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Special bond

Wrestlers 'go to the mat' to offer lesson in friendship, page 16.

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School vouchers gain support, see smoother path ahead

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Things are looking up for school vouchers.

Although there is currently more talk than action on school vouchers—scholarships used for private school

tuition—the conversation about them has moved from education circles to the highest levels of government as they are discussed by President Donald J. Trump, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and members of Congress.

Catholic leaders are paying close attention to this discussion too, since the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the National Catholic Educational Association have long been advocates of parental choice in education.

The most recent reference to school vouchers was in Trump's first budget proposal on March 16. It called for a \$9 billion cut of the Education Department's overall budget, while proposing an increase in school choice funding.

The president's budget proposal, which needs congressional approval, allocates \$1.4 billion to expand school vouchers and proposes to eventually provide \$20 billion a year, the amount Trump pledged to spend on school choice during his campaign.

Of this fund, about \$250 million would be used for private school vouchers and \$168 million would go to charter schools. An additional \$1 billion would be used for Title I, a program for low-income students.

"We will give our children the right to attend the school of their choice, one where they will be taught to love our country and its values," Trump said at a March 15 rally in Nashville, Tenn.

Greg Dolan, associate director for public policy for the USCCB's Secretariat of Catholic Education, said the president's budget proposal did not contain details about how the voucher money would be made available, so it is hard to know exactly how this scholarship plan might play out.

But he was happy they were included in the budget proposal as a "marker of what the president is interested in."

Dolan, like other school choice advocates, said that the lack of details didn't dissuade him.

See **VOUCHER**, page 2



WASHINGTON LETTER



A lasting gift

Her inquisitive nature—and her deep belief in the beautiful design of the world that God has created—serve Leah Massingale well as she teaches science to middle-school students at St. Michael School in Greenfield. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Love for students, joy for teaching and faith in God define St. Theodora winner

By John Shaughnessy

Some moments from childhood stay with you forever, influencing the person you become and impacting the people you come to love.

Even as an adult, Leah Massingale has kept the wonder and sense of beauty for the world that she knew as a child—the wonder and beauty that she first experienced as she stood by the ocean, looked up at the stars and entered a deep cavern beneath the Earth.

For Massingale, that childhood wonder has evolved into her deep belief in "the beautiful design" of the world that God has created. And she especially sees the wonder and beauty of the world in the middle-school students she teaches.

"It's important that my children see that God has made them in his image, that they are special to him, that he sees each of them as unique," Massingale says. "Every day, I look around

the classroom and see the wonder in their faces, and the joy that comes when they understand something. I wouldn't want to do anything else. I'm a teacher."

Her love for her students, her joy for teaching, her faith in God, and her continuing appreciation for the beauty and wonder of the world are all parts of the reason why Massingale has been chosen as this year's recipient of the Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

Oh, yes, she also has a wry sense of humor, as shown by some of the signs that dot her classroom at St. Michael School in Greenfield.

Touches of humor and love

One sign of her humor declares, "No sense being pessimistic. It wouldn't work anyway."

See **AWARD**, page 2

Interactive exhibit brings to life special story of chapel built by Italian prisoners of war

By Natalie Hoefler

On the far west side of Johnson County Park in Edinburgh stands a small structure, just 11 feet by 16 feet.

Unassuming in stature, the little building is teeming with history. If its walls could talk, they would tell the story of the tiny structure's creation in 1943 as a Catholic chapel, a small space of peace and spiritual respite built by several of the 3,000 Italian prisoners of war interred in Camp Atterbury during World War II.

In an ongoing, rotating series of exhibits called "You Are There," the Indiana Historical Society (IHS) in Indianapolis has given voice to some of the possible stories the chapel walls could tell. Using a photo taken in late August of 1943, the history center has re-created the interior of the chapel. For the next 18 months, visitors can "step into" the scene and interact with actors portraying actual men who worked at or were interned in the camp.

'Back to the Catholicism of the '40s'

"We didn't even know about the chapel," says Angela Wolfgram, an IHS exhibitions researcher. "That whole story was

See **CHAPEL**, page 8



The staff of the Indiana Historical Society in Indianapolis used this photo from August 1943 to re-create the interior of the Catholic chapel built by Italian prisoners of war at Camp Atterbury in Edinburgh during World War II. (Photo courtesy of Camp Atterbury)

AWARD

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Another notes, “I’m not bossy, I just know what you should be doing.”

And a third simply states, “Shed Thy Attitude.”

The touches of humor are an indication that while Massingale loves her students, she also understands that the middle school years can be a difficult time as they make the transition from childhood to adolescence.

“What is most rewarding for me is helping the children get through the rough years,” she says. “Middle school is hard. Kids can be mean. Family situations are difficult. The world tells them they’re not good enough. Jesus has given me a heart for the quiet kids—the ones that try to slip by without being noticed, the ones that look sad or disheveled or disorganized.

“I try to connect with these kids every day on a personal level—just simple things, like an extra greeting in the hallway or a gentle encouragement.”

That ability to connect with students distinguishes Massingale, says Father Aaron Jenkins, pastor of St. Michael Parish.

“The message outside her door provides a gentle reminder to all, ‘You are a child of God,’” Father Jenkins says. “She works to recognize each child’s gift.”

St. Michael’s principal Patty Mauer says Massingale is motivated by “the possibility of writing a success story with each child that enters her doorway.”

“She welcomes all with open arms, but she definitely has a soft spot for those who have yet to see God’s gift in themselves,” Mauer notes. “Middle schoolers so eagerly want to fit into the mold of peer expectations, but often measure themselves short for one reason or another. She works hard for them to see the positive.”

Discovering the world’s wonder

Massingale credits her appreciation for the wonder and beauty of the world—and

her students—to her first teachers, her parents.

The daughter of Jerry and Pam Massingale grew up with her brother and sister in a family that enjoyed traveling and exploring.

“My dad grew up in Indianapolis, but he didn’t get to see a lot as a child,” she recalls. “He worked really hard so our mother could stay at home with us. He installed telephones. He loved to take us places—to the Smoky Mountains, Mammoth Cave in Kentucky and to the ocean.

“He always had time to take us walking or read us Bible stories. We’d look up at the stars, and listen to the crickets and the cows in the fields. He was always looking for something new you could look at and see. And we’d talk about that. Dad had this big influence on me about wanting to see what’s out there.”

She returned the favor to her father when she received a teaching fellowship from Lilly Foundation, Inc. in 2011, using her grant to visit and photograph a dozen national parks, including Yellowstone, Mesa Verde and the Grand Canyon.

“Before we went on that journey, my dad had a heart attack, and he thought his journeying was over,” she recalls with a smile. “So it was amazing to give that trip to him, and give back to him.

“He nearly broke his neck trying to get down to the Pacific Ocean, which he had never seen before. To see in him what he must have seen in us as children was amazing.”

A lasting gift

While Massingale has a deep sense of the wonder and beauty of the world, she may have an even deeper commitment to all the people and pets she considers as family.

She lives with her parents, taking care of her mother who has Parkinson’s disease and her father who is a diabetic.

She worked part time in a veterinary clinic for 10 years, earning extra income to pay for the bills for her dogs.



‘I try to serve as a good role model, demonstrating patience, fortitude, self-control and gentleness in my dealings with them. When I fail, I ask for their forgiveness. When they fail, I remind them of the beauty of grace.’

—St. Michael teacher Leah Massingale

And she beams when she talks about her “Christian colleagues” at St. Michael School.

“It’s nice when things get bad that you know there will be people who will rally around you,” she says. “They make a world of difference.”

That’s the world Massingale has strived to share with her students during her 19 years of teaching at St. Michael School. She longs to show them the wonder of the world. And she longs to show them the difference they can make in the world.

“A quality Catholic education places Jesus at the center of the school and the classroom,” she notes. “It focuses on students as whole people, concerned not only with academic growth, but also with spiritual growth. It places importance on family and community.

“I try to serve as a good role model,

demonstrating patience, fortitude, self-control and gentleness in my dealings with them. When I fail, I ask for their forgiveness. When they fail, I remind them of the beauty of grace.”

She has never forgotten the moments from her childhood that have influenced the person she has become, the moments that have impacted the people she has come to love. She hopes to leave that same impact on her students, her “children.”

“I hope they remember that I loved them even when it wasn’t easy.

“I had the example of God’s love at home. My parents are faithful to each other. They put each other first, and they put us first. I hope my students see that kind of unselfish love and connect it to being a Christian. Mostly, I hope they look at me and see the love that Jesus has for them.” †

Finalists for teaching honor come from throughout the archdiocese

While Leah Massingale of St. Michael School in Greenfield was selected as this year’s recipient of the Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education Award, four other teachers were named as finalists for the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

Finalists also included:

- **Christine Exline**—St. Monica School in Indianapolis
- **Mary Alice Knott**—Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville
- **Janice Narwold**—St. Louis School in Batesville
- **Lorene Olejnik**—St Susanna School in Plainfield †

VOUCHER

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“We’re paying attention to this,” he told Catholic News Service on March 17.

The education section of the “skinny budget,” as it has been described, only devotes two pages to education and doesn’t include proposals for tax-credit scholarships, which have been touted as Trump’s likely way to expand school choice.

The federal tax credit proposal the Trump administration is considering would allow individuals or corporations to receive full or partial tax credit for donations to nonprofit organizations

that provide scholarships to be used for private school tuition. Scholarship tax credits are currently used in 16 states—including Indiana—and are primarily for low-income students.

“Federal tax credits are very intriguing, and could be a game changer,” said Dolan, who added that the key is in the details. If the federal government does not put strings on the funds, Catholic schools, which have more than 40 percent of the seats of private education, would be interested.

“If it’s done right, it could bring [school] choice to places where it isn’t,” he said.

Currently, 27 states—including Indiana—and the District of Columbia

have some type of school choice measure in place, and several states have legislation on the table for it this year.

Dolan said the issue of federal tax credit scholarships will likely be presented as a part of tax-reform plan and would come up before Congress before the August recess.

DeVos has pointed to Florida’s tax credit scholarships as one of her major successes from when she was on the board of the Foundation for Excellence in Education, a group that worked to expand tax credit scholarship programs across the country.

On March 3, Trump was joined by DeVos, U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Florida, and Florida Gov. Rick Scott in a visit to St. Andrew School in Orlando, Fla., to specifically discuss the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship program used by 70 percent of the school’s students.

James Herzog, associate director for education for the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops, who took place in a roundtable discussion about the scholarship program, said he hopes Congress will look to Florida as an example of how tax credit

scholarships benefit students, families, educators and schools.

“On a state level, we really appreciate the school choice program because it makes Catholic education possible to low-income families,” he said. Currently, 25 percent of students attending Catholic schools in the Orlando Diocese benefit from the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship.

The only federally funded voucher program is the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, which began in 2004 and provides scholarships to low-income children in Washington for tuition at participating private schools.

The program was reauthorized for annual funding on March 10 by a House committee. Appropriations committees will determine how much money the program receives. It still needs to go through the Senate, where a companion bill hasn’t been introduced yet.

Leaders of the program told *The Washington Post* they expect to add hundreds of new students to the program next year because they expect Trump will push for additional funds for it. †



‘Federal tax credits are very intriguing, and could be a game changer. ... If it’s done right, it could bring [school] choice to places where it isn’t.’

—Greg Dolan, associate director for public policy for the USCCB’s Secretariat of Catholic Education



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Pre-K bill to expand pilot program advances in Senate

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

A proposal to expand state-funded pre-kindergarten for at-risk children and maintain parental choice passed the Senate education panel by an 8-1 vote on March 15, and now moves to the Senate appropriations panel for funding approval. The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) supports the legislation.

Rep. Bob Behning, R-Indianapolis, author of the expansion plan, House Bill 1004, presented it before the Senate Education and Career Development Committee, saying targeted, high-quality preschool has a high rate of return on investment. Behning said research points to high tangible and intangible outcomes, including higher education attainment; higher likelihood of maintaining employment; higher earning potential; and reduced crime rate.



Rep. Bob Behning

Behning added the return on investment in pre-kindergarten education yields a three to four dollar return for every one dollar spent on pre-K.

The Indianapolis lawmaker calls pre-K a "wise investment," especially over the long run, as one looks at the cost to the state of remediation down the road.

Additionally, Behning said the investment in pre-K could help to reduce or prevent those in the at-risk group from needing welfare, addiction treatment or incarceration.

The preschool expansion bill builds upon the state's On My Way Pre-K

pilot program. It 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. If passed, the proposal would expand the pilot program from five counties to any county in Indiana.

House Bill 1004 was amended by the Senate panel by a vote of 9-0. The Senate adopted their version of the pre-K expansion plan contained in Senate Bill 276. The amended version would dedicate \$16 million for the pre-K program rather than the \$20 million proposed in the original version of House Bill 1004. The Senate panel also removed voucher access language for pre-K children to enter kindergarten at the school of the parent's choice, a provision the ICC supports. The amendment added a new feature to the plan, which would give priority to children in foster care to access quality preschool.

Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the ICC, who serves as the public policy spokesperson for the bishops in Indiana, said House Bill 1004 would improve upon the current preschool program in that it increases access to high-quality preschool education for more children.

Tebbe explained the original version of House Bill 1004 contained voucher language which would have allowed income-eligible preschool children access to a kindergarten through 12th-grade voucher once the child reached kindergarten. They could also use the voucher for nonpublic schools, including religiously affiliated ones.

"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



'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. Under the original version of House Bill 1004, children who qualify for a pre-K voucher because their family has a financial need would have been eligible for the choice scholarship for kindergarten.'

—Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference

the original version of House Bill 1004, children who qualify for a pre-K voucher because their family has a financial need would have been eligible for the choice scholarship for kindergarten.

"While I'm disappointed the voucher piece of the pre-K program was removed in the Senate, I'm not surprised," continued Tebbe. "There are at least three aspects of the bill that are very positive as it relates to parental rights, nonpublic or religiously affiliated preschools, and the common good. First, the measure would maintain parental choice in allowing a parent to choose the preschool that best suits the child, including religiously affiliated, nonpublic or public pre-school.

"Second, the plan also would allow for a variety of ways a preschool program would be able to qualify as a state-approved, high-quality preschool program. Third, it reaches a targeted, at-risk population of low-income children who would gain access to preschool. For these reasons, the pre-K expansion plan is a positive step forward."

The ICC executive director said that many preschool programs in Indiana that

are religiously affiliated or nonpublic institutions meet quality standards that exceed the state's requirements to qualify as a high-quality preschool program. These programs would be eligible to serve as providers for children to access as part of the pre-K expansion plan.

According to United Way of Central Indiana, Indiana is behind most states in pre-K enrollment with only 36 percent of Hoosier children ages 3-4 in such a program. The national average of the same age group in a pre-K program is 46 percent. Only seven states have a higher rate than Indiana of children not attending preschool.

Tebbe said the bill is likely to move to a conference committee in April. He added he expects giving income-eligible, pre-K students access to the K-12 choice scholarship or voucher to be a part of the negotiation during conference committee.

The ICC provides legislative updates and other public policy resources at www.indianacc.org.

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

Nuncio: Evangelization, mercy, encounter mark pope's first four years

NEW YORK (CNS)—Evangelization, mercy, encounter and accompaniment are the hallmarks of the first four years of Pope Francis' papacy, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, said on March 15.



