



The

# Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



## The last acceptable prejudice

Questioning of nominee shows how anti-Catholicism still exists, writes Richard Doerflinger, page 12.

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Joe and Jenni Amschler pose with their son Jaxson in January. The Amschlers adopted Jaxson through Adoption Bridges of Kentuckiana, a ministry of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany. (Submitted photo)

## Couple's life becomes touched by love in opening their hearts to adoption

(Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles about adoption as a pro-life option.)

By Natalie Hoefler

LOUISVILLE, KY.—Jenni and Joe Amschler recall the birth of their baby boy with love and awe.

"I fell in love with him as soon as he was put on my chest," says Jenni. "It was an instant bond."

"It was instant" for Joe, too, he says.

"I did the first skin-to-skin. I changed the first diaper. I mean, that was our baby."

The fact that the couple's skin was white and their baby's was a beautiful brown was of no consequence.

"I love him as my own. I didn't give birth to him, but how could you not

love this little baby?" she says, hugging 18-month-old Jaxson as he sits on her lap.

"He is my son, who I will love, support and take care of his every need," Joe says.

Like so many couples who had trouble conceiving, the Amschlers opened their hearts to adoption.

Unlike some couples who adopt, the Amschlers know the birth mother—and of her refusal to have an abortion.

This is the story of their pro-life adoption journey through Adoption Bridges of Kentuckiana, a ministry of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany.

### 'We always knew we wanted children'

Jenni, 31, and Joe, 33, were married in September of 2009. With Joe serving full time in the United States Army, the couple moved frequently.

It was during one such move that the couple suffered their first miscarriage. Their second miscarriage happened while they were stationed in Arizona.

"Grieving was difficult because we didn't know anyone and were far from family," says Jenni. "And we were always transitioning from one place to another, so we didn't have time to focus on the grieving."

After researching the cause of the infertility, and even a surgery, the couple remained childless.

Joe entered the Army Reserves in 2013. He started working at General Electric, and the couple settled in their hometown of Louisville, Ky.

When the couple suffered their third miscarriage, they decided they were

See ADOPTION, page 9

## Parishioners, Knights knock on doors, check on senior citizens after Irma

PEMBROKE PINES, Fla. (CNS)—The nation watched in sadness and outrage at the deaths of eight elderly people in Hollywood, Fla., without air conditioning and electricity following the historic passing of Hurricane Irma.

Members of nearby St. Edward Parish in Pembroke Pines and the local Knights of Columbus council, hearing the call to be good neighbors, prepared hot meals and set out to knock on doors and check in on senior citizen residents four days after the storm.

The group was given permission to go door to door with their hot meals and water supplies at the expansive Century Village

See related story, page 2.

Pembroke Pines housing development in western Broward County on Sept. 14.

Residents there reportedly had been without electricity and air conditioning for days, although power was being restored even as the parish volunteers were making their rounds.

According to news reports, police confirmed earlier in the week that about 60 percent of the 15,000-person community of mostly retirees still didn't have electricity and was under a "boil water" notice. Century Village is a community comprised of people 55 and older.

Compounding the hardships, many elderly citizens at Century Village were unable to get around the four-story buildings because the elevators were not working and some residents couldn't climb three and four flights of stairs.

The volunteers visited several of the buildings with hot meals consisting of Cuban food and pasta along with bottled water.

Scott O'Connor, the Knights' state secretary for Florida and a resident of Pembroke Pines, noted that his own mother had lived in Century Village at one time.

"It is a large community built for citizens over 55 years old, and in the early days it was primarily Jewish-oriented, but now it is quite an eclectic mix of people and a kind of self-contained city," O'Connor said. "We are out here helping and that is what we do; it doesn't matter what religion you are, we are helping everybody."

See IRMA, page 9

## Little Sisters of the Poor provide witness of God's love and 'keep dignity before us,' Archbishop Thompson says

By Natalie Hoefler

Like fans anticipating the arrival of a celebrity, eight Little Sisters of the Poor eagerly waited outside their home for Archbishop Charles C. Thompson.

"There he is! That's him!" one exclaimed as the archbishop's black car pulled into the drive of the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis.

Before he was out of the car, Mother Francis Gabriel, the order's superior in Indianapolis, and several of the sisters rushed to greet him.

"Immediately after we heard about his being named as archbishop, we looked for an opportunity to welcome him to our home," said Mother Francis.

The day they settled on was Aug. 30, the feast day of St. Jeanne Jugan, foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor.

"We pulled out all the plugs—it's a family feast day," Mother Francis said.

See SISTERS, page 8



Little Sisters of the Poor Sister Gloria Thomas, left, Mother Francis Gabriel, and Sisters Alexis, Cecelia and Marthe welcome Archbishop Charles C. Thompson to the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis on Aug. 30. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



## Pallium investiture

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, N.J., is vested with a pallium by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, during Mass on Sept. 14 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark. The pallium is a white woolen band worn by archbishops atop their chasubles. It symbolizes their authority over an ecclesiastical province and their unity with the pope. Cardinal Tobin served as shepherd of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis from 2012-16. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

## Where to give to assist with recovery from hurricanes Irma and Harvey

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Several Catholic organizations have established emergency relief operations for the thousands of people affected by Hurricane Irma in the Caribbean and southeastern United States and for those still recovering from Hurricane Harvey in Texas and Louisiana.

Contributions can be made to:

- Catholic Charities USA: online at [catholiccharitiesusa.org/donate-to-disaster-relief](http://catholiccharitiesusa.org/donate-to-disaster-relief); telephone at 800-919-9338; mail to P.O. Box 17066, Baltimore, MD 21297-1066 and write "Hurricane Relief" in the memo line of the check.
- The Texas Catholic Conference is coordinating emergency services. A listing by diocese of where to give has been posted online at [txcatholic.org/harvey](http://txcatholic.org/harvey).
- The Florida Catholic Conference's website also has links to Catholic Charities

agencies for the Miami Archdiocese and Florida's other six dioceses: [www.flacathconf.org/hurricane-irma-response](http://www.flacathconf.org/hurricane-irma-response).

- Catholic Relief Services is taking donations for emergency shelter, water and critical supplies for families in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba and other Caribbean islands: [www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org).
- Local dioceses are expected to initiate an emergency collection during weekend Masses on Sept. 23-24 to help those recovering from devastation wrought by Hurricane Irma in the Caribbean and the southeastern region of the United States. Parishes took up an earlier special collection at weekend Masses during the weekend of Sept. 2-3 or Sept. 9-10. Funds benefit Catholic Charities USA's disaster relief efforts as well as pastoral and rebuilding support through the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org). †

## How has the rosary affected your life of faith?

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the appearances of the Blessed Mother to three children in Fatima—appearances in which she instructed the children to spread the word about the importance of praying the rosary for peace in the world, for peace in people's hearts.

In honor of the Blessed Mother's request, and since October is the month of the Holy Rosary, *The Criterion* is inviting readers to share their stories of how

praying the rosary has made a difference in their lives and the lives of people they know.

Please send your responses and your stories to assistant editor John Shaughnessy by e-mail at [jshaughnessy@archindy.org](mailto:jshaughnessy@archindy.org) or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime number where you can be reached. †

## Red Mass and dinner for Catholic lawyers and judges set for Oct. 5

By Sean Gallagher

For centuries, Catholic lawyers and judges have worshipped together annually at what is known in tradition as a Red Mass.



Dr. James Callaghan

It is given that title because the Mass is typically a votive Mass of the Holy Spirit in which the celebrant wears red vestments. The legal professionals seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy for their work in the legal term to come.

The St. Thomas More Society of Central Indiana is sponsoring a Red Mass and dinner for Catholic lawyers and judges beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 5 at St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis.



Msgr. William F. Stumpf

Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan vicar general, is scheduled to be the principal celebrant of the Mass.

The dinner will take place after the Mass at the Indiana Roof Ballroom, 140 W. Washington St., in Indianapolis.

The keynote speaker during the dinner will be Dr. James Callaghan, chief executive officer of Franciscan Health hospitals in Indianapolis, Mooresville and Carmel, Ind.

The recipient of the society's Person of All Seasons Award will be retired lawyer John Ryan, who serves as the president of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Indianapolis.

Patrick Olmstead, a lawyer who is a member of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, is the president of the society. He said his involvement in it has helped him both professionally and spiritually.

"It's inspirational in both ways," Olmstead said. "You get to see how good lawyers practice. You get to see how values and beliefs can help guide you to

where you have a principled base practice. Oftentimes, you'll see lawyers who just feel like they have a higher calling,



Fr. Joseph Newton

whether that's to the judiciary or to their practices and how they treat their clients."

Father Joseph Newton, archdiocesan vicar judicial, serves as chaplain for the St. Thomas More Society, which is named after a

16th-century English lawyer, judge and statesman who died for the faith for refusing to consent to King Henry VIII's claim to be the leader of the Church in England.

More's life was opened to a broader audience through the award-winning play and movie, *A Man for All Seasons*.

Father Newton regularly sees the society's members "truly embody the spirit of St. Thomas More" as they "work toward growing in faith, growing in knowledge and growing in our respective professions.

"The St. Thomas More Society in our monthly meetings, community outreach, and educational activities gives us an opportunity for faith in action and a place to discuss how faith informs law and



John Ryan

law informs justice tempered with mercy," the priest said.

Olmstead is pleased with how participation in the Red Mass in Indianapolis has grown in recent years.

"It's really awesome to see the pews continue to fill," he said. "It's growing. More and more judges are attending. That's great to see."

(Tickets to the dinner following the Red Mass are \$67.50 for lawyers, and \$67.50 for a judge and a guest. To register for the dinner, visit [www.stmsindy.org](http://www.stmsindy.org) and click on "Red Mass." The registration deadline for the Oct. 5 Mass and dinner is Oct. 2. ) †

## Official Appointments

Effective immediately

**Rev. Daniel E. Bedel**, administrator of St. Margaret Mary Parish and St. Patrick Parish, both in Terre Haute, to pastor of the parishes for a term of six years.

**Rev. Michael Hoyt**, administrator of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, to pastor of the parish for a term of six years and retaining his assignment as Catholic chaplain at Butler University in Indianapolis.

**Rev. William G. Marks**, administrator of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, to pastor of the parish for a term of six years.

**Rev. John P. McCaslin**, administrator of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, to pastor of the parish for a term of six years.

**Rev. Todd Riebe**, administrator of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, to pastor of the parish for a term of six years.

**Rev. Benjamin D. Syberg**, administrator of Our Lady of the Springs Parish in French Lick and Our Lord Jesus Christ the King Parish in Paoli, to pastor of the parishes for a term of six years.

(These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.) †



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# 40 Days for Life starts on Sept. 27, more participants needed

Criterion staff report

40 Days for Life is an international campaign that seeks to end abortion through peaceful prayer vigils at abortion centers, and to raise community awareness of the consequences of abortion.

The campaign runs twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall. During the 40-day campaigns, individuals silently pray during one-hour time slots in front of abortion centers around the world.

See related editorial, page 4.

This year, the fall campaign runs from Sept. 27-Nov. 5, with Indianapolis and Bloomington participating within the archdiocese.

Cities participating near archdiocesan boundaries include Evansville, Ind. (Evansville Diocese), Louisville, Ky. (Archdiocese of Louisville) and Cincinnati (Archdiocese of Cincinnati).

All campaigns are in need of volunteers to sign up to pray.

For more information or to sign up for a prayer time slot, log onto [40daysforlife.com](http://40daysforlife.com) and click on "Find a Campaign."

For those without computer access, see each location below for a number to call for more information or to sign up.

## Bloomington

The Bloomington 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 421 S. College Ave. Contact: Monica Siefker, 812-330-1535 or



Participants in a 40 Days for Life campaign midpoint rally hold pro-life signs in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility in Indianapolis on March 14, 2015. (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)

812-345-7988, or [monica.siefker@gmail.com](mailto:monica.siefker@gmail.com).

## Indianapolis

The Central Indiana (Indianapolis) 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 8590 Georgetown Road.

A kickoff rally will take place at St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis, at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 26, featuring Father Rick Nagel, the parish's pastor.

A closing ceremony will take place at St. John Church at 5 p.m. on Nov. 5. Ryan Bomberger, an Emmy Award winner and the founder of the Radiance Foundation, will be the keynote speaker. Bomberger

was conceived in rape. His biological mother courageously gave him a chance to live and the chance to be loved by an adopted family. His life defies the myth of the 'unwanted' child.

Contact Debra Minott at 317-709-1502 or [debra@goangels.org](mailto:debra@goangels.org).

## Evansville

The Evansville 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 125 North Weinbach Ave. Contact: Cathie Francis, 812-474-3195 or [cfrancis@rtlswin.org](mailto:cfrancis@rtlswin.org).

## Cincinnati

The Cincinnati 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public

right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 2314 Auburn Ave.

There will be several events held at this location during the fall campaign:

- Kickoff rally, 7 p.m. on Sept. 27, featuring Shawn Carney, president and co-founder of 40 Days for Life.
- Group prayer will be held each Friday from 7-8 p.m. at the vigil.

Contact: Mary Clark, 513-791-4039 or [cincy40days@fuse.net](mailto:cincy40days@fuse.net).

## Louisville

The Louisville 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the EMW Women's Surgical Center at 138 W. Market St. Contact: Laura and Adam Grijalba, 502-475-5403 or [la.grijalba@att.net](mailto:la.grijalba@att.net). †

# Annual Respect Life Sunday Mass, Life Chain events set for Oct. 1

Criterion staff report

The archdiocesan Annual Respect Life Sunday Mass will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 10:30 a.m. on Oct. 1. Msgr. William F. Stumpf, vicar general, will celebrate the Mass. The Archbishop O'Meara Respect Life Award and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award will be presented during this celebration.

The Archbishop O'Meara Respect Life Award honors an adult or married couple who demonstrates leadership in promoting the dignity and sanctity of human life in the parish community and in the archdiocese. This year's winners are Josh and Cara Bach.

The Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award honors a high school student who demonstrates leadership in promoting the dignity and sanctity of human life in the parish community, school community, and in the archdiocese. This year's winner is Emily Taylor.

Life Chain events will also take place

throughout central and southern Indiana on Oct. 1.

Life Chain events are peaceful and prayerful public witnesses of individuals standing for 60-90 minutes praying for our nation and for an end to abortion. It is a visual statement of solidarity by the Christian community that the Church supports the sanctity of human life from the moment of conception until natural death. Learn more about the Life Chain Network and other event locations at [LifeChain.net](http://LifeChain.net).

The following Life Chain events in central and southern Indiana are listed in alphabetical order by location:

- **Bloomington**, 2-3:30 p.m., neighborhood parking and signs available at 16 locations along East Third Street from College Mall Road west to College Avenue, then south on College Avenue to Planned Parenthood. Information: Carole Canfield, 812-322-5114.

- **Brazil**, 2-3 p.m., Highway 40 at Alabama St. Information: Jeff Etling, 812-230-6365

- **Brookville**, 2-3 p.m., Main Street at the Courthouse. Information:

Jerry Mersch, 513-702-4949.

- **Columbus**, 2-3 p.m., Second Street at Washington Street in front of city hall. Information: Don Demas, 812-372-0774.

- **Connersville**, 2-3 p.m., 30th Street at Park Road. Information: Joyce Nobbe, 765-647-3154.

