Couple reaches across ocean, boundaries to give a child with a disability a home

By Natalie Hoefer

Katrina and Russ Kelly can’t keep the excitement out of their voices—they’ve recently returned from Bulgaria, where they finally met their 5-year-old adopted son.

“He attached to me way faster, but I felt this immediate bond,” says Russ of Gosho (pronounced GO-show).

Russ had to place Gosho on Katrina’s lap for two reasons: the child did not have the ability to climb into her lap on his own, nor did Katrina have the ability to pick him up—both Katrina and Gosho have a rare genetic disorder called spinal muscular atrophy.

“This one is me, in an orphanage,” explains Katrina, 32, of the defect, also known as SMA. “It affects the nerve-to-muscle connection so there’s not a strong signal, and because of that the muscles atrophy, so it causes weakness.”

Because of the condition, she has used a motorized wheelchair since the age of 3. With such mobility, Katrina received her sacraments while growing up in St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, earned her law degree from the University of Notre Dame, practices business litigation for a law firm in Indianapolis, married Russ a year-and-a-half ago at St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, and soon will be a first-time parent.

The Kellys’ search for a child to adopt began about 15 months ago.

“In her years of litigation, she really saw the value in education, he listened immediately shares the story of the influence that his grandfather had on him as he was growing up in the African country of Nigeria. Although his grandfather didn’t have any formal education, he listened intently as an Irish priest serving in their African community stressed the need to build Catholic schools for the children.

So his grandfather and others donated the land and the labor to build the schools, and provided help to keep them operating. Through those schools and through his grandfather’s example, Oruche has embraced a defining way to live his life.

“We are put on this Earth to build communities,” says Oruche, now a member of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. “That education, more than anything else, taught me how to build communities.

“It’s not about you. It’s about what you can do for others and your community.”

That approach marks the lives of Oruche and the three other recipients of the archdiocese’s 2018 Celebrating Catholic School Values Career Achievement Award who will be honored on Feb. 22: Gary Althrich of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, and Dan and Jan Megel of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon.

One of the best ways to understand what really matters to someone is to ask about the people who have greatly influenced him or her life.

By John Shaughnessy

Ody Oruche

Family influences shape honorees who strive to build community with their Catholic values

Pope to diplomats: World peace depends on right to life and disarmament

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Because everyone has a right to life, liberty and personal security, nations must find nonviolent solutions to conflict and difficulties, Pope Francis said.

A culture of peace “calls for unmitting efforts in favor of disarmament and the reduction of recourse to the use of armed force in the handling of international affairs,” he said on Jan. 8 in his annual address to diplomats accredited to the Vatican.

Given the urgent need to favor dialogue and diplomacy in conflict resolution and to end the stockpiling of weapons, “I would therefore like to encourage a serene and wide-ranging debate on the subject, one that avoids polarizing the international community on such a sensitive issue,” the pope said.

At the start of a new year, the pope dedicated his speech to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its adoption by the U.N. General Assembly in December.

The declaration was an attempt to help the world’s nations base their relations on “truth, justice, willing cooperation and freedom” by upholding the fundamental rights of all human beings, he said. The very foundation of freedom, justice and world peace, he said, quoting the document, is built on recognizing and respecting these rights.

However, in his nearly 50-minute speech to the diplomats, the pope cautioned that there has been a movement to create “new rights” that often not only conflict with each other, but can be at odds with the traditional values and cultures of many countries, while neglecting the real needs they have to face.

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Follow Jesus like Magi, pope urges during Mass on Epiphany

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—To follow Jesus, one must set out like the Magi, leaving comfort behind, following the light and offering the Lord gifts without expecting anything in return, Pope Francis said on Jan. 6 during Mass on the feast of the Epiphany.

In his homily, the pope asked people to think about the Gospel story of the Three Kings and why no one else seemed to see and follow the star to Bethlehem.

Perhaps, he said, it was because “few people raised their eyes to heaven.” Today, too, people think it is enough “to have our health, a little money and a bit of entertainment. I wonder if we still know how to look up at the sky. Do we know how to dream, to long for God, to touch all, to reach the beauty, but do no good. The Magi, on the other hand, talk little and journey much.”

Like the Magi, Pope Francis said, Christians are called to imitate the Lord in offering gifts without expecting anything in return.

God, who “became small for our sake, asks us to offer something for the least of his brothers and sisters,” the newly, the hungry, the stranger and the prisoner, he said.

“No one knows how to dream, to long for God, to touch all, to reach the beauty, but do no good. The Magi, on the other hand, talk little and journey much.”

In the Gospel story, he said, it is clear that Herod fears losing his power, many of the townspeople fear what is new and the priests and scribes, who know the prophecy about the Messiah’s birth, are companion just to talk about it. “They can be the temptation of those who are used to being believers: They can talk at length about the faith they know so well, but will not take a personal risk for the Lord,” he said. “They talk, but do not pray; they complain, but do no good.”

So it is with success, Star they choose to follow in their lives.

“Some stars may be bright, but they do not show the way. So it is with success, money, career, honors and pleasures when we care for a sick person, help someone for the sake of helping, or forgive someone who has hurt us,” the pope said. “These are first received an education in faith at home, “if at home parents don’t speak the language of love,” the transmission of faith and values, he said.

“God, always there: it takes you by the hand always overwhelm by its brightness, but it is very difficult.”

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Follow Jesus like Magi, pope urges during Mass on Epiphany

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is revising its policies to no longer exclude churches of worship from applying for federal aid to recover from damages caused by natural disasters.

The policy change was outlined in the agency’s revised 217-page manual, “Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide” issued on Jan. 2.

This change is not just for damage caused in future disasters, but also affects claims made by church leaders after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma because it can be applied retroactively to claims made “on or after Aug. 23, 2017.”

An introduction to the new FEMA manual credits the change in policy to a Supreme Court decision last June, which ruled that Trinity Lutheran Church in Missouri should not have been denied a public benefit just because it is a church. The court’s 7-2 decision specifically referred to the church-operated preschool, and said should not be excluded from a state grant program to refurbish its playground surface just because it is a religious entity.

“The court’s declaration of the ‘Neutral Aid Decision,’ FEMA has considered its guidance on private nonprofit facility eligibility,” the agency’s new document says, pointing out that houses of worship would be excluded from eligibility for FEMA aid on the basis of the religious character or primarily religious use of the facility.

Carl Anderson, CEO of the Knights of Columbus, was similarly pleased with the FEMA decision.

“Fear, the destruction due to the flooding and hurricanes is of such a magnitude that the government must help in the response,” he said in a statement. “The Knights of Columbus have given $1.4 million to repair or help rebuild churches that were destroyed or badly damaged in hurricanes last year in Texas, Florida and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The organization also raised $3.8 million for disaster relief in these areas.”

Churches are no longer exempt from FEMA disaster assistance

Effective immediately

Very Rev. Sean R. Dundas, V.F., appointed administrator pro tem of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg while continuing as pastor of St. Michael Parish in Brookville, St. Peter Parish in Franklin County and dean of the Batesville Deanery.

Rev. J. Peter Gallagher granted a temporary leave of absence from pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg for reasons of health and well-being.

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

Official Appointments

The Criterion

January 11 — 9:30 a.m.
Mass with students and staff, Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

January 18 — 10 a.m.
Leadership Team Meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

January 21 — 11:45 a.m.
Mass with the Installation of Pastor, St. Mark the Evangelist Church, Indianapolis

January 22 — noon
Solemn Observance, Roe v. Wade, Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church, Indianapolis, followed by march to the Indiana Statehouse

(Schedule subject to change.)

