as master of ceremonies the past four years when the archbishop has celebrated Masses across the Archdiocese of Indianapolis: “I was with him on the Sunday he found out he was a cardinal. He was so shell-shocked. He said, ‘I am so not deserving of this.’ And I said, ‘That’s why you are deserving of this.’”

“I believe he exemplifies the best virtues a cardinal should have—dedication, compassion. From the very soul of his being, he really cares about people.”

‘He understands the struggles’

His easy, sincere connection with people shines through in the moments before the beginning of the prayer service in which he will be installed as a cardinal. He heads into a section filled with family and friends, hugging them, reaching out to them, smiling with them.

When he walks to another section of the basilica, he flashes a smile of surprise when he recognizes a man he met long ago during the 20 years he served the Church in Rome. They embrace and laugh together, remembering the time that Cardinal-designate Tobin’s car had a minor fender-bender with the other man’s car—Cardinal-designate Tobin smiling again as he admitted the accident was his fault, just as he did then.

During this time, he also asks a friend to take a photo of him and the other two Americans who will become cardinals today—Cardinal-designates Blase J. Cupich of Chicago and Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the new Vatican office for laity, family and life.

And he searches for his 93-year-old mother, Marie Tobin, putting his arms around her when he finds her. And she beams for the oldest of her 13 children.

It’s also telling that 11 of his 12 siblings are here, the exception being a brother who has to undergo surgery and couldn’t make the trip. And numerous other family members—the Tobin clan—have made the journey. So has Duncan MacDonald, a friend since their grade-school days in Detroit. And there are about 20 priests from the Redemptorist order, the order for which he served as superior general from 1997 to 2009.

Then there is the strong contingent from the Church in central and southern Indiana—priests he has ordained, priests he has served with, priests he has come to view as brothers. The archdiocesan contingent also includes colleagues that he regards as friends, and members of the faithful that he has always viewed as extended family.

Surrounded by all parts of his extended family, he looks relaxed, joyful, at peace.

Greg Otolowski takes in the entire scene. The director of communications for the archdiocese knows there’s also another important quality of Cardinal-designate Tobin’s approach to people: his compassion. It’s a compassion that Otolowski believes has been shaped from Cardinal-designate Tobin’s background: he comes from a large family, his father died at a young age, his mother had to raise their children by herself, and he has served as a pastor “in some really poor areas” in Detroit and Chicago.

“He understands the struggles a lot of people go through just to make it to the end of the day,” Otolowski says. “I think that’s what’s so important about him being a cardinal.”

The bond of blood

At 11 a.m., Pope Francis and the 17 new cardinals approach the central altar at St. Peter’s Basilica.

As Cardinal-designate Tobin sits by the altar waiting his turn to be installed by Pope Francis, less than 3 1/2 years have passed since the two men shared another special moment in this same basilica. On June 29, 2012, Cardinal-designate Tobin knelt in front of Pope Francis to receive his pallium—a circular band made from lamb’s wool that symbolized his role as the shepherd of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and his communion with the pope.

In becoming a cardinal, the connection between him and Pope Francis reaches an even deeper level for the two men who first became friends when they met during a meeting of the Synod of Bishops in Rome in 2005. That deeper bond is reflected in the cardinal’s red cassock that Cardinal-designate Tobin already wears on this morning—the color representing a cardinal’s desire to stay faithful to Christ and the Church, even to the extent of shedding his blood for them.

It’s the kind of bond—being there for another person completely, putting the other person first—that has marked Cardinal-designate Tobin’s life.

It’s also the kind of bond that Pope Francis talks about in his homily during the prayer service, moments before installing the 17 new cardinals. Pope Francis refers to the Gospel of St. Luke’s “Sermon on the Plain,” a call that Christ gave the Apostles.

“Instead of keeping the Apostles at the top of the mountain, their being chosen leads them to the heart of the crowd,” Pope Francis says. “It sets them in the midst of those who are troubled, on the ‘plain’ of their daily lives.”

Pope Francis says it’s a call that all Christians must embrace, offering mercy and hope to everyone, even our enemies. At the end of his homily, he tells the newest cardinals waiting to be installed that they must lead this effort.

“My dear brothers, newly-created cardinals, the journey toward heaven begins in the plains, in a daily life broken and shared, spent and given—in the quiet daily gift of all that we are. Our mountaintop is this quality of love. Our goal and our inspiration is to strive, on life’s plain, together with the people of God, to become persons capable



Pope Francis greets new Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin during a consistory in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on Nov. 19. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

of forgiveness and reconciliation.”

An unbelievable moment

That call resounds in Cardinal-designate Tobin’s mind as he walks up the steps of the central altar of St. Peter’s to be greeted by Pope Francis—to be installed as a cardinal. In that moment, people throughout St. Peter’s strain for a closer look at their son, brother, friend and family member.

As he kneels before the pope, the pontiff embraces him in a long hug. Pope Francis then places the red biretta on now-Cardinal Tobin’s head, an exchange that the cardinal’s mother gets to see up-close from her seat to the right of the altar.

Pope Francis also gives him his cardinal’s ring, declaring, “Receive the ring from the hands of Peter and know your love for the Church is strengthened by the love of the Prince of the Apostles.”

Walking down the steps of the altar, Cardinal Tobin moves toward the area where the other members of the College of Cardinals are waiting for him. One by one, he smiles and embraces them, receiving their smiles and embraces in return.

His mother savors every moment, every scene, describing it as “unbelievable.”

The extended Tobin family

As the prayers, wishes, smiles and tears flow toward and for newly-installed Cardinal Tobin, there’s also the memory of the telling words he shared in a conversation on the evening before he became a cardinal.

It was a conversation in which he talked about the importance of having his “extended family” here in Rome—all the people who have shared the journey of his life, all the people he has come to know and love, all the people who know and love him. Among that “extended family” he especially remembered the people of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis—those who came to Rome and those who are back home.

“Election night helped me understand,” he said about this gift of extended family. “I saw Indiana governor-elect Eric Holcomb’s acceptance speech. What really struck me was he said, ‘All through the campaign, people said Holcomb can’t do this, and Holcomb can’t do that.’ He said, ‘They’re right, but we can.’ And that’s what this experience is, too.

“It’s the experience of being able to do things because it’s a we. It’s not an I. I feel and treasure as part of my family



New Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin gets down to floor level to greet children during a reception at the Pontifical North American College after a consistory at the Vatican on Nov. 19. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

my extended family of Hoosiers who have accepted me. And it makes me think I can do this.”

He also talked about how the biggest struggle of the past six weeks has been his reassignment to the Archdiocese of Newark—and how he plans to confront that struggle.

“I was belly-aching one day to someone back in Indiana,” he said. “He listened and looked at me in great sympathy. And then he said, ‘What did you sign up for?’ I’ve thought about that. On the day of my profession, when I professed my vows, I gave it all. I really didn’t have that much to give as a 21-year-old. Now, it’s a little different. At the end of the day, I want to be true to what I vowed. So I say, ‘OK, it’s all yours, even if it hurts.’”

Drew and Wilma Young of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg are part of that “extended family” from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis that has come to Rome to celebrate the man that has been their spiritual leader for the past four years.

They remember how he shared in the grief and sorrow of their community when four local people were killed in a small plane crash shortly after he was installed as archbishop. They also recall the joy he shared when the parish dedicated its new church last August.

“I have the strongest positive feelings for him,” Drew Young says. “He’s kind. He’s honest. You know he has the love of God straight through him. You can’t help but believe him and trust him. He’s a real ambassador for God.”

On an extraordinary day, an extraordinary man became a cardinal.