- **Greensburg**, 2-3 p.m., North Lincoln Street at 10th Street. Information: Pat Koors, 812-614-0595.

- **Central Indiana (Indianapolis)**, 2:30-3:30 p.m., Meridian Street from St. Claire Street to 38th Street. Parking is available at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., or Knights of

Columbus Mater Dei Council 437, 1305 N. Delaware St. The Catholic Center parking lot will be closed during the Life Chain event. Information: Larry Holbrook, 317-919-1653.

- **Lawrenceburg**, 2-3:30 p.m., U.S. 50 between Walnut Street and Front Street. Information: Duane Meyer, 812-537-4853.

- **Milan**, 3-4 p.m., Highway 101 at Highway 350. Information: Ed King, 812-654-6502.

- **Terre Haute**, 2-3:30 p.m., 3rd Street at Wabash Avenue. Information: Tom McBroom, 812-841-0060. †

SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS, INDIANA

*Praying with the Mystics of Assisi and Indiana*

9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Saturday, Oct. 7

Examine the life, writings and prayer of Francis and Clare of Assisi and Saint Mother Theodore Guerin.

Presented by: Sister Cathy Campbell, SP  
Cost: \$45 (includes lunch)

Register by Oct. 2  
at [Events.SistersofProvidence.org](http://Events.SistersofProvidence.org)  
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# The Criterion

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## Editorial

# 40 Days for Life, Life Chain allow us to follow Mary's example of discipleship

As Catholic Christians, we have a special relationship with our Blessed Mother.

Mary is the mother of Jesus Christ, but she is also the mother of the Church and our mother, a brave, young woman who answered God's call to live out her vocation by giving birth to the Savior of the world.

Like many of us, her life included joys and sorrows. As Pope Francis said during a Mass on Sept. 15 commemorating the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, Mary was a courageous woman who stood by Jesus even when the crowds turned against him and even though she knew he would face a tragic death.

But despite challenges, the pope added, she followed Jesus the whole time, which is why "we say that Mary is the first disciple."

Because the Church recognizes October as a month dedicated to Mary and also as Respect Life Month, we believe it is also appropriate to mark the fall 40 Days for Life campaign during this time.

This year's campaign, which runs from Sept. 27-Nov. 5, is an international effort that seeks to end abortion through peaceful prayer vigils at abortion centers, and to raise community awareness of the consequences of abortion. An annual 40 Days for Life campaign also occurs each spring.

As you'll read on page 3 of this week's issue of *The Criterion*, during the 40-day campaigns, individuals silently pray during one-hour time slots in front of abortion centers around the world.

According to Sean Carney, president of 40 Days for Life, this year's fall campaign is the largest ever with people offering their prayerful witness in 375 cities around the world. Talk about the power of prayer!

This six-week period offers each of us a grace-filled opportunity to offer special petitions to end abortion. There are 40 Days for Life sites located in central and southern Indiana and around the surrounding region for those interested in prayerfully standing up for life. All campaigns are in need of volunteers to sign up to pray.

The Central Indiana 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility at 8590 Georgetown Road, in Indianapolis.

A kickoff rally will take place at St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis, at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 26, featuring Father Rick Nagel, the parish's pastor.

For more information or to sign up to pray, contact Debra Minott at 317-709-1502 or [debra@goangels.org](mailto:debra@goangels.org).

In Bloomington, the 40 Days for Life campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility at 421 S. College Ave. For more information or to sign up to pray,



**Pope Francis places flowers near a statue of Mary as he prays in the Little Chapel of the Apparitions in early May at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal. Mary was a courageous woman who stood by Jesus even when the crowds turned against him, and even though she knew he would face a tragic death, Pope Francis said. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)**

contact Monica Siefker, 812-330-1535 or 812-345-7988, or [monica.siefker@gmail.com](mailto:monica.siefker@gmail.com).

For more information or to sign up at other sites, log onto [40daysforlife.com](http://40daysforlife.com) and click on "Find a Campaign."

While the 40 Days for Life campaign focuses on ending abortion, we Christians are called to respect all human life, from conception to natural death.

The annual Respect Life Mass and various Life Chain events on Respect Life Sunday—the first Sunday of each October—give us more opportunities to do just that.

The archdiocesan Annual Respect Life Sunday Mass will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 10:30 a.m. on Oct. 1. Msgr. William F. Stumpf, vicar general, will be the principal celebrant of the Mass.

Later that day, Life Chain events will also take place throughout central and southern Indiana.

Life Chains are peaceful and prayerful public witnesses of individuals standing for 60-90 minutes praying for our nation and for an end to abortion. According to its website, it is a visual statement of solidarity by the Christian community that the Church supports the sanctity of human life from the moment of conception until natural death.

Several Life Chain gatherings are being held throughout central and southern Indiana. See a list on page 3, or go to [LifeChain.net](http://LifeChain.net) for more information about locations.

Like Mary, we are called to be disciples of Christ. And as we learn through our Blessed Mother, discipleship does not always offer us an easy path.

As we approach October, we pose this question: What better time is there to follow Mary's example than during a month when we remember her and honor her faithful commitment?

—Mike Krokos

## Making Sense of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

# Sex in accord with reason

An article published in 2012 in *The Atlantic* described the sexual practices of the Aka and Ngandu people who live in the tropical forests of central Africa.

Researchers Barry and Bonnie Hewlett, anthropologists from Washington State University, found that married Aka and Ngandu men and women consistently reported having sex multiple times in a single night. They also discovered that practices of, and even the concepts of, homosexuality and masturbation appeared to be largely unknown to the groups:



"In both cultures, men and women view

sexual intercourse as a kind of 'work of the night.' The purpose of this work is the production of children—a critical matter in an area with a very high infant mortality rate. Semen is understood by the Aka and Ngandu to be necessary not only to conception, but also to fetal development. A woman who is already pregnant will see having intercourse as contributing to the health of her fetus. The Aka and Ngandu speak of sex as 'searching for children.' ... Said one Aka woman, 'It is fun to have sex, but it is to look for a child.'

"Meanwhile, a Ngandu woman confessed, 'after losing so many infants, I lost courage to have sex.' Is the strong cultural focus on sex as a reproductive tool the reason masturbation and homosexual practices seem to be virtually unknown among the Aka and Ngandu? That isn't clear. But the Hewletts did find that their informants—whom they knew well from years of field work—'were not aware of these practices, did not have terms for them,' and, in the case of the Aka, had a hard time even understanding about what the researchers were asking when they asked about homosexual behaviors."

Modern-day Western societies, meanwhile, have adopted an alternative understanding of sexuality, one that leans heavily on adjectives like "pleasure-seeking" or even "recreational," quite distinct from the category of a "search for children." They feature practices of contraception, male and female sterilizations, abortions, and the sanctioning of homosexual, masturbatory, and other non-procreative sexual behaviors.

In earlier times, however, Western views more closely resembled those of the Aka and Ngandu, especially in recognizing the fundamental orientation of sexuality toward the good of offspring.

The Catholic Church has long affirmed that married love has a twofold significance, being ordered both toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring.

St. Thomas Aquinas once noted that nature intends, in broad strokes, not only the generation of children, but also their "carrying forth and promotion all the way to the perfect state of man as man"—in other words, both the engendering and conscientious raising of children.

Recognizing this natural ordering toward "mature offspring" also points to certain natural inclinations that prompt men and women to protect and care for their children: we are inclined to have sexual relations; we are inclined to be certain that the child we are going to be committed to is our own, and to care for that child continually; and we are inclined to remain with the mother/father of that child, sharing a life of mutual assistance marked by true friendship in the commitment of marriage. Nature has given us these inclinations to serve the good of the species and our personal good.

If human sexuality is properly understood as directed toward bringing forth life within marriage, this raises the possibility that other non-procreative uses of the generative power of man would constitute an inappropriate use of this human faculty, something the Christian tradition has affirmed and commonly taught.

Certain types of sexual activity have always been seen, to borrow the Latin phrase, as "*contra naturam*" (against nature), that is to say, performed in such a way that generation cannot follow. Among such practices would be included masturbation, sodomy and bestiality.

Certain other types of sexual activity, while not contrary to nature in that sense, are still opposed to the order of reason, because the act is done in a way that the due care and education of children is not provided for. This is implied, for example, when men and women who are not married to each other engage in sexual relations, as in situations of adultery, fornication, incest or sexual assault.

St. Thomas noted that the sexual act is one to which we humans, like all animals, are naturally inclined, and as such it would be a grave error to assert that the act could be evil in itself. Nevertheless, the manner in which the act takes place and the details surrounding it are essential to determining whether the act occurs in an authentically human way, that is to say, in a way that is "*secundum naturam*" (in accord with nature) and in accord with the dictates of reason.

(Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience at Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See [www.ncbcenter.org](http://www.ncbcenter.org).) †

## 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](mailto:criterion@archindy.org). †



# Christ the Cornerstone

## 'Laudato Si' is an encyclical for the 21st century

In my column last week, I began to reflect on Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment, "*Laudato Si'*, on Care for Our Common Home."

In his own unique style, but consistent with previous popes, Pope Francis provides us with a wonderful blueprint for contemplation and action in response to the environmental challenges of our time. He writes with the true heart of a pastor and the mind of a teacher, seeking not to divide but to unite humanity in prayer, study, reflection, dialogue and response to a very serious issue that has an impact on all of creation. Although challenging, "*Laudato Si'*" ultimately conveys a message of hope.

Running throughout "*Laudato Si'*" is the concept of sustainability by means of an integral ecology. To that end, Pope Francis poses a question for all to consider: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?" (#160)

Seven key principles of Catholic social teaching are intertwined throughout this encyclical. These include: life and dignity of the human person; call to family, community and participation; rights and responsibilities; option for the poor and vulnerable; the dignity of work and the rights of workers; solidarity; and care for God's

creation. From the perspective of justice, none of these are optional.

Faithful to the Church's notion of the relationship between faith and reason, Pope Francis draws on the knowledge of experts in various fields of science. The pope is not attempting to provide economic, political or biological solutions. He clearly points out that the role of the Church is not to provide practical solutions, but to provide encouragement and guidance in the search for such solutions.

In particular, Pope Francis emphasizes the plight of the poor in the midst of the environmental challenges before us. He exhorts all humanity to an openness of heart and mind toward a deeper sense of appreciation for all creation as a gift from God. Such appreciation rightfully leads to a greater commitment to simplicity, harmony, humility, solidarity and, most importantly, dialogue.

Not one to shy away from challenges or criticism, Pope Francis stresses the need for both individual and societal conversion to become more engaged in relationship with God, others and creation as a whole. To be authentically and truly free, one cannot exclude any of these relationships without compromising one's own dignity and integrity.

The Holy Father is especially concerned with all the waste and destruction of what he terms a "throwaway culture," rooted in selfishness, indifference, excessive individualism and unrestrictive consumerism. He particularly points out that the more industrialized, first-world countries, such as the United States, must assume a greater responsibility for assisting the poorer countries in achieving a more sustainable livelihood.

Excessive consumption of the Earth's resources by developed countries cannot continue in isolation to the deprivations existing in developing countries. While he readily acknowledges that climate change and degradation of the Earth's resources are not limited to a single issue, Pope Francis does not hesitate to emphasize the "human factor" contributing to the environmental crisis that has especially escalated in the last couple of decades.

Everyone, including the poorest of the poor, has an inalienable right to a decent living, drinkable water, food, employment, health care and housing. To this end, true to his Jesuit spirituality, the Holy Father exhorts each human being to engage in a daily examination of conscience.

Pope Francis makes it clear that

authentic, sincere and inclusive engagement in ongoing dialogue is paramount. No one should be left from the table, especially those who are most affected by any type of economic or political decision in any given situation. No one should be left out of the conversation if it is to be honest, just and best for all involved.

Properly caring for Mother Earth, our common home, demands a commitment to sacrifice and simplicity of life on the part of every Christian. Applying "*Laudato Si'*" to the challenges of our local situation, we can begin to make headway by addressing the four principal areas to overcoming the scourge of poverty in our midst as outlined in the Indiana bishops' pastoral letter "Poverty at the Crossroads: The Church's Response to Poverty in Indiana." These include family life, employment, education and health care. Created in the image of God, each of us has the capacity to make a difference.

Drawing grace and inspiration from the unity of the loving relationship of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son and Spirit, three persons in one God—we human beings are at our best when living in right relationships with God, others, self and creation. †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## Laudato Si', una encíclica para el siglo XXI

En mi columna de la semana pasada comencé a reflexionar sobre la encíclica del papa Francisco acerca del medioambiente, titulada "*Laudato Si'*, sobre el cuidado de la casa común."

En su estilo característico, pero en consonancia con sus predecesores, el papa Francisco nos ofrece un excelente plan para la contemplación y la acción, en respuesta a los desafíos de nuestros tiempos. El Santo Padre escribe con el corazón de un verdadero pastor y la mentalidad de un maestro; no busca dividir sino unir a la humanidad en oración, estudio, reflexión, diálogo y en respuesta a un problema muy serio que afecta a toda la creación. Aunque presenta un desafío, "*Laudato Si'*" expresa, en definitiva, un mensaje de esperanza.

El hilo conductor de esta encíclica es el concepto de la sostenibilidad mediante una ecología integral. En este sentido, el papa Francisco plantea una pregunta para todos: "¿Qué tipo de mundo queremos dejar a quienes nos sucedan, a los niños que están creciendo?" (#160)

A lo largo de esta encíclica se entretrejen siete principios clave de la doctrina social católica, a saber: la vida y la dignidad de la persona humana; el llamado a vivir en familia, en comunidad y a participar; los derechos y las responsabilidades; opciones para los pobres y los vulnerables; la dignidad del trabajo y los derechos de los trabajadores; la solidaridad y el cuidado de

la creación de Dios. Desde la perspectiva de la justicia, ninguno de estos aspectos es opcional.

Fiel a la noción de la Iglesia de la relación entre fe y razón, el papa Francisco se fundamenta en los conocimientos de los expertos en diversos campos científicos. El papa no intenta ofrecer soluciones económicas, políticas o biológicas y explica claramente que la función de la Iglesia no es proporcionar soluciones prácticas, sino alentar y orientar en la búsqueda de tales soluciones.

En especial, el papa Francisco destaca la grave situación de los pobres en medio de los desafíos ambientales que se nos presentan. Exhorta a toda la humanidad a tener mentes y corazones abiertos hacia un sentido más profundo de valoración de toda la creación como un don de Dios. Dicha valoración conlleva justamente a un compromiso más profundo con la sencillez, la armonía, la humildad, la solidaridad y, primordialmente, el diálogo.

Puesto que no elude los retos o la crítica, el papa Francisco enfatiza en la necesidad de la conversión individual y de toda la sociedad para entablar una relación más estrecha con Dios, con el prójimo y con la creación como un todo. Para ser auténtica y verdaderamente libres, no podemos excluir ninguna de estas relaciones sin que esto comprometa la propia dignidad e integridad.

Al Santo Padre le preocupa en especial el despilfarro y la destrucción en lo que él denomina la "cultura del despilfarro" que se origina en el egoísmo, la indiferencia, el individualismo excesivo y el consumismo desenfrenado. En especial, señala que los países más industrializados o del primer mundo, como Estados Unidos, deben asumir una responsabilidad mayor de ayudar a los países más pobres a lograr una forma de subsistencia más sostenible.