January 11 — 11:30 a.m.
Faith in Indiana (formerly IndyCAN) meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

January 11 — 6 p.m.
Mass of Thanksgiving for Bishop-designates Mark Spalding for the Diocese of Nashville, Tenn., at Cathedral of the Assumption, Louisville, Ky.

January 13 — 5 p.m.
Mass and Dinner—St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Fortville, Ind.

January 14 — 10 a.m.
Mass with the Installation of Pastor for St. Patrick and St. Margaret Mary churches, at St. Patrick Church, Terre Haute

January 16 — 1 p.m.
Priests Council Meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

January 26 — 1 p.m.
Diocesan Pastors’ Meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

January 27 — 10 a.m.
Mass with the Installation of Pastor, St. Joseph the Worker Church, Indianapolis

January 28 — 12 noon
Solemn Observance, Roe v. Wade, Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church, Indianapolis, followed by march to the Indiana Statehouse

(Schedule subject to change.)

January 12 — 10 a.m.
Mass of Appreciation, St. Mark the Evangelist Church, Indianapolis

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(Schedule subject to change.)
Johnson will speak at inaugural Indiana March for Life on Jan. 22

By Natalie Hoefler

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Diocese of Lafayette, Ind., and Right to Life of Indianapolis are teaming up to offer the inaugural Indiana March for Life on Jan. 22 in Indianapolis, with multiple events taking place during the day.

The event—which is open to all—solemnly recalls the legalization of abortion in the United States 45 years ago through the Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton decisions on Jan. 22, 1973.

Below is the schedule of events:

• Noon: Mass concelebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and Lafayette Bishop Timothy L. Doherty at St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis.

• 1:30 p.m.: March for Life starting at the Indiana Convention Center on Capital Avenue across from St. John Church, and processing around the statehouse (approximately one-half mile).

• 2:30-4 p.m.: Pro-life rally on the south steps of the Statehouse building. Among the speakers will be Archbishop Thompson, Brian Boudreaux, House Speaker and state representative; Sue Swazy-Leibel, coordinator of the Susan B. Anthony List’s Indiana Young Women’s Pro-Life Caucus; Anna Allgaier, Great Lakes Regional Coordinator for Students for Life and a state senator; and a representative of the office of Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb.

• 4 p.m.: Rose Memorial Service in memory of lives lost to abortion, held in the Statehouse or on the south steps of the Statehouse, with a keynote address from internationally acclaimed pro-life advocate Abby Johnson.

Mercy sisters embark on solidarity week with immigrants via social media

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In a strongly worded message prior to National Migration Week on Jan. 7-13, the president of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas expressed solidarity with migrants and called on others to stop “blaming migrants and fanning anti-immigrant sentiment that divides our nation.”

“We renew our call for an immediate end to the unjust and immoral treatment of migrants and refugees, recognizing that decades of failed U.S. political and economic policies have contributed to the reasons people have fled homelands,” said the Jan. 3 statement by Mercy Sister Patricia McDermott from the sisters’ headquarters in Silver Spring, Md.

The statement says the Sisters of Mercy “stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who are forced by poverty, persecution or violence to flee their countries to flee their homes, loved ones and livelihoods, desperately seeking safety and the opportunity to provide for themselves and their families.”

The sisters ask for passage of laws to help young adults who come to the United States without documentation, for continuation of a temporary immigration status for migrants from Haiti and Central America, and for an end to expedited deportations, travel bans and long-term detention of immigrants.

“As Pope Francis reminds us: ‘How can we not see the face of the Lord in the face of the millions of exiles, refugees and displaced persons who are fleeing in desperation from the horror of war, persecution and dictatorship?’” the statement says.

The Mercy Sisters kicked off National Migration Week on Facebook at facebook.com/MercySisters and on Twitter at twitter.com/sistersofmercy, recalling their religious order’s migration journey from Ireland to the United States in the 1800s. The next day, they explored that the “anti-immigrant sentiment in the 19th century, mirrored so often in the rhetoric of our own times,” the statement says.

During subsequent days, they highlighted how their religious community responded to a variety of immigration waves, and how U.S. policies abroad drove migration to the U.S., from the 1970s until today.

National Migration Week began under the auspices of the U.S. Catholic bishops as a way “to honor and learn about the diverse communities of the Church, as well as the work that the Church undertakes to serve immigrants and refugees,” said a Jan. 5 press release from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“National Migration Week allows for reflection upon the biblical teaching concerning welcoming the stranger and allows us to share the journey with our brothers and sisters who have been forced from their homes,” said Bishop Jose S. Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration.

A statement about the week by Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, called it a “time of prayer and reflection on our history as a migrant Church and nation.”

The cardinal urged Catholics to think about the pope’s message on World Day of Peace, Jan. 1, when he said that migrants and refugees “bring their courage, skills, energy and aspirations, as well as the treasures of their own cultures; and in this way, they enrich the lives of the nations that receive them.”

Endowments make a difference.

Do more for the least of your brothers and sisters in Christ.

God calls us to share the gifts we’ve been given. A wonderful way to do that is by creating or contributing to an endowment fund. With a fund held and managed by the Catholic Community Foundation you can support your preferred Catholic ministry. Last year, for instance, endowments helped Catholic Charities serve over 209,000 people in need of services including food, shelter and clothing in our Archdiocese. Start giving back today and make an impact in your Catholic Community. We can show you how.
We need more immigrants

This is National Migration Week, declared by the U.S. bishops. However, this is not a newly declared week. As the bishops’ website says, “For nearly a half century the Catholic Church in the United States has celebrated National Migration Week, which is an opportunity for the Church to reflect on the circumstances confronting migrants, including immigrants, refugees, children, and victims and survivors of human trafficking.”

Although the week is celebrated each year, it comes at a time this year when some people, including President Donald J. Trump, are trying to reduce immigration in the United States. He continues to demand that Congress approve the financing for a wall between the United States and Mexico to keep out people who are desperate.

We have to ask why. Why should we be trying to keep out people who need help? Why are we trying to keep out people who would contribute greatly to our economy, including those forced to come here illegally because it’s impossible for them to come legally because of our tight immigration laws. Estimates are that the underground economy in the U.S. is worth $1.14 trillion every year in state and local taxes.

The bishops’ theme for Migration Week is “Many Journeys, One Family.” It “draws attention to the fact that each of our families has a migration story, some recent and others in the distant past. Regardless of where we are and where we came from, we remain part of the human family and are called to live in solidarity with one another.”

As Catholics, we believe in the human dignity of all immigrants and refugees. More than 65 million people displaced from their homes and more than 22 million displaced outside their countries as refugees—the worst forced displacement crisis since World War II—the United States should be admitting more refugees.

However, the Trump administration has already announced that only 54,000 refugees could come into the United States this fiscal year, the lowest in recent history. The U.S. bishops hope that that will be raised to at least 75,000 refugees in 2019.

Meanwhile, the Church in Indiana as well as throughout the country will continue to advocate for refugees and help them resettle in this country. You can see more information about what the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is doing by visiting archindy.org.

Letter to the Editor

NCY attendee says gathering offers inspiration for young Catholics

I would like to thank you for the comprehensive coverage of the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCY) that was featured in the Nov. 24, 2017, edition of The Criterion.

This was my second time to attend, and it was incredibly inspiring to be among so many young, faith-filled Catholics.

This event has the potential to change the life of every Catholic who attends it. For me personally my heart is more open to God’s calling in my own life after having experienced NCY.

