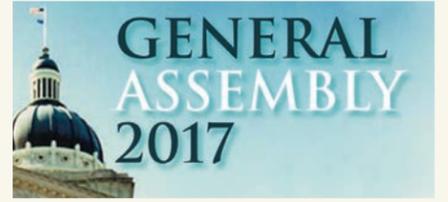




The

# Criterion

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Public policy

ICC gears up for state legislative session, page 9.

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## Cardinal Tobin looks to bridge chasm between faith, life in anxious world

NEWARK, N.J. (CNS)—The chasm between faith and life is the greatest challenge facing the Catholic Church today, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin said at his installation Mass to become the new archbishop of Newark, N.J.

During the Mass on Jan. 6, he urged the Church to be salt for the Earth so that the presence of Christ does not become “a comforting, nostalgic memory.”

In his homily, Cardinal Tobin said he wanted to head off “a growing trend that seems to isolate us, convincing us to neatly compartmentalize our lives” as people attend Mass on Sunday, and then doing “whatever we think we need to do to get by” the rest of the week.

Cardinal Tobin said his appointment reminded him “that stakes are incredibly high” as he assumes leadership of the

richly diverse Archdiocese of Newark.

See related column, page 4.

“If we permit the chasm between faith and life to continue to expand, we risk losing Christ, reducing him simply to an interesting idea of a comforting, nostalgic memory. And if we lose Christ, the world has lost the salt, light and leaven that could have transformed it,” he said.

He recalled how the Church is “the place where believers speak and listen to each other, and it is the community of faith that speaks with and listens to the world. The Church senses a responsibility for the world, not simply as yet another institutional presence or a benevolent NGO [non-governmental organization], but as a movement of salt, light and leaven for the world’s transformation. For this reason, our kindness must be known to all.”

The installation took place before more than 2,000 people at Newark’s towering Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Cardinal Tobin concelebrated the Mass with six other



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin smiles while speaking to the congregation at the end of his Jan. 6 installation Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, N.J. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

cardinals and more than 60 archbishops and bishops. Five hundred priests and deacons also participated.

After a 30-minute opening procession, Archbishop John J. Myers, retired archbishop of Newark, welcomed participants and took special note of members of Cardinal Tobin’s religious community, the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (the Redemptorists),

his 93-year-old mother, Marie Tobin, and his extended family. Cardinal Tobin, 64, is the eldest of 13 children.

Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, recalled when St. John Paul II visited Newark in 1995, he described the nearby Statue of Liberty as a symbol of “the nation America aspires to be.”

See INSTALLATION, page 8

## Msgr. William F. Stumpf is elected archdiocesan administrator by college of consultors

By Sean Gallagher

In accordance with the stipulations of the Church’s *Code of Canon Law*, Msgr. William F. Stumpf was elected archdiocesan administrator on Jan. 9 at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.



Msgr. William F. Stumpf

He was elected by the seven archdiocesan priests who serve on the archdiocesan college of consultors.

As archdiocesan administrator, Msgr. Stumpf will oversee the day-to-day business of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis until

Pope Francis appoints a new shepherd for the Church in central and southern Indiana.

“It’s an honor and a privilege,” said Msgr. Stumpf of the election. “I take it very seriously. I love the archdiocese, and so it is always a privilege to serve when you love the Church.”

After he was elected and accepted the election, Msgr. Stumpf made a profession of faith while placing his right hand on a Bible.

“It was very powerful for me,” he said. “Those are all the things that I hold dear. They mean everything to me. But it was even more powerful to me in a sense of leadership. Not only are these the things that I’ve held dear and supported all my life as a priest, now I’m being asked to preserve those for a larger entity than just a parish.”

In leading the archdiocese through this time of transition, Msgr. Stumpf’s authority will be limited by canon law. He is prohibited, for example, from closing parishes or opening new ones.

He also cannot name pastors of parishes until the archdiocese has been without an archbishop for one year. Msgr. Stumpf is, however, able to name priests as parish administrators in the interim.

Msgr. Stumpf will also need the approval of the college of consultors to call a man to be ordained a priest or deacon.

“The administrator is not to be making innovations,” said Msgr. Stumpf, who served as archdiocesan vicar general under

See STUMPF, page 8

## Catholic values, spirit of caring and love of faith connect award-winning members of archdiocese

By John Shaughnessy

Three pieces of wisdom guide Tom Spencer’s life and faith, starting with the advice that his mother gave him as a child.

“One of the things she taught me in life was that you’re always practicing to become a better Catholic,” says Spencer, a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

That approach marks the lives of Spencer and the three other recipients of the 2017 Celebrating Catholic School Values Award who will be honored on Feb. 9: Kevin Johnson of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, and Van and Kathy Willis of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany.

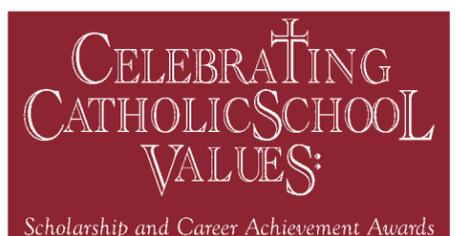
For Spencer, “always practicing to become a better Catholic” is tied to a question that is the second foundation of

his life and faith: “Are you and I changing other people’s lives?”

Spencer has tried to answer that question by his numerous efforts throughout the archdiocese to help pregnant women in need, to increase vocations, and to support the caring ministry of the Little Sisters of the Poor at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis.

He’s an advocate of the Women’s Care Center in Indianapolis because of the way “it supports pregnant women, and encourages them to learn more about the gift of life while providing resources to help raise their child.”

He’s also been a longtime member of the Serra Club of Indianapolis, promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life. At his parish, his significant involvement includes coordinating trips



to Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad for students at St. Luke School.

“Besides trying to be a good child of God and a good husband and father, my next most important work is support of vocations,” says Spencer, the father of two grown children. “I’ve always had a love for the priesthood and religious life.”

That love shined through in his friendship with the late Father Thomas

See CCSV, page 2

# CCSV

continued from page 1

Murphy during the time the archdiocesan priest and fellow University of Notre Dame graduate battled Parkinson's disease.

"He was the priest I would never become," says Spencer, who is also a member of Legatus of Indianapolis, an organization for Catholic business leaders. "He had high expectations for me, and I



**Tom Spencer**

didn't want to let him down. Everyone can change the world—if only in a small way—and he changed my world." So has Spencer's wife of 36 years, Gayle. "She's a very devout woman, and she's been generous in sharing me with so many Catholic entities," says Spencer, a 1972 graduate of Lafayette Central Catholic High School in Lafayette, Ind. "She's my life mate, my best friend, and she enables me to be a good child of God. I hope I've done the same for her."

Those words lead to the third foundation of Spencer's life and faith, the foundation he considers the most important.

"My first job is to get myself, my wife and my kids to heaven," he says. "That's why we're here. We're here to know him, love him and serve him."

### Kevin Johnson's call to love

Kevin Johnson's emotions overflow when he talks about how his life has been touched by the love and compassion that



**Kevin Johnson**

he believes is inherent in the Catholic faith. He remembers the difference his fourth-grade teacher at Little Flower School in Indianapolis had on him during the year when his father died. He recalls all the support his two children received when they were students at St. Ambrose School in Seymour.

And he'll never forget the care and concern his son Tommy received when he was a student at Roncalli High School—the school he attended after their family moved back to Indianapolis, a time

when Tommy had three serious surgeries at Riley Hospital for Children for a life-threatening condition.

"Catholic education and our Catholic faith have shaped every part of my life," says Johnson, a 1977 graduate of Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis. "It's been there to support us through the tough times, too."

All those situations help explain Johnson's strong commitment to supporting Catholic education and the faith.

He was president of the parish council during his family's years at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish. He successfully led a \$1.2 million building campaign at St. Ambrose Parish. And he has expanded the Special Religious Development (SPRED) program for adults with special needs at his current parish, Holy Spirit in Indianapolis.

"The thing I love about the SPRED participants is they're non-judgmental, and they take every day as the gift it is," he says. "It's one of those things where you get more out of it than you give. It's powerful."

Johnson is also on the board of directors at Scecina, serves as vice-chairman of the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Commission, and is a member of the Knights of Columbus. And his community involvement reflects concern for the homeless and children who live in struggling economic areas.

"I feel like Jesus came here to show us love and compassion. That's what we're called to do. I try to do my little part in the process. I fail often."

The one area where he's sure he has succeeded is in his choice of his spouse, Lori—a relationship that dates back to their school days together at Little Flower and Scecina.

"She has been the rock," Johnson says about his wife of 35 years. "She's always been supportive of my very busy career while also being involved in the communities and the parishes. Honestly, I feel if I'm getting this award, she should be, too. She's involved as much as I am."

"We're proud of the Catholic Church and what it means to the world. We've had the love and support of a lot of people."

### Kathy and Van Willis' key to happiness

For Kathy and Van Willis, their lives, their family and their marriage are all centered on the power of "example."

## Tickets are available for 21st annual Celebrating Catholic School Values program

The 21st annual Celebrating Catholic School Values reception and awards program for the archdiocese will be held on Feb. 9 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Indianapolis.



**James Danko**

Danko, president of Butler University in Indianapolis.

The reception will begin at 6 p.m. in the hotel's Grand Hall of Union Station. The awards program will follow at 7 p.m.

The event raises money for scholarships to help low-income families enroll their children in the Catholic school of their choice. Tickets may be purchased for \$75 at [www.archindy.org/ccsv/purchase2017](http://www.archindy.org/ccsv/purchase2017).

For information about the event, contact Joni Ripa at 317-236-1444 or 1-800-382-9836, ext. 144. †

When Kathy was 5, her father died—leading her mother on a journey that would take her back to school to earn a degree in education, become a teacher and principal,



**Van and Kathy Willis**

and model for her four children the importance of "Catholic service, faith and love." "She instilled that ethic in us that you served," Kathy says. When Van met Kathy when they were both in law school, he saw how much her Catholic faith meant to her and chose to become a Catholic, too. He also viewed his choice as a way the two of them would eventually follow the example of his Southern Baptist parents—going to church as a family and "helping people whenever you can."

Now married for 28 years, Kathy and Van have tried to set that example of "Catholic service, faith and love" for their four children—through their extensive commitment to their southern Indiana community and their parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in New Albany.

Kathy's involvement at their parish has included serving on its school commission, the liturgy committee and the faith formation commission while also leading retreats, helping with funeral meals, and writing and editing the parish newsletter. She has also served on the board of directors at St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities.

Van has served their parish as an usher, a lector, president of its pastoral council, and a volunteer at its soup kitchen. He is currently the president of the board of trustees at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville.

His community involvement has also included working with the Floyd County Head Start program, Goodwill of Southern Indiana, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, and Hope Southern Indiana—"an organization of about 35 churches that provides financial assistance and job training to the neediest people in the community."

As a couple, the two full-time attorneys also have served as co-chairs of a capital campaign at their parish. They've also seen the impact that their example has had on their children.

"One is a teacher, one is a nurse, one is studying to become an occupational therapist," says Van, noting that their youngest is a junior at Providence High School.

"I started taking them to the soup kitchen at the parish at a young age. It shows them that a lot of people don't have the advantages they have. And it's the right thing to help other people. You can tell them things, but if you show them, it means a lot more."

Kathy adds, "I've really tried to teach them that you have to involve God in the day-to-day decisions of your life—that you have to take it to prayer."

Their approach has done more than helped their parish, their community and their children. They say it's also strengthened their marriage.

"Van and I are pretty like-minded," Kathy says. "We try to share our time, talent and treasure in the ways we can. Everything I do is related to my faith. I just feel like I want to share my faith. When you have something that is so important to you, you want to share it."

"I feel that is the key to happiness. I love to serve. It brings a joy to my life that I want to share with others." †

## Archdiocese will celebrate World Marriage Day with special Mass on Feb. 12 in cathedral

Criterion staff report

In honor of World Marriage Day, the archdiocese will celebrate a special Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 10:30 a.m. on Feb. 12.

Recognition will be given to the couples in attendance married the longest and shortest amount of time. After the Mass, a reception will be held in Assembly Hall at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St.

Due to limited space, registration

for the Mass is required. For an online registration form, log on to [www.archindy.org](http://www.archindy.org).

To register by phone or for more information, call 317-236-1521 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1521. Registration is first come, first served, and closes when maximum capacity at the cathedral is reached.

If you would like your 50th, 60th, 70th or 75th anniversary announcement placed in *The Criterion*, log on to [www.archindy.org/criterion/local/forms3/anniversary-form.html](http://www.archindy.org/criterion/local/forms3/anniversary-form.html), or call 317-236-1585 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1585. †



### Pope Francis' prayer intention for January

- **Christian Unity**— That all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving with prayer and fraternal charity to restore ecclesial communion and by collaborating to meet the challenges facing humanity.

(Editor's note: Starting in 2017, the Holy Father will present only one prepared prayer intention per month, rather than the two presented before this year. He plans, however, to add a second prayer intention each month related to current events or urgent needs, like disaster relief. The urgent prayer request will help mobilize prayer and action related to the urgent situation. The Apostleship of Prayer will publish these urgent prayer intentions on this website as soon as it receives them from the Vatican.)

(To see the pope's monthly intentions, go to [www.apostleshipofprayer.org/2017-intentions](http://www.apostleshipofprayer.org/2017-intentions).) †

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# Vigil for Life with guest speaker is among three local *Roe v. Wade* solemn observance opportunities this month

Criterion staff report

The archdiocesan Office of Pro Life and Family Life is offering several opportunities to participate in this year's solemn observance of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion 44 years ago on Jan. 22, 1973. Below is a list of the events.



Ennie Hickman

## '9 Days for Life' novena is Jan. 21-29

The first opportunity is a novena through the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Their annual "9 Days for Life" novena takes place on Jan. 21–Jan. 29. The novena focuses on prayer for the respect and protection of all human life with daily intentions, brief reflections and more.

It can be downloaded or received via Facebook, e-mail, text message or an app. Learn more or join the novena by logging on to [www.9daysforlife.com](http://www.9daysforlife.com).

## Mass and Prayerful Witness on Jan. 23

Next, since Jan. 22 falls on a Sunday this year, the annual Mass and Prayerful Witness for the legal protection of the unborn will take place on Jan. 23. Mass will be celebrated at noon at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.

Following Mass, there will be the opportunity to remain in the cathedral for eucharistic adoration, or to participate in a prayerful procession along Meridian Street. After the procession—around 2:30

p.m.—Benediction will take place in the cathedral.

Parking will be available at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St. For more information, contact Rebecca Niemerg, director of the Office of Pro Life and Family Life, at [niemerg@archindy.org](mailto:niemerg@archindy.org), or call 317-236-1569 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1569.

## Vigil for Life is Jan. 25

The final archdiocesan event of the solemn prayerful observance of the *Roe v. Wade* decision is the archdiocese's second Vigil for Life on Jan. 25, sponsored by the archdiocesan Secretariat of Pastoral Ministries. It will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral from 6:30-9 p.m. While the event is designed for youths, young adults and families, all are welcome.