(For more stories and photos of the consistory and other events in Rome, go to www.archindy.org/consistory.) †



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin greets retired Pope Benedict XVI in the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery, the retired pope’s residence in the Vatican gardens on Nov. 19. Also pictured are Pope Francis and Archbishop Georg Ganswein, prefect of the papal household. After the consistory, Pope Francis and the new cardinals hopped in vans for a short ride to visit the retired pope. (Photo courtesy L’Osservatore Romano)

In first homily, Cardinal Tobin says mercy always within reach

By John Shaughnessy

ROME—Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin chose a place in his heart to share his first homily as a cardinal—the Church of St. Alphonsus Liguori in Rome.

The church is named for the founder of the Redemptorist order—the order in which Cardinal Tobin was ordained a priest in 1978. It's also the home church of the general headquarters of the Redemptorists—the place that was his home when he served as the superior general of his order from 1997 to 2009.

The Church of St. Alphonsus Liguori is also meaningful to him because it's the home of the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and the Blessed Mother has always been a major influence in his life.

In the beautiful, small church packed with people for evening Mass on Nov. 20, Cardinal Tobin delivered his homily first in Italian and then in English, accommodating Catholics from the local community, members of the Redemptorist order, and his friends and family from the United States, including a huge contingent from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

For his homily, Cardinal Tobin drew upon the experience of the outdoor morning Mass of Nov. 20 in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. During that Mass, Pope Francis closed the Holy Doors of Mercy at St. Peter's Basilica, symbolically closing the Church's Holy Year of Mercy around the world.

Here is the essence of his first homily as a cardinal:

"I think for most of us perhaps, at least the question crossed our mind, 'What does it mean to close the Door of Mercy?' Is it possible that mercy is now beyond our reach? Perhaps that's why our Holy Father chose to close the Year of Mercy today, on the feast of Christ the King—because the feast reminds us of the story of the King who dies from love.

"People make fun of it. They say, 'What sort of God would allow his Messiah to die the way Jesus died?' But he dies with his arms open, nails in, to



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin is pictured with extended family after celebrating Mass on Nov. 20 for pilgrims in the Church of St. Alphonsus Liguori in Rome. (Photos by John Shaughnessy)

remind us that there are some things more important than life. And one of those things, perhaps the only thing more important than life itself, is love. The true grace of God that we see in Jesus crucified is a clear sign that mercy was not ended.

"The words of Jesus to that dying thief, who simply wanted to be remembered when Jesus entered his kingdom, should give all of us hope: 'Today you will be with me in paradise' [Lk 23:43]. Today—because love is always in a hurry. Love always wants to go where it should go—to the beloved. To be with me. I want you in paradise.

"And so we close a door today, but we recognize a King. And our mother Mary, who is given to us as the mother who is always ready to help us, presents us the reason for our hope. Those elongated figures of hers in the icon point to Jesus, the only Savior in the world, the more simple face of God." †



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin elevates the Eucharist during a Nov. 20 liturgy in the Church of St. Alphonsus Liguori in Rome. Standing behind him is Loral Tansy, master of ceremonies.

'Extended family' for cardinal extends beyond Tobins, Redemptorists

By John Shaughnessy

ROME—If there's one thing a brother in an Irish family learns quickly, it's that a conversation with one of his sisters will often lead to some interesting and unexpected situations.



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin is pictured with his sisters Sara Broderick, center, and Margo Tobin on Nov. 20 in Rome. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

As proof, consider a conversation that Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin had with one of his sisters, Ann Levigne, earlier this fall—before Pope Francis announced on Oct. 9 that he would be one of 17 new cardinals for the Church.

"About two months ago, we were talking about Rome," Ann says with a smile. "And I said, 'Can you do something remotely notable so we can go back to Rome?'"

After a laugh, she added, "We're certainly happy for Joe, but we're happier for our Church. It's bittersweet knowing he will hate to leave Indianapolis, but it's great that we're sharing this as a family, including his family from Indianapolis and his family in Rome."

The reality for Cardinal Tobin is that his understanding of family extends far beyond his 93-year-old mother, his sisters, his brothers, his nieces, nephews and other relatives—a huge contingent that came to Rome to support him as he was installed as a cardinal by Pope Francis on Nov. 19 in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

For Cardinal Tobin, his extended family also includes his friends who share with him the charism of the Redemptorist order. And the reality for everyone who has longtime friends is that these friends will often add a touch of humor to their serious thoughts of joy and affection for you.

So it is with Redemptorist Father John Steingraeber, who has known Cardinal Tobin since 1966, a time that has included the 12 years that Cardinal Tobin served as superior general of their order founded by St. Alphonsus Liguori.

"Joe was a freshman when I was a senior in high school seminary," Father John says. "As one of his classmates once

said about Joe, 'I've thought many things of you over the years, but never as the successor of St. Alphonsus.'"

Turning serious, Father John said, "He's proven to be a worthy successor. It's such an honor. And we're so proud of the attitude he has about being transferred to Newark. It shows the true missionary spirit he has as a Redemptorist."

Cardinal Tobin's "extended family" has also grown to include the Catholics of central and southern Indiana. One of those family members who has come to know him well during his four years as the spiritual leader of the archdiocese is Theresa Brydon, his executive assistant for 2 1/2 years.

"There are some people you feel you've known all your life, and that's how this feels with him," she said. "I have a feeling of joy for him, but I also feel I haven't been with him enough."

It's a feeling shared by many people throughout central and southern Indiana. †

List of Advent penance services, resources, are available online

During the season of Advent, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will have a special webpage at www.archindy.org/advent.

The page contains various Advent resources, including links to the daily readings, reflections from Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, penance service schedules, images of past *Criterion* Christmas issue covers and links of interest to other Advent websites. †

St. Bartholomew Choir honored, overjoyed to perform at consistory

By John Shaughnessy

VATICAN CITY—The voices of the choir of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus soared inside St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican as they became one with the Sistine Chapel Choir during the consistory of cardinals on Nov. 19.



Dr. Bogdan Minut

The St. Bartholomew Choir is so talented that the singing group performed in Carnegie Hall in New York City in 2014. Yet even that opportunity didn't match singing in St. Peter's as Pope Francis installed 17 new cardinals, including Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin.

"This is a huge honor for everybody," said Dr. Bogdan Minut, the director of

music ministry at St. Bartholomew Parish. "Everyone is so excited. It's a great joy for all of us."

The choir actually received the invitation to sing at St. Peter's Basilica near the beginning of 2016, when it was invited to join the Sistine Chapel Choir for the closing Mass of the Holy Year of Mercy on Nov. 20. Then they were asked to sing at the consistory of cardinals—an honor that led to even higher notes of joy for the choir when it was announced that Pope Francis had chosen Archbishop Tobin to become a cardinal.

"We were excited already, and to find this out just blew our minds," Minut said. "He's an extraordinary man, a wonderful pastor and a model of faith in action. It's a great accomplishment to be named a cardinal. The fact that we know him personally is so good for our faith and our trust in the Lord. It's a great opportunity to witness this in person." †

Proclaim Christ the king of mercy, pope says at end of Holy Year

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Following Christ the King, whose regal power is love and mercy, means the whole Church and each Christian must “follow his way of tangible love,” Pope Francis said.

Celebrating the feast of Christ the King on Nov. 20 and closing the extraordinary jubilee celebration of the Holy Year of

See related story, page 16.

Mercy, Pope Francis insisted, “we have received mercy in order to be merciful.”

On a warm, late fall morning, St. Peter’s Square was filled with an estimated 70,000 people for the Mass, which was concelebrated by the new cardinals Pope Francis had created the previous day.