Archbishop Christophe Pierre

"First and foremost, Pope Francis is committed to the work of evangelization. The main role of the Church is to evangelize—to receive the Gospel and offer it to the world," he said in a conversation in New York with Jesuit

Father Matthew F. Malone, president and editor-in-chief of America Media. The event was co-sponsored by America Media and the American Bible Society.

"The *raison d'être* of the Church is evangelization. It's not a business, it's not an organization or an association for the defense of Jesus, but a group called to announce God's presence to humanity," Archbishop Pierre said.

At a meeting of cardinals before the conclave that elected him pope, then-Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio reflected on the challenges Pope Benedict's successor should address. Archbishop Pierre said Pope Francis' handwritten notes from his talk were a blueprint for his papacy.

In them, Pope Francis underscored the importance of evangelizing with apostolic zeal and going to the peripheries of sin, pain, injustice and misery to reach people. He warned that when the Church does not come out of herself to evangelize, she becomes self-referential and sick. He wrote, "The evils that, over time, happen in ecclesiastical institutions have their root in self-reference and a kind of theological narcissism."

Cardinal Bergoglio said the next pope, "must be a man who, from the contemplation and adoration of Jesus

Christ, helps the Church go out to the existential peripheries, that helps her be the fruitful mother, who gains life from the sweet and comforting joy of evangelizing."

"The Church is a continuation of Christ in the world," Archbishop Pierre said. And the pope continues to insist it is time not to rest, but to go to the many peripheries to be God's presence to the people who suffer, he said.

He expanded on the pope's familiar description of the Church as a field hospital. "It's very simple. It's a tent where you attend people. Be there. Don't waste time. That's where you meet wounded people."

Father Malone said Jesus, the source of joy in the Gospels, is the medication in the field hospital. Pope Francis pictures himself as a patient in the hospital, not the doctor, he said.

People have rediscovered the sacrament of penance during this papacy because Pope Francis identifies himself as a sinner and is seen going to confession, Archbishop Pierre said. "Many had abandoned the sacrament of reconciliation, but have rediscovered the necessity of receiving the forgiveness of God and giving it to others," he said.

When the pope speaks of mercy, it is not only a human virtue, but a gift from God, and people are the first target of God's mercy, Archbishop Pierre said. "Our Church is a merciful Church. We present truth in a respectful way. Mercy means dialogue and walking along the path of the other," he said.

"I'm impressed to see the capacity Pope Francis has to meet people," Archbishop Pierre said. "Politicians want to see the pope, not just for the photo, but for the encounter. I have seen politicians transformed."

He recounted the pope's visit to Sweden to mark the 500th anniversary of Lutheranism. "We've had the idea that Luther is the enemy," the nuncio said. But Pope Francis had an encounter with Lutheran leaders there and said Luther

is part of the history of the Catholic Church. The pope speaks with his actions, Archbishop Pierre said.

The nuncio said Pope Francis approaches dialogue as an important ingredient of public life. People who dialogue successfully must be rooted in their own convictions and faith. In this way, dialogue is "two rooted persons looking for the truth," he said.

The pope is hard on bishops and priests because he wants them to be masters of discernment and help people develop the capacity to choose between good and bad, Archbishop Pierre said. It is not enough to identify right from wrong, he said. If the understanding is not applied to personal actions, life will be a dichotomy.

Archbishop Pierre said Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation "*Evangelii Gaudium*" ("The Joy of the Gospel") is based on the closing document of the 2007 meeting of the Latin American

bishops' council in Aparecida, Brazil. Then-Archbishop Bergoglio led the editing committee for the document. A document intended for the Latin American bishops "became the patrimony of the whole Church," Archbishop Pierre said.

He said Pope Francis' experience living in a "peripheral" country helped him elaborate a different kind of option for the poor than the one envisioned three decades earlier at the Medellin, Colombia, meeting of the Latin American bishops. "The reality is the people had been evangelized so deeply that the culture was filled with the Gospel," he said.

Because the Church does not play the same role in people's lives it once did, the Church today is challenged to help people encounter Christ and rediscover the presence of God in their own lives. It must be missionary and not self-referential, the nuncio said. †



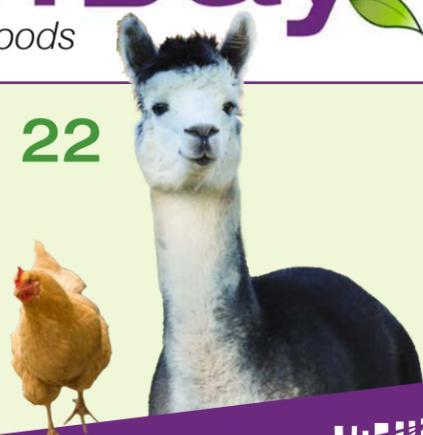
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Editorial



Pope Francis kneels before a priest for the sacrament of penance during a Lenten prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on March 17.
 (CNS photo/Evandro Inetti, pool)

Our Lenten journey and reconciliation

What do you call a person waiting in line to enter a confessional? A sinner seeking forgiveness.

What about a bishop, dressed in all white in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, kneeling at a confessional seeking God's healing mercy and forgiveness? Pope Francis.

There is no funny punch line or humorous response for the above examples, nor should there be.

The photograph accompanying this editorial isn't the first time we've seen our universal shepherd of the Church seeking the sacrament of reconciliation. And we're fairly certain it won't be the last.

If there's one thing we've learned from our Holy Father, as he said in a lengthy interview in September of 2013 published in *America* magazine after being elected pope, he, like all of us, is far from perfect.

"I am a sinner. This is the most accurate definition," Pope Francis said of himself in the interview. "It is not a figure of speech, a literary genre. I am a sinner."

We've come to see firsthand how much the pope values the sacrament of penance—he admits he goes every two weeks—and after presiding over the annual Lenten penance service on March 17 in St. Peter's Basilica, he was one of 95 priests and bishops listening to confessions and granting absolution.

But according to a Catholic News Service (CNS) story, Pope Francis first spent about four minutes kneeling before a priest in one of the wooden confessionals receiving the sacrament of reconciliation before he walked to one nearby, put on a purple stole and waited for the first penitent to approach.

The pope spent 50 minutes hearing the confessions of seven people—three men and four women, all laypeople—and sharing God's mercy with them before leading the congregation in prayers of thanksgiving for the experience of the "goodness and sweetness of God's love for us."

We're roughly halfway through our Lenten journey, and now is a good time to examine how we've fared where the three pillars of Lent—prayer, fasting and almsgiving—are concerned.

Paulist Father Jack Collins said in a CNS story at the beginning of

Lent that these pillars are "very much countercultural" by making people think of their need for God and others.

As we begin this examination of conscience, we would be well-served to ask ourselves two simple questions: Have we stumbled in seeing Christ in others? Have we failed in being Christ to others?

If we have gotten pulled into the chaotic fray that is the result of a vitriolic atmosphere created by so many in today's world, we may not like the answer. Mercy, which Pope Francis uses so much in describing a key tenet of our faith, may be the furthest thing from our minds—and hearts.

Name nearly any topic, and there's a good chance the mainstream media has reported on it. But when we see, read or hear those reports, we need to remember they are usually from a secular view, not a faith-based perspective. As Catholic Christians, we need to examine what our Church teaches and why. In today's complicated world, there are no easy answers to life's challenges.

Our faith teaches us dialogue is a good way to build bridges. As Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, says in a page 3 story in this week's issue of *The Criterion*, Pope Francis approaches dialogue as an important ingredient of public life. People who dialogue successfully must be rooted in their own convictions and faith, Archbishop Pierre said. In this way, dialogue is "two rooted persons looking for the truth," he added.

The truth is that we are imperfect human beings on a journey. Our destination, God willing, is his eternal kingdom in heaven.

If you haven't already during this Lenten season, why not partake in the sacrament of reconciliation? There are still plenty of opportunities at parishes throughout the archdiocese. They are listed on page 10.

Pope Francis wants us to understand how important the sacrament is to our lives of faith. "Forgiveness is not a result of our efforts, but is a gift," he said at an audience in 2014. "It is a gift of the Holy Spirit who showers us with mercy and grace that pours forth unceasingly from the open heart of Christ crucified and risen."

—Mike Krokos

Letters to the Editor

As Christians, we are called to be activists for the witness of truth

I am disappointed in the editorial choice to publish the letter in the March 10 issue of *The Criterion* whose headline read: "Reader says newspaper must print both sides in immigration debate," specifically as it applies to the deportation of Guadalupe Garcia de Rayos, a wife and mother of citizens of the United States though she herself is of illegal immigrant status.

You are a Catholic newspaper. You are obliged to print the Gospel message side of the news, not "both sides." I found the letter to be the antithesis of the Gospel message: narrow-minded, self-centered, in short, unchristian.

It is not the mission of a Catholic newspaper to publish such opinions, at least not without editorial comment as to the Gospel, the pope and the bishops' stance on the same issues. I am surprised that the March 17 issue was not flooded with responses from our Church members.

Yes, following the law is admirable, as the letter writer states, but at some point justice must be tempered with mercy.

Separating a family without recourse to correcting the situation is wrong. Her family of U.S. citizens also has rights. The mother had complied with Immigration and Customs Enforcement check-in policy. To suggest, as this letter did, that her family should relocate to another country in spite of legitimate citizenship in this country is to deny their rights.

"She came into our wonderful country, and broke many laws and took all the free stuff." Really? Multiple laws? Or only the requirement to have a Social Security number to work? Who allowed that catch-22 in the system? To work, one needs a number. To not work and support

oneself is wrong. But we will look the other way and allow it—at least for now while convenient to us.

"... took tax dollars that all of us earned for our citizens. The U.S. gives to illegal immigrants free education, medical, housing and food." Again, really? Where is this vast expenditure on these programs?

Illegal aliens are not eligible for government benefits, but we collect their taxes and Social Security contributions anyway. Her children are entitled to the same education as all children, and they are citizens. It looks to be a win for the U.S. government to refuse benefits to illegal people, but collect their money anyway. Of course, as citizens her family was eligible for any benefits for which they qualified, but large expenditures and automatic free "stuff"? Not in the experience of most hard-working immigrants, legal or not.

Our beliefs put us firmly into looking out for one another in the human family. If a fair system for entering legally into our country existed following deportation, as the author suggests, I am sure many would avail themselves of it. Otherwise, we have exploited workers by ignoring their status for our own benefit of cheap labor for years, and then throwing them into a criminal status and deportation by a sudden surge of strict enforcement of laws. Justice? Mercy? Where is the immigration reform promised for decades to solve this?

We are in this life together. That is a sum of our social beliefs as Catholic Christians.

Fay Obergfell
 Lexington, Ind.

Criterion has jumped on bandwagon as adversary of president, reader says

In the March 10 issue of *The Criterion*, the front page featured a story about the immigration ban and all the opposition and protests going on against it. We already get enough of that every day from the mainstream media. Do we also have to be bombarded with it from our Catholic newspaper, too? The ban is for 120 days—not forever!

The first responsibility of the government is the protection of its citizens. President Donald J. Trump is attempting to fulfill his campaign promises, and I thank God for that.

I resent the fact that *The Criterion* is jumping on the bandwagon of his adversaries. Why can't we just give him a chance? I also point out that if Mr. Obama was still president, there would be no protests of any

kind. We need to get to the "why" of that.

The immigration ban of 120 days and other immigration-related stories made the front page, and pages two and three of this issue. My challenge to the editor is this: Why was the article about President Trump visiting a Catholic school in support of school choice on page 10 instead of the front page? Could it be that *The Criterion* has become just another mainstream newspaper that only gives one side of the issue—the side they want us to see?

I believe it is time those who lost the election step aside and let the winner who loves America make it great again. He needs our support.

Mary Badinghaus
 Lawrenceburg

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper's commitment to "the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God" (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as

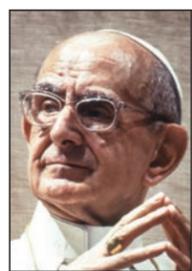
necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org. †

At 50, 'Populorum Progressio' takes on new life through Pope Francis

WASHINGTON (CNS)—These days when Pope Francis talks about integral human development and his vision of a Church that goes to the margins of the world, he undoubtedly thanks a predecessor of 50 years ago for the inspiration.



Pope Paul VI

Blessed Paul VI addressed “the progressive development of peoples” as “an object of deep interest and concern to the Church” in his encyclical “*Populorum Progressio*” (“The Progress of Peoples”) that emerged in the years following the Second Vatican Council (#1).

Pope Francis has used language similar to that in the encyclical in his admonitions of the world economy and his vision for a more merciful world.

Released on March 26, 1967—perhaps purposefully on Easter—Blessed Paul’s encyclical rooted the Church in solidarity with the world’s poorest nations. He called for the elimination of economic disparity and reminded people to recognize the common threads that unite humanity in a world with finite resources.

“We are the heirs of earlier generations, and we reap benefits from the efforts of our contemporaries; we are under obligation to all men,” Blessed Paul wrote in his only social encyclical. “Therefore, we cannot disregard the welfare of those who will come after us to increase the human family. The reality of human solidarity brings us not only benefits but also obligations” (#17).

Such a call has repeatedly echoed throughout Pope Francis’ four-year pontificate. A reading of his apostolic exhortation “*The Joy of the Gospel*” (“*Evangelii Gaudium*”) and his encyclical on the environment and human development, “*Laudato Si*,” on Care for Our Common Home, he reminds the human family of the social responsibilities to care for one another. In line with Blessed Paul, he has repeatedly recalled the social injuries caused by an “economic system that has the god of money at its center,” as he said in a message to the U.S. Regional World Meeting of Popular Movements in Modesto, Calif., in February.

While 50 years have passed and the political discussion has shifted to new issues, the message of “*Populorum Progressio*” has been resurrected in a 21st-century pope and remains as

important today as it was in 1967, social policy experts told Catholic News Service (CNS) as the encyclical’s golden anniversary approached.

“‘*Populorum Progressio*’ and the whole idea of integral human development is really the cornerstone of everything since [then] in the Church,” said Dana Dillon, assistant professor of theology at Providence College.

The message, if not the specific words, has resonated through the pontificates of St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, but it is Pope Francis who has renewed the call for true human development in a world still experiencing economic inequality and vast pockets of extreme poverty, said Leonard Calabrese, retired executive director of the Commission on Catholic Community Action in the Cleveland Diocese.

“It’s not only about economic development. It’s also about distributive justice and a concern for fairness for how development and the benefits of development are spread through the society,” Calabrese said, comparing the similar calls from both popes.

Jesuit Father Drew Christiansen, distinguished professor of ethics and global development at Georgetown University, called Pope Francis a “Paul VI pope” because of his reliance on the Holy Spirit in calling the world to mercy and justice.

The timing of the encyclical’s release—less than 16 months after Vatican II concluded—fed eager laypeople and clergy to go into the world to share the good news through action. Not only did Blessed Paul announce the formation of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace then, but the document inspired the introduction in 1969 of what today is the U.S. bishops’ Catholic Campaign for Human Development and gave birth to social action offices in many dioceses.

“It had carriers all over the world who were sympathetic to the mood of the council and the themes of the Church’s involvement in the world of the council. It energized the Church and many people in the development field,” Father Christiansen said.

