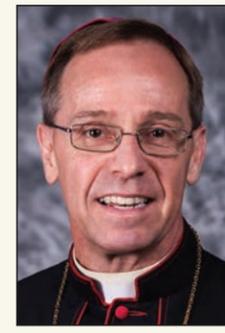




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Christ the Cornerstone

Human life should be respected, protected, writes Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, page 5.

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Pope asks forgiveness from victims of clergy sex abuse in Chile

SANTIAGO, Chile (CNS)—Pope Francis, in his first formal speech in Chile, asked forgiveness from those who were sexually abused by priests.



Pope Francis

Addressing government authorities and members of the country's diplomatic corps on Jan. 16, the pope expressed his "pain and shame at the irreparable damage caused to children by some ministers of the Church."

"I am one with my brother bishops, for it is right to ask for forgiveness and make every effort to support the victims, even as we commit ourselves to ensure that such things do not happen again," he said.

Preparations for Pope Francis' visit to Chile on Jan. 15-18 were overshadowed by continuing controversy over the pope's decision in 2015 to appoint to lead a diocese a bishop accused of turning a blind eye to the abuse perpetrated by a notorious priest.

The pope's appointment of Bishop Juan Barros as head of the Diocese of Osorno sparked several protests—most notably at the bishop's installation Mass—due to the bishop's connection to Father Fernando Karadima, his former mentor. Father Karadima was sentenced to a life of prayer and penance by the Vatican after he was found guilty of sexually abusing boys.

The protests against the pope's appointment of Bishop Barros gained steam when a video of Pope Francis defending the appointment was published in September 2015 by the Chilean news channel, *Ahora Noticias*. Filmed during a general audience a few months earlier, the video showed the pope telling a group of Chilean pilgrims that Catholics protesting the appointment were "judging a bishop without any proof."

See POPE, page 9

'I don't know what's going to happen'



Brenda Martinez, right, puts a puzzle together with her daughters, Luna, 4, and Athenea, 5 months, in her Indianapolis home on Jan. 4. Brenda was brought to the U.S. from Mexico at the age of 6 and is currently protected from deportation by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. (CNS photo/Katie Rutter)

'Dreamer' faces potential nightmare reality amid struggle for immigration reform

By Katie Rutter

Catholic News Service

Brenda Martinez's first dream was to become an astrophysicist.

As she finished seventh grade in Indianapolis, her heart was set on attending Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., with the help of a state scholarship program.

But in one crushing blow, she learned she was "undocumented," which made her ineligible for the financial assistance and dashed her hopes that her dream could become real.

"That's how I started being cautious about dreaming," Martinez told

Catholic News Service.

Martinez is part of a group in the United States that has become known as "Dreamers"—the name given to the nearly 800,000 people in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, the federal program that covers children who were brought to the U.S. illegally.

The fate of Martinez and the other Dreamers is now being played out again in Washington as politicians try to find a solution to immigration reform.

It's a process that has also been influenced by a federal judge's decision on Jan. 9 to issue an injunction that temporarily blocks President Donald

J. Trump's administration from phasing out protections for the undocumented Dreamers.

Now 25 and a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, Martinez fled as a 6-year-old from the bleak and dangerous city of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. The border town has been wracked by violence for years as rival gangs battle for valuable drug trafficking routes and rule through fear.

"Women were getting kidnapped, and they were getting raped and murdered and being dumped next to the border. It would be every other day, every other day," Martinez said.

See DREAMER, page 8

Holy hours for vocations in deaneries offer opportunity to pray for those discerning God's call

By Sean Gallagher

Beginning later this month, the archdiocesan Vocations Office will sponsor holy hours for vocations in all 11 deaneries of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The first will take place at 7 p.m. on Jan. 30 at St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., in Bloomington.

Not all holy hours in each of the deaneries have been scheduled.

These one-hour periods of eucharistic adoration will include time for silent prayer, various prayers for vocations and a reflection on vocations. They are taking place for several purposes,

said Andy Miller, associate director of vocations in the archdiocese.



Andy Miller

They are a way to have Catholics across central and southern Indiana come together to pray for people discerning the vocation to which God is calling them.

This, in turn, said Miller, will hopefully encourage them to speak with such people and encourage them in their discernment.

"So often, vocations work for us has



been a matter of encouraging others, to give them a voice to talk to young people," Miller said. "So many of our older individuals in our parishes, even our

See VOCATIONS, page 9

Payday lending bill makes practice more equitable for borrowers, says ICC

By Brigid Curtis Ayer

A bill to make payday lending more equitable for borrowers is under consideration at the Indiana General Assembly this year. The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) supports the proposal. Senate Bill 325, authored by Sen. Greg Walker, R-Columbus, would cap fees and the interest collected on the loan to a 36 percent annual percentage rate (APR). Current law allows up to a 391 percent APR.

Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the ICC, says Senate Bill 325 addresses the unjust interest charged by lenders in the payday lending industry. "Current law and practice often puts persons and families into a debt trap by taking advantage of their circumstances," said Tebbe. "Usury and exploitation of people violates the seventh commandment.



Glenn Tebbe

Lending practices that, intentionally or unintentionally, take unfair advantage of one's desperate circumstances are unjust."

Walker, who is an accountant, said the research he has done on this issue is interesting, and it gives support as to why Indiana should address it. He said the effect on the customer of the payday loan would be minimal if the borrower was a one-time a year customer. The customers who habitually use payday loans may be less aware of the impact these high rates impose on them than the average consumer.

Walker added when looking at payday loans on a state-by-state basis, states that cap the rate at 36 percent cause most of the payday lender vendors to flee the marketplace. This is because payday lenders need very high rates of return to operate. Walker said the financial impact of the loan on the borrower cannot necessarily be measured by the traditional stresses like a bankruptcy, losing a home, or the ability to meet other debt obligations.

"The reason is because the individuals that turn to the payday loan on a habitual level are already maxed out on the credit card," said Walker. "They are already struggling to meet the weekly and monthly obligations that they have. And in some cases, there is really nothing to file bankruptcy on.

"Where the stresses are more measurable is on the emotional and physical strain level," said Walker. "This level of interest increases, and actually compounds that stress on the individual and the family network. A customer for

a payday loan is already in financial distress. A lot of the time the borrower is borrowing to pay off another debt, pay a utility bill or put food on the table," he said.

"There is a difference between interest and usury," said Walker. "It might be hard for some to draw a bright line between the two. But I draw it at 391 percent." Walker also points to alternatives to these products saying many nonprofit and community development groups are



Sen. Greg Walker

working to step in and help fill the gap for families in financial crisis.

As for its status, Walker said he is working with the committee chair to get the payday lending bill a hearing, but said nothing definite is scheduled. "What

I hope to accomplish is to at least have the conversation. I think it's an important issue to talk about and raise awareness that there are better alternatives for people in financial crisis than obtaining a high interest, short-term loan."

A recent report issued by the Boston-based National Consumer Law Center shows 15 states and the District of Columbia have capped payday loans at 36 percent.

In a poll released this month, 80 percent of Indiana respondents favored more regulation on payday loans. Bellwether Research and Consulting, a polling firm in Alexandria, Va., conducted the poll and surveyed 600 registered voters.

The Center for Responsible Lending, a nonprofit organization based in North Carolina dedicated to educating the public on predatory financial products, studied the effects on low-income families in states with payday loans versus those without them. Their research showed that those with limited means fare far worse in states where payday lending products are available. The study concluded that rather than help a household, payday loans are more likely to create a debt burden and worsens the household's financial stability.

Walker and others have noted the importance of assisting these families struggling to make ends meet. In states without payday loans, many resort to getting help from family or friends. Some cut back expenses, and there are many churches, government agencies, non-profit and community organizations working to fill the gap.

Tebbe said, "I am disappointed that the chance is slim for the payday lending bill to get a hearing." Senate Bill 325 must receive a hearing before the end of January to advance.

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



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

January 21-31, 2018

January 21 — 11:45 a.m.

Mass with the Installation of Pastor, St. Mark the Evangelist Church, Indianapolis

January 21 — 6 p.m.

Prayer Service for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Mount Zion Baptist 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

January 23-25

Catholic Leadership Institute; Ongoing Formation & Support Session, Orlando Fla.

January 28 — 10 a.m.

Mass at St. Mary Church, Rushville, to honor 150th Anniversary of St. Mary School

January 30 — 6 p.m.

Connected in the Spirit, New Albany Deanery Town Hall Meeting, auditorium of Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School, Clarksville

January 31 — 10 a.m.

Catholic Schools Week Mass, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

(Schedule subject to change.)

Catholic Charities in Iowa archdiocese ends refugee resettlement program

DUBUQUE, Iowa (CNS)—Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Dubuque is preparing to end its refugee resettlement program after 77 years in operation.

The primary reason the program is closing down is because the numbers of refugees are down.

The U.S. Department of State decreased the number of refugees who can legally seek refuge in the United States from 110,000 to 45,000 annually. Also, the department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration recently announced that all refugee resettlement sites across the country will be required to resettle at least 100 refugees annually to stay open.

These federal changes are happening when the needs of local refugees also are being met by other groups, and as a result Catholic Charities will not be able to meet the new minimal threshold required.

"Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Dubuque has been resettling refugees from all over the world in eastern Iowa since 1940, primarily in Cedar Rapids and Waterloo," said Tracy Morrison, the agency's executive director, in a statement. "It's a loss for our entire community."

"Our faith guides us to believe in the dignity of all persons and the need to protect the most vulnerable, especially refugees and migrants. It is with a heavy heart that we announce the ending of this ministry," added Dubuque Archbishop Michael O. Jackels.

Catholic Charities' refugee resettlement program employed three full-time staff and two AmeriCorps members.

There also were other staff members at the agency who didn't work in the program directly, but their jobs will be impacted.