The pope and the new cardinals first went to the atrium of St. Peter’s Basilica and gave thanks for “the gifts of grace received” during the Holy Year. Pope Francis then went to the threshold of the Holy Door and pulled each side shut. The door will be sealed until the next Holy Year, which is likely to be 2025.

In his homily, Pope Francis said that even if the Holy Door is closed, “the true door of mercy, which is the heart of Christ, always remains open wide for us.”

The power of Christ the King, he said, “is not power as defined by this world, but the love of God, a love capable of encountering and healing all things.”

Like the “good thief” who turned to Jesus on the cross and was assured a place in heaven, anyone who turns to God with trust can be forgiven, the pope said. “He is ready to completely and forever cancel our sin, because his memory—unlike our own—does

not record evil that has been done or keep score of injustices experienced.”

Loving like Christ loves us, he said, means constantly seeking the grace to forgive others, forget the offenses committed and be instruments of reconciliation in the world.

Following Christ the King also means accepting “the scandal of his humble love,” which can be difficult because it “unsettles and disturbs us.”

Christ’s love, the love Christians are called to imitate, is concrete and tangible and is not concerned with personal comfort, power and superiority.

Even in evangelization “the lure of power and success seem an easy, quick way to spread the Gospel,” he said. The Holy Year of Mercy was a call to “rediscover the youthful, beautiful face of the Church, the face that is radiant when it is welcoming, free, faithful, poor in means but rich in love, on mission.”

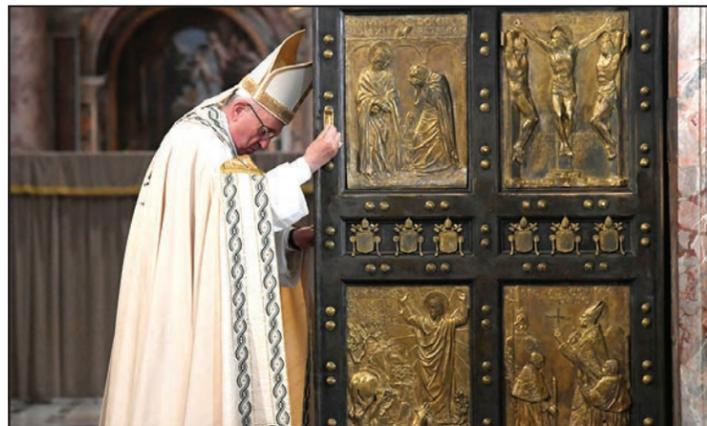
Christ the king, “our king, went to the ends of the universe in order to embrace and save every living being,” he said. “He did not condemn us, nor did he conquer us, and he never disregarded our freedom, but he paved the way with a humble love that forgives all things, hopes all things, sustains all things.”

Christ’s followers are called to continue his saving mission, the pope said.

At the end of the Mass, Pope Francis signed his new apostolic letter, “*Misericordia et Misera*” (“Mercy and Misery”), which a papal aide announced was written to affirm that the commitment to sharing the merciful love of God continues because it is “the heart of the Gospel.” †



Pope Francis greets new Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Indianapolis after celebrating the closing Mass of the Holy Year of Mercy in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Nov. 20. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



Pope Francis closes the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica to mark the closing of the jubilee Year of Mercy at the Vatican on Nov. 20. (CNS photo/Tiziana Fabi, pool via Reuters)

Priests, parishioners reflect on closing Holy Year of Mercy liturgy

By John Shaughnessy

VATICAN CITY—Father Andrew Syberg’s face glows as he shares how he felt concelebrating the Nov. 20 Mass that ended the Holy Year of Mercy with Pope Francis, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin and hundreds of priests from around the world.

“It was pretty overwhelming,” said Father Syberg, associate pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, about the outdoor Mass in St. Peter’s Square that drew tens of thousands of people. “I’m sitting here in St. Peter’s, and there’s the pope, Cardinal Tobin,

my brother priests and all these people celebrating mercy.”

Even more importantly, Father Syberg said, that celebration of mercy should lead people back to the source of all mercy.

“Even though there was the closing of the Holy Door of Mercy, the one thing we should be sure of is that God’s mercy is sufficient, it endures, and the calling of the Year of Mercy is something the world needed. Hopefully, it can springboard us into the future.”

Sunday’s Mass at St. Peter’s also had an emotional impact on Kimmie Hamilton, who came to Rome with her father and three of her adult siblings to witness Cardinal Tobin become one of the 17 new cardinals installed by Pope Francis on Nov. 19.

“Walking through the Holy Door at St. Peter’s on Saturday was such an

incredible experience, knowing all the graces you receive, knowing you can help other people,” said Hamilton, a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

“It’s such a gift to come here with my dad and some of my siblings. Coming here as a family, especially knowing how important our Catholic faith is to our mom and dad and our family, is so special. The Catholic faith is based on so many traditions, and that’s one of the foundations of our family.”

Hamilton made this trip to Rome—her first—with her father, Jerry Semler, and three of her six siblings: Michael

Semler of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, Dori Dodson of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, and Jeffrey Semler of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

“To see the Holy Doors close, it was very moving,” said Jerry Semler, a member of St. Pius X Parish.

Semler wished that his wife of 56 years, Rosie, could have also made the trip, but a health issue didn’t make that possible. And their three other children had previous commitments. Still, it’s been a weekend to remember, especially considering that it included seeing his close friend, Cardinal Tobin, become a cardinal.

“We’ve just had a great relationship with Cardinal Tobin,” he said. “And to be here with four of our kids has been quite an experience for me.”

Father Jerry Byrd also seemed emotionally overwhelmed when he talked about the weekend’s events.

“I feel lucky to be here,” said Father Byrd, pastor of the parishes of St. Ann and St. Joseph, both in Jennings County, and St. Mary in North Vernon. “I feel real proud of Cardinal Tobin—and honored to be part of the archdiocese—and to be a priest he inspired.

“To witness his elevation as a cardinal and to concelebrate Mass with Pope Francis, it’s all been very neat.” †



Father Andrew Syberg



Father Jerry Byrd

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Advent is a season of preparation for Christ's return in glory

By Mike Nelson

Since its fourth-century origins in Western Europe, the season of Advent has undergone various configurations, purposes and focuses across space and time.

In 380, the council of Saragossa in Spain declared that Christians were obliged to attend church daily from Dec. 17 to Jan. 6, the feast of the Epiphany. During the following century, fasting on three days of each week from the feast of St. Martin of Tours (on Nov. 11) through Christmas was mandated by Church authorities in Gaul.

And early Advent observances had a penitential focus, much like Lent, complete with violet liturgical vestments, the exclusion of the Gloria and alleluia from the liturgy and, for catechumens, their preparation for baptism at Epiphany.

Over time, however, Church leadership in Rome—mindful of Easter's pre-eminence in the life of the faithful—restored the alleluia to Advent's Sunday liturgies, and emphasized Jesus' return as foretold in Scripture (long before Jesus' birth was connected to the season).

Today, Catholics regard Advent as a season of preparation and expectation, of promise and hope. Penance can be an aspect of the season, but not a predominant one.

Although penance services are a staple of many parish Advent observances, penitential action isn't anything Catholics aren't already doing regularly. The penitential rite of every Mass calls us to conversion—to examine our consciences, to cleanse our souls—so we may truly welcome and receive Christ into our hearts and our lives.

Thus, Advent focuses on directing our hearts and minds to the return of the risen Christ into our world, regardless of how much we may care to focus on the sweeter, gentler aspect of welcoming and receiving the Christ Child on Christmas Day.