Massimo Faggioli, professor of theology and religious studies at Villanova University, suggested it was time for the Church to take a deeper look at “*Populorum Progressio*” at this point in the Church’s history. “It is relevant because it is a time to rediscover what was the most radical Catholic social teaching of these last 50 years,” he told CNS.

The document raised the profile of the Church’s concern for people in the global south at a time when European colonialism



A woman and dog are seen amid garbage along a street in 2015 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Blessed Paul VI’s 1967 encyclical “*Populorum Progressio*” rooted the Catholic Church in solidarity with the world’s poorest nations. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

was declining, giving people across Africa, Asia and Latin America greater hope that the Church was with them, Faggioli explained.

In the global north, however, the encyclical was panned. Vermont Royster, editor of *The Wall Street Journal* at the time, called it “warmed-over Marxism” because it challenged capitalism’s inherent rush to achieve profit at the expense of human life. Others were critical of Blessed Paul’s assessment that economic trade must benefit both the developed countries and those emerging from the colonialism that had dominated the world for centuries, feeling it was too judgmental of existing corporate practices.

Samuel Gregg, director of research at the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty in Grand Rapids, Mich., writing for *Crisis Magazine* on March 3, questioned why Blessed Paul addressed such questions specifically. He questioned the prudential judgments offered by Blessed Paul about such matters because “there’s often no single right answer for Catholics.”

Still, he credited Blessed Paul for his emphasis on core Church teaching on integral human development.

“Paul VI reminded us that while human development has a material dimension, it cannot be reduced to material growth,” Gregg wrote in an e-mail to CNS. “We fully develop when we freely choose the goods that are distinctly human and act accordingly. If Catholics lose sight of this truth when we talk about topics ranging from justice to the decisions of political and business leaders to the environment, then we will have nothing distinctive to say about human development.”

While the particulars of trade deals may have shifted over the last

half-century, the overall issue of the importance of building relationships among people in developed and developing nations remains, said John Carr, director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University.

Blessed Paul envisioned that economic development could lead to long-lasting peace, Carr said. “Development and justice is more a matter of being more than having more. Being more a worker, being a husband, mother, a citizen,” he said.

Carr points particularly to paragraph 47 of the encyclical as a vital passage that raises questions that resonate today as they did in 1967. In the passage, Blessed Paul explained that simply ending hunger and reducing poverty was not enough. He called on people to build a human community across borders, cultures and economic classes.

Blessed Paul continues: “On the part of the rich man, it calls for great generosity, willing sacrifice and diligent effort. Each man must examine his conscience, which sounds a new call in our present times. Is he prepared to support, at his own expense, projects and undertakings designed to help the needy? Is he prepared to pay higher taxes so that public authorities may expand their efforts in the work of development? Is he prepared to pay more for imported goods, so that the foreign producer may make a fairer profit? Is he prepared to emigrate from his homeland if necessary and if he is young, in order to help the emerging nations?” (#47)

Carr said the same questions deserve consideration today.

“Candidly,” he told CNS, “the contrast between the dominant message in Washington and the call of the Church could not be more stark.” †

Senate confirmation hearings open for Trump’s Supreme Court nominee

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The first day of Senate confirmation hearings for Judge Neil Gorsuch, President Donald J. Trump’s



Judge Neil Gorsuch

nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court, began on March 20 with a series of introductory remarks from senators establishing what they hope to ask the nominee and the importance of the role of Supreme Court justice.

Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa,

who is chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, began the day’s hearing by praising what he said was Gorsuch’s firm respect of the separation of powers of government. A vote on the judge’s confirmation is set to take place on April 3.

The nominee, who currently sits on the Denver-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, would fill the vacant seat on the Supreme Court left by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia last year. Senate Republican leaders last year chose not to vote on then-President Barack Obama’s nominee for the court, Judge Merrick Garland.

In opening remarks, many of the senators spoke of the importance of a

Supreme Court justice’s role, particularly given the length of time a justice generally has the position—it is a life term.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vermont, said the “stakes could not be higher” for the job.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-California, the committee’s ranking Democrat, and the second to address the hearing, noted the “very unusual circumstances” of the hearing after Garland was never granted a similar opportunity.

She highlighted several areas that she would be interested in hearing more from Gorsuch such as his views on abortion and on voting rights.

She noted that the judge had not made decisions on abortion, but she said his writings “raise questions” and can be interpreted to mean he would vote to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

Gorsuch has degrees from Columbia, Harvard and Oxford universities. He clerked for two Supreme Court justices and also worked for the Department of Justice. He is an adjunct law professor at the University of Colorado, and he wrote a 2009 book arguing against the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia.

He has strong views on religious liberty, having sided with the Little Sisters of the Poor in their challenge

of the contraceptive, abortifacient and sterilization mandate of the Affordable Care Act. In *Hobby Lobby Stores v. Sebelius*, in June 2013, the 10th Circuit ordered the federal government to stop enforcement of the federal mandate against the family that owns Hobby Lobby, the Oklahoma-based Christian chain of retail arts and crafts stores. In his concurrence, Gorsuch said the mandate substantially burdened the family’s religious exercise—a decision the Supreme Court later upheld.

Gorsuch, who attended a Jesuit-operated Catholic high school in Maryland, Georgetown Preparatory School, was raised a Catholic but is now an Episcopalian. Scalia, who had been one of six Catholic members of the court, was often described as its most conservative voice and known for his strict interpretation of the Constitution.

Just as the first day of hearings got underway, 60 national and state pro-life groups sent a letter to the members of the U.S. Senate calling for Gorsuch’s swift confirmation.

“Judge Gorsuch is widely recognized as a jurist possessed of deep intelligence and true fairmindedness,” the letter said. “In 2006, the U.S. Senate recognized these qualities, confirming Gorsuch without dissent to his current position

on the 10th Circuit. After a decade of constitutionally sound and clearly written rulings and opinions, Judge Gorsuch deserves once again the swift approval of the Senate.”

The letter was spearheaded by the pro-life organization Susan B. Anthony List and signed by members of the Pro-life Court Coalition.

Signers include Marjorie Dannenfelser, president, Susan B. Anthony List; Carol Tobias, president, National Right to Life; Tom McClusky, president, March for Life Action; Father Frank Pavone, national director, Priests for Life; Janet Morana, co-founder, Silent No More Awareness Campaign; Star Parker, president, Center for Urban Renewal and Education; Melissa Ortiz, founder and principal, Able Americans; and Eva Andrade, Hawaii Family Forum.

“Many will attest to Judge Gorsuch’s judicial temperament and his respectful treatment of everyone in proceedings before him,” the letter said. “He has consistently applied an originalist approach to the Constitution, and a respect for the separation of powers, reminiscent of the late Justice Antonin Scalia.

“We believe that Judge Gorsuch’s thoughtful opinions illuminate how he would decide difficult questions on the Supreme Court,” it added. †

Events Calendar

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

March 27

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Serra Club Dinner Meeting**, Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan director of vocations, speaking, 6-8 p.m., \$15. Information: 317-748-1478 or smclaughlin@holyspirit.cc.

March 28

St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Monthly Ecumenical Taizé Prayer Service**, sung prayers, meditation and readings. 7-8 p.m. Information: 317-926-7359 or rectory@saintmichaelindy.org.

March 29

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish cafeteria, 7575 Holiday Drive, E., Indianapolis. **Lenten Soup Suppers and Speaker Series**, week four of five, (April 5), Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, speaking on "The Four Poverties: What Are They, Why Do They Matter and How Do We Fight Them?" 5:30 p.m. Mass, 6 p.m. soup supper, 7 p.m. speaker. Information: dcarollo@stluke.org, 317-259-4373.

St. Anthony of Padua Parish,

316 N. Sherwood, Clarksville. **Lenten Evening of Reflection: Living a Blessed Life through the Beatitudes**, Conventual Franciscan Brother Bob Baxter presenting, 6:30 p.m. Information: b.morra@stanthony-clarksville.org.

March 31

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild Rummage Sale**, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 317-223-3687, vlgmimi@aol.com.

St. Anthony of Padua Parish, 316 N. Sherwood, Clarksville. **Men's Club Fish Fry**, baked or fried fish, oysters and shrimp, 5-7:30 p.m., adults \$7.50-\$9.50, children \$3-\$5. Information: b.morra@stanthony-clarksville.org.

St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. **Lenten Fish Fry**, dinners, sandwiches and sides, dine-in, carry out or delivery, assorted prices, noon-6 p.m. Information: 317-536-1047 or stritchsecretary71@yahoo.com.

April 1

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd.,

Brookville. **First Saturday Marian Devotional Prayer Group**, Mass, prayers, rosary, confession, meditation, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462.

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

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Learn to Weave**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. \$115 includes lunch, registration deadline March 31. Information, registration: 812-535-2931, wvc@spsmw.org, or www.spsmw.org/providence-center/events.

Pioneer Park, 1101 N. Indianapolis Road, Mooresville. **St. Thomas More Parish "Hooray! It's a Jubilee**

5K Walk/Run," benefiting Churches in Mission, 8 a.m. check in, 9 a.m. start, ages 18 and older \$25, ages 6-17 \$15, family of four \$60, ages 5 and younger free. Register by March 25 at www.stm-church.org. Bring a canned food item. Information: 317-831-4142 or thomasmoremoorville@gmail.com.

Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 89 N. 17th St., Beech Grove. **Holy Name of Jesus Altar Society Spring Rummage Sale**, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 317-784-6860.

April 4

Mission 27 Resale, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. **Senior Discount Day**, every Tuesday, seniors 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.

April 5

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New

members welcome. 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish cafeteria, 7575 Holiday Drive, E., Indianapolis. **Lenten Soup Suppers and Speaker Series**, week five, Michael J. Crowther, president and CEO of the Indianapolis Zoological Society, speaking on "St. James, The Parable of the Talents, and Orangutans," 5:30 p.m. Mass, 6 p.m. soup supper, 7 p.m. speaker. Information: dcarollo@stluke.org, 317-259-4373.

April 7

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral chapel, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Lumen Dei Catholic Business Group**, 6:30 a.m. Mass, 7:15-8:30 a.m. breakfast at Lincoln Square Pancake House, 2330 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Information: 317-435-3447 or lumen.dei@comcast.net.

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

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday** celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mass, 5:45 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass until 9:30 p.m., sacrament of Reconciliation available. Information: 317-888-2861 or info@olgreenwood.org.

St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Charismatic Renewal Praise and Mass**, praise and worship 7 p.m., Mass 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-546-7328, mkeyes@indy.rr.com.

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 535 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. **Lenten Fish Fry**, fish, fries, slaw and drink, 5-7 p.m., adults \$8, seniors \$6, children \$4 children. Desserts available for \$1. Information: 317-771-5909, a.coltman@sbcglobal.net.

St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. **Lenten Fish Fry**, dinners, sandwiches and sides, dine-in, carry out or delivery, assorted prices, noon-6 p.m. Information: 317-536-1047 or stritchsecretary71@yahoo.com. †

Retreats and Programs

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

April 7-8

Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Preparing for Holy Week**, Providence Sisters Jan Craven and Paula Damiano presenting, Fri. 7 p.m. through Sat. 5 p.m., \$200 includes meals and housing, \$150 commuters. Register by March 23 for housing, March 31 for commuters. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or spsmw.org/providence-center/events.

April 7-9

Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, **Celebrating the Paschal**

Mystery, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting, \$255 single, \$425 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Tobit Marriage Preparation Weekend**, \$298 includes separate room accommodations for couple, meals, snacks and materials. Information, registration: www.archindy.org/fatima/calendar/tobit.html, Marcia. johnson@archindy.org or 317-545-7681, ext. 107.

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. †

Sacred Rhythms of Prayer, Benedictine Sister Carol Falkner and Patty Moore presenting, 7 p.m. Sat. through 10:30 a.m. Sun., \$200 per person; bring a friend - \$175 per person. Information and registration: 317-788-7581, www.benedictinn.org.

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mt. St. Francis. **The Wisdom of the Second Half of Life women's retreat**, Judy Ribar presenting, 7 p.m. Fri.-2 pm. Sun., \$150 includes lunch and dinner on Sat. and lunch on Sun. Information and registration: 812-923-8817, retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org or www.mountsaintfrancis.org. †

Divorce and Beyond offered on Tuesdays from April 18-May 23 in Indianapolis

Divorce and Beyond, a ministry of the archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life and Family Life, will be offered at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, from 7-9 p.m. on six consecutive Tuesdays from April 18-May 23.

The topics for discussion will be the process of divorce, self-image, stress,

anger, blame, guilt, loneliness and forgiveness.

The cost of the six-week session is \$30, which includes a book.

For more information or to register, contact divorce and bereavement ministry coordinator Deb Van Velse at 317-236-1586 or dvanvelse@archindy.org. Registration also at www.archindy.org/plfl/ministries-divorce.html. †

On April 6-9, Agape Performing Arts to perform Les Miserables School Edition

Agape Performing Arts, a ministry of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, will perform the musical *Les Miserables School Edition* at Knights of Columbus Mater Dei Council 436 McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware St., in Indianapolis, at 7:30 p.m. on April 6-8 and at 3:30 p.m. on April 9.

This author-approved edition has

been abridged to a running time of just over two hours, while carefully maintaining the integrity of one of the greatest musicals ever written.

Tickets are \$5 for children, \$10 for adults and VIP seating for \$15.

More information can be found and tickets can be purchased at www.thelittleboxoffice.com/agape. †



What a story

Members of the fourth-grade class of St. Michael School in Greenfield pose on Jan. 31 with their teacher, Kim Dehr, along with a check for \$500 the class received for winning a story contest sponsored by Vectren Corporation, a natural gas distribution company. The contest was open to schools in Indiana and Ohio. In addition to the money, which is for use in the students' classroom, the class received a hardbound copy of the story they wrote, edited and illustrated titled, "You Can Be an Energy Safe Kid, Too!" (Submitted photo)

Regnum Christi will offer one-day silent retreat for women on April 8

Regnum Christi Ohio Valley will offer a one-day silent retreat for women based upon the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola* at Our Lady of the Apostles Family Center, 2884 N. 700 W., in Greenfield, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on April 8.

Throughout the centuries, the *Spiritual Exercises* have proven to be an excellent means of conversion and sanctification. The retreat focuses on identifying the root of your most persistent sinful habits and developing a plan for fostering the virtues that can help you eliminate those sinful tendencies. The retreat is silent to help participants maintain their focus on God and listen to what he is saying.

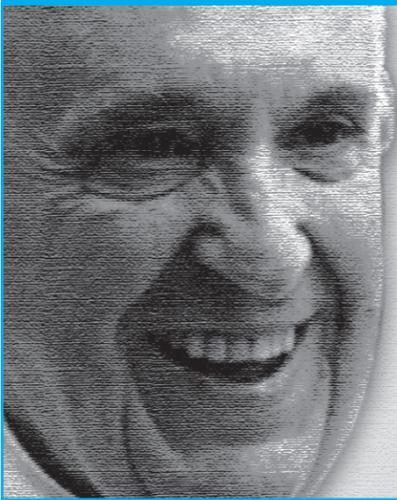
Regnum Christi (Latin for "Kingdom of Christ") is an approved group, or movement, within the Church that helps people to live their faith deeply and to

get involved in works of service that assist people with the hope of bringing them closer to the Lord.