The event takes place the week of the national March for Life in solidarity with all those gathering in Washington, D.C. The vigil will include music by Matt Faley; a keynote address by Ennie Hickman of Adore Ministries; a reflection, eucharistic procession, adoration and Benediction led by Father John Hollowell, pastor of Annunciation Parish in Brazil and St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle; and an opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation from 6:45-8:45 p.m.

The event is free. However, participants are asked to bring donations for Birthline, a ministry that provides material support for pregnant women and mothers of infants in need.

Items most in need are diapers (sizes newborn-5), baby wash, diaper wipes and clean, gently used or new clothes,



Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, leads a procession along North Meridian Street in Indianapolis on Jan. 22, 2016, during last year's solemn prayerful remembrance of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion. This year's Mass and procession will take place on Jan. 23. (Criterion file photo by Natalie Hoefler)

sizes newborn-2T.

Although registration is not required, it is encouraged and is available by logging

on to [www.vigilforlife.eventbrite.com](http://www.vigilforlife.eventbrite.com).

Parking will be available at the Catholic Center. †

# Nominations for 2017 Spirit of Service Awards are due on Jan. 20

Catholic Charities of Indianapolis is seeking nominations for its annual adult and youth Spirit of Service Awards.

Candidates will be individuals who, through the giving of their time, talents and treasures in a volunteer capacity, have made significant contributions to our community (i.e., business, health care, communications, education, family, arts, human services, religion, science, government, athletics, youth development or other service fields).

Please also consider any individual(s) who is a current or former client of Catholic Charities Indianapolis programs, and is now significantly contributing to our community.

The lives of the candidates will reflect the highest ethical standards, and their work will be consistent with the values of



Catholic Charities Indianapolis: justice, diversity, self-determination, respect, stewardship, action and personal growth.

For nomination forms for both the adult and the youth awards, log onto [www.archindy.org/cc/indianapolis/index.html](http://www.archindy.org/cc/indianapolis/index.html). Nominations are due by Jan. 20.

For questions or more information, contact Valerie Sperka at 317-592-4072 or [vsperka@archindy.org](mailto:vsperka@archindy.org). †

# Pope: Jesus amazed others because he was humble, helpful, not a hypocrite

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Jesus astonished people with the way he taught and interacted with others because he wasn't aloof, domineering or hypocritical, Pope Francis said in a homily.

"Jesus wasn't allergic to people. Touching lepers, the sick did not disgust him," whereas the Pharisees—who strolled around in fine clothes—looked down on the people and considered them ignorant, he said during a Mass on Jan. 10 in the chapel of his residence.

"They were removed from the people, they weren't close," the pope said of the Pharisees. "Jesus was very close to the people, and this gave him authority."

The pope's homily centered on the day's Gospel reading (Mk 1:21-28) in which people gathered at the synagogue in Capernaum "were astonished" at Jesus' teaching because he displayed an authority that differed so greatly from that of the scribes.

The people would listen to and be

respectful toward the doctors of the law and the scribes, but the people didn't take what they said "to heart," he said.

These teachers felt themselves superior, as if to say: "We are the teachers, the princes, and we teach you. No service. We command, you obey," the pope said. But Jesus "never passed himself off as a prince. He was always the servant of everyone, and this is what gave him authority."

The traditional teachers were hypocrites, declaring the truth, but not doing what they preached, Pope Francis said.

Jesus "lived what he preached," he said, representing the harmonious union of "what he thought, felt and did."

"Jesus, who is humble, who is at the service [of others], who is near, who doesn't despise people and who is consistent, has authority," the pope said. "This is the authority that the people of God sense." †

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# The Criterion

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## Editorial



Migrants wait in line to receive food during a snowfall in Belgrade, Serbia, on Jan. 9. In the United States, National Migration Week runs on Jan. 8-14. (CNS photo/Marko Djurica, Reuters)

## Encountering our migrants

The U.S. Catholic bishops have designated this week, Jan. 8-14, as National Migration Week. It has celebrated this week for nearly 50 years to reflect on the circumstances

confronting migrants, including immigrants, refugees, children, and victims and survivors of human trafficking.

See related story, page 16.

The theme for this year's observance is "Creating a Culture of Encounter." It's a response to Pope Francis' emphasis on encountering others because, as the pope said, "faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others."

The U.S. bishops' website says, "With respect to migrants, too often in our contemporary culture we fail to encounter them as persons, and instead look at them as others. We do not take the time to engage migrants in a meaningful way, but remain aloof to their presence and suspicious of their intentions. During this National Migration Week, let us all take the opportunity to engage migrants as children of God who are worthy of our attention and support."

It seems to us that our attitude toward migrants should be identical with our attitude toward anyone else. It's embodied in the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Mt 7:12; Lk 6:31)

In fact, that's precisely what Pope Francis told the members of the U.S. Congress during his address in the Capitol in Washington on Sept. 24, 2015. He urged legislators to follow the Golden Rule to protect life at all stages, aid immigrants and the poor, nurture the good of the biological family, and care for creation.

More recently, during the consistory at which Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin was made a cardinal, the pope warned against casting someone as "an enemy because they come from a distant country, or have different customs. An enemy because of the color of their skin, their language, or social class."

As both Catholics and Americans, we say that we believe that all people are created equal and deserve equal rights. Furthermore, our Catholic ancestors from a wide variety of countries have historically benefited from the American values that prompted the creation of

the Statue of Liberty and the poem by Emma Lazarus that include the words, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

Yet now, with a new president about to take office on Jan. 20, kindness toward migrants no longer appears to be a priority in this country. We say "appears" because we're convinced that most Americans still want to welcome migrants and that they voted for Donald Trump despite his campaign against migrants rather than because of it.

We hope, in particular, that President Trump won't rescind President Obama's executive order, issued in 2012, that has kept an estimated 740,000 young people from being deported. These are young men and women who were brought to the United States as children, and have grown up here like any other American children. If deported, they would be going to countries and cultures they have never known. Many of them can make great contributions to our country.

It's encouraging that Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina has said that he will introduce legislation protecting these Dreamers, as they're called, if such legislation is necessary. And a statement signed by the presidents of more than 70 colleges and universities, released by the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, supports the Dreamers.

Trump says that he still wants to build a wall between the United States and Mexico, giving the impression that millions of Mexicans are coming into the country illegally. He must know that that is no longer true, and hasn't been true since 2008, according to a November 2015 Pew Research Center analysis of government data. Since then, more Mexicans have left the United States than have entered.

Those who have entered, though, did so for the same reasons that our ancestors moved to the United States, most of them before there were limits on the number of migrants permitted to enter. Let's treat them as we would like to be treated.

However, the theme for this special week concerns encountering migrants. We can do that in our parishes where numerous migrants worship, some more than others. In Indianapolis, for example, St. Monica Parish has an especially large number of Hispanics.

—John F. Fink

## Reflection/Daniel Conway

# Festive, familial spirit marks Cardinal Tobin's installation

Festivities for the installation of Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin as the sixth archbishop of Newark on Jan. 6 began



with an elegant buffet luncheon at Nanina's in the Park. Hundreds of the cardinal's family and friends, along with the apostolic nuncio and a large delegation of cardinals, archbishops, bishops and priests attended.

The presence of Cardinal Tobin's mother, Marie Terese, and so many members of his large family made the celebration seem more like a family gathering than a formal occasion. The Tobins are like that. They are warm, outgoing and welcoming. Even when they are guests, not the hosts, they go out of their way to make sure that everyone feels at home.

It's unlikely that Cardinal Tobin had time to enjoy Nanina's sumptuous buffet. He was too busy going from table to table during the meal greeting family, friends, priests, bishops and cardinals. As always, his warmth and gracious hospitality made everyone feel welcome, and as he engaged in brief conversations with literally hundreds of people, each one was made to feel as though he or she was the only person in the room.

Priests from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis who travelled to Newark for the installation joked that the security guards posted in every corner of the grand hall were there to prevent the guests from Indianapolis from kidnapping the cardinal, and bringing him "home" to Indiana in an extra large suitcase! But that was the only hint of the Hoosier delegation's lingering bittersweet feeling. The evident joy expressed by everyone in Newark who hosted the gathering made the occasion a genuine opportunity to experience Cardinal Tobin's episcopal motto: "*Gaudete in Domino*" ("Rejoice in the Lord").

The installation liturgy which followed the luncheon was extraordinarily beautiful and inspiring. The Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart is unquestionably one of the most spectacular churches in North America. Still filled with what seemed like thousands of poinsettias, magnificent Christmas wreaths and other floral decorations, the basilica's gothic splendor was "warmed" by the Christmas spirit and made especially inviting.

No one does "pomp and circumstance" quite like the Catholic Church, and the liturgy of installation was an exceptionally festive ceremony. Once the trumpets sounded and the organ filled the church with majestic beauty, the grand procession began. Hundreds of priests, bishops, archbishops and cardinals were joined by ecumenical and interreligious representatives, knights and ladies of various Catholic fraternal orders and other dignitaries in solemn procession through the basilica, whose 2,000 seats were

filled to overflowing.

As soon as all were assembled, the formal reception of the new archbishop took place at the front doors of his cathedral church. As Cardinal Tobin kissed a crucifix and sprinkled those nearby with holy water, the cathedral choir sang a 15th-century canticle, *Gaudete in Domino*, in celebration of their new shepherd.

Once in the sanctuary, the cardinal was welcomed by his predecessor, Archbishop John J. Meyers, now Emeritus Archbishop of Newark. He was then officially installed by the pope's representative, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States. The nuncio read the formal proclamation signed by Pope Francis on Nov. 7, 2016, transferring Cardinal Tobin from Indianapolis to Newark.

Afterward, as is customary, the cardinal showed the proclamation to Archbishop Myers and to all present—walking the entire length of the Cathedral Basilica with the document held high for all to see.

It was a powerful moment. A humble priest and bishop, a missionary from a large Catholic family, a dear friend to brothers and sisters from many different corners of the globe, Cardinal Tobin showed all present the proof of the assignment he has received from the successor of St. Peter to love the 1.5 million Catholics in the Archdiocese of Newark, and to proclaim the joy of the Gospel to all its diverse peoples and cultures.

Later, in his homily, the cardinal spoke of the chasm that exists between faith and life that threatens our Church, more than all the "hot-button issues" that are discussed incessantly both inside and outside Church circles. Bringing faith and life together is the greatest challenge we face as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, the cardinal said. It is not an insurmountable burden, but a great gift that should be undertaken with gratitude for the grace we have received from the one who has given us everything.

"I am comforted by the words Paul wrote to his beloved friends in Philippi," Cardinal Tobin said. "Rejoice in the Lord always, I say it again, rejoice! ... Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God" (Phil 4:4-7).

The installation of Cardinal Tobin was a grand day of rejoicing. It was a festive, familial celebration with prayers recited and sung in English, Spanish, Korean, Polish, Creole, Ibo, Portuguese, Tagalog and Italian. It was a formal occasion made warm and welcoming by the humility and humor of the man who was himself being welcomed and initiated as the 11th bishop and sixth archbishop of Newark.

May God bless Cardinal Tobin and grant him great joy!

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

## Doctrine of faith says Mary experienced no pain at the birth of Christ, reader says

In reference to Sean Gallagher's Christmas column "Reflecting on childbirth can draw us closer to God" in the Dec. 23 issue of *The Criterion*, it should be pointed out that it is a defined doctrine of the faith that the Virgin Mary did not experience pain at the birth of Christ.

Since from her conception she was preserved from original sin, she did not suffer this result of it (Council of Trent: Session I, Article III).

David P. Kubiak  
Holy Rosary Parish  
Indianapolis

## Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and should be informed, relevant, well-expressed, concise, temperate in tone, courteous and respectful.

The editors reserve the right to select and edit the letters based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content. Letters

must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367.

Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to [criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org).

# Parish remembers Vietnamese martyrs, honors Blessed Mother

By Victoria Arthur (Special to The Criterion)

From the martyrs who died for their beliefs to the Virgin Mary who comforted their faithful at a time of great persecution, Vietnamese Catholics have a rich history to remember and revere.

And hundreds of them in central Indiana did just that recently, gathering at St. Joseph Church on the west side of Indianapolis for important events that recall the past while looking to the future.

One of those events was the annual Holy Vietnamese Martyrs' Mass, where many generations of Vietnamese Catholics assembled to recognize the foundations of their deep faith.

"Our ancestors are everything to us, and our Vietnamese martyrs—who are saints now—are our heroes," said Chau Kachelmyer, a longtime member and leader of the archdiocesan Vietnamese Catholic Congregation, which has been based at St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis for years. "They are the source of the biggest pride for us, and it is our tradition to acknowledge them.

"Every year," continued the Carmel, Ind., resident and mother of two, "we repeat the history and the traditions of these martyrs to keep their memories alive."

The Nov. 27 Mass, preceded by an outdoor procession marked by traditional drums and punctuated by colorful costumes, was a vibrant celebration in stark contrast to the dark history of Catholic persecution in Vietnam.

Since the time that Jesuit and Dominican missionaries introduced the faith to the country in the 18th century, Catholics in Vietnam have been subjected to wave after wave of often brutal oppression. Today, Catholics there remain a persecuted minority under the officially atheistic Communist government.

In 1988, Pope John Paul II canonized a group of 117 Vietnamese martyrs who are a representative sample of the estimated 150,000 to 300,000 Catholic faithful in Vietnam who gave their lives for their faith over the centuries.

Their feast day is Nov. 24, which this year fell on Thanksgiving. Fittingly, thankfulness was at the heart of the Martyrs' Mass held three days later, followed by a bountiful reception in the parish hall with traditional Vietnamese foods.

Vietnamese parishioners at St. Joseph Parish are grateful to have a faith home where they can gather to celebrate the

sacraments and pass on their rich traditions to their children.

"You don't have to look very far to see the future of our Church," said Nam Nguyen, who was watching his two young daughters perform onstage at the reception along with other children of the parish. "Sometimes, we come to church and see more children than adults."

Like Chau, Nguyen left Communist Vietnam for a new life in America free of religious persecution. He, his wife and three children have made a home in Fishers, Ind., but St. Joseph is their second home.

Nguyen expressed his gratitude to the parish for being so welcoming to the Vietnamese community, and since joining the parish in 2009, he says he has witnessed the Vietnamese parishioners and the broader Church community grow closer.

"In the beginning, I remember our first Christmas together, and you could see Vietnamese over there and Americans over there, not interacting much," Nguyen said. "But recently, as a result of various activities, that has been changing.

"Every September, we have our parish festival, when we plan together and cook together, and slowly we begin to know each other. And even a little thing like sometimes on Sundays we watch [football] together. One thing we have in common is we all root for the [Indianapolis] Colts!

"Whenever we are together," he continued, "we find out there are more similarities between us than differences."

## Honoring Our Lady

One tie that binds the entire faith community of St. Joseph Parish is a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother, according to Father Minh Duong, the parish's associate pastor. The Vietnamese congregation, which he leads, held a Dec. 18 fundraiser in the parish hall to raise money for a large statue of the Virgin Mary that parishioners have ordered from Vietnam.