La explotación excesiva de los recursos de la tierra por parte de los países desarrollados no puede seguir ajena a las penurias que existen en los países en vías de desarrollo. Si bien reconoce sin reparos que el cambio climático y la degradación de los recursos de la tierra no se limitan a una sola causa, el papa Francisco no duda en subrayar el "factor humano" que contribuye a la crisis ambiental que se ha intensificado especialmente en décadas recientes.

Todos, inclusive los más pobres entre los pobres, poseen un derecho inalienable a vivir dignamente, al agua potable, a tener alimento, a empleo, a la atención de salud y a la vivienda. En este sentido y fiel a su espiritualidad jesuita, el Sumo Pontífice exhorta a cada ser humano a realizar a diario un examen de conciencia.

El papa Francisco deja muy en claro

que es primordial participar de forma auténtica, sincera e inclusiva en un diálogo continuo. Nadie debe quedar excluido, especialmente los más afectados, por decisiones económicas o políticas en una situación dada. Para que el diálogo sea honesto, justo y provechoso para los involucrados, todos deben participar.

Cuidar adecuadamente a la Madre Tierra, nuestra casa común, exige el compromiso de todos los cristianos de hacer un sacrificio y vivir de forma sencilla. Aplicando los planteamientos de "*Laudato Si'*" a los desafíos de nuestra situación local, podemos comenzar a avanzar al abordar los cuatro aspectos principales para superar el estigma de la pobreza que existe entre nosotros, tal como lo detallan los obispos de Indiana en su carta pastoral titulada "*Pobreza en la Encrucijada: la respuesta de la Iglesia ante la pobreza en Indiana.*" Estos aspectos comprenden la vida familiar, el empleo, la educación y la atención de salud. Creados a imagen de Dios, cada uno de nosotros tiene la capacidad de marcar la diferencia.

Tomando como ejemplo la gracia y la inspiración de la unidad de la devota relación de la Santísima Trinidad: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo, las tres personas que conforman un solo Dios, los seres humanos vivimos a plenitud cuando entablamos relaciones positivas con Dios, con el prójimo, con nosotros mismos y con la creación. †

# Events Calendar

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

## September 25

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, 14598 Oakridge Road, Carmel, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese). **Fight the New Drug**, talk on the harm of pornography based on scientific evidence, 7 p.m., free, reservations not required. Information: 317-430-3448, [diane.conover@sbcglobal.net](mailto:diane.conover@sbcglobal.net).

## September 27

Holy Trinity Heritage Park, 702 E. Market St., New Albany. **Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting**, located on the site of New Albany's first Catholic parish, hosted by St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities, noon. Information: [www.stecharities.org](http://www.stecharities.org), 812-949-7305. (Re-scheduled from Sept. 13)

St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, 5719 Saint Marys Road, Floyds Knobs. **Card party**, 7-10 p.m., door prizes, \$5 per person. Information: 812-923-3011.

St. Mary Parish **"Italian Dinner"** at Lawrence County Persimmon Festival, Main St., Mitchell, 4-7 p.m. Information: 812-849-3570.

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Archdiocesan Ministry of Consolation Team (AMCT) Quarterly Meeting**, for grief ministers or those wishing to become involved in the ministry, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Information: Deb VanVelse, 317-236-1586, [dvanvelse@archindy.org](mailto:dvanvelse@archindy.org).

## September 28

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild Card Party**, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 317-223-3687, [vlgmimi@aol.com](mailto:vlgmimi@aol.com).

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](mailto:rectory@saintmichaelindy.org).

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral chapel, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **St. Raphael Catholic Medical Association Guild of Indianapolis White Mass and Reception**, for

Catholic physicians, nurses and health care professionals, 6 p.m. Mass, followed by dinner reception across the street at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, admission \$15, medical students \$5, children free. Reservations by Sept. 26 at [www.indycathmed.org](http://www.indycathmed.org). Information: [info@indycathmed.org](mailto:info@indycathmed.org).

## September 28-30

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. **Fall Festival**, Thurs. 5-10 p.m., Fri. 5 p.m.-midnight, Sat. noon-midnight, rides, games, live entertainment, gambling, raffle, silent auction. Information: 317-356-7291.

## September 29

Knights of Columbus, Mater Dei Council #437, McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware, Indianapolis. **Agape Performing Arts Fall Harvest Swing Dance Fundraiser**, 7-11 p.m., \$10 admission. Information, [agapeshows@gmail.com](mailto:agapeshows@gmail.com), 317-631-4373.

St. Joseph Parish, 125 E. Broadway, Shelbyville.

**Octoberfest**, 5-11 p.m., food, brews, pumpkin painting, live music, free. Information: 317-398-8227.

## September 29-30

Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Octoberfest and Health and Safety Fair**, 5 p.m.-midnight, \$20,000 raffle, health and safety fair, kids games and inflatables, authentic German food, Fri. 8:30-11:30 p.m. "The Flying Toasters" band, Sat. 6:30-8:30 p.m. "Spinrut" band, 8:30-11:30 p.m. "Woomblies Rock Orchestra" band. Information: 317-784-5454.

St. Thomas More Parish, 1200 N. Indiana St., Mooresville. **Applefest**, Fri. 5-9 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-9 p.m., food barn, carnival, kids games, crafters, corn hole, wine and beer garden. Information: 317-831-4142.

## September 30

St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. **Annual Raffle**, 6-10 p.m., games, food, drinks, music and more.

\$20 per person. Information: [stritasecretary71@yahoo.com](mailto:stritasecretary71@yahoo.com), 317-632-9349.

Primo Banquet Hall, 2615 National Ave., Indianapolis. **Angels of Grace 10th Anniversary Luncheon**, style show, lunch, award ceremony, 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m., \$35 per person, \$260 table of eight. Information and registration: 317-788-7581, [www.benedictinn.org](http://www.benedictinn.org).

## Sept. 30-Oct. 1

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Introduction to the Flame of Love Movement**, following 4:30 p.m., 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. Masses in first floor classroom of CYO building. Information: 317-753-8434 or [trustandpraise@gmail.com](mailto:trustandpraise@gmail.com).

## October 1

**Life Chain Events** throughout archdiocese; see related story on page 3.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. **Neighborhood Street Fair**, 3-7 p.m., food, drinks, entertainment, crafts,

children's games, bingo and information booths, free. Information: 317-638-5551, [springman0823@hotmail.com](mailto:springman0823@hotmail.com).

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 5692 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass in Slow Motion**, step-by-step explanation of words and actions of the Mass, 9:30 a.m. Information: 317-257-2266.

St. John Paul II Parish, St. Joseph Campus, 2605 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **Turkey Shoot, Fall Festival and Chicken Dinner**, 10:30 a.m. until folks leave, chicken dinners with homemade dumplings, booths, raffles for items and money, quilts, firing range. Information: 812-246-3522.

Holy Family Parish, 3027 Pearl St., Oldenburg. **Fall Festival**, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., fried chicken and roast beef dinners with sides, homemade ice cream, money raffle, quilts, pull tabs, basket booth, kids games, silent auction, baked goods, Christmas crafts. Information: 812-934-3013. †

## Sisters of St. Benedict offer separate discernment evenings on Oct. 20 and 21

The Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, 1402 Southern Ave., will offer two separate discernment evenings from 4-9 p.m. on Oct. 20 and 21.

It will provide an opportunity for single Catholic women ages 19-40 to discern their next step in life. The

evening will involve prayer, dinner and time to learn tools for discerning God's call.

An option to spend the night on Oct. 20 is available.

For more information, contact vocation director Benedictine Sister Julie Sewell at [vocations@benedictine.com](mailto:vocations@benedictine.com). †

## VIPs



**Donald and Elizabeth (Prusakiewicz) Nester**, members of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 2.

The couple was married at St. Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in Gaylord, Mich., on Sept. 2, 1967.

They have four children: Debbie Hillenburg, Kelly Johnson, Kim Meyer and Jeff Nester.

The couple also has four grandchildren. †

## 'Saints in the Streets' initiative to clean St. Anthony Parish neighborhood on Oct. 7

All are invited to participate in "Saints in the Streets," a joint event sponsored by St. Anthony and St. Barnabas parishes in Indianapolis, meeting at St. Anthony Parish, 337 N. Warman Ave., in Indianapolis, at 8 a.m. and working in the neighborhood until noon on Oct. 7.

Participants will clean streets, alleys, parks and elderly neighbors' yards near St. Anthony Parish. The event is a good

opportunity for youths needing service hours, families or anyone who wants to make a difference in the near west side neighborhood.

Volunteers will receive a T-shirt and free lunch, and can register online at [www.facebook.com/saintsinthestreets.indy](http://www.facebook.com/saintsinthestreets.indy) or at [bit.ly/2uZSCbH](http://bit.ly/2uZSCbH).

For information, call 317-292-8964 or e-mail [saintsinthestreets@gmail.com](mailto:saintsinthestreets@gmail.com). †

## St. Agnes Academy class of 1968 looking for alumnae for June reunion in Indy

Members of the class of 1968 of the former St. Agnes Academy in Indianapolis are in the planning stages of organizing a 50th reunion, set for June 3, 2018.

They are searching for alumnae of their class in hopes of having as many classmates as possible attend the reunion.

For more information, call 317-340-7550 or e-mail [padouglass@gmail.com](mailto:padouglass@gmail.com). †



## Commitment ceremony

Judy Skarbeck, a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, poses with a cake on July 30 celebrating her commitment ceremony as a member of the Associate Community of the Spiritual Family of Blessed Catherine Kasper, a tertiary order of the Poor Handmaid of Jesus Christ Sisters in Donaldson, Ind., in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The ceremony followed a year of formation for Skarbeck. She joins 142 other faith-filled women and men from nine dioceses across the Midwest who are associates within this spiritual family. (Submitted photo)

## 'Prayer, Family and Relationship with God' conference at St. Nicholas Parish in Sunman on Oct. 7

A one-day conference called "Prayer, Family and Relationship with God" will take place at St. Nicholas Parish, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Dr., Sunman, from 8:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m. on Oct. 7.

This conference is meant to draw participants closer to God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It begins with Mass at 8:30 a.m.

John Beaulieu from Franciscan University of Steubenville will give five talks throughout the day "The Perfect Love of the Father," "The Sacrificial Love of the Son," "The Abiding Love

of the Holy Spirit," "Releasing the Grace of the Holy Spirit," and "The Satisfying Love of Community."

Participants are asked to bring their own lunch and dinner, and there will be an opportunity to pre-order pizza for dinner. Free drinks, water and snacks will be available.

Teens and adults are invited to attend. There is no charge, although freewill offerings will be accepted.

For more information, call 317-439-3432 or e-mail [servantsofgod@etczone.com](mailto:servantsofgod@etczone.com). †



# The Face of Mercy

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

By Daniel Conway

## Jesus, the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price

During his address to pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square before the *Angelus* on July 30, the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Pope Francis said:

"The disciple of Christ is not one who is deprived of something essential; He is one who has found much more: he has found the fullness of joy that only the Lord can give. It is the evangelical joy of healed people; of forgiven sinners; of the thief to whom is opened the door of paradise."

Speaking about that day's reading from the Gospel of Matthew, which tells the parables of the "hidden treasure" and the "pearl of great price," Pope Francis emphasized that "the attitude of searching is the essential condition for finding."

The treasure is the kingdom of God, found through the person of Jesus Christ, the pope said. And to obtain it, our hearts must burn with the desire to seek it and find it out.

"He is the hidden treasure, he is the pearl of great value. He is the fundamental discovery, which can make a decisive turning point in our lives, filling it with meaning."

Too many of us spend our whole lives searching in the wrong places, for things that will never satisfy our deepest longing.

The parables that Jesus tells in St. Matthew's Gospel speak to the urgency of seeking, and ultimately finding, "hidden treasure" and "the pearl of great price." Whether we find them by accident or as the result of a long and difficult process of seeking, our reaction should be immediate and all-encompassing.

We must sell everything we have, without counting the cost to ourselves, and embrace the new-found treasure, the pearl of great price, as the secret to all life's mysteries.

As Pope Francis has written in his encyclical "*Laudato Si'*," on Care for Our Common Home, "Rather than a problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise" (#12). This is a great discovery that the missionary disciple makes when he or she encounters the person of Jesus Christ and gives up everything to follow him and proclaim his Good News.

The parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price "highlight

two characteristics concerning the possession of the kingdom of God," Pope Francis said, "searching and sacrifice."

It is true, the pope says, "the Kingdom of God is offered to all—it is a gift, a favor, a grace—but it is not made available on a silver plate, it requires dynamism: it is to seek, to walk, to do."

Consistent with his intolerance for "lazy Christians" or those of us who are content to remain indoors in the comfort and security of our homes, Pope Francis says that the Gospel demands action, not mere lip service. Giving up everything—including our very lives—for the sake of the Gospel is the most dramatic form of action that a missionary disciple can take in response to the Lord's invitation, "Come, follow me" (Mt 4:19).

"Evaluating the invaluable treasure leads to a decision that also involves sacrifice, detachment and renunciation," the pope says.

A disciple's choice to sacrifice everything for Christ is not a matter of "despising" the things of this world, but of putting things in their proper order,

placing Jesus first before everything else.

And doing so leads to the joy of the Gospel, which fills the hearts and lives of those who have found Jesus. "Those who are saved by him are freed from sin, sadness, inner void, and isolation," the pope said. "With Jesus Christ, the joy is always born and reborn."

Everyone of us seeks the "consoling presence of Jesus in our lives." And this presence, Pope Francis said, is one that transforms our hearts, opening us up to the needs of our brothers and sisters, in particular those that are weaker or more vulnerable than we are, especially the poor, migrants and refugees, the unborn, elderly and infirm on the margins of society.

"Let us pray, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary," the pope concluded, "for each of us to witness, with daily words and gestures, the joy of having found the treasure of the Kingdom of God, that is, the love the Father has given us through Jesus."

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

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

## Jesús: El tesoro escondido y la perla preciosa

Durante su discurso a los peregrinos reunidos en la Plaza de San Pedro, antes del *Angelus*, el día 30 de julio, el 17th domingo del tiempo Ordinario, el papa Francisco expresó:

"El discípulo de Cristo no es uno que se ha privado de algo esencial; es uno que ha encontrado mucho más: ha encontrado la alegría plena que solo el Señor puede donar. Es la alegría evangélica de los enfermos sanados; de los pecadores perdonados; del ladrón al que se le abre la puerta al paraíso."

Al hablar acerca de la lectura de ese día, tomada del Evangelio según san Mateo y que relata las parábolas del "tesoro escondido" y de la "perla preciosa," el papa Francisco enfatizó en que "la actitud de la búsqueda es la condición esencial para encontrar."

Tal como lo indica el papa, el tesoro es el Reino de Dios que se encuentra a través de la persona de Jesucristo, y para obtenerlo, nuestros corazones deben arder con el deseo de buscarlo y encontrarlo.

"Es Él el tesoro escondido, es Él la perla de gran valor. Él es el descubrimiento fundamental, que puede dar un giro decisivo a nuestra vida, llenándola de significado."