Registration is from 9-9:30 a.m. Mass is at 9:30 a.m., then the rest of the day will be spent in silence. The sacrament of reconciliation, Stations of the Cross, the rosary and individual spiritual guidance will be available.

The cost is \$35, which includes a catered lunch and retreat materials. Registration and payment are due by April 2. Make checks payable to Summit Seekers, Inc., c/o Renée Schoening, 1862 Windy Hill Lane, Indianapolis, IN, 46239.

To register or for more information, contact Renée Schoening at j.r.schoening@sbcglobal.net or call 317-201-5815. †



The Face of Mercy

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

By Daniel Conway

Religious women, men are witnesses to hope

In his homily for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord last month, Pope Francis said:

"When the parents of Jesus brought the Child in fulfillment of the prescriptions of the law, Simeon, 'guided by the Spirit,' took the Child in his arms and broke out in a hymn of blessing and praise. 'My eyes,' he said, 'have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.' Simeon not only saw, but was privileged to hold in his arms the long-awaited hope, which filled him with exultation. His heart rejoiced because God had come to dwell among his people; he felt his presence in the flesh.

"Today's liturgy tells us that in that rite, the Lord, 40 days after his birth, outwardly was fulfilling the Law, but in reality he was coming to meet his believing people. This encounter of God with his people brings joy and renews hope.

"Simeon's canticle is the hymn of the believer, who at the end of his days can exclaim: 'It is true, hope in God

never disappoints.' God never deceives us. Simeon and Anna, in their old age, were capable of a new fruitfulness, and they testify to this in song. Life is worth living in hope, because the Lord keeps his promise. Jesus himself will later explain this promise in the synagogue of Nazareth: the sick, prisoners, those who are alone, the poor, the elderly and sinners, all are invited to take up this same hymn of hope. Jesus is with them, Jesus is with us."

Simeon's great hymn of hope is available to everyone, the pope says, because Jesus calls each of us to be "his believing people" and to encounter him personally in joy.

In this homily, Pope Francis also called attention to the 21st World Day of Consecrated Life, an annual celebration of the contributions made by members of religious communities. As a Jesuit, Jorge Mario Bergoglio knows about the ups and downs of religious life from the inside out. In the 1970s, he served as a Jesuit provincial. Afterward, he also served as a teacher, administrator and spiritual director before being ordained a bishop in his native Buenos Aires.

In this homily, the pope likened the hope-filled prayer of the old man, Simeon, to the witness given by the founders of religious orders—the "elders in faith" who shared their hopes and dreams with their followers.

"We have inherited this hymn of hope from our elders. They made us part of this process. In their faces, in their lives, in their daily sacrifice we were able to see how this praise was embodied. We are heirs to the dreams of our elders, heirs to the hope that did not disappoint our founding mothers and fathers, our older brothers and sisters. We are heirs to those who have gone before us and had the courage to dream.

"Like them, we too want to sing, 'God does not deceive; hope in him does not disappoint.' God comes to meet his people. And we want to sing by taking up the prophecy of Joel and making it our own: 'I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions' " (Jl 3:1).

Pope Francis warns against all forms of apathy and discouragement in the consecrated religious of our day. He strongly encourages all priests, sisters and brothers to "take up the dreams of our elders," and "once more encounter what originally set our hearts on fire!"

Authentic Christian life requires the willingness to let go of what is comfortable. That's why Pope Francis concludes with a courageous call to action:

"Let us accompany Jesus as he goes forth to meet his people, to be in the midst of his people. Let us go forth, not with complaining or anxiety, but with serenity and songs of praise. Not with apprehension but with the patience of those who trust in the Spirit. In this way, let us share what is truly our own: the hymn that is born of hope."

The courage to dream has been handed on to us by our elders. Let's not hesitate to take up their dreams or to let our hearts burn with hope!

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

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

Los hombres y mujeres religiosos son testigos de esperanza

En su homilía en ocasión de la Fiesta de la Presentación del Señor en el Templo, el mes pasado, el papa Francisco dijo:

"Cuando los padres de Jesús llevaron al Niño para cumplir las prescripciones de la ley, Simeón 'conducido por el Espíritu' toma al Niño en brazos y comienza un canto de bendición y alabanza: 'Porque mis ojos han visto a tu Salvador, a quien has presentado ante todos los pueblos; luz para alumbrar a las naciones, y gloria de tu pueblo Israel.' Simeón no sólo pudo ver, también tuvo el privilegio de abrazar la esperanza anhelada, y eso lo hace exultar de alegría. Su corazón se alegra porque Dios habita en medio de su pueblo; lo siente carne de su carne.

"La liturgia de hoy nos dice que con ese rito, a los 40 días de nacer, el Señor 'fue presentado en el templo para cumplir la ley, pero sobre todo para encontrarse con el pueblo creyente.' El encuentro de Dios con su pueblo despierta la alegría y renueva la esperanza.

"El canto de Simeón es el canto del hombre creyente que, al final de sus días, es capaz de afirmar: 'Es cierto, la esperanza en Dios nunca decepciona.' Él no defrauda. Simeón y Ana, en la vejez,

son capaces de una nueva fecundidad, y lo testimonian cantando: la vida vale la pena vivirla con esperanza porque el Señor mantiene su promesa; y será, más tarde, el mismo Jesús quien explicará esta promesa en la Sinagoga de Nazaret: los enfermos, los detenidos, los que están solos, los pobres, los ancianos, los pecadores también son invitados a entonar el mismo canto de esperanza. Jesús está con ellos, él está con nosotros."

El Santo Padre nos dice que el gran himno de Simeón está al alcance de todos porque Jesús nos llama a cada uno para que seamos su "pueblo creyente" y a encontrarlo personalmente en la alegría.

En su homilía, el papa Francisco hizo énfasis en la celebración de la XXI Jornada Mundial de la Vida Consagrada, una celebración anual de los aportes realizados por los miembros de las comunidades religiosas. Como jesuita, Jorge Mario Bergoglio conoce los altos y los bajos de la vida religiosa desde su propio seno. En la década de los 70, sirvió como jesuita provincial. Posteriormente también fue maestro, administrador y director espiritual antes de su ordenación como obispo en su natal Buenos Aires.

En su homilía, el papa comparó la oración cargada de esperanza de un anciano—Simeón—con el testimonio de los fundadores de las órdenes religiosas, los "mayores en la fe," que compartieron sus esperanzas y sueños con sus seguidores.

"Este canto de esperanza lo hemos heredado de nuestros mayores. Ellos nos han introducido en esta 'dinámica.' En sus rostros, en sus vidas, en su entrega cotidiana y constante pudimos ver como esta alabanza se hizo carne. Somos herederos de los sueños de nuestros mayores, herederos de la esperanza que no desilusionó a nuestras madres y padres fundadores, a nuestros hermanos mayores. Somos herederos de nuestros ancianos que se animaron a soñar; y, al igual que ellos, hoy queremos nosotros también cantar: Dios no defrauda, la esperanza en él no desilusiona. Dios viene al encuentro de su Pueblo. Y queremos cantar adentrándonos en la profecía de Joel: 'Derramaré mi espíritu sobre toda carne, vuestros hijos e hijas profetizarán, vuestros ancianos tendrán sueños y visiones' " (Jl 3:1).

El papa advierte a los religiosos consagrados de nuestra época a que no

sucumban a la apatía y al desánimo. Anima vehementemente a todos los sacerdotes, religiosas y hermanos a "recibir el sueño de nuestros mayores" y a "volver a encontrarnos con lo que un día encendió nuestro corazón."

La vida cristiana auténtica implica estar dispuestos a abandonar nuestra comodidad. Es por ello que el papa Francisco concluye con un valiente llamado a la acción:

"Acompañemos a Jesús en el encuentro con su pueblo, a estar en medio de su pueblo, no en el lamento o en la ansiedad de quien se olvidó de profetizar porque no se hace cargo de los sueños de sus mayores, sino en la alabanza y la serenidad; no en la agitación sino en la paciencia de quien confía en el Espíritu. [...] Y así compartamos lo que no nos pertenece: el canto que nace de la esperanza."

Nuestros mayores nos han dado el valor para soñar. No dudemos en acoger sus sueños ni en dejar que nuestros corazones se enciendan de esperanza.

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.) †

Make confession more available, God's heart is always open, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Hear confession every time someone asks, Pope Francis said, and don't ever put limited hours on the sacrament of reconciliation.

"Please, let there never be those signs that say, 'Confessions: Mondays and Wednesdays from this time to that time,'" he told hundreds of confessors and other participants attending an annual course sponsored by the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican court that handles issues related to the absolution of sin.

"Hear confession every time someone asks you. And if you are sitting there,

praying, leave the confessional open because God's heart is open," he said on March 17.

Confession "is a pastoral priority," and is a daily call to head to the "peripheries of evil and sin, and this is an ugly periphery," he said.

"I'll confess," he told his audience, that the Apostolic Penitentiary "is the tribunal that I really like because it is a 'tribunal of mercy,' where one goes to get that indispensable medicine for our souls, which is divine mercy."

A good confessor, he said, has begged

God for "the gift of a wounded heart, capable of understanding others' wounds and of healing them" with God's mercy, he said.

So much harm is done to the Church and human souls when a confessor is not guided by prayer and the Holy Spirit in discerning what God wants to be done, he said.

"The confessor never follows his own will and doesn't teach his own doctrine," but is called to be God's servant in full communion with the Church.

Be ready to use confession as an opportunity to evangelize and remind

people of the basic, essential truth of faith and morality. Pray to God for the gift of humility and the recognition of one's own sins that God fully pardoned, he told them.

This kind of prayer is not only "the prime guarantee for avoiding every harsh approach that fruitlessly judges the sinner and not the sin," he said, it also reminds confessors they are "simple, albeit necessary, administrators" of God's free gift. "And he will certainly be pleased if we make extensive use of his mercy." †

CHAPEL

continued from page 1

brought to us by one of our historical society members. ... We thought that [the photograph] would be a really nice scene to re-create.”



Michael Redmond

The photo depicts three Italian prisoners painting finishing touches in the chapel, with U.S. Army chaplain Conventual Franciscan Father Maurice Imhoff standing in front of the altar.

Father Maurice is one of the persons “brought to life” for the exhibit. He is portrayed by Michael Redmond, a paid IHS actor who is also a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis.

To portray Father Maurice, Redmond relied upon Wolfgram’s research and research of his own. He tracked down newspaper articles from the priest’s hometown newspaper. He also read correspondence between Father Maurice and his family.

“We have four weeks to prepare” for their roles in the exhibit, he says. “We do probably a half a semester’s worth of work in four weeks.”

Redmond brings more than knowledge to the role of Father Maurice.

“Being Catholic, your entire being is Catholic,” he says. “Everything about you is Catholic. That was one of the reasons I was attracted to playing the priest. And I have an understanding of what a priest is.”

For the actors not familiar with Catholicism, Father Jeffrey Godecker, a retired priest of the archdiocese, was brought in to give an overview of the faith.

“I was there for about two hours,” says Father Godecker. “A lot of it was to answer their questions about Catholicism [now] and Catholicism at that time, what Italian Catholicism would be like, what [the prisoners’] relationship with the chaplain was.”

“I was trying to take them back to the Catholicism of the ‘40s, which would mean Mass in Latin. We talked about the two saints [portrayed in the frescoes in the chapel]—St. Francis and St. Anthony, Italian saints. Those would be the two saints for most Italians.”

Wolfgram says it was interesting for the actors to learn about the pope of the time, Pope Pius XII.



John DeHart, right, a member of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Franklin, talks with “Lt. Col. John Gammell” as “POW Dorino Moro” looks on in the re-created 1943 Italian POW-built Catholic chapel of Camp Atterbury in Edinburgh. The Indiana Historical Society in Indianapolis re-created the chapel as an exhibit to inform visitors about life for the 3,000 Italian prisoners of war interned at Camp Atterbury in Edinburgh during World War II. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

“It was fun learning about his involvement with different humanitarian efforts at that time and the official stance he was able to take on different things going on during WWII,” she says.

‘In prison, but the tone was different’

The very presence of the prisoner-built chapel speaks to the importance of the Italian POWs’ faith, says Wolfgram. The prisoners would had to have presented the idea to and sought permission from the compound director, U.S. Army Lt. Col. John Gammell.

“There could be a number of reasons why the men wanted to do this,” she speculates. “There’s the aspect that faith was a vibrant part of their lives back in Italy, and certainly the aspect that they’ve been in war for several years. Right before this, they were in North Africa, and they wouldn’t have been able to properly [celebrate] Mass or really any of the sacraments.”

“There could also be some guilt—the fact that their families were in all of the turmoil that Italy was experiencing, various cities getting bombed, a lack of resources there. They were really experiencing no danger when they were here.”

“Just the care that these men put into it I think really speaks to the great importance they were putting on this chapel.”

Wolfgram explains that the prisoners built the chapel with “material left over by the Army—the Army didn’t give them specific materials for this

purpose. [The prisoners] wanted to, of course, dress it up” with frescoes and a painted marbled look to the altar, she says.

Most interesting to Wolfgram in the roughly 15 months she spent researching the project was “learning about the culture that was developed at this prisoner of war camp, and how they were allowed certain freedoms,” she says.

“They were in prison, but the tone was just different than what I expected for a POW camp. They had recreation time. They had time to pursue hobbies. I believe it was in this recreational, off-time from their normal work that they were allowed to work on this [chapel]. ...

“My understanding is that Lt. Col. John Gammell was very kind to these POWs. ... There were certain regulations they were following through the Geneva Convention, just to make sure that these men were being treated well. But he really took it a step further.”

Although she could find no specific start date, Wolfgram believes construction of the chapel started in July of 1943 and took about six weeks to complete.

“By the time we get to early October, they actually have a delegate from the Vatican come and [celebrate] a Mass,” she explains. “But I feel it would have been consecrated before that, because I see reports of them starting to use it by late August. I think there was a period where they were working on it but still having Mass.”

Mass is still celebrated at the “Chapel on the Meadow,” as it has come to be called. Each year in August, the Italian Heritage Society of Indiana hosts a Mass, rosary and picnic by the chapel. Wolfgram credits past society president Dr. James Davita with providing information on the chapel.

“He’s Catholic and Italian,” she says. “He’s done a lot of research on specific parishes, and we know that [Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis] has a lot of connection to what was going on in this camp. We’ve got some resources indicating

[the prisoners] had a priest a few times before they had Father Imhoff full time.”

‘Come in and play along’

The format of learning about history by interacting with actors “in character” is called first-person interpretation.

Wolfgram says that of the nine characters recreated—including Father Imhoff, Lt. Col. Gammell, a few guards and five POWs—any two or three could be present at a time.

“The topics people could ask about could be a wide range,” says Wolfgram. “[The actors] would certainly be able to speak to the home front—the camp would have affected life for people in the area. They would have had interactions with the POWs some.”

“They can speak to the Catholicism being displayed here—this is obviously a religious space. Also where these men have been before they were brought here, their daily life here, what they experienced back in Italy.”