"Some employees will be laid off, others will be transitioned into other ministries," Morrison told *The Witness*, Dubuque's archdiocesan newspaper.

Catholic Charities will continue to help newcomers to the country through the agency's legal aid program for immigrants.

Morrison said the demand for legal services is so high that the charity is looking into the hiring of another attorney.

Mary Ready, refugee resettlement manager at the agency, said the "ultimate reward" for her in working with the program has been "seeing families reunited."

"We worked [with those who had] U.S. ties. The refugees who arrived here always had family," she said.

One particularly heartwarming scene Ready said she will always remember was an airport arrival where a father got to meet his son for the first time because his wife was pregnant when they were separated.

"Getting to witness those moments and to hear families say they finally feel at home and they're happy to be back with their family, that's the most memorable," she said, adding that she hopes other groups will be able to continue this service. †



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Fear becomes sin when it leads to hostility toward migrants, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Being afraid and concerned about the impact of migration is not a sin, Pope Francis said, but it is a sin to let those fears lead to a refusal to help people in need.

“The sin is to allow these fears to determine our responses, to limit our choices, to compromise respect and generosity, to feed hostility and rejection,” the pope said on Jan. 14, celebrating Mass for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

While fear is a natural human reaction, he said, “the sin is to refuse to encounter the other, the different, the neighbor, when this is in fact a privileged opportunity to encounter the Lord.”

Thousands of migrants and refugees now living in Rome, but coming from more than 60 countries, joined Pope Francis and an international group of cardinals, bishops and priests for the Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica.

Sixty of the migrants and refugees carried their homeland’s national flags into the basilica before the Mass, and hundreds wore the national dress of their countries, including many of the people who read the prayers of the faithful and brought up the gifts at the offertory during the multilingual Mass.

According to the United Nations, an estimated 258 million people are living outside the country of their birth. The number includes 26 million refugees and asylum seekers, who were forced to flee their homelands because of war or persecution.

In his homily at the Mass, Pope Francis reflected on Jesus’ response to the disciples who asked him where he lived. “Come and you will see,” Jesus tells them, inviting them into a relationship where they would welcome and get to know each other.

“His invitation ‘Come and see!’ is

addressed today to all of us, to local communities and to new arrivals,” the pope said. “It is an invitation to overcome our fears so as to encounter the other, to welcome, to know and to acknowledge him or her.”

For the migrants and refugees, he said, that includes learning about and respecting the laws and customs of their host countries. “It even includes understanding their fears and apprehensions for the future,” he added.

For people in the host countries, he said, it means welcoming newcomers, opening oneself “without prejudices to their rich diversity,” understanding their hopes, fears and vulnerabilities and recognizing their potential.

“In the true encounter with the neighbor, are we capable of recognizing Jesus Christ who is asking to be welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated?” Pope Francis asked.

“It is not easy to enter into another culture, to put oneself in the shoes of people so different from us, to understand their thoughts and their experiences,” the pope said. That is one reason why “we often refuse to encounter the other and raise barriers to defend ourselves.”

People in host countries may be afraid that newcomers “will disturb the established order [or] will ‘steal’ something they have long labored to build up,” he said. And the newcomers have their own fears “of confrontation, judgment, discrimination, failure.”

Both sets of fears, the pope said, “are legitimate, based on doubts that are fully comprehensible from a human point of view.”

Sin, he said, enters the equation only when people refuse to try to understand, to welcome and to see Jesus present in the other, especially “the poor, the rejected, the refugee, the asylum seeker.” †



Family members bring up the offertory gifts as Pope Francis celebrates Mass marking the World Day of Migrants and Refugees in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on Jan. 14. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

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Editorial



Pope Francis greets a young Rohingya refugee from Myanmar during a Dec. 1 interreligious and ecumenical meeting for peace in the garden of the archbishop's residence in Dhaka, Bangladesh. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano via Reuters)

Peace, justice, love: All gifts from God

What is peace? It's the absence of violence, certainly, but it's also much more. St. Augustine called it "the tranquility of order," which is certainly an important aspect of peace. When we're at peace, we're not filled with anxiety; our homes are not filled with loud arguments and discord; our neighborhoods are safe and well-ordered, not threatening or chaotic; and nations, races and peoples live together in harmony and mutual respect without suffering the horrors of prejudice, enmity or war.

But true peace is more than just good order or civility. The Second Vatican Council ("*Gaudium et Spes*," #78) teaches that peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity. Peace is much more than the absence of war or the coexistence of nations. Peace is a gift from God, the sum total of many gifts from God that help us live fully with hearts full of justice and love.

What is justice? Giving every human being the reverence and respect due to him or her as a child of God. Justice is structuring human affairs, and the organization of society, in accordance with God's plan. We are just when we treat others fairly, and when we work together to protect the innocent and the vulnerable from violence or evil. We are just when all people (wealthy and poor, strong and weak) live together in mutual respect and solidarity.

What is love? The sharing of self that we learn most perfectly from God, who is Love, and who shows us how to be for others in everything we say and do.

Authentic love is not self-serving or self-gratifying. It is the generous sharing of ourselves (all that we have and all that we are) in ways that connect us intimately with God and with our fellow human beings—those who are closest to us (family, friends and neighbors) and those who are far from us (strangers, social outcasts, even enemies).

True peace, the peace that lasts, happens when we work for justice. It is the product of the hard work of civilization, the rule of law and the right-ordering of social structures. Peace requires fairness, respect for human dignity and the refusal to take advantage of another's weakness. If we want

peace, we must work for justice—here at home and around the world.

Lasting peace—the kind that is more than a temporary ceasefire or a periodic break between hostile actions—is the effect of charity. There is no real peace without forgiveness or without the willingness to sacrifice our individual or collective self-interest for the sake of genuine harmony. If we want peace, we must let go of our desire for revenge, and we must be willing to let old wounds heal through the saving grace of God's love.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that "earthly peace is the image and the fruit of the peace of Christ, the messianic Prince of Peace" (#2305). Peace has been made possible for us because, by the blood of his Cross, Christ has reconciled us with God and with each other. We have been forgiven so that we may forgive others. We have been shown mercy so that we might let go of our desire for vengeance against those who do us harm to a higher form of justice that is informed by love. "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father in heaven" (Mt 5:44-45).

In his message for the 51st World Day of Peace, on Jan. 1, Pope Francis pointed to war, conflict, genocide, ethnic cleansing, poverty, lack of opportunity, and environmental degradation as reasons that families and individuals become refugees and migrants.

Peace will happen when we learn to welcome others, especially the vulnerable. When that day comes, nations will unite in a world order that respects the fundamental human rights and authentic cultural diversity of nations and peoples. Neighbors will help and respect one another. Families will live together joyfully. And each woman and man on Earth will be calm, untroubled and at peace.

When that day comes, Christ will come again, and his peace will be established throughout all of creation. In the meantime, as we begin this new year, let's continue our search for peace by recommitting ourselves to the work of justice and by loving God and our neighbor unselfishly as Christ loves us.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Greg Erlandson

Resolutions for 2018

I think there is no holiday we so look forward to and are so happy when it's over as Christmas.

Christmas, we all know, should be about celebrating God's great gift to us.

Too often, it becomes instead an endless series of to-do lists: searching for the perfect gift, planning perfect meals, scheduling all sorts of traditions that our families associate with the holiday.

In truth, the many to-do lists leading up to Christmas both provide us with memories and seem tailor-made to distract us from "the reason for the season."

Now as we contemplate when to take down the tree and who will take down the lights, it is time to focus on the year ahead, which of course means another to-do list: creating New Year's resolutions.

If you are casting about for resolutions, or afraid you have too many of them, I have four suggestions that may save you either anxiety, guilt or both.

Resolution No. 1: Make someone think all that Christmas shopping was worth it by writing a thank-you note. It is a lost art, I know, but a thank-you note can be a little gift in itself. In a world that often seems supremely ungrateful for all its blessings, thank-you notes are a tangible expression of gratitude.

A handwritten note sent via snail mail is the Platonic ideal of thank-yous, but an email thank-you is good too, even if adorned with heart and smiley face emojis. It really is the thought that counts.

Resolution No. 2: Work out a strategy for working out. The vast majority of us usually start the year thinking we need to exercise, diet or both. We set an ambitious goal for ourselves, we fall off the treadmill early, so to speak, and then

Be Our Guest/Richard Doeflinger

Loving our children well

On the last day of 2017, the feast of the Holy Family, the Mass readings and a fine homily by a priest in my parish got me thinking about parents, children and bioethics.

The readings recount God's shocking request that Abraham sacrifice his son Isaac, and they quote an inspiring yet disturbing prophecy greeting the infant Jesus when his parents present him at the

Temple in Jerusalem.

Mary and Joseph are "amazed" (Lk 2:33) at this prophecy. The holy man Simeon confirms that Jesus will be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory for your people Israel" (Lk 2:32). But he adds to Mary that he will be "a sign that will be contradicted—and you yourself a sword will pierce" (Lk 2:34-35).

The angel Gabriel left out this last part when he asked Mary to bear Jesus, and she said, "May it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38). But she carries on in humble faith, reflecting on these things as she and Joseph raise Jesus as well as they can.

Abraham also receives distressing news. Having miraculously received a son in his old age, by whom God says his descendants will number as the stars in the sky, Abraham is told to offer up that son as a sacrifice. His hopes for the future seemingly destroyed, he still trusts, thinking that "God was able to raise even from the dead" (Heb 11:19). And God rewards his faith: Having surrendered

we throw in the towel and go off in search of a sugar high to cut our disappointment. It's a vicious cycle.

When I had to put myself on an exercise regime, my guide to the workout stations was a bored young woman who clearly had lost her faith in humanity. When I asked her how long people usually lasted before giving up on their plans, she answered with a cynical laugh: "By the middle of February."

