At Mass for unborn, priest notes that ‘real love always seeks to serve’

By Natalie Hoefer

The line of approximately 200 marchers stretched more than a city block, signs bobbing up and down as they walked 1.5 miles along Meridian Street in downtown Indianapolis, their Hail Mary’s echoing between the walls of the buildings.

This was a march for life, a solemn, prayerful witness calling for an end to abortion that was legalized 44 years ago through the Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton decisions.

“It was beautiful to see the reaction of the people as we turned corners and walked down busy roads,” said march leader Scott Seibert, archdiocesan marriage and family enrichment coordinator, who helped to lead the march.

“There were semi-trucks driving on the overpass that honked in support of us. There were several cars that honked in support as they drove past. It was amazing for me to see people in some of the larger buildings we were walking past who stuck their heads out to look and see what was taking place.”

There were some negative responses to the march as well, but Seibert said that’s to be expected.

“I kept thinking about the beatitudes, [the Gospel of Matthew 5:1-12],” he said. “When we do the Lord’s work, we should expect both moments of affirmation, and moments of negativity. In both, we need to offer it to the Lord. It’s never about us—it’s always about him!”

Before the march, the archdiocesan observance for the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children began with Mass on Jan. 23 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral. Father Patrick Beidelman, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization and rector of the cathedral, served as the principal celebrant.

In his homily, he recalled the story from the day’s Gospel reading in which Christ asked the disciples what they were discussing along the road (Mark 9:30-37).

“When confronted directly by Jesus, the disciples are ashamed to confess their conversation, but he knows anyway,” Father Beidelman said. “They had been arguing about who was the greatest.”

“He tells them, ‘So you want first place? You want to be on top? Then take the last place. Be the servant of all.' “Jesus is constantly turning things upside down and inside out for us. He sets a standard that is contrary to the world.”

Though snubbed by Women’s March, pro-life groups still participate

WASHINGTON (CNS)—After being removed from a list of partner organizations for the Women’s March on Washington, pro-life groups still took to the streets on Jan. 21 to participate in the massive event—with some members reporting support “by so many women” while other pro-lifers were taunted and cursed, and had their signs ripped apart.

“Overall, it was an amazing experience,” said Destiny Herndon-De La Rosa, of New Wave Feminists, one of the groups removed as a march sponsor.

“We were prepared for confrontation, and instead were supported by so many women,” said Herndon-De La Rosa told Catholic News Service (CNS).

The group posted photos on their Facebook and Instagram accounts of their participation, holding signs that read, “I’m a pro-life feminist.”

“They kept coming up and telling us how glad they were that we were there and how, even though they didn’t necessarily agree on the abortion issue, they thought it wrong that we were removed as partners,” said Herndon-De La Rosa. “It was very cool.”

That reception wasn’t the one experienced by members of the Virginia-based Students for Life of America. A video posted later in the day of Jan. 21 to the organization’s Facebook page showed marchers taunting some of the pro-lifers and ripping up their signs, which read: “Abortion Betrays Women.”

Students for Life of America officials said what was billed as an inclusive march ended up having a “radical abortion agenda”

Pope Francis says of President Trump

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As President Donald Trump was being sworn in, Pope Francis told an interviewer it would be “reckless” to pass judgment on the new president before he had a chance to do anything.

“We must wait and see,” the pope told two reporters from the Spanish newspaper El País during a 75-minute interview on Jan. 20.

The interview was published late on Jan. 21 in its original Spanish with an English translation.

Asked if he wasn’t worried at least about some of the things Trump said before his election, the pope responded, “I’m waiting. God waited so long for me, with all my sins.”

“Being afraid or rejoicing beforehand because of something that might happen is, in my view, quite reckless,” the pope said. “We will see. We will see what he does, and then we will judge—always on the concrete. Christianity either is concrete, or it is not Christianity.”

Before the newspaper interview, Pope Francis sent best wishes and prayers to the incoming president shortly after he took the oath of office on Jan. 20.

“I offer you my cordial good wishes and the assurance of my prayers that almighty God will grant you wisdom and strength in the exercise of your high office,” the pope’s message said.

Saying that the human family faces “grave humanitarian crises” that demand “far-sighted and united political responses,” the pope said he would pray that Trump’s decisions “will be guided by the rich spiritual and ethical values that have shaped the history of the American people, and your nation’s commitment to the advancement of human dignity and freedom worldwide.”

The pope also said he hoped that America’s “stature” continued to be
The Pope's Astronomer will speak on Feb. 7 at Brebeuf in Indianapolis

Jesuit Brother Guy Consolmagno, the director of the Vatican Observatory and president of the Vatican Observatory Foundation, will deliver a presentation titled “The Heavens Proclaim, Astronomy and the Vatican” at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School, 2801 W. 86th St. in Indianapolis, at 7 p.m. on Feb. 7. The program will be held in the school’s Erflyroom Auditorium.

The roots of the Vatican Observatory date back to the Gregorian Reform of the calendar in 1582, and the observatory has been part of the extensive history of the church for the last 100 years has been to show the poor, the outcast and those in need, who, like Lazarus, stand before our door.”

The message concluded with the pope saying he would ask God to grant the new president, his family and all Americans “peace, concord and every material and spiritual prosperity.”

During the newspaper interview, El Pais reporters asked another question about Trump and populists in the United States and Europe who, the interviewer said, “capitalists on fear in the face of an uncertain future in order to form a message full of xenophobia and hatred toward the foreigner.”

“Cries provoke fear, alarm,” the pope said.

In times of crisis, the pope said, large segments of the population think, “Let’s look for a savior who gives us back our identity, and let’s defend ourselves with walls, barbed-wire, whatever, from other peoples who may rob us of our identity. And that is a very serious thing.”

Obviously, Pope Francis said, nations have a right and duty to control their borders, especially under the threat of terrorism, but “no country has the right to deprive its citizens of the possibility of talking with their neighbors.”

The El Pais reporters also asked Pope Francis about his hopes for improved diplomatic relations with China. As he has done in the past, the pope reported that a Vatican-China committee has been meeting regularly for years and the dialogue continues.

“Are you ready to go to China?” he was asked.

“When they invite me,” he replied. “In China, the churches are full. One can practice one’s religion in China,” he added, without mentioning the fact that religious practice is tightly controlled by the government.

El Pais also asked the 80-year-old pope if he expects to resign like Pope Benedict XVI did.

“That I don’t know. That is for God to decide,” he said. “When I feel that I cannot go on, my great teacher Benedict taught me what to do. And, of course, I think that, if I was to leave the other side—hopefully not from hell.”

Open Doors + Open Arms + Open Hearts

The students in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis Catholic schools are doing great things! Please take the time to review a special publication from the Office of Catholic Schools at www.archindy.org/OCSSpecialPublication-2016-2017 highlighting our Catholic Schools and those who help us make us what we are today!

Corrections

In the Indiana Catholic Conference story in the Jan. 20 issue of The Criterion, we misspelled the name of Matthew Ellis, program director for the Hoosier Alliance for Serious Mental Illness. 

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Vicar judicial continues ministry in absence of archbishop

By Sean Gallagher

When Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin was appointed the new archbishop of Newark, N.J., on Nov. 7, 2016, changes immediately occurred in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Cardinal Tobin ceased being archbishop and served as administrator with limited authority until he was installed in Newark on Jan. 6.

Msgr. William F. Stumpf and Father Joseph Feltz respectively were no longer archdiocesan vicar general and vicar for clergy.

In the midst of all this change, Father Joseph Newton continued as vicar judicial, overseeing the archdiocese’s metropolitan tribunal, which primarily hears petitions of Catholics seeking a declaration of nullity (commonly known as an annulment) of a previous marriage.

As Father Newton said these changes and transition there is no bishop to lead it. "The judicial vicar remains to see that the administration of justice still happens in the Church," Father Newton said. "It would be unjust for the position of the judicial vicar to go away, and therefore every marriage case currently in the works come to a complete stop.

"So, the Church, in its wisdom, maintains the position so that cases may continue so that people’s marriage cases can keep going."

A few weeks before he was installed in Newark, Cardinal Tobin expressed his confidence in Father Newton’s continued ministry in the tribunal during the archdiocese’s time without an archbishop.

"One of the functions of law is to provide stability to the community," Cardinal Tobin said. "Father Joe will provide the archdiocesan administrator with the clues that will allow him to shepherd the Catholic community in central and southern Indiana until a new archbishop is named. I am confident that my successor will be as satisfied with Father Joe’s service as I have been."

Msgr. Stumpf was elected archdiocesan administrator on Jan. 9 by the seven priests who serve on the archdiocesan college of consultants.

Father Newton said he was attracted to ministry related to canon law before he was ordained a priest in 2008. He learned the various tasks of people ministering in the tribunal while still a seminarian, and in his first three years of priestly life and ministry.

From 2011-13, he studied canon law at The Catholic University of America in Washington. Since completing graduate studies, he has minstered full time in the tribunal, becoming vicar judicial on June 29, 2016.

Although the study and practice of canon law has its intellectual side, Father Newton traces his interest in it to his personal hobby of restoring old cars. “I’m very mechanical by nature,” he said. "I like functional sorts of things. Canon law has a lot of function. It takes divine law, natural law and the teachings of the Church and sort of distills them into principles which govern the Church. In some ways, it’s very practical. It always appealed to me because, in many ways, I’m a sort of practical kind of person."

He experienced the practical application of canon law when he served as associate pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis from 2008-11, discovering that ministry in a parish and in canon law came together to help him be a better priest.

"Being in a parish helps me understand that everything we do here in the tribunal is about people, is about supporting their rights," Father Newton said. "It is a pastoral ministry. Each and every person that works [in the tribunal] has a vocation to shepherd the community."

He was also attracted to ministering in canon law because of the two priests who preceded him as archdiocesan vicar judicial: Msgr. Frederick Easton, who served in the role from 1980 until his retirement in 2014; and Father Stanley Pondoro, who was vicar judicial from 2011-16, and now serves as pastor of St. Louise Parish in Zionsville.

Reflecting on those two priests, Father Newton looked at his desk, at which vicars judicial have worked for several decades. "Whoever sits at that desk … stands on the shoulders of giants, of great canon lawyers," he said. "It’s quite a legacy to live up to. I don’t think that I can live up to the legacy, but that doesn’t stop me from trying."

For his part, Msgr. Easton appreciates Father Newton’s pastoral approach to ministry in the tribunal.

"He definitely has captured a good understanding of the maxim found in the last canon of the 1983 Code of Canon Law," Msgr. Easton said, “namely this: the salvation of souls, which must always be the supreme law in the Church, is to be kept before one’s eyes.”

Ann Tully, coordinator of the tribunal and a judge instructor/assessor, was on its staff when Father Newton first ministered there as a seminarian. She has enjoyed watching him grow in ministry in canon law and appreciates his current leadership of the tribunal.

"Father Joe became part of our team from the beginning," she said. "Now that he is the judicial vicar, he leads a team that he is completely committed to serving, and we are very proud of him."

That team has been working harder than ever since Pope Francis promulgated changes to canonical procedures in marriage cases in 2015.