Letter to the Editor

Making Sense of Bioethics

Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

To be or not to be: Posing the implications of suicide

In recent years, we have witnessed a growing tendency to promote suicide as a way of resolving end-stage suffering. Physician-assisted suicide is now legal in a handful of states, and other jurisdictions are considering laws to legalize the practice.

A few years ago on “Nightline,” Barbara Walters interviewed an assisted suicide advocate who summed it up this way: “We’re talking about what people want. There are people who, even suffering horribly, want to live out every second of their lives, and that’s their right, of course, and they should do it. Others don’t want that. Others want to.”

Those favoring physician-assisted suicide argue that getting out of our final agony means essentially redeeming a “get out of jail free” card through committing suicide. At first glance, taking this step would indeed appear to end our troubles definitively. But we must ask, is this a view of things that is dead wrong, and we don’t actually end up escaping our sufferings? What if we, instead, end up in a new situation where our trials are still present, and maybe even more intense, on account of the willful decision we made to end our own life?

I was recently reminded of this serious flaw in the “suicide solution” after watching a remarkable video adaptation of Shakespeare’s tragedy Hamlet, with Campbell Scott co-directing and starring in the title role. Lithium, he is forbidden by Hamlet’s timeless soliloquy “to be or not to be,” I was struck by how carefully Scott’s Hamlet addresses the vexing question of intense human suffering and the perennial temptation to commit suicide. Hamlet’s musings about whether it is better to put up with the bad things we know about in this life than to step into the strange new land of death’s “undiscovered country,” a country about which we know very little and from which no one returns. This leaves us, in Hamlet’s words, “puzzled” and “in ‘dead of something after death.’” He wonders aloud about the hidden costs of suffering and asks, “whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune’ that make arms1 a sea of trouble, and by opposing, end them.” He concludes by asking whether we should rather “bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of?”

Among those who end up committing suicide, whether physician-assisted or otherwise, many will face exterminating circumstances including severe depression or other forms of extreme mental pain.

In such cases, it is clear that their moral responsibility will be greatly diminished, as fear and anguish constrict their ability to think and reason clearly.

But this is not always the case, and some people, with clear mind and direct intention, may choose to end their life. It appears to have been the case for Britney Maynard. She was the young woman in Oregon who in the early stages of her brain cancer carefully arranged and orchestrated her own physician-assisted suicide, using the few months in advance the date and setting who would be present in the room, what music would be playing as she did it.

Such a decision is always a tragedy, and every life, even when compromised by disease or suffering, remains a great gift to be cared for. When freely chosen, suicide is a form of serious wrongdoing and, in the words of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Gravely contrary to the just love of self. It likewise offends love of neighbor because it unjustly breaks the ties of solidarity with family, nation, and other human societies to which we continue to have obligations” (#2228).

It leaves behind loved ones to contend with unresolved guilt, shame and pain.

While our life on earth may seem to offer an “escape valve” for the serious pressures and sufferings we face, we do well to consider the effects of this choice both in this life and in the life to come.

In the next life, a preceding act of suicide may deny us the very relief we were seeking, and may, in fact, lead to harsher purification in a new situation of our own making. Moreover, a heavy heart can lead to a fate far worse than purgatory.

Our Lord and his Church care profoundly about everyone, and even though this act clearly involves grave matter, the catechism reminds us that our response to the one who commits suicide, “The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives” (#2283). Suicide is not only not to be encouraged, but now, and having significant, eternal implications for the journey to that “undiscovered country” that awaits us.

(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 Catholic Church, and is, in the words of the Church, “a moral theologian.” He serves as director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.)
“Algunos de ustedes expresaron: Este sistema ya no se aguanta. Tenemos que cambiar, tenemos que volver a llevar la dignidad humana al centro y que sobre este pilar se construyan las estructuras sociales alternativas que necesitamos. Hay que hacerlo con coraje, pero también con inteligencia. Con tenacidad, pero sin fanatismo. Con pasión, pero sin violencia. Y entre nosotros, todos, enfrentando los conflictos sin dejar atrapados en ellos, buscando siempre resolver las tensiones para alcanzar un plano superior de unidad, de paz y de justicia.” —Papa Francisco

Este es el primer número de The Criterion en 2018. ¡Feliz Año! Que el año que comienza esté repleto de la paz de Cristo. Durante las próximas semanas hasta la Cuaresma, en la columna “Cristo, la piedra angular”, hablaremos acerca de los temas sociales que los obispos católicos de Estados Unidos hemos recibido el encargo (y el desafío) de abordar. Estos asuntos tan delicados exigen que examinemos muy cuidadosamente la dignidad de la persona, la dignidad y el respeto que debemos a todos, sin distinción de raza, sexo, nacionalidad, riqueza, situación social, o diferencias en el idioma, la cultura o la tendencia política.

Puesto que el 15 de enero se observa en nuestro país el Día del Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. el domingo 15 de enero, este día dedicamos reflexiones con el fin de fomentar el diálogo y la convivencia con paz y respeto.

La no violencia es el único camino a la paz y la armonía racial

Algunos de ustedes expresaron: Este sistema ya no se aguanta. Tenemos que cambiar, tenemos que volver a llevar la dignidad humana al centro y que sobre este pilar se construyan las estructuras sociales alternativas que necesitamos. Hay que hacerlo con coraje, pero también con inteligencia. Con tenacidad, pero sin fanatismo. Con pasión, pero sin violencia. Y entre nosotros, todos, enfrentando los conflictos sin dejar atrapados en ellos, buscando siempre resolver las tensiones para alcanzar un plano superior de unidad, de paz y de justicia.” —Papa Francisco

Este es el primer número de The Criterion en 2018. ¡Feliz Año! Que el año que comienza esté repleto de la paz de Cristo. Durante las próximas semanas hasta la Cuaresma, en la columna “Cristo, la piedra angular”, hablaremos acerca de los temas sociales que los obispos católicos de Estados Unidos hemos recibido el encargo (y el desafío) de abordar. Estos asuntos tan delicados exigen que examinemos muy cuidadosamente la dignidad de la persona, la dignidad y el respeto que debemos a todos, sin distinción de raza, sexo, nacionalidad, riqueza, situación social, o diferencias en el idioma, la cultura o la tendencia política.

Puesto que el 15 de enero se observa en nuestro país el Día del Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. el domingo 15 de enero, este día dedicamos reflexiones con el fin de fomentar el diálogo y la convivencia con paz y respeto.
Retreats and Programs

January 20  

February 1-2  

February 6  

February 9-11  
Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, 2015 26th St., Indianapolis. "Poetry as Spiritual Reading, Praying and Writing." Information: 317-582-8536. www.providenceindy.org/events.

January 30  

February 1  

VIPS

Robert and Rosalie (Metkelo) Nevitt, members of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 20. The couple was married at the former Holy Trinity Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 20, 1968. They have three children: James, Michael and Robert Jr.

The couple also has six grandchildren.

Events Calendar

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

January 17  

January 18  
St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mckee Ave., Indianapolis. Third Thursday Adoration, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:35 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

January 19  

January 20  
St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 7575 Holliday Dr. E., Indianapolis. "Standing Strong as a Parent," TV personality, author, speaker. EWTN radio and television host, 7-9 p.m., free but registration required.

January 22  

January 24  

February 1-2  

February 6  

February 9-11  
Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, 2015 26th St., Indianapolis. "Poetry as Spiritual Reading, Praying and Writing." Information: 317-582-8536. www.providenceindy.org/events.