The statue, which Father Duong says will be the focal point of an outdoor shrine at the parish, will honor Our Lady of La Vang. This is the title given to the Virgin Mary as she appeared to the faithful in late 18th-century Vietnam.

To escape religious persecution, a band of Vietnamese Catholics had taken refuge in the jungle of La Vang, where they met secretly to practice their faith, including praying the rosary every day at dusk. In 1798, the Blessed Mother appeared to encourage these people, who were suffering hardships, including sickness from contaminated water. The faithful were reportedly cured of their illnesses after Mary instructed them to boil leaves from the plentiful jungle vegetation.

"This shrine will be a beautiful reminder of what Our Lady did for the Vietnamese people," said Father Duong, who ministers



Children from the archdiocesan Vietnamese Catholic Congregation take the stage on Nov. 27 in Elford Hall at St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis. The performance was part of the west side parish's commemoration of the Feast of the Holy Vietnamese Martyrs. (Photos by Victoria Arthur)



Le Bao Uyen, left, and Chau Kachelmyer enjoy a reception following the Vietnamese Martyrs' Mass on Nov. 27 at St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis. Both are actively involved in the parish, which is home to the archdiocese's Vietnamese Catholic Community.

to the approximately 150 Vietnamese families who call St. Joseph Parish home. Father Duong is a priest of the Diocese of Quinhon in Vietnam ministering in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Masses in Vietnamese are celebrated at St. Joseph twice every Sunday, at 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Like Chau and Nguyen, Vietnamese people come from all

over the area to the church to celebrate and share their traditions with others.

"We see the community grow every day," Nguyen said. "I feel very much at home here."

(Victoria Arthur is a freelance writer and member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg.) †



Tram Le, a member of the choir of the archdiocesan Vietnamese Catholic Congregation, and longtime congregation member Hoa Nguyen assist Bella Tran with her traditional costume. The members of St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis were preparing for the outdoor procession prior to the annual Vietnamese Martyrs' Mass on Nov. 27 at the parish.

## Vietnamese New Year Mass to be celebrated on Jan. 29

By Victoria Arthur

Special to The Criterion

The calendar may read mid-January, but for the Vietnamese community, New Year's celebrations are still to come.

The Vietnamese Lunar New Year, known as Tet Nguyen Dan or simply "Tet," is a three-day event that begins this year on Jan. 28. Vietnamese Catholics in Indianapolis are busy preparing for their annual Tet Mass, which is rich in meaning and ritual. All are welcome to attend the special Mass, set for 1 p.m. on Jan. 29, at St. Joseph Church, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., in Indianapolis.

"This is the biggest and most important festival for Vietnamese people of all religions," said Chau Kachelmyer, a leader of the Vietnamese Catholic Congregation, which is based at St. Joseph Parish. "Tet is the most grand event for our culture. Children

come home, no matter where they have been, to celebrate with loved ones.

Friends exchange gifts, we pay respect to our ancestors, and we thank God for the last year and ask for his blessing on the New Year."

The Jan. 29 liturgy will include a number of special symbols and rituals, Kachelmyer said. One is selecting a Scripture passage hanging on a mai flower tree—a custom harkening to the Vietnamese tradition of picking a bud from a tree to bring good luck in the new year.

"One member of each family will get in line to receive the word of God from the tree and practice and pray it as instructed," she said. "Also during the Mass, four different generations will pay respects with incense in front of the altar."

A reception with music and traditional Vietnamese food will follow in the parish hall. †

# Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/events](http://www.archindy.org/events).

## January 14

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Perfect Pastry at Home**, techniques of making pastry in a home kitchen, 1-5 p.m., \$45. Information: 812-535-2932, [wvc@spsmw.org](mailto:wvc@spsmw.org), [events.sistersofprovidence.org](http://events.sistersofprovidence.org).

## January 18

Christ the King Church, 5884 N. Crittenden Ave., Indianapolis, **"Being a Catholic in a Busy World,"** nationally recognized Catholic motivational speaker Mike Patin presenting on raising a family of faith, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-255-3666, [cflaten@ctk-indy.org](mailto:cflaten@ctk-indy.org).

Marian University, Marian Hall Theater, 3200 Cold Springs Rd., Indianapolis. **"A Sign of the Cross,"** screening of the documentary on the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg to kick off the

yearlong celebration honoring Marian University's 80th year in Indianapolis, 6-7:30 p.m., free. Information: 317-955-6213.

## January 19

St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or [www.catholiccemeteries.cc](http://www.catholiccemeteries.cc).

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Cook Without a Book: Creative Answers to "What's for Dinner?"** Learn to think like a chef, flexible recipes, ingredient

substitution, and stocking your pantry, 5:30-8:30 p.m., \$35, registration deadline Jan. 13. Information: 812-535-2931, [wvc@spsmw.org](mailto:wvc@spsmw.org), [events.sistersofprovidence.org](http://events.sistersofprovidence.org).

## January 20

Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, WTHR news reporter David MacAnally presenting, Mass, breakfast and program, 7-9 a.m., \$15 members, \$21 non-members, breakfast included. Reservations and information: [www.catholicbusinessexchange.org](http://www.catholicbusinessexchange.org).

St. Jude School, 5375 McFarland Rd., Indianapolis. **Kindergarten Open House**, 12:30-2 p.m. Information: 317-784-6828 or [www.sjsindy.org](http://www.sjsindy.org).

## January 21

**Helpers of God's Precious**

**Infants, Indianapolis.** Mass and Divine Mercy Chaplet at 8:30 a.m. at St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., followed by prayer at a local abortion center, and continued prayer at the church for those who wish to remain.

## January 23

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Mass and Prayerful Witness for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children**, noon Mass followed by opportunity to participate in eucharistic adoration or procession along Meridian Street with Benediction to follow in cathedral about 2:30 p.m. Parking available at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St. Information: 317-236-1569, [www.archindy.org/plfl/](http://www.archindy.org/plfl/) or [rniemerg@archindy.org](mailto:rniemerg@archindy.org).

## January 25

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Archdiocese of Indianapolis Vigil for Life**, sponsored by the Secretariat for Pastoral Ministries, 6:30-9 p.m., for youth, young adults and families. President of Adore Ministries Ennie Hickman presenting, no charge, donations for Birthline accepted. Registration: [www.vigilforlife.eventbrite.com](http://www.vigilforlife.eventbrite.com). Information: 317-236-1569 or [rniemerg@archindy.org](mailto:rniemerg@archindy.org).

## January 26

Pregnancy Care Center of Southeast Indiana, 62 Doughty Rd., Suite 4 and 5, Lawrenceburg. **Open House**, 2-4 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.; view the newly renovated space and learn about expanded services. Information: 812-537-4357 or [www.helpimpregnant.org](http://www.helpimpregnant.org).

## January 29

St. Matthew School, 4100

E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Open House for Prospective Families**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Information: 317-251-3997 or [rsobolweski@saintmatt.org](mailto:rsobolweski@saintmatt.org).

## February 1

Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

## February 1-March 15

St. Patrick Parish, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute. **Catholics Returning Home**, 7-week program to welcome inactive Catholics back into the community led by returning Catholics, Wednesdays 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. beginning Feb. 1, free. Information, registration: Donna Wenstrup, 815-232-8518 or [Donna.wenstrup@saintpat.org](mailto:Donna.wenstrup@saintpat.org). †

## Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/retreats](http://www.archindy.org/retreats).

## January 27

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Silent Self-Guided Day of Reflection**, \$32 includes room for the day, continental breakfast, lunch and use of common areas, additional \$37 extends stay to include the night before or night after day of silence and includes light dinner. Information and registration: 317-545-7681, ext. 107 or [www.archindy.org/fatima](http://www.archindy.org/fatima).

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **6th Annual Girls' Night Out: Women Helping Women**, 7-9:30 p.m., \$25 per person. Information: 317-788-7581, [www.benedictinn.org](http://www.benedictinn.org).

## January 30

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Evening of Reflection**, 6:30-9 p.m., \$35

includes light snacks and refreshments. Information and registration: 317-545-7681, ext. 107, [marcia.johnson@archindy.org](mailto:marcia.johnson@archindy.org) or [www.archindy.org/fatima](http://www.archindy.org/fatima).

## February 10-12

Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, **"Almost Paradise,"** for married couples, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting, \$425 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or [mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu](mailto:mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu).

## February 13

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Silent Self-Guided Day of Reflection**, \$32 includes room for the day, continental breakfast, lunch and use of common areas, additional \$37 extends stay to include the night before or night after day of silence

and includes light dinner. Information and registration: 317-545-7681, ext. 107 or [www.archindy.org/fatima](http://www.archindy.org/fatima).

## February 15

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Spend a Day with God: Personal Retreat Day**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$35 includes room and lunch; spiritual direction \$30 (optional). Information and registration: 317-788-7581, [www.benedictinn.org](http://www.benedictinn.org).

## February 17-18

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Pre-Cana Preparation Conference**, \$255 with overnight accommodations (two rooms), \$185 for commuters, includes meals, snacks and materials. Information, registration: [www.archindy.org/plfl/marriage-precana.html](http://www.archindy.org/plfl/marriage-precana.html).

## VIPs



**Frank and Margaret (Caradonna) Lori**, members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on Jan. 18. The couple was married in St. Mary Church in New Albany on Jan. 18, 1947. They have three sons: Joseph and Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, and the late Frankie Lori. Cards and well wishes can be sent to Diversicare of Providence, 4915 Charlestown Road, New Albany, IN 47150. †

## Prayer service for new government leaders set for Jan. 20 at St. Thomas Aquinas

An interfaith prayer service for new state and federal government leaders will be held at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., in Indianapolis, at 10 a.m. on Jan. 20. Prayers will be led by several people, including Father Steven

Schwab, St. Thomas Aquinas pastor; Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation Senior Rabbi Brett Krichiver; and Nur-Allah Islamic Center of Indianapolis Resident Imam Michael "Mikal" Saahir. All are invited to attend this interfaith gathering. †

## Help your marriage at Retrouvaille retreat on Feb. 24-26 in Indianapolis

A Retrouvaille (pronounced "retro-vi") retreat for troubled marriages will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, on Feb. 24-26. Retrouvaille is a worldwide program that offers tools needed for hurting couples to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. For more than 30 years, the program has helped hundreds of

thousands of couples heal their hurting marriages. To get confidential information about the program or to register for the Feb.24-26 weekend/post-weekend sessions, log onto [www.HelpOurMarriage.com](http://www.HelpOurMarriage.com) or [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org), e-mail [RetrouIndy@gmail.com](mailto:RetrouIndy@gmail.com) or call 317-489-6811 for confidential registration information. †



## 'We the People' winners

Members of the civics team of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, along with their coach Jill Baisinger, left, and Indiana Supreme Court Justice Steven David, third from right in the back row, pose with their trophy for taking first place in the "We the People" State Finals at Union Station Crowne Plaza in Indianapolis on Dec. 12. The team won four out of six unit awards and first place overall. (Submitted photo)

## Crusaders for Life to join in Service for the Unborn on Jan. 22 in Indianapolis

The public is invited to join Right to Life of Indianapolis and a busload of students from Crusaders for Life in Chicago in prayer for the annual Memorial Service for the Unborn at the Indiana War Memorial, 431 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 2:30 p.m. on Jan. 22 in commemoration of the 44th anniversary of the tragic *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision. The keynote speaker is Antiochian Orthodox Father Josiah Trenham, speaker at the West Coast March

for Life in 2016, followed by the Memorial Rose Ceremony, commemorating the lives lost to abortion each year since 1973. Immediately after the memorial service, there will be a peaceful march from the War Memorial to the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. All are invited, and students are especially encouraged to join with the Crusaders for Life. For more information, call 317-582-1526 or log onto [www.rtlindy.org](http://www.rtlindy.org). †



# The Face of Mercy

(from Pope Francis' papal bull "Misericordiae Vultus")

By Daniel Conway

## New series to reflect on teaching of Pope Francis

(Editor's note: This week, we begin a new series by Criterion editorial committee member Daniel Conway on the teaching of Pope Francis.)

As a member of *The Criterion's* editorial committee, I have been asked to write a series of reflections on the teaching of Pope Francis.

Popes teach using a variety of instruments both formal and informal. Encyclicals such as "*Laudato Si'*," on Care for Our Common Home," apostolic exhortations such as "*Amoris Laetitia*" ("The Joy of Love") and papal bulls such as "*Misericordiae Vultus*" ("The Face of Mercy") receive lots of attention in the media. These are important statements of Church teaching, and they reflect the passion and wisdom of the current pope,

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, in very public and powerful ways.

But Pope Francis is always teaching. Homilies at daily Masses, Sunday Angelus reflections, catecheses given during the Wednesday general audiences, and many other forms of communication reveal the mind and heart of the first pope from Argentina, a Jesuit known for his strict observance of the vow of poverty and his commitment to live simply as a man of the people with a special love for the poor.

Pope Francis, like his namesake, "*il Poverello*," the poor saint from Assisi, tries to lead a simple life, but he also relies on symbolic gestures such as living in the Vatican's guesthouse instead of the apostolic palace or riding in an ordinary car instead of a limousine, to illustrate his teaching.

"Preach the Gospel always," St. Francis of Assisi is said to have taught. "When necessary, use words." All other times, the great saint counseled, live as faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ and the way he lived. Pope Francis takes these words to heart, and he tries to live them in visible, often dramatic ways in his ministry as the bishop of Rome.

In this weekly column, I will offer reflections on the teaching of Pope Francis, his words and his example. I'll also point out the ways in which his pastoral style—the way he lives and ministers—underscores his formal teaching.

The name of this column, "The Face of Mercy," is taken from the pope's proclamation of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, "*Misericordiae Vultus*" ("The Face of Mercy"):

*"Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy. These words might well sum up the mystery of the Christian faith. Mercy has become living and visible in Jesus of Nazareth, reaching its culmination in him. The Father, 'rich in mercy' (Eph 2:4), after having revealed his name to Moses as 'a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness' (Ex 34:6), has never ceased to show, in various ways throughout history, his divine nature. In the 'fullness of time' (Gal 4:4), when everything had been arranged according to his plan of salvation, he sent his only Son into the world, born of the Virgin Mary, to reveal his love for us in a definitive way. Whoever sees Jesus sees the Father (cf. Jn 14:9). Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God." †*

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

## Nueva serie de reflexión sobre las enseñanzas del papa Francisco

(Nota del editor: esta semana comenzamos una nueva serie a cargo del miembro del comité editorial del The Criterion, Daniel Conway, acerca de las enseñanzas del papa Francisco.)

Como integrante del comité editorial del *The Criterion* se me ha encomendado escribir una serie de reflexiones sobre las enseñanzas del papa Francisco.

Para cumplir con su cometido, el papa se vale de diversos instrumentos, tanto formales como informales. Encíclicas como "*Laudato Si'*," sobre el cuidado de la casa común," exhortaciones apostólicas tales como "*Amoris Laetitia*" ("*La alegría del amor*") y bulas papales como "*Misericordiae Vultus*" ("*El rostro de la misericordia*") reciben gran atención en los medios de comunicación. Todas ellas constituyen declaraciones importantes sobre la doctrina de la Iglesia y reflejan la pasión

y la sabiduría de nuestro actual pontífice, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, de formas muy manifiestas e impactantes.