The changes included allowing tribunals to handle cases when a former spouse lives in another country, forgiving the previous requirement that a second tribunal had to review cases, and establishing a brief process for cases that met specific requirements.

That same year saw Cardinal Tobin eliminate all fees for marriage cases in the archdiocese’s tribunal, although Father Newton noted that these were frequently waived in the past for people in need.

Father Newton said these changes and the pastoral example of Pope Francis and Cardinal Tobin resulted in the archdiocesan tribunal starting a record 275 new cases in 2016—about 110 more than the previous record.

"The increase in cases is not something that we go around bemoaning," Father Newton said. “It’s joyful. It means that the example of our Holy Father and Cardinal Tobin, the outreach of the tribunal and the working of the Holy Spirit is alive and well and in work in people who really want to do what the Church asks them to do. This is cause for great joy on our part.”

Even though the Church in central and southern Indiana is currently without an archbishop, this pastoral ministry of justice in the tribunal will continue under the leadership of Father Newton.

(Further more information on the ministry of the archdiocesan metropolitan tribunal, visit www.archindy.org/tribunal)

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Fourth-grade basketball teaches lessons of faith and the ultimate goal

All of the practice and game experience my 9-year-old son Victor had in his first season in Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) basketball led up to a shining moment during a recent game.

His team of fellow fourth-grade boys from St. Cornelius Catholic School in Indianapolis were down four points with less than 30 seconds left in the game.

A missed shot from square foot from Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood fell to the floor. Victor dove after it, and successfully took it away from one of his opponents. Lying on his back, he made a great pass to a teammate, who then made a layup when he was fouled. The teammate made the free throw, and their team was only down one point.

In the waning seconds of the game, another teammate put up a potential game-winning shot at the buzzer, but it fell off the rim with 0.000 seconds left on the game clock.

My sadness at the loss was far surpassed at my elation in seeing Victor make such a key play. I didn’t count as much on the stat sheet. But it made a victory possible. More importantly for his wonderful coach and a proud father, it showed how much he developed in his first season playing basketball.

At its start, Victor didn’t have a sense of the game and didn’t know how to try to play. But the patient teaching of his coaches and the rapid growth of his classmates helped get him a grasp of what to do on the floor. A few of his teammates knew much more about the game, and naturally took charge during games. But they were patient in helping him and their other teammates become a better player.

And the fact that the team had only six players meant that everyone got experience. Though fewer in number and usually smaller in stature than other teams, they were giants in heart and team spirit. These boys who prayed together at Mass every school day, studied together in class, ate lunch with each other and played together on the court clearly supported each other and had fun together as a team.

As we prepare to celebrate Catholic School Week, it’s good to know that CYO’s basketball sports, when approached appropriately by parents, coaches and players and kept in their proper context, can give those involved a lively perspective on the life of faith.

To live out the Gospel well requires us to study it regularly, like a new basketball player learning the rules and finer points of the game and an experienced one going deeper into his knowledge of it. It also involves putting it into practice in everyday life, like basketball players going over the fundamentals again and again in practice and applying them in actual situations.

The only truly faithful Christian has a part to play in carrying out Christ’s mission, just as Victor and his small band of teammates had essential roles to carry out on their team, even if they were newcomers to the game.

(Arnaud J., Dominican Father writes for The Criterion.)

Too much light can overshadow the power of closeness in our lives

The children’s Christmas Mass was at 6 p.m. In fact, it was so crowded that the organ was silent because of the limited space. Forty professional musicians, including the choir of St. Vincent de Paul Church, were on stage in the middle of the “Christmas Mass” choir. The organist would be overwhelmed by the size of the choir.

At this point, I don’t expect Victor to be the next Larry Bird. (But who knows?) What I do hope he learns, though, is that this experience of a lifetime and any other events in the years to come will help him become a better friend to his teammates, and give him the massive pride of an Indiana parade and naturally took charge during games. But they were patient in helping him and their other teammates become a better player.

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(Arnaud J., Dominican Father writes for The Criterion.)

The Human Side

Fr. Eugene Hemrick

Too much light can overshadow the power of closeness in our lives

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Leader lead to certainty of God, Pope Francis asks Dominicans

“I say to you, offer no resistance to one who strikes you on [your] right cheek, turn the other to him as well” (Mt 5:38-39).

In his 2017 World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis called for “a new style of politics built on peace and nonviolence.” His message comes none too soon as the world continues the vicious cycle of violence, and political discourse becomes increasingly intolerable. Pope Francis offers a solution to the problem of violence that is not new but is very difficult to achieve. He calls it “active nonviolence.”

There is a tendency to view peace—and peacemakers—as passive. Peacemaking is too often seen simply as “turning the other cheek,” accepting the blows of misfortune with a faint hope that things will turn out OK in the end. This is not the kind of peacemaking that Pope Francis urges us to adopt. His way of making peace is active, not passive. It is the way of St. Teresa of Calcutta, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and, according to Pope Francis, “the thousands of women in Liberia who helped end their nation’s civil war.”

In his homily, Pope Francis reflected on St. Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy and its description of proclaiming the Gospel at a time when people were “always seeking new teachers, myths, different doctrines and ideologies.”

The situation today is even more exaggerated, the pope said, because “of the reduction of subjectivity.” The response must be to attract people to the changing truth of faith in God and in the Gospel, the pope said to the Dominicans.

When a Christian gives glory to God through his or her actions and words, Pope Francis said, people will notice and ask, “Why does that person act that way?”

“Let’s listen carefully to the message of Pope Francis, and the words and example of Jesus, and commit ourselves to active nonviolence as the new style of politics here at home and throughout the world!”

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee.)
February 1
Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1480 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’s, 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 p.m., beginning Feb. 1, free. Information: registration: Donna Wenstrup, 815-232-8581 or Donna.wenstrup@gmail.com.

February 3
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral chapel, 1347 N. Meridian, Indianapolis. Lumen Dei Catholic Business Group, 6:30 a.m. Mass, 7:15-8:30 a.m. breakfast at Lincoln Square Pancake House, 2338 N. Meridian, Indianapolis. Information: 317-435-3447 or lumen.dei@comcast.net.

February 4
Mount St. Francis Center for Vocations, 812-923-8817 or retreats@mountsaintfrancis.com. Feb. 3 at mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats. Contact Mark and Jill Bradleylevine@msn.com.

February 7
Mission 27 Retreat, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. Senior Discount Day, every Tuesday, senior get 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.–6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260.

February 10
Benedictine Father “Almost Archabbey Guest House Square Pancake House, 2330 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. 8:30 a.m. breakfast at Lincoln Square Pancake House, 2338 N. Meridian, Indianapolis, noon, free-will offering. Register and donuts to follow. Information: 317-748-1478 or umctabl6@louisville.net.

February 11
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 535 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Movie Night, 6:30-9 p.m., $5 includes movie, popcorn and refreshments. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

February 12
Mission 27 Retreat, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. Senior Discount Day, every Tuesday, senior get 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.–6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260.

February 14
Mission 27 Retreat, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. Senior Discount Day, every Tuesday, senior get 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.–6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260.

February 17
Mission of Grace, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. Senior Discount Day, every Tuesday, senior get 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.–6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260.

February 19
National Catholic Conference Day of Reflection, sponsored by the Archdiocesan Office of Intentional Ministry, 9 a.m., a day of prayer for the Church, especially the African-American community, free-will offering. Register and information: 317-236-1474 or pjr@archindy.org.

February 23

February 24
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. Eight-Day Spiritual Advent Festival, spiritual events and activities celebrating the feast days of Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Bernadette. Information: 317-356-7291 or parishsecretary@ollindy.org.

February 25
St. Michael the Archangel Church, 185 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. “The Blood of the Lamb” Bible Study, offered 8 weeks on Mon. 7 p.m., Tues. 7:45 p.m. and Thurs. 7 p.m. Information: Sandra Harthlee, 317-372-5925 or herl85@sanlouislawrence.org.

February 27
Sacred Heart Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. Mass, 7 p.m.; Litany of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, 5 p.m. Information: 317-428-0403.

February 1
Retreats and Programs

February 10-12

February 19
St. Maurice Parish, 2110 Leota St., Indianapolis. Weekend of Peace for Women, Judy Ribar, facilitator, 7 p.m. Fri. 2-1 p.m. Sun., $150 includes dinner and lunches, register by Feb. 3 at mountsspirituals.org/registration. Information: 812-923-8817 or info@mountsspirituals.org.

February 12
St. Nicholas Church, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Drive, Sunman, St. Nicholas Valentine’s Breakfast, pancakes, sausage and gravy, scrambled eggs, pastries and fruit, 7:30 a.m. - noon, free-will offering. Information: 812-623-2964.

February 14

February 16

February 18
By Gina Fleming
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

A week prior to the final class of my administrative program several years ago, I stayed up until 3 in the morning putting the final touches on the documentation I was to present to a group of 50 mentors, colleagues, family members and friends as my culminating project. Everything was compiled in one location on my computer, backed up on a jump drive that remained in the bag with the computer, and tossed gently in the car before a productive day as principal.

Running late to my son’s game that evening, I did not have time to stop by home and drop off the computer. Instead, it remained in the car while we watched our then second-grader play basketball. As we approached the car later that evening, we immediately noticed the shattered glass surrounding our vehicle. I blocked my son from getting closer. It then dawned on me—it was glass from my car window, and the computer bag was gone!

Spontaneously, I squatted down, held my face in my hands, and simply cried. Two years of work flashed before my eyes, as did the anguish of having to start all over. And then I felt two little arms wrap around my neck from behind. My 7-year-old gently said, “Mommy, we need to pray for those men because they have damaged their relationship with Christ.”

Regrettably, I wanted to respond, “I pray they find God before I find them!” But I knew my son was right. I knew this little child of God understood the presence of and need for our Lord and Savior, for he benefited from the tremendous sacramental preparation he had received and the amazing role models he shared his days with at his Catholic school.

In central and southern Indiana, we are blessed to have 69 Catholic school communities sharing their faith through knowledge and service. The articles throughout this Catholic Schools Week Supplement are intended to give you a small snapshot of the learning, teaching, leading and proclaiming that takes place on our campuses in concert halls, on athletic fields, and throughout our communities every day.

If you really want to be uplifted and reminded of God’s shining light in our world, visit one of our Catholic schools! Allow the principal to share a story or two about the phenomenal students, committed parents and dedicated teachers and staff members they serve daily. And while you are there, please pat him or her on the back for me with a “thank you” for the expertise, wisdom and passion for our faith that is demonstrated consistently.

Thank you to our pastors, who recognize our Catholic schools as beacons of hope for the world, and who support the ministry so readily.

Thank you to our school leaders, who know no boundaries when the education, formation and salvation of students are at stake.

Thank you to our teachers and staff members, who relentlessly serve with zeal so that young people can flourish in college, life and heaven.

Thank you to our lay volunteers, parents, parishioners, business partners and donors, who support Catholic education in ways that benefit students today and for generations to come.

And thank you to our students, who not only see that all are made in the image and likeness of Christ, but who recognize their privilege in responding to God’s love through service to others.

That 7-year-old boy of ours grew up, as they all do. As a product of one of our archdiocesan Catholic high schools, he can now look to the future with great anticipation, along with the other nearly 24,000 students we currently serve across more than 13,000 square miles of Indiana.