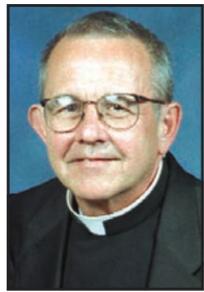
Because not all visitors are comfortable with first-person interpretation, says Wolfgram, an informational section with audio and visual displays is available outside the chapel.

A St. Joseph’s Table Shrine is also on display. It provides information about the Italian tradition of celebrating St. Joseph’s Table to commemorate the saint’s feast day on March 19. The shrine is sponsored by the Italian Heritage Society of Indiana.

Redmond recommends that, to get the most of the chapel exhibit, visitors come prepared to leave the present behind.

“If people come in and play along,” he says, “if they allow themselves to be in 1943 and take us as we are, that we are who we say we are, it will be a natural outpouring of information.”

(For more information on the exhibit and the costs and location, log on to www.indianahistory.org. For more information about the Italian Heritage Society of Indiana, log on to italianheritage.org.) †



‘I was trying to take them back to the Catholicism of the ‘40s, which would mean Mass in Latin. We talked about the two saints [portrayed in the frescoes in the chapel]—St. Francis and St. Anthony, Italian saints. Those would be the two saints for most Italians.’

—Father Jeffrey Godecker, a retired archdiocesan priest who assisted the Indiana Historical Society

‘Play along’ to get the most out of the Chapel on the Meadow exhibit

By Natalie Hoefler

Michael Redmond, an actor for the Indiana Historical Society (IHS) in Indianapolis, says that to get the most out of a visit to IHS’s recreated Catholic chapel built in 1943 by Italian prisoners of war interned at Camp Atterbury during World War II, it is best for visitors to “play along” with the actors.

“If they allow themselves to be in 1943 and take us as we are, that we are who we say we are, it will be a natural outpouring of information,” he says.

Here are questions visitors might consider asking the actors who portray Italian POWs, camp guards, camp director United States Army Lt. Col John Gammell and U.S. Army chaplain Conventual Franciscan Father Maurice Imhoff.

Questions for any character

What do you think of the conditions in the camp?
What is a typical day like in the prison camp for you?

What are the reactions of the local community to the camp?

What is the food like?

What do the prisoners do for recreation?

What do you know about the current pope?

Where have you served?

Why do you think the chapel is a good idea?

What kind of prayer material is available in the chapel?

Questions for POWs

Where did you fight in the war?

How long did it take to get here?

What did you think about coming to America?

Had you ever heard of Indiana?

Do you have any contacts with the world outside of the camp?

Why did you want to build the chapel?

How often is Mass celebrated in the camp?

What did you contribute to the chapel?

Who are the murals of, and why were they chosen?

Questions for guards

Has anyone tried to escape?

Do you ever take prisoners outside of the camp?

Questions for Lt. Col. John Gammell

Why did you let them build the chapel?

What other things have they asked for?

How does their treatment differ from POW camps in Europe?

Where did you get the material for the chapel?

Questions for Father Imhoff

What are some of the ways that you interact with the prisoners outside of Mass?

Why is the altar against the wall—how do you get behind it to celebrate Mass?

What language do you use to communicate with the prisoners?

How does the practice of the faith here differ from in Italy? †

Men's conference gives early Lenten boost in faith to participants

By Sean Gallagher

ST. LEON—Some 800 Catholic men from Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio got a good spiritual boost at the start of Lent by participating in the second annual E6 Catholic Men's Conference held on March 4 at East Central High School in St. Leon.

The title of the conference, organized by All Saints Parish in Dearborn County and its King's Men men's faith formation group, refers to the sixth chapter of St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians in which the Apostle exhorts believers to "put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil" (Eph 6:11).



Patrick Madrid

This year's conference featured presentations by Catholic apologist and author Patrick Madrid; clinical psychologist, Catholic author and radio host Dr. Ray Guarendi; and Pro Football Hall of Famer Anthony Munoz, who played left tackle for the

National Football League's Cincinnati Bengals from 1980-92.

Opportunities for prayer and the sacraments during the conference

included Mass, praying of the rosary, the sacrament of penance, eucharistic adoration and Benediction.



Dr. Ray Guarendi

Madrid recalled a time during a summer in the 1970s when he was a high school student in California and dated a girl whose father

was opposed to the Catholic faith and challenged him frequently about it.

During that summer, Madrid, with the help of his father and Catholic books that his father shared with him, learned about the faith and was able to answer those challenges.

"He actually, without intending to, made me a stronger Catholic," said Madrid of his girlfriend's father. "By the end of the summer, I had learned my Catholic faith under pressure so that I actually began to believe it for myself.



Participants in the E6 Catholic Men's Conference on March 4 at East Central High School in St. Leon hold up rosaries while they are being blessed by Father Jonathan Meyer, pastor of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, which organized the second annual conference.



Pro Football Hall of Famer Anthony Munoz, who played 13 years with the National Football League's Cincinnati Bengals, reflects on his life and faith.

It was no longer, 'I'm Catholic because that's how I was raised.'"

Madrid encouraged the men at the conference, especially fathers and grandfathers, to be leaders in the faith for the young people in their lives like his father was for him.

"Unless we know why we believe what we believe, we are unable, I believe, to lead or encourage or teach," Madrid said. "If we really want to be those leaders, we have to know what we believe."

This leadership, he said, is important today because the numbers of Catholics and Christians in the U.S. is declining while those who adhere to no faith is increasing.

"I would argue that the only way that we can stop that from happening is for you and me as Catholic men to not only know what we believe, why we believe it," Madrid said, "but also have the gumption to share those beliefs with other people at work, in your social circles and certainly in your families."

In the conference's second presentation, Guarendi noted with many humorous asides that leadership for fathers must involve discipline in a cultural climate that is increasingly difficult for people of faith.

"You're the best parent those kids are going to have," he said. "Do you know that? If you don't do it, for whatever reason, it's going to be done. Those folks out there will discipline that child. A judge, a landlord, an army sergeant, a police officer, an employer—I shudder to say the next one—a wife. Somebody's going to teach them, and the world hurts. The world will hurt our kids."

"Discipline without love may be harsh," Guarendi continued. "Love without discipline is child abuse, because ultimately that kid is going to be crushed by those folks out there."

In his homily during the conference's Mass, Father Jonathan Meyer exhorted his listeners to invite young men to consider if God is calling them to be priests.

"That's the role of every man in this auditorium," said Father Meyer, pastor of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County. "There are men in this room today that God is calling to be priests. Who is going to invite them? Who's going to encourage them? And who's going to pray for them?"

During a break in the conference, All Saints parishioner Will Vollmer, a father of three children, said the day was a way for him to be renewed in his vocation.

"It's nice to recharge like this," he said. "I'm excited to go back home. Sometimes, you get complacent. I've got some things to go and work on with my kids, appreciate them more, talking with them more instead of just throwing them in a time out. There's a nurturing opportunity there."

In the afternoon, Munoz shared his story of being raised in poverty by a single mother, enduring many injuries in college football, and becoming one of the best offensive linemen in the history of pro football.

"The tough times that we go through refine us and make us the people that God wants us to be," Munoz said.

He encouraged conference participants to focus on their faith and relationship with God in their everyday lives.

"What you do every day should be [a] way of worshipping God and thanking him for the opportunities you have," Munoz said. "God will continue to open doors for each and every one of us. We've just got to be willing to be used by him. We all have opportunities to be mentors, to have an impact in our communities, if we're willing to be used."



Kyle Vollmer, left, and his brother Will Vollmer laugh during a presentation by Dr. Ray Guarendi on March 4. Kyle is a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Harrison, Ohio, in the Cincinnati Archdiocese. Will is a member of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, which organized the conference. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

In the conference's final presentation, Madrid reflected on three kinds of conversion—spiritual, moral and intellectual.

He recalled a conversation he once had with a woman who had an abortion and subsequently abandoned the Catholic faith in which she had been raised. After hearing her story, Madrid counselled her to go to confession, only to see her appalled by his advice.

At the time, he thought that his approach was a total failure. But some time later, the woman spoke to Madrid again, telling him that she had eventually taken his advice, experienced a conversion and had returned to the Church.

"Let's be available to God for the spiritual conversion of people around us," Madrid reflected. "Don't forget how God works through our weaknesses. The spiritual conversion of your own, as well as people around you, may very well happen because of your availability."

In speaking about moral conversion, Madrid reflected on the challenge of living what one believes, especially in a culture where pornography is so widely available, particularly online.

"The great saints of the Latin Rite Church, at least since St. Dominic, will all tell you that the rosary is the most powerful weapon against sin and vice, outside the Mass and the sacraments," he said. "You will see tremendous moral conversion. Whatever it may be in life, you'll begin to see correction and improvement in all the little things that are keeping you from God."

The challenges to the faith coming today, especially from popular views on scientific and medical developments, requires Catholics to increase their knowledge of the faith in an intellectual conversion, Madrid noted.

"You're not prepared if you don't have an intellectual conversion," he said. "We all have to be constantly learning. It doesn't take much."

In fact, he said that reading the Bible and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for 10 minutes a day can be like a "Bowflex for your mind."

A period of eucharistic adoration and Benediction ended the conference. Father Meyer encouraged the attendees to take their renewed faith and put it into action in the world.

"What a blessing to be with you men,



Father Jonathan Meyer, pastor of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, distributes Communion during a Mass celebrated on March 4 during the E6 Catholic Men's Conference held at East Central High School in St. Leon. Assisting Father Meyer is altar server Jack Deddens, a member of All Saints Parish.

to be with our Lord, to be united in strength, to put on the armor of God, that we may go out and battle in a world that longs for truth, meaning and purpose," he said. "I invite you to join me in this battle, the battle to reclaim our faith, our souls, to fight against the principalities and powers of the world that are all against us.

"But Christ is victorious, and thus so are we." †



Mike St. Amand, a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, joins approximately 800 conference attendees in praying the rosary.

Lent provides an opportunity to focus attention on homeless

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Almsgiving is a Lenten tradition, and Washington resident Ron Van Bellen says his volunteer work feeding the homeless honors his Catholic faith as he prepares for Easter.

The real estate agent and member of Holy Trinity Parish in Georgetown was one of several volunteers dishing up dinner for homeless men and women lined up on March 8 for the weekly St. Maria's meals program sponsored by Catholic Charities each Wednesday evening.

Van Bellen took time to greet each man and woman who went through the food line before they made their way along the downtown Washington sidewalk to eat their dinner.

"Every time I volunteer, I reflect on how my day went and how it related to my relationship with God," he told Catholic News Service (CNS). "It does relate to Lent. We have to sacrifice and serve our brothers and sisters."

Van Bellen's example of helping the homeless during Lent is a Catholic value that Washington's Catholic Charities president and CEO, Msgr. John Enzler, would like to see spread across the U.S.

It's clear in the Scriptures that fasting and penance go beyond not eating meat on Fridays and giving something up during Lent, Msgr. Enzler told CNS. "It's about making someone else's life better with your service and your commitment."

The homeless are among the world's most vulnerable people, and providing service to them during Lent is an ideal way for Catholics to live out their faith in a way that will make a real difference, he said.

Concerted efforts by religious and governmental organizations to address the U.S. homeless situation appear to be making a difference.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported a 3 percent drop in the national homelessness rate from 2015 to 2016 and a 12 percent drop in the last five years.

HUD reported the 2016 national homeless population to be nearly 550,000.

However, the homeless rate rose from 2015 to 2016 in the District of Columbia

and a few states, including Alabama, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Oklahoma and Washington.

With more than a half million people still considered homeless, it's an issue that all U.S. cities confront, and there are varying solutions being employed to raise money necessary to address it in a consequential way, Msgr. Enzler said.

In its effort to fund anti-homelessness programs, Los Angeles County placed a proposal called Measure H on its ballot during its March 7 election.

The initiative, which passed, raises the sales tax a quarter cent and is expected to generate \$355 million a year for 10 years to fund mental health, addiction treatment, health care, job training, affordable housing and other programs and services for the homeless.

"There doesn't seem to be a secret sauce, if you will, about how to completely eradicate homelessness," Msgr. Enzler said. "But, it seems to me that we just don't have enough case workers and social workers."

He believes more people need to serve as navigators, mentors or coaches for individual homeless men and women.

"We don't have enough people who can really step in and say, 'I'm going to help this one individual,'" Msgr. Enzler said, "and say 'it's my job to help just that one person get a job and get a place to stay and stay with them. Mentor them through that process.'"

He has been encouraging volunteers in his Catholic Charities' programs to make the homeless their focal point during Lent.

Pope Francis has long urged governments and Christians to recognize the dignity of the homeless and help ease their suffering.

Homelessness became more complicated in the nation's capital this Lenten season because the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library shut down on March 4 for a three-year, multimillion-dollar renovation.

Many D.C. homeless men and women used that library branch as a day resource center, a place to get out of the elements during the daytime hours, to use the computer lab to look for work and to use the public restrooms, Msgr. Enzler said.

That closure inspired him to explore a partnership between the District of



Volunteers with Catholic Charities' St. Maria's meals program in Washington serve dinner on March 8 to the homeless. (CNS photo/Chaz Muth)

Columbia and other charitable groups to fund an official day resource center for the homeless, complete with a meal program, laundry and shower facilities, as well as job counselors, case managers and social workers.

It's an idea that is still percolating with no commitments yet realized, Msgr. Enzler said.

It's also an idea that Able Putu, a 37-year-old homeless Washingtonian who uses a wheelchair, would like to see come to fruition.

Putu said the library closure left him without a place to rest, use the lavatory and made him more vulnerable to being

robbed during the daytime hours.

"I know a lot of people think the homeless are scum and aren't worthy of anyone's help, and maybe that's true about some of them," Putu said, "but it's not true about most of us."

Van Bellen said he had been one of those people with a negative opinion of the homeless before he started his volunteer work.