Our Advent prayer of longing, "*Maranatha*," rooted in early Christian liturgy, means "Come, Lord." The very word "Advent" derives from the Latin "*advenire*," meaning "to come to" (other sources cite the Latin "*adventus*," or a "coming," from the Greek word "*parousia*," defined as "presence" or "arrival").

By any of these definitions, the word addresses "the advent of God's kingdom," as St. Leo the Great suggested in a mid-fifth-century homily during his pontificate. Jesus, St. Leo said, regularly taught his Apostles to focus on what we today might call "the big picture": the second coming, citing the Gospel of St. Luke:

"Beware," Jesus said, "that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the Earth. Be vigilant at all times" (Lk 21:34-36).

Sixteen centuries later, we receive the same message on the first Sunday of Advent in this new liturgical year's Gospel reading from St. Matthew.

Jesus speaks to his disciples shortly after he enters Jerusalem, and just prior to his crucifixion and resurrection, events that caught his disciples (and most everyone else) quite off guard. He reminds them of the world's foolishness in the time of Noah, and of the woes that await those who are unprepared for the coming of the Son of Man.

"Therefore, stay awake!" Jesus warns his listeners. "For you do not know on which day your Lord will come" (Mt 24:42).

The setting of this reading, combined with those on the following Sundays of Advent, reiterates the important point that this liturgical season, like every other, is linked to the paschal mystery, the dying and rising of Our Lord.

The readings themselves are preceded by a collect (another name for the opening



Palestinian Manan Abu Abuayash holds her 6-month-old child Maram while lighting candles on Dec. 20, 2015, in the Church of the Nativity where tradition holds that Christ was born in Bethlehem, West Bank. Advent is a time for Catholics to spiritually prepare for Christ's glorious second coming. (CNS photo/Debbie Hill)

prayer of the Mass) that is both prayer and exhortation: "Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom."

These readings and prayers suggest that Advent is a season of expectation as well as preparation. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* makes this point clearly:

"When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: 'He must increase, but I must decrease'" (#524).

The "precursor," of course, is St. John the Baptist from whom we hear more

later in the Advent season—"a voice of one crying out in the desert," as he, too, calls for all to prepare, for "the one who is coming after me is mightier than I" (Mt 3:11).

And the coming to which John refers should not be new information to God's people.

"The coming of God's Son to Earth is an event of such immensity that God willed to prepare for it over centuries," the catechism points out (#522). "He announces him through the mouths of the prophets who succeeded one another in Israel. Moreover, he awakens in the hearts of the pagans a dim expectation of this coming."

To be awakened in heart. This is our hope for which we prepare every week—starting with Advent.

(Catholic journalist Mike Nelson writes from southern California.) †

God prepared for centuries to send his people his Son as the Savior

By Marcellino D'Ambrosio

Advent is a time of anticipation, for someone even bigger than Santa Claus is coming to town.

The human race has been waiting a long time for his next visit. Actually, it waited a long time for his first visit. Things had gone awry early in our history. We went from paradise to misery in the blink of an eye. Only God could turn things around, but he was a long time coming.

First, some groundwork had to be laid—a slow, gradual preparation of humanity to get it ready for the historic encounter with its Savior. There were some ideas about God and his plan that had to be gotten across. Moses was entrusted with the lion's share of that job.

But besides this intellectual preparation, there had to be spiritual and moral preparation as well. Calling the people of God to holiness was the specialty of the prophets and, given the magnitude of their job, there were many of them—Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea and Zechariah, to name a few.

God spoke both stern and comforting words through these prophets.

Isaiah 40, for example, begins with comfort: "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service has ended, that her guilt is

expiated" (Is 40:2). Captivity is over, God is coming to the rescue, to feed his flock like a shepherd.

Yet Isaiah goes on to say that a road in the desert must be prepared for this coming. Valleys must be filled in. Mountains leveled. Crooked ways made straight.

Actually, it would be easier if all we had to do was literally dynamite some mountainside. But the last and greatest of the prophets, St. John the Baptist, helps us understand the true meaning of Isaiah's words. The prep work needs to be done in us, not in sand and gravel.

If the Messiah is to come, the way must be leveled and straightened. The heights blocking his approach are mountains of pride. Pride exalts itself higher than God, erecting a barrier against him. The tower of Babel is a great example of pride's futile loftiness.

But how about the valleys needing to be filled?

Philosophers and theologians define evil as the privation of good, the lack of something that ought to be there. Lack of faith is a sin. Lack of charity is a sin. Such sins of omission are gaping holes needing to be filled to make a highway for our God.

John the Baptist lived his message. The mountains of pride had been leveled



An Advent wreath decorates the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican on Dec. 14, 2015. Advent is a time of spiritual preparation for Christ's second coming, which recalls the centuries in which God prepared his people for the first coming of his Son as the Savior. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

in him. He pointed not to himself but to him whose sandal strap, he says, he is not fit to untie. "I have baptized you in water; he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit" (Mk 1:8).

The Messiah was coming to utterly immerse us in the power and wisdom of God, to make us a new people, able

to be like God, to do new and great things.

This is, without a doubt, something worth preparing for.

(Marcellino D'Ambrosio is co-founder of Crossroads Productions, an apostolate of Catholic renewal and evangelization.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

20th-century Church: The warmth of Pope Paul VI

(Eighteenth in a series of columns)

I have a soft spot for Blessed Pope Paul VI, whose accomplishments as pope seem to have been overshadowed by St. John Paul II. Perhaps it's because Pope Paul



was the first pope I met. It happened in 1977 while I was president of the Catholic publishing company Our Sunday Visitor.

The purpose of a special audience was to present Pope Paul the first copies of *The Pope's Family Prayer Book*, which he had commissioned and which had been published in Italy. Our Sunday Visitor was the publisher of the English translation of the book, which we made available to publishers in England, Australia and Canada. Representatives of those publishers were also at the special audience.

After giving a specially-bound copy of the book to him, and hearing him express his hope that many families would buy it,

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

One day after Thanksgiving, but we're still thankful

The actual feast of Thanksgiving is past, but there's still plenty to be thankful for. It sure doesn't seem like it sometimes, what with politics and greed and self-centeredness all about us. Still, we should think about it.



Personally, I've always been grateful that I was born in the United States of America. As a woman and a religious

practitioner, I felt supported and even respected by our system of government. To me, patriotism meant being vigilant in preserving the freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution.

It also meant not abusing what are our rights. I believe we have a right to protest this or that, but not to burn a flag or riot or disrespect authority just because we feel like it. At the same time, we have the responsibility to make changes when they are necessary, as in finally creating civil rights laws after a century of immoral segregation. We hope to reverse other bad rulings such as *Roe v. Wade*, and must work to do so.

Emmaus Walk/Debra Tomaselli

Have you ever thanked God during times like this?

In this time of thanksgiving, it's easy to recall our many blessings. Usually, I'm grateful for the good things in my life.



I'm thankful when things go my way, aren't you?

But what if they don't?

I learned something about that while thumbing through my Bible recently. In Acts 16, Paul and Silas

are preaching the Good News in Macedonia. People were receptive at first, but before long, things didn't go well for the two evangelists.

The tide turned when Paul drove a demon from a slave girl, rendering her unprofitable to her master. The merchant accused Paul and Silas of corrupting the city and teaching the people to do things against the Roman laws. A mob quickly formed. Paul and Silas were arrested, condemned and whipped mercilessly.