As a mother, I find tremendous comfort and joy in knowing that he and our other graduates will lead and serve our Church and world for years to come.
‘Road map for life leads family to Catholic education

By John Shaughnessy

GREENWOOD—Kathy Ducote believes that God has a road map for each of our lives. And considering what happened at her father’s funeral, Kathy figured that God was using that moment to lead her in a new direction.

By the time her dad died in the early summer of 2015, Kathy had already spent 20 years as an educator in a public school system, so she was disappointed by the number of people from her work life who showed up to support her in her time of grief.

“I could count on my hands the number of people who came [from work],” says Kathy, a member of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood. “In contrast, I lost count of the people from my faith community who came. It was an outpouring of support.”

It was also the final sign that led her to make a change she had already been considering. Two months after her dad’s death, Kathy started life as a Catholic school teacher, teaching third-grade students at her parish’s school.

“I knew that this was where God was calling me,” she says. “I thought, ‘This is a God thing.’”

She had the same thought during a time earlier in her life when she had walked away from her faith, a time when she met a man who asked her to go on a first date with him—to church.

Taking the leap

“I wasn’t going to church because I didn’t feel connected.” Kathy recalls about that initial date with her now-husband, Harold Ducote. “I wanted someone who could connect the Gospel to everyday life.”

“He took me to his church at SS. Francis and Clare. Father Vince Lampert was the pastor we began dating in 2007. He shared the Gospels in a way that applied to my life. For that, I was extremely grateful. Going to Mass was a huge part of our relationship.”

Her Catholic faith became a central part of her life. So did Harold. They were married at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Church in 2009.

Now, there is the latest change of direction in their lives. After seeing the joyful, faith-filled experience that Kathy had in her first year of teaching at a Catholic school, Harold decided that he wanted to have that experience, too. So the veteran public-school educator also made the switch to teaching at SS. Francis and Clare School this year.

“When she switched to Catholic education last year, she was so joyful coming home from work,” recalls Harold, who teaches math at the middle-school level.

“She was like a new person. She said, ‘They listen, they try. I wanted that, too, so I took a leap.’”

That leap has led him to a life where he can live his faith at school, not hide it. He is involved in preparing eighth-grade students for confirmation, including serving as a sponsor for one. “This was the best choice I have ever made,” he says. “There are some days I feel like I am so filled with the Holy Spirit, it is hard to contain.”

“One of the biggest things that has drawn me to Catholic education is to be able to illuminate, illustrate and just show what Christ can change your life, that he’ll take you to successes and places you’ll never dream of. The whole experience has deepened my faith any my connection to Christ. I want to impart this to my students and share with them the truth that they can find redemption and peace in Jesus.”

Harold has felt Christ’s influence in his life, especially in the early days of their marriage when the couple faced a health crisis that tested their wedding vows.

“It changed our love for the better”

“I had a stroke in 2009. It was 57 days after we got married,” he says. “I had the anointing of the sick by the priest. I was instantly healed. It was miraculous.

“That was the biggest challenge of ‘for better or worse.’ It changed our love for the better. It made me slow down long enough to hear God.”

That deep relationship with God hadn’t always been a part of Harold’s life.

“In my twenties and early thirties, I wasn’t interested in going to Mass much. I was lost back then. I was so touched. That’s what Catholic education does. That’s what we want for our son.”

It’s too what she wants to do for her students.

“My faith class lasts from 8 in the morning to three in the afternoon,” she says. “I can talk about faith, morality and values at any time, and incorporate them in any subject.

“In teachable moments with my kids, I can jump into those moments with the Catholic faith. The more you can put a child in a real-life situation and have them use their minds to experience it, it’s going to stay with them. That’s how I feel I need to teach my kids.”

“It’s all part of the new direction in life for their family. Kathy and Harold are enjoying the ride.

“God has road maps for us to follow,” says Kathy. “This gift of faith is exactly what Harold and Kathy want for their son Gus, who is in kindergarten at SS. Francis and Clare School.

“They also want Gus to experience the sense of family that they believe is at the heart of Catholic education.

“After taking care of my dad before he died, I’ve learned even more that family is important and life is precious,” Kathy says. “Now I can take my son to school with me. Our paths cross. I can get that smile or hug from him during the day.

“That’s another gift from God. At SS. Francis and Clare, my family is around me. Even my students, they truly are my kids.

She sees the special impact her students have on her.

“In my first year here, I’d get emotional every month on the 26th—the day my dad died—and they’d know it. They wrapped their arms around me during those times. I was so touched. That’s what Catholic education does. That’s what we want for our son.”

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Student shares three favorite things about her Catholic school

Special to The Criterion

Gracie Ripperger’s enthusiasm overflowed when she and the other members of the fifth-grade class at St. Michael School in Brookville were asked to write an essay about their school.

“Have you ever loved a place so much that you want to have more physical activity, and I get to do something good for my school.”

“My last reason is I get to play sports. I love this because you get a chance to have a team. I get a chance to have more physical activity, and I get to do something good for my school.”

She then shared her three favorite parts about her Catholic school.

“Number one favorite thing at St. Michael’s is Mass because I get to spend time with God. I get to be in God’s house four times a week. And I get to learn how to praise and follow God.”

“My second reason is you have smaller classes, and I like that, because I get to be with one class. I get to make close friends, and I get more individual learning with teachers. The teachers are amazing inside and outside of school.”

“My last reason is I get to play sports. I love this because you get a chance to have a team. I get a chance to have more physical activity, and I get to do something good for my school.”

“I love these things because they make up my life. St. Michael’s is not just a school. It is my school.”

Kathy Ducote uses signs throughout her third-grade classroom at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School in Greenwood to lead her students closer to God. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)
20 Reasons to Celebrate Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese

By John Shaughnessy

The success stories in Catholic schools in the archdiocese are countless. They range from a young child in grade school learning to read and learning the fundamentals of the Catholic faith, to a high school student preparing for college and becoming involved in service that helps change the life of another person.

There are also the success stories that come when students give everything they have to their academics, their athletics, their artistic pursuits and their faith.

The 2016-17 school year in the archdiocese has already led to numerous successes, ones that happened quietly and others that gained headlines. Here is a sampling of those successes, captured in a recap we call, “20 Reasons to Celebrate Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese.”

1. St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis is one of four Catholic schools in the country to earn the 2016 “Let’s Move! Active Schools National Award.”

2. Brent Adams, a math teacher at St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis, was selected as a 2016 International STEM Fellow, recognizing his excellence in teaching his seventh- and eighth-grade students in science, technology, engineering and math. As part of the honor, he traveled to China to participate in a program with Chinese educators.

3. Cathedral High School in Indianapolis was named a 2016 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. Cathedral was one of only 50 private schools across the country to receive the honor in 2016, and the only high school—public or private—to so recognized in Indiana.

4. Catholic schools in the archdiocese have earned 31 National Blue Ribbon awards.

5. Roncalli High School in Indianapolis received the Urban League’s “Educational Excellence” Award for its pioneering efforts to welcome students with special needs.

6. Curt Eckstein, a senior at Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg, won the 2016 boys’ Indiana high school cross-country championship. He was also named the winner of the Charles F. Maas Mental Attitude Award for the state cross-country tournament.

7. A team of teachers at St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis is in the midst of a special three-year program at the University of Notre Dame that focuses on helping teachers inspire student learning in science, technology, engineering and math. St. Barnabas is one of just 10 schools from across the country chosen for this program.

8. Nancy Buening, principal of St. Mary School in Greensburg, is a recipient of the “Lead. Learn. Proclaim. Award” from the National Catholic Educational Association. The award honors “the outstanding work of Catholic school educators in communities across the country.”

9. Five-center Catholic schools in Indianapolis became part of the Notre Dame ACE Academies network. The five schools—Central Catholic, Holy Angels, Holy Cross Central, St. Anthony and St. Philip Neri—joined a network that strives to help children from low-income areas receive a Catholic education and grow up in a community of faith.

10. Carl and Mary Kay Wolford of Holy Family Parish in New Albany were honored with the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award from the National Catholic Educational Association. The national honor recognized the couple for the way their lives have impacted Catholic education “and the well-being of our nation’s youth.”

11. Father Thomas Scecina was inducted into the Indiana Military Veterans Hall of Fame in November. The namesake of Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis served the United States as a military chaplain during World War II before dying at sea with other prisoners of war in 1944.

12. The 2016 football team of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis captured the Indiana class 2A state championship with a 28-6 win over Eastbrook High School on Nov. 25.

13. The overall high school graduation rate in the archdiocese is 97 percent.

14. The 2016 girls’ volleyball team of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis won its second straight class 4A state championship by defeating top-ranked Crown Point High School in the finals on Nov. 5.

15. St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis received the Urban League’s “Educational Excellence” Award for their ongoing commitment to excellence in serving students of diverse races and ethnicities.

16. The Junior Spell Bowl team of St. Roch School in Indianapolis won their fourth state championship in five years during the annual spelling competition at Purdue University.

17. The football team of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis culminated an undefeated season with a dramatic 34-22 win over Northwood High School in the Indiana class 4A state championship.

18. St. Mary School in Greensburg added a seventh- and eighth-grade to its school.

19. 27 aspiring Catholic school leaders joined the archdiocese’s new Catholic School Leadership Academy, which helps to prepare great leaders in Catholic schools.

20. Catholic school enrollment in the archdiocese is nearly 24,000 students, an increase of about 2,000 students since 2010. All schools focus on the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth of every child, with the main goal of preparing them for heaven.
High schools in archdiocese host groups of international students

By Sean Gallagher

The Church is by its nature universal. But it’s not unusual for students in Catholic schools in the archdiocese and elsewhere to have a limited exposure to other cultures and languages.

Two Catholic high schools in central and southern Indiana are participating in programs to expand their students’ perspective on the world and helping to spread the Gospel in the process.

This was especially true since the international students came from largely secular cultures where faith-based schools are rare or non-existent.

Roncalli High School in Indianapolis had about a dozen students and two teachers from Leipzig, Germany’s Rudolph-Hildebrand School in their community for a month at the start of the 2016-17 academic year.

At the same time, a similar size group of students from China were welcomed to Seton Catholic High School in Richmond of students from China were welcomed to Seton Catholic High School in Richmond through the Foreign Links Around the Globe initiative.

Roncalli’s experience was part of the German American Partnership Program, co-sponsored by the U.S. and German governments. About a dozen students from Roncalli will spend three weeks in Leipzig in June.

“Pony,” living with her family made a difference in Emily’s life, too.

“It was just a really different experience opening your home to somebody who can barely speak English,” said Emily. “It was tough at first. But we got used to it after a while. It taught us a lot of patience.”

The experience also helped her understand her Catholic faith in a deeper way.

“In theology class, we talk about how the Church is universal,” Emily said. “I think this really put it into perspective for us. We were able to see how much our faith can be spread, and how it affects the whole world and everybody around us.”

Emily said Seton’s welcoming of the Chinese students flowed from its Catholic identity.

“It ties in seamlessly with what we’re called to do as Christians and Catholics to share the Gospel,” he said. “The whole program fits nicely into that. When you’re opening your home to a stranger, you’re sharing the Good News.”