Muchos de nosotros nos pasamos la vida buscando en los lugares incorrectos, cosas que jamás satisfarán nuestros anhelos más profundos.

Las parábolas que narra Jesús en el Evangelio según san Mateo hablan sobre la imperiosa necesidad de buscar y, finalmente encontrar el "tesoro escondido" y "la perla preciosa." Ya sea que los encontremos por accidente o como resultado de un largo y difícil proceso de búsqueda, nuestra reacción debe ser inmediata y universal.

Debemos vender todas nuestras posesiones, sin tomar en cuenta el precio, y acoger ese nuevo tesoro, la perla preciosa, como el secreto de todos los misterios de la vida.

Tal como lo expresó el papa Francisco en su encíclica titulada "*Laudato Si'*, sobre el cuidado de la casa común":

"El mundo es algo más que un problema a resolver, es un misterio gozoso que contemplamos con jubilosa alabanza" (#12). Este es el gran descubrimiento que realiza el discípulo misionero cuando se encuentra con la persona de Jesucristo y lo deja todo para seguirlo y proclamar la Buena Nueva.

Las parábolas del tesoro escondido y la perla preciosa "destacan dos

características respecto a la posesión del Reino de Dios: la búsqueda y el sacrificio."

"Es verdad dice el papa 'que el Reino de Dios es ofrecido a todos es un don, es un regalo, es una gracia pero no está puesto a disposición en un plato de plata, requiere dinamismo: se trata de buscar, caminar, trabajar."

En concordancia con su intolerancia ante los "cristianos perezosos" o aquellos de nosotros que gustosamente permanecemos a puerta cerrada en la comodidad y la seguridad de nuestros hogares, el papa Francisco dice que el Evangelio exige acción, no meras palabrerías. Dejarlo todo, incluso la propia vida, por el Evangelio, es la acción más impresionante que puede realizar un discípulo misionero en respuesta a la invitación del Señor: "Sígueme" (Mt 4:19).

"La valoración del valor inestimable del tesoro, lleva a una decisión que implica también sacrificio, desapegos y renunciaciones" explica el papa.

La elección de un discípulo de sacrificarlo todo por Cristo no significa que menosprecie lo mundano, sino que coloca las cosas en el orden adecuado, anteponiendo a Jesús a todo lo demás.

Y esto es lo que conlleva a la alegría del Evangelio que colma los corazones y las vidas de quienes han encontrado a Jesús. "Aquellos que se dejan salvar por Él son liberados del pecado, de la tristeza, del vacío interior, del aislamiento," señala el Santo Padre. "Con Jesucristo siempre nace y renace la alegría."

Todos buscamos "la presencia consoladora de Jesús en nuestra vida." Y esta presencia, dice el papa Francisco, es lo que transforma nuestros corazones y nos abre a las necesidades de nuestros hermanos, particularmente las de los más débiles o más vulnerables que nosotros, especialmente los pobres, los inmigrantes y refugiados, los bebés que no han nacido, los ancianos y los enfermos que se encuentran en los márgenes de la sociedad.

"Rezamos, por intercesión de la Virgen María finaliza el papa para que cada uno de nosotros sepa testimoniar, con las palabras y los gestos cotidianos, la alegría de haber encontrado el tesoro del Reino de Dios, es decir el amor que el Padre nos ha donado mediante Jesús."

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

## Boston College says students doing well after acid attack in France

BOSTON (CNS)—Boston College officials said on Sept. 18 that four of its university students studying abroad who were victims of an acid attack a day earlier in Marseille, France, were doing well.

The female students, all juniors, plan to remain in Europe for their studies and offered forgiveness to the woman who sprayed them with an acid solution outside of the Saint-Charles train station in Marseille, according to a statement posted on the university's website.

Following the incident, French police arrested a 41-year-old French woman who they described as "disturbed" and suffering from mental illness. Police said the incident was not related to terrorism. The woman was not identified.

The students were treated at a hospital in Marseille after the attack and released the same day. Police told ABC News that two of the students were treated for facial burns, and that the other two were not physically injured but were treated for shock.

"We are very proud of our students and the gracious manner in which they have handled themselves throughout this ordeal," said Jack Dunn, university spokesman, adding that the Boston College "community is here to provide whatever support and assistance they need."

The students were identified as Courtney Siverling, Charlotte Kaufman and Michelle Krug, who are enrolled in Boston College's Paris program, and Kelsey Kosten, who is studying

at the Copenhagen Business School in Denmark.

"It appears that the students are fine, considering the circumstances, though they may require additional treatment for burns," Nick Gozik, who directs the Boston College Office of International Programs, said in an earlier statement. "We have been in contact with the students and their parents and remain in touch with French officials and the U.S. Embassy regarding the incident." †

# SISTERS

continued from page 1

Archbishop Thompson's visit to the St. Augustine Home was not his first introduction to the Little Sisters. The order has a home in the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky., where the archbishop was a priest, and had a home in Evansville where he served as bishop for six years. The home in Evansville closed in 2014.

"I have a great, high regard for them," the archbishop told *The Criterion*.

"St. Jeanne Jugan has a great story, her unassuming way that she had about her and her vocation . . .

"They give such witness to that today. The Little Sisters of the Poor, they're so highly regarded throughout the Church."

During his homily, Archbishop Thompson shared with the congregation how, when he was ordained and installed as bishop of Evansville in 2011, then-Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein joked with him, "Don't let anyone call you Bishop Chuck. If they do, make them pay \$10 to the Little Sisters of the Poor."

Archbishop Thompson also likened St. Jeanne Jugan to an iceberg "where you just see the tip, but the biggest chunk is under the water. . .

"How much goes on here [at the St. Augustine Home] day in and day out, not just among the sisters but the volunteers, the staff, even among the residents and their families? We see many beautiful things, and yet usually that's just the tip of the iceberg."

Archbishop Thompson noted how the Little Sisters' foundress cared for and reached out to "those who society so often turns away and acts indifferent toward. St. Jeanne Jugan saw that dignity. I think that's what the Little Sisters do here, is keep that dignity before us. . .

"What we celebrate today is a saint that tells us to look out for others, keeping Christ in the center and focusing on others."

He recounted a story of a lover of music who told an ailing concert pianist, "I love music. I can play the notes. But I cannot play the music. The notes are in the hand, but the music is in the heart, and in the soul."

The archbishop said the witness of St. Jeanne Jugan and the Little Sisters of the Poor is that "they show us not just what it is to play the notes, but to play the music of God's love, mercy and compassion, that which comes not just from the hands and the feet, but what comes from the heart and the soul."

Archbishop Thompson noted that, in proclaiming the Beatitudes in that day's Gospel reading, Christ showed how he recognized "dignity in everyone as a child of God," that "whatever their frustration,



Sisters, residents and guests at the Little Sisters of the Poor St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis sing an opening hymn during a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson on Aug. 30, the feast day of St. Jeanne Jugan, the foundress of the Little Sisters. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson elevates the Eucharist during the Mass he celebrated at the Little Sisters of the Poor's St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis on Aug. 30, the feast day of St. Jeanne Jugan, the foundress of the Little Sisters.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson greets Mary Liddy, a resident of the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis, on Aug. 30.

whatever their pain, they did not go unnoticed by God . . . So each person, regardless of their state in life, [is] blessed. . .

"We honor St. Jeanne Jugan today by counting our blessings, even in the midst of hardships. We continue to look after the needs of others. We continue to raise up those whom Jesus Christ loves. . .

"[Emulate St. Jeanne Jugan] not just by counting your blessings, but by being a blessing to others, by giving of ourselves not just with our hands and our feet, but with our hearts and our souls."

After the Mass, a long line of residents, family members, volunteers, St. Augustine Home Guild members and staff stretched

through the chapel to meet Archbishop Thompson.

Residents Carl and Patricia Lentz, both 87, were among those who waited as long as a half hour to meet the archbishop.

"We were blessed to have him here," said Carl. "I think he's going to be a blessing to us all. I look forward to experiencing him in the liturgy again sometime. I don't know when that will be, but I'm ready!"

"The Mass was beautiful, just beautiful," said Carl's wife, Patricia.

As residents of St. Augustine Home for seven years, the couple recalled meeting then-Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin when he celebrated Mass at the home.

"We hated to see Cardinal Tobin go," Patricia admitted. "But this is all part of God's plan. It was so refreshing to get to meet [Archbishop Thompson]."

Sister Amy, one of the sisters who greeted the archbishop outside, noted "how happy we were that he could come.

"We were especially touched by his humility. He was so happy to be here.

"It was a very special moment for us."

(For more information on the Little Sisters of the Poor and the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis, visit [www.littlesistersofthepoorindianapolis.org](http://www.littlesistersofthepoorindianapolis.org).) †

## Little Sisters rely on 'God's partners' to help meet needs

By Natalie Hoefler

To help serve the elderly poor, there is one thing the Little Sisters of the Poor are not too proud to do: beg. In fact, it is one of their traditions from their foundation.

When St. Jeanne Jugan started the congregation in 1843 in France, she started by picking one elderly woman off the street and cared for her in her own home. Soon other elderly came for help.

"She didn't have the means to care for the elderly she took in," says Little Sister Mother Francis Gabriel, superior of the order in Indianapolis and its St. Augustine Home for the Aged. "It was common practice at that time in France to go out and beg.

"The elderly told her where they used to go. She went in their name. She told them, 'I will take care of their body and spirit if you help me care for them,' and the tradition of begging—development, they now call it—was born.

"To this day, the tradition of begging helps us to remember our roots, why we're here and who we're here for," says Mother Francis.

Although the sisters no longer set out on foot to beg, they do visit local businesses in search of help.

"Every city is a little different," says Mother Francis. In Indianapolis, the beggar for St. Augustine Home "has regular rounds she makes with regular companies or vegetable and fruit vendors, and regular donors. . .

"We go from business to business, give our card, explain who we are, and ask if they could help us, if not now then in the future."

Recently, the Marsh Supermarket chain went out of business. The store had regularly helped supplement the home's kitchen with fruits, vegetables, bread, sweet rolls and other items, Mother Francis said.

Such regular contributors help the Sisters "meet the general operating expenses of the home, and at the same time it's a treat for the residents," who hail from all over Indiana but particularly from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Diocese of Lafayette.

While the closing of the supermarket chain has had an impact, Mother Francis is far from worried.

"Miracles continue to this day," she says. "St. Jeanne Jugan was ingenious to

use what she could at the time to help the elderly. We're doing the same."

Such efforts include mailings, fundraising events, speaking at parishes and the help of the St. Augustine Guild—and a devotion to St. Joseph

"We know if we pray to him, he will provide for us," Mother Francis says.

Currently eight sisters—the youngest in her 30s and the oldest in her 90s—help care in some way for the residents living in the home, a number which hovers around 95.

Because the home has two nursing floors—in addition to the opportunity for individual living—the sisters receive reimbursement from the federal government for acuity of care.

"But it's only 60 percent of what we need on a monthly basis," says Mother Francis. "The other 40 [percent] comes from benefactors and friends.

"St. Jeanne Jugan said she wasn't alone in this [mission]. These are God's children we're providing for. We aren't alone. It's the sisters, the residents, the employees, the volunteers, guild members, Association of St. Jeanne Jugan [those who pray for the Little Sisters, their cause and those they

serve]—it's all these friends who do things for us."

The support the sisters receive frees them up to do the true charism of their vocation: to "take [the elderly] in when they're well so they can benefit from the social and spiritual activities that go on here, prep them for God's coming, and care for them as they progress," says Mother Francis.

"One of our main focuses of our life is to be with those who are dying and not leave their bedside," she explains. "A sister stays with them around the clock. We like to say that the last face they see is ours before they look on Jesus. . . It's a time of faith we can share, and strengthen them in their weakness."

She says all those who help the Little Sisters in their mission "are God's partners.

"He's working through them to bring about his kingdom and care for the poor elderly, which is so greatly needed in our day."

(For more information on how to help the Little Sisters of the Poor with financial or material donations or by volunteering, call the St. Augustine Home at 317-415-5767.) †

# ADOPTION

continued from page 1

ready to pursue adoption.

“For us, I think it was God’s plan for us to adopt,” says Joe.

“We always knew we wanted to have children,” Jenni adds. “And when we couldn’t have our own, then we reached out to friends who we knew were going through the adoption process. They were the ones who led us to Adoption Bridges [of Kentuckiana].”

The agency, a Louisville-based ministry of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany, works with women in unexpected pregnancies who seek loving families for their babies rather than abortion.

“The agency does a lot of work and effort in locating these forever families,” says Mark Casper, agency director for St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities. “Unfortunately, for every baby that’s able to be placed for adoption, there are 10-20 families wanting to adopt.”

In 2014, the agency handled 22 adoptions, 20 the following year, and 14 in 2016.

Casper says several aspects of Adoption Bridges differentiate it from other agencies, such as an all-day training for couples seeking to adopt; free lifetime mental health counseling for the parents of the adopted child, the adopted child and the birth parents; residential options if the mother chooses to raise her child; and legal licenses to handle adoptions both in Indiana and in Kentucky.

These were all appealing features to the Amschlers. But so was the fact that the agency only deals with infant adoptions.

“We’ve never been parents before, so we wanted that [experience of] every two hours you have to get up and change the diaper and feed the baby,” says Jenni.

Supporting the agency’s pro-life cause also figured into the Amschler’s decision.

“There are definitely circumstances outside a birth mother’s control, especially

in this day and age where there are so many influences and things that are wrong in the world,” says Joe. He and Jenni acknowledge the strength it takes for a birth mother “to have her child and love them enough to place them up for adoption.”

Jenni adds that the birth mother had the strength to fight pressure from her father to have an abortion.

“She said, ‘No, I’m going to give a family a baby,’” says Jenni.

## ‘It’s definitely a two-way street’

The Amschlers filled out an application for Adoption Bridges which allowed them to specify such preferences as gender, multiple births, ethnicity and more.

She notes that the form even “goes over drugs—what you’re OK with, what you’re not OK with, and alcohol abuse. They’re seeing a lot of heroin babies right now.”

The staff at Adoption Bridges “was incredibly supportive” through the entire



Joe and Jenni Amschler smile on April 22 with their son Jaxson, who they adopted through Adoption Bridges of Kentuckiana, a ministry of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

process, says the couple. They offered monthly meetings for couples waiting to adopt, and “we knew that if we had any questions, we could just pick up the phone and call them or e-mail them and they would get right back to us,” says Jenni.

Even nearly two years after adopting Jaxson, the Amschlers still keep in touch with the members from their former support group of couples who joined the adoption journey at Adoption Bridges during the same time frame.

“It’s a family,” says Jenni. “Once you’re in, you’re in.”

“The support group that we were in, we all got placed within six to eight months of each other. We’re going to hit different milestones together: the

pre-school, the sleep deprivation, the teething, the walking and everything else.”

But the Amschlers appreciated the support being offered to the birth mothers as well.

“For every thousand questions we had, [the birth mother] had three times as many,” says Joe. “It’s definitely a two-way street, it’s not just about us. That makes us feel good.”

At Adoption Bridges, the birth mother uses couple-made

portfolios to select the family she thinks will be best for her unborn child. Shortly after Jaxson’s birth mother chose the Amschlers, the couple met her.

“She is a very strong person,” says Joe.