So my resolution was to make it to March 1. Whatever you commit to, give yourself a two-month goal. You might find that not only have you created a habit, but you've outlasted those January crowds at your local gym.

Resolution No. 3: The same principle may apply to being a better Catholic. Many of us want to add something to our spiritual life: more Masses, more rosaries, more Scripture.

Again, my suggestion is pick one, and set yourself a goal: Go to a daily Mass once a week until Lent. Say one decade of the rosary every night until Lent. Just pick one thing, and see if you can get to Ash Wednesday (which is on Feb. 14 this year). Who knows, in February you might just want to extend that resolution to Easter.

Resolution No. 4: Finally, let us all resolve to add a little civility to our texts, e-mails and social media. Don't say anything to anybody that you wouldn't say to their face. Avoid anonymous messaging. Say a prayer for someone you want to snark bomb. Or wait 24 hours before you hit send.

Social media is becoming a nasty, bitter space. We can't clean it all up, but we can make sure we don't add to it.

And whatever your resolutions for 2018, may it be a year of blessings for you and your family.

(Greg Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholicnews.com.) †



Christ the Cornerstone

Human life should be respected, protected in all circumstances

“Everyone is responsible for his life before God who has given it to him. It is God who remains the sovereign Master of life. We are obliged to accept life gratefully and preserve it for [God’s] honor and the salvation of our souls. We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us. It is not ours to dispose of” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2280).

Next Monday, Jan. 22, is a Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. It is a serious day of remembrance for the millions of victims of our nation’s immoral and unjust abortion laws and practices.

Our Church vigorously opposes abortion because we believe that from the first moment of conception each human being must be recognized as having the inviolable right to life. No human law or social policy can override this most fundamental, God-given civil right.

Our Church’s absolute commitment to the dignity of human life extends to other social issues as well. All forms of homicide, including infanticide (the killing of children) and genocide (the elimination of entire communities based on their religious or ethnic identities) must be strenuously opposed.

The same is true of capital punishment, which Pope Francis has declared to be “inadmissible no matter how serious the crime committed because it attacks the inviolability and dignity of the person.”

This same principle applies to all forms of euthanasia (see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2276). Catholic social teaching emphasizes that “those whose lives are diminished or weakened” due to illness, disability or extreme old age “deserve special respect.” They should be helped to lead lives that are as full and dignified as possible in their diminished circumstances. Whatever its motives and means, direct euthanasia (“mercy killing”) consists in putting an end to a human life. Our Church teaches that this is “always unacceptable.”

The same is true of suicide, which, tragically, is increasing in our society. According to the catechism, “Suicide contradicts the natural inclination of the human person to preserve and perpetuate his life. It is 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” (#2281).

Especially in the United States today, when many states have adopted laws that permit—even encourage—suicide assisted by physicians and loved ones, the Church is required to speak out and to declare that “suicide is contrary to love for the living God.”

In all these cases, the Church and all of us individual Christians have a moral responsibility to show compassion, understanding and loving support for our sisters and brothers who are under so much emotional pain and stress that they seriously consider taking a human life—their own, that of an unborn child or a loved one who is in terrible pain.

We cannot imagine how much intense pressure is placed on those who contemplate abortion, euthanasia or suicide. What’s needed above all is the unconditional love and mercy that our Lord Jesus Christ offers to all who are burdened in any way. His love is needed, often desperately, to break through the barriers of guilt and shame that surround our brothers and sisters who have given up hope, and are seeking a way out of overwhelming crises in their lives.

Our Church’s absolute commitment to the dignity of

life is not meant to “lord it over” women and men who are suffering. Instead, it serves as a call to the rest of us—spouses, family members and friends, neighbors and fellow parishioners, and all people of good will—to reach out to those who are suffering, and offer both words of encouragement and a helping hand wherever possible.

In order to be signs of the unconditional love and mercy of God, we uphold the conviction that “human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator who is its sole end.”

Because we know how much God loves each and every one of us, we affirm that “God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstances claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2258).

We are stewards, not owners, of God’s gift of life. Let’s do everything in our power to nurture, protect and defend this gift—from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death! †



Cristo, la piedra angular

En todas las circunstancias se debe respetar y proteger la vida humana

“Cada cual es responsable de su vida delante de Dios que se la ha dado. Él sigue siendo su soberano Dueño. Nosotros estamos obligados a recibirla con gratitud y a conservarla para su honor y para la salvación de nuestras almas. Somos administradores y no propietarios de la vida que Dios nos ha confiado. No disponemos de ella” (Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica, #2280).

El próximo lunes 22 de enero es la Jornada de Oración para la Protección Legal de los Bebés No Nacidos. Se trata de un día importante en el que recordamos a los millones de víctimas de las leyes y prácticas inmorales e injustas con respecto al aborto en nuestro país.

Nuestra Iglesia se opone vehementemente al aborto porque creemos que desde el primer momento de la concepción se debe reconocer el derecho inviolable a la vida que poseemos todos los seres humanos. Ninguna legislación ni política social puede sustituir este derecho civil fundamental otorgado por Dios.

El compromiso absoluto de nuestra Iglesia con respecto a la dignidad humana se extiende también a otras cuestiones sociales. Todas las formas de homicidio, inclusive el infanticidio (matar a niños) y el genocidio

(exterminar comunidades enteras basándose en su identidad religiosa o étnica) se deben rechazar enérgicamente.

Lo mismo ocurre con la pena capital, que el papa Francisco ha declarado “inadmisible sin importar cuán graves hayan sido los crímenes cometidos porque atenta contra la inviolabilidad y la dignidad de la persona.”

El mismo principio se aplica a todas las formas de eutanasia (refiérase al *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*, #2276). Las enseñanzas sociales del catolicismo insisten en que “las personas enfermas o disminuidas” a causa de una enfermedad, discapacidad o por ancianidad “deben ser atendidas.” Deben recibir ayuda para que puedan llevar vidas plenas y con la máxima dignidad posible dadas sus circunstancias. Independientemente de los motivos y los medios, la eutanasia directa (“matar por compasión”) consiste en poner fin a una vida humana. Nuestra Iglesia nos enseña que esto “siempre es inaceptable.”

Y lo mismo sucede con el suicidio que, trágicamente, está en auge en nuestra sociedad. De acuerdo con el *Catecismo*: “El suicidio contradice la inclinación natural del ser humano a conservar y perpetuar su vida. Es gravemente contrario al justo amor de sí mismo. Ofende también al amor del prójimo porque rompe injustamente los

lazos de solidaridad con las sociedades familiar, nacional y humana con las cuales estamos obligados” (#2281).

Especialmente en la realidad actual de Estados Unidos donde muchos estados han adoptado legislaciones que permiten, e incluso promueven, el suicidio asistido por médicos y seres queridos, la Iglesia tiene la obligación de manifestarse y declarar que “el suicidio es contrario al amor que profesamos al Dios vivo.”

En todos estos casos, la Iglesia y todos nosotros individualmente como cristianos, tenemos la responsabilidad moral de mostrar compasión, comprensión y un apoyo amoroso a nuestros hermanos que sufren tanto dolor emocional y presión que son capaces de considerar seriamente la posibilidad de tomar una vida humana, ya sea la suya propia, la de un niño que no ha nacido o la de un ser querido que agoniza.

No podemos imaginarnos la presión tan intensa a la que están sometidos quienes contemplan el aborto, la eutanasia o el suicidio. Por encima de todo, lo que necesitamos es el amor incondicional y la misericordia que nuestro Señor Jesucristo ofrece a todos aquellos que sufren de cualquier forma. Se necesita su amor, a menudo desesperadamente, para romper las barreras de la culpabilidad y la vergüenza que rodean a nuestros hermanos que han perdido la esperanza

y que buscan una salida a las crisis que agobian sus vidas.

El compromiso absoluto de nuestra Iglesia con la dignidad de la vida no se traduce en un trato prepotente contra los hombres y mujeres que sufren. Al contrario, es un llamado para el resto de nosotros—cónyuges, familiares y amigos, vecinos y parroquianos, todas las personas de buena voluntad—para que nos acerquemos a quienes sufren y les ofrezcamos palabras de aliento y una mano amiga siempre que sea posible.

Para poder ser símbolos del amor incondicional y la misericordia de Dios, tenemos la convicción de que “la vida humana ha de ser tenida como sagrada, porque desde su inicio es fruto de la acción creadora de Dios y permanece siempre en una especial relación con el Creador, su único fin.”

Puesto que sabemos cuánto nos ama Dios, afirmamos que: “Sólo Dios es Señor de la vida desde su comienzo hasta su término; nadie, en ninguna circunstancia, puede atribuirse el derecho de matar de modo directo a un ser humano inocente” (*Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*, #2258).

Somos administradores, no dueños del don de la vida que nos ha otorgado Dios. Hagamos todo lo que esté a nuestro alcance para promover, proteger y defender ese don, desde el momento de la concepción hasta la muerte natural. †

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 22

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Noon Mass marking the 45th anniversary of Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision**, concelebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of Indianapolis and Bishop Timothy L. Doherty of Lafayette, followed at 1:30 p.m. by inaugural March for Life to Indiana Statehouse. Pro-life rally at 2:30 p.m. on the south steps of the Statehouse building. Rose Memorial Service at 4 p.m. at Statehouse remembering lives lost to abortion featuring speaker Abby Johnson, followed by a youth rally and Holy Hour featuring Johnson from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Church. Youth rally includes eucharistic exposition and Benediction, music, Scripture and quiet time. Information: rtindy.org/upcoming-events/indiana-march-for-life/.

Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, 19 N. Alabama St., Brazil. **Solemn Observance of Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision**, meet in church parking lot at 11:55 a.m., walk to Clay County Courthouse, 609 E. National Ave. and 3rd Street, noon-1 p.m., signs provided. Information: Tom

McBroom, 812-841-0060.