Pero el papa Francisco nunca deja de impartir sus enseñanzas. En las homilias de las misas diarias, en las reflexiones durante el Angelus dominical, en la catequesis durante las audiencias generales de los miércoles y en muchas otras formas de comunicación se revela el pensamiento y el sentir del primer papa argentino, un jesuita famoso por su estricta adherencia al voto de pobreza y su compromiso de vivir sencillamente como un hombre del pueblo, con especial devoción hacia los pobres.

El papa Francisco, al igual que su tocayo "*il Poverello*," el Pobre de Asís, procura llevar una vida sencilla, pero también apela a gestos simbólicos como vivir en la casa de huéspedes en vez de en el palacio apostólico o desplazarse en

un automóvil ordinario en vez de en una limosina, para ilustrar sus enseñanzas.

Se dice que san Francisco de Asís enseñaba "vivan el evangelio siempre." "Cuando sea necesario, usen palabras." En las demás situaciones, el gran santo aconsejaba vivir como testigos fieles de Jesucristo y de su forma de vida. El papa Francisco se toma a pecho estas palabras y procura vivirlas de una forma visible y a veces drástica en su ministerio como obispo de Roma.

En esta columna semanal ofreceré reflexiones sobre las enseñanzas del papa Francisco, sus palabras y su ejemplo. También señalaré de qué forma su estilo pastoral—el modo en que vive y su ministerio—refuerza sus enseñanzas formales.

El nombre de esta columna, "El rostro de la misericordia," proviene de la proclamación del Santo Padre del Jubileo

de la Misericordia, titulada "*Misericordiae Vultus*" ("*El rostro de la misericordia*"):

*"Jesucristo es el rostro de la misericordia del Padre. El misterio de la fe cristiana parece encontrar su síntesis en esta palabra. Ella se ha vuelto viva, visible y ha alcanzado su culmen en Jesús de Nazaret. El Padre, 'rico en misericordia' (Ef 2:4), después de haber revelado su nombre a Moisés como 'Dios compasivo y misericordioso, lento a la ira, y pródigo en amor y fidelidad' (Ex 34:6) no ha cesado de dar a conocer en varios modos y en tantos momentos de la historia su naturaleza divina. En la 'plenitud del tiempo' (Gal 4:4), cuando todo estaba dispuesto según su plan de salvación, Él envió a su Hijo nacido de la Virgen María para revelarnos de manera definitiva su amor. Quien lo ve a Él ve al Padre (cfr. Jn 14:9). Jesús de Nazaret con su palabra, con sus gestos y con toda su persona revela la misericordia de Dios." †*

## Pope Francis to diplomats: Break bad habits of war and injustice

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—At the start of a new year, Pope Francis laid out a laundry list of suggested resolutions for religious and political leaders for making a joint commitment toward building peace.

No conflict exists that is "a habit impossible to break," the pope said, but he underlined that kicking such a habit requires greater efforts to rectify social injustice, protect religious freedom, jump-start peace talks, end the arms trade and cooperate in responding to climate change and the immigration and refugee crises.

In a 45-minute speech on Jan. 9 to diplomats accredited to the Vatican, the pope underlined what he saw as the real "enemies of peace," and the best responses that could be made by today's religious and political leaders.

"One enemy of peace," he said, is seeing the human person as a means to an end, which "opens the way to the

spread of injustice, social inequality and corruption."

The waste, "greedy exploitation" and inequitable distribution of the world's resources provoke conflict, he said, and human trafficking, especially the abuse and exploitation of children, cannot be overlooked.

Another enemy of peace, the pope said, are ideologies that exploit "social unrest in order to foment contempt and hate" and target others as enemies to be eliminated.

"Under the guise of promising great benefits, [such ideologies] instead leave a trail of poverty, division, social tensions, suffering and, not infrequently, death," he said.

What peace requires, he said, is "a vision of human beings capable of promoting an integral development respectful of their transcendent dignity," as well as the courage and commitment to seek to build peace together every day.

Religions are "called to promote peace," he said, appealing to "all religious authorities to join in reaffirming unequivocally that one can never kill in God's name."

"The fundamentalist-inspired terrorism" that has been killing so many innocent people the past year is "a homicidal madness which misuses God's name in order to disseminate death in a play for domination and power."

Fundamentalist terrorism is the fruit of deep "spiritual poverty" that does not connect a pious fear of God with the mandate to love one's neighbor. Often it also is linked to deep social poverty, which demands action including on the part of government leaders.

Political leaders must guarantee "in the public forum the right to religious freedom," and recognize the positive contribution religious values make in society, he said. They must promote

social policies aimed at fighting poverty and promoting the family as well as invest heavily in education and culture so as to eliminate the sort of "terrain" that spreads fundamentalism.

Christians, whose divisions "have endured too long," also must heal past wounds and journey forward together with common goals since many of those conflicts have threatened social harmony and peace, the pope said.

Peace, he said, entails greater justice and mercy in the world, especially toward foreigners, migrants and refugees.

"A common commitment is needed, one focused on offering them a dignified welcome," he said. It means recognizing people have a right to emigrate and take up a new residence without feeling their security and cultural identity are being threatened. Immigrants, however, also must respect local laws and cultures, he added. †

# INSTALLATION

continued from page 1

Archbishop Pierre told Cardinal Tobin, “We are confident that in imitation of the Good Shepherd, your episcopal ministry will be both hospitable and welcoming.”

The nuncio read the apostolic mandate from Pope Francis to the Newark Archdiocese’s college of consultors to authorize Cardinal Tobin’s appointment as the new archbishop of Newark. The letter noted that Cardinal Tobin carried out his episcopal responsibility to his flock in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for four years “with prudence, decision-making and much learning.” It also commended him to the protection of St. Patrick and St. Elizabeth, patrons of the Archdiocese of Newark.

Carrying the unfurled scroll with the mandate raised high in front of him, Cardinal Tobin walked down the main aisle and was greeted with sustained applause in the cathedral that was filled to capacity.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and his wife, Mary Pat, as well as Sen. Robert Menendez were among the civic representatives. About 40 members of Cardinal Tobin’s extended family were also at the installation Mass. So were about 30 people from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

“I had a great sense of gratitude during the Mass that we had him for four years and what a blessing he’s been,” said Msgr. William F. Stumpf, a close friend of Cardinal Tobin and now the administrator of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. “But there was also that real sense that he’s not going to be here anymore and he doesn’t belong to us.

“It just reminded me again of how much I miss him, and we’ll all miss him. It was very emotional.”

Yet, Msgr. Stumpf also realizes why Pope Francis called Cardinal Tobin to lead Newark, an archdiocese that

celebrates Sunday Mass in 20 languages and has about 1.5 million members, compared to the 224,000 Catholics in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

“It’s so important that somebody of that talent and experience is now the head of a major diocese that has so many immigrants,” Msgr. Stumpf said.

“That’s critical, particularly at a time when we’re struggling around issues about immigration, and there are fears around immigrants.”

The installation Mass was also a “bittersweet experience” for Annette “Mickey” Lentz, a close friend of Cardinal Tobin and chancellor of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

“The basilica came to life—beautiful music, Christmas flowers, a full house, and great participation and spirit,” Lentz said about the liturgy. “It gave me a sense of peace for him. His homily was one of being thankful for the gift of grace.”

Lentz showed a similar gift of grace as she considered the future of Cardinal Tobin in Newark.

“I hope that God will give him the courage and grace to move forward,” she said. “Making his needs known to the Father, he will succeed, without a doubt. He has much to do, but he has the will with which to make it happen.”

The installation took place during the Christmas liturgical season. “O Come, All Ye Faithful” was the opening hymn. “Angels We Have Heard on High” was sung as the cardinal accepted greetings from representatives of clergy, religious,

and laity of the Archdiocese of Newark, ecumenical and interreligious groups and civil authorities.

The responsorial psalm was a version of Psalm 98 commissioned for the occasion from Pedro Rubalcava.

“Beautiful Star of Bethlehem,” “Joy to the World,” “The First Noel” and “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” rang out in the church decorated with red poinsettias and evergreen wreaths.

Ethnic diversity in the Archdiocese of Newark was represented by prayers of intercession in Spanish, English, Korean, Polish, Creole, Ibo, Portuguese, Tagalog and Italian.

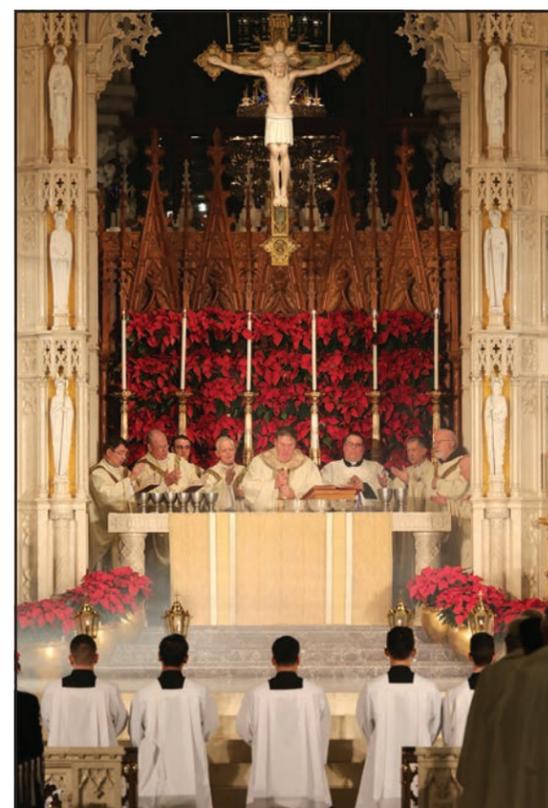
At the end of Mass, Cardinal Tobin thanked “all those families to which I belong, beginning with the one that’s put up with me for 64 years,” specifically his mother, 12 brothers and sisters, in-laws, nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts and uncles who were present. He said his family taught him how to love and share while growing up in a one-bathroom house with eight sisters.

The cardinal extended thanks to his Redemptorist family and “bishops in episcopal service in Indiana and New Jersey.” When he thanked Archbishop Meyers for his welcome and “the care you’ve given to this archdiocese for 15 years,” the congregation offered sustained applause.

Thanking the people in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for all they taught him and now mean to him, Cardinal Tobin said, “I showed up there unexpectedly four years ago, and I was a little embarrassed to be parachuted in on top of these unsuspecting Hoosiers.”



A woman reacts as she receives Communion from Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin during his Jan. 6 installation Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, N.J. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin concelebrates his Jan. 6 installation Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, N.J. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

Of his newest family in Newark, Cardinal Tobin said, “These past couple of months have been an interesting roller coaster of emotions, a time of preparation, anticipation and change for all of us.” He expressed “heartfelt, sincere thanks” to the “army of people” who worked since his appointment was announced on Nov. 7 to plan multiple services and celebratory events.

(Criterion staff writer Sean Gallagher and assistant editor John Shaughnessy contributed to this report. To see a photo gallery from the Newark installation Mass, go to [www.archindy.org](http://www.archindy.org).) †



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin enters the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, N.J., to begin his Jan. 6 installation Mass. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

# STUMPF

continued from page 1

Cardinal Tobin. “This is not a time of change. He’s just to maintain the archdiocese, to see us through this time of transition until the new archbishop comes.”

Msgr. Stumpf said that the fact that Pope Francis did not name an administrator for the archdiocese at the time that he appointed Cardinal Tobin to lead the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., represented a “vote of confidence” by the Vatican about the Church in central and southern Indiana.

“If there were concerns that the archdiocese was divided or had serious issues or struggles, I think Rome would have stepped in and named an apostolic administrator,” said Msgr. Stumpf. “That’s happened in other dioceses.”

He also noted that Cardinal Tobin—after he was appointed to lead the Newark

Archdiocese, but before he was installed there—began a “pastoral assessment” of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis that “gives the new archbishop a real report of who is the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, what are the key concerns and strengths of the archdiocese that he’s going to be the shepherd of.”

This assessment, facilitated by a private consulting group, will involve discussions with clergy and lay leaders across the archdiocese, and is expected to be concluded by June.

Msgr. Stumpf encouraged all the faithful across central and southern Indiana to pray during this time of transition until a new archbishop is appointed.

“We should be wanting to pray that God sends us a wonderful new shepherd and for us, that we prepare our hearts to welcome that new shepherd,” he said. “It’s going to be very important to make him feel a part of the archdiocese.” †



Msgr. William F. Stumpf, center, prays the eucharistic prayer during the Oct. 4, 2015, archdiocesan Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. On Jan. 9, he was elected archdiocesan administrator by the priests who make up the archdiocesan college of consultors, and will lead the Church in central and southern Indiana until a new archbishop is appointed. Joining Msgr. Stumpf at the altar are Father Paul Landwerlen, left, and Father Robert Robeson. (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)

# Catholic conference gears up for state legislative session

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) is gearing up for state legislative action as 150 lawmakers returned to the Statehouse on Jan. 3 in Indianapolis to craft a



biennial budget by the April 29 adjournment deadline.

The ICC, which celebrated the 50-year anniversary of its founding in 2016, represents the Catholic Church in Indiana on national and state matters of public policy.

“The ICC communicates the value and dignity of the human person created in the image and likeness of God to state legislators and public policy makers,” said Glenn Tebbe, executive director, who serves as the public policy spokesperson for the bishops in Indiana.

“It is my job and the job of the Church through the ICC to share our theological perspective and practical experience with state public servants to assist them in making sound public policy to benefit the common good,” said Tebbe. “Our work and policy statements reflect an application of the consistent life ethic as it relates to proposed legislation, current and future public policies. We shed light on the value and dignity of the human person from conception until natural death.”

The ICC classifies issues into a few broad umbrella categories, including: life, education, families and children, and the common good. Tebbe has identified several priority issues upon which he will take action or keep a watchful eye this year.

In the life category, Tebbe anticipates legislation to be introduced banning the death penalty for those with serious mental illnesses.

“The Catholic Church’s efforts to abolish the death penalty are long standing,” he said. “The ICC will support legislation to ban the death penalty for those suffering from serious mental illness if the bill gets a hearing.”

Other states have enacted statutes legalizing physician-assisted suicide. Here, state lawmakers’ interest in taking on the end-of-life issue has not materialized, Tebbe said. The Catholic Church opposes assisted suicide in all its forms, and Tebbe said if a bill to legalize it surfaces this year, the Church will oppose it. But at this point, the ICC executive director said he is unaware of any bill being introduced in Indiana this year.

In the area of education, school choice legislation emerges every year, and Tebbe expects state lawmakers to act on expanding state-funded preschool. “As the preschool expansion takes place, I will be advocating that religiously affiliated schools can participate and not be left out of the equation to improve opportunities for Hoosier children,” he said. The Indiana Choice Scholarship Program continually undergoes “scrutiny,” and Tebbe says the issue often spawns a “point of contention” during legislative deliberation. During the session, Tebbe said he remains abreast and actively involved in discussions on possible tweaks to the plan, and offers suggestions and resources to improve access and delivery of the scholarship program as a whole.