“If I ran into the birth mother today,” says Jenni, “I’d probably run up to her and give her a hug and tell her I love her. We did at the hospital—we hugged each other and told each other that we loved each other.”

## ‘You’ve got a story that’s really awesome’

That embrace happened on Nov. 18, 2015.

“When we got to the hospital, the advocate was there with us,” Jenni recalls. “She was in the delivery room, texting us that he was here. ... She was there around the clock. Every step of the way we were calling [Adoption Bridges], they were calling us,” even at 2 a.m., the couple says.

They became Jaxson’s foster parents while Adoption Bridges pursued legal action to terminate the father’s parental rights.

“Even though adoption is a scary thing because you don’t terminate the rights right then and there, you can’t guard yourself from loving this baby,” says Joe. “Even if they just might be in your home for just a couple months, you still have to show the baby love.”

On Feb. 18, 2016, Jenni and Joe legally became the parents of Jaxson, now 22 months old.

Jaxson’s is an open adoption, meaning that he can one day meet his birth mother, if he chooses.

“We talk about her to Jaxson,” says Jenni. “We’re very open. He has two biological brothers. We’ll keep that open to him in the future.”

Overall, the experience of adopting Jaxson was easy, says Jenni. But that’s not to say the adoption journey has been without its heartaches.

“Before we adopted Jaxson, we were called for a little girl,” she says. “She was already 48 hours old and in the hospital. ... We automatically said yes.”

“Come to find out an aunt wanted to take the baby, which was devastating to us. It was another [time of] grieving.”

A similar situation happened this August—again with a baby girl—after the Amschlers started the process anew last



Jaxson Amschler, then 18 months old, is mesmerized by the camera as he sits on the lap of his dad, Joe Amschler, on April 22. Joe and his wife Jenni adopted Jaxson through Adoption Bridges of Kentuckiana, a ministry of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany.

November to adopt a sibling for Jaxson.

“I had always said ‘one and we’re done,’” says Jenni. “But going through the adoption experience with Adoption Bridges, the experience we had with his birth mother, how easy it was—we were at the hospital with him and said, ‘OK, we can do this again.’”

She notes that “we did get picked up quickly with Jaxson, but we might not with this next one.”

“Some [couples] hear from us in weeks or months,” says Casper. “On average, the wait is more like 18 months to two years, but we don’t control that—that’s based on the birth mothers and who they choose.”

Still, the couple remains hopeful.

“We know God has a plan for our family and will send us the perfect baby at his timing,” says Jenni.

“You’ve got a story at the end of the day that’s really awesome,” Joe agrees. “The child will have loving parents at the end of the day who are going to guide them through their life journey. Their story is going to be unique.”

“You have to step outside of your comfort zone—it’s going to be rewarding.”

(For more information on Adoption Bridges of Kentuckiana, go to [www.adoptionbridges.org](http://www.adoptionbridges.org) or call 502-585-4369.) †

**‘The agency does a lot of work and effort in locating these forever families. Unfortunately, for every baby that’s able to be placed for adoption, there are 10-20 families wanting to adopt.’**



—Mark Casper, agency director for St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities

# IRMA

continued from page 1

One of the issues the housing complex has, he said, is that the residents are susceptible to loss of power, and there is only one elevator in each of these buildings.

“Sometimes you have elderly people who may have mobility issues and can’t get down the stairs, and so bringing meals and supplies in for them is really a necessity and something we can do to help,” O’Connor said.

“Normally when we get affected by storms, it is localized. But in this particular case, Hurricane Irma affected

really all of our Florida jurisdiction.”

Daniel Diaz, grand knight of Council 14698 in Pompano Beach, helped coordinate the food delivery program along with five other Knights.

“Because they lost power here for about a week, all the food in their refrigerator went bad,” said Diaz, who said he rode out the hurricane with his mother at her residence nearby. “This was widespread and went straight up the entire state.”

Diaz, who also is the Knights’ state young adult and college council coordinator, said he will keep looking for ways the Knights can help in the local hurricane recovery. “We are going to keep

our ears open and see how else we can serve our community.”

Irma will be remembered as one of the Atlantic’s strongest hurricanes on record, with earlier peak winds of 185 mph and at Category 4 strength when it came ashore in the Florida Keys. Some sources are predicting that insured losses from the storm could total \$18 billion in the U.S.

Hurricane Irma also caused significant harm to populations in the Caribbean, including the U.S. Virgin Islands.

“Before Hurricane Irma, we set up the network in terms of communications and figured out who was doing the various positions in the state and with coordination with Supreme,” said Knights

District Deputy Peter Chiaravalle, a resident of Fort Lauderdale.

“We were lucky on the east coast of Florida—we didn’t get hit as bad as we thought we might have,” Chiaravalle said. “So a lot of preparation work really paid off.”

Elsewhere in Florida, the Knights were already down in the Keys helping, and a supply truck from the north of the state was waiting to go there, said Joe Cox, a public relations coordinator for the Knights in Florida.

“It is in times like these that we find out who has a willing heart and a ready hand to do something for our fellow human beings who have suffered a lot,” he said. †

# Priest marking 50 years is a witness for racial justice, Church renewal

By Sean Gallagher

During much of his 50 years of priestly life and ministry in the Church in central and southern Indiana, retired Father Martin Peter has sought to apply the Gospel prophetically to driving social questions of the day.

That might have been hard to foresee, though, when he grew up in the 1940s and 1950s, in Tell City, a faith-filled town along the Ohio River, but one which was relatively insulated from the broader world at the time.

That began to change a little for him when he discerned a call to the priesthood as a teenager. But the early years of his priestly formation were spent just up the road from Tell City at the former Saint Meinrad High School and College.

Change came quickly, though, during the last four years of Father Peter's time in the seminary when he was a student at The Catholic University of America in Washington from 1963-67.

Within months of his arrival, he and the rest of the nation were shocked at the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the first Catholic to hold that office.

He stood in line to view the president's casket in the U.S. Capitol, and watched from a sidewalk as the funeral cortege made its way to Arlington National Cemetery.

"It was a very powerful experience, very moving," said Father Peter. "The whole country was partially in shock and definitely in mourning for a young, vibrant president who had a lot of charisma."

During his years in Washington, Father Peter also was formed for the priesthood by his participation in demonstrations for civil rights for African-Americans.

"Having been raised in a small town in southern Indiana, with basically only one race, it was a very broadening

kind of perspective," he said. "Really, throughout my priesthood, it helped me to understand and believe more strongly in racial equality and how we really need to continue to overcome some of the differences and animosity that tends to be there between people who are different from each other."

His value of civil rights for all people that was instilled in the seminary was put into action in the early 1980s when he served as pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis.

At the time, the nearby Riviera Club, a private recreational facility near the parish, did not accept African-Americans as members.

Father Peter, members of the parish and other priests in the Indianapolis North Deanery led a successful effort that involved demonstrations and dialogue to have the club change its admission policy.

"It was a wonderful experience, really," said Father Peter. "It put into practice the equality that we preached. Every person is our brother and sister."

St. Thomas parishioner Charles Williams, himself an African-American, took part in the effort and was encouraged by his pastor's leadership.

"It was so strengthening to know that you had some support," Williams said. "Father Marty was integral in that in terms of getting the club opened.

St. Thomas Aquinas was at the forefront of the marches and the whole process.

"That was faith in action."

Putting faith into action in the way that Father Peter did when serving at St. Thomas and other archdiocesan faith communities sometimes put him at odds with some parishioners who had different views on how the Gospel should be applied to social issues.

While Father Peter did not back away from the prophetic aspects of his priestly ministry, he also knew that he was called in his vocation to bring all the faithful together as one.

"It's a challenge to reconcile being



Father Martin Peter distributes Communion during a July 14 Mass at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus. The retired priest celebrated the 50th anniversary of his priestly ordination earlier this summer. (Photo courtesy of The Republic)

both a prophet and a reconciler," he said. "If a person doesn't feel that tension, it may mean that we've sold out totally to one and ignored the other.

"If you really love people and accept them where they are and, at the same time, challenge them to grow, all kinds of good stuff can happen."

And he saw much good happen in leading St. Thomas and, later, St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg and St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis.

One of the good things that he promoted in parish ministry before he was granted early retirement in 2003 for health reasons was to promote increased lay participation in the Church's ministry.

He saw this as a way to implement the renewal of the Second Vatican Council, which, in viewing the Church as the people of God, opened the door to greater involvement by the laity in its ministry.

"In the parishes where I was at, that was a strong emphasis," Father Peter said. "I really believed that all of us are part of the people of God, not just the ordained. As a result, in every parish where I served, we had active lay leadership. I'm a firm believer in collaboration and consultation."

In 1975, when he was co-pastor of St. Thomas with Father Joseph Dooley, now deceased, he hired Matt Hayes as one of the first lay directors of religious education in the archdiocese.

"He is a faith-filled individual and very committed to the ministry of the Church," Hayes said of Father Peter. "His personality was such that he really welcomed the gifts of all parishioners. He's a great example of someone who comes in as a catalyst and is able to make things happen because of who he is."

Hayes currently serves in the archdiocese as project director of the Empowering Pastoral Leaders for Excellence in Parish Leadership and Management grant that it received in 2016 from Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Now living in rural Bartholomew County, Father Peter stays active in priestly ministry, assisting in more than 50 parishes across central and southern Indiana in his 14 years of retirement. Because of where he lives, he often serves parishes in Columbus, Edinburg, Franklin, Nashville and Seymour.

Father Peter enjoys focusing on what he calls "the heart of priestly ministry," moments such as celebrating Mass, witnessing the exchange of wedding vows and burying the dead.

And it's in these moments that he encourages men who are considering the possibility of serving the Church to reflect that God might be calling them to priestly life and ministry.

"So much of what I find wonderful about the priesthood is the opportunity to be with people in the greatest joys and sorrows of life," Father Peter said. "You're with them at baptisms and weddings, celebrations of joy, but also at funerals and times of grief and difficulties. It is one of the most fulfilling ways to be a part of people's lives.

"I oftentimes think that, after an opportunity to be with people in ministry, I'm not sure who ministered to whom. In giving of yourself in ministry, so much is given back to you in terms of people's deep faith, love and care."

(To learn more about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit [HearGodsCall.com](http://HearGodsCall.com).) †

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## Father Martin Peter

- **Age:** 76
- **Parents:** The late Lawrence and Dorothy Peter
- **Home Parish:** St. Paul Parish in Tell City
- **Seminary:** The former Saint Meinrad High School and College in St. Meinrad; The Catholic University of America in Washington
- **Favorite Scripture passage:** Matthew 25:31-46
- **Favorite saints:** St. Francis of Assisi; St. John XXIII
- **Favorite prayer or devotion:** Peace prayer of St. Francis of Assisi; Serenity Prayer
- **Hobbies:** Traveling in Europe. ("When I travel in Europe, I travel backpacking, independently, to really get out and meet local people.") †

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## Eternal life is an overwhelming experience of God's love

By David Gibson

Heaven is so hard to imagine! For heaven is to such a great extent unknown to us.

Yet, we who are Catholics profess in the Nicene Creed during the Mass that we “look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” But do we? Pope Benedict XVI wondered about that.

In his 2007 encyclical “*Spe Salvi*” (“Saved by Hope”) on Christian hope, Pope Benedict posed the question directly. He asked, “Do we really want this—to live eternally?” His concern was that eternal life might sound “monotonous” to many, or even “unbearable” (#10).

In fact, the pope speculated, there may be many who “reject the faith today simply because they do not find the prospect of eternal life attractive” (#10).

His comments launched a novel conversation, yet a compelling one. Some commentators asked in a slightly humorous vein: Will heaven be boring? Will there be anything to do in heaven? Naturally, the conversation ultimately progressed to asking what eternal life truly implies.

Pope Benedict observed that, on the one hand, eternal life “drives us,” though “we do not know the thing toward which we feel driven.” In one way or another, “we cannot stop reaching out for it” (#11-12).

However, he acknowledged, we can only attempt to imagine an eternity that “is not an unending succession of days in the calendar, but something more like the supreme moment of satisfaction” (#12).

This will be “like plunging into the ocean of infinite love, a moment in which time—the before and the after—no longer exists,” Pope Benedict eloquently explained. He said, “Such a moment is life in the full sense, a plunging ever anew into the vastness

of being, in which we are simply overwhelmed with joy” (#12).

The pope noted how “Jesus expresses” this in the Gospel of St. John where he says, “I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you” (Jn 16:22). “Think along these lines” in attempting “to understand the object of Christian hope, to understand what it is that our faith, our being with Christ, leads us to expect,” the pope advised (#12).

Pope Benedict was not alone among recent popes in attempting to spark a renewed conversation about heaven. St. John Paul II captured the rapt, though somewhat puzzled, attention of believers and nonbelievers alike when in July and August 1999 he delivered a series of talks on heaven, hell and purgatory.

It really got people thinking and talking when he observed that heaven is not a “physical place in the clouds,” but a “state” of living in full “communion with God, which is the goal of human life.”

Quoting the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Pope John Paul called heaven “the state of supreme, definitive happiness” (#1024).

He acknowledged that a spatial image of heaven indeed is found in Scripture. He stressed, moreover, that “it is always necessary to maintain a certain restraint” when describing “ultimate realities” like heaven, “since their depiction is always unsatisfactory.”

But today, he proposed, “personalist language is better suited to describing the state of happiness and peace we will enjoy in our definitive communion with God.”

What is known “in the context of revelation,” he commented, is “that the ‘heaven’ or ‘happiness’ in which we will find ourselves is neither an abstraction nor a physical place in the clouds but a living, personal relationship with the Holy Trinity.”



A man visits the graves of deceased relatives at a cemetery in Managua, Nicaragua. In the Nicene Creed, we profess that we “look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” (CNS photo/Oswaldo Rivas, Reuters)

It seems that the things we look forward to prompt us to get up in the morning. They are the stuff of hope. But the things we dread or that remain basically unknown to us can create anxieties and give rise to troublesome fears.

So a conversation about heaven as a source of hope to look forward to seems important. Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster, England, speaking during his younger years as an archbishop to the 1999 special assembly for Europe of the World Synod of Bishops, encouraged such a conversation, one whose aim is not simply to “engender fear.”

Instead, he said, the Church’s teaching about death and eternity can offer people the hope that “day by day, the key to true judgment is always mercy.”

A challenge in looking forward to the life of the world to come is that many of

us are hardly ready to leave behind the joys or even the obligations of life here and now. Pope Benedict recognized this, writing that what often is desired may not be “eternal life at all, but this present life” (#10).

But must present life and eternal life stand in opposition? Redemptorist Father Anthony Kelly, an Australian theologian, sought in *God Is Love* to show how they intertwine.

“The seed of eternal life is germinating” now, he suggested in his book. “The life of the world to come is already present as we participate in the activity of God’s loving.”

Calling love “the very life of the new creation,” Father Anthony spoke of “the world to come” as “the realm of life to the full.”

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.) †

## Although beyond earthly comprehension, Scripture shows glimpses of heaven

By Paul Senz

In the great creeds of the Catholic faith, we profess our belief in the “life of the world to come” and “life everlasting.” This is not something merely passively believed in. Rather, it is a profound hope in the truest sense of the word: the blessed trust in God’s mercy and providence.

Why is this “world to come” something that we should look forward to? What do we learn from sacred Scripture?