January 26

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Girls Night Out: Women Helping Women**, supporting Beacon of Hope and their work against domestic violence, manicures, massages, dessert bar, crafting, door prizes, 7-9:30 p.m., \$25. Information and registration: 317-788-7581, www.benedictinn.org.

January 25

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.

January 28

St. Matthew the Evangelist School, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Open House**, for prospective families, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Information: 317-251-3997, rsobolewski@saintmatt.org.

St. Lawrence Parish, Learning Center, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **"Wisdom: God's Vision for Life" Bible Study**, explore Proverbs, Wisdom, Sirach, Ecclesiastes, offered

8 weeks on Mon., 7 p.m. or Wed., 12:45 p.m., \$25. Information and registration, contact Sandra Hartlieb, 317-372-5925 or shartlieb@saintlawrence.net.

January 29

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Serra Club Dinner Meeting**, Benedictine Father Justin Duvall presenting on the Benedictine way of life, 5:40 p.m. rosary followed by dinner, \$15. Information: 317-748-1478 or smclaughlin@holyspirit.cc.

January 31

St. Nicholas School, 6459 E. St. Nicholas Dr., Sunman. **Open House**, for prospective parents and students, 6-7 p.m. Information: 812-623-2348, school.stnicholas-sunman.org.

February 2

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

St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Charismatic Renewal**

Praise and Mass, praise and worship 7 p.m., Mass 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-546-7328, mkeyes@indy.rr.com.

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., Father Coady Owens presiding, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, www.womenscarecenter.org.

February 3

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville. **First Saturday Marian Devotional Prayer Group**, Mass, prayers, rosary, confession, meditation, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462.

February 6

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

February 7

Knights of Columbus Council 3433, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

February 10

St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **12th Annual Concert Series: Young Musicians Concert**, 7 p.m., freewill offering. Complete list of all concerts: www.saintbartholomew.org, under "Music Ministry," or bminut@stbparish.net.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Seton Elementary Campus, 801 W. Main St., Richmond. **Chocolate Fest**, hors d'oeuvres, chocolate, silent auction, 5-8 p.m., \$15 pre-sale tickets only through Feb. 9. Information and tickets: Lisa Rourke, 765-969-4919.

February 11

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass in French**, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-627-7729 or acfadi2014@gmail.com.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Class of '63 monthly gathering**, 6 p.m. Mass, optional dinner afterward. Information: 317-408-6396.

February 13

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Monthly Taizé Prayer Service**, theme "Praying for Peace in the World and in Our Hearts," 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild**, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-223-3687, vlgmimi@aol.com.

February 15

St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001

Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

February 17-19

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Used Book Sale sponsored by Linden Leaf Gifts**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., books not pre-priced but donations accepted. Information: 812-535-2932 or lindenleafgifts@spsmw.org.

February 21

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

February 24

East Central High School, Performing Arts Center, 1 Trojan Pl., St. Leon. **E6 Men's Conference: Armor Up**, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, Father Larry Richards, Father Jonathan Meyer and Dr. Ray Guarendi presenting, Mass, rosary, confession, vendors, \$45 for adults, \$15 high school and college, includes lunch and materials, free parking. Information and registration: www.ecatholicmensconference.com

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Bread Baking: Sourdough**, bread-making basics, creating and maintaining starters and incorporating sourdough into baked goods, Candace Minster presenting, 1-5 p.m., \$45. Registration deadline Feb. 21. Information: 812-535-2931, wvc@spsmw.org, or www.wvc@spsmw.org.

Archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry to host young adult event on Feb. 5

The Black Catholic Ministry of the archdiocesan Office of Intercultural Ministry is sponsoring a young adult gathering at the Intercultural Pastoral Institute at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, 4052 E. 38th St., in Indianapolis, from 6:30-8 p.m. on Feb. 5. The institute is located in the lower level classrooms of the school building. The purpose of the gathering is

to hear the voices of Black Catholic adults between the ages of 18 and 35. However, all are welcome.

Childcare is available with advanced reservations.

The event is free. Registration is encouraged, but not required.

For information and reservations, contact Pearlette Springer at 317-236-1474 or pspringer@archindy.org. †

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center to offer retreat on Ignatian spirituality

Jesuit Father William Blazek will be the presenter for a weekend retreat called "Following Our Holy Desires" at the Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, in Bloomington, beginning with Mass at 7 p.m. on Feb. 16 and ending after 10 a.m. Mass on Feb. 18.

One of the central tenets of Ignatian spirituality is that God speaks to us in the deepest desires of our heart. Recognizing and following these holy desires can

help us to configure our will to that of the Father, and help us to find a place of genuine happiness and spiritual joy.

The cost ranges from \$220 for a single room to \$100 per person for a room of four. The commuter rate is \$50. All Saturday meals and Sunday breakfast are included.

For more information and registration, visit www.motheroftheredeemer.com or call 812-825-4642, ext. 1. †

Mission 27 Resale offers weekly senior discount, funds vital projects

Mission 27 Resale, 132 Leota St., in Indianapolis, is a second-hand resale shop operated by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Indianapolis, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the poor and disadvantaged. The shop's name honors the mission of St. Vincent de Paul, whose feast day is Sept. 27. Items for sale include clothing, household items, furniture, books, toys and more. Every Tuesday, senior citizens receive 30 percent off clothing.

Money raised by Mission 27 Resale funds two vital programs: the society's food pantries and its Changing Lives Forever program, which teaches people how to lift themselves out of poverty.

For more information on the shop, call 317-687-8260 or go to www.mission27resale.com.

To learn more on how to volunteer for, donate to or receive help from the Indianapolis Society of St. Vincent de Paul, go to www.svdipindy.org or call 317-924-5769. †

Plan a private retreat for 2018 at one of three retreat centers in the archdiocese

A private retreat allows one to re-connect with God for a day or several days with a personally chosen focus, and without the distractions of daily life. Three retreat centers in central and southern Indiana offer such opportunities.

—**Benedict Inn & Retreat Center**, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove, operated by the Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, will offer a Personal Day of Retreat from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. four times during the first half of 2018—on Feb. 13, April 11, May 1 and June 13.

The cost is \$35, which includes a room for the day and lunch. Spiritual direction is available for an additional \$30. For more information or to register, call 317-788-7581 or go to www.benedictinn.org.

—**Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality**, 101 St. Anthony Dr., in Mt. St. Francis, welcomes private retreatants at any time. Individuals have the option of staying in a private suite at the main retreat center, a room in a retreat house, or in a primitive cabin located on a lake in a 400-acre wooded sanctuary. Costs vary depending on housing and length of stay.

For more information, log on to www.mountsaintfrancis.org or call 812-923-8817.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, offers various silent, self-guided retreats throughout the year.

Silent day retreats are offered on Jan. 26, Feb. 14, April 18, May 4, June 25, July 26, Aug. 14, Sept. 25, Oct. 19 and Nov. 26; during Holy Week on March 26, 27, 28 and 29; and during Advent on Dec. 18, 19, 20 and 21. The cost is \$35, which includes a continental breakfast, lunch and the use of a room. An overnight stay is available for an additional \$28, with dinner available for \$9. Participants interested in receiving spiritual direction during their day retreat may contact Mary Schaffner at mschaffner@archindy.org or 317-545-7881.

Fatima Retreat House will also offer silent guided or self-directed retreats for anywhere from three to eight days from July 13-20. The cost ranges from \$209-\$520 depending on number of days, and includes room, meals and sessions with a spiritual director.

For more information on or to register for Fatima's single-day or multiple-day silent retreats, contact Cheryl McSweeney at 317-545-7881 or mcsweeney@archindy.org, or log on to www.archindy.org/fatima. †



The Face of Mercy

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

By Daniel Conway

Pope Francis says death penalty is contrary to Gospel

It's no surprise that Pope Francis is against the death penalty. Recent popes have spoken out against this practice. Pope St. John Paul II clarified the Church's teaching in his pro-life encyclical, "*Evangelium Vitae*" ("The Gospel of Life"), and amended the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to say that the death penalty is only permissible under very strict, and rare, circumstances.

But Pope Francis has made Church teaching on the death penalty more direct and unambiguous. The practice "heavily wounds human dignity," the pope says. It is "an inhuman measure" that is "contrary to the Gospel" because the death penalty is an intentional decision to end a human life which, the pope says, "is always sacred in the eye of the Creator." In the end, "only God can be the true judge and guarantor" of any human life. Not even the most vicious and inexcusable crimes can justify the taking of a human life. Capital punishment removes the possibility that the guilty party will recognize his or her guilt, request forgiveness and begin a new life.

The Gospel is filled with examples of God's mercy toward sinners, including

those who have committed crimes which according to Mosaic law or Roman law were punishable by death. Forgiveness is absolute, not conditioned on the gravity of the offense. No matter what we have done, or how often we have done it, redemption is always available.

Christ's sacrifice on the cross has already paid the price for our transgressions—no matter how serious. It is not up to human agents to decide when someone else's life should be forfeited. That choice is to be made by God alone. He sees what we cannot see. He knows things we will never know or understand.

Pope Francis acknowledges that this is a development, a deeper understanding, of the Church's teaching. In the past, capital punishment was allowed because it was seen in the same light as an individual's right to self-defense. Faced with no other option, an individual can justifiably take the life of someone who poses an immediate threat to one's own life or the life of another. Killing in self-defense is permissible in extreme, life-threatening circumstances precisely because it respects human dignity and protects the vulnerable

from experiencing grave harm.

The argument for capital punishment is much weaker. Rarely does a society have to resort to the death penalty in order to protect its citizens from immediate danger. Once someone who has committed grave crimes and is a threat to the community is in custody, there are always options for incarceration and, perhaps, rehabilitation. Life in prison is admittedly an expensive burden for society, but human life is sacred and inviolable. It is impossible to put a price on a human being's life—even when a person has committed the most reprehensible crimes.