February 12  

A Girls Night Out: Women Helping Women event will be held at Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove, from 7-9:30 p.m. on Jan. 26. Activities include mini mani-pedis, massages, a dessert bar, crafting and juried shows and exhibitions. His work is found in public and private collections, including the Sheldon Museum of Art and the Kentucky Foundation for Women. The exhibit is free and open to the public. For library hours, call 812-357-6041, 800-987-7311 or visit www.saintbarnabas.org.

The National Federation of Priests’ Council to hold convocation in Chicago in April

The National Federation of Priests’ Council (NFCP) will hold its 50th Annual Convocation of Priests at the Millennium Knabstrup Hotel, 163 E. Walton Pl., in Chicago, on April 23-26. The theme of the convocation is "NFCP and the U.S. Priesthood: Looking Back—Looking Forward." The convocation is open to all U.S. priests and bishops, and is designed as a time for prayer, discussion, presentations and fellowship. Information on registration and hotel accommodations, along with a confirmed speaker list and preliminary schedule, can be found at the NFPC website at www.nfpc.org. Contact the office at 312-442-9700.

Exhibit of dimensional art on display at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery

An exhibit of two- and three-dimensional works by Ferdinand artist Curtis Uebelhor will be on display in the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery, 200 Hill Dr., in St. Meinrad, from Jan. 20-Feb. 10. Uebelhor works with found or discarded objects or surplus bits and pieces to furnish wry commentary on social issues such as education or the environment.

The exhibit is free and open to the public. For library hours, call 812-357-6041, 800-987-7311 or visit www.saintbarnabas.org/library/hours. All times are Central Time.
Legislative session is expected to be ‘fast and furious’

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

“Fast and furious”—these are the words used by Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), to describe what’s ahead for the less than three-month session of the 2018 Indiana General Assembly which reconvened at the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis on Jan. 3.

Two aspects of this year’s General Assembly make for a crazy few months of lawmaking, Tebbe said. First, the session is a short, non-budgetary session. Lawmakers do not need to create a biennial budget. They did that in 2017. The short session also requires lawmakers to adjourn by March 15. Second, 2018 is an election year. All 100 Indiana House members are up for re-election, and half of the 50 Indiana senators are as well.

“Lawmakers will be eager to hit the campaign trail as early as possible, while others may be eager to avoid controversial topics which may be used against them in an election year,” said Tebbe.

“Given this backdrop, the Indiana Catholic Conference plans to continue its work to advance the consistent life ethic and promote the common good,” he added.

Tebbe explained that the consistent life ethic is the principle that every human person, created in the image and likeness of God, deserves dignity and respect from conception to natural death. The ICC executive director’s role is to ensure that respect for each person is voiced and promoted as laws are being created and public policy is implemented.

“Standing up for the common good and advancing the consistent life ethic takes many forms. Sometimes, the ICC must play offense and work to get certain bills passed, and other times we are playing a bit of defense to protect laws that are beneficial to people and the common good,” said Tebbe. As in previous years, he expects there to be a mix of issues which require an offensive or defensive approach.

Education, pro-life, social issues and immigration top the general category list which the ICC monitors and promotes from a Catholic perspective year-round, but does so in a more vigilant way during the legislative session as new laws form.

Tebbe expects opponents of school choice to offer legislation adding more restrictions to access the school choice scholarship program, which benefits lower-income students and families.

The ICC supports the program because it allows parents the right to find the best setting for their children to attend school.

Tebbe says Indiana Right to Life may offer legislation to tweak current Indiana law.

He notes that Indiana has some of the most stringent abortion laws in the country, which the ICC continues to support.

A pro-life bill to guarantee certain work accommodations for pregnant women may move this year, according to Tebbe, and the ICC plans to support it.

Attempts to legalize physician-assisted suicide are possible. The ICC is opposed to legalizing physician-assisted suicide, and continues to work to prevent a bill legalizing it.

Along the lines of economic justice, a bill dealing with payday lending is expected to resurface. The ICC has opposed payday lending legislation that expands the practice to further exploit low-wage earners. Testimony in previous years showed those with limited means who use payday lending services get trapped in a debt cycle and pay exorbitant, unjust interest rates.

Immigration legislation in Indiana has been aimed at revoking or restricting to access the school choice scholarships helping economically disadvantaged families who have the least.

Tebbe says the ICC will play offense and work to get certain bills passed, and other times we are playing a bit of defense to protect laws that are beneficial to people and the common good.”

— Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference

Catholic program for abandoned babies may have saved Edmonton newborn

EDMONTON, Alberta (CNS)—A safe-haven program called Angel Cradle, operated by Covenant Health, may have saved a newborn baby’s life. The Angel Cradle program for abandoned babies may have saved Edmonton newborn.

A healthy baby was dropped off at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital in Edmonton within the past six months under the Angel Cradle program that lets parents anonymously leave a baby in a cradle within a doorway.

It was the first time a baby has been abandoned under the Angel Cradle program since it began in Edmonton in May 2013, and it is proof that the program is working, said a spokesman for Covenant Health, which operates the Angel Cradle at Grey Nuns and Misericordia hospitals.

“In light of Catholic social teaching, our mission is to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and, in this case, there was a positive outcome,” said Gordon Misetic, vice president of mission, ethics and spirituality.

“We can’t lose sight of the desperate circumstances that would lead to this decision, and we have to remember that this person chose to leave their baby in a safe environment. The Angel Cradle program helps prevent situations from being very tragic, which happens as we know,” he said.

Tebbe said he expects Sunday sales of alcohol, legalization of medical marijuana, and the ongoing opioid crisis to garner a lot of attention during this session. These issues will likely overshadow some of the ICC’s efforts or issues.

Regarding Sunday sales of alcohol and legalizing medical marijuana, the ICC will monitor both issues. The ICC supports efforts to prevent opioid addiction and treat those suffering from it.

More than 500 bills will be filed for consideration this year. Lawmakers only have three weeks to hold hearings before the bills cross over to the second chamber for another round of three weeks of hearings. While it depends on the committee chair, only a handful of bills will get a hearing in each committee each week, said Tebbe.

To follow ICC priority legislation, details and get updates, go to www.indianacce.org.

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

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forms of ideological colonization by the stronger and the wealthier, to the detriment of the poorer and the most vulnerable,” he said. Seven decades after the creation of the universal declaration, Pope Francis said, “it is painful to see how many fundamental rights continue to be violated today. First among all of these is the right of every human person to life, liberty and property.”

War, violence and abortion all infringe on these rights, he said. “Poverty and misery—all too often unborn children discarded because they are ‘ill or malformed,’ or as a result of the sentiment of ‘economic survival’—are too often cast aside especially when they are infirm, he said.

In conclusion, he said, “The right to life entails working for peace, he said, because without peace, integral human development becomes unattainable.”

Integral development, in fact, is intertwined with the need for peace. “The manipulation of weapons clearly aggravates situations of conflict and entails enormous human and material costs that undermine development and the search for lasting peace.”

The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons last year shows how the desire for peace continues unabated. “It shows how the desire for peace continues unabated. ‘I think I had a lot of anxiety ahead of time that he would not attach to me as much because I can pick him up and hold him as easily as she admires,’ she really felt like she did. … And I sang together several times, and he would say, ‘Bravo!’ when we sang.”

Russs felt the bond, too. “He was calling us mom and dad [Mamata and Tanu, translated in Bulgarian] from the very beginning,” he says. “I was wondering about that, if we’d have to ease him into that. But right from the very beginning he was like, ‘This is my dad. This is my mom. It was really sweet.”

Another smile lights Katrina’s face as she adds, “He’s a really good kid, really resilient, just a happy child.”