St. Paul tells us—echoing the prophet Isaiah—that “what eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor 2:9). This is a perfectly true observation: heaven, the life of the world to come, is infinitely beyond any human comprehension. This is probably the most fundamental thing about heaven we learn from Scripture.

But while we cannot fully comprehend or imagine it, there are certain things we do know.

In the opening lines of his *Confessions*, St. Augustine profoundly wrote, “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” This rest “in the Lord” finally comes at our entrance into heaven. It is here that we experience what has become called the beatific vision, seeing God “face to face.”

In his first letter, St. John writes that we “shall see God as he is” (1 Jn 3:2). This is one of the great mysteries of heaven: How can we truly see God? God told Moses that “you cannot

see my face, for no one can see me and live” (Ex 33:20). In the course of salvation history, though, Jesus gives us a beautiful, moving insight into God’s ultimate revelation of himself to each of us.

In what has become known as the farewell discourse, Jesus says to his Apostles, “In my Father’s house, there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be” (Jn 14:2-3).

God has prepared a place for us in his home. Nothing should keep us from our place in the house of our Lord.

We would do well to always remember the insight of St. Paul. Heaven is, fundamentally, the perfect fulfillment of our deepest desire: to be in union with God.

It is nothing like anything we have seen or heard, or that we can fathom. It is not an eternity of sitting on a cloud playing a harp; it is not gold fences keeping out those not righteous enough to “earn their wings.” It goes infinitely beyond our own images of it.

And, as a result, picturing such mundane and pedestrian visions of heaven can make it seem, well, mundane and pedestrian! It could even cause someone’s desire for heaven to diminish—and we don’t want that. We should all be constantly striving for heaven.

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



Christ’s ascent to heaven is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Therese of Lisieux Church in Montauk, N.Y. In St. John’s Gospel, Jesus says, “In my Father’s house, there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?” (Jn 14:2). (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz, Long Island Catholic)

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

## Anti-Catholicism resurfaced during the election of 1928

This is the fourth of my columns about the anti-Catholicism that existed in the United States, and especially in Indiana, 100 years ago. We can be grateful that most of it no longer exists, although it does pop up now and then.



By the mid-1920s, much of the anti-Catholicism started to die down, especially, in Indiana, after Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

Grand Dragon D. C. Stephenson was convicted of the rape and second-degree murder of Madge Oberholtzer. When Gov. Edward Jackson refused to pardon him in 1926, Stephenson talked to reporters of the *Indianapolis Times* about bribes the Klan had given to politicians. Mayor John Duvall of Indianapolis was jailed for 30 days and convicted of bribery, and numerous officials across the state resigned because of bribery charges. Klan members were arrested and went to prison on bribery charges. KKK members resigned by the thousands.

But then came the presidential election of 1928 between the Catholic

Democratic governor of New York, Alfred E. Smith, and Republican Herbert Hoover. Smith was a popular four-term governor of New York, a self-made man who never went to high school after his father died when he was 13, and went to work at the Fulton Fish Market. He built his political career as the champion of immigrants and the working man. But he was a Catholic.

Once again, the anti-Catholic literature came out, telling readers that Catholics were un-American because they were part of an alien culture that opposed freedom and democracy. Groups circulated a million copies of the bogus Knights of Columbus oath, one paragraph of which I quoted here three weeks ago.

The National Lutheran Editors and Managers Association issued a manifesto against “the absolute allegiance” that Catholics owed to a “foreign sovereign who does not only ‘claim’ supremacy also in secular affairs as a matter of principle and theory but who, time and again, has endeavored to put this claim into practical operation.”

Protestant ministers warned their congregations that, if Smith won the election, the pope would move to the

United States and rule the country from a fortress in Washington. After Smith lost, the joke was that he sent a one-word telegram to Pope Pius XI: “Unpack.”

It’s true that Smith lost by a landslide not only because he was a Catholic, but because the country was enjoying prosperity under the Republican presidency of Calvin Coolidge and expected Hoover to continue that prosperity. Also, Smith wanted to repeal Prohibition, which wasn’t a popular position in 1928. He was accused of being a drunken Catholic Irishman.

In the election, the Catholics voted for Smith. But he won only eight states, six of them in what was the Solid South that, quite different from today, was Democratic—Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, Arkansas, Alabama and Georgia. The other two states were Massachusetts and Rhode Island, which were heavily Catholic.

It would be 32 years before another Catholic would be nominated for the presidency. John F. Kennedy also ran into some anti-Catholic opposition, but it was nothing compared to the opposition to Smith. A lot changed during those 32 years. †

A More Human Society/  
Richard Doerflinger

## The last acceptable prejudice

Anti-Catholicism has been called “the last acceptable prejudice.” Tragically, it was recently on display at the Senate Judiciary Committee’s confirmation hearing for Amy Coney Barrett, nominated to be a federal appellate judge.

Barrett, a professor at Notre Dame Law School, is a constitutional law expert



who has clerked for appellate and Supreme Court judges. She is eminently qualified. A Catholic at a Catholic university, she has helped law students and others understand how to reconcile being a good Christian and a good judge.

This should not be a problem. Article VI of the Constitution requires judges and other public officials “to support this Constitution.” It also demands that “no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.”

Professor Barrett clearly subscribes to the first of these clauses. As she said at the Senate hearing: “It’s never appropriate for a judge to impose that judge’s personal convictions, whether they derive from faith or anywhere else, on the law.” But some Democrats on the committee seemed not to have heard of the second clause.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-California, expressed a concern to Barrett that, based on her past speeches, “the dogma lives loudly within you.” Feinstein implied that believers who accept their Church’s moral teachings are un-American.

Then came Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Illinois. He grilled Professor Barrett on a 1998 law review article she co-authored as a student with a law professor.

That article discussed the dilemma of someone with moral or religious objections to something he or she is asked to do as a judge. For example, authorizing an abortion for a minor girl or imposing a death sentence could present a conflict of conscience for an “orthodox Catholic” (by which, the authors explained, they simply meant someone who believes Catholic teaching on the point at issue).

Such conflict would occur rarely, and for an appellate judge probably never. Such a judge does not order abortions or executions, but reviews lower courts’ actions for consistency with required legal procedures.

But if conflict is unavoidable, said the authors, the judge should not compromise the integrity of the law or one’s conscience, but recuse herself from the case as someone whose “impartiality might reasonably be questioned” (as per Title 28 of the U.S. Code).

Durbin read the article to say a judge can impose her beliefs on the law—the opposite of what it says—and forced the nominee into an exchange about who is an “orthodox Catholic.” He said he saw Pope Francis as “a pretty good Catholic,” apparently unaware that such assessments are more the pope’s job than his own.

Finally, Sen. Al Franken, D-Minnesota, accused Barrett of consorting with “hate groups” comparable to the Ku Klux Klan, because she once spoke at an event sponsored by the Alliance Defending Freedom—a legal defense firm that has won important religious freedom cases at the Supreme Court.

Franken relied on the Southern Poverty Law Center, which brands as “hate groups” many organizations whose crime is to defend traditional Christian views on abortion and same-sex marriage. By that standard, Pope Francis leads a “hate group.”

Maybe these senators wanted to warn devout Catholics that they will be shamed by the powers that be if they seek public office. They might only succeed in making more Catholics ashamed to be Democrats.

(Richard Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.) †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

## Trying to send our life in the best possible direction

Recently, I heard a pundit say that the direction our lives take often depends upon 10 events, seven personal decisions and five people. The more I thought



about that, the more accurate an insight it seemed to be.

Determining events in my life included World War II and following wars and even the Great Depression. That event certainly affected my family,

but I was not aware of it at the time. Other events are graduations, moving to new locations, trips abroad and work opportunities, but it’s hard to assign their significance within a total of 10.

For one thing, events often happen totally outside of our control, as in world politics or natural disasters. We remember things like ISIS and the ravishing hurricanes and earthquakes of late. And some events are the result of our own or others’ decisions. Thus, the phrase “unintended consequences” comes to mind. Whatever the case, some events loom large in the sum of a lifetime.

Decisions also dominate what happens to us. If we think about someone like

Hitler, we can only wonder at the decisions he made. Or we tend to approve the decisions of Mahatma Gandhi or St. Teresa of Calcutta because they were positive responses to the human condition rather than corrupters of it. We approve or disapprove because of the apparent motives behind the decisions.

Religious people base their decisions upon their moral beliefs and practices. Their aim is to please God or Allah or their Supreme Authority, and to seek affirmation through prayer or meditation, performing good works or trying to do good in general. Humanists and others who are not overtly religious also try to do the right thing, based on their belief that we all share a human bond with responsibilities as well as benefits.

Sometimes, doing the right thing conflicts with our personal comfort or desires. Rather than confront a spouse and repair our relationship, we may decide to commit adultery instead. Or we cheat a bit in order to pay the kids’ college fees. Such decisions affect many others besides the spouses or the IRS, including family, friends, and maybe even work. So we realize that our decisions are crucial to more people than just ourselves.

The people who’ve helped determine the direction of our lives often include

our parents, teachers and other authority figures. We have mentors, spouses and even outside figures who do the same. Hitler certainly affected the course of my generation, if only from afar. My parents and my spouse have shaped me, as well as certain friends and colleagues at work.

Most of this influence was for the good, largely because we tend to choose others for the good they may do us, or the positive effect they have on us. In the case of parents, it’s more like luck. We can’t choose our parents, but we sure learn from them regardless. And that’s why parenting is so much more than physical reproduction.

If we witness a happy marriage it helps, but we can learn how to be married even from bad examples. We can also learn what it meant to love and affirm your kids so that they go out into the world prepared to succeed.

So I thank God for free will. Free will helps us to make good decisions and choose wholesome opportunities and people. We can’t always determine events or the actions of others, but we sure can pray to choose the correct responses.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

## A response to the complexities of immigration in our world

“The beginning of wisdom is: get wisdom; whatever else you get, get understanding” (Prv 4:7).

The Book of Proverbs offers counsel for solving the complexities of immigration.



To understand the important role immigration fulfills is to understand God’s use of it. In the early pages of Genesis, God tells Abraham to take his possessions and

migrate to the land of Canaan from Haran (Gn 12:1-6).

Like Abraham, so too do Moses, the Hebrews and numerous biblical figures become immigrants. In these cases, immigration is God’s means for emancipation, elevating people’s lives and spreading the word of God.

Immigration represents hope of a new and enhanced life. Understood in

this light, it promotes one of the three theological virtues that contains the grace needed to withstand despair and despondency: hope. It fortifies the human spirit by enabling people to look forward to the promise of new horizons.

The word “civil” contains the idea of home. A home-like spirit is imperative for immigration to succeed. It is the welcoming spirit that Bernini’s colonnades inspire at St. Peter’s in Rome: open arms extending to everyone as brothers and sisters in a spirit of solidarity.

Some people fear immigrants will introduce bad elements into their culture. The U.S. bishops see them differently: Immigrants are a rich gift enhancing the life of the Church and nation. Immigrants amplify life’s largesse.

When people wall off themselves to keep out undesirables, fear and paranoia are reinforced. Worst of all, walls represent turning one’s back away from others instead of turning toward ways of

creating conversion, reconciliation and fraternity.

Our God-given responsibility is to be God’s co-creator, working to improve and develop humanity. When we translate this responsibility, it means defending the dignity of immigrants who are fleeing undignified, degrading situations.

Understanding prompts us to reflect on what has just been discussed here, and to see the necessity of a moral compass when responding to immigration.

Without God’s wisdom, treating immigration justly will falter. Without reverence for the hope it creates, despair will prevail. Without a spirit of reconciliation, redemption and solidarity, objections, unfounded doubts and naysaying will continue to hinder progress.

Without the law of God, laws concerning immigration have little to no possibility of succeeding.

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

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

September 24, 2017

- Isaiah 55:6-9
- Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a
- Matthew 20:1-16a

The last section of the Book of Isaiah provides this weekend's Mass with its first reading. Virtually none of the prophets of ancient Israel wrote when times were good, or at least when the prophets perceived the times to be good.



Certainly, the author of the section of the Book of Isaiah from which this weekend's reading comes hardly regarded

the times to be good. An added dimension to the story of the unhappy plight then being endured by God's people is that when they returned from Babylon, where they and their ancestors had been in exile for four generations, they found poverty instead of relief.

Having greeted the fact that their exile was over with great rejoicing, convinced that God had provided for them and had rescued them, they found misery and despair waiting them.

It is easy to imagine their anger. They were furious with God. For generations, they had trusted that God would come to their aid.

This prophet had to restore their trust in God. He warns the people not to put their trust in scoundrels. The prophet tells the people to call upon God, the source of true strength, regardless of fleeting appearances to the contrary.

For this weekend's second reading, the Church offers us a passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. The Apostle Paul, in this Epistle's soaring language, proclaims the divinity of Christ, the Savior, the Son of God. He explains the intimate, inseparable link between the Lord and true disciples.

Come what may on Earth, a disciple will never die, if the disciple is constant in loving God and following Christ in obedience to God.

St. Matthew's Gospel provides the last reading, a parable. It is set within the context of everyday life in Palestine at the time of Jesus. Agriculture was the

pursuit of most. Life was hard. Poverty was endemic.

Gainful employment was at a premium. Men looking for a job and income came to village centers each morning, making themselves available for work. People with projects came to these places and hired these men.

It was a buyer's market. No labor statutes or requirements for any minimum wage restrained employers in their pursuit of profit. Still, at least for Jews, certain expectations of fairness prevailed. A dinarius was a typical day's wage.

Jesus used the term "vineyard." It immediately brought to mind Old Testament references to Israel as God's vineyard. So the story from the beginning had a theological and moral quality. God owned and cared for the vineyard. He set the rules, but God hires the men. He therefore provides them with survival itself.

Two powerful lessons emerge. The first is that God is enormously generous. The second is that God's ways are not necessarily our ways, a reality we seldom remember.

## Reflection

For some weeks, the Church, through these weekend readings, has been calling us to follow Christ. Wisely, in this process, the Church recognizes that some of us hesitate not because we do not want to be with the Lord, but because we bear the burden of guilt or doubt. We think that our self-created distance from God is too great to bridge.

The Church reassures us emphatically in these readings of God's unlimited mercy. God is the source of life. He offers it to us lavishly.

Whatever our sin, if we repent, even at a late hour, God's loving forgiveness awaits us.

Ultimately, however, we must choose to be with God, to be disciples. No one is dragged kicking and screaming into heaven. Discipleship requires faith. Paul's words call us to faith with the reminder that all is folly without God, all is impermanent, and all is death. God alone offers life. †

## Daily Readings

### Monday, September 25

Ezra 1:1-6  
Psalm 126:1-6  
Luke 8:16-18

### Tuesday, September 26

St. Cosmas, martyr  
St. Damian, martyr  
Ezra 6:7-8, 12b, 14-20  
Psalm 122:1-5  
Luke 8:19-21

### Wednesday, September 27

St. Vincent de Paul, priest  
Ezra 9:5-9  
(Response) Tobit 13:2, 3-4, 7-8  
Luke 9:1-6

### Thursday, September 28

St. Wenceslaus, martyr  
St. Lawrence Ruiz and companions, martyrs  
Haggai 1:1-8  
Psalm 149:1-6, 9  
Luke 9:7-9

### Friday, September 29

St. Michael the Archangel  
St. Gabriel the Archangel  
St. Raphael the Archangel  
Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14  
or Revelation 12:7-12a  
Psalm 138:1-5  
John 1:47-51

### Saturday, September 30

St. Jerome, priest and doctor of the Church  
Zechariah 2:5-9, 14-15a  
(Response) Jeremiah 31:10-13  
Luke 9:43b-45

### Sunday, October 1

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Ezra 18:25-28  
Psalm 25:4-9  
Philippians 2:1-11  
or Philippians 2:1-5  
Matthew 21:28-32

## Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

# The Church's Code of Canon Law lays out the duties of a parish pastor

Q Can you please explain what a pastor's duties are and whether he has anyone overseeing him? Does he report directly to the bishop? Does the bishop ever meet or check with the pastor to see how things are going? (New York)



A A pastor, as the word itself signifies, is essentially a "shepherd" entrusted

with the care of souls for those in his parish. The pastor's responsibilities are laid out in Canon 528 of the Church's Code of Canon Law.