"I found out that those were misperceptions," he said. "What I've discovered is the homeless people I've encountered here are sweet and definitely misunderstood. I wouldn't have figured that out if I hadn't exposed myself to them." †

Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following list of services was reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

- March 28, 7 p.m. for St. Catherine of Siena, Decatur County, at St. John the Evangelist, Enochsburg
- March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
- April 7, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. for All Saints, Dearborn County, at St. Martin Campus, Yorkville
- April 12, 7 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County

Bloomington Deanery

- March 28, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Mitchell, and St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, at St. Vincent de Paul
- April 5, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer
- April 6, 6 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington
- April 12, 4-9 p.m. confession for St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, and St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington, at St. Paul Catholic Center

Connersville Deanery

- April 4, 6 p.m. confession for St. Elizabeth Ann Seton at St. Mary Church, Richmond after 5:15 p.m. Mass

Indianapolis East Deanery

- March 27, 7 p.m. for Holy Angels and St. Rita, at St. Rita
- March 31, 6-8 p.m. confession at St. Michael, Greenfield

- April 1, 10 a.m.-noon confession at St. Michael, Greenfield
- April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville

Indianapolis South Deanery

- April 4, 7 p.m. for St. Barnabas, St. Mark the Evangelist and St. Roch, at St. Barnabas
- April 10, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

- March 27, 7 p.m. for Holy Angels and St. Rita, at St. Rita
- March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel
- April 4, 7 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
- April 5, 7 p.m. for St. Anthony and St. Christopher, at St. Christopher
- April 7, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas More, Mooresville

New Albany Deanery

- April 6, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany ("12 Hours of Grace")
- April 9, 1 p.m. at St. John, Starlight

The following additional confession times are part of the New Albany Deanery's "The Light is on for You:"

- 6-7 p.m. each Tuesday in Lent at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
- 5:45-7:30 p.m. with adoration each Wednesday in Lent at St. Michael, Charlestown

- 6:30-7:30 p.m. each Wednesday in Lent for St. John Paul II, Clark County at St. Paul Church, Sellersburg
- 6:30-7:30 p.m. each Wednesday in Lent at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
- 7-8:30 p.m. each Wednesday in Lent at Holy Family, New Albany
- 5:45-7:30 p.m. with adoration each Thursday in Lent at St. Francis Xavier, Henryville
- 4-6 p.m. each Friday in Lent at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville
- 8-10 a.m. each Saturday in Lent at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville

Seymour Deanery

- March 28, 6:30 p.m. for St. Ann, Jennings County; St. Mary, North Vernon; and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Mary
- March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus

Terre Haute Deanery

- April 3, 7 p.m. for St. Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods; Sacred Heart of Jesus; St. Benedict; St. Patrick; St. Joseph University; and St. Margaret Mary, all of Terre Haute, at St. Joseph University
- April 10, 7 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle
- April 11, 7 p.m. at Annunciation, Brazil †

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Saints provide strong examples of prayer, fasting and almsgiving

By Effie Caldarola

The three pillars of Lent—prayer, fasting and almsgiving—enrich our spiritual life during this penitential season. But they can also be challenging.

Saints can shed light on our journey. So let's begin with almsgiving and look to St. Katharine Drexel as a profound example of the depth to which this practice calls us.

In many ways, Drexel is a saint for our time. She died in 1955 at the age of 96, and her feast day on March 3 stood this year like a beacon at the beginning of Lent.

Born in Philadelphia into great wealth, Drexel was a debutante, a world traveler, and a well-educated girl who made the society pages. Using the jargon of the Gilded Age, when extravagant displays of wealth marked success, she had every opportunity to marry "well."

But Drexel heard a different call. Like a page out of today's news, the plight of people of color in the U.S. troubled her. On a European tour, she met Pope Leo XIII and encouraged him to send more missionaries to serve Native Americans. The pontiff replied by asking her why she didn't become a missionary.

Eventually, Katharine forsook her social status to found an order of missionary sisters and dedicate her life and fortune to serving Native and African-Americans. Reportedly, this prompted a late 19th-century headline that could have been ripped from today's tabloids: "Gives up Seven Million."

Drexel's achievements include the founding of Xavier University in New Orleans, the first Catholic university in the U.S. for African-Americans; 145 missions for Native Americans; and a system of black Catholic schools. She battled segregation until a heart attack forced her retirement in the 1930s.

Drexel's sanctity had its roots at home: Her father and stepmother were pious and generous, reminding us that the example we give our children makes a difference. Another lesson: Unlike Drexel or the rich young man of the Gospel, we may not be called to give up everything, but our faith challenges us all to give sacrificially and to reject the false idols of status and wealth.

All saints are examples of intense prayer, but St. Ignatius of Loyola is an outstanding guide to deeper prayer during Lent. Despite being born in the Basque region of northern Spain in 1491, he has great relevance today. The *Spiritual Exercises* that he developed are considered one of the most influential

books on spirituality ever written, and they have experienced a huge burst of popularity since the Second Vatican Council.

Numerous books are available to guide ordinary people in the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius, and a quick online search of "Ignatian spirituality" can lead to a wealth of help for Lent.

Like Drexel, Ignatius was born into wealth. A product of his era, he was infatuated with romantic ideals of chivalry and warfare that he believed proved one's manhood and won women's hearts.

But after he experienced a serious leg injury during combat, the young nobleman was forced to spend weeks in bed recuperating, where he hoped to read the romantic literature of the era. But only the lives of the saints were available.

Ignatius began to discern the difference he felt in his interior life after reading of saints versus reading of romantic heroes. It was the beginning of his journey into understanding God's way of speaking to us in our own lives, a journey he eventually shared with his followers, who became the Jesuits. Today, he shares that journey of discernment with all who explore the treasure of his *Spiritual Exercises*.

During Lent, Catholics are asked to go beyond the fasting proscribed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday and fast in some way meaningful to our unique faith journey. In a culture besotted with self-care and self-indulgence, we often question whether ascetic practices like fasting are really helpful.

Venerable Matt Talbot provides an example of someone who used asceticism to help him on his journey from addiction to wholeness. Born into a large family, Talbot lived in poverty-stricken, post-Potato Famine Ireland. He began work at age 12, and that's when a soul-consuming alcoholism took root.

At the age of 28, Talbot, with the help of a



Medals depicting Venerable Matt Talbot, an Irishman known to have overcome alcoholism through religious devotion, are seen in a display case at Pauline Books and Media in Old Town Alexandria, Va. Talbot's example of fasting, applied to the particular circumstances of his life of faith, can help Catholics in their approach to this practice during Lent. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

confessor—and the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius—began his journey of sobriety. His abstinence was accompanied by a radical conversion. A laborer and a union man, he became a third order Franciscan, gave up another addiction—smoking—and began to lead his ordinary life with extraordinary penance and self-sacrifice.

Talbot is at the second rung of a four-step ladder to canonization. A miracle attributed to his intercession could lead to him being declared "Blessed." But in the meantime, thousands believe he has helped them in their struggle with addiction.

All of us are attached to something that impedes spiritual growth. During Lent, fasting from a behavior—drinking, gossiping, addictive screen time—that interferes with our relationship with Jesus can lead to conversion. An attribute of Talbot was that people described him, despite his self-denial, as a very happy man.

May the discipline of fasting, the discernment of prayer and the justice of almsgiving bring us joy this Lent.

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

The saints celebrated during Lent show the faithful how to live the Gospel

By Paul Senz

The lives of the saints are presented to us by the Church as exemplars of a Christian life. We look to their example for instruction on how to live our faith and guide ourselves into a life in Christ. During the season of Lent, there are a number of saints' feast days that can



A mosaic of martyrs SS. Perpetua and Felicity adorns a chapel wall in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, in this Sept. 28, 2016, photo. During the season of Lent, there are a number of saints' feast days, including the March 7 feast day of these North African martyrs. (CNS photo/Chaz Muth)

be particularly instructive.

Since the date of Easter is not fixed—it is celebrated on the Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal (spring) equinox—the dates that fall during Lent change from year to year. This broadens the potential for different saints' feast days to fall during this holy season.

We strive to commemorate the feasts of these holy men and women while maintaining a reverent and penitential disposition. This does not mean we must be somber-faced.

On the contrary: It means we should look at how these saints can help us live Lenten lives. Here are a few examples of saints whose feasts fall during Lent this year, and how they can help us in this way.

March 7 is the feast of SS. Felicity and Perpetua. These holy women and their companions were martyred in Carthage in present-day Tunisia around A.D. 203. Perpetua was a woman of noble birth, and Felicity her slave; not even yet baptized, the women were catechumens, so completely taken with the Gospel of Jesus Christ that they

willingly gave their lives for the sake of their faith.

St. Katharine Drexel is another figure who has left us a wonderful example of the self-sacrifice that is part and parcel of authentically living Lent, emptying ourselves for the sake of others.

Drexel, born in 1858 in Philadelphia, grew up quite wealthy, but with the understanding that the family's wealth was to be shared with others.

When she inherited the family fortune, she dedicated herself to caring for Native Americans and African-Americans. Pope Leo XIII encouraged her to become a missionary during an audience, and she eventually founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. After starting more than 60 schools (including Xavier University in New Orleans), St. Katharine Drexel died in 1955. We celebrate her feast on March 3.

There is one more saint I would like to look at whose feast falls during Lent: St. Joseph. This solemnity is typically marked on March 19, but in 2017 the feast is moved to March 20. (March 19 is the third Sunday of Lent this year.)

Among the great exemplars of a Christian life, St. Joseph stands out as a particular model. As husband of Mary and foster father of Jesus, St. Joseph dedicated his every moment and effort to the well-being of those in his charge—true self-sacrificial love.

There are many more saints whose feasts fall during Lent this year. Their stories provide guidance for us today, and there are a great many more beyond that who can serve as examples of how to live Lenten lives.

(Paul Senz is a freelance writer living in Oregon with his family.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Checking up on the work of Food for the Poor in Jamaica

While I was editor of *The Criterion*, some of my traveling was done specifically to get stories for *The*



Criterion. Two trips were to see what the organization Food for the Poor was doing. I was impressed with people I met who are doing amazing things for the poor.

My first trip with Food for the Poor was to Jamaica. There I met

Father Gregory Ramkissoon, a little (5-foot-3-inch or so) native of Trinidad, who built a community of 70 or 80 families. Most of the families still lived in homes similar to those I've seen in slums throughout the world—in Palestinian refugee camps, in Peru, in India, and other places—tiny shacks made mainly of corrugated steel or tin, without running water or toilets.

But Father Ramkissoon, with the help of Food for the Poor, was building a concrete block building that was to serve as a home for abandoned children, victims of incest and those with Down syndrome. The project provided work for the people

and taught them useful skills at the same time.

Another impressive priest was Father Richard Albert, pastor of St. Patrick Parish and St. Jude Parish, both in the middle of Waterhouse, the poorest and most violent area of Jamaica. He was a large man in his 40s, a native of New York City. As pastor of his parishes, he operated three schools, one for each parish and one for Riverton City, a community actually built on a garbage dump, with one water pipe for the 7,000 people who lived there. (Food for the Poor was in the process of building toilets and three more water pipes.)

Besides those duties, Father Albert was also editor of the archdiocesan newspaper (a well-edited monthly paper; we were given copies of a couple issues), and director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, director of evangelization and director of ecumenism for the Archdiocese of Kingston.

Father Albert also founded St. Monica's Leper Home, where 28 lepers in various stages of leprosy entertained us with singing. I recall one leper named Norris, a blind man, who played the guitar while the other residents sang. An old woman named

Lillian, with one foot, her nose and fingers missing, sang away and clapped in time to the music. A man who, we were told, was 99 years old, blind and toothless, sang a humorous song about mangoes. Young people were taking care of all these lepers with help from Food for the Poor, which supplied medical supplies.

Still another impressive man was Father Richard Ho Lung, a Jesuit priest of Chinese descent who founded the Brothers of the Poor. He was running a Faith Centre and another place called Jacob's Well, caring for 110 homeless people and others who were severely mentally disabled.

We also visited a home for the elderly being operated by the Missionaries of Charity (St. Teresa of Calcutta's sisters). And we visited a training center where young ladies were being taught to use sewing machines supplied by Food for the Poor.

It was a Jamaica that few tourists see.

(John Fink's recent series of columns on Church history is now available in book form from Amazon. It is titled *How Could This Church Survive?* with the subtitle, *It must be more than a human institution.*) †

Coming of Age/Maria-Pia Negro Chin

The cross and divine mercy during Lent

Have you found yourself wondering if Jesus loves you? Think you don't deserve this love? If you want these doubts dispelled, try praying the Stations of the Cross.



Based on scriptural accounts from the time when Jesus was condemned, leading to his death and when he was laid in the tomb, these 14 stations really help you to remember his

sacrificial love for us.

Back in college, the Way of the Cross (another name for the stations) helped me meditate on Jesus' passion and resurrection at a time when my Lenten journey kept hitting a wall. I kept thinking I needed to earn salvation through my own efforts instead of realizing that it was a gift.

Praying the Way of the Cross with Scripture, meditations and songs put things back into perspective. By reflecting on these stations, Jesus' sacrifice acquires new meaning.

Think of Jesus carrying his heavy cross, Jesus falling while people surrounded him, how he saw his mother, how he comforted those who were sad for him, how he was nailed to the wood, his death on the cross before being laid in the tomb.

This act of love was not easy.

We know that Jesus' crucifixion was not the end of the story. Thinking of the cross is a way to acknowledge the means of our salvation.

Training our will to do God's will and to glorify him can be difficult, but it does not compare to the gift we have received on the cross. Praying, fasting and almsgiving—as well as the sacrament of confession and getting rid of sinful habits—can strengthen us, help us grow in virtue and draw us closer to God during Lent amid our own crosses.

Jesus told St. Faustina Kowalska, the 20th-century Polish nun who received the message of divine mercy, that God's love and mercy are for everyone: "I have opened my heart as a living fountain of mercy. ... On the cross, the fountain of my mercy was opened wide by the lance for all souls—no one have I excluded!"

We know what the cross represents, but, sometimes, we can see it so often that we forget its meaning or what it calls us to do.

Before praying the 14 Stations of the Cross last summer, English-speaking pilgrims in Poland during World Youth Day heard from Sister Gaudia, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. She told the young people that every time she thought of God's mercy, an image of the cross would appear in her head.

"Love, the cross and mercy are about one thing: giving life for others," she said.

The sister then asked the youths to hold their crucifixes or rosary beads and to think the words "for me" when looking at the cross. "[Jesus] became human for me, he left his wisdom, his teaching in the Bible, for me. He performed many miracles then and now for me. He gave his life for me," she said. "He could not have done anything more than that, to give his life for us."

It is hard not to feel loved after that.

We can show we are convinced of this love through our actions, and by giving life to our neighbors. As we approach the season of Easter, we can continue to work on the ways we encounter the love and mercy that Christ has already given to us.

To pray the Stations of the Cross, visit goo.gl/APviVx or goo.gl/bjtdSv. To pray with a video series of the Stations of the Cross, visit bustedhalo.com/video/virtual-stations-of-the-cross.

(Maria-Pia Negro Chin is bilingual associate editor at Maryknoll Magazine.) †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

This is what may put Catholic jokes in another context

At Mass, we say we believe in "one holy, catholic and apostolic Church." Now, most of us know that holy means sacred, and apostolic means evangelistic, roughly. But do we ever consider what "catholic" really means?



Many people equate "catholic" with the Catholic Church, and this is certainly a fact. But in a way, this definition is more limited than I think is appropriate. "Catholic" (small "c") means "universal," which has a much broader scope. It includes more territory than only the Roman Catholic Church.

That's why "catholic" is not capitalized in the Creed. In declaring our faith, we recognize that we're including everyone in the family of God, not just certain portions of it.

Thus, we have a huge responsibility for viewing others as part of our spiritual family, with all the rewards and problems that come with it. We love our family and always wish them well, but sometimes they are a pain in the neck. They say that family has to take you in when no one else will, and that's both a blessing and a curse.

The universal church includes Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, atheists, agnostics and whoever else there is. It means all races of people, all ages, and all genders. It means those who embrace organized religion, New Agers and spiritualists and those who vehemently deny God's existence.

So, how can we deal with this mysterious quality that we believe is inherent in faith? How do we take on such a huge responsibility?

Emmaus Walk/Debra Tomaselli

Pray not to stray toward the devil, his words of prey

It's Lent, and I can tell.

I'm not having trouble fasting from the usual sweets and coffee.



Rather, the battle goes much deeper.

It was just an innocent question I posed to Melinda, my neighbor ... but I should have known where it could lead.

"How's Robert?"