Pope Francis believes that this development of Church teaching does not contradict or change what Christians have always believed. The Christian faith has always insisted on the dignity of human life from the moment of conception to natural death. As followers of Jesus Christ, we have an obligation to defend the sacredness of human life whenever and wherever it is threatened.

"Therefore," Pope Francis says, "it is necessary to reiterate that, no matter how serious the crime committed, the death

penalty is inadmissible, because it attacks the inviolability and dignity of the person."

Currently, the catechism says that the death penalty is permissible only if: 1) the identity and guilt of the condemned is certain; and 2) capital punishment is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against an unjust aggressor.

Opponents of the death penalty point out that history shows how difficult it is to be certain about the identity or guilt of someone who has been condemned to death. They also insist that capital punishment is rarely, if ever, "the only possible way" to protect society from dangerous criminals.

Pope Francis' vision of the boundless mercy of God strongly influences his position on the death penalty. God's justice is not "legalistic" or rigid. It is colored by the immensity of God's love for every human being regardless of his or her worth in the eyes of society. From this perspective, every life is worth saving, regardless of the cost.

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

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

El papa Francisco afirma que la pena de muerte es contraria al Evangelio

A nadie debería sorprender que el papa Francisco esté en contra de la pena de muerte. Todos los papas de años recientes se han pronunciado en contra de esta práctica. En su encíclica en favor de la vida, titulada "*Evangelium Vitae*" ("El Evangelio de la vida"), el papa san Juan Pablo II aclaró las enseñanzas de la Iglesia y enmendó el *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica* para que reflejara que la pena de muerte solo está permitida en circunstancias muy estrictas.

Pero el papa Francisco ha despejado toda ambigüedad y ha hablado en forma más directa acerca de las enseñanzas de la Iglesia con respecto a la pena de muerte. Esta práctica, según lo expresó el Santo Padre, "perjudica fuertemente la dignidad humana." Constituye una "medida inhumana" y es "contraria al Evangelio" puesto que la pena de muerte es la decisión intencional de poner fin a una vida humana que, según lo afirma el papa: "siempre es sagrada a los ojos del Creador." Al final, "Dios es el único juez y garante" de cualquier vida humana. Ni siquiera los crímenes más violentos e imperdonables justifican suprimir una vida humana. La pena capital elimina la posibilidad de que el culpable reconozca su culpa, pida perdón y comience una nueva vida.

El Evangelio está repleto de ejemplos

de la misericordia de Dios hacia los pecadores, inclusive aquellos que han cometido crímenes que, de acuerdo con la ley romana, se castigaban con la muerte. El perdón es absoluto, no está condicionado a la gravedad de la ofensa. Independientemente de lo que hayamos hecho o con qué frecuencia, la redención siempre es una opción.

El sacrificio de Cristo en la cruz pagó por adelantado el precio de nuestras transgresiones, sin importar cuán graves hayan sido. Por tanto, no les corresponde a los agentes humanos decidir si se debe perdonar la vida de una persona. Esa decisión le pertenece exclusivamente a Dios pues Él ve lo que nosotros no podemos ver y sabe cosas que nosotros jamás sabremos ni entenderemos.

El papa Francisco reconoce que esto constituye un acontecimiento que amplía la noción de las enseñanzas de la Iglesia. Antiguamente se permitía la pena capital porque se la consideraba desde la misma perspectiva de la defensa propia. En ausencia de otra opción, una persona puede justificadamente tomar la vida de aquel que represente una amenaza inminente para la propia vida o para la de otra persona. Matar en defensa propia es un acto permitido en circunstancias extremas en la que existe un peligro para la vida, precisamente porque

este acto respeta la dignidad humana y protege al vulnerable contra un grave daño.

Sin embargo, la defensa de la pena capital es mucho menos sólida. Muy raramente una sociedad tendría que recurrir a la pena de muerte para proteger a sus ciudadanos contra un peligro inminente. Cuando una persona que ha cometido crímenes graves y que constituye una amenaza para la comunidad se encuentra detenido, siempre existen opciones en cuanto a prisión y, tal vez, rehabilitación. Ciertamente la prisión de por vida representa una carga costosa para la sociedad, pero la vida humana es sagrada e inviolable. Es imposible ponerle precio a un ser humano, aunque esa persona haya cometido los crímenes más abominables.

El papa Francisco considera que esta novedad en las enseñanzas de la Iglesia no contradice ni cambia las convicciones que han tenido siempre los cristianos. La fe cristiana siempre ha insistido en cuanto a la dignidad de la vida humana desde el momento de la concepción hasta la muerte natural. Como seguidores de Jesucristo, tenemos la obligación de defender el carácter sagrado de la vida humana siempre y dondequiera que esta se vea amenazada.

"Por lo tanto,—afirma el papa— es necesario reiterar que, por muy grave que

sea el delito cometido, la pena de muerte es inadmisibles porque atenta contra la inviolabilidad y la dignidad de la persona."

En la actualidad, el catecismo dice que la pena de muerte solo es admisible si: 1) [se ha realizado] la plena comprobación de la identidad y de la responsabilidad del culpable; y 2) el recurso a la pena de muerte fuera el único camino posible para defender eficazmente del agresor injusto las vidas humanas

Los detractores de la pena de muerte señalan que la historia demuestra lo difícil que es comprobar la identidad o la culpabilidad del que ha sido sentenciado a morir. También insisten en que la pena capital rara vez, por no decir nunca, "es la única opción" para proteger a la sociedad de los criminales peligrosos.

La visión de la infinita misericordia de Dios que tiene el papa Francisco influye marcadamente en su postura con respecto a la pena de muerte. La justicia de Dios no es "leguleya" o rígida. Está teñida por la inmensidad del amor de Dios por cada ser humano, independientemente de su valía a los ojos de la sociedad. Desde esta perspectiva, toda vida humana merece ser salvada, sin importar el costo.

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

Supreme Court sends Georgia inmate's death-row case back to lower courts

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court sent a death-row case back to the lower courts on Jan. 8 in a summary ruling.

In a 6-3 vote, the high court ordered the federal appeals court based in Atlanta to examine claims that a juror in the case of death-row inmate Keith Tharpe voted for the death sentence because Tharpe is black.

The U.S. Supreme Court had already halted Tharpe's scheduled execution

the night it was initially scheduled in September. Now the court is giving Tharpe—convicted of killing Jacquelin Freeman, his sister-in-law, 27 years ago—another chance to have a court hear his claims of racial bias on his sentencing.

Justice Clarence Thomas, who wrote the dissent and was joined by Justices Samuel Alito and Neil Gorsuch, said the court's unsigned opinion demonstrated "ceremonial hand-wringing," and he

predicted Tharpe would lose his appeal.

The appeal stems from interviews Tharpe's legal team conducted in 1998 with Barney Gattie, a white juror. Gattie used racial slurs and said his study of the Bible led him to question "if black people even have souls," according to court filings. Gattie signed an affidavit, although he later testified that he voted to sentence Tharpe to death because of the evidence against him.

The high court's majority opinion said

Gattie, who has since died, never retracted his "remarkable affidavit," which provides evidence that "Tharpe's race affected Gattie's vote for a death verdict."

Georgia courts would not consider any evidence of potential racial bias, and a U.S. District Court also refused to consider that evidence. Tharpe's attorneys looked into having the District Court's ruling reopened and reconsidered, but the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit rejected it. †

DREAMER

continued from page 1

“It was scary because my mom was working the second or third shift, and that’s when people would go missing,” she added.

A robbery at her grandparents’ butcher shop, where she and her younger sister stayed, was the final incident. Her godparents, already residing in Indianapolis, insisted that Martinez come to live with them. Leaving her mother and sister behind, Martinez grew up in relative security until the crushing day when her godmother explained that she was undocumented.

“I started paying attention to the news, how there were ladies getting deported, how you could just lose everything in one go,” she said. “So I was kind of worried, but at the same time I didn’t want to give up so I just kept going.”

Martinez did not feel that her situation fit the narrow criteria to apply for permanent residence or citizenship and lived in constant fear of deportation, unable to legally drive or work.

A glimmer of hope appeared in 2012 when President Barack Obama enacted DACA. Although not a path to citizenship, the program gave about 800,000 young people like Martinez renewable two-year permits to legally work, acquire driver’s licenses and attend college.

“I felt safer because I could finally have a job and work and make something out of my life here,” she recalled.

Martinez enrolled in a local community college and worked low-wage jobs to pay for tuition and books. She acquired a business certification, and then paused her college education to give birth to her first daughter, Luna. Five months ago, she and her husband welcomed a second child,



Brenda Martinez, a Dreamer currently protected by DACA, listens to Providence Sister Tracey Moran on Jan. 4. Sister Tracey is an immigration activist with the grassroots network group, Faith in Indiana. (CNS photo/Katie Rutter)

Athenea. Martinez decided to stay home to care for the girls.

“[My husband] works from 7 a.m. till 5:30 p.m., and from there he starts working at 6 or 7 p.m. at the other job and he doesn’t come home till 1, 2, sometimes 3 a.m.,” she explained.

“Hopefully, once I start working again, he can leave one of the jobs. But that’s how we were taught, so that’s how we’re

living right now,” Martinez said.

Yet even that plan might be dashed. When President Trump announced the end of DACA in September, it meant Martinez’s permit to live and work in the U.S. could not be renewed. Her permit runs out in March 2019. Now, the negotiations in Washington and

the federal judge’s injunction add to the uncertainty of her future.

“I don’t know what’s going to happen,” Martinez says. “I don’t know if they’re going to tell me to get my stuff and I have a certain amount of time to get out, I don’t know if they’ll offer me another way to have another job permit,” she said.