Another aspect of Catholic schools that was shared with the international students is its focus on community. This made a strong impression on Jacqueline Redlich, a teacher at Rudolph-Hildebrand who was part of the group that spent time at Roncalli.

“We all felt that Roncalli is an amazing and special place,” she said. “It seemed like a big family, and we soon felt part of this community. The teachers at Roncalli put a lot of effort and care into seeing their students succeed, and at the same time they emphasize the faith, which was new for us.

“In my opinion, the Catholic identity and faith-based education create a strong feeling of togetherness, and it was great for us to experience firsthand this school spirit.”

Weisenbach was similarly pleased to see how the faith of the Roncalli community was passed on to their German visitors in a way that also showed they were committed to academic excellence.

“It gave me chills,” he said. “It was what I was probably most deeply touched by. For them to see that education and faith could be so co-mingled was fascinating.”

Roncalli senior Emily Gant and her family hosted a German student in their home, who also happened to be named Emily. The two students have kept in touch and become good friends.

“I’m always going to remember this. I made a dear and close friend from this opportunity,” she said. “I also got deeper into my knowledge of German. It’s a great way to connect students from around the world.”

Emily thinks other Catholic schools should consider welcoming groups of international students.

“It shows how much we care for others, how it’s good to get to know other people through our faith and spread our faith to them,” she said. “It’s great for us to be messengers for Christ.”

The Class of 2016 earned over 638 million in college scholarships.

Over 60% of the RHS Class of 2016 graduated with an Academic Honors Diploma or higher.

Roncalli awarded more than $1.9 million in need-based tuition assistance to RHS families for the 2016-2017 school year.

In the past 24 years, Roncalli students have collected more than 1.6 million canned food items for the poor.

The Class of 2016 completed over 64,100 hours of community service during their four years at RHS, with every Roncalli student performing more than 150 hours of community service prior to graduation.

Roncalli Celebrates Catholic Education

Applications For Registration Now Being Accepted
visit www.roncalli.org
Serving others, helping those less fortunate, promoting acts of kindness—all are actions and values each Christian is called to emulate. Catholic schools support and nurture these values.

Some students live out such charity in bold and heartwarming ways. Here are the stories of two such students—Olivia Dudas, a fifth-grade student at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School in Richmond, whose “Traveling Bags of Kindness” project made national news; and Rachel Kent, a senior at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, whose fundraising efforts for the nonprofit Unbound help those in need in 20 countries around the world.

“When serving others and passions intersect’…”

When Rachel Kent heard about Unbound, a lay Catholic-founded nonprofit organization working in 20 countries to overcome poverty, she knew she wanted to participate in their fundraising efforts. But once the then-sophomore at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis who plays both basketball and one-upped Divya in India, she wanted to do more.

“Helping Divya was great, but there always seemed to be more kids that need help than those who don’t have sponsors,” says Rachel, now 17 and a senior. “I wanted to help them, but wasn’t able to financially.” So she decided to turn a hobby she’s passionate about into a way to raise money for Unbound.

“I learned to make friendship bracelets at camp, I think it must have been like eight years ago,” says Rachel. “I kept making them, and I got pretty good. People would tell me, ‘You should sell them!’ and I’d say, ‘No, they’re for my friends. You don’t need them!’ But I thought this cause was good enough to sell the bracelets.”

In her junior year, Rachel started an Etsy webpage called Knot Your Average Bracelets (KYABracelets). For $7, she makes a bracelet for the purchaser and one for Unbound to give to a child. All proceeds go to the organization.

Each bracelet takes about two hours to make—days, Rachel.

“The other day I was making a lot of bracelets and I was like, ‘Oh, man! This is an all-out, I’m a labor of love. I hope that these kids, even though they might not fully know or fully understand what went into the bracelets, that they still know that they’re important and loved.

“The money is cool. It’s awesome that I’m able to create something that is larger than I, or larger than I could do by myself.”

As of early January, Rachel had made 200 bracelets and raised more than $1,000, including some donations. “I want all of the money to go to Unbound, so I buy my own supplies,” she says. “I’m trying to make this new shirt, or do I buy the bracelet string? It’s what’s more important. If it makes you a bit uncomfortable, I would say that’s a good thing, because you’re giving more of yourself.”

The member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis says the project was “a leap of faith to start.”

“But I think you have to tell yourself, ‘I’m going to do this.’ God calls us to serve other people and to help the less fortunate. That’s how we serve.”

“And [making friendship bracelets] is something I love to do. It’s one of my passions. I think when serving others and your passions intersect, that’s kind of like you found your niche.”

“It just matters what’s in your heart”

That 10-year-old Olivia Dudas was voluntarily watching a televised segment on kindness speaks to her tendency toward generosity. Her reaction to the segment says even more.

“The [Indianapolis] Pacers were at Riley Children’s Hospital,” recalls the fifth-grade student of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School in Richmond. “They were taking pictures with patients and signing autographs. The kids were smiling. One of the nurses said that they don’t regularly smile. It just popped into my head—I want to do that in Richmond.”

Olivia’s mother, Andrea Dudas says her daughter “went upstairs, and 15-20 minutes later she sent me a text” with a plan she called the “Traveling Bags of Kindness.”

“The idea was to purchase a few large gift bags, pass them on to family and friends and ask to help them fill the bag to be passed on to another person, and so on. The filled bags were then delivered to Genesis Women’s Shelter in Richmond and Riley Hospital for Children at IU Health in Indianapolis.

The project started with three bags one week before Thanksgiving. By Dec. 20 they had traveled to Ohio, Delaware, Georgia, and Florida, and multiplied from three bags to 63, plus diapers, two scooters and three boxes of books.

“The story of Olivia’s project was picked up by the Associated Press and spread nationally. A member of ‘The Today Show’ staff contacted Andrea to let her know they were discussing the possibility of including Olivia’s story on a segment they were planning on kindness. Olivia is ‘very empathetic,’ says Dudas. ‘She has a giant heart, always has.’

Olivia, now 11, acknowledges that giving “makes others happy.” But more importantly, she adds, “I feel like I should do it. Christ died on the cross for us. I [can] pay him back and pay it forward.”

While Olivia and her mother are not Catholic—they attend First Baptist Church in Richmond—Andrea says she knew when Olivia was born that she wanted her to go to Seton.

“Going to Seton has helped nurture that [giving] side of her. It’s not only the curriculum—they teach love and understanding” at Seton, she says.

And now Olivia is seeking her classmates’ help in her next project: delivering 1,000 homemade Valentines to the residents of all the nursing homes in Richmond.

The idea started when Elizabeth Higgins Clark, actress and founder of the #KeepAmericaKind project, contacted Olivia. She encouraged the girl to continue her acts of kindness into 2017, and said to help, she would send Olivia Valentine’s cards to hand out. I decided that I want to step it up and go to every nursing home in Richmond,” says Olivia, whose great-grandmother resides in a Richmond nursing home: “That’s 10, and we have to make over 1,000 Valentines.”

She is enlisting the help of her classmates—and numerous other volunteers—to make and personally deliver the Valentines to each resident. She is also making boxes of treats for the staff of each nursing home.

Dudas posted the project on Facebook.

“It’s gone crazy,” she says. As of Jan. 18, she had homemade Valentines coming from California, Wisconsin, Texas and even Canada.

When asked what advice she had for those who want to help others, Olivia was full of encouragement.

“You can do anything, no matter what your age is. ‘It just matters what’s in your heart.’”

Those interested in contributing a homemade Valentine to Olivia’s next project may send them to RMD-Patt Insurance Agency, Attn: Andrea Dudas, 36 W. North St., Richmond, IN 47374. Valentines must be received by Feb. 10. If more than 1,000 Valentines are received, the extra ones will be delivered to patients at Riley Hospital for Children.

Scores of friendship bracelets in the foreground are ready to be shipped to the international nonprofit Unbound while their creator, Cathedral High School senior Rachel Kent of Indianapolis, makes another to add to the stack. For each bracelet she sells, Rachel makes one for Unbound to give to an impoverished child in a foreign country, and gives all proceeds to the lay-Catholic founded organization. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

Teacher’s creative class helps students overcome challenges in life

By John Shaughnessy

Emily Denton views Catholic education as having a simple purpose: “It’s about first things first—grace and resilience and to follow the model of Christ in all that we do.”

What has always amazed Denton during her 11 years of Catholic teaching are “the incredible things that can be accomplished when guided by this simple purpose.”

In that spirit, Denton created “Class Challenge Box,” a 30-minute period, during Friday’s religion class, when students can anonymously submit questions, thoughts or challenges to a shoebox to be discussed, she explains. “During this time, we move all the desks to the edges of the classroom and sit in a circle. After readings aloud a ‘challenge’ submitted by a student, I give my own advice and then open it up to the other students to offer solutions, if you access or thoughts on the situation.”

It’s become an experience, Denton says. “My students, she’s seen her students, ‘who can seem so tough and independent at times, open up about their biggest insecurities and offer sincere advice to others who are struggling.”

Challenge Box has also led to one of the most rewarding teaching moments for Denton, a finalist for the 2016 Saint Theodora Guerin Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for an educator in the archdiocese.

“A student had submitted the following question: ‘What is the nicest thing anyone has ever said to you?’

“The students took a while to think about this, and gradually almost all of their hands went up. A couple of students mentioned a coach who had said things they never forgot, and others talked about compliments from family members. Then a girl, who had transferred to our school mid-year due to a move, raised her hand.

“She didn’t know exactly what the nicest thing anyone has ever said to me is, but I know it’s something that’s been said here in the last few weeks. This is the first time I’ve had people who I know are my real friends.”

“Her classmates were beaming, and a couple of the girls blurted out that they were so glad she was here. It was one of those moments when I could just step back from the class and watch them take care of each other as a community. I see the effects of Challenge Box. I hope that it gives my students a sense that we’re all on this journey together, and we are here to care for each other.”

Emiley Denton strives to give her students at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis “a sense that we’re all on this journey together, and we are here to care for each other.” Here, she works alongside Owen DeLaney. (Staple photo)

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Emily Denton strives to give her students at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis “a sense that we’re all on this journey together, and we are here to care for each other.” Here, she works alongside Owen DeLaney. (Staple photo)
Catholic schools witness to the Gospel through service

By Sean Gallagher

Catholic schools across central and southern Indiana—and indeed across the nation—are known for their academic excellence. We’re also dedicated to helping their students take what they learn in their classrooms, including their knowledge of the Catholic faith, and applying it in service to the broader community.

Middle school students at Our Lady of Lourdes School and St. Simon the Apostle School, both in Indianapolis, have done this in a variety of ways throughout this academic year.

With their school situated in the heart of Indianapolis’ east side, an area affected by poverty and crime, Lourdes students have taken action to promote peace in the neighborhood next door. They put a peace banner along the school’s fence facing high-traffic Washington Street, gave speeches at a peace rally, and created artistic “peace posts” that share messages of peace that will be placed on the grounds of faith communities on the east side.

Small groups of St. Simon students throughout the year go out from their northeast side school to assist at charitable agencies. But the entire 240 middle school student body formed out on Oct. 27, 2016, to serve in food pantries, shelter homes and other charities for the school’s annual Fall Day of Service.