*‘Our work and policy statements reflect an application of the consistent life ethic as it relates to proposed legislation, current and future public policies. We shed light on the value and dignity of the human person from conception until natural death.’*

—Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference

Creating a new biennial budget lends itself to potential opportunities to promote the common good. Tebbe said he will work with others to ensure that programs to benefit the most vulnerable in society, including lower-income families and children or the elderly, are protected or enhanced.

One such issue that Tebbe said he will be working on includes help for those with opioid drug problems, and receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, commonly known as food stamps.

Current Indiana law prohibits any person with a drug felony to be banned permanently from receiving food assistance through the SNAP program, even if they qualify based on income. Tebbe said evidence-based research supports that individuals who receive adequate access to good nutrition have improved odds of reforming their lives, and such a program reduces recidivism.

He added he will also support adequate funding to alleviate the needs of families and children, including funding for education, both public and nonpublic.

The ICC director says he believes the session will be productive in advocating for the Church’s interests and furthering the common good. Throughout the session, Tebbe monitors or takes action on roughly 100 bills.

The Indiana General Assembly consists of 150 legislators—100 representatives and 50 senators. After the 2016 election, Republicans maintained a super majority in both the House and Senate, with 70 Republicans and 30 Democrats in the House, and 41 Republicans and nine Democrats serving in the Senate.

The ICC offers several resources on its webpage. People can stay up to date through legislative action reports, review position papers or by joining the Indiana Catholic Action Network (I-CAN). Also as a part of its 50-year anniversary, the ICC produced videos to explain the role and importance of its involvement in public policy making. These videos and other resources are available at the ICC webpage at [www.indianacc.org](http://www.indianacc.org).

(Brigid Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

## Catholics in Congress: one-third of House, one-quarter of Senate

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The religious makeup of the 115th Congress is significantly Christian—91 percent—with Catholics comprising one-third of the House of Representatives and about a quarter of the Senate.

Overall, there are six fewer Christians in the new Congress, at 485 members. But there are four more Catholics, who now total 168.

The high percentage of Christians in Congress is similar to the 87th Congress in 1961, when such information was first collected. At the time, 95 percent of Congress members were Christian.

The data on the religious makeup of the current senators and representatives was collected by Pew Research Center

and announced on Jan. 3.

The Pew report notes that the large number of Christians in Congress has shifted in recent years with a decline in the number of Protestants. In 1961, Protestants made up 87 percent of Congress, compared with 56 percent today. Catholics, conversely, made up 19 percent of the 87th Congress, and now are 31 percent of the legislative body.

Looking at each party, two-thirds, or 67 percent, of Republicans in the new Congress are Protestant, and 27 percent of Republicans are Catholic. The breakdown between Protestants and Catholics is more evenly divided among the Democrats: 42 percent are Protestant, and 37 percent are Catholic.

Of the 293 Republicans in the new Congress, all but two, who are Jewish, are Christian. Democrats in Congress also are predominantly Christian—80 percent—but they have more religious diversity among non-Christians.

The 242 Democrat Congress members include 28 Jews, three Buddhists, three Hindus, two Muslims and one Unitarian Universalist, in addition to one religiously unaffiliated member and 10 who declined to state their religious affiliation.

Overall, the new Congress has seven

fewer Protestants than the last Congress. Baptists had the biggest losses—down seven seats—followed by Anglicans and Episcopalians—down six seats.

Among non-Christian religious groups, Jews and Hindus had the biggest gains—an increase of two seats each. Jews now hold 30 seats in Congress. The number of Hindus rose from one to three, and the number of Buddhists increased from two to three.

The number of Muslims in Congress—two—remained unchanged. †

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# Guard the faith, make it grow, pope tells parents at baptism

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Parents are charged with guarding the faith given to their children at baptism and helping them become true witnesses by example rather than just rules, Pope Francis said.

By asking the Church for faith for their children through the sacrament of baptism, Christian parents have the task of helping their children to grow so that they “may be witnesses for all of us: also for us priests, bishops, everyone,” the pope said during a Mass in the Sistine Chapel.

During the Mass on Jan. 8, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, Pope Francis baptized 28 infants—15 boys and 13 girls.

“Faith is not reciting the ‘Creed’ on Sunday when we go to Mass: It is not only this,” the pope said. “Faith is believing that which is the truth: God the Father who has sent his Son and the Spirit which gives us life.”

The pope’s brief homily centered on the meaning of faith, which he described as a lifelong journey that “is lived” and leads to becoming a witness of Christ.

Parents, he continued, must also teach through their example that faith “means trusting in God.”

While the pope spoke, the faint cries of a child echoed throughout the Sistine Chapel, causing a chain reaction of crying infants.

“The concert has begun!” the pope said jokingly. “It is because the children are in a place they do not know; they woke up earlier than usual. One begins with one note and then the others mimic. Some cry simply because another one cried.”

Acknowledging that some babies might be crying because they are hungry, the pope urged the mothers to not be ashamed to breast-feed their children in the chapel.

“Mothers, nurse them without fear, with all normality, like Our Lady nursed Jesus,” he told them.

Later, before praying the *Angelus* with those gathered in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Francis said the feast of the Lord’s baptism helps “us to rediscover the beauty of being a baptized people.”

The baptized, he said, are “sinners saved by the grace of Christ, truly inserted by the power of the Holy Spirit in the filial relationship of Jesus with the Father and welcomed into the womb of mother Church” where Christians are capable of being brothers and sisters with everyone.

Noting John the Baptist’s feelings of unworthiness in baptizing Jesus, Pope Francis said John was aware “of the great distance between him and Jesus.”

However, Jesus came into the world to bridge the gap between God and man and “to reunite that which was divided,” he said.

After his baptism, Jesus begins his mission of salvation, which is characterized “by the style of a humble and meek servant, armed only with the strength of truth,” he said.

All Christians, the pope added, are called to follow Jesus’ style of proclaiming the Gospel without “shouting or scolding someone.”

“True mission is never proselytism, but rather attraction to Christ. But how? How is attraction to Christ done? With one’s own witness that comes from a strong union with him through prayer, adoration and concrete charity, which is service to Jesus present in the least of our brothers,” he said.

After reciting the *Angelus* prayer, Pope Francis prayed for the parents and for the children he baptized, as well as for



Pope Francis baptizes one of 28 babies in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican on Jan. 8. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano)

a “young catechumen” he baptized on Jan. 7 in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, where he lives.

The Vatican provided no further details about the young person.

“I invoke the Holy Spirit upon them and their children so that this sacrament, which is so simple yet at the same time so important, may be lived with faith and joy,” the pope said. †

## Catholic-Muslim dialogue opens to support Islamic American communities

WASHINGTON (CNS)—An emerging Catholic dialogue with Muslims aims to show public support for Islamic American communities.

The dialogue stems from concerns expressed by U.S. bishops in the wake of “a serious uptick in violence against American Muslims ... to make sure that they are sensitive to what is going on in the [Muslim] communities,” said Anthony Cirelli, associate director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

The dialogue, underway since last February, will build on three already existing regional Catholic-Muslim dialogues, also overseen by the secretariat. Those gatherings have involved Muslim and Christian scholars and religious leaders, and have focused largely on academic discussions and comparisons of their respective religious texts, Cirelli said.

The regional dialogues—mid-Atlantic, Midwest and

West Coast—have been effective in creating a better understanding among Muslim and Catholic leaders on a theological level, Cirelli explained. The national dialogue also will help Muslim leaders to better advocate for current concerns, “especially with the incoming [U.S.] administration,” said Cirelli, referring to calls by President-elect Donald J. Trump and others to monitor American Muslims and limit entry of Muslim visitors from abroad.

“While our meetings will still have as a central component—the all-important theological conversation—right now there is an urgency to engage more in a kind of advocacy and policy in support of the Muslim community,” Cirelli told Catholic News Service (CNS).

Cirelli cited statistics documenting a higher number of anti-Muslim activities nationwide as well as a recent study by The Bridge Initiative, a Georgetown University research project on Islamophobia, claiming that Catholics who regularly obtained information from Catholic media were more likely to unfavorably view Muslims than those who did not.

“The bishops’ priority at the moment is to listen to [Muslims’] concerns, their fears, their needs ... and so discern how we as Catholics can help them achieve their

goals of full participation in their communities,” Cirelli said.

He said Muslim counterparts to the dialogue were still being identified.

“At this point in our nation’s history, we, the bishops, are mainly concerned with listening to and, when appropriate, coming to stand with our Muslim colleagues in their own difficult work of addressing the fears of ordinary Americans with respect to Muslims as well as their work in trying to change the negative narrative surrounding Muslims in our popular media,” Cirelli said.

The creation of the dialogue was motivated by the call of “*Nostra Aetate*,” the Second Vatican Council’s declaration on the relations with non-Christian religions.

“As the national conversation around Islam grows increasingly fraught, coarse and driven by fear and often willful misinformation, the Catholic Church must help to model real dialogue and goodwill,” Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski of Springfield, Mass., chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, said at the time the dialogue started in February.

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago was designated as the dialogue’s Catholic chairman and assumed the position on Jan. 1, Cirelli said.

He said that as part of the dialogue’s launch last February, Bishop Robert W. McElroy of San Diego held a public discussion with Sayyid M. Syeed, national director of the Islamic Society of North America’s Office for Interfaith and Community Alliances.

During the widely publicized event at the University of San Diego’s Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, Bishop McElroy challenged U.S. Catholics to take an active role in combating “the scourge of anti-Islamic prejudice.”

The next dialogue is set for March 7-9 in Chicago. On March 8, Bishop McElroy will discuss the common good tradition in the Catholic Church. An Islamic scholar, who has yet to be named, will address the Islamic understanding of hospitality in the Quran. †

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## Parishes, dioceses called to show care for people with mental illness

By Mike Nelson

“I remember sitting in the hospital,” said Kay Hughes, “huddled in a little group of about six, when one of us received a visit from her pastor. The rest of us sat there and related things like, ‘My pastor never visits me, no one from the Church visits me. I’ve never even received a card from my church, let alone visits or flowers.’”

This story, told by a woman who struggled with mental illness—and her faith community’s lack of awareness or action to address it—begins “Welcomed and Valued: Building Faith Communities of Support and Hope with People with Mental Illness and Their Families,” a 2009 publication of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) and its Council on Mental Illness.

The NCPD—a leader in actively addressing mental illness within the context of the Catholic faith—stresses that welcome and inclusion of such individuals is the only option for a Catholic community that promotes respect for life.

“People with mental illness have many gifts and talents that add to the life of a community of faith,” states “Welcomed and Valued.”

“Once we strip away the generalizations and distortions, we are better able to see people for who they truly are, individuals created in the image of God, our brothers and sisters.”

Such awareness and action is essential, given that mental illness is experienced by one in five U.S. adults each year, according to the American Psychiatric Association Foundation and the Mental Health and Faith Community Partnership in “Mental Health: A Guide for Faith Leaders.”

But, the report adds, “Mental illness is treatable. The vast majority of individuals with mental illness continue to function in their daily lives.”

That message underscores the NCPD’s mission “to fully include people with mental illness and their families in the life of the Church, and to support them as they seek justice in our society.”

The distinction between mental illness and disabilities of a physical, developmental or emotional nature has not always been made by the Catholic Church in its outreach efforts and documents, although such efforts make clear that individuals seen as “different” because of their disabilities are no less deserving of love, acceptance and support than anyone else. Some examples:

- The U.S. bishops’ 1978 pastoral statement on persons with disabilities. “Scripture teaches us that ... ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself’ ” (Mk 12:31, Mt 22:39), the bishops wrote. “We must love others from the inside out ... accepting their difference from us in the same way that we accept our difference from them.”

- “Hearts Made Whole,” a 2011 pastoral letter on

behavioral health by Bishop Michael J. Bransfield of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia. “Our compassion,” the bishop said, “must be combined with a sense of justice forged in the crucible of our awareness of our interdependence, our respect for the human dignity of each person, and our awareness that Jesus resides in each of us.”

- “Disabilities in Parishes Across the United States: How Parishes in the United States Accommodate and Serve People with Disabilities,” a 2016 report by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. The report noted that a majority of parishes have taken action to accommodate those with any sort of disability in parish life and activities.

And in June 2016, Pope Francis—celebrating a Mass for the Jubilee for the Sick and Disabled that was part of the Holy Year of Mercy—stated, with characteristic bluntness, “The world does not become better because only apparently ‘perfect’ people live there ... but when human solidarity, mutual acceptance and respect increase. ... The way we experience illness and disability is an index of the love we are ready to offer.”

In the U.S., promoting a culture of welcome, acceptance and inclusion for those with mental illness has been led by the Archdiocese of Chicago. Two decades ago, led by Deacon Tom Lambert of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, the archdiocese established its Commission on Mental Illness, with a membership that includes persons with mental illness and mental health service providers.

The commission annually coordinates and presents workshops, liturgies and parish-based, semi-weekly “faith and fellowship” meetings for small groups of mentally ill people and parish volunteers.

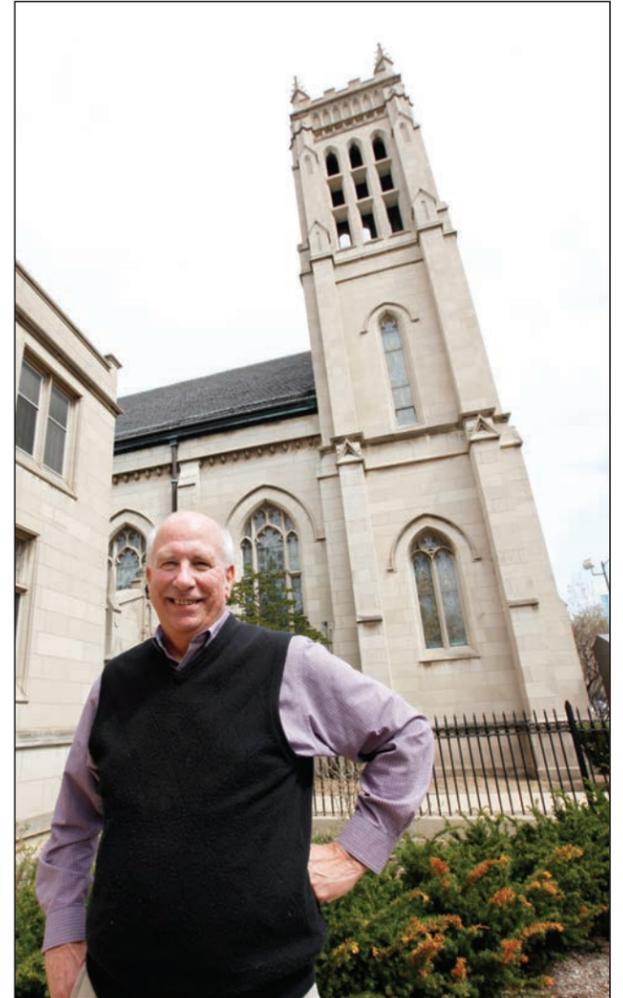
Other dioceses, notably the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon, and its Office for People with Disabilities, offer resources that address how to welcome and include those with mental illness in parish life.