Then they were dragged into prison. Torches of fire lit the way, flickering in the shadows of the corridors. Other

I gave Pope Paul a packet of some of the other material published by Our Sunday Visitor. He was particularly interested in *Our Sunday Visitor* (OSV) weekly newspaper. He asked about its circulation, which, at the time, was 310,000. He was also grateful for OSV's quarterly periodical *The Pope Speaks*, which published his major addresses.

After looking over the May 8, 1977, issue of *OSV*, Pope Paul asked very simply, "May I have this?" I assured him that he could have the entire package of material I brought for him. In return, he gave me a medal commemorating my visit and a copy of a small book, *Consilio Viam Alere*, containing meditations on the decrees of the Second Vatican Council.

I was greatly surprised that he gave me as much time as he did, and also that he took such an obvious interest in *Our Sunday Visitor*. His father was a Catholic newspaper editor, and I think that had a lot to do with it. He actually talked with me about the paper's layout and typefaces, which really surprised me.

After that meeting, I reported to the readers of *OSV* that the pope appeared to

be in excellent health. He had a healthy tanned complexion, and he looked much better in person than in pictures. Despite arthritis in his legs, he stood throughout the 15 or 20 minutes, and seemed to be in no hurry to end the audience.

After our discussion about *OSV*, the pope called the others back for a group photograph and then re-called them for his papal blessing. He continued to hold my hand while expressing his gratitude for publishing his prayer book.

Needless to say, I was greatly impressed by Pope Paul's friendliness, humility and warmth. They are qualities that many people saw in him, including Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh. I plan to write about his friendship with the pope next week.

Before he became pope, Archbishop Giovanni Montini was Pius XII's closest adviser and the first cardinal created by John XXIII. As pope, he presided over three sessions of the Second Vatican Council. He also was the most traveled pope in history up to that time.

Paul VI was a great pope who should not be forgotten. †

We have the right "to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." That means life, period. And liberty, when it does not infringe on the rights of others. And the pursuit of happiness, not the assurance of it.

I'm also grateful for the abundance we enjoy as Americans. This means the many opportunities we have to gain education and satisfying work and to serve others. Most of us enjoy abundant creature comforts as well: adequate housing, good food and available health care. But it is also our duty to make sure that everyone in our society shares these advantages. The poor may be always with us, but we should still try to whittle down their numbers.

I am eternally thankful for my parents and extended family who have given me constant and uncritical love and support. Their example makes it possible for the love and concern to go on and be shared with subsequent generations, friends, neighbors, colleagues at work and fellow parishioners. Even sales clerks and the mailman should be included. Whoever's on the scene.

Thanksgiving for books and music are high on my list, too. Even when old age

threatens our enjoyment of these things, there are ways to enjoy them. There are talking book services if you can't see, and tactile ways to experience music if you can't hear. Best of all, there can be personal contacts with others to enrich our spare time, especially when most of our time is spare.

The computer and smart phones and the other ubiquitous "devices" are things to be grateful for. Used with care, they can be a godsend for work and social contact. They don't provide the intimacy we all need, but they are helpful. And I'm grateful for my sense of humor, which allows me to deal with all the new things that appear as we speak.

Most of all, I'm thankful for the faith which has sustained me all my life. From the time I was a tot hiding under the piano at Sunday School until today, I have believed in the God who loves me.

The pilgrims held the first Thanksgiving feast to thank God for their survival in a new land. Indeed, we are all pilgrims making our way through the land of life toward the promised land in heaven. And, like the first pilgrims, we have God on our side. †

Now that's worth a song or two!

I think the same happens for us when we praise God during difficulties. Incredible things happen. We are set free. Even if we can't see the doors fly open, we are freed. We are free from anxiety. We are free from worry. We are free to be at peace. We are unbound.

Praise, after all, expresses our trust in God. When we trust God, no matter the circumstances, we are set free.

So this Thanksgiving, my list of blessings will expand slightly. There will be the typical thanks for family, friends, good times and successes. But with a little prayer, my list will include the struggles. I'll give thanks that some of my worst times turned into the best times because they introduced me to the real presence of God in my life. He showed up when everything else failed.

And even now, as I'm battling cancer, failing to see the road ahead, I'll praise God and thank him for that, too.

Praise will set me free.

And that'll be worth a song or two!

(Debra Tomaselli writes from Altamonte Springs, Florida. She can be reached at dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Parents and children can lead each other closer to God

My 3-year-old son Colin often knows what he wants. And when he isn't yet able to express his desires clearly through



his ever-growing vocabulary, he'll take my wife, Cindy, or I by the hand and lead us to what he wants us to do for him.

Such incidents are cute and funny. But one happened recently that was touching and even profound.

We were at Mass and when it came time to receive Communion, Colin did something unusual. He mostly likes Cindy to carry him as she's walking forward in the Communion procession line.

That day, though, he held my hand and walked next to me as I approached the sanctuary of the church to receive. And as the moment arrived, he kept his attention on the priest as he gave Communion to one worshipper after another.

It was like he was drawing me closer to the Lord in his wonderful, almost God-like innocence.

As I came close to the great gift of himself that Christ gives to me and all the faithful in the Eucharist, Colin was showing me both the humility that is proper for that moment and the attention on it alone that should hold our hearts and minds in that sacramental encounter with the Lord.

Looking back gratefully on the blessed time with Colin, I see how it was emblematic of how God calls parents and children to mutually lead each other closer to himself.

When Colin and his brothers were baptized as infants, my wife, Cindy, and I took on the responsibility of forming them in the faith so that, as they grow, like Jesus did as a child, "in wisdom and age and favor before God and man," they may embrace fully as their own that faith given to them at the start of their lives (Lk 2:52).

This obligation that we freely took on is a mighty one, one which no parent can fulfill on his or her own or even together if they relied on their human gifts alone. It requires the help of God's grace, which is available to us at every moment of every day and in a special way through our marriage in the Lord.

Parents need such divine help because, of course, their own journey of faith to the Lord is far from complete. And in the mysterious interweaving of God's providence, he leads parents closer to him through their children just as they strive with his help to bring them to him as well.

St. Paul said that marriage was a "great mystery" that embodied the mystical marriage between Christ the bridegroom and his bride, the Church (Eph 5:32). Well, there is a holy mystery, too, in the relationship formed by God between parents and their children.

So often, they can get caught up in the busyness of their daily lives with all of its duties and obligations. But parents and children would do well to step back regularly from the many little things they place such great value on in their lives, and catch a glimpse of the powerful ways that God is working in their relationships to shower his love and mercy upon them.

The more children and parents can recognize God drawing them closer to him through each other, the more they can grow in their mutual love and their love of God.

In this upcoming season of Advent, Catholics are called to prepare spiritually for the coming of Christ, both at the end of time and in their everyday lives.

Parents and children can be channels of grace for each other in this blessed season, walking together to Christ who yearns to come more fully into all of our lives. †

First Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, November 27, 2016

- Isaiah 2:1-5
- Romans 13:11-14
- Matthew 24:37-44

The Church organizes the biblical readings at weekend Mass into three cycles, A, B, and C. This weekend, the First Sunday of Advent, begins a new Church liturgical year. Therefore, the readings for this weekend, and until Advent 2018, will be within Cycle A. Most Gospel readings this year will come from the Gospel of St.



Matthew. Because of this emphasis, the forthcoming biblical readings will allow us to learn about, and reflect upon, Matthew's Gospel.

This weekend's first reading is from the first section of the Book of Isaiah. Inevitably, all of Isaiah is eloquent and profound.

Isaiah is also blunt and frank. The prophet often warned the people that doom awaited them if they did not return in fidelity to God. This is a theme of the first section of Isaiah.

While somber, the reading is not hopeless. Isaiah also reassured the people that if they reformed, God would protect them. The faithful should never despair.