In sponsoring service events, educators in both schools spoke of a purpose beyond forming their students to give of themselves. They also see it as a way for their schools to be witnesses to the Gospel in the broader community.

“It’s a witness to our faith,” said Lourdes middle school teacher Angie Therber. “And I think that’s as important as the academics that we’re teaching in the building. That was really the impetus for the whole thing, to combine the two.”

“It makes you step back and be in awe,” said St. Simon assistant principal Laura Mates of how the Fall Day of Service demonstrated the Catholic faith to others. “It was such a wonderful gift for us to be out and be stewards of the Catholic faith. For us to be that example of our religion was pretty powerful.”

Mates did a lot of logistical work in arranging some 50 drivers to take the students across town to serve people in need at agencies such as the Wheeler Mission Thrift Shop, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul’s food distribution center and Seeds of Hope.

“To hear the casual conversations when [the students] got back with their peer groups about what they did, the impact they had and they joy they had in doing it makes it all worth it,” she said.

St. Simon eighth-grader Nicholas Zink has learned a lot about the importance of service in his nearly three years as a middle school student. “It shows others our faith,” he said. “It shows how God is affecting them through the community by knowing how people are helping them. They aren’t alone. People are there to help.”

Nicholas says that God is also affecting him when he leaves his school to help others. It builds in him a habit of service which he described as “something that I just do, like going to sports practices or to school.”

Mates said middle school is a key time to nurture this habit in students.

“By doing it in the middle school, we have a lot of molding and shaping that we can do before some of their ideas are cemented in place when they get to high school,” she said. “This can be an entry way for them to figure out what they can do to help others.”

Leaders at Lourdes are as dedicated to growing hearts for service in their middle school students as well. But the difference in that school’s context and focus in service from St. Simon shows the various ways that Catholic schools can approach this aspect of education.

Lourdes has only 18 middle school students and is located in a historic neighborhood. St. Simon, on the other hand, has 240 middle school students and is in a suburban community developed during the past few decades.

Leaders at Lourdes chose to focus on promoting peace, while St. Simon sent their students to a broad array of charitable agencies.

Yet both schools incorporate service into the learning that goes on in their classrooms in ways that let all students discover and use their gifts.

“This [peace post] project gave everybody a chance to excel at something,” Therber said. “We had everything: reading, discussion, writing, presenting, speaking and art. They can all carry it forward in some way. They know that they have a God-given talent that they can use for the betterment of others.”

Lourdes eighth-grader Grace Swinefurth appreciates her chance to take part in the peace efforts of her school.

“This is a huge responsibility,” she said. “I love sharing everything that I have learned with other people and making the world a better place. My family is super proud. My friends are super proud. Everybody in the community is feeling better because we did this project.”

The experience has had a similar impact on Therber.

“It’s probably one of the most rewarding things that I’ve done as a teacher, honestly,” she said. “I feel proud that we’re doing something that’s beneficial to the community, and is reinforcing the Catholic Christian ideals that we try to teach.”

‘Most important student’ leaves his unforgettable mark on teacher

By John Shaughnessy

In more than 11 years as a Catholic school teacher, Brittany Geswein has always had the approach of valuing “each and every student.” Yet, her most rewarding experience in education involved a child who never entered her classroom.

“The year I started my teaching journey as a freshman [in college] was the same year my brother Brandon started kindergarten,” recalls Geswein, a sixth-grade teacher at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County. “From the very beginning, I took him under my wing.”

“After observing his difficulty with reading, I suggested we have him formally assessed. In the fourth grade, he was diagnosed with a severe reading comprehension disability and attention deficit disorder. I helped write his plan to assure he was receiving needed accommodations in the classroom.” She continued her work with her brother through his time in junior high and high school.

“We read together in the evenings and all summer long for years,” notes Geswein, a finalist for the 2016 Saint Theodora Guerin Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for an educator in the archdiocese.

“We tackled everything from science fair projects and research papers to organizing notes and preparing for tests. We faced every difficult challenge and celebrated every success together.”

Through it all, “Brandon was the most consistent student I ever taught,” she says.

“This isn’t because he was my brother, but because of what he taught me. He forever changed my daily performance in the classroom and the relationship I have with each of my students. I had high expectations for Brandon’s teachers and wanted the best for him. In the same way, I set high expectations for myself knowing the impact I was having on the lives of my students.”

“Working with him taught me the importance of meeting kids where they are and lifting them higher. Learning has to be fun and engaging. Brandon taught me that even those students who don’t like schoolwork can love to go to school if they have someone who believes in them.”

“The lessons—and the closeness of their relationship—continued until Brandon suddenly died three years ago when he was a sophomore at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville.

“He died in his sleep from Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy, a disease which had lain dormant in his brain for nearly 10 years,” Geswein says.

By doing it in the middle school, we have a lot of molding and shaping that we can do before some of their ideas are cemented in place when they get to high school,” she said. “This can be an entry way for them to figure out what they can do to help others.”

Leaders at Lourdes are as dedicated to growing hearts for service in their middle school students as well. But the difference in that school’s context and focus in service from St. Simon shows the various ways that Catholic schools can approach this aspect of education.

Lourdes has only 18 middle school students and is located in a historic neighborhood. St. Simon, on the other hand, has 240 middle school students and is in a suburban community developed during the past few decades. Leaders at Lourdes chose to focus on promoting peace, while St. Simon sent their students to a broad array of charitable agencies.

Yet both schools incorporate service into the learning that goes on in their classrooms in ways that let all students discover and use their gifts.

“This [peace post] project gave everybody a chance to excel at something,” Therber said. “We had everything: reading, discussion, writing, presenting, speaking and art. They can all carry it forward in some way. They know that they have a God-given talent that they can use for the betterment of others.”

Lourdes eighth-grader Grace Swinefurth appreciates her chance to take part in the peace efforts of her school.

“There has been a huge responsibility,” she said. “I love sharing everything that I have learned with other people and making the world a better place. My family is super proud. My friends are super proud. Everybody in the community is feeling better because we did this project.”

The experience has had a similar impact on Therber.

“It’s probably one of the most rewarding things that I’ve done as a teacher, honestly,” she said. “I feel proud that we’re doing something that’s beneficial to the community, and is reinforcing the Catholic Christian ideals that we try to teach.”

“With his passing, he taught me a final lesson. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see the face of God. Being a Catholic school teacher is a ministry in which I get to spend my days preparing those with the purest of hearts for their eternal life in heaven.”
By John Shaughnessy

Three years removed from the heartbreaking experience of being homeless with six children, Kevina White shares a story of finding hope and a home for her family.

With a calm joy, White talks about the home she has found for her children at Holy Angels School, one of the five center-city Catholic schools in Indianapolis that became part of Notre Dame’s Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) program at the beginning of this school year.

“It’s a family community—and because of that, we’re able to grow together, we look out for each other, and it’s made my life a lot easier being able to know and trust the adults here, and know they really care about my children,” White says as she stands on the school’s playground.

“We’re more stable—spiritually, physically, and the children academically. Things that help you to succeed are an education and college and, of course, your faith. That’s what helps you get to heaven. Here at the academies, they do instill that faith. That’s what helps you get to heaven. It’s a family community—and because of that, we’re able to grow together, we look out for each other, and it’s made my life a lot easier being able to know and trust the adults here, and know they really care about my children,” White says as she stands on the school’s playground.

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

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

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

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

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

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

“I’m grateful for programs such as this, so families can get the catapult—just something they need to help them get to where they need to be, so we’re able to give back as well,” said White, who now has a job. “I just praise God that we’re able to do that at this time.”

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

• Centered in the person of Jesus Christ
• Contributing to the evangelizing mission of the Church
• Distinguished by excellence
• Committed to educate the whole child
• Steeped in a Catholic world view
• Sustained by Gospel witness
• Shaped by communion and community
• Accessible to all students
• Established by the expressed authority of the bishop

(“Defining Characteristics of Catholic Schools”, National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools)

RESEARCH SAYS …

• Catholic schools tend to operate as communities rather than bureaucracies, which links to higher levels of teacher commitment, student engagement and student achievement (Marks, 2009).
• In Catholic schools, the student achievement gap is smaller than in public schools (Jeynes, 2007; Marks & Lee, 1989).
• Latino and African American students in Catholic schools are more likely to graduate from high school and college (Grogger & Neal, 2000).
• Graduates of Catholic high schools are more likely to earn higher wages (Neal, 1997).
• Catholic schools tend to produce graduates who are more civically engaged, more tolerant of diverse views, and more committed to service as adults (Campbell, 2001; Wolf, Greene, Kleitz, & Thallhammer, 2001).
• When a Catholic school closes, neighborhood disorder increases (Brinig & Garnett, 2009).

What Makes a Catholic School Special

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ARE …

• Accessible to all students
• Sustained by Gospel witness
• Distinguished by excellence
• Shaped by communion and community
• Centered in the person of Jesus Christ

What is an Indiana School Voucher?

A Voucher is a state-funded scholarship that helps cover the cost of tuition at a private school. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive up to 90% of the local per-student state funding amount.

Who qualifies for a Voucher?

• A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
• A student in grades K-12 who has received a Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Current Catholic school students CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but do you not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Current Catholic school students CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply for a Voucher?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit www.ik4nd.org/s.vp

Additional local scholarships may also be available. Contact your local Catholic school.

K-12 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

What Makes a Catholic School Special

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Pre-K vouchers are available in Marion and Jackson counties. For more information, log onto www.in.gov/fssa/4944.htm

TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP

What is a Tax Credit Scholarship?

The Indiana Tax Credit Scholarship Program provides scholarship support to families who want to enroll their children in the Catholic school of their choice. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive a minimum of a $500 Tax Credit Scholarship.

Who qualifies for a Tax Credit Scholarship?

• A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
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**GREATER INDIANAPOLIS DEANERY SCHOOLS**

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* **Notre Dame ACE Academies**
**Teacher finds the right chemistry at Catholic high school**

*By John Shaughnessy*

After teaching for six years in a public school, Dan McNally experienced a refreshing change on his first parents’ night at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

“The mother of a chemistry student who was having some difficulty in my class pulled me aside and said, ‘The last chemistry teacher always gave the kids the easy way out. We’re so glad you’re here,’” McNally recalls. “It seemed as though providing a challenging curriculum was desired instead of criticized, as was common at my past schools.

“Soon, it was clear that Bishop Chatard provided an environment for both teachers and students where the primary desire was to support one another. Parents were always going to support their kids, but they were also going to support the teacher. It is as though parents have faith that teachers have the best interest of the student in mind, and are confident that we can all pull together to ensure the best outcome.”

Now, after 32 years of teaching at Bishop Chatard, McNally has developed a deeper appreciation of the gift the Catholic school provides.

“One finds that there is a genuine effort on the part of all interested parties to see the face of God in each other,” says McNally, a finalist for the 2016 Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for an educator in the archdiocese. “A simple outlook, but one with profound results—the personification that Jesus brought to Earth doesn’t have to be limited to Jesus himself.”