Amy Simpson, the author of *Troubled Minds: Mental Illness and the Church’s Mission*, suggests that the first step for any parish or individual wanting to address the issue of mental illness is to “talk about it,” noting that most who have mental illness do so “quietly and in shame.”

People who have mental illness, Simpson asserts, “need friends who will not abandon them when they’re symptomatic.”

And if a faith community can’t be a source of friendship and support, who can?

“How can it be,” Kay Hughes asks in “Welcomed and Valued,” “that a church is not a safe place—a sanctuary for those who need respect, dignity, affirmation, prayer and hope for recovery?”



Deacon Tom Lambert of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Chicago is pictured in this 2011 photo when he co-chaired the National Catholic Partnership on Disability’s (NCPD) Council on Mental Illness and served as president of Faith and Fellowship, a Chicago-based outreach to people with severe mental illnesses. The NCPD—a leader in actively addressing mental illness within the context of the Catholic faith—stresses that welcome and inclusion of such individuals is the only option for a Catholic community that promotes respect for life. (CNS/Karen Callaway, Catholic New World)

“We are not our diagnosis. We, too, have gifts and talents to be shared. You need to understand our serious needs.”

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

## Scripture can provide comfort and consolation in times of crisis and fear

By Effie Caldarola

Desolation and crisis come to all of us in life. Sorrow, depression, addiction, anxiety and loss are part of the human condition. At some time, we each face a low point.

Where do we turn in times of need? Sometimes, we



A community member holds up a Bible during a July 7 vigil in Baton Rouge, La. A message posted at a retreat center always seems to underscore God’s concern for our anxiety as found in the Scriptures: “Sometimes the Lord calms the storm, and sometimes he lets the storm rage and calms his child.”

(CNS photo/Jeffrey Dubinsky, Reuters)

need professional help. We always need community support and the arms of loved ones.

And in the midst of trouble, the believer finds a haven from the storm in Scripture. Most of us have our favorite passages, the place where consolation washes over us. Scripture helps us find peace in the presence of God and supports us in a moment of trouble.

Many scholars note that the most common phrase in the Bible is “Be not afraid” and its variants.

The prophets used this phrase. Isaiah speaks in God’s voice: “Do not fear: I am with you; do not be anxious: I am your God” (Is 41:10).

Angels always tell us not to fear, as an angel did when he told Joseph in a dream to take Mary as his wife. Even Jesus uses the phrase to calm our apprehension: Walking on the water in St. Matthew’s rendition, Jesus tells his terrified disciples, “Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid” (Mt 14:27). And that’s just one of many times he urges us away from fear.

Perhaps it’s this mantra-like repetition of the phrase that makes it most consoling. Angels and prophets alike know that we mortals fall prey to terror and anxiety. Fear is so a part of our psychic makeup, and God, who is very aware of our distress, is

ready to meet us there.

In Matthew, Chapter 6, Jesus provides beautiful reflections on worry: “Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil” (Mt 6:34).

And how many of us have found comfort in our sleepless hours visualizing Jesus calming the storm as his terrified disciples recoil from the pounding waves?

The message I’ve seen posted at a retreat center always seems to underscore this Scripture passage’s concern for our anxiety: “Sometimes the Lord calms the storm, and sometimes he lets the storm rage and calms his child.”

Each of us has special Scripture readings that offer safe harbor from trouble. For some, it may be the woman with the hemorrhage, touching the hem of Jesus’s garment and being cured. Others may find it peaceful to go with Jesus when he slips away in the early morning to find a quiet place and pray there.

The important thing is to return again and again to the passage that offers us the most help in times of need. This is where the Lord waits to comfort us.

God does not scold us for our fear or anxiety or trouble. God does not want us to approach Scripture with guilt, but rather with an acknowledgement of our dependency and our need.

Bring your fear to Scripture and do not be afraid.

(Effie Caldarola is a freelance writer and a columnist for Catholic News Service.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

## My first visits as a journalist with St. Pope John Paul II

Friends have encouraged me to write some columns about some of my experiences during my 69 years of working for the Catholic press. I thought I'd start with my time with St. Pope John Paul II.



In 1979, I was president and publisher of the Catholic publishing company Our Sunday Visitor (OSV), and also president of the International Federation of Catholic Press Associations. We scheduled a conference of the federation for Dublin, and it turned out that we were there at the same time as Pope John Paul II was making his first visit to the United States, stopping in Ireland on the way.

The Archbishop of Dublin had a reception for us the day before the pope's arrival, and he couldn't have been more gracious. More than that, he gave us front row seats at the Mass the pope was going to celebrate in Phoenix Park.

That Mass was some event! An estimated 1 million people were in the park to see the pope, and I had never seen so many people in one place before. The pope's plane arrived and flew low over the park before landing. The people went wild.

After the Mass, we were bused to the archbishop's home, where the pope was staying. After dinner, he came out to meet the press, giving us a little homily but not answering questions.

The pope's itinerary took him to New York and then to Washington. I had received an invitation to the White House while the pope was there to visit President Jimmy Carter, so my wife Marie and I flew back to Washington. However, that White House reception for the pope was not very intimate.

The most intimate visit Marie and I had with him was in March of 1980. During the pope's visit to America, Our Sunday Visitor went all out to cover the trip. We had reporters and photographers wherever he went. We recorded his addresses, used some of the music from Dave Brubeck's Mass "To Hope" as background, and

got actress Helen Hayes to introduce the record we produced. We also published the pope's talks in our quarterly *The Pope Speaks*, and we published a special book with numerous photos of the visit.

I asked for an audience with the pope to present samples of all this material, and the audience was granted. The pope received all the material we brought and was very friendly, although, I have to add, not nearly as warm and interested as Blessed Pope Paul VI had been when we met with him.

Prior to our meeting, Marie had bought about a zillion rosaries for the pope to bless and had them in a big white plastic bag. Suddenly the pope said, "The rosaries." Marie, who had stayed in the background while I was explaining OSV's publications to the pope, came forward quickly, wondering how the pope knew that she had rosaries to be blessed. But it turned out that the pope was calling to one of his assistants to bring rosaries to give to us.

Next week: Some other visits with John Paul II. †

Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

## The pursuit of happiness in the new year

Don Currey was a 30-year-old graduate student when he cut down the world's oldest tree.



A brown-eyed, sun-tanned geography student at the University of North Carolina, Don was striking in his looks and his ambitions: to better understand Ice-Age glaciology by examining bristlecone trees. And so he found

himself in Nevada in the summer of 1964 amid a grove of bristlecones on Wheeler Peak Mountain when his tree corer got stuck in a tree.

Since it would not come out, a park ranger helped him remove his instrument by cutting down the tree. Don began to count its rings and eventually realized, much to his dismay, that he had felled a tree that was 4,844 years old—what was then considered the oldest tree on the planet.

The tragic mistake advanced geographers' understanding of longevity, which had been correlated with the size of trees, like the Redwoods of California. Ice-burnished bristlecone pines, with their storybook swirls on gnarled limbs—trees that peak at just 20 feet—are, it turns out, some of the oldest trees in the world.

They're able to live so long because, even if a large portion of a bristlecone is damaged by erosion or fire, small strips of living bark, which one researcher dubbed "life lines," can function and keep the tree alive. A strip of bark that might be only two inches wide can support all of the tree's foliage.

Adversity begets longevity, analysis suggested: The severe conditions the bristlecone endured over time actually helped extend its lifespan.

As I look ahead to 2017 and that which has never been, I've been thinking of all the history that has come before me—both as a Catholic and a member of my family. The communion of saints feels more alive to me than ever before—almost hauntingly so, yet comforting—the canonized ones and my ancestors, stories of resilience and grace and the lifelines that sustained.

I'm resolving to study them this year and glean their stories and songs. I want to capture oral histories of those still living—the kind where I get out of the way and let them talk—and to read up on those no longer here.

Young adulthood may bring a sense of invincibility, throbbing with novelty and thrill, but lately, I'm feeling blessed and strengthened by my history. I want to dig deeper.

To begin, I'm reading Robert Ellsberg's book *The Saints' Guide To Happiness*, which frames that secular pursuit, an unalienable American right, in spiritual terms, showing how the saints' capacity for goodness and love, ultimately, made them happy.

My biggest takeaway is the book's message about learning to see and learning to love. "Our whole business in this life," St. Augustine wrote, "is to restore to health the eyes of the heart, whereby God may be seen."

That's what happened to Thomas Merton, Ellsberg recounts, when he was on an errand in the shopping district of Louisville, Ky., at the corner of Fourth and Walnut. "I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs," Merton wrote. "It was as if I suddenly saw the secret beauty of their hearts, the depths of their hearts, where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in God's eyes."

I tear up when I read this passage. What more could we hope for in the new year than to share in that vision?

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn., and the editor of *SisterStory.org*.) †

It's All Good/Patti Lamb

## Approach 2017 with an optimistic and peaceful heart

A few days before Christmas, my 9-year-old daughter was jubilant when she found a certain book in the children's section at the library. She had never expressed such enthusiasm over a book. I silently cheered, hoping to myself that she was finally coming to love reading.



Then she explained the reason for breaking into her celebration dance in the middle of the young readers' fiction section.

"My teacher is reading this book to us at school, and now I'll be able to read ahead, mom!" she shrieked.

"Each day she finishes reading to us, I'll know what happens next!" she added.

She gave a content smile.

Later that same week, I sat down to fill out our calendar for 2017. At the end of each December, I take that year's calendar and, beginning with the former January, transfer important dates like birthdays and anniversaries to the calendar of the New Year. As I write the dates in the calendar for the year to come, it gives me a chance to look back and reflect on the events of the past 365 days, which I had taken care to note in the calendar.

These are just a few of the events I had included:

- "Deanna's 50th Birthday"
- "Pick up new puppy"
- "Take Meal to Anna's Family (New Baby!)"
- "Aunt Dolores's Funeral"
- "Margaret's First Communion"
- "Nathan's Second Annual Memorial 5K"
- "Erin's family visits from Seattle"
- "Job interview"
- "Henry's first track meet"
- "Help Emmitt move"
- "Take meal to Mike's family (Chemo treatment)"
- "Michael & Katie's wedding"
- "Courtney's surgery (Pray!)"
- "Family vacation to St. Petersburg"

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

## Cherishing a rich culture through its lens of history

It is estimated the new National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington has 33,000 objects, 3,500 of which are presently on display.



Visitors to the museum can view the glass-topped casket used to display the body of 14-year-old Emmett Till, murdered in Mississippi, a murder that sparked the 1950s

and '60s African-American civil rights movement.

The dress of Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery, Ala., is exhibited, as is the dress of actress and singer Pearl Bailey.

A sign that says "Colored" is attached to a segregated drinking fountain from the Jim Crow era, indicating use for blacks only.

The trumpet of jazz musician Louis Armstrong is one among numerous musical instruments of famous African-American musicians.

Sports fans can view the boxing gloves of Muhammad Ali, a striking portrait of the boxer Joe Louis, the tennis racket of Althea Gibson and beautiful life-size bronze statues of Jackie Robinson sliding into a base, and Michael Jordan sinking one of his famous winning baskets.

Also on display are handcuffs used by police in Cambridge, Mass., to arrest African-American Harvard University professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. in 2009. And one can view the presidential campaign office of Barack Obama during his 2008 run for president.

As I walked through the museum, I thought, "If a person wanted a degree in African-American history and culture studies, this museum is an excellent place to start."

As awe-inspiring as is its architecture and contents, what struck me most

were the visitors, many of whom were African-American families with their children.

What caught my attention was listening to elders passing on their history to children on what it was like being African-American in their day. It dawned on me, "This is the same method of storytelling used to teach about Christ, the history of the Church and its traditions."

In the play *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye sings, "How do we keep our balance? That I can tell you in one word! Tradition! ... Because of our traditions, every one of us knows who he is, and what God expects him to do."

The new African-American museum is spellbinding, but most mesmerizing it is like being in a temple in which African-Americans are learning more fully about who they are and the richness of their culture.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for *Catholic News Service*.) †

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, January 15, 2017

- Isaiah 49:3, 5-6
- 1 Corinthians 1:1-3
- John 1:29-34

The Book of Isaiah furnishes this weekend's first reading from the Scriptures. Relief and joy uplifted the atmosphere.



Hopes centered upon a bright future, all because of the fact that, after the humiliation, uncertainty and anguish of being conquered by Babylonia, and then after generations of exile in Babylon

for many, God's People were entering a new day of return to their homeland and hopefully to lives of prosperity and security.

Lest anyone think this fortunate turn of events was the mere outcome of changing politics or luck, the prophet eloquently insisted that the plight of the people was improving because of God's direct and merciful intervention into human affairs. God brought their relief. He promised to protect and sustain the people, despite the misfortunes that might befall them, and God was faithful.

In turn, the Hebrews, God's people, human instruments on Earth of the divine will, bearing witness, were faithful during their years of trial. They never succumbed to the paganism of Babylon.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend selects a passage from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. The Apostle Paul ranks today among the greatest Christian figures of all time, and certainly he stands as a most extraordinary figure in the development of Christianity in the crucial time of the first century.

Attaining this distinction was not without personal cost for Paul. He had to contend with converts to Christianity who were not always loyal to the Gospel. The very culture in which they lived not only surrendered without a whimper to human instincts, but also elevated these instincts literally to the level of the divine, delighting in lust, gluttony, drunkenness and so on.

The Christian converts in Corinth, then one of the major cities of the

Mediterranean world, were literally awash in this culture.

Another burden for Paul was that he had to defend his very credentials to preach the Gospel. He had to insist that Jesus had called him to be an Apostle.

The last reading is from St. John's Gospel. John was attracted to John the Baptist, to say the least, possibly coming from a group influenced by this prophet. Among John the Baptist's qualities was his absolute intellectual and religious honesty. He was fearless. He thoroughly believed that God had called him to be a prophet.

So, St. John's Gospel presents John the Baptist in most admiring terms.

In this reading, John the Baptist saw Jesus in the distance and acknowledged him as the Redeemer. The element of sacrifice was vividly present. John identified Jesus as the "Lamb of God" (Jn 1:29).

Finally, treasured Old Testament symbols testified to the identity of Jesus. The dove descended from the sky from heaven to rest upon Jesus. God and Jesus are one.

## Reflection

At Christmas, the Church excitedly told us that Jesus was born. Son of Mary, Jesus was a human, as are we. The shepherds adored Jesus, representing all humanity.

At the Epiphany, the magi found Jesus after searching for God. To assist them, God led and protected them. In Jesus, they found God.

At the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, the Church introduced us to Jesus as the Savior of doomed humanity. In Jesus, humans would have access to eternal life.

Now, continuing the process, John the Baptist, so reliable and so insightful in his holiness, proclaimed Jesus as the Lamb of God. In all these settings, the Church carefully puts before us the person of Jesus the Lord and tells us about Jesus.