After all, such was the ancient covenant. God promised to protect and secure the people, although the people themselves could, at least for a while, bring catastrophe upon themselves by their sins.

Almighty God will judge the good and the bad. Such is the divine right. It is also logical, pure and simple. All behavior must be balanced against the justice and love that are in God. All must conform to God's law in order to come to true happiness and fulfillment. The faithful hasten the day of their salvation by loving and obeying God.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans is the source of the second reading.

Paul called upon Christians to live as authentic followers of Jesus. While stressing the need to be faithful models of Christ in human living, the Apostle urged disciples to set their priorities by the standard that eternal life is the goal. Moreover, each Christian, as each

human, may face the end of earthly life at any time. For the Roman Christians of this era, the end very well might come in the form of a gruesome death after being convicted of the crime of Christianity. So Paul had a genuine task to accomplish in encouraging and challenging the faithful in Rome.

The Gospel of Matthew, the source of the last reading, predicts the final coming of Jesus. Beneficial reading of the Gospels requires realizing three perspectives: 1) The Gospel event in the actual time of Jesus; 2) The event as its implications came to be understood in the time when the Gospels were written, probably decades after Jesus; and, 3) The place that the event occupies in the general literary structure of each individual Gospel.

Likely composed generations after Jesus, Matthew was written for Christians who yearned to be relieved of the burden, and indeed peril, of living amid harshly antagonistic circumstances by experiencing the triumphant second coming of Jesus. Recalling the Lord's own words, the Gospel reminded those Christians, and reminds us, that indeed Jesus will come again in glory.

Reflection

Advent, begun in the liturgies of this weekend, calls us to prepare for Christmas. Preparation is much more than wrapping Christmas gifts and decorating Christmas trees. It means working to make the coming of Jesus into earthly life, commemorated on Christmas, a truly personal experience when the Lord comes into our loving hearts here and now.

So the Church calls us to be good Christians, to rid ourselves of anything standing in the way.

It calls us to reset our priorities. Regardless of Christmas 2016, Jesus will come again to Earth in a most glorious, victorious and final sense. We will meet the Lord, as God's judge, after death. We must prepare to meet the Lord. We must refine ourselves as honest disciples of the king born in Bethlehem. We today must shape our lives with these realities in mind. †

Daily Readings

Monday, November 28

Isaiah 4:2-6
Psalm 122:1-9
Matthew 8:5-11

Tuesday, November 29

Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17
Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday, November 30

St. Andrew, Apostle
Romans 10:9-18
Psalm 19:8-11
Matthew 4:18-22

Thursday, December 1

Isaiah 26:1-6
Psalm 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a
Matthew 7:21, 24-27

Friday, December 2

Isaiah 29:17-24
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14
Matthew 9:27-31

Saturday, December 3

St. Francis Xavier, priest
Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26
Psalm 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6
Matthew 9:35—10:1

Sunday, December 4

Second Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17
Romans 15:4-9
Matthew 3:1-12

Reflection/Sally Meyer

God meets us in everyday living: The lady in the grocery store

As I watched two people in front of me move through the checkout line, I didn't notice anything unusual about the cashier.

She was elderly with white hair, and had clear, blue eyes. When I got to the front of the line, she looked me square in the eye and gently asked, "Do you have everything you need?" It was as if she really wanted to know the answer.



Her question touched me. Cashiers don't normally ask that. Usually the phrase is something like, "Did you find everything?" It didn't take long for me to answer. I looked directly back at her and said, "Yes, I do have everything I need."

God finds a way to find me. And that day, he met me through the woman in the checkout line.

What was it that stopped me in my tracks? What was it that made me feel like there was an urgency to her question?

As I reflect back, it was eye contact. Her question meant something important because she looked at me.

Then there was her voice. There was a calmness and care in it, seeming to reach right out to me—as if I were important. I couldn't help but think that this is how Jesus would look at me and speak to me if he were right here with me. It was in that

precise moment, where the gentleness of voice, and the look of compassion, made me fully aware of God's presence.

Questions continued to surface after that encounter. What does it mean for me to be grateful? Am I being grateful?

Thanking God for all I have been given and acknowledging all the goodness in my life is important and something that is not to be taken lightly.

But I can't help but think I am being called to reflect more deeply on the cashier's question. God's love and care for me were affirmed in her words. How am I being called to use my own thankfulness to love others with more gentleness and compassion?

As I think about the most challenging times in my life, it is sometimes hard to imagine that God was there in all of it.

Feeling grateful is difficult in hard situations. It's easier to become angry, resentful or depressed about what I do or don't have.

But God reaches out to us and meets us in all of our situations, messy or not. He is in the middle of all of it. We are not alone. The cashier behind the counter reminded me of that.

What are you thankful for? Who are you thankful for? Do you have everything you need?

(Sally Meyer is a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.) †

My Journey to God

Pilgrimage Pondering

By Natalie Hoefler

In the pilgrimage of your life there was a pause, Cardinal Tobin,
A holy moment of communion with God
In the land where once walked
The Word Incarnate.

As you gazed upon the room
Where Mary uttered her eternal "Yes,"
Did you ponder the extent of your
own "Yes"
To the Word Incarnate?

As you rode upon the sea
Where Peter walked upon
storm-maddened water,
Did you ponder your own faith
In the Word Incarnate?

As you walked atop Mount Tabor
Where Transcendence was transfigured,
Did you ponder and "Listen to Him,"
To the Word Incarnate?

As you eyed the Garden of Gethsemane
Where love and submission conquered
fear,

Did you ponder the cup you might
one day drink
For the Word Incarnate?

As you walked the *Via Dolorosa*
Where sorrow crushed with the weight
of wood,
Did you ponder the load you might carry
For the Word Incarnate?

As you celebrated the Eucharist over
the empty tomb
Where Love vanquished death and won
eternal life,
Did you ponder your own lasting hope
In the Word Incarnate?

As you move forward on your pilgrim
journey,
And perhaps ponder these things in
your heart,
Know that a multitude of prayers carry
you, as does
The Word Incarnate.



(Natalie Hoefler is a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis and is a reporter for The Criterion. In this photo from Feb. 8, 2015, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin pauses for a moment during the archdiocesan Holy Land pilgrimage to pray in front of the room where it is believed Mary announced her "Yes" to the Archangel Gabriel. The underground room is enshrined in the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth, Israel.) (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

BOHNERT, Dr. J. Thomas, 86, Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Nov. 9. Husband of Nina Bohnert. Father of Gary, Jon and Mark Bohnert. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of four.

COLLIGNON, Paul S., 91, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 11. Husband of Jeanette Collignon. Father of Kathleen Murphy, Marcia Ann Young and Thomas Collignon. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of one.

CUNDIFF, Raymond E., 76, St. John the Baptist, Starlight, Nov. 13. Husband of Ora Cundiff. Father of Michael Cundiff. Brother of Sonny Van Cleve. Grandfather of two.

DURRETT, Christa M. (Salamone), 53, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 13. Wife of Carl Durrett. Mother of Mason and Vincent Durrett. Sister of Sheri and Steve Salamone.

FIEREK, Kathleen A., 70, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Oct. 29. Wife of James Fierek. Mother of Susan Hays, Annie, Katie, Mary, Edward, Joe and John Fierek. Sister of Marilyn Flick, Regina Haltom, Jeannie Herrera and David Dugan. Grandmother of 11.

HALL, Mary Margaret, 75, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Nov. 11. Mother of Sylvia Amos, Beverly Haynes, Darla Raque and Rick Hall. Sister of Helen Balmer, Louise Elmer, Ann Foley, Norma Lamb and John Weiseka. Grandmother of eight.