McNally has also tried to keep that perspective in 60 seasons of coaching boys’ and girls’ tennis at the archdiocesan Indianapolis North Deanery high school. He shares the story of one young man—“let’s call him Evan”—a former public high school student who wanted to join the team seemingly because it “might give him a head start at becoming familiar and comfortable in a new setting.”

“Evan was not particularly skilled on the tennis court, and he didn’t show the athleticism that would predict much improvement. As it turned out, there was exactly the number of guys trying out that we needed, so we kept him on the team.

“Four years later, we had a young man who had obliterated the school record for most career losses. Sure, he got better as he grew up and got stronger. He even got to play a varsity match against a weaker opponent and won!”

Years later, Evan still comes by Bishop Chatard to reconnect with McNally—a reality that leads his former coach to share a reminder with all coaches and teachers.

“As teachers and coaches, we need to remind ourselves every single day of the immense influence we are privileged to exert on our students and athletes. They process every word and every action. It might be just another class or just another practice to us. But it just might be the most important class or practice of their life. The care we take in the preparation and execution of a lesson plan or practice plan can never be discounted.

“If we can do those things while looking for the face of God in each kid, we are bound to be successful educators.”

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**Jesus’ example leads teacher on the best course for her students**

*By John Shaughnessy*

As a first-grade teacher, Jeanine Ritter always looks for ways to make her students smile and have fun as they learn. One day, her boys and girls will be connecting with students in Japan through video technology. And during each Christmas season, they have a baby shower for Jesus, bringing in gifts for an archdiocesan charity that helps parents of infants.

“They also make photo stories of a personal ‘hero’ in their lives. And during each Christmas season, they have a baby shower for Jesus, bringing in gifts for an archdiocesan charity that helps parents of infants.”

Through all of these projects and others, my students working hard to understand their distinct needs and strengths, positive qualities and passions.”

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**The WEST DEANERY Celebrates CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK**

Communities of Faith, Knowledge & Service

CARDINAL RITTER HIGH SCHOOL  HOLY ANGELS CATHOLIC SCHOOL  SAINT ANTHONY CATHOLIC SCHOOL  ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL

ST. MICHAEL - ST. GABRIEL AROANGELS CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  ST. MALACHY PARISH SCHOOL  ST. MONICA CATHOLIC SCHOOL  ST. SUSANNA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

FOLLOW THE HASHTAG #CSW17 JANUARY 30 - FEBRUARY 3
CYO SPORTS
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OF THE BODY, HEART AND SPIRIT
School bequest is an ‘investment in the future’

By Natalie Hofer

As the Ohio River meanders along the southern border of Indiana, its waters reflect the hilly town of Madison. There, in 1837, Father Michael Shawe started the area’s first Catholic school.

Now, 180 years later, Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School and Pope John XXIII School continue the legacy of Catholic education in Madison. It’s a legacy the institutions are proud of.

They are also proud of the fact that together as Prince of Peace Schools—named for Madison’s sole parish—the school system is one of only two in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis that are supported by a single parish.

So Prince of Peace Schools’ president Phillip Kahn says it was a “huge benefit” 30 years ago when a small group—mostly Madison Catholic school alumni—created Friends of Shawe and Pope John Schools, Inc. (Friends), a nonprofit organization that established an endowment to support the long-term needs of the schools.

“The schools were doing no fundraising back then,” says Robert Barlow, Friends co-founder, current president and a graduate of Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School. “The idea was, and still is, to supplement the Catholic school experience and what the teachers could do.”

“Friends is unique. With the [school administration] model now with a principal and president, most [schools] are doing their own development. If it was that way 30 years ago when we formed Friends, Friends might never have come into existence,” says Kahn, who helps oversee development efforts for the two schools, is grateful for the assistance.

“Most Catholic schools operate on tuition which is covering everything, and then donations from community members or alumni throughout the country,” he says.

“More and more Catholic schools try to make a bigger pool of money through donations. That’s why we’ve so lucky to have Friends, where people can leave a bequest which impacts the yearly gift Friends gives us.”

The endowment started by the Friends founders in 1986 was $500,000. Barlow recalls the early days of the organization, when funds were used to fulfill “specific teacher requests, like going on a field trip to the state museum and funding [projects] at $500 or $1,000.”

“Through their efforts and the generosity of the community and alumni of the schools, the endowment had grown to $3 million—until recently,” says Julie Berry, a Friends board member, describes Joy and Paul Buchanan as a “humble, unassuming couple.” They married in 1981 and had been members of Prince of Peace Parish. The couple had no children together, and Joy, a widow when she married Paul, had sent her son to a public school. She died in February 2012, and Paul died in November 2014.

Despite the lack of connection to the Madison Catholic schools other than through their parish, the Buchanans wanted to support the continuation of Catholic education in the area. So they left a bequest for Friends in their will—for $1.2 million, believed to be the largest bequest in the organization’s history.

“I was really astounded, knowing what it would mean to our school in the short and long term,” says Kahn.

With the bequest, an annual tuition scholarship of $2,500 in the Buchanans’ name was created for a student wishing to attend one of the Prince of Peace schools.

The board also set up a teachers’ fund of $10,000 per year. The fund will help finance teacher projects that benefit students and staff that are not covered by the annual budget, such as field trips, faculty workshops or academic competitions.

“We have challenges in keeping a good school system going” in Madison, Berry says. “Certainly this is not a high-income area. But our children are entitled to a good Catholic education. So bequests like this are really great for our cause. It’s incalicable what their gift will give through the years for our endowment.”

Having received eight years of Catholic education in Madison, fellow Friends board member Rick Grote appreciates the benefits of attending a Catholic school. “I think there’s a set of morals you get from Catholic education,” he says. “It helps you keep God in front of everything you do—he’s here, he’s alive and he’s around. You have friends with similar morals and principles. That helps create a support system, a Catholic support system.”

Berry says the bequest—and any donation to Catholic schools—is an “investment in the future.”

“I think it’s important to support Catholic education in any way you can, through volunteering or donating,” she says.

“I hope [the Buchanan] will inspire people to think about what they can do. Maybe they can’t give a million, but I hope that somebody reads this and thinks, ‘Hey, I can do something like that.’”

(For more information on Friends of Shawe and Pope John Schools, Inc., log onto friendsofshawepj.org. †)

Service guides educator’s efforts to share Christ’s love

By John Shaughnessy

As a father and a Catholic school teacher, Doug Bauman is always looking for the opportunity to share moments that reveal “the incredible sacrificial love that Christ teaches us to love one another,” says Bauman, a math teacher at St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis.

Bauman tries to convince his students through the way he treats them with respect and attention, through the example he sets by attending Mass with his family, and through an experience he considers as his most rewarding moment as a teacher—working with his students on the school’s annual canned food drive to help local food pantries.

All those cans are able to be donated because of the efforts and sacrifices of our students,” says Bauman, the recipient of the 2016 Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for an educator in the archdiocese.

“They went out ‘canning’ in their neighborhoods. They gave up some of their money to purchase cans. They did extra chores around the house to earn ‘can money.’

“When I step into the back of that truck and work side by side with my students loading thousands of canned goods, we get to see a very different and special side of each other. I get to see their humanness firsthand. And they get to see their math teacher make an attempt to pack as many cans as possible into a very confined space. It’s during those moments that I’m reminded why we are here on Earth—to love God and to love one another.”

That lesson of “walking in the light of Christ” is the one that Bauman hopes endures for his students.

The late Joy and Paul Buchanan of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison left a legacy to Catholic education at Prince of Peace Schools through a bequest to Friends of Shawe and Pope John Schools, Inc., a unique nonprofit created to financially benefit the two Madison Catholic schools.

(Submitted photo)
Cathedral High School is pleased to announce that the school will offer multi-student discounts to Cathedral families, starting with the 2017-2018 school year! We feel that this decision makes a strong statement about two things—the Holy Cross value of “family” at Cathedral, and the significance of having as many students as possible from each family attend Cathedral.

For families with more than one child at Cathedral next year and beyond, the second child will receive a discount of $1,000. The third child will receive a discount of $2,000. Any fourth child or beyond will receive a discount of $3,000.

Want more info? Contact Duane Emery, Vice President for Enrollment Management, at 317-968-7360 or demery@gocathedral.com. Or visit www.gocathedral.com/multistudent.
Moms share Catholic school experience with their children

By Christa Hoyland

CLARKSVILLE—It’s not uncommon for parents of Catholic school children to work at their children’s school. Many of these parents have careers in education, or they’re stay-at-home parents who want to be on the same schedule as their children or earn extra money.

What’s unusual about Debbie Miller and Nan Fougerousse is that they each left established careers in other fields to work at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville.

Miller, a 1987 Providence graduate, gave up a 20-year career as a nuclear medicine technologist to serve lunch in the school cafeteria. Fougerousse, a 1984 alumna, had spent 20-plus years in the insurance claims field, and her role before joining the school’s main office staff was as a claims analyst supervisor for an insurance recovery business.

Each took a cut in pay, but the benefits of working in a Catholic school and in the same building with their children are worth much more, they say.

“I went from taking an hour to get home at the end of every day to a three-mile trip down Lewis & Clark [Parkway] in my jeans and T-shirt,” Miller says. “I’m a happier mom since I’ve been here. I’m just more available for them.”

Miller joined the cafeteria staff nearly three years ago before her son Trey, a sophomore, was even a student at the school. She enjoyed her previous job doing stress testing and heart imaging at a hospital in Louisville, Ky., but when her route to work was impacted by long-term bridge construction projects, she began looking for work in southern Indiana.

When she learned of an opening in the Providence cafeteria, she happily changed careers in order to be on the same schedule as her children, including a second son, Jake, who will be a freshman in 2018.

As much as she loved her previous job, Miller said she enjoys her new job even more, from watching the students hold impromptu cheer sessions during lunch to the camaraderie of her co-workers.

“Being back at my alma mater and being part of the Blue Pride and school spirit, it’s been fun,” she says.

She also likes the atmosphere of working in a Catholic school, from the values exhibited by the students and staff to taking part in morning prayer.

“I love the prayer that starts the day,” Miller says. “It sets the tone for them and us. There’s so much here outside the books. There’s so much more than just an education. It’s the values and the community feeling here.”

Fougerousse said she decided to apply for the office assistant job in the fall of 2015 because she felt like she was missing out on many of her children’s activities. In the 2014-15 school year, her son Luke was a senior on the football team and her daughter Mia was a sophomore on the girls’ volleyball, basketball and softball teams. She attended as many games as she could, but sometimes missed important school events.

“I was spending a lot of time in my car,” Fougerousse says of her previous job. “I just missed a lot of stuff.”

Now that she has worked at Providence for 1 1/2 years, son Luke is in college, her daughter is a senior on the girls’ volleyball and basketball teams, and son Alec is a freshman on the football and boys’ basketball teams.

She works their school schedule and can attend their events at school and games in the evenings. She also is happy to be working in a more relaxed atmosphere and appreciates the opportunity to live her faith.

“I like that we have Mass, and you have people who will openly pray with you—and it’s O.K. to say ‘God bless you,’” Fougerousse says.

“What drove me crazy in high school—that everybody knew my parents and everybody knew me—is what I love about it now. I just like the community. It’s a family.”

That extra touch of family at school also works for their children.