It invites us to follow Jesus. It invites us to know Jesus. He is one of us. He spoke to us. He died for us. We must only wish to know the Lord. †

## Daily Readings

### Monday, January 16

Hebrews 5:1-10  
Psalm 110:1-4  
Mark 2:18-22

### Tuesday, January 17

St. Anthony, abbot  
Hebrews 6:10-20  
Psalm 111:1-2, 4-5, 9, 10c  
Mark 2:23-28

### Wednesday, January 18

Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17  
Psalm 110:1-4  
Mark 3:1-6

### Thursday, January 19

Hebrews 7:25-8:6  
Psalm 40:7-10, 17  
Mark 3:7-12

### Friday, January 20

St. Fabian, pope and martyr  
St. Sebastian, martyr  
Hebrews 8:6-13  
Psalm 85:8, 10-14  
Mark 3:13-19

### Saturday, January 21

St. Agnes, virgin and martyr  
Hebrews 9:2-3, 11-14  
Psalm 47:2-3, 6-9  
Mark 3:20-21

### Sunday, January 22

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Isaiah 8:23-9:3  
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14  
1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17  
Matthew 4:12-33  
or Matthew 4:12-17

## Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

### Some saints known for helping with specific needs, but all can intercede

Q I often hear people say that they pray to specific saints for specific needs, and that this is effective. I, though, have a certain few favorite saints, and I ask each of them to intercede with the Lord for all of my requests. So, my question is this: Should I make an adjustment and pray instead to designated saints according to their "specialties"? (Indiana)



A It is true that certain saints are regarded as having particular "specialties"—either because of the history of that saint's life, or the record of certain favors being granted through his or her intercession.

St. Matthew, for example, is considered the patron saint of bankers and bookkeepers because of his own occupation as a tax collector, and St. Luke is regarded as the patron of physicians.

St. Anne, the mother of Our Lady, is often invoked at childbirth, and St. Joseph has been called the patron of a happy death. St. Lucy, a fourth-century martyr who is thought to have had her eyes gouged out but her sight miraculously restored, is sometimes asked to intervene for problems with eyesight.

The Church has long believed that the saints, our elder brothers and sisters in the faith, live now in God's presence and can intercede with the Lord on our behalf.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem wrote around 350 that during the eucharistic prayer, "we make mention also of those who have already fallen asleep: first, the patriarchs, prophets, Apostles and martyrs, that through their prayers and supplications God would receive our petition."

When we pray, it boosts our confidence and enhances our faith to know that the particular saint we ask to help might well have a special sympathy for our own circumstance. There is no definitive answer, though, to the question you pose, and none of us can presume to be privy to the inner workings of heaven.

I think that you should continue exactly what you are doing—seeking the intercession of those saints to whom you are especially drawn so that they might intervene in all of your needs.

Q Our family recently moved from Ohio, where our parishes were united as to when the congregation knelt or stood. (Universally, we knelt during the consecration.)

In the new parish where we are members, roughly half of the congregation stands throughout the consecration while the other half kneels. Our family follows our old habit of kneeling, but this lack of uniformity feels awkward to us.

In other parishes we have attended in our new area, everyone seems to be kneeling at this time of the Mass. What is your opinion? (New York)

A The answer to your question is simple and straightforward. The "General Instruction of the *Roman Missal*" says that "in the dioceses of the United States of America, they [i.e., the congregation] should kneel beginning after the singing or recitation of the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy) until after the amen of the eucharistic prayer, except when prevented on occasion by ill health, or for reasons of lack of space, of the large number of people present or for another reasonable cause" (#43).

The common posture of the congregation is a symbol of a community at worship united by faith, and it also fosters that sense of unity.

It is true that in many parts of the world the congregation does stand for most of the eucharistic prayer (except for the consecration, when everyone kneels), but the bishops of the U.S. felt that kneeling is regarded by Americans as the most reverential posture, and is therefore the one most suitable for the entire eucharistic prayer in ordinary circumstances.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at [askfatherdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:askfatherdoyle@gmail.com) and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †

## My Journey to God

### Flight

By Frances Huff

To Egypt, evil escalating  
No camels, one mule  
Clearing cliffs, desert, water  
Returning when evil lessened  
Not to Bethlehem  
To the quietude  
Of Nazareth



(Frances Huff is a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. Men portraying the Three Kings prostrate themselves before parishioners portraying the Holy Family during a Spanish-language Mass on Jan. 8 marking the feast of the Epiphany at St. Hugh of Lincoln Church in Huntington Station, N.Y.)  
(CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz, Long Island Catholic)

## Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The *Criterion* invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column.

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

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367 or e-mail to [criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org). †

# 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.

**BILZ, Kathleen**, 90, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Wife of William Bilz. Sister of Bernice McCarty.

**BOYLE, Thomas D.**, 41, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Dec. 6. Husband of Andrea Boyle. Father of Kira Boyle. Son of David and Rose Mary Boyle. Brother of Lisa Dietz and Kevin Boyle. Grandson of Paul Colosimo.

**BRADFORD, Helen L. (LeRoy)**, 89, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Dec. 7. Mother of Kyle Ciresi, Kim Clarkson, Melia Schleitwiler, Andrew, Jeff, Jerry and Matt Bradford. Sister of Lillian Gipe. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of 13.

**BRAMBLE, Robert L. Jr.**, 52, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Dec. 7. Husband of Kelly Bramble. Father of Alecia Bewley. Stepfather of Brittany Sullivan, Kimmie, Shannon and Jacob Howse. Son of Robert and Pansy Bramble. Brother of Carol Blair, Barbara Frazier, Linda Gowan and Mary Wetterer. Grandfather of one.

**BROWN, Beth D.**, 89, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Mother of Patricia Grandy, Lisa Morris, David, Keith and Stephen Brown. Sister of several. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of six.

**CONRAD, Doris V.**, 95, St. John the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Dec. 11. Wife of Fred Conrad. Mother of Mary Florence Forsythe, Cecilia, Stephen and Vincent Conrad. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of six.

**CWIKLA, Angela D.**, 41, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Wife of David Cwikla. Mother of Jake Cwikla. Sister of Montelle Berkshire, Erica Conrad and Heather Ray.

**DOYLE, Berniece**, 81, Holy Family, New Albany, Dec. 9. Mother of Lora Clasen and Mark Doyle. Sister of Mary Helen Peter, May and John Jacobi, Jr. Grandmother of two.

**ELLIOTT, Harry R.**, 92, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Husband of Helen Elliott. Father of Carol Robison, Susan Scott, Michael and Thomas Elliott. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of nine.

**ERNST, Charles**, 83, St. Monica, Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Husband of Lois Ernst. Father of Lauren Kniola, John and Pat Ernst. Grandfather of six.

**ERBSE, Marilyn**, 88, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Dec. 12. Mother of Candace Harlan, Jeff, Steve and Tony Erbse. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of three.

**FRANKE, James**, 90, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Nov. 28. Husband of Mary Elaine Franke. Father of Jennifer Frederick, Susan Schiller, David, Eric, Gregory, John and Steven Franke. Brother of Myra Hendy. Grandfather of

13. Great-grandfather of several.

**GANDOLPH, Patricia M.**, 88, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 14. Mother of Carole Kirk, Christine Pressley, Barbara Washburn, Susan and David Gandolph. Sister of Eileen Riedman. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of 17.

**GLOSSON, Donald A.**, 87, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Dec. 18. Husband of Helen Glosson. Father of Kristy Geier and Kelly Kelms. Brother of Joan Apple. Grandfather of two.

**HANSEN, Emma E.**, 76, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Dec. 12. Mother of Cathy Cain, Erica Chudzinski, Kelly West, Dale Nigh, Cindy, Kimberly and Eric Hansen. Sister of Connie Countie, Rosemary Moellering, Cat and Michael Stevens. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of one.

**HODGE, Amanda M.**, 34, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 15. Mother of Madison. Daughter of Mark Hodge. Sister of April.

**Hoke, Sarah A.**, 87, St. Anne, New Castle, Dec. 8. Mother of Linda Miller, Valerie Ryan, Susan Timmons, Jennifer, Kathleen, Brian, Gary and William Hoke. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of six.

**HUMBLES, Eugene V.**, 64, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Oct. 23. Husband of Nelly Humbles. Brother of Donna Fuss, Gail Lester and Wayne Humbles.

**HUTSON, Gene E.**, 89, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Dec. 11. Husband of Phyllis Hutson. Father of Amy Combes, Jennifer D'Andrea, Pamela Mohr, Victoria Muniz, Jeffrey and Michael Hutson. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of two.

**JOHNSON, Julie M.**, 82, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Dec. 16. Wife of William Johnson. Mother of Carol Sappenfield, Bret, Bruce and Mark Williams. Sister of Vernon Chenoweth. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of 14.

**KENNEDY, Mary Lucille**, 98, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Dec. 16. Aunt of several.

**KLEIN, James A.**, 74, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City, Dec. 18. Husband of Evelyn Klein. Father of Betsy Kelly, Robin, Brian, Robert and Rodney Klein. Brother of Judy Atkins, Karen Kooiker, Joan Olinger, Barbara and Robert Klein. Grandfather of nine.

**KORTMAN, Dennis M.**, 64, Prince of Peace, Madison, Dec. 14. Husband of Kay Kortman. Stepfather of Tina Carlson and Mark Hyatt. Brother of Paula Kortman. Step-grandfather of four. Step-great-grandfather of four.

**KUNKEL, Clifford**, 85, St. Mary, Greensburg, Dec. 21. Husband of Ruth Kunkel. Father of Carol Kramer, Lynne Miller, Angie Wood, David, Gary, Mark and Rick Kunkel. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of 15.

**LUZAR, Joseph M.**, 99, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Nov. 2. Father of Patti Wiseman, Joseph and Willy Luzar. Grandfather of one.

**MCKEON, Thomas M.**, 98, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 15. Father of Daniel and Thomas McKeon. Grandfather



## Meeting the pope

Pope Francis greets young people during his weekly audience on Jan. 4 in Paul VI Hall at the Vatican. (CNS photo/Tony Gentile, Reuters)

of two. Great-grandfather of four.

**MAIO, John A.**, 50, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 7. Father of Francesca Olson, Bradley Herman, Antonia, Emily, Nicole and Jacob Maio. Son of Michael and Mary Ann Maio. Brother of Florence Abbott, Antoinette Burford, Marianne Duncan, Theresa Minock, Michelle Venezia, Catherine and Patricia Maio. Grandfather of two.

**MANSINI, Patricia J.**, 90, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Nov. 28. Mother of Benedictine Father Guy Mansini.

**MILLER, Edward J.**, 85, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Dec. 7. Husband of Joan Miller. Father of Edward, Jr. and Steven Miller. Brother of Dorine May, Ann Tallant, Charles and Paul Miller. Grandfather of five.

**MINGIONE, Carolyn A. (Burt)**, 76, Prince of Peace, Madison, Dec. 15. Mother of Amy Ball, Frank, Jr. and Stephen Mingione. Sister of Ellen Donnelley, Mary Fogle, Kathleen Houston, Joe and Michael Burt. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of one.

**NAVARRO, Joseph P.**, 81, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Dec. 12. Husband of Mary Ann Navarro. Father of Lisa Holt, Joann Thilman, Mary Rose and Joseph Navarro. Brother of Margaret Filaccio, Irene Olsen and Phillip Suarez. Grandfather of six.

**NEAL, Janet (Fleshner)**, 83, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Dec. 18. Mother of Julie Hardin and Susan Neal. Sister of Madonna McDonald and Rex Fleshner. Grandmother of one. Great-grandmother of 2.

**OBBERGFELL, John E.**, 76, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Dec. 16. Husband of Peggy Obergfell. Father of Diane Gindling, Kathie McCarthy-Hartman, Edward and Michael Obergfell. Brother of Marty Adams, Jerry, Jim and Mark Obergfell. Grandfather of seven. Step-grandfather of seven.

**ORTH, Margaret J.**, 87, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Dec. 16. Mother of Barbara Huffman, Victoria Regan, Robert Dunn, Robert and William Orth. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 18.

**PARDIECK, Phyllis**, 79, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Dec. 12. Wife of Robert Pardieck. Mother of Daniel and Michael Pardieck. Grandmother of two.

**POTTS, Helen**, 93, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Dec. 16. Mother of Michelle Ellerbrock, Susan Gentner, Gregory and Dr. Timothy Potts. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of 12. Great-great-grandmother of two.

**QUALTERS, Sharon S.**, 79, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Dec. 17. Wife of James Qualters. Mother of Carol and Mike Burchard, Joe and Kevin Qualters. Sister of Carol Murrell. Grandmother of four.

**RINGLE, Hamako**, 87, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Dec. 23.

**SCHAPKER, William H.**, 83, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Dec. 15. Husband of Christine Schapker. Father of Therese, Christopher, Mark and William Schapker. Grandfather of four.

**SCHWEGMAN, Marcella**, 84, St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, Dec. 15. Mother of Marcia Adams, Sandra Leffler, Debbie Lux and Steve Schwegman. Sister of Cliff Kunkel. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of one.

**SENG, Dorothea**, 103, Holy Family, New Albany, Dec. 4. Mother of Joan Marie Banet. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 11. Great-great-grandmother of one.

**SNYDER, Helen L.**, 96, St. Paul, Tell City, Dec. 15. Sister of Betty Litherland. Aunt of several.

**STROBEL, Urban J.**, 84, St. Pius V, Troy, Dec. 13. Father of Joanie Howland, Lee Ann Huebschman, Bernie, Dennis and Mike Strobel. Brother of Marietta Collins, Cleta Dauby, Irene Miller and Leo Strobel. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of eight.

**TAIT, Findlay M.G.**, infant, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Son of Anna Sharpe and David Tait. Brother of Fiona, Sophia and Vincent Sharp. Grandson of Pasquale and Sharon Rocchio, Neil and Flona King and George Tait.

**TEX, Michael**, 80, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Dec. 21. Brother of Mary, Ronald and Thomas Tex. Uncle and great-uncle of several.

**TUTTS, Barbara J.**, 88, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Wife of Joseph Tutts. Mother of Janet Messersmith and Michael Tutts. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of one.

**VOGELGESANG, James J.**, 86, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Dec. 14. Husband of Mary Vogelgesang. Father of Robert and Scott Vogelgesang. Brother of Donald Vogelgesang. Grandfather of three.

**WILSON, Jeanette**, 86, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Dec. 22. Mother of Patricia Goodall, Julia Johnson, Theresa

Mason, Robert and Thomas Wilson. Grandmother of 12.

**WITT, Jennifer A.**, 55, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, Dec. 12. Wife of Michael Witt. Mother of Laura Dawson, Deacon Alex, Anna and Broderick Witt. Sister of Marilyn Jacoby, Kathleen Reel and Daniel Thomas. Grandmother of two. †

## Providence Sister Marie Brendan Harvey taught at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College

Providence Sister Marie Brendan Harvey died on Dec. 27, 2016, at Lourdes Hall at Ministry Eagle River Hospital in Eagle River, Wis. She was 90.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 3 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Mary Therese Harvey was born on Jan. 2, 1926, in Chicago. She entered the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Feb. 2, 1946, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1953.