“Getting a jump start”

That Gosho was so happy came as a surprise to the Kellys, especially because they had no idea what they would do to break in their environment—living with primarily non-verbal children with no means of moving on his own.

“Kept staring at my wheelchair,” Katrina recalls. “I was wondering, freaked out.” He’s thinking, ‘Moms aren’t supposed to be in a wheelchair?’

“But I figured out pretty quickly he was just fascinated by it.” When they returned home, the Kellys pursued a mantra of “taking things slow,” including obtaining permission from both governments, background checks from every state that has a presence in the region, a process that totals four for Russ, 36, who works for an electrical contractor in Indianapolis—and overlaps with agencies in both countries.

“The fees are certainly high because you’re paying two agencies—in fact we have three, two here and one in Bulgaria,” she says. “There’s a lot of financial challenge, although there’s a lot with some of our friends, too.”

Finally last October, the Kellys made the 30-hour plane and car ride to Gosho’s orphanage in Bulgaria. Fortunately, they found that none of the children held in the orphanage’s permission, and had sent it to Gosho “so he could have a little bit of freedom,” says Katrina.

It is the first of many expenses that will come with raising a child with SMS. Gosho was diagnosed a specialist pediatrician, therapists, medical equipment and a wheelchair for life.

“The Kellys are not as intimidated by the medical challenges as other parents might be.”

“Already kind of you what we need to do on the school side, which is kind of a nice boost,” says Katrina. “We have neighbors with a disabled child of our own. We’ve been turning us in the right direction, and I’ve been talking to my mom, since she had a disabled child as well. … Back to childhood enough to know some of the things I need to arrange for him, so we’re getting a jump start as much as we can.”

But there will be some additional challenges outside of the medical sphere. “That transition [from the orphanage] to be emocional, losing everyone’s he’s known who was his everyday,” says Katrina. “It doesn’t mean ‘less than.’ Sometimes, it’s exactly what you want, actually. He’s just a kid, a great kid, and that’s all he is. He’s in a wheelchair. Our family is complete with him.”

(Anyone interested in contributing to help the Kellys with travel expenses and fees in adopting Gosho may contact Katrina at 317-425-7128 or katrina.kelly@FaegreBD.com)
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Sisters of Providence celebrate milestone jubilees

In 2017, two Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods celebrated 75 years in the congregation, seven celebrated 70 years, and nine celebrated 60 years.

60-year jubilarians

Sister Marcella (formerly James) Gallagher, a native of Woodstock, Ill., entered the congregation on July 22, 1957, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1965. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in education, and from Indiana University with a master’s degree in elementary education.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at McClelland and Stout Field elementary schools, as program coordinator for the Hispanic Education Center, and as a lab technician. In Indiana, she also served in Fort Wayne and Jasper. Currently, she ministers as a volunteer in the Administration Building of the Sisters of Providence.

Sister Patricia (formerly Kevin Joseph) Muhleney, a native of Chicago, entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1957, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1964. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in education, and from Illinois State University with a master’s degree in psychology.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis (1962-67). She also ministered in Illinois and Texas currently, she ministers as a volunteer for the 22nd Police District in Chicago.

Sister Carol (formerly Michaelleen) Meyers, a native of Chicago, entered the congregation on Jan. 7, 1957, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1964. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in education, from Indiana University with a master’s degree in early childhood development, and from Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis with a master’s degree in adult education.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at St. Matthew the Apostle School (1961-64); in Plainfield as a teacher at St. Susanna School (1984-85); and at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College as an instructor of early childhood/Montessori teaching methods. She also served in Illinois and Washington, D.C. Currently, she ministers as a parish volunteer at St. Cyprian Parish in River Grove, Ill.; as an English as a Second Language tutor at the Dominican Literacy Center in Melrose Park, Ill.; and as a Montessori consultant in Chicago.

Sister Sharon (formerly Charlene) Richards, a native of Owosso, Mich., entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1957, and professed her final vows on Aug. 15, 1964. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in education, and from Marygrove College in Detroit with a master’s degree in education.

She has served in Illinois, Maryland and North Carolina. Currently, she ministers as a volunteer at St. Alexander School in Palos Heights, Ill.

Sister Elizabeth (formerly Ann Martin) Snigla, a native of Chicago, entered the congregation on July 22, 1957, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1963. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in education, and from Northeastern Illinois University with a master’s degree in special education.

She has served in Illinois, Maryland, Missouri and in the country of Peru. Currently, she ministers as a volunteer advocate for immigrants, victims and prisoners at Taller de San José in Kolbe House in Chicago.

70-year jubilarians

Sister Agnes Maureen Badura, a native of Chicago, entered the congregation on July 22, 1947, and professed final vows on Jan. 21, 1955. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics, and from Marquette University with a master’s degree in mathematics.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher in Indianapolis at St. Philip Neri School (1958-61); in Terre Haute as a volunteer for the Wabash Valley Health Center; and in various roles at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She has also served in California, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, Oklahoma and Washington, D.C.

Sister Joyce (formerly Robert Ellen) Brophy, a native of Joliet, Ill., entered the congregation on July 22, 1947, and professed final vows on Jan. 23, 1955. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in education, and from Indiana State University with a master’s degree in education.


Sister Mary Catherine Keene, a native of Chicago, entered the congregation on Jan. 7, 1957, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1964. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in music education, from the University of Illinois with a master’s degree in music, and from Catholic Theological Union/Illinois with a master’s degree in music education.

Currently, she ministers as an english as a second language consultant in Chicago.

Sister Neri (formerly Carol) Knarzer, a native of Chicago, entered the congregation on July 21, 1957, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1965. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in music education, and from Northern Illinois University with a master’s degree and doctorate in English.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at St. Andrew School (1961-62) and St. Simon the Apostle School (1962-67). She also served in Illinois, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma and in France. Currently, she ministers as an archivist and grant writer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in music education, from the University of Illinois with a master’s degree in music, and from Catholic Theological Union/Illinois with a master’s degree in music education.

Currently, she ministers as the activities coordinator in Providence Hall and at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Arlene (formerly Jean Cecile) Brophy, a native of Chicago, entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1957, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1964. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in education, and from Illinois State University with a master’s degree in early childhood development, and from Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis with a master’s degree in adult education.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis (1962-67). She also ministered in Illinois and Texas currently, she ministers as a volunteer for the 22nd Police District in Chicago.

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Jeopardy! champion will speak at 22nd annual Celebrating Catholic School Values program

Awards Ceremony will honor four individuals who have dedicated their lives to Catholic education

Jeopardy! champion and longtime Catholic school fundraiser Dan Alrich will be the keynote speaker for the archdiocese’s 2018 Celebrating Catholic School Values reception and awards program on Feb. 22.

The reception will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Old O’Connellar Hotel and Convention Center, 131 S. Main St., in the hotel’s historic Union Station. The awards program will follow at 7 p.m.

The event will recognize and thank the many donors who have contributed millions of dollars through the Institute of Quality Education (IQE) to help children receive a Catholic education in the archdiocese. It also will honor four individuals who have used their Catholic school education to make a difference in the lives of at-risk youths and their families.

Tickets may be purchased for $75 at www.archindy.org/ccsv/purchase 2018. For information on the event, contact Joni Riga at 317-236-1444 or 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1444. Archdiocese President of the Men’s Catholic League of St. Joseph, Sister Carol is the superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and oversees 35 elementary and high schools in the western part of the state.

She also holds a variety of positions in Catholic education, including as a teacher, principal, development director and consultant.

The author of several articles, pamphlets and two books, Sister Carol is proud of the fact that she is still the only religious woman to have been a three-day champion on the television quiz-game show “Jeopardy!”