“It’s nice when I have a question,” Mia Fougerousse says. “I can just come down here and ask her. People tell me all the time, ‘I love your mom.’”

Trey Miller shares that experience. He likes that when he talks about a fellow student, his mother is familiar with the person.

“Everybody knows my mom, and she knows everybody,” Trey says. “It’s interesting, sometimes a little awkward, but funny.”

Mia Fougerousse, right, talks about her after-school practice schedule with her mother, Nan Fougerousse, an administrative assistant in the main office of Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville. (Submitted photo)
Faith is healing. Little did I know how his being accepted by one day after Mass he finally was feeling whole again, had gone through a serious personal struggle commented have become significant.

Many parishes have greeters at the doors. We do, too, but I have found that they function better when they have a deliberate task. So they give out bulletins as people come in. This flies in the face of the receive-a-bulletin-as-you-depart tradition, but people know they are being treated as adults.

Hospitality goes way beyond the greeters. We remind people that everyone has to welcome and make room for others. It starts in the parking lot, where people warmly greet each other. On rainy mornings, the “umbrella brigade” is in action as people are met with someone handing them an umbrella to use as they walk in.

Inside church, people talk to each other as they enter the gathering space. A warm and clean atmosphere is promoted. Basic needs like being able to see and hear have become significant.

Accessibility is one of our goals. It means that people with disabilities of all kinds are not only welcomed, but joyfully accepted.

Children are treated as full-fledged parishioners, as we do what we can to assist their parents. At all Masses, there is a children’s Liturgy of the Word. We have a Sunday morning preschool for kids 3 to 5 years old as well as a nursery with qualified child care workers.

One more comment about hospitality. A man who had gone through a serious personal struggle commented one day after Mass he finally was feeling whole again, thanked me and the parish. When I asked what we had done, he said, “Father, don’t you understand? Hospitality is healing.” Little did I know how his being accepted by the community had helped him.

In addition to hospitality, a parish that wants to be successful has to address two other aspects in the way Mass is celebrated.

The first of those is preaching. As a homilist myself, I know this is an ongoing challenge. What all homilists need to know is that people want to hear how the message flowing from the Scriptures intersects with their own experience.

I have learned that the best way to help this happen is to employ visual images as part of a homily. Such images as stories, comparisons, analogies and well-thought-out examples can help all listeners regardless of age or educational background. But these images have to be authentic and not simply something found on the Internet.

To make sure my words help create a bridge from the Scripture to modern-day life, I often try out parts of my homily with different groups. Frequently, I check with other staff members to evaluate what I am preparing.

Just as the homilist prepares for Sunday, the people of the parish must do so as well. Our parish has small faith groups that meet regularly and read the Scriptures of the upcoming Sunday. Parents are encouraged to read Sunday Mass readings to their children before coming to church.

Through these efforts, as well as insights promoted through our parish website and app, we encourage people to become familiar with the readings before coming to Mass.

Homily preparation is work and needs plenty of time. I work on the homily throughout the week, often writing notes and outlines. Only when I feel ready do I actually write the homily, but by that time I truly know it and am at home with it.

The final element to help people have a rich Mass experience is music. This cannot be overstated. Because music is an art form, what appeals to one person may not be the preference of another. What all people like, however, is when music is well-done, inviting and allows participation of the assembly.

Our parish is blessed with very good music, much of which is rather contemporary. What is necessary for any church, regardless of music choice, is that it become a high priority and that various resources, including financial ones, be made available to enhance the music program.

Parish life is more than the Sunday Mass experience, but for many, that is precisely where they get to know a faith community. Often that experience is where people find what their faith needs to help them in their discipleship of the Lord.

(BY FATHER HERB WEBER

By Joseph F. Kelly

When we hear the word “church,” we might think of the universal faith community to which we belong or of a physical structure, which can take many different shapes.

But what were church buildings in the earliest days of the faith actually like?

Somewhat surprisingly, the New Testament does not say. The Gospels show Jesus in a variety of places, including synagogues, although he was not in some of them. Most accounts of his preaching show him outdoors, in plain areas, on hills, by water. The Gospels make it clear that he wanted his message to reach as many people as possible, so he chose outdoor environments.

The same was true of his disciples. The Acts of the Apostles shows St. Peter preaching on the steps of the Temple in Jerusalem or wherever he could find a crowd. Acts mentions that St. Paul rented the hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus so he could preach. There would have been nothing special and certainly nothing Christian about a rented hall, but it met Paul’s immediate needs.

But obviously the Christians needed more permanent places of their own. Here we have more information. When Peter escapes from prison in Jerusalem, he goes to the home of the mother of John Mark, where the local community has met to pray.

Since they are praying as a group, this was a liturgical event.

When Peter gets to the door of this woman’s house, the first person he meets is a servant woman—in those days, a slave—which means that this is the house of a wealthy person, suggesting that it could hold a number of people for a liturgy.

A final piece of evidence occurs in the apostle Paul’s Letter to Philemon, in which he greets the church that meets in Philemon’s house.

There is evidence that the person who owned the house often presided at the liturgies and meetings, but that is not conclusive.

So when did the Christians actually get church buildings, built for the purpose of worship? Not until the middle of the third century—no later than 260. The oldest such building is in what is now Iraq.

If it sounds surprising that it took so long for the first church building to be constructed, we must consider several factors.

First, most of the early Christians, including Paul himself, expected the imminent end of the world. More than that, most expected to be alive when it happened. Second, the emperor Nero persecuted the Roman Christians in the year 64. Over the next two and half centuries, periods of persecution, while not continuous and empire-wide, happened with regularity. That made Christians wary about putting up any kind of permanent structure and certainly not large or imposing ones.

The real church construction occurred in the fourth century when the Roman emperors began to tolerate Christianity on a permanent basis. They provided not only permission to build, but also donated funds. Several of these imperially-inspired churches are still standing in Rome.

But the generation that knew Jesus never saw a church building.

Joseph F. Kelly is retired professor at John Carroll University in University Heights, Ohio.)
It was great fun to hob-nob with people like Bob Hope, Loretta Young, Charlton Heston, Rodney McDowell and many others both before the audience and even more during the reception after the pope left.

During the pope’s speech, I was seated behind Phil Donahue and his wife, Marlo Thomas. As the Pope finished and started to leave, they crashed through the crowd to try to shake hands with him, as did many others. It was interesting to see the stars give the kind of attention to the pope that they themselves received from their fans.

That All May Be One

Fr. Rich Giotto

Let’s strive to create ecumenical moments in our lives of faith

It is a small thing to introduce oneself to a stranger. That small thing grows larger when we share that we are Catholic, attend a local church, and ask of the other person’s faith community. And it is no small thing when we graciously receive an invitation to engage other faiths through individual relationships.

It is a small thing to encounter a waiter at your hotel in Newark, and find he is a Coptic Christian from Egypt. I found out by asking, which led to an ecumenical moment. He said with excitement that when he finished his shift he would be going to church to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany—Christmas, for Copts. He smiled with pride and joy!

It is a small thing to give food, or clothing to a food pantry or clothes to a homeless shelter. It is a simple thing to gather with another Christian in prayer—at a wedding, funeral, neighborhood gathering, or a reenactment of an historical moment.

Emmasa Walk/Debra Tomaselli

Be at peace knowing of God’s indescribable love for you

You know how sometimes an added stressor like cancer can magnify underlying problems that have been there all along,” she said. Her lips quivered. Her eyes filled with tears.

“If you don’t love Jesus, don’t you love?” another attendee said. “you might be better off without him.”

She hung onto every word, her attention focused on the speaker.”

You’re right,” someone offered. “Be patient. It may just be the way he’s brought it to you.”

“He may not be angry, really,” another said. “It may be that he’s just sad.”

“Of course, God loves you,” someone said. “God loves all of us.”

“You, yes, loved everyone,” another added. “All we chime in agreement.”

Then, Betty spoke again. “Yes, I know God loves all of us,” she said. “I know he loves everyone.” She smiled gently. “But I really feel like he loves you.”

We could make it a point to visit a neighboring Christian church, and experience its worship and hospitality! Could you let them know you are a neighbor from your own parish, and thank them for being in the neighborhood living the Gospel?

Then what could you promote in your parish, along with your pastor and others, as a follow up to reflect on your experience?

We could create so many more ecumenical moments, if we put our minds and hearts to it!

(Father Rich Giotto is director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism. He is pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.)

The meeting room was packed. Maybe it was the time of year. Maybe because the topic was art. But whatever the reason, the cancer support group was crowded. I took the seat by the far end of the room.

The meeting began with short introductions. Then we were given paper, scissors, glue and marker to make collages representing our lives.

Compositions filled the room.

“It’s OK be someone,” someone said. “Be patient. It may just be the way he’s brought it to you.”

“There’s what he looks like ever since I’ve had cancer,” Cathy said. “Cathy smiled, comforted. Then Betty spoke. “Yes, we who had recently undergone surgery for cancer, had a sweet smile and curly white hair.

“I love the most important thing,” she said. “I don’t know why, but I just really feel God loves me. I’ve always felt that.”

“Shaun.” I even received a letter once addressed to “Shaun.”

That was reinforced in my own life as I grew up with the particular spelling of my first name. “Sean” is a more common name now than when I was a child. Then it was unusual, and I frequently had people pronounce my name incorrectly. People would say “Shawn.”

I learned from the early age to be patient with such mistakes, and to correct them courteously when appropriate. But it did teach me to be patient with others when people made mistakes about my name.

The connection between personal identities and names is natural—and also biblical. When Moses asked the Lord to reveal his name, the Lord imported him in the burning bush, the Lord told him, “I am who am” (Ex 3:14). This mysterious reply has traditionally been understood to say that the Lord’s name reflects his identity, that God’s existence is eternal, outside space and time. He has never existed. He simply is. “I am who am.”

At the time of the New Testament, we learn that John the Baptist and Jesus were given their names by an angel before they were conceived in stumps in their mothers’ wombs. And the Hebrew meaning of Jesus’ name—“God saves” or “God is merciful and His mission are inseparable. Jesus gave a new name to his Apostle Simon, calling him “Rock.” And his God-given mission is bound up together. Jesus named the apostle Peter to mean “rock.” Then he would build his Church (Mt 16:18).

The naming of a person to be baptized is an important rite in the sacrament of baptism in the Church. In baptism, God is claiming us as his own, by name. And in being baptized, we are given a name that reflects our wondrous, God-given, life-saving identity: Christian.

Little Colin is still long for a name that will help him to learn who he is. As he does, he seems to take pride in his identity. Hopefully, he and all of us can take a holy pride in who we are in the eyes of God—his adopted children whom he loves infinitely in our unique identity.
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, January 29, 2017

- Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13
- 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- Matthew 5:1-12a

The first biblical reading this weekend is from Zephaniah. These details are known about this prophet. He was the son of Cush and a descendant of Hezekiah, presumably King Hezekiah, who reigned as king of Judah, the southern Hebrew kingdom centered in Jerusalem, from 715 BC to 687 BC.