Robert is her son.

Last year, Melinda mentioned that Robert and his wife Kate, with their two daughters, were heading toward divorce. That saddened me.

So I prayed for Robert and his wife. I prayed fervently. I know divorce is sometimes necessary, but it just didn't seem to be the case here. God's will be done.

So my initial inquiry was from a heart of love and concern.

Melinda smiled. "They're doing better," she said, "much better."

"Oh, good," I said, inviting explanation.

Melinda started talking about their struggles. Evidently, Kate never had a great childhood. Kate's mom often attacked her with critical remarks,

no matter who was around. She even embarrassed Kate at the wedding.

"She is so rude to her," Melinda said.

"It is shameful."

"That's abusive," I added.

I totally understood. I had been humiliated by Anne, a mutual friend of ours. I never knew if anyone else ever really saw how mean she was. Should I bring it up?

I felt the urge to tell Melinda how awful that situation had been. Here was my perfect chance for validation.

I was so tempted.

But, really, there was no need to discuss this with Melinda. I had resolved the conflict with Anne long ago. We were at peace. If I were to bring it up now, the whole goal would simply be to defame her.

So I resisted.

But as I encouraged Melinda to keep talking about the problematic woman in her son's life, our conversation spiraled downward.

Temptation knocked again.

I had to hold up my end of the conversation didn't I? Surely I should bring up our friend, right? I'd be justified. I'd be right. After all, this conversation fed right into it.

Over time, many people have come to understand that "catholic" does apply to all of us. That's why the trend is toward global this and global that. Of course, all the financial institutions figured that out a long time ago.

Still, while we may think that more advanced countries embrace this idea, there are tribal factions creating conflicts everywhere on Earth, trying to prevail with their political system or religious belief or just to be more powerful than the other guy. We have Turks versus Kurds, and retro cold war groups against democracies, and Shiites fighting Sunnis.

Sometimes, we think of it as solely an international religious war harking back to the Crusades and the Middle Ages because it seems to be Christians and Muslims at odds. And maybe it is to some of the participants. But the overall reasoning is that we are so different from the "other" that the idea of "catholic" seems impossible.

Jesus came to save everyone. He founded a church, a community of believers, who know that God's will is the determining factor in that salvation. And that it is also God's will for the entire "catholic" population to achieve it.

The church we speak of here, of course, is a religious group. It includes anyone from Roman Catholics to Protestants to Jews, Muslims, etc. But in fact, it also includes every kind of human beyond them, because it is "catholic."

Whether we are Christian who understand that mystery or not, it applies to us. So, when we Roman Catholics pray before receiving Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, "May the body and blood of Christ bring us all to everlasting life," we're praying for the universal, catholic Church. For all of us. †

I opened my mouth, but paused.

Deep within, I knew it was the wrong thing to do.

Melinda waited for me to speak. That's all it took. I caved.

"That's exactly what happened to me," I said. I dragged up past events, bashing our mutual friend. Although I'd already forgiven Anne, I recounted every injustice, every mistake, every wrong she did.

Even as I spoke, I knew I was out of line.

Suddenly, both Melinda and I realized our conversation had turned to gossip. We ended the discussion and headed toward the kitchen to start dinner.

The next day, I felt the sting on my conscience. I wished I could take those words back. I realized clearly that I'd been tricked by the evil one, and I so easily took the bait.

Yep, giving up coffee is way easier.

Fasting from sin is much more difficult. The devil is so cunning ... so sly.

In the days ahead, I'll pray for my neighbor's son and his wife.

I'll pray for my wretched soul as well.

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

The Fourth Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 26, 2017

- 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a
- Ephesians 5:8-14
- John 9:1-41

Drawing from the first word in the original Latin of the text of the entrance antiphon for this weekend's liturgy, this Sunday long has been called "Laetare Sunday." *Laetare* means "to rejoice." The Church rejoices even amid the penance of Lent. The glory of Christ shines forth, as the Lord rose in brilliant light after being crucified.

The first reading for this weekend is from the First Book of Samuel. An ancient prophet and therefore God's representative and spokesman, Samuel selected the young David to be king of Israel. To signify this appointment, Samuel anointed David with oil.

Anointings always have marked persons for special jobs or to strengthen them in particular circumstances. All Catholics are anointed when they are baptized and confirmed. Priests and bishops are anointed. Faithful people in bad health are anointed to strengthen them and reinforce their spiritual constitution should they near death. Altars and the walls of churches are consecrated when they are liturgically dedicated. Once, kings were anointed.

David was and still is special in the Hebrew mind. He was the great king who united and empowered the nation, but he was much more than a successful political leader. His ultimate duty was in tightening the bond between God and the people. The bond was in the people's genuine acknowledgement of God, and their lives of obedience to his law confirmed this bond.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians provides the second reading. This reading is an admonition to the Christian people of Ephesus, a major seaport, commercial center and home to significant pagan shrines in the first-century Roman Empire.

Drawing heavily upon the imagery of light and darkness, the reading links light with righteousness and darkness with sin, calling upon the Christian Ephesians to live in the light.

St. John's Gospel furnishes the last reading. Central to the story is the Lord's meeting with a man blind since birth. The Lord gives the man sight. To understand this entire story, it is necessary to realize how Jews at the time of Jesus looked upon physical difficulties.

Unaware of the scientific explanations for blindness and other ailments that people of this age have come to see as obvious, the ancient Jews believed such difficult circumstances came as a result of sin. After all, original sin ushered death itself into the world. In this thinking, sin also upset the good order of nature and introduced disease and physical disabilities.

Thus, the question came: Was this man's blindness the result of his own sin or a sin of his parents?

Searching for an answer, the Pharisees question the man. The Pharisees are shown as obstinate and smug. By contrast, the blind man is humble and sincere. He has faith in God and in Jesus.

An added element, surely of special interest to the early generations of Christians who suffered persecution, was that the Pharisees expelled the man from their synagogue. The righteous often suffer from the ill will of others.

Reflection

The Gospel story recalls a miracle. It also is a study in contrasts. On the one side is the man born blind whom Jesus healed. The other side is that of the Pharisees, so self-satisfied and confident in their own knowledge and their own high estimates of their piety.

We must apply these contrasts to ourselves. We may not be very evil or even pompous and boastful as were the Pharisees. Still, we must admit our limitations. Our exaggerated judgments of ourselves trick us again and again and again.

All this keeps us in the dark. Lent is the time to face facts. We must recognize our need for God. We must turn to God. He is light. The wonder of this is that God will receive us, love us, forgive us and give us sight. The light of God's presence awaits us. Rejoice! †

Daily Readings

Monday, March 27

Isaiah 65:17-21
Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b
John 4:43-54

Tuesday, March 28

Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12
Psalm 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9
John 5:1-16

Wednesday, March 29

Isaiah 49:8-15
Psalm 145:8-9, 13c-14, 17-18
John 5:17-30

Thursday, March 30

Exodus 32:7-14
Psalm 106:19-23
John 5:31-47

Friday, March 31

Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22
Psalm 34:17-21, 23
John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Saturday, April 1

Jeremiah 11:18-20
Psalm 7:2-3, 9b-12
John 7:40-53

Sunday, April 2

Fifth Sunday of Lent
Ezekiel 37:12-14
Psalm 130:1-8
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45
or John 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Text of Hail Mary prayer rooted in Scripture and Church's tradition

QI have been wondering about the origin of the Hail Mary prayer. I realize that the first part is from the Scriptures, when Mary is greeted by her



cousin Elizabeth, but when was the complete prayer introduced in the Church and who were its authors? (New Jersey)

AAs to the first part of the prayer, you are half-right. The words in the very opening

verse come from the archangel Gabriel's greeting to Mary at the annunciation: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you" (Lk 1:28, Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition).

Then, as you indicate, the next verse repeats the pregnant Elizabeth's enthusiastic greeting of her cousin following Mary's 90-mile journey from Nazareth: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Lk 1:42).

The joining of those two verses first made its way into the texts of the Mass during the seventh century, as an offertory verse for the feast of the Annunciation, and became a widespread practice during the 11th century in the prayer of monastic communities.

The second half of the Hail Mary, the petition—"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death"—came later. That first appeared—except for the word "our"—in print in 1495 in the writings of Girolamo Savonarola, and became part of the reformed breviary of Pope Pius V in 1568 following the Council of Trent.

The popularity of the prayer has continued to grow over the centuries. In hearing the confessions of small children, when it comes time to assign a penance, I often ask them, "Do you have a favorite prayer, one that you especially like to say?" Most of the time, by a wide margin, they choose the Hail Mary.

And each night before I go to sleep, I follow a habit of some 50 years and recite three "Hail Marys," asking Mary to help me to be a good and faithful priest.

QMy first husband of 28 years died three years ago. Both of us were practicing Catholics. I have since been blessed to meet another special man. He is Catholic and has never been married.

If I remarry, I will lose the financial benefits that will affect my retirement years. I know how short life is and don't want to wait 10 years until the restriction will not affect us financially. Is it possible to be married in the Church without its being a civil union?

We have chosen to live together, which goes against everything I have been taught, and I feel like a hypocrite. Although in our minds we are totally committed as though

we were married, we would still like to be married in the Church. Can you offer any guidance? (Indiana)

AIn the United States, when a Catholic priest officiates at a wedding, he does so in two capacities: first, in his religious role as a representative of the Church, but also in a civil role as an agent of the state. The priest is obligated legally to then register the marriage in the appropriate civil jurisdiction.

There is, in fact, a provision in the Church's *Code of Canon Law* (#1130-33) that does authorize a bishop to permit a marriage "celebrated secretly"—but that is commonly interpreted as applying to cases where the civil law is unjust (e.g., a law that prohibits interracial marriages).

A priest who performed a marriage ceremony in the U.S., as you desire, would violate the law and expose himself to civil penalties—not to mention that you yourself could be subject to criminal penalties for fraudulently collecting the financial benefits.

I know that this is an inconvenient answer and presents you with a hard choice, but your soul is worth far more than your pension. It sounds as though your new friend is a real blessing in your life, so I pray that you will marry in the Church and take the financial hit.

Hopefully, you've already experienced in your life how, in one way or another, God provides for our needs. If this is the case, then go forward in faith, trusting that his providence will care for you and your beloved in the future.

It would also appear from your question that your conscience is troubled by your decision to live with your new friend. You might then consider seeking out the peace and mercy of God in the sacrament of penance.

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

My Journey to God

Soft Landings

By Stephanie Kilpatrick

Today I fell
Again.
But with cushions clutched to
my side
The landing was
Soft.
This is the blessing
Of You.
Soft Landings.
Fallings, failings are
Unavoidable.
So human.
What grace is given when we ask



For You.
When we join
With You.
When we rest
In You.
Soft landings
is You.

(Stephanie Kilpatrick is a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis. The plane carrying Pope Francis arrives at Joint Base Andrews outside Washington on Sept. 22, 2015.) (CNS photo/Kevin Lamarque, Reuters)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

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

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

Rest in peace

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

ADKINS, Stella, 94, St. John the Apostle, Bloomington, March 6. Aunt of several.

AMBERGER, Richard, 73, St. Nicholas, Ripley County, Feb. 28. Husband of Jo Ann Amberger. Father of Charlene Dudley and Charles Amberger. Brother of Millie Blanken, Edith Ernestes, Rosemary Gander, Ann Gutzwiller, Delores Linkel, Margaret Thielking, Albert, Bill, David, John and Steve Amberger. Grandfather of four.

CAMPBELL, Gilbert W., 86, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, March 7. Husband of Alma Campbell. Father of Lisa Flood, Lynn Franz and Paula McCartin. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of nine.

CHILDERS, Joseph, 67, St. Mary, Rushville, March 13. Father of Joseph Childers, Jr. Brother of Janice Sosbe.

DUFFY, Therese M., 89, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, March 5. Sister of Mary Collins and Margaret Smith. Aunt of several.

DUGAN, Dr. Thomas P., 83, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, March 7. Husband of Barbara Dugan. Father of Anne Collins, Mary Harvey, Dr. Margaret Workman, Gregory, Joseph, Michael and Paul Dugan. Grandfather of 27.

FISCHER, Mary R., 91, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, March 2. Mother of Karen Cabell, Patricia Wade, Christine, Elaine, Mary Ann, Susan, David, Greg, James, Jon, Michael and William Fischer. Sister of Molly

Campbell and Ann Hurley. Grandmother of 21.

FRTZ, Eugene S., 87, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, March 8. Husband of Elizabeth Fritz. Brother of Raymond Murphy. Uncle of several.

FUSSNER, Eugenia M., 86, St. Mary, Rushville, March 13. Wife of Francis Fussner. Mother of Beverly Gahimer, Pamela Hoeing, Gary, Jeffrey and Thomas Fussner. Sister of Janice Gutzwiller and Mary Ann Miller. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of four.

GEDRICK, Charles S., Jr., 93, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Feb. 14. Father of Dottie McCormick, Clida Perry, Marsha Zucca and Charles Gedrick, Jr. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of 19.

GEIS, Robert P., 86, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, March 1. Husband of Peggy Geis. Father of Letitia Eisenmann, Maureen, Christopher, John, Patrick and Robert Geis. Brother of Kate Lorenz. Grandfather of 18. Great-grandfather of three.

GREENE, Michael T., 27, St. Mary, New Albany, Feb. 25. Son of Mickey and Rose Greene. Brother of Christina Greene. Grandson of Emogene Greene.

HARDEBECK, Irvin L., 92, Immaculate Conception, Millhouses, March 12. Father of Patrick and Phillip Hardebeck. Brother of Eleanor Stephanic, Clara Wagner and Arthur Hardebeck. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of six.

HEAVRIN, Rodney L., 79, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, Feb. 28. Father of Melanie and Tony Heavrin. Brother of Nick, Randy and Ted Heavrin. Grandfather of one.

HOAGLIN, Martha A., 73, Christ the King, Indianapolis, March 4. Wife of Don Hoaglin. Mother of Joseph Hoaglin. Sister of Denny Harvey.

KESSANS, J. Ralph, 87, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 7. Father of Theresa Crowe, Kevin, Mark and Tim Kessans.



Preparing for Easter

Production worker Rose Marie Dixon uses a sander to apply gold foil to a paschal candle on March 10 at the A.I. Root Co. in Medina, Ohio. The candles are made to order and shipped to churches across the United States. (CNS photo/Katie Breidenbach)

Brother of Darla Laake and Alma Jean Schnellenberger. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of four.

LITHERLAND, Elizabeth, 87, St. Paul, Tell City, March 11. Mother of Madonna Brumfield, Debbie Hasenour, Dennis, Jamie and Joe Litherland. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of 18.

LOPP, Elizabeth F., 104, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, March 1. Aunt of several.

MADER, Edwin R.A., 89, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, March 7. Brother of Agnes Hall and Viola Higgins. Uncle of several.

MARLETT, Leona R., 84, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 13. Mother of Sandra McDonald, April Nemeth, Karen and Thomas Marlett. Sister of Lucy Corder and Florence Malin. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of 11. Great-great-grandmother of one.

MARTIS, Juliette B., 89, St. Vincent de Paul,

Bedford, March 7. Mother of Linda Heironimus, Lorrie McFadden, Daryl and David Martis. Sister of Clarence Hodgen. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of several.