“I would be really devastated if I would have to leave, and if they told me that I can’t take my children with me because they are citizens and I’m not. That is my main worry: that I won’t be able to take my children with me,” she added.

Rather than remain frozen by fear, Martinez connected with the local grassroots advocacy network, Faith in Indiana, formerly Indianapolis Congregation Action Network (IndyCAN). The organization suggested that she share her story with thousands of young people at the National Catholic Youth Conference last November in Indianapolis, hoping to inspire others to intercede for her and her DACA-protected peers who are collectively known as “Dreamers.”

“It’s hard to think about losing the Dreamers in our community,” said Providence Sister Tracey Horan, a community organizer with Faith in Indiana.

“To me, it feels like losing a generation of young adults who have fire and passion to create something new. We can’t even calculate the cost of that,” said Sister Tracey, a member of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

Martinez hopes the politicians in Washington will reach an agreement that allows her to continue to dream.

“I just would like them to realize that it’s a lot of lives they have in their hands right now that are kind of hanging by a thread,” Martinez said.

“We’re not here to do any harm. We help the economy because we work and pay our taxes. We just want to make our dreams come true, and have something that we can give to our family as well.”

(Katie Rutter is a freelance writer and member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington. To watch a related video, go to <https://youtu.be/OIY6fM1SbKg>.) †

‘It’s hard to think about losing the “Dreamers” in our community. To me, it feels like losing a generation of young adults who have fire and passion to create something new. We can’t even calculate the cost of that.’

—Providence Sister Tracey Horan, a community organizer with Faith in Indiana



Director is hopeful, realistic about immigration reform efforts

By John Shaughnessy

Tim Winn has watched closely as politicians in Washington have begun the new year seeking to find a solution to immigration reform in the United States.

“It’s unfortunate that there are some stipulations that both sides are trying to include in it because ultimately that hurts the thousands of people who would benefit from some sort of policy change,” says Winn, the director of immigration legal services of Catholic Charities Indianapolis. “But I’m glad that there is some momentum.

“It does feel like with the new year there was a new shift in importance for some sort of immigration reform. So I’m happy about the momentum being picked up.”

Winn has also kept that balance of hope and reality as he has followed the news surrounding a federal judge’s decision on Jan. 9 to temporarily block President Donald J. Trump’s administration from phasing out protections for undocumented “Dreamers”—the name given to the nearly 800,000 people in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, the program that covers children who were brought to the U.S. illegally.

‘I would like to see a major overhaul of immigration law that puts people first, that recognizes the efforts and benefits of immigrants in this country, and recognizes the history of immigrants in this country.’



—Tim Winn, the director of immigration legal services of Catholic Charities Indianapolis

“It’s nice to think that people whose DACA has expired can possibly renew it while they’re sorting this all out. So maybe they can continue to keep their status,” Winn says.

“But there is some concern it will affect [the politicians in Washington] from wanting to do any major overhaul or make any actual policy change—that it will just kind of delay everything. So there’s that concern. But obviously for the clients who are really just caring about the day to day—going to school and working—I think it could be good.”

Winn’s ultimate hope for immigration reform is a policy that will lead to a win-win for immigrants and the country.

“I would like to see a major overhaul of immigration law that puts people first, that recognizes the efforts and benefits of immigrants in this country, and recognizes the history of immigrants in this country,” he says.

One of his major concerns is that immigration reform just doesn’t focus “on those immigrants who are going to bring economic change.”

“From what we’ve seen, there’s an effort towards allowing the high-skilled immigrants in, which is great,” he says. “But we also have to recognize that there are a

lot of other folks who can bring a lot of benefit to the country, but who might not necessarily have those high skills. So I think we need an overhaul to immigration reform that is humanitarian in nature, that creates new lines for getting some pathway [to citizenship], and that those lines aren’t 20 years long.”

That humanitarian approach has been the hallmark of the archdiocese’s Refugee and Immigrant Services program that has helped 20,000 people during the past 40 years.

In 2016, Catholic Charities Indianapolis helped about 600 refugees and migrants by offering food, clothing, housing and job readiness classes. The archdiocese’s Refugee and Immigrant Services program also matches migrants and refugees with volunteer mentors.

The assistance continues to extend to the “Dreamers” and their families.

In his work, Winn has seen where the power of a dream can lead.

“I’ve had a number of clients who I have seen since the beginning of DACA, which was in 2012. So for six years, we’ve been doing the renewals. And I’ve had multiple clients come back to me asking for a letter of recommendation because they’re buying houses.

“I get the benefit of looking into their case and their story, and there are a few people who you really just see making huge strides—going back to school, having great jobs, making good money and then taking off with buying houses and stuff like that.”

(For more information about immigration efforts in Indiana, visit www.archindy.org/immigration.) †

POPE

continued from page 1

“Think with your head; don’t let yourself be led by all the lefties who are the ones that started all of this,” the pope said. “Yes, Osorno is suffering, but for being foolish because it doesn’t open its heart to what God says and allows itself to be led by all this silliness that all those people say.”

Survivors of abuse and their supporters planned a conference and protests around the pope’s arrival.

But Pope Francis made his way to La Moneda, the presidential palace, and was welcomed by Chilean President Michelle Bachelet. Thousands were gathered in the square outside the palace, chanting “*Francisco, amigo, Chile esta contigo*” (“Francis, friend, Chile is with you”).

Despite the jovial atmosphere outside La Moneda, there were serious signs of protest in Santiago.

Chilean media reported vandalism at Divine Providence Parish, not far from O’Higgins Park, where the pope was to celebrate Mass later in the morning. Vandals spray painted the words “*complice*” (“accomplice”) and “*papa arde*” (“burn, pope”) on the facade of the church below a banner welcoming Pope Francis.

Three days earlier, several Chilean churches were firebombed, and police found other, unexploded devices at two other churches in Santiago. Some of the pamphlets included the phrase, “The next bombs will be in your cassock,” and spoke of the cause of the Mapuche indigenous group.

“How are you? Were you able to rest?” Bachelet asked the pope when



Pope Francis walks with Chilean President Michelle Bachelet after arriving for a meeting with government authorities, members of civil society and the diplomatic corps on Jan. 16 at La Moneda presidential palace in Santiago. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

he arrived at the palace. “Perfectly,” he responded. The two leaders stood as the national anthems of Chile and Vatican City State were played before entering the courtyard of the palace, where about 700 members of the country’s government authorities and of the diplomatic corps welcomed the pope with a standing ovation.

In his speech to the country’s political

leaders, Pope Francis emphasized the need for officials to listen to the people and to value their experiences, cultures, sufferings and hopes.

Included in the pope’s list were “children who look out on the world with eyes full of amazement and innocence, and expect from us concrete answers for a dignified future.”

At that point, he told the officials, “I feel bound to express my pain and shame at the irreparable damage caused to children by some ministers of the Church.”

The pope’s acknowledgment of the crimes of sexual abuse committed by members of the clergy was met with a loud applause from the government authorities present.

Looking at the country’s social and political life, Pope Francis congratulated the nation for its steady growth in democracy since 1990 when the rule of Gen. Augusto Pinochet ended.

The recent presidential elections in November, he said, “were a demonstration of the solidity and civic maturity that you have achieved.”

“That was a particularly important moment, for it shaped your destiny as a people founded on freedom and law,

one that has faced moments of turmoil, at times painful, yet succeeded in surmounting them. In this way, you have been able to consolidate and confirm the dream of your founding fathers,” the pope said.

Chilean President Michelle Bachelet is scheduled to hand the office over to President-elect Sebastian Pinera in March.

Chile’s future, Pope Francis said, depends on the ability of its people and leaders to listen to those in need, and “replace narrow ideologies with a healthy concern for the common good.”

The unemployed, native peoples, migrants, the elderly, young people and children all deserve to be listened to while also giving “preferential attention to our common home.”

The wisdom of the country’s indigenous population, he added, can help Chilean society “transcend a merely consumerist view of life, and to adopt a sage attitude to the future.”

“The wisdom of the native peoples can contribute greatly to this,” Pope Francis said. “From them, we can learn that a people that turns its back on the land, and everything and everyone on it, will never experience real development.” †

VOCATIONS

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young adults who are married, ... are afraid to bring it up with people who are discerning.



Fr. Eric Augenstein

“These events hopefully make it more realistic and possible, encouraging people to stand up for their faith and talk to others about it as well.”

In addition, the holy hours will be a way for archdiocesan Catholics to support

with their prayers the upcoming meeting of the Synod of Bishops at the Vatican in October when it will discuss the topic, “Young people, the faith and vocational discernment.”

“It’s our way to participate,” said Miller. “We can’t go to Rome and be a direct voice on the synod floor. But we can offer our support, encouragement and prayers.”

Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan director of vocations, said that prayer “is the foundation of all discipleship and vocations” and that, in the holy hours, “there is no better way to start that foundation of prayer locally.”

“It is a way to connect our individual spiritual life to our local parish, to the archdiocese, to the universal Church, especially in this area of vocational discernment,” he said. “And that connection is made through prayer.”