The Hebrew kingdom, the southern kingdom of Israel, was uncertain. Their mightier neighbors, and as history shows, northern kingdom of Israel, was uncertain. Their royal ancestry is uncertain. The first biblical reading this weekend

- 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13

My Journey to God

The End is the Beginning

By Patrick Harkins

When you have come to turn over the last spade, tucked the last spade’s faded handle you know beauty the Creator has made.

When you have washed clean what even gloves could not keep out, when you have felt the ache of fall, you know what the Creator has made is good.

When you see wind blow leaves across the way andacossmear upon the earth as though there are not enough leaves to cover the ground with your 95-year-old friend: Rather than a sponsor.

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- Isaiah 58:7-10
- Psalm 112:4-9
- 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
- Matthew 5:13-16

Church condemns lying, allows for truths to remain unspoken in some situations

I am a caregiver for my elderly mother and also for another woman, who is 95.

Sometimes, I buy little gifts for my mother and she always asks me how much something costs—since she doesn’t want me to spend a lot on her. Her mind is back in the days when things were much less expensive, so I resort to making up a price, smaller than the actual one. Is that wrong?

The other woman is selfish, mean and miserable. I know that I can only work part time for her, or I would go out of my mind.

She often asks me to work extra hours, and I find myself making up stories to explain why I can’t do it. I had to do this at Christmas time, or else she would have ruined my family’s holiday. How badly am I sinning? (City of origin withheld)

But I would be even more direct with your 95-year-old friend: Rather than fabricating a false excuse, tell her that you can’t work the extra hours she wants because you have “other family responsibilities.” One of those responsibilities is surely keeping yourself sane.

Have the rules changed on the sacrament of baptism? Recently, I attended a Catholic baptism where neither the first nor middle name of the child being baptized was the name of a saint. The man who was the godfather practices no religion at all, and the godmother—although baptized as a Catholic—does not now practice her faith. Can you please explain? (New York)

The Church’s current Code of Canon Law—which has been in effect since 1983—does not require that a child be baptized with the name of a saint. The only stipulation (Canon 855) is that the name chosen should not be “foreign to Christian sensibility.”

Prior to 1983, the Church did require that the child be given a “Christian” name (e.g., “Faith” or “Christian”), or the name of a saint. If not, a saint’s name was added to the name chosen by the parents, and that second name was recorded in the parish baptismal registry as well.

In my own view, it is still preferable that parents choose a saint’s name because, as the child grows, that particular saint might serve as an inspiration and example.

As to the religion of the godparents, a sponsor must be a practicing Catholic, 16 years of age or older and have already received the sacraments of first Communion and confirmation (Canon 874). Only one sponsor is required (Canon 873), so if one godparent were a practicing Catholic, the other “godparent” at the ceremony could be a baptized non-Catholic, but that person would then be listed in the registry as a “witness” rather than a sponsor.

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at frkennethdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbus Circle Dr. Albany, New York 12203.

The Criterion Friday, January 27, 2017
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 in the archdiocese are listed elsewhere in this edition. Ordained priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are native to the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.


CESSELL, Joan, 80, St. John the Apostle, Bloomington, Jan. 13. Mother of Mary, North; Christina Pailey, Grace and Don Cissell. Sister of Grace Tarrant, Janice and Pete Rasche. Grandmother of nine.


HILL, Eileen Jean, 80, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Jan. 17.


MERRILL, Mary Ann, 74, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Jan. 27. Sister of James and Charles Merrill. Stepfather of Mary Ann and John Merrill. Great-grandmother of 29.


SILVERS, Elizabeth, 84, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Jan. 15. Mother of Connie Blevins, Darryl and Donald Silver. Sister of six.


TREMBLE, Janet, 76, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Jan. 9.

ULRICH, Frances R., 95, St. John the Apostle, Indianapolis, Dec. 11. Uncle of several.

WILLS, Larry L., 63, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, Jan. 7. Father of Karen Kinder, Mary Shaler, Patricia and Larry Wills II. Grandfather of two. Great-grandfather of five.


Kiev cathedral

Trees frame St. Alexander Catholic Cathedral on a foggy Jan. 17 day in Kiev, Ukraine. Constructed in 1817, the cathedral is the oldest Catholic church in Kiev. (CNS photo/Sergey Dolzhenko, EPA)

Benedictine Father Rupert Osbick held monastic leadership positions

Benedictine Father Rupert Osbick, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabchacy in St. Meinrad, died on Jan. 14 at the monastery. He was 95.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 17. Burial followed at the Archcarchy Cemetery.

Father Rupert was a jubilarian of monastic profession, having celebrated 72 years of monastic profession. He was also a jubiliarian of ordination, having celebrated 68 years of life and ministry as a priest.

Howard Otto Osbick was born on Nov. 14, 1921, in Elgin, Ill. Father Rupert entered Saint Meinrad’s former Minor Seminary in 1939, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy in 1943. He was invested that same year as a novice at Saint Meinrad Archabchacy.

He professed temporary vows on Aug. 10, 1944, and solemn vows three years later. He was ordained a priest on May 18, 1948.

Father Rupert held many leadership positions in the monastery, including for 31 years as its treasurer, as well as business manager. During this same period, he provided spiritual direction at Saint Meinrad College.

He served as general manager of the monastery’s Abbey Press from 1979-91.

Father Rupert ministered as the monastery’s superior (third in leadership) from 1986-91 and in other periods as novice master for clerics, pastoral liaison for the monastery’s co-workers, an assistant in its human resources department and a member of the monastery’s vocations department.

For the past 16 years, he ministered as a confessor for Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology and served on the Abbey’s Council and other monastery committees.

Surviving are sisters Marjorie Banker and Mary Burnell of Elgin, Geraldine Mistretta of Carpentersville, Ill., and School Sister of Notre Dame Sister Patricia Osbick of Chicago and a brother, Bruce Osbick of Elgin.

Memorial gifts may be sent to Saint Meinrad Archabbacy, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, IN 47577.
Another, and especially how we sort out another, how we work and play with one unconditional love.

Life “without discrimination and with invisible in society.”

Ability to be of service to those who are needy child to illustrate that real greatness comes in developing an attitude and most vulnerable members of society.

“If we work, and play with one unconditional love.

He noted that Catholic teaching “stands in stark contrast” to modern culture’s ambition blinds you to the needs of same-minded, faith-filled Catholics.”

The title of the conference is taken from the sixth chapter of St. Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians which calls on the faithful to “put on the armor of God” (Eph 6:11) in

life of faith of so many people.

In addition to the speakers, the conference will include the celebration of the Mass, the opportunity to participate in the sacrament of penance, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction.

Registration for the conference will begin at 7:30 a.m., and Guarendi has agreed to stay after the conference for a question-and-answer period with fathers and sons. Lunch will be provided for conference participants.

Duane Meyer, a conference organizer, said that “men like myself come back year after year to similar conferences because they help us live out the Catholic faith to the fullest, through great speakers, the sacraments of the Eucharist and communion, singing songs of praise and worship and bonding with a large group of like-minded, faith-filled Catholics.”

Last year’s conference drew more than 500 participants from across Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky.

Meyer helps organize the first E6 conference, and said it was amazing to see how much the relatively small All Saints Parish could do to encourage the
Prekindergarten bill would expand school choice access for families

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

A proposal to enhance state-funded prekindergarten for at-risk children also expands school choice access.

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) supports the legislation. The preschool expansion bill, authored by Rep. Bob Behning, R-Indianapolis, builds upon the state’s On My Way Pre-K pilot program. The pilot program allows income-eligible 4-year-olds access to high quality preschool education in five counties—Allen, Jackson, Lake, Marion and Vanderburgh.

Currently, the pilot program serves approximately 2,300 low-income children. Behning said the program serves to provide options to preschoolers whose parents may choose a church or religiously affiliated pre-K option. The state won’t force them back to the public school setting for kindergarten.

“I have always been an advocate of school choice beginning in kindergarten,” Behning continued. “The K-12 voucher portion of the bill provides a seamless transition for children whose parents may choose a church or religiously affiliated pre-K option. The state won’t force them back to the public school setting for kindergarten. It gives parents’ ability to select a school that best suits their children’s needs.”

Behning said he’s going to fight to keep the school choice piece in the proposed legislation.

“Another critical aspect of the bill is it increases access to high quality preschool education for more children. It also increases the income eligibility making more families eligible. The bill, he continued, makes those children voucher-eligible to go into a school of their parent’s choice beginning in kindergarten, including nonpublic or religiously affiliated schools. Typically, a kindergarten student cannot receive a choice scholarship commonly referred to as a voucher, for a nonpublic school, but must enter a public school first,” said Tebbe. “Under this plan, children who qualify for a pre-K voucher because their family has a financial need would be eligible for the choice scholarship for kindergarten. Pre-K is an additional 2,300 students. Behning said these income guidelines sync up with the kindergartner through 12th (K-12) grade scholarship program.

“arbitrary income level of $67,432 for a family of four,” he said. “If a family has two kids, a family could be paying upward of $16,000 per year. That’s about 30 percent of their gross income.

“I have always been an advocate of school choice beginning in kindergarten,” Behning continued. “The K-12 voucher portion of the bill provides a seamless transition for children whose parents may choose a church or religiously affiliated pre-K option. The state won’t force them back to the public school setting for kindergarten. It gives parents’ ability to select a school that best suits their children’s needs.”

Behning said he’s going to fight to keep the school choice piece in the proposed legislation.

“Another critical aspect of the bill is it increases access to high quality preschool education for more children. It also increases the income eligibility making more families eligible. The bill, he continued, makes those children voucher-eligible to go into a school of their parent’s choice beginning in kindergarten, including nonpublic or religiously affiliated schools.

Typically, a kindergarten student cannot receive a choice scholarship commonly referred to as a voucher, for a nonpublic school, but must enter a public school first,” said Tebbe. “Under this plan, children who qualify for a pre-K voucher because their family has a financial need would be eligible for the choice scholarship for kindergarten. We support parents’ ability to select a school that best suits their children’s needs. House Bill 1004 does that.”

Tebbe added that the school choice portion of the bill is expected to be a bone of contention in the pre-K debate.

Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the ICC who serves as the public policy director, said the ICC also expands school choice access.

Behavioral Health services have been a focus of Indiana lawmakers, who have passed laws increasing access to mental health services for children and adults.

According to a recent report from the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Indiana has one of the highest rates of suicide among children and young adults in the country. The report found that Indiana had the 10th highest rate of suicide among children and young adults in 2017.

In an effort to address this issue, Indiana lawmakers have passed laws that increase access to mental health services for children and young adults. These laws include funding for expanded mental health services in schools, training for teachers and other school staff in recognizing signs of mental health issues, and funding for community-based mental health services.

The legislation also includes provisions that allow for expanded mental health services in schools, including training for teachers and other school staff in recognizing signs of mental health issues, and funding for community-based mental health services.

The pope made his remarks during a meeting with Italian bishops and other religious leaders in Rome.

The pope has been a vocal advocate for human rights and social justice. He has spoken out against war, poverty, and discrimination, and has called for greater mercy and compassion in dealing with those who are marginalized and excluded from society.

The pope has also been critical of the capitalist economic system, which he believes contributes to inequality and social injustice.

He has called for a more inclusive and just society, one that values the dignity and worth of every person, regardless of their background or circumstances.

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