MCCORMICK, Alfred R., 93, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, March 8. Husband of Doris McCormick. Father of Lynn Knudson, Kathryn Weber, Kevin, Patrick and Tom McCormick. Brother of Darlene Appel, Pat and Tom McCormick. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of four.

MCDADE, Daniel J., 96, St. Luke the Evangelist, March 3. Husband of Elizabeth Crafton. Father of Patti McCartney, Jerome and Thomas McDade.

MYERS, Daniel M., 87, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, March 14. Husband of Elizabeth Myers. Father of Joan Bellitto, Laura Heinrich, Mary Sheets, Clare, Andrew, James and Michael Myers. Grandfather of 19. Great-grandfather of four.

RODE, Irene T. (Wathen), 94, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 9. Mother of Jayne Chambliss, Joyce Lewis, Joan

McKinley, Jeff, Jerry, Jim and Joe Rode. Sister of Joe and Leo Wathen. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of 33.

ROSKOVENSKY, Ann, 96, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Feb. 28. Mother of Mary Ann Moy and Jim Roskovensky. Grandmother of four. Great-great-grandmother of two.

SCHAFER, Alison M., 22, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, March 6. Daughter of Neil Schafer and Pamela Prickett-Schafer. Step-daughter of Marlene Schafer. Sister of Ashley Hardin, Emily and James Schafer. Step-sister of Michelle Griffin and Josh McCullough.

SCHMELZ, Juanita F., 82, St. Mary, Lanesville, March 9. Wife of Marvin Schmelz. Mother of Christopher, John, Michael, Paul and Stephen Schmelz. Sister of Joan Stroud, Jennifer Taylor, Jeanette Whitaker and John Wiseman. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of three.

THELANDER, Mary A., 93, St. Paul, Tell City, March 7. Sister of Catherine

Bartholomew, Frank and Louis Kraus. Aunt of several.

TODD, Martha, 91, St. Mary, Rushville, March 9. Mother of Cathy Coffman, Ann Curtis, Susie Fooksman, Peggy Mull, Rosie Osborne, Janie Starkey, David, Jim and John Todd. Sister of Sue Frye and Doris Peterson. Grandmother and great-grandmother of several.

WATSON, Kathryn M., 66, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, March 9. Wife of David Watson. Mother of Paul Gillespie, David, Jr. and Michael Watson. Sister of Cindy Ferrell, Bruce, Dennis, Mark and Scott Gillespie. Grandmother of 10.

WATTS, Jacquelyn D. (Kleine), 33, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, March 4. Wife of Michael Watts. Daughter of Ric and Peggy Kleine. Sister of Jennifer Brown. Aunt of several.

WILLIAMS, Arlin L., 80, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, March 9. Father of LeeAnn Bone and Susan Jones. Brother of Irene Logsdon, Albert, George and Jim Williams. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of one. †

Head of Knights says those targeted for genocide still need aid, prayers

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (CNS)—A year after then-U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry issued a declaration of genocide about atrocities carried out by the Islamic State militant group, the head of the Knights of Columbus urged prayers for “those who are being persecuted and killed for their faith.”

In the same statement on March 14, Supreme Knight Carl Anderson also announced that the international fraternal organization, based in New Haven, was giving nearly \$2 million in new assistance to aid Syrian and Iraqi Christian refugees.

“A year ago, our country declared with one voice that genocide was occurring to Christians and other religious minority communities, but words are not enough,” Anderson said.

“Those targeted for genocide continue to need our assistance, especially since many have received no funding from the U.S. government or from the United Nations,” he said. “The new [Trump] administration should rectify the policies

it found in place, and stop the de facto discrimination that is continuing to endanger these communities targeted by ISIS for genocide.”

On March 17, 2016, Kerry said that atrocities carried out by the Islamic State group against Yezidis, Christians, Shiite Muslims and other minorities were genocide, the first U.S. declaration of genocide since Sudanese actions in Darfur in 2004.

The new funds being donated by the Knights of Columbus to aid Syrian and Iraqi Christian refugees includes support for: medical clinics in Iraq; Easter food baskets for displaced Christians under the care of the Archdiocese of Irbil, Iraq; general relief for the Christians of Aleppo, Syria, via the city’s Melkite archdiocese; and support for the Christian refugee relief programs of the Syriac Catholic patriarch.

In his prayer intentions for March 2017 posted on YouTube, Pope Francis also called for prayers for persecuted Christians. †

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Amid warm relations, pope to visit Egypt

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Accepting an invitation from Egypt's president and top religious leaders, Pope Francis will visit Cairo on April 28-29.

In response to an invitation from President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, the Catholic bishops in Egypt, Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros II and Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of al-Azhar University, "Pope Francis will make an apostolic trip to the Arab Republic of Egypt," the Vatican announced on March 18.

While saying details of the trip would be published soon, the announcement said the two-day trip would be focused on Cairo, the capital city.

It will be the pope's 18th trip abroad in his four years as pope and the seventh time he visits a Muslim-majority nation. He will be the second pope to visit Egypt after St. John Paul II went to Cairo and Mount Sinai in 2000.

The invitation came amid increasingly closer relations between the Vatican and al-Azhar, which is considered the most authoritative theological-academic institution of Sunni Islam.

El-Tayeb visited the pope at the Vatican in May 2016—the first time the grand imam of al-Azhar was received by the pope in a private meeting at the Vatican. †

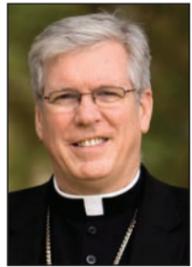


Back-to-back champs

The Marian University Knights defeated St. Xavier (Ill.) 66-53 on March 14 in the NAIA Women's Division II title game in Sioux City, Iowa, to win their second consecutive NAIA national title. Marian finished the season with a 35-3 record. The Knights defeated Southern Oregon to win last year's championship. (Photo courtesy Marian University)

House bill's 'protections' said laudable, other aspects 'troubling'

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The inclusion of "critical life protections" in the House health care bill is laudable, but other provisions, including those



Bishop Frank J. Dewane

related to Medicaid and tax credits, are "troubling" and "must be addressed" before the measure is passed, said the chairman of the U.S. bishops' domestic policy committee.

Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., who is chairman of the bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, sent a letter on March 17 to House members. It was released on March 20 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

Regarding life protections in the bill, Bishop Dewane said: "By restricting funding which flows to providers that promote abortion and prohibiting federal funding for abortion or the purchase of plans that provide abortion—including with current and future tax credits—the legislation honors a key moral

requirement for our nation's health care policy."

Among the "very troubling features" of the bill are the Medicaid-related provisions, he said. Other aspects that must be addressed before the bill is passed include the absence of "any changes" from the current law regarding conscience protections against mandates to provide certain coverage or services, Bishop Dewane said.

His letter follows one sent on March 8 to House members by him and three other bishops' committee chairmen stating they would be reviewing closely the American Health Care Act (AHCA), introduced in the House on March 6 to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act.

The other signers of the earlier letter were: Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chairman, Committee on Pro-Life Activities; Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman, Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty; and Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chairman, Committee on Migration.

In his March 17 letter, Bishop Dewane said one area in the new bill that could be helpful—with "appropriate safeguards"—is an effort to increase flexibility for states

and provide more options for health care savings and different kinds of coverage based on economic levels. But still, Bishop Dewane said, "efforts to increase flexibility must be carefully undertaken so as not to undermine" a given program's "effectiveness or reach."

In the House bill, Medicaid expansion would be repealed and replaced with a "per capita allotment." Under the current law, more Americans became eligible for Medicaid, so long as their states opted into the entitlement program's expansion.

The House bill's "proposed modifications to the Medicaid program, a vital component of the social safety net, will have sweeping impacts, increasing economic and community costs while moving away from affordable access for all," Bishop Dewane said.

He also cited the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) assessment of the bill that said "as many as 24 million additional people could be uninsured in the next 10 years for a variety of reasons."

The U.S. bishops, he said, have stressed that "all people and every family must be able to see clearly how they will fit within and access the health care

system in a way that truly meets their needs."

The CBO estimates millions of people currently eligible for Medicaid under the law "will be negatively impacted due to reduced funding from the per capita cap" proposal, Bishop Dewane said.

"State and local resources are unlikely to be sufficient to cover the gaps," he continued.

Congress needs "to rework the Medicaid-related provisions of the AHCA to fix these problems and ensure access for all, and especially for those most in need," said Bishop Dewane.

He also pointed out that the House measure does not provide "conscience protection against mandates to provide coverage or services, such as the regulatory interpretation of 'preventive services' requiring contraception and sterilization coverage in almost all private health plans nationwide."

The mandate requiring most employers to provide such coverage even if they are morally opposed to it, he reminded House members, "has been the subject of large-scale litigation, especially involving religious entities like the Little Sisters of the Poor." †

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Two wrestlers 'go to the mat' to offer a lesson in friendship

By John Shaughnessy

Winning and “bragging rights” are often all that seem to matter in sports—and then you hear the story of Drew Willis and John Troxell.

Both Drew and John are intense competitors, the kind of athletes that aren't measured by their current small body frames, but by the hugeness of their hearts.

Take them on in wrestling—the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) sport they both love—and when you look into their eyes across the mat, you immediately know you are going to get their toughness, their aggressiveness—*everything they have*—until the last second ticks away.

Both 13, they also share a passion for their sport that can push a youth at this age—leading them to run more, practice more, do more pull-ups, attend more camps and more workouts, all with the desire of being the best they can be.

So now you have a glimpse of nearly everything that came into play as John, an eighth-grade student at St. Roch School in Indianapolis, and Drew, a seventh-grade student at St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis, locked eyes before the beginning of their intense, 109-pound-weight-class, CYO match on March 4.

Oh, yeah, there's one more thing you should know about Drew and John. They're good friends, the kind of friendship that adds an extra element to such matches.

“When you go up against a friend, it makes you want to wrestle even harder,” John says. “You want to get the win, but you also want to get bragging rights.”

“We've always been friends, so we have that rivalry,” Drew says. “You're trying to get bragging rights.”

And so their match was everything that could be expected from two wrestlers, two

friends who had both gone undefeated in their previous matches that day. Back and forth, they went at each other, locking eyes, looking for openings, striking and sparing, neither of them backing down or letting up as John held a 7-5 lead in the closing seconds of the final period.

“It was one of the longest and hardest matches I've had in the last few years,” John would say later. “We were fighting so hard.”

With about 15 seconds left, Drew dove in for a takedown, lifting John off the mat, striving to finish a move that would earn him two points, a tie and an opportunity to win the match in overtime.

Then it happened.

As Drew began to drive John into the mat, he felt everything in his right shoulder go numb. Looking over at his bench, Drew saw the immediate look of concern on the face of his coach, who rushed from the gym to find a trainer. As the referee raised John's hand, signaling that he had won the match, other coaches and adults rushed to Drew on the mat. There, they saw a bone pushing through the skin on his right shoulder.

Minutes later, as emergency responders wheeled Drew from the gym on a stretcher, John, concerned and distraught, walked over to quietly tell Drew, “Good luck, bro.” Drew's dad, Clayton Willis, tried to soothe John before he left the gym, telling John, “It's not your fault. It was a freak accident.”

That same Saturday afternoon, from Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis, Clayton Willis shared the news with John's dad that Drew would have to have surgery on his broken collarbone the next morning, and that his season was over.

Drew was devastated. John was in shock. They both needed a friend.

That moment came the next day. The seven o'clock surgery on that



When Drew Willis, left, and John Troxell wrestled each other in a Catholic Youth Organization match on March 4, the two Catholic grade-school students didn't expect that their competition would become a touching lesson about friendship. (Submitted photo)

Sunday morning of March 5 left Drew with six screws and a plate in his right collarbone. It also left him dazed and downcast into the afternoon—until he looked up and saw John standing there before him.

“He was a little surprised,” says John, the son of Aaron and Erin Troxell. “He saw me, and he smiled from ear to ear. Our dads started talking, and I started talking to Drew about the match and what's going to happen. They brought a wheelchair in, and Drew sat in the chair, and I just pushed him around the whole floor. We found a game room and started playing air hockey. Drew used his left hand.”

John pauses, the joy rising in his voice as he tells what happened next, “We were laughing and having a good time. It was a relief for me because I was all worried about him. We were back to normal, playing games together again. I knew it was going to be all right.”

So did Drew.

“When John showed up at the hospital, it made me feel good again,” he says. “It was fun. We had a good time. It felt good to know we had that bond, and I hope it continues.”

Their fathers, who have been friends for nearly 30 years, savored that moment, too.

“To see Drew laughing again was great,” his dad says. “It's probably some of the best medicine you can get.”

Later that afternoon, Drew enjoyed the special dinner that John had brought to the hospital for him.

A few hours later, as Drew was getting ready to be released from the hospital to go home, another unexpected visitor arrived at the door of his room—an extraordinary minister of holy Communion coming by to see if Drew wanted to receive the Eucharist.

Drew did. So did John.

“We had the body of Christ together,” John says.

Drew adds, “That was a special moment.”

The aftermath of Drew's injury has been marked with many touches of concern. He, his dad and his mom Celeste have received numerous texts, e-mails and phone calls from people at St. Roch and St. Barnabas parishes, and from the community of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, where Drew has attended wrestling camps.

“I'm blessed because all these people are telling me they're praying for me,” Drew says. “I'm blessed to be in the Catholic community of the South Deanery where everyone knows each other.”

He especially feels blessed by his friendship with John.

“Friendship means more than wrestling,” Drew says.

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The path toward corruption is a slippery road, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Christians who trust in themselves rather than God eventually become unsympathetic to those in need and slide down the slippery path of corruption, Pope Francis said.

People who place their trust in their own vanity, pride and riches lose their sense of direction and “distance themselves from God,” the pope said on March 16 during his early morning Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

“When a person lives in his own closed environment, when he breathes that air that comes from material goods, from pleasures, from vanity, from feeling safe and only trusting in himself,” the pope said, “he loses his bearings, he loses the compass and doesn't know his own limits.”

Pope Francis reflected on the day's first reading from the prophet Jeremiah in which God warns: “Cursed is the man who trusts in human beings, who seeks his strength in flesh, whose heart turns away from the Lord” (Jer 17:5).

To trust in one's own heart, the pope said, is a “slippery path” because “nothing is more treacherous than the heart.”

The Gospel reading, in which Jesus tells the story of the rich man and

Lazarus, illustrates what happens to those who trust too much in themselves and their own wealth while ignoring the poor at their doorstep, he said.

If the rich man was only sinful, the pope noted, he could be redeemed if he turned away from sin and asked forgiveness. However, “his heart led him on a path of death, and from that point there is no return.”

“That is when sin is transformed into corruption. And this man wasn't a sinner, he was a corrupt person. Because he knew of [Lazarus'] many miseries, yet he was happy and he didn't care about anything,” the pope said.

Christians, he continued, must think about what they feel when they see a poor or homeless person, and they must be wary of the sight of the suffering becoming “normal.”

“Are they part of the view, the city landscape? Like a statue, a bus stop, the post office, are the homeless just part of the city? Is this normal?” the pope asked. “Beware. We must beware.”

To avoid the slippery path “from sin to corruption,” he said, Christians need to pray that God would illuminate their hearts and help them avoid the path from which there is no return. †