Award winner leads outreach through men’s club, parish

Dan Alrich, a recipient of the archdiocese’s Career Achievement Award, has been involved in Catholic education for many years. Alrich, who is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, will speak at the event.

Alrich is a graduate of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis and a student at the University of Notre Dame. He has a master’s degree in human resources management.

Alrich has been a lay leader at St. Anthony School in Indianapolis, and he has helped to support Catholic schools in the city.

Alrich has been a member of the archdiocese’s Men’s Catholic League since 2001, and he has been a leader of the league’s Community Justice Project.

Alrich is the founder of the archdiocese’s Men’s Catholic League’s Career Achievement Award. He is the recipient of the award.

The idea of sharing your experiences with young people—and helping them—is a good reason to get out of bed in the morning.”

Honor couple build a life of caring on foundation of faith, family

The story of Dan and Jan Megel begins with the pair’s commitment to helping others.

The couple has been involved in Catholic education for many years, and they have dedicated their lives to helping others.

The couple’s commitment to helping others has been recognized by the archdiocese, which has awarded them the archdiocese’s Career Achievement Award.

The couple has a goal of helping others to make a difference in their communities.

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Faith

Baptism joins us to the mystical body of Christ, the family of God

By David Gibson

Baptism is no more formality in Christian life. “It is an act that touches the depths of our existence,” Pope Francis remarked in January 2014, speaking four days before the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, when contemporary popes customarily baptize babies in the Vatican’s Sistine Chapel.

I do not know all the reasons Pope Francis accepted the word “formality” in telling what baptism is not. But obviously, to regard baptism as a formality, something like an academic society’s initiation ceremony, would be to misunderstand it entirely.

The pope was concerned that some Christians may view baptism only as “a formal act of the Church to give a name” to a child. More than that, he wanted to call attention to baptism’s far-reaching effects.

Baptism, along with the sacraments of confirmation and eucharist, “conforms us to the Lord and turns us into a living sign of his presence and of his love,” said the pope.

Mentioning baptism on another 2014 occasion, Pope Francis observed that it “regenerates us in Christ, renders us a part of his body.”

The underlying causes of this decline undoubtedly are complex. Some new parents may harbor anger, disappointment or simply indifference related to the Church. Many may be unaware of what others find rewarding about life in the Christian community.

There are parents, too, who make no formal decision one way or the other about baptism after a child’s birth; no baptism takes place. Years later, the question arises again, and for some the answer now is “undoubtedly are complex. Some new parents may harbor anger, disappointment or simply indifference related to the Church. Many may be unaware of what others find rewarding about life in the Christian community.

There are parents, too, who make no formal decision one way or the other about baptism after a child’s birth; no baptism takes place. Years later, the question arises again, and for some the answer now is affirmative.

Something like this happened for a parent in a parish class I lead to prepare parents for their child’s baptism. At one point, this parent appeared about to apologize to me for delaying his child’s baptism so long.

But I did not think he owed me an apology. Instead, I encouraged him to be happy about the decision now reached by his family and to look forward to a happy, heartfelt celebration of the fast-approaching baptismal day.

But what is celebrated? Baptism “grafts” believers “as a living member onto Christ and his Church,” Pope Francis said. In the language of St. Paul, each baptized person becomes part of Christ’s body.

Paul had much to say about Christ’s living body and its members’ diversity— their varied backgrounds, roots, talents and needs. But “we were all baptized into one body,” Paul said (1 Cor 12:12-29).

The living, mystical body of Christ, therefore, “is not a single part, but many” (1 Cor 12:12). Yet each part is needed, valued. Paul illustrated this point by writing: “If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? … But as it is, there are many parts, but one body” (1 Cor 12:25-27).

Notably, all these parts are concerned “for one another,” and “if [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it” (1 Cor 12:25-26). Whenever I think of Christ’s living body, I remember the warm, inviting words of Pope Benedict XVI when he baptized 10 infants in January 2006.

“Through baptism,” he stressed, “each child is inserted into a gathering of friends, who never abandon him in life or in death, because these companions are God’s family.”

He added, “This group of friends, this family of God … will always accompany him, even on days of suffering and in life’s darkest nights.”

Isn’t becoming grafted onto such a community reason enough to celebrate baptism?

Scripture suggests infants were baptized in the earliest days of the Church

By Daniel S. Mullhad

The Catholic practice of baptizing infants is an “immemorial tradition of the Church,” according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (#1252). Documents exist from as early as the first century that explain the practice, and statements about infant baptism were particularly strong in Africa, the last instruction also notes.

While the Bible does not explicitly mention infant baptism, it quite likely developed in the earliest days of the Church. As the Church’s apostolic mission grew, “it is quite possible that, from the beginning of the apostolic preaching, when whole ‘households’ received baptism, infant baptism may also have been baptized” (#1252).

There are several passages in the Bible that mention the baptism of “households.” The first appears in Acts 16, which records the story of St. Paul’s visit to Philipp in Macedonia. There he met Lydia, “a worshiper of God,” who was so moved by Paul’s message of salvation in Jesus that she and her whole household were baptized (Acts 16:12-15).

A similar story occurs in Acts 16:25-34. Paul and Silas are in prison for preaching the Gospel when they are set free by an earthquake. Their jailer, seeing the earthquake as an omen from God asks, “Sir, what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30)

He is told, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you and your household will be saved” (Acts 16:31). Acts reports that “he and all his family were baptized at once” (Acts 16:33).

Other passages that refer to the baptism of entire households include Acts 18:8 and in St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, where Paul acknowledges that he had “baptized the household of Stephanas” (1 Cor 1:16).

While none of these passages explicitly mentions the baptism of infants, infants are not explicitly omitted either. The use of the word “household” suggests that everyone who lived as a part of that family would have been baptized— including children and other relatives, family servants or even slaves. Why would any infants or young children in the family not be included?

The Church’s understanding of the sacrament of baptism—not just the practice of infant baptism—has been shaped by these particular Bible passages. Baptism, the catechism says, is a celebration of new birth in Christ Jesus that frees us from “the power of darkness,” and brings us “into the realm of the freedom of the children of God” (#1256).

In baptism, we experience the “sheer gratuitousness of the grace of salvation,” not because of anything we do or say, but simply through the freely given gift of God’s saving love for us (#1250). Isn’t the baptism of whole households, including infants, a perfect example of this?

Jesus said, “Let the children,” including infants, “come to me” (Lk 18:16, 18) because he calls us all, whatever our age at baptism, to live a life of faith. Baptism marks the beginning of that life of faith, not the end.

(Baptized Christians celebrate the rewards of life in Christ’s living body. But they also are charged with doing their part to ensure that the faith community actually is “a gathering of friends” and “companions” for others who suffer and experience dark times.

In the thinking of many, a formality refers to life’s red tape. It is inconsequential, something quickly to consign to the past. But baptism cannot be consigned to the past.

That is why Pope Francis encourages Christians to discover and remember the date of their baptism. Otherwise, he fears, they could lose awareness of what the Lord has done in them and think of their baptism only as a past event.

However, the pope stated, “we are called to live out our baptism every day.”

(CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)
The ‘meantime’ is all we’ve got, be thankful to God for it

The most important living we can do is right now, Jennifer said. She has inspired me to do a better job of loving those God has placed in my path.

One day, a diagnosis might come our way that we’re not expecting. Or we might receive word of a loved one’s death. When Billy entered into the hospital for his cancer diagnosis, we were faces down, praying for a miracle. When Billy came into the hospital, I would do anything I could for him. That’s why I’ve always been a fighter. And I’m still fighting.