(For more information about the holy hours for vocations sponsored by the archdiocesan vocations office, visit HearGodsCall.com, send an e-mail to amiller@archindy.org or call 800-382-9836, ext. 1490 or 317-236-1490.) †

Holy Hours for Vocations

7 p.m., January 30
Bloomington Deanery
St. Paul Catholic Center
1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington

7 p.m., March 22
Terre Haute Deanery
St. Joseph University Church
113 S. Fifth St., Terre Haute

7 p.m., May 9
Seymour Deanery
St. Ambrose Church
325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour

7 p.m., August 9
New Albany Deanery
St. Augustine Church
315 E. Chestnut St., Jeffersonville

7 p.m., September 26
Indianapolis East Deanery
St. Michael Church
519 Jefferson Blvd., Greenfield

7 p.m., February 6
Batesville Deanery
All Saints Church - St. John Church
25743 State Route 1, Guilford

7 p.m., April 24
Connersville Deanery
St. Gabriel Church
232 W. Ninth St., Connersville

7 p.m., August 2
Indianapolis North Deanery
St. Joan of Arc Church
4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis

7 p.m., September 4
Indianapolis West Deanery
St. Monica Church
6131 N. Michigan Rd., Indianapolis

TBD
Tell City Deanery
Indianapolis South Deanery

Pope flies over Argentina, sparking questions of when he’ll visit

MEXICO CITY (CNS)—The papal flight to Chile lasted about 15 hours and flew over the Pope Francis’ native Argentina, where many in the Church, politics and chattering classes wondered aloud: When will he arrive here?

After Argentine Cardinal Jose Mario Bergoglio was elected pope in March 2013, many Argentines expected he would put his home country on the top of his list of countries to visit. Nearly five years later, Pope Francis has traveled four times to Latin America, but not to Argentina.

As he flew over Argentine airspace on Jan. 15, he sent a brief message to Argentine President Mauricio Macri, blessing the people and reminding them: “Do not forget to pray for me.”

The pope has never announced any firm plans to visit, though Church observers voice opinions that he would prefer to avoid the polarization of Argentine politics, especially because, as archbishop of Buenos Aires, he often criticized corruption and ministered to the marginalized.

Politicians on all sides have tried to claim the pope as one of their own—a fellow traveler, who would embrace their cause if he were in the country. Some old friends are sometimes seen as informal

spokesmen for the pope.

“These so-called ‘friends of the pope’ do not help because they’re part of the ‘grieta’”—or crack, as Argentines call their political polarization—“and media, interestingly, present them as spokesmen of the Holy Father,” said Tito Garabal, a Catholic journalist in Buenos Aires, who has known Pope Francis for more than 20 years.

“They’re repeating falsehoods that many people believe are true, and then it has to be said that the pope never said such things,” he added.

Pope Francis is visiting Chile and Peru on Jan. 15–21, his fourth trip to South America. Observers are split on whether he will ever visit Argentina.

“I have the impression that the Argentine bishops don’t know what to say,” said Jose Maria Poirier, editor of the Catholic magazine *Criterion* in Buenos Aires.

“On one hand, they want to show total unity with the pope, but, on the other, many of them don’t understand,” Poirier said, adding that perceptions of the pope intervening in domestic politics “causes discomfort.”

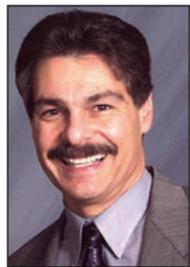
Garabal said the pope had other more urgent issues than returning to Argentina for a homecoming. †

Annual E6 Catholic Men's Conference set for Feb. 24

Criterion staff report

The third annual E6 Catholic Men's Conference will take place from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. on Feb. 24 at East Central High School in St. Leon.

Organized by a chapter of King's Men, a men's prayer and education group at All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, the conference will feature presentations by clinical psychologist, author and radio host Dr. Ray Guarendi; Father Larry Richards, a priest of the Diocese of Erie, Pa., and an internationally known speaker, author and retreat leader; and Father Jonathan Meyer, pastor of All Saints Parish.



Dr. Ray Guarendi

The title of the conference is taken from the sixth chapter of St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, which calls on the faithful to "put on the armor of God" (Eph 6:11) in their spiritual battle against evil.

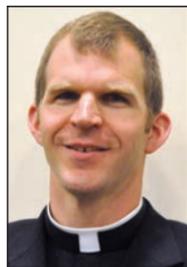


Fr. Larry Richards

In addition to the speakers, the conference will include the celebration of the Mass, the opportunity to participate in the sacrament of penance, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson is scheduled to be the principal celebrant of the Mass.

Registration for the conference will begin at 7 a.m., Lunch will be provided for conference participants.

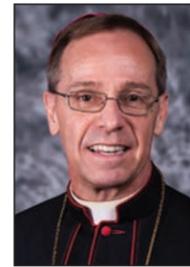
The speakers will participate in a question-and-answer session in addition to giving their own presentations.



Fr. Jonathan Meyer

Last year's conference drew more than 800 participants from across Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky. Duane Meyer, a conference organizer and member of All Saints Parish and St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg, said he hopes that "the conference can bring men into a deeper relationship with Christ, help men to have healthy engaging talks about their faith with other men and their family, and inspire them to be better husbands and fathers."

Advance registration for the conference is \$45 per person, \$50 on the day of the conference and \$15 per person for high school and college students. Clergy and religious may attend free of charge, but must register online. Members of the Knights of Columbus can register online for \$35, using the promotional code "kofc35."



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

(For more information or to register online, visit e6catholicmensconference.com, send an e-mail to contact@e6catholicmensconference.com or call 812-576-4302.) †

Indiana Catholic Women's Conference set for March 10

Criterion staff report

The Indiana Catholic Women's Conference is scheduled for March 10 in the 500 Ballroom of the Indiana

Convention Center, 100 S. Capital Ave., in Indianapolis.

Hosted by the Marian Center of Indianapolis, the theme of this year's conference is "The Sanctification of the Family." The featured speakers include Msgr. Charles



Msgr. Charles E. Pope

Pope, a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington; author Sonja Corbitt; and Mother Margaret Mary, who founded the Sisters of Children of Mary in Cincinnati.

Father Anthony Hollowell, associate pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, will serve as emcee for the day, with assistance from Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo.



Sonja Corbitt

The conference will run from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., with check-in beginning at 8 a.m. The day will include lunch and the opportunity for Mass, the sacrament of reconciliation, adoration, Benediction and shopping at vendors' booths. Prior to Feb. 27, the cost is \$50 for an individual and \$45 for members of groups of 10 or more. On Feb. 27, the cost increases by \$5. The cost for students, regardless of registration

date, is \$25. There is no cost for religious. A gift and VIP seating will be given to each member of the largest group in attendance.



Mother Margaret Mary, C.M.

Catholic Register.

Msgr. Pope is a regular columnist for *Our Sunday Visitor* newspaper and *The Catholic Answer* magazine, and writes blogs for his archdiocese and the *National Catholic Register*. Mother Margaret Mary taught for 18 years. She founded the Sisters of Children of Mary and was consecrated in 2002 and given the religious name Margaret Mary. There are currently 13 Sisters of Children of Mary with ministry in Cincinnati and Newark, Ohio.

Corbitt is an author and speaker who produces high-impact, uplifting, multimedia Bible studies, including *Unleashed*, *Fearless*, *Ignite* and *Alive*. A former Baptist, Corbitt was later received into the full communion of the Church. She lives in Tennessee with her husband Bob, and home schools their two sons.



Fr. Anthony Hollowell

(To register for the conference, log on to goo.gl/fgvZD8. For those with no access to a computer, send a check made out to Marian Center of Indianapolis for the appropriate amount with an indication of the number attending. The check can be mailed to Marian Center of Indianapolis, P.O. Box 47362, Indianapolis, IN 46247.) †

Catholics condemn 'racist' comments attributed to President Trump

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Some Catholics said it was more important to look at the sentiment, not the vulgarity of the words the president of the United States allegedly used to refer to immigrants from certain countries.

But disparaging, hateful and racist are the words some Catholic organizations used to describe how they feel about profane comments attributed to U.S. President Donald J. Trump at a Jan. 11 meeting about immigration.

On Jan. 12, Sen. Richard J. Durbin, D-Illinois, said the president used profanity to refer to people from certain countries, and other "things which were hate-filled, vile and racist" during a meeting about immigration, and at least one Republican senator, South Carolina's Lindsey Graham, confronted him about it.

In a statement following the reports, the National Black Catholic Congress said it condemned the remarks.

"As people of faith, concerned with the dignity of all of God's people, we deplore such racist and hateful speech," the group said.

While speaking to the press, Durbin said the comments, made while trying to hash out a deal on immigration, came after he was listing the countries with the highest numbers of people who benefit from Temporary Protected Status

(TPS) and include Haiti, El Salvador and some African nations, countries that, one by one, have seen the protection evaporate since Trump took office. Trump questioned why the U.S. would accept more immigrants from Haiti and "[expletive] countries."

"Those countries the president disparaged are by no means Shangri-La's [sic] but, that's why people emigrate from them," said Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski on Jan. 12 via Twitter. "And as Emma Lazarus' poem on the Statue of Liberty suggests, they become the 'best and the brightest' of the immigrants to this country."

The Archdiocese of Miami, which he leads, is the spiritual home to one of the largest populations of Haitian Catholics in the country.

Archbishop Wenski also said via Twitter that while the president had on Jan. 9 suggested he would sign whatever Congress brought him on immigration reform, his remarks instead "laid bare the true motivations of those that want to close our nation to immigrants."

A Jan. 12 statement issued by James Rogers, chief communications officer for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), said the reported "disparaging" remarks "have aroused great concern."

"As our brothers and sisters from these

countries are primarily people of color, these alleged remarks are especially disturbing," the statement said.

In Maryland, Jeanne Atkinson, executive director of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc., said "the hateful disrespect [the president] expressed only confirms the bigoted attitude that undergirds the administration's inhumane policies—canceling Temporary Protected Status for Haiti, El Salvador, Sudan and Nicaragua, ending DACA, barring people from majority-Muslim countries."

And it was "especially appalling" that the president "graphically enunciated the contempt he feels for people in struggling nations" during a week when the Catholic Church in the U.S. was marking National Migration Week, Atkinson said. The U.S. Catholic bishops instituted National Migration Week—observed this year on Jan. 7-14—to reflect on the circumstances confronting migrants, immigrants, refugees and human trafficking victims.