HOGAN, Steven E., 54, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, Nov. 3. Husband of Maria Baker-Hogan. Father of Jasmin, Sierra and Steven Hogan, Jr.. Son of Mason Hogan, Sr. and Doris Miller-Hogan. Brother of Joni Hogan-Curtis, Diedre Guynn and Ronald Hogan.

HUTT, Thomas L., 74, St. Mary, North Vernon,



Gobble gobble

Free-range turkeys are seen on Nov. 12 at Miloski's Poultry Farm in Calverton, N.Y. Thanksgiving was celebrated on Nov. 24 this year. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Nov. 5. Husband of Betty Jean Hutt. Brother of Barbara Flispart, Katie LaHue, Carla Schnieders, Cecilia Steele, Bob, Bud, Jack, Joe and Phil Hutt. Uncle of several.

JONES, Betty Ann, 86, St. Mary, New Albany, Nov. 5. Wife of Clarence Jones. Mother of Julie Schamel, Janice Smith,

Jeff, Jim and John Jones. Sister of Franciscan Sister Noreen, Bob and Tom McLaughlin. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of five.

LECHER, Barbara A., 72, Holy Family, Oldenburg, Nov. 13. Wife of Thomas Lecher. Mother of Valerie Caudill, Shirley Stenger, Wendy Weisenbach, Frank, Gary, Marvin, Mike, Rick, Sam and Tony Lecher. Sister of Melly Allgeier, Jackie Armbruster, Martha Simmermeyer and Rosie Weisenbach. Grandmother of 43. Step-grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of six. Step great-grandmother of five.

MCCARTIN, Viola R., 93, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Nov. 9. Mother of Diane Benedetti, Debbie Butterweck, Kay Grube, Gary, Greg, Richard and Steve McCartin. Grandmother of 22. Great-grandmother of 17. Great-great-grandmother of one.

MCCLELLAN, Ives P., 67, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 6. Husband of Barbara McClellan. Father of Sue Gaudreau, Patty Graul, Sandy Miller and Michael

Ives. Brother of Mary Agusti and Patricia Burt. Grandfather of 12.

MAYMON, Catherine E., 85, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Nov. 4. Mother of Rhonda Eckert, Mona Lewen, Kim, Shanon, Joe, John, Mark and Pat Maymon. Grandmother of 18. Great-grandmother of 20.

MARONE, Joseph P., 92, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 15. Father of Judy Harrison, Teresa Hupalo, Michael and Tom Morone. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of nine.

OHOLOROGG, William J., 81, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Oct. 29. Uncle of several.

PIO, Juana Caixba, 45, St. Gabriel, Connerville, Nov. 6. Daughter of Olegario Caixba Belli and Margarita Pio Promotor.

SCHNEIDER, John, 89, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Nov. 10. Husband of Doris Schneider. Father of Johanna Evans, Marianna Franz and William Schneider. Brother of

Paula Kish, Janet Quinter and George Toschlog. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of 13. Great-great grandfather of one.

SCHULER, James, 96, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Nov. 5. Father of Kathy Lee, Sandra Robinson, Eugene and Jimmy Schuler, Jr.. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of six. Great-great-grandfather of three.

TORRELLA, Rene J., 76, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Nov. 2. Husband of Marlene Torrella. Father of Abigail Chauhan, Carrie Torrella McCord, Tracy Torrella McCord, Tracy Snell and Andrew Torrella. Son of Hilda Torrella. Brother of Roxann Tanner, Regina and Carlos Torrella. Grandfather of six.

WILLIAMSON, Luby, 82, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Nov. 3. Father of Lee Ann Huffine and Mark Williamson. Step-father of Micci Wampler and Rich Townsend. Brother of Mary Travis-Gresham and Jerry Williamson. Grandfather of six. Step-grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of six. †

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- Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, CSSR

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Faith calls us to embrace saint's witness of belonging, priest says

By Mike Krokos

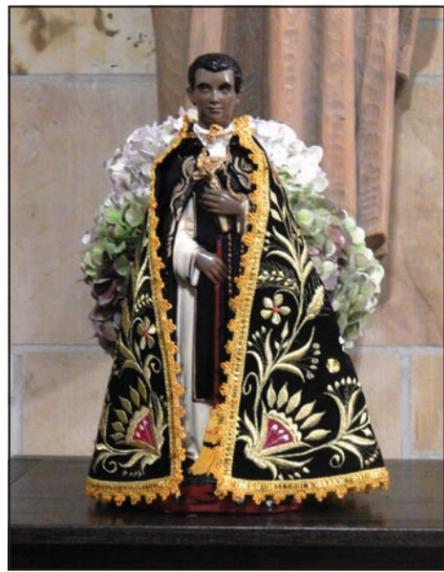
The life of St. Martin de Porres offers lessons in simplicity, humility and compassion, and his example is relevant today as Catholics try to better understand their brothers and sisters from different backgrounds or ethnic traditions.

That was the message Pearlette Springer took away from the 13th annual archdiocesan St. Martin de Porres Mass celebrated on Nov. 3 at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis.

"I believe that it is important for the archdiocese to celebrate this particular feast day because people have a tendency to place Africans, African-Americans and Latinos in boxes," said Springer, who serves as archdiocesan coordinator of Black Catholic Ministry. "St. Martin de Porres had a shared heritage of Spaniard, Peruvian and African—probably from the west coast of Africa. His language was probably Spanish, but his physical features were definitely African. I think it is safe to say that a majority of Africans, African-Americans and Latinos have a shared ancestry that goes back to the time of the African slave trade. Our society separates and tends to pit one group against the other. This has caused a deep division between Latinos and African and African-American peoples."

Springer added that, with St. Martin de Porres as a patron saint of social justice, the celebration of his feast day offers the Church in central and southern Indiana a chance to walk away with an awareness of the commonality of these cultures.

"To understand that we suffer, to a great extent, from the same discrimination, the same racism, the same marginalization," she continued.



A statue of St. Martin de Porres sits at the front of St. Michael the Archangel Church.

"I would like to see the beginnings of African, African-American and Latino communities embracing each other, standing up for each other and demanding equality, equity and justice for each other."

During the Mass, readings were proclaimed in English and Spanish. Prayers of the faithful were spoken in English, French, Italian, Spanish and Tagalog—a national language of the Philippines.

An estimated 200 people attended the liturgy.

Martin was abandoned by his father when he was young, and he was rejected by many people in society. After working for a few years as an apprentice to a barber—who also served as a surgeon in those days—he was accepted as a lay helper in the Dominican order. After nine years, the community, impressed with his prayer life, humility and love, invited him to profess vows.

In his various ministries, Martin treated all people equally regardless of their ethnicity, race or social status, which was not the norm in Lima, Peru, where racism abounded at the time.

"What was extraordinary in his life is that he saw Jesus Christ in the ordinary, everyday reality of belonging," explained Father Michael Hoyt, pastor of St. Michael Parish, in his homily.

The saint's witness, the priest continued, showed that every person belongs in the house of God.

Through his ministry, St. Martin de Porres demonstrated that "he knew that he belonged to Jesus Christ, and that everyone he came in contact with—whether they were against him or for him, whether they were black or white, whether they were rich or poor, he knew that they belonged," Father Hoyt said.

As people of faith, we must follow the saint's example and be witnesses "so that no one we come in contact with experiences a kind of rejection from us," he continued.