I’m going to face the future head-on. I feel like I’ve finally taken the time to bandage them. I need to get on with my own oxygen mask and help my goal stick.

Most of life happens in the meantime. Jennifer reminds us to focus on the present, wishing our kids’ science fair projects away and enjoy them already. Creating a science fair board with Henry for three hours on an unusually warm Saturday afternoon in December is an opportunity to make a fun time together.

I ask all of you prayer warriors to please include my friend Jennifer in your prayers. She believes in the power of prayer, and tells me that she can feel those prayers lifting her. But she has a long way to go.

As we “ring” in 2018, what do we want to be a part of? What are we looking forward to?” she added. Her dream is to see something, but until we get there—wherever that may be—it’s smooth sailing ahead.

Jennifer recently shared that she plans to write a book called “Doubles down on self-care: hitting the treadmill with help my goal stick. I like to hear the simple relief that provided gave me peace. It might sound like the mantra for an anti-resolution, a permission slip to try, but it’s the path my life’s planning. I want to take better care of myself so I can grow more fully into the person God designed me to be.

I’m also entering into conversation with Catholics I admire to deepen my thinking and find new details of what self-care looks like in action. My pastor connects with friends or picks up a book at the library, while I enjoy a tall glass of Fairlife chocolate milk.

I’m going to face the future head-on. I feel like I’ve finally taken the time to bandage them. I need to get on with my own oxygen mask and help my goal stick.

As a New Year is upon us, flip on any television or radio station and we’re bombarded with messages reminding us of our New Year’s resolutions that we usually try to pursue. We feel encouraged to lose weight, quit smoking, eat healthier, go back to school, get to the gym and much more.

My advice to you is to remember that reaching our goals will bring us peace, contentment and fulfillment. I suppose aresetting of the physical calendar is a good time to push goal chasing.

For some of us, however, this sense of goal chasing is harder to achieve. I understand. I’ve fallen into the unfortunate habit of making statements like this. ”If I could just [insert goal du jour], then I’ll be all well.” Recent issues I’ve inserted into the statement above include, but aren’t limited to:

—Sell the house.
—Get my son into this semester.
—Understand how to get to her. 
—Pay off the item.
—Lose enough weight to fit back into my pants.
—Get a good night’s sleep.

As we “ring” in 2018, what do we want to celebrate, to accomplish and to focus on? What will be the bellwether events of this New Year?

As we “ring” in the new year with “love.” Pope Francis reminds us that when we love one another, we are loving and serving Christ. Now, the pope is calling us to share a journey with our neighbors—all our neighbors, not those who are living near our cities. “It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.” Sharing this true story, from our own era, of two communities that can look at one scene can be seen as the best of times and the other—quite the opposite.

There was a time when I was the first glance of a community experiencing the best of times to seeing “another” city and the worst of times to seeing a city in distress. It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.” Sharing this true story, from our own era, of two communities that can look at one scene can be seen as the best of times and the other—quite the opposite.

Some see the world in black and white, while others see the world in black and white.

Jennifer is a gifted writer. One day, Jennifer told me that she plans to write a book called “In the Meantime.” She said that we’re all chasing something, but until we get there—wherever “there” is—we’re going to be suffering.

It’s important to be present in the unglamorous, ordinary moments, Jennifer told me. Whether that’s spent supervising your children’s homework, or working in an office where the work is not what you’ve wanted it to be.

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Monday, January 15
1 Samuel 15:4-23
Psalm 50:6-15, 16-17, 21, 23
Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday, January 16
1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 89:20-22, 27-28
Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday, January 17
St. Anthony, Abbott
1 Samuel 17:32-37, 40-51
Psalm 144:1-2, 9-10
Mark 3:1-6

Thursday, January 18
1 Samuel 18:6-9; 19:1-7
Psalm 56:2, 3-9
Mark 3:7-12

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Church regulates the number of Masses a priest may daily celebrate

Recently I visited a parish in Ohio. It was there to attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass on Dec. 24. Before Mass, the regular priest announced that there would be a substitute priest for that Mass because of the limit of “three Masses a day.” (The regular priest was scheduled to celebrate a different Mass that morning and then two Christmas Eve Masses later in the day.) Is this “three-Mass rule” a strict law of the Church or a guideline? If it’s a law, could it be upheld in an emergency? For example, say a large parish with two priests had one get sick and no substitute could be found? Would a Mass (or two) have to be canceled? (Virginia)

Although it may surprise many Catholics to learn this, the Church has for centuries regulated the number of Masses a priest may celebrate in a day, primarily to ensure that the Eucharist is celebrated with the dignity and devotion it deserves. The current Code of Canon Law says that “if there is a shortage of priests, the local ordinary can allow priests to celebrate twice a day for a just cause, or if pastoral necessity requires it, even three times on Sundays and holy days of obligation” (#905.2).

In many dioceses, bishops have given their priests blanket permission to invoke this “twice on weekdays, three times on Sunday” option. The date to which you refer—Dec. 24, 2017—was a Sunday, and so your local pastor was not “making up” a rule; the three-Mass limit was in place.

For genuine pastoral emergencies, a bishop is empowered to grant a dispensation even beyond the “three-Mass limit”—such as the situation you raise where a sudden sickness and lack of a substitute might compromise the need of the faithful for the Eucharist.

A recent letter in your column from an inmate in Missouri has been in my heart in such strong way that I had to write.

(Editor’s Note: That letter was from someone who had been in prison for 25 years and was seeking to have his sentence changed from life to death penalty because of what he termed his “unbelievable suffering,” and the fact that his heart was “hardened” and he could not discover any role that God might possibly have for him to play in prison.)

I, too, am an inmate; I have served 23 years of a 15-years-to-life sentence. I have been denied three times by the parole board because of the “nature of the crime”—which is a constant, unchanging fact, although I have changed positively from the very core of my being.

God comes to me often in the darkness and reminds me of his love. I trust him and know that he has forgiven me, even though the system has not. Even in prison, he brings people into my life to encourage me, so that I can live for him and with the hope of pleasing him somehow.

Let the Missouri inmate know that he is worth so much to God. He should help God work in him, not against him. God loves this man and is on his side. (Ohio)

I have chosen to run this letter not simply for the advice it offers to the prisoner in Missouri, but for a larger purpose: It shows that every person is worthy of redemption and capable of it. The Marysville inmate—obviously incarcerated for a serious crime—has evidently found a spiritual core deep within his soul.

I am reminded of what Pope Francis said in 2015 while visiting a prison in Philadelphia: “The Lord goes in search of us; to all of us he stretches out a helping hand. To all of us he stretches out a helping hand; to all of us he stretches out a helping hand.”

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith and/or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column. Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org.
Rest in peace

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SINGING IN ROME

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PROVIDENCE SISTERS ORTEGEL SERVED IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS FOR 45 YEARS

PROVIDENCE SISTER MARGARET ANN WILSON, EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE

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PROVIDENCE SISTER MARGARET ANN WILSON

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Sister Margaret Ann Wilson was a member of the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47467.

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Father John Hollowell, pastor of Annunciation Parish in Brazil and St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, explains the rules of the pumpkin slice competition. (Photo by Shayna Tews)

As iron sharpens iron, so one man must be special to another (Prv 27:17). As iron sharpens iron, so one man must be special to another (Prv 27:17). As iron sharpens iron, so one man must be special to another (Prv 27:17). As iron sharpens iron, so one man must be special to another (Prv 27:17). As iron sharpens iron, so one man must be special to another (Prv 27:17). As iron sharpens iron, so one man must be special to another (Prv 27:17).