They are multiple and include such things as: nourishing the faithful through the sacraments; preaching the word of God and the truths of the faith; providing for Catholic education, especially for children and young people; fostering charitable works and social justice; evangelizing the unchurched and those who have left the faith; and encouraging family prayer.

The very next canon (#529) instructs the pastor to strive to know his parishioners personally—especially by visiting the sick and those experiencing special difficulties. Depending on the size of the parish and its staff, a pastor might also find himself involved in temporal matters, such as overseeing building projects or managing finances, but his primary duties are spiritual ones, as the code indicates.

As for overseeing the pastor's performance and his welfare, that can vary somewhat according to the size of the diocese. Dioceses in the U.S. range from a few thousand Catholics to several million.

Generally in smaller dioceses, there is frequent interaction between the bishop and his priests, while in larger ones, regular supervision may be entrusted to an auxiliary bishop, vicar for clergy or director of priests' personnel. Even in "megadioceses," though, bishops tend to schedule periodic meetings with their priests to share thoughts on pastoral matters and to hear their concerns.

With the decline in the number of Catholic priests in the U.S. (some 58,000 in 1965, 37,000 in 2016), most parishes now have only one priest, and that priest is busier than he has ever been.

So to counter isolation and loneliness, fraternities of priests ("support groups") are growing in number—six or eight priests meeting together monthly to share a meal as well as ideas and challenges in ministry.

Q I am a Catholic, but I have forgotten why incense is sometimes used at Mass. Please explain, especially with regard to its use at funerals. (Oregon)

A The smoke of burning incense is seen by the Church as an image of the prayers of the faithful rising to heaven. That symbolism is seen in the Book of Psalms: "Let my prayer be incense before you; my uplifted hands an evening offering" (Ps 141:2).

Incense is also mentioned in the New Testament in the Book of Revelation as an image of the worship offered to the Almighty in heaven: "The smoke of the incense along with the prayers of the holy ones went up before God from the hand of the angel" (Rev 8:4).

The use of incense was common in Jewish worship and carried over into Christian practice. In Exodus, Chapter 30, the Lord instructs Moses to build an altar of incense. Christian ritual books as early as the seventh century mark the use of incense in liturgies on Good Friday.

The current "General Instruction of the Roman Missal" (which contains the Church's norms for the celebration of the Eucharist) permits the use of incense at several times during the Mass, including at the Gospel and at the elevation of the consecrated bread and wine.

At a funeral Mass, as well as symbolizing the prayers of the congregation directed toward heaven, incensing the casket honors the body of the deceased, which through baptism became a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.

One pastoral caution: Occasionally people can be allergic to incense; at a couple of funerals, I have been tipped off in advance about such a concern, and have foregone the use of incense at that particular Mass.

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

## My Journey to God

# The Homeless Man

By Janet Tosick

Southern Indiana: a red light  
A man on the corner held a cardboard sign  
He had a beard, black hair, pleading eyes.  
I hesitated that day,  
When will the light change, I prayed.  
I opened my purse, passed a \$5 bill to my husband.  
My husband's hand reached the man.  
"Have a nice day," exclaimed my husband.  
Usually a "thank you, Ma'am!" Or, "God bless!"  
But this man simply looked at me with the eyes of Jesus.



(Janet Tosick is a member of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield. A pedestrian gives money to a homeless man sitting outside St. Francis of Assisi Church in New York City in 2009.)

(CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

# 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.

**CANTIN, Mary**, 80, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Sept. 1. Wife of Dick Cantin. Mother of Barbara Carroll and Michael Cantin. Sister of Dick Laudick.

**EVERETT, Lucas E.**, infant, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, Aug. 28. Son of Lee and Stephanie Everett.

**FRIEDRICH, James A.**, 69, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Sept. 1. Father of Aaron, Bryan and Jamie Friedrich. Brother of Paula Sandlin. Grandfather of two.

**FULTON, Clona C.**, 89, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Aug. 31. Mother of Christin, Christopher and Paul Fulton. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of one.

**GERTH, Charles**, 82, St. Anne, New Castle, Aug. 31. Father of Charles and Michael Gerth. Grandfather of two.

**HAMEL-HARRIS, Roseann**, 78, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Sept. 1. Mother of Brad and Brian Hamel. Sister of Frank, Jim, John and Leo Evans. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of one.

**HECKLER, Paul F.**, 92, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Sept. 4.

Husband of Doris Heckler. Father of Ann Fetzter, Amy, Paula, David, Luke, Mark and Michael Heckler. Brother of Mary Macerlane and Joe Heckler. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of two.

**KING, Martha A.**, 91, St. John the Baptist, Starlight, Aug. 23. Aunt of several.

**MCCONAHAY, Charles E.**, 82, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Aug. 31. Father of Ann Figy, Kathleen Reneau, Susan and Timothy McConahay. Grandfather of 15. Great-grandfather of eight.

**MENESST, Ronald**, 68, St. Anne, New Castle, Sept. 1. Father of Kelly Eaton.

**MERCIER, Patricia A.**, 76, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, Aug. 21. Wife of William Mercier. Mother of Rhonda Glenn, Kimberly Holmes, Julie Smith, Jeannette VanWinkle, Billy Cornwell and Keith Smith. Sister of Mary Ann Linder. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of five.

**MONDRUSH, Gustave, Jr.**, 85, St. Anne, New Castle, Aug. 26. Husband of Lila Mondrush. Father of Louise Davies, Karen Fink, Virginia Martin, Judy Schultz and



## Heroes in the Holy Land

U.S. Army veteran Rocio Villanueva, 31, from Escondido, Calif., Israeli Army veteran Omer Oster, 22, and U.S. Marine veteran Donna Perdue, 51, from Valparaiso, Ind., light candles while visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the Old City of Jerusalem while touring the Holy Land with the Heroes to Heroes program on Sept. 11. The program brings wounded veterans to the Holy Land to tour with wounded Israeli veterans. (CNS photo/Debbie Hill)

Steven Mondrush. Brother of Doris Kutch and Ronald Mondrush. Grandfather of 12.

**NIEHOFF, Marjorie A.**, 77, St. Mary, Rushville, Sept. 8. Wife of Paul Niehoff. Mother of Rebecca Heim, Melinda Mahan, Cindy Richter and Alan Niehoff. Sister of Nancy Grocox and Danny Warrick.

Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of five.

**O'BRIAN, Vivian R.**, 90, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Sept. 6. Mother of Mary Pat McKee, Alice and Mike O'Brian. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of five.

**PFLUM, Robert**, 79, St. Gabriel, Connersville,

Sept. 6. Husband of Lona Pflum. Father of Lisa Snyder and Scott Pflum. Brother of Diane Jones, Marilyn Miles, Carolyn Nutty, David, Lowell, Phillip and Richard Pflum. Grandfather of three.

**PRICKEL, Anthony D.**, 76, St. Louis, Batesville, Sept. 13. Father of Gayla, Chris and Scott Prickel. Brother of Emma, Katie and Larry Prickel. Grandfather of seven.

**ROBERTS, James R.**, 71, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Sept. 6. Husband of Lynn Roberts. Brother of Monica Folske, Terry Nelson and Catherine Smith. Uncle of several.

**SCOTT, Rose (Vissing)**, 86, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Aug. 30. Mother of Teresa Natterman, Dee Dee Webb, Marty and Rick Scott. Sister of Mary Catherine Young. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of six.

**SMITH, Wanda**, 78, St. Anne, New Castle, Aug. 23. Mother of Natalie Shaw and Lisa Thomas. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of seven.

**WAGNER, Michael S.**, 68, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, Sept. 7. Husband of Rosanna Wagner. Father of Angela Halliburton and David Wagner. Brother of Karen Edwards and John Wagner. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of two.

**WEBER, David P.**, 67, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, Sept. 2. Husband of Betty Weber. Father of Aileen Weber, Hugh and Sherman Stephens. Brother of Patty Price and Hugh Weber. Grandfather of six.

**WITTLER, Bernice (LaMar)**, 89, St. Anne, New Castle, Aug. 25. Mother of Lisa Lovell. Sister of Glenn LaMar. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of seven.

**ZONKEL, Joseph P.**, 78, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Sept. 8. Husband of Julieta Zonkel. Father of Mary Rose Pitman, Christine and Joe Zonkel. Brother of Raele Sue Moore and Alan Zonkel. Grandfather of five. †

## Benedictine Sister Anita Eberle ministered in Catholic parishes and schools throughout central and southern Indiana

Benedictine Sister Anita Eberle, a member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, died on July 21 at the St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove. She was 71.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 26 at the Monastery Chapel at Our Lady of Grace. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Anita was born on May 14, 1946, in New Albany and grew up as a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight.

She entered Our Lady of Grace on Sept. 7, 1963, professed first vows on July 4, 1964, and perpetual vows on June 21, 1970.

Sister Anita earned a bachelor's degree in education at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, and a master's degree in religious studies at Marygrove College in Detroit. She also studied spiritual direction at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash.

During her 53 years of vowed religious life, Sister Anita ministered in Catholic education for seven years in schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. She later served for 26 years in parishes in central and southern Indiana as a director of religious education and pastoral associate.

In the archdiocese, Sister Anita taught at St. Pius X School in Indianapolis from 1967-69 and 1971-74, and at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville from 1969-71. In parish ministry in the archdiocese, she served in Indianapolis at St. Barnabas Parish from 1974-78, the former St. Catherine of Siena and St. James parishes from 1981-86 and from 1991-92, St. Matthew the Apostle Parish from 1986-91 and at the former Holy Trinity Parish from 1993-2000. Sister Anita also ministered at the former St. Joseph Parish in St. Leon from 1978-79 and at the former St. Joseph Parish in Clark County from 1979-81.

Sister Anita is survived by her sisters Donna Hoying of Centerville, Ohio, and Marie Kaufman, Diana Owens and Marilyn Shumate, all of New Albany, and her brothers, Jim Eberle of Louisville, Ky., Larry Eberle of Fort Wayne, Ind., Paul Eberle of Greenville, Ind., and Tom Eberle of Floyds Knobs.

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

## Bannon remarks on '60 Minutes' revive anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant views

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (CNS)—When former White House strategist Steve Bannon criticized the Catholic Church and the U.S. bishops for their views on immigration, he resurrected widespread 19th-century anti-Catholic nativist charges against the Church and immigrants to the United States.

In an interview on Sept. 10 on the CBS-TV program "60 Minutes," Bannon said that the bishops of the United States had "an economic interest in illegal immigration" as "they need illegal aliens to fill the pews."

Bannon, a Catholic, was responding to the bishops' defense of young people, called "Dreamers," and support for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, known as DACA, that protected them from arbitrary deportation.

DACA is currently under legislative review, and the bishops' concern is that it will be abandoned.

Bannon's complaint of a political and economic ulterior motive for the U.S. Church's traditional support of immigrants is one the most persistent anti-Catholic legends of American politics.

The charge has been that Catholic immigrants represent an unthinking electorate that will vote in lockstep according to the dictates of the pope and the hierarchy. The pope and the U.S. bishops will control this massive Catholic electorate and will wield their power to undermine American democracy for their own benefit.

That argument was made a hundred times over in American history. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams waged political warfare over the Naturalization Act of 1798 aimed at limiting newly arrived European "aliens" from voting.

Rising on a tide of anti-immigrant fears, Lyman Beecher, father of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* author Harriet Beecher Stowe, published *The Plea for the West* in 1836. He argued that Catholic immigration was a papal conspiracy to take over the Mississippi Valley.

The inventor of the wireless, Samuel F. B. Morse, claimed in 1835 that European Catholic royalty were flooding America with immigrants who would soon coalesce as an army under the pope's direction.

The pre-Civil War, anti-Catholic nativist movement reached a crescendo with the Know-Nothing party that was built on the fear of a Catholic takeover of America through domination of the ballot box.

A centerpiece of the Know-Nothing movement was the call to deny Irish immigrant Catholics access to the ballot box by requiring a minimum of 25 years residency before citizenship was granted. Other Know-Nothing proposals included anti-papal test acts before taking political office. Catholics would be specifically required to reject foreign—papal—influence.

After the Civil War, the nativist fear was that Catholic immigrant voters egged on by their bishops would force state subsidies for parochial schools to undermine the public school system.

In the midst of passing convent inspection laws and other anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant nuisance legislation, numerous states would enact so-called Blaine amendments to their state constitutions to prevent state subsidies to Catholic schools no matter how

"powerful" the Catholic immigrant voting bloc became. Such 19th-century Blaine amendments remain in place today in 37 state constitutions.

The American Protective Association—while conjuring up fears of an armed Catholic uprising—argued in the late 19th century through the early 20th century for restrictions on Catholic immigration and for the closing of Catholic schools as un-American entities brainwashing the young.

The "goo-goo" movement of political reform in the late 19th century and early 20th century, aimed at breaking the power of urban political machines, was often a thinly disguised attack on the power of the Catholic immigrant city voters allegedly controlled by local priests and bishops.

Bannon's critique of the Catholic Church and its support of immigrants is nothing new in the American experience. Yet at no point has it ever been shown that the Church has economically benefited from its position on immigration or used its position politically. †

Investing with Faith/Joanna Feltz

## Use traditional IRA distributions to create income tax-free endowment

Traditional individual retirement accounts (IRAs) are wonderful savings vehicles because they allow your money to grow, tax-free, over many years until you begin making withdrawals at retirement. But did you know they also provide tax benefits for faithful Catholics establishing endowment funds? Upon reaching age 70 1/2, you must begin annually withdrawing a minimum amount, called the required minimum distribution (RMD), based on a schedule set by the Internal Revenue Service. The first payment can be delayed until April 1 of the following year.