Father Michael Hoyt, second from left, pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis, prays the eucharistic prayer during the archdiocesan St. Martin de Porres Mass celebrated on Nov. 3 at his parish's church. Also pictured are Father Douglas Hunter, left, Father Kenneth Taylor and Society of the Divine Word Father Charles Smith. (Photos by Mike Krokos)



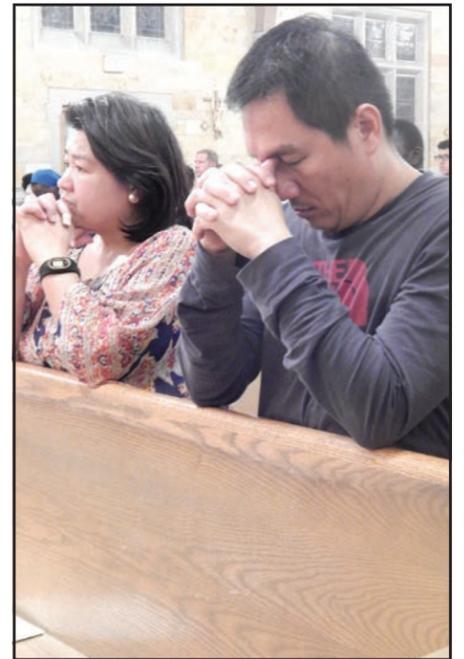
Maria Pimentel-Gannon, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis who is also a member of the archdiocesan Intercultural Ministry Commission, proclaims the first reading in Spanish.

"Our world is desperately in need of a cure, a cure of this illness which is making us forget that we belong to each other ... to each other and to God."

Maria Manalang, who is coordinator of the archdiocese's Filipino Ministry, attended the liturgy with her husband, Darwin. She offered prayers of the faithful in Tagalog, and said the gathering offered them another chance to witness the diversity of the local Church.

"We try to support each other, and this gives us the chance to spread our culture," said Maria, a member of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis. "To share it, we have to participate in it as well, to be part of it. It's an exchange. It's important to support our other [intercultural] commissions."

Maria Pimentel-Gannon, a member of St. Monica Parish in



Maria Manalang, who is coordinator of the archdiocese's Filipino Ministry, and her husband, Darwin, pray during the Nov. 3 Mass. They are members of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis.

Indianapolis who is also a member of the archdiocesan Intercultural Ministry Commission, said the annual celebration that brings communities together is "one of the best things we've done in the archdiocese." †

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Pope extends special Year of Mercy provisions on confession

VATICAN CITY (CNS)— Acknowledging and sharing God’s mercy is a permanent part of the Christian life, so initiatives undertaken during the Holy Year of Mercy must continue, Pope Francis said.

“Mercy cannot become a mere parenthesis in the life of the Church,” the pope wrote in an apostolic letter, *“Misericordia et Misera,”* (“Mercy and Misery”), which he signed on Nov. 20 at the end of the Year of Mercy. The Vatican released the text the next day.

The Church’s focus on God’s mercy must continue with individual acts of kindness, assistance to the poor and, particularly, with encouraging Catholics to participate in the sacrament of reconciliation and making it easier for them to do so, the pope wrote.

In his letter, Pope Francis said he formally was giving all priests permanent permission to grant absolution to those who confess to having procured an abortion. While many bishops around the world, and almost all bishops in the United States, routinely grant that faculty to all their priests, Pope Francis had made it universal during the Holy Year.

According to canon law, procuring an abortion brings automatic excommunication to those who know of the penalty, but procure the abortion anyway. Without formal permission, priests had been required to refer the case to their bishops before the excommunication could be lifted, and sacramental absolution could be granted to a woman who had an abortion or those directly involved in the procedure.

“I wish to restate as firmly as I can that abortion is a grave sin, since it puts an end to an innocent life,” the pope wrote. “In the same way, however, I can and must state that there is no sin that God’s mercy cannot reach and wipe away when it finds a repentant

heart seeking to be reconciled with the Father.”

Speaking to reporters during a Vatican news conference on Nov. 21, Archbishop Rino Fisichella said procuring an abortion still results in automatic excommunication the very moment the procedure is carried out.

Sacramental absolution, therefore, is not just forgiving the sin of abortion, but also means “the excommunication is removed,” he said.

Now that all priests have been given the faculty to lift the excommunication and grant absolution, the *Code of Canon Law* will have to be updated, said the archbishop, who is president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, the office that organized events for the Year of Mercy.

The pope also formally extended the provision he made during the Year of Mercy of recognizing as valid the sacramental absolution received by “those faithful who, for various reasons, attend churches officiated by the priests of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Pius X,” the traditionalist society founded by the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre.

Although the Vatican and the society continue talks aimed at formally restoring the society’s full communion with the Church, Pope Francis said he was extending the pastoral provision “lest anyone ever be deprived of the sacramental sign of reconciliation through the Church’s pardon.”

The title of the document is taken from a sermon by St. Augustine about Jesus’ encounter with a woman caught in adultery. After those who wanted to stone her slinked away, only Jesus and the woman—mercy and misery—remained.

In the Gospel story, the pope wrote, and in the sacraments of the Church, particularly confession and

the anointing of the sick, “references to mercy, far from being merely exhortative, are highly performative, which is to say that as we invoke mercy with faith, it is granted to us, and as we confess it to be vital and real, it transforms us,” as it did with the woman caught in adultery.

“This is a fundamental element of our faith,” Pope Francis wrote.

“Even before the revelation of sin, there is the revelation of the love by which God created the world and human beings,” he wrote. “His love always precedes us, accompanies us and remains with us, despite our sin.”

In celebrating and welcoming God’s love and mercy, he said, a special place in the Church must be given to families, especially at a time when the very meaning of family is in crisis.

“The beauty of the family endures unchanged, despite so many problems and alternative proposals,” he said. “The grace of the sacrament of marriage not only strengthens the family to be a privileged place for practicing mercy, but also commits the Christian community and all its pastoral activity to uphold the great positive value of the family.”

Still, he wrote, “the experience of mercy enables us to regard all human problems from the standpoint of God’s love, which never tires of welcoming and accompanying,” even in situations marked by failure or sin.

“Our life, with its joys and sorrows, is something unique and unrepeatable that takes place under the merciful gaze of God,” he said. In counseling couples, priests must use “a careful, profound and far-sighted spiritual discernment, so that everyone, none excluded, can feel accepted by God, participate actively in the life of the community and be part of that People



Pope Francis signs an apostolic letter, *“Misericordia et Misera,”* (“Mercy and Misery”) after celebrating the closing Mass of the Holy Year of Mercy in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Nov. 20. In the letter, the pope called for several special initiatives begun during the Year of Mercy to continue on a permanent basis. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

of God which journeys tirelessly toward the fullness of his kingdom of justice, love, forgiveness and mercy.

“Nothing of what a repentant sinner places before God’s mercy can be excluded from the embrace of his forgiveness,” the pope wrote. “For this reason, none of us has the right to make forgiveness conditional.”

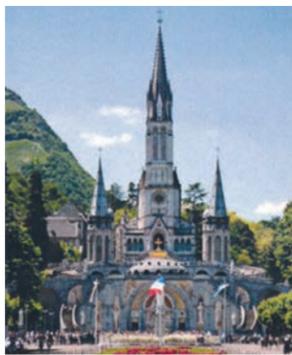
In another continuation of a Year of Mercy project, Pope Francis asked the more than 1,100 priests he commissioned as “missionaries of mercy” to continue leading retreats, missions, prayer services and offering confession in dioceses around the world.

“Their pastoral activity sought to emphasize that God places no roadblocks in the way of those who seek him with a contrite heart, because he goes out to meet everyone like a father,” the pope said. †

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