Special to The Criterion

“Masculinity is experiencing a great crisis today, and so many of our young men are in need of mentoring about what authentic masculinity is. Living out masculinity is something that has to be modeled.”

—Father John Hollowell, pastor of Annunciation Parish in Brazil and St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle

Father John Hollowell, pastor of Annunciation Parish in Brazil and St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, approaches men in both parishes about a year-and-a-half ago and asked if they would like to take on an active role in forming a boys’ group for the young men. It was there that the local chapters of Fraternus were born. “Masculinity is a great gift from God, and that it is not, as some say today, the source of all the world’s problems,” explained Father Hollowell. “You know there are certainly unhealthy and evil understandings of masculinity being peddled by our culture, but those are forgeries and counterparts. Jesus Christ shows us how to live out an authentic and life-giving masculinity.”

Fraternus chapters meet once a week, beginning with Comp Time, a competitive game. The group then listens to “The King’s Message,” a short video clip provided by the national Fraternus organization which coincides with the virtue being taught that week. The young men then break off into Squad Time—the younger students in one group and the older in another—where conversation can go more in-depth with the message for the week. The night ends with a challenge and a prayer. “I’ve been pleasantly surprised by some of the wisdom that some of our young men have been able to articulate in our Squad Time,” said Chris Durcholz of Annunciation Parish, one of the captains of its Fraternus chapter. “I’ve gotten a lot out of that. Maybe I didn’t give so much credit to our youth for having the wisdom, but when I stopped and listened, I was pretty surprised.”

Other young people from the neighborhood, including non-Catholics, have even joined the activities. “We’re trying to give our young men within our parish and our community an idea of what it means to be a man and within that, there’s inherent responsibilities that you have to care for your family,” explained Durcholz. “Moms are wonderful, and they’re great, and they so vitally important, but the bond between a young man and his father or at least another man or Fraternus brother is extremely important.”

“And I think we’re going to see in the future how this is going to pay dividends. We’ve had a lot of success stories this year, but I think we’re just seeing the tip of the iceberg.”

“Masculinity is experiencing a great crisis today, and so many of our young men are in need of mentoring about what authentic masculinity is,” said Father Hollowell. “Living out masculinity is something that has to be modeled.”

Over the past year, the groups at both parishes have enjoyed forging their own swords, camping out with Mass under the stars, canoeing, fishing, and even a knightings ceremony with an authentic Fraternus sword.

Annunciation parishioner Kevin Shonk, also a Fraternus captain, said the brotherhood and the rites of passage experienced during the weekly meetings are important factors that go beyond the Fraternus nights.

“Whether we go out and play flag football or [stay] inside because of the weather, there’s some kind of competition within. But it’s friendly competition,” Shonk said. “I personally think that brings them all closer together, because that holds everybody accountable because you have the team aspect. And so, you hold your other Fraternus brother accountable for his actions, and then the high school guys can kind of lean on each other in high school. That creates that bond. And if it’s not there, then what kind of accountability do they have for each other?”

(Shayna Tews is a freelance writer and a member of Annunciation Parish in Brazil. If you are interested in starting a Fraternus chapter at your parish or learning more about the organization, visit fraternusbrothers.org.)

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The Campus Minister interacts with all areas of Mission and Ministry, collaborating with the staff, and serving students. The successful candidate will be responsible for ensuring the following: support leadership development and spiritual formation of student leaders; support the realization of the Rebuild My Church Strategic Plan; work within the campus ministry budget and related planning and evaluation; consult and communicate with diocesan and campus officials.

The successful candidate will have a Bachelor’s degree in theology, ministry, social work, or related field, be knowledgeable of and an excellent communicator of Catholic Social Teaching, experience working with young adults and in Microsoft Office programs.

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Abel Bates, a member of Fraternus at St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, scales a wall during a Fraternus ranch experience last spring in Tennessee. (Photo courtesy Father John Hollowell)
75-year jubilarians

Sister Mary Patricia Cummings (formerly Maria Janice), a native of the former Holy Trinity Parish in New Albany, entered the congregation on Jan. 7, 1942, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1949. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in education, and from Indiana State University with a master’s degree in education.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher in Bloomington at St. Charles Borromeo School (1970-71); in Clarksville at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School (1971-76); in Indianapolis at St. Thomas Aquinas High School (1953-56), in New Albany at Holy Family School (1967-69); as a pastoral associate in Jeffersonville at St. Augustine Parish (1976-85); in New Albany at Baptist Hospital (1976-77); and at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in residential services. She also served in Fort Wayne and Whiting, Ind., and in Illinois, Maryland and Washington, D.C. Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Francis Edwards (formerly Francis Bernard), a native of Oklahoma City, Okla., entered the congregation on Sept. 8, 1942, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1950. She graduated from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics, from Indiana State University with a master’s degree in mathematics, and from University of Oklahoma with a master’s degree of library science.

In the archdiocese she served as a teacher in Indianapolis at the former St. Catherine of Siena School (1948-50), St. Anthony School (1950-52); the school is now a Notre Dame ACE Academy), the former St. John Academy (1952-55), the former St. Agnes Academy (1956-68), the former Ladywood High School (1968-69 and 1971-72); as a librarian for Providence Cristo Rey High School (2006-08); and in various roles at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She also served in Vincennes and Evansville, Ind., and in California, Illinois, Missouri and Oklahoma. Currently, she ministers in residential services at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Catholic groups decry end of immigration protection for Salvadorans

WASHINGTON (CNS)—As the Catholic Church in the U.S. began observing National Migration Week to take a time to reflect on the circumstances confronting migrants, immigrants, refugees, and human trafficking victims, the administration of President Donald J. Trump announced that it would end an immigration protection for thousands of Salvadorans, one of the largest groups of modern-day immigrants in the country and the largest of any Catholic group.

More than 200,000 Salvadorans, living under a special immigration status in the U.S. called Temporary Protected Status (TPS) should be eligible to stay in the country illegally or returning to a nation designated as one of the most dangerous in the world not at war, after the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced on Jan. 8 that it was ending a provision called Temporary Protected Status (TPS) after Sept. 9, 2019.

“arly to terminate TPS for El Salvador was made after a review of the disaster-related conditions upon which the country’s original designation was made,” DHS said in a statement.

Sisters of Providence

Sisters of Providence, a Catholic religious order whose origins date back to the 18th century, have a long history of supporting Salvadorans in the United States. The order has a presence in 22 countries and is known for its work with refugees and immigrants.

In a statement, Bishop Joe S. Vasquez, the Roman Catholic bishop of San Antonio, Texas, said the decision to end TPS for Salvadorans was a “clear and tragic” one.

“arly to terminate TPS for El Salvador will have a devastating impact on the many people who have been living and working in the United States for many years, particularly in the communities where they have built their lives,” Bishop Vasquez said. "The administration’s actions not only fail to address the root causes of migration, but they also fail to respect the human rights of people who are fleeing violence and persecution in their home countries. This is a clear and tragic decision, and I join my colleagues in the bishops’ conference in expressing our outrage at this action.

In a statement, Bishop Joseph M. Siegel of Paterson, N.J. also expressed his concern about the decision.

“Teresita’s concern for education and her commitment to the integral development of children and young people is matched only by her unwavering dedication to the Church. She has been a beacon of hope and a source of inspiration to many in her community, and her legacy will continue to inspire others for generations to come.”

The Sisters of Providence remain committed to supporting Salvadorans and other immigrants and refugees who seek safety in the United States, and we will continue to advocate for policies that protect their rights and dignity,” Bishop Siegel said.

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