Sister Marie Brendan earned a bachelor's degree at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

During her 70 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Marie Brendan ministered in education for several decades in schools in Illinois, Indiana and Michigan. In later years, she served in parish pastoral ministry and development work.

In the archdiocese, Sister Marie Brendan served at the former St. Benedict School in Terre Haute from 1948-49 and at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College from 1954-69 and 1970-82.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †

## Benedictine Sister Mary Bede Betz served for 52 years in Catholic schools across the state

Benedictine Sister Mary Bede Betz died on Dec. 12, 2016, at Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove where she was a member. She was 90.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 15 at the monastery chapel. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Theresa Catherine Betz was born on Jan. 4, 1926, in Schnellville, Ind. She entered Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., now in the Evansville Diocese, and professed temporary vows on June 5, 1945, and perpetual vows on Aug. 10, 1949.

Sister Mary Bede transferred to Our Lady of Grace Monastery, which was founded by Monastery Immaculate Conception, in 1960.

She earned a bachelor's degree in education at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand and The Catholic University of America in Washington.

During her 71 years as a Sister of St. Benedict, Sister Mary Bede ministered in education for 52 years in schools in Indiana, retiring to the monastery in 1999.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Bede served at Christ the King School in Indianapolis from 1948-51, at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County from 1954-59 and 1965-67, at the former St. Paul School in Tell City from 1959-63, at the former St. Michael School in Bradford from 1963-65, at the former St. Michael School in Cannelton from 1967-69, at the former St. Martin of Tours School in Siberia from 1969-70 and in public schools in Leopold and religious education at St. Augustine Parish in Leopold from 1970-99.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Retired Sisters' Fund, in care of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove, IN 46107 or online at [www.benedictine.com](http://www.benedictine.com). †

# St. Thomas Aquinas student interviews Cardinal Tobin

By Natalie Hoefer

Since being named a cardinal and being reassigned as archbishop of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J.—where he was installed as shepherd on Jan. 6—Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin has been sought by dozens of major media outlets for an interview, including the *National Catholic Register*, *The New York Times*, BBC World News and other agencies in Italy, Spain, Ireland and Belgium.

But when an e-mail of questions came from a reporter for the St. Thomas Aquinas School's *Tiger Prints* newspaper in Indianapolis, Cardinal Tobin made sure to clear his schedule for an in-person interview.

Miles Barth, a seventh-grade student at the school, arrived at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis with pen and notebook ready to go on Dec. 1.

Accompanied by his father John Barth, his English teacher Amy Board and his principal Cara Swinefurth, Miles was led into the chancery and introduced to Cardinal Tobin.

"I wasn't that nervous because when I met him, he was really nice, very warm," said the young reporter.

The group settled into a conference room, and the questions began. For about 15 minutes, Miles asked Cardinal Tobin questions about how he learned he was named a cardinal, his and his family's reaction to the news, how he felt about moving to Newark, and what goals he hoped to accomplish there.

There were also questions that elicited pauses and deep thought from the cardinal, such as his favorite memory from his time in the archdiocese.

"That's a tough one," Cardinal Tobin said, followed by a moment of silence. "There's so many, but one that comes to

mind is last Easter. One of the parishes not too far from here, St. Monica, had a fire, so they couldn't have the Easter Vigil in their church. They asked if they could come to [SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis]. I said, 'Sure, of course.' Then the pastor said, 'By the way, there are 43 baptisms.'

"I've never baptized that many people in my life! Just to see that new life and to know that there were lots of people ... who just welcomed these people into the Church—they made the Church attractive for them.

"Sometimes you're aware of all that you need to do, but every once in a while God says, 'I'm in charge.' That's a great memory."

Another question Miles asked that provoked some thought was what Cardinal Tobin felt his greatest accomplishment in the archdiocese was.

After pause for reflection, the cardinal responded.

"There are 131 parishes in the archdiocese scattered across 39 counties, and I always said the challenge here is to move the archdiocese from being an archipelago—that's one of my favorite words, which is a bunch of islands—to being a network, so that these 131 parishes feel like they're part of something bigger, and not only feel it but show it by working together," he said.

At the end of the interview, Miles asked Cardinal Tobin what advice he would give to the students of St. Thomas Aquinas School.

There was no pause from the cardinal on this answer.

"Be the best you can be," he said. "The way I understand that is developing all the gifts God has given you, especially including the gift of faith.

"I think the longer I live, the more I realize intelligence and all that stuff, that's



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin poses with Miles Barth, a seventh-grade student at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis, after the young reporter conducted an interview with the cardinal at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis for the school's newspaper on Dec. 1. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

great stuff. Athletic ability—that's good. If you dance or write or be a journalist like you, that's all great.

"But what pulls it all together is faith, because that reminds me that everything I have is a gift. It's not my sole accomplishment.

"So I would say to the students, be the best you can be and develop all that you have been given, but especially the gift of faith."

Miles has been developing both his faith and his interest in writing at St. Thomas Aquinas School since kindergarten. This is his second year writing for the school paper.

"You get to start writing for it in sixth

grade," he explained. "Everyone has to write an article every quarter, and certain articles get in—editors choose them.

"I've been interested [in writing] for a long time. I remember when I was younger, I was really impatient because I really wanted to write for the paper. I was always asking people if I could write early, but they said no."

Now he faces the task of writing an article based on his interview with one of only 11 cardinals in the United States.

"I got a lot of information," said Miles. "He gave really good answers. He had really great stuff for me to put in my article." †

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Interested persons should send a cover letter and resumé to:

**Mrs. Denni Badger**

St. Alphonsus Liguori Catholic Church  
1870 Oak Street  
Zionsville, IN 46077  
[administrationcoordinator@zionsvillecatholic.com](mailto:administrationcoordinator@zionsvillecatholic.com)

#### Director of Youth Ministry

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Director of Youth Ministry to begin employment July 2, 2017. The archdiocesan director of youth ministry models Christian discipleship and fosters a comprehensive approach to youth ministry that recognizes cultural, developmental, and spiritual diversity among Catholic youth and their families. The successful candidate is expected to be a role model for ministry in service of the Church's mission to youth. The director invites, trains, and supports archdiocesan youth leaders who are expressly charged with engaging and leading youth toward Christian maturity. The position requires three years previous experience leading youth ministry in the parish and at the diocesan level. Qualified candidates must have minimum of a bachelor's degree in Theology or a related field. Master's degree is preferred.

To apply, please e-mail a cover letter, resumé, and list of references, in confidence, to:

**Ed Isakson**

Director, Human Resources  
1400 N. Meridian St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
E-mail: [edisakson@archindy.org](mailto:edisakson@archindy.org)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

#### Coordinator of Latino Outreach, Office of Catholic Schools

The Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Coordinator of Latino Outreach to support Catholic schools throughout central and southern Indiana. The Coordinator of Latino Outreach provides leadership for and guidance to archdiocesan schools to assist them with advancing the enrollment and participation of Latino students and families in our Catholic schools. The Coordinator of Latino Outreach will assist Catholic school leaders in creating school plans that focus on the following priorities: developing a culturally responsive school climate and pedagogy, identifying and executing marketing and recruitment efforts to meet stated enrollment objectives, producing an implementation timeline, and establishing metrics. The Coordinator will assist school leaders in engaging their school communities to successfully serve Latino students in the areas of teacher and staff training, a culturally-responsive pedagogy, and parent outreach. Additionally, the Coordinator will develop marketing and recruitment templates to assist school leaders with implementing efforts to attract and engage Latino students and families.

The Coordinator of Latino Outreach will develop strategic relationships

between Latino community organizations and schools to advance student recruitment efforts and to build a portfolio of potential service providers. Collaboration within the archdiocese and with others doing similar work in other dioceses is essential. The Coordinator will visit Catholic schools to assess progress toward their school planning goals as defined by the plans' established metrics.

The applicant should be an active, practicing Catholic committed to serving children, families and Catholic school communities. Candidates should possess an advanced degree, preferably in the field of education and/or marketing/communication and have experience successfully working in Catholic schools and/or another closely related field, preferably in a leadership position. The applicant should be bi-lingual and bi-cultural and must have a strong commitment to strengthening and sustaining PK-12 Catholic schools. This individual must also work collaboratively, demonstrate a growth mindset, and approach challenges as opportunities.

To apply, please e-mail your cover letter, resumé, and list of references to:

**Ed Isakson**, Director of Human Resources, Archdiocese of Indianapolis  
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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

# Bishops cite immigration in National Migration Week statement

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Urging Americans to look at their families for stories of immigration, the president and vice president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) called attention to the hardships and contributions of immigrants to American society as the U.S. Church observed National Migration Week.

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston and Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles also said in a statement that the week is “an opportunity to embrace the important work of continuing to secure the border, to welcome the stranger and serve the most vulnerable” as components of “a humane immigration policy.”

National Migration Week was observed on Jan. 8-14.

“This year, we are invited to create a culture of encounter where citizens old and new, alongside immigrants recent and long-standing, can share with one another their hopes for a better life,” said the statement marking the observance, which

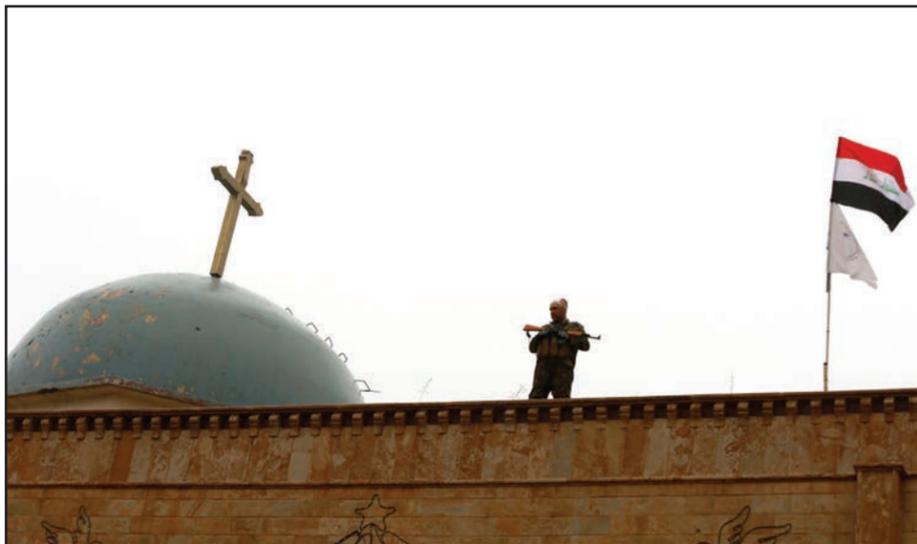
began 25 years ago as a way to reflect on how immigrants and refugees have contributed to the Church. “Jesus, Mary and Joseph knew life as refugees, so let us also begin this encounter within our very own families.”

The prelates said migration is “an act of great hope,” and those who are forced to leave their homelands “suffer devastating family separation and most often face dire economic conditions to the point they cannot maintain a very basic level of living.”

War and persecution force refugees to leave their homelands, they said. They urged Catholics to seek stories from their families about how their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents left their homelands.

“Let us remind ourselves of those moments when our loved ones were forced to seek the mercy of others in a new land,” the statement said.

Though the United States has a great national heritage of welcoming the stranger, “fear and intolerance have



An Iraqi soldier stands guard during Christmas celebrations at the al-Tahira al-Kubra Church in al-Hamdaniya, east of Mosul, on Dec. 25, 2016. (CNS photo/Ahmed Jalil, EPA)

occasionally tested that heritage,” the statement said, adding that “whether immigrating from Ireland, Italy or countless other countries, previous

generations faced bigotry. Thanks be to God, our nation grew beyond those divisions to find strength in unity and inclusion.” †

## How will U.S. policy affect Middle East’s Christians in 2017?

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A wide variety of issues, both domestic and foreign, have been raised during the presidential transition. One that hasn’t received much notice is the situation of the beleaguered Christian community in the Middle East.

Given the interest in, and media coverage of, those other issues, it’s an open question as to just what the United States would do for the Middle East’s Christian minorities under the presidential administration of Donald J. Trump.

Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, said he would reintroduce a bill he first introduced in September that would ensure U.S. aid specifically reaches Christian refugees and internally

displaced people in the region.

Another feature would be to allow genocide victims—“at least the persecuted Christians,” Smith said—to apply as a family and get asylum in the United States. “It gives him the ability to get the interviews. It doesn’t guarantee that they will become an asylee in the United States, but it gives them the opportunity.”

Smith said he gave a copy of the bill on Jan. 4 to Vice President-elect Mike Pence.

Stephen M. Colecchi, director of the Office of International Justice and Peace at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, was leaving for a mid-January fact-finding mission in the region, with the first stop

being Irbil, Iraq, a Kurdish-controlled zone in the northern part of the country where many Iraqi Christians have fled.

“I imagine we will meet with a fair number of internally displaced Iraqi Christians. We will also be meeting with some Syrians who have fled to the Kurdish region because of the violence there,” Colecchi told Catholic News Service (CNS). Also on the itinerary are visits to Catholic Relief Services’ projects that assist all groups, including Yezidis and Shiite Muslims, “who have been affected by the terrible conflict,” he said.

The U.S. bishops’ stance on policy matters relies in large part on the experiences of the bishops in the affected region or country. “We look for situations where there is clear Church teaching, guided by the local Church,” Colecchi said. “We consult with the Holy See and make sure our positions are consistent with the Holy See. And we look for situations where the United States can make a difference. The United States is heavily involved in the region, and needs to take leadership to help those who are suffering.”

“There’s lots of confusion” when it comes to consensus on solutions, said Michael LaCivita, communications director for the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), a Vatican agency.

“There’s lots of folks advocating for their people to return to their native communities, the ones that have been freed or liberated. The problem is that 80 percent of these places have been destroyed. There’s a lot of rubble. In order for people to return to their villages and their towns, they need proper housing, and they need infrastructure and they need security—and guarantees that they’re not going to be exposed as they were a few years ago.

“No one knows what the future will hold,” LaCivita added. “Should we have safe havens? Christians are saying no,” he said. “How can we be Christian witnesses to the Gospel if we live in the Christians-only zones? Others are calling for the swift emigration of Christians out of the Middle East.

“Washington will talk and talk and talk, as Washington often does, but I can stay this: Unilateral action by the United States in that part of the world typically has had consequences for the vulnerable communities, often for the communities these unilateral actions are intended to help.”

The Department of State’s declaration of the Islamic State’s murderous sprees since 2014 as genocide “allowed the international community to come full circle and really realize the gravity of the situation. Communities were being wiped off the face of the Earth. They were going extinct, basically,” said Philippe Nassif, executive director of In Defense of Christians.

Nassif said the fate of Christians will improve in some places, but likely not in others, citing “fundamentalism” in Egypt directed against the nation’s Coptic Christians.

In Defense of Christians has the creation of a Christian autonomous region in the Ninevah Plain of Iraq as one of its legislative priorities. Another is to have Congress recognize the genocide with aid money to relieve its effect. A third is to support the security and stability of Lebanon, which Nassif noted has “the most populous and stable Christian population,” and which could serve as a model for political cooperation between Christians and the majority Muslim populations elsewhere in the region. †

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