State and federal governments classify your RMD as taxable income because taxation was deferred while the funds remained in your IRA. However, if you roll over a portion of your RMD into an endowment fund to benefit a non-profit organization such as an archdiocesan parish, school or ministry, you can do it income tax-free. Called a charitable IRA rollover or a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), it benefits both you and the non-profit because no income taxes will have to be paid on the donated funds. Recently at the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation, we helped a retired couple create a memorial endowment fund for an Indianapolis Catholic high school by utilizing the charitable IRA rollover. The endowment provides a scholarship for a student entering the high school from a specific Catholic grade school, also located in

Indianapolis. The couple chose to create the fund because they believe the high school plays an important role for its community and needs to attract even more deserving students. By being able to offer additional, meaningful academic scholarships to these students, they are helping the school continue to instill strong moral and religious values as the size and quality of its classes increase. Working with the custodian of their IRA, the Catholic Community Foundation was able to readily explain the details of the program to the couple and to answer their questions. We can do the same for you. To learn how you can create an endowment fund that will turn your passion into a lasting legacy, Catholic Community Foundation staff and I are

always happy to assist you. Feel free to reach out to me by e-mail at [jfeltz@archindy.org](mailto:jfeltz@archindy.org) or by phone at 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1482, or 317-236-1482. (Joanna Feltz, J.D., is director of planned giving for the Catholic Community Foundation in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and consultant to the law firm Woods, Weidenmiller, Michetti, Rudnick & Galbraith PLLC. For more information about planned giving, log on to [www.archindy.org/plannedgiving](http://www.archindy.org/plannedgiving). Tax information or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice and cannot be relied on to avoid statutory penalties. Always check with your legal, tax and financial advisors before implementing any gift plan.) †

†

## Indian Salesian priest held captive for 18 months meets Pope Francis

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—One day after his release from captivity, Salesian Father Tom Uzhunnalil met with Pope Francis.

According to the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, the pope welcomed Father Tom at his residence, the Domus Sanctae Marthae, on Sept. 13.

Arriving before Pope Francis, the Salesian knelt before him and kissed his feet. Visibly moved by the gesture, the pope helped him up and kissed his hands, the Vatican newspaper said.

Before blessing Father Tom, the pope embraced him and said he would continue to pray for him as he had done during his imprisonment.

The priest was kidnapped on March 4, 2016, from a home for the aged and disabled operated by the Missionaries of Charity in Aden, Yemen. Four Missionaries of Charity and 12 others were murdered in the attack.

Although the masked gunmen who carried out the attack were initially believed to have been members of the Islamic State, Father Tom later said in a press conference that they never identified themselves to him.

According to Oman's state-run news agency ONA, Father Tom was "rescued" on Sept. 12 by Oman authorities "in coordination with the Yemeni parties."

Father Tom thanked the pope, telling him that "he prayed every day for him, offering his suffering for his mission and the good of the Church."

Recalling his time in captivity, the Salesian told the pope that although he was unable to celebrate Mass, "every day, I would repeat to myself, in my heart, all the words of the celebration."

Father Tom said he continues to pray for all those who have been spiritually close to him, particularly for the four nuns and 12 people murdered when he was abducted.

Also present at the meeting was Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, India, who told *L'Osservatore Romano* that "after this terrible experience, the essential message Father Tom wants to convey is that 'Jesus is great, and he loves us.'"

"Truly, every day, I felt Jesus close to me," Father Tom said. "I always knew and felt in my heart that I was never alone." †



Salesian Father Tom Uzhunnalil, who was released on Sept. 12 after having been kidnapped 18 months ago in Yemen, kneels at the feet of Pope Francis during a Sept. 13 meeting at the Vatican. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano)

## Belgian brothers group to keep offering euthanasia at facilities

OXFORD, England (CNS)—Belgium's Brothers of Charity Group, which operates 15 centers for psychiatric patients, has rejected a Vatican order to stop offering euthanasia.

In a Sept. 12 statement, the organization said it had not been given a chance to explain its "vision statement and argumentation."

It added that it "always took into account shifts and evolutions within society," and "emphatically believed" its euthanasia program was consistent with Church teaching.

"In our facilities, we deal with patients' requests for euthanasia for mental suffering in a nonterminal situation with the utmost caution," said the organization.

"We take unbearable and hopeless suffering and patients' requests for euthanasia seriously. On the other hand, we want to protect life and ensure euthanasia is performed only if there is no more possibility of providing a reasonable treatment perspective to the patient."

Meanwhile, a Sept. 12 statement from Brother Rene Stockman, the order's superior general in Rome, said he "deplores the fact that there is no willingness to negotiate" the text of the vision statement on the part of the Belgian organization with ties to the order.

An initial deadline of the end of August to settle the disagreement was delayed until Sept. 11, the statement explained, to allow further negotiations to take place.

But it said that the scheduled talks were "shot down" because Professor Rik Torfs, a former rector of Belgium's Catholic University of Leuven called in to mediate the dispute, "could no longer put his trust in the Brothers of Charity organization in Belgium."

The statement said: "The superior general remains open to dialogue, provided that this dialogue is about the content of the vision text, and thus whether or not to apply euthanasia within the walls of the institutions of the Brothers of Charity ..."

The Belgian Church's Cathobel news agency said on Sept. 12 that the Brothers of Charity Group lay chairman, Raf De Rycke, a former economics professor, had agreed euthanasia requests would now be examined "with greater circumspection than previously," but conceded that the order's hospitals were not yet ready to accept more restrictive guidelines. †

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### Employment

## PRESIDENT

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A detailed job description can be found at [desaleshighschool.com/home/employment](http://desaleshighschool.com/home/employment).

Please submit resume and cover letter to [search.desaleshighschool@gmail.com](mailto:search.desaleshighschool@gmail.com).

## DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

St. Simon the Apostle Catholic Church is accepting applications for a full-time Director of Music Ministry. St. Simon is a parish of 1,400 families, a school ministry (K-8) of 700 students and is located on the northeast side of Indianapolis. Candidate will plan, coordinate and conduct music for regular Saturday (5:30 pm), Sunday (8:00, 9:15 & 11:00) and Holy Day masses and services. Candidate should 1) be very familiar with Catholic liturgy and traditions, 2) have a Bachelor's or Master's degree (or equivalent experience) in music, 3) have music ministry experience in a Catholic church environment and 4) be an accomplished accompanist and choral conductor. Candidate will conduct weekly music rehearsals with volunteer choir and musicians.

St. Simon will offer a competitive salary, health benefits and vacation time. Evening and weekend work are required. Deadline for applications is October 1, 2017. A full job description is available on the church website ([www.saintsimon.org/music-ministry](http://www.saintsimon.org/music-ministry)).

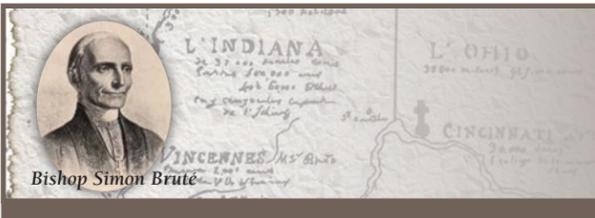
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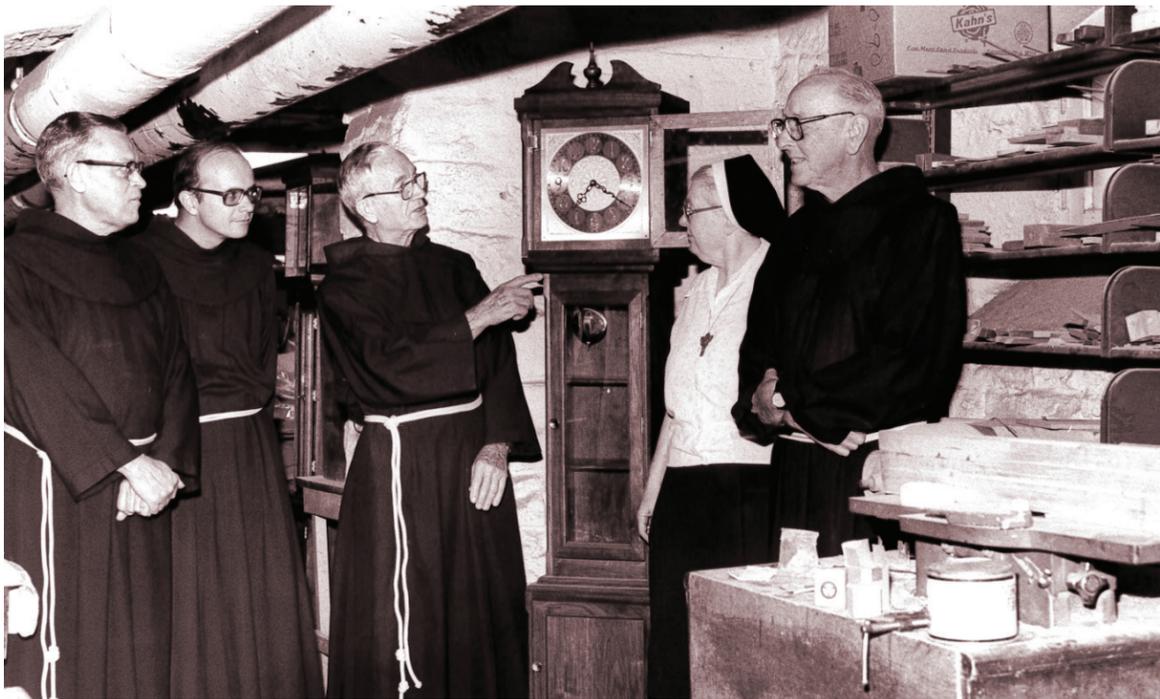
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# From the ARCHIVES



## Franciscans steeped in Holy Family history

The Franciscans have a long history at Holy Family Church in Oldenburg. The Sisters of Saint Francis, led by Sister Theresa Hackelmeier, arrived in Oldenburg in 1851 to found a convent, school and orphanage. In 1866, Franciscan friars took over as pastors of the parish, an arrangement that continues today.

In this photo, Franciscan Brother Leonard Kirejewski shows a clock he constructed to Franciscan fathers Adrian Schneider and Leonard Cornelius, Franciscan Sister Rose Alma Nieman, and Franciscan Father James Fitzpatrick. The photo was originally featured in *The Criterion* on Nov. 13, 1981.

## Catholics and other Christians advocate for support of worldwide hunger programs

By Sean Gallagher

As Congress returned from its Labor Day recess, one of the many items on its agenda was consideration of a federal budget proposed earlier this year by President Donald J. Trump which calls for significant cuts to several social safety net programs.

Earlier this summer, Catholics and other Christians across central and southern Indiana expressed their concern about the proposed cuts, especially to programs aimed at fighting hunger in this country, in more than 3,600 letters delivered to the offices of senators and representatives from throughout the state.

This annual "Offering of Letters" is a program sponsored by Bread for the World, a Washington-based ecumenical organization that seeks to end hunger in the U.S. and abroad.

Charles Gardner, a member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis, has long been involved with Bread for the World and helped to coordinate this year's local effort in the Offering of Letters.

"It's an opportunity to show ecumenical cooperation in a concrete way," he said.

Twelve parishes in Bloomington, Columbus, Indianapolis and Terre Haute, as well as the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, joined 26 other Christian congregations from across the region in participating in the program this year.

Gardner said that it is appropriate that Catholics work to bring Christians together in this kind of advocacy for the common good.

"We're supposed to be pretty good at gathering people under the same tent," he said. "That's supposed to be one of the things we do. We can be instruments of gathering."

Father Rick Ginther, director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, said that this kind of effort is a way to involve all the faithful in the work of promoting Christian unity.



Catholics and other Christians from across central and southern Indiana pose on June 5 in the Indianapolis office of Sen. Todd Young with letters from their faith communities advocating for support of federal hunger programs. The letters were part of the annual "Offering of Letters" sponsored by Bread for the World, an ecumenical organization that seeks to end hunger in the U.S. and abroad. (Submitted photo)

"This is where ecumenism really takes place for most people," he said. "We can stand together with a common belief rooted in the Gospel. We can do something that the Gospel calls us to. That's the way that you build a relationship."

"And then you find ways to talk to each other about what you believe and it's much less threatening."

Whether or not the letters delivered to Hoosier legislators will have an effect on their consideration of the proposed budget is ultimately not important to Gardner.

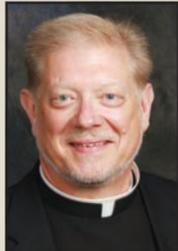
"We do this, first of all, to be faithful and second of all, to be successful" Gardner said. "We do this because this is what it means to be a follower of Christ."

"It's just part of living out my faith. It's encouraging to me and my faith to see people who might not be of my tradition who share this passion for trying to be the face of Christ in the world in their own way."

(To learn more about Bread for the World, visit [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org). To learn more about how to be involved locally

in the Offering of Letters, contact Charles Gardner at [gardner1947@gmail.com](mailto:gardner1947@gmail.com).) †

**'This is where ecumenism really takes place for most people. We can stand together with a common belief rooted in the Gospel. We can do something that the Gospel calls us to. That's the way that you build a relationship.'**



— Father Rick Ginther, director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis

## New tool to use 'Laudato Si' to measure, rank nations' development

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (CNS)—A Catholic university, the Joseph Ratzinger-Benedict XVI Vatican Foundation and a Latin American foundation working on sustainable development have developed a tool to measure and rank countries' efforts in human and environmental development.

The idea is to have an effective tool that measures using Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si", on Care for Our Common Home," as the basis for the initiative.



Pope Francis

The "Laudato Si" Observatory will be launched at the closing of the Ratzinger Foundation's international symposium, scheduled on Nov. 29-Dec. 1 in San Jose, said Fernando Sanchez, head of the Catholic University of Costa Rica.

Sanchez, a former Costa Rican ambassador to the Vatican, said the observatory hopes to prompt research and "to provide nations' governments an absolutely academic tool ... to promote positive change, which is what the pope is asking us to do, and it would be our major contribution with this symposium."

The observatory "stems from taking the encyclical, dividing it into measurable topics—measurable indicators—and drawing up a human and environmental index," all of which concern "human development and environmental development," he added.

In the 2015 encyclical, Pope Francis urged a conversation that includes everyone and the need for a conversion to bring about lasting change on how people view the environment.

Sanchez said the encyclical is the framework for the observatory and its output and, compared to other measurements already implemented, "the great difference is that this index will have the Church's social doctrine as its anchor."

"The possibilities to prompt change with this index are enormous," he said.

The symposium, "On Care for Our Common Home, a Necessary Conversion to Human Ecology," aims to make it "utterly clear that the struggle for human, social, environmental development is not an ideological issue," Sanchez said.

"It's an issue of survival, it's an issue of responsibility, it's an issue of conscience. That's essential, and it's what the Holy Father tells us. Besides, it's not for some, it's for all," said Sanchez.

"And also, he clearly says that it's a real issue ... climate change," although "some new leaders have tried to say it's an invention," said Sanchez, who reaffirmed that "it's real, it's urgent, it's global and it's not ideological."

The three-day event will feature presentations by Cardinal Claudio Hummes, retired head of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy and president of the Brazilian bishops' Commission for the Amazon; Cardinal Giuseppe Versaldi, head of the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education; and Tomas Insua, research fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School and executive director of the Global Catholic Climate Movement.

Sanchez said there is high expectation about general participation in the symposium, because scholars, entrepreneurs, environmentalists and students have been invited.

"The great challenge we have here is to take an issue, which is for all an important issue, discuss around it and do it in a simple way, as the pope is doing," he said.

In his view, "one of the pope's marvels ... is that he has managed to 'democratize' the Holy See's message, because everyone understands him. You may be in favor or against him, but you undoubtedly understand him, and this encyclical is a good example," he said. †



A train carries coal near Ravenna, Ky., in this 2014 file photo. Catholic groups are developing a new tool to rank countries' work in human and environmental development. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)