"We call on the president to apologize to the people of all the nations he slandered and to the American people," Atkinson said. "We ask members of Congress and other leaders to denounce these slurs. They do not reflect who we are as Americans."

The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas in a statement said they found it appalling

that Trump would use "vulgar and offensive" language to describe the countries, which include places where the women religious serve.

"We find the sentiment behind the comments even more troubling and agree with the spokesperson for the United Nations Human Rights Commission, who in his condemnation noted that the language is consistent with the racist decision making and attitude that has been expressed by this administration over the past year," the Mercy Sisters said referring to comments from Rupert Colville, U.N. human rights spokesman.

"These are shocking and shameful comments from the president of the United States. There is no other word one can use but 'racist,'" Colville said to press members in Geneva, adding that vulgarity wasn't the main offense in what the president said.

"It's about opening the door to humanity's worst side, about validating and encouraging racism and xenophobia that will potentially disrupt and destroy lives of many people," he said.

In his statement, the USCCB's Rogers said: "All human beings are made in the image and likeness of God, and comments that denigrate nations and peoples violate that fundamental truth and cause real pain to our neighbors." †

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are *two* ways to make a report:

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2** Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
chill@archindy.org

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Confirmation strengthens us to take part in the Church's mission

By John C. Cavadini

The sacrament of confirmation is perhaps the most mysterious of all the sacraments. Many Christians find it difficult to understand what benefit it brings. Isn't the Holy Spirit received at baptism?

Yes, baptism makes us "a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1279). Then why do we need to receive the Holy Spirit again in confirmation?

And, isn't baptism "valid and efficacious" without confirmation? Yes (#1306). Then why do we say that "confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace" (#1285, #1288) or that it brings an "increase and deepening of baptismal grace" (#1303), its "strengthening" (#1289)?

What do we mean when we say confirmation "perfects baptismal grace" (#1316)? Isn't baptismal grace perfect enough?

Of course, to answer the first question, all the sacraments are "actions of the Holy Spirit" (#1116), and all "sacramental grace" is the grace of the Holy Spirit, though in a way "proper to each sacrament" (#1129). So, the Holy Spirit is received in every sacrament, not just baptism, but in each in a different way.

We can ask: What is the special relationship between confirmation and the Holy Spirit? What is the "action" of the Holy Spirit in baptism, and what is the action of the Holy Spirit in confirmation?

To address the second question, baptism is valid and efficacious without the Eucharist also, and someone who dies immediately after baptism is saved without the help of any other sacrament. And yet we would not say that the Christian life on this Earth attains its full exercise apart from the Eucharist.

The Eucharist, too, completes baptismal grace, in the sense that baptismal grace is ordered toward the Eucharist. Baptism is the "gateway to life

in the Spirit ... and the door that gives access to the other sacraments" (#1213); by baptism, we are "born of water and the Spirit" (#1225, Jn 3:5), given freedom as "the children of God" (#1250).

We are given "a share in the common priesthood of all believers" (#1268). This priesthood is exercised first in our participation in the Eucharist and in the eucharistic life it forms in us, as our whole life and all of our acts become more and more a living sacrifice of praise (Heb 13:15) in Christ and for Christ.

This can help us understand the function of confirmation. Just as baptism is the sacrament of dying with Christ and rising with him to the new life of a child of God, and so is especially associated with the cross and resurrection, so confirmation is especially associated with Pentecost. In fact, it is "the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost" (#1302).

The Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Apostles to strengthen them for their apostolic mission. Confirmation "perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church" (#1288). The sacrament thus has a unique connection to the Apostles, and indeed the original rite of confirmation consisted of the Apostles' laying on of hands of the newly baptized, to strengthen them for their mission with the same special outpouring of the Spirit that they received.

In baptism, the action of the Holy Spirit configures us to the passion, death and resurrection of Christ, bringing about our death to sin and our rebirth in the love and the life of Christ. We have a new identity as children of God.

In confirmation, the action of the Holy Spirit is to strengthen us in our new identity, imparting an "apostolic" character. It associates us more fully with the apostolate or the active mission of the Church.

It is baptismal grace itself that in a sense seeks its own maturity, its own growing up, its own perfection, just as the



Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wis., uses sacred chrism oil to trace a cross on the forehead of Alma Karina Ruiz, 16, during the sacrament of confirmation at St. Joseph Church in Wautoma, Wis., on Aug. 26, 2017. In confirmation, the action of the Holy Spirit is to strengthen us in our new identity, imparting an "apostolic" character. It associates us more fully with the apostolate, or the active mission of the Church. (CNS photo/Sam Lucero, *The Compass*)

natural life of a child, in a sense, seeks its own maturity, completion, growing up. Baptismal grace, precisely because it is a rebirth, is ordered toward the "growing up" and strengthening of the newly born in Christ.

The action of the Holy Spirit in baptism orients us toward his own further action in conferring the further apostolic grace of Pentecost. Thus we are empowered to live out the eucharistic life toward which baptism, and indeed all of the other sacraments, are ordered, with a "Pentecost" identity, an identity analogous to that of an Apostle.

Thus baptism and confirmation are closely linked. Originally, confirmation immediately followed baptism, and it still does in the Eastern Catholic Churches (and in the Latin Church for adult baptisms). But in both Eastern and

Latin Churches, the connection with Pentecost was never left behind. In the Eastern Churches, confirmation makes use of the special holy chrism blessed by the bishop, the successor of the Apostles, while in the Latin Church, the ordinary minister of the sacrament is still the bishop.

Because the bishop cannot be present at every baptism, the post-baptismal anointing of confirmation is delayed, but that should only serve to remind us that this sacrament is our participation in Pentecost, a privilege and fulfillment that our baptismal grace seeks, and for which it makes us fit.

(John C. Cavadini is professor of theology and director of the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana.) †

Anointing in the Bible was a special sign of being chosen by God

By Mike Nelson

In the Catholic tradition, to be confirmed is to be chosen—chosen by God to be a sign of his presence in the world.

"Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit," declares the minister of the sacrament (ordinarily a bishop, but sometimes, a priest) as he traces the sign of the cross—a sign of consecration—with the sacred chrism oil—representing health and strength—on the recipient's forehead.

With this action, the newly confirmed "shares more completely in the mission of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit with which he is filled," so that his life may emanate "the aroma of Christ," reads the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#1294).

Scripturally, we find numerous instances where God's choosing of a person has been expressed through being anointed with holy oil. In the Book of Exodus, God instructs Moses in the consecration of priests, in this case Moses' brother Aaron: "Take the anointing oil and pour it on his head, and anoint him" (Ex 29:7).

Perhaps no anointing in the Old Testament is more profound as that of David, youngest son of Jesse, by the prophet Samuel:

"The Lord said: 'There—anoint him, for this is the one!' Then Samuel, with the horn of oil in hand, anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and from that day on, the spirit of the Lord rushed upon David" (1 Sm 16:12-13).

That the Lord passed up David's older brothers before instructing Samuel to anoint David suggests that anointing is not administered according to worldly

standards, but only to those God chooses to do his work. "You love justice and hate wrongdoing," declares the Book of Psalms. "Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellow kings" (Ps 45:8).

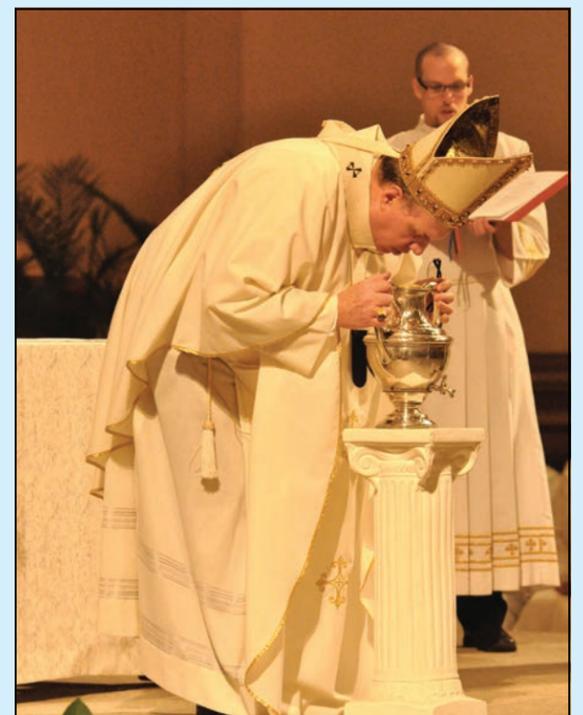
Jesus himself makes known the power and purpose of anointing in one of his first public actions, the teaching and proclamation of Scripture in the synagogues, for which he was well-received—at least, initially.

Then, in his hometown of Nazareth, he quotes Isaiah—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor"—and adds, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:18, 21). The ensuing uproar causes those assembled to drive him out of the town—a lesson to Jesus' followers of the risks awaiting the anointed ones who seek to do God's will.

St. Paul, for one, took that lesson to heart, fearlessly proclaiming the Good News despite enduring persecution and punishment throughout his ministry. "The one who gives us security with you in Christ and who anointed us is God," Paul tells the people of Corinth. "He has also put his seal upon us and given the Spirit in our hearts as a first installment" (2 Cor 1:21-22).

And the catechism echoes that promise: "This seal of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service forever, as well as the promise of divine protection in the great eschatological trial" (#1296).

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



Then-Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin ritually breathes upon chrism oil while blessing it on March 22, 2016, during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Seminarian Timothy DeCrane, right, assists as an altar server during the liturgy. Passages throughout the Bible connect being anointed with oil with God choosing a person for a mission. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

From the Editor Emeritus/John E. Fink

Willa Cather's portrayal of Archbishop Lamy of Santa Fe

After writing last week's column about Sister Blandina Seagle's exploits in the Old West, I decided to stay with adventures in the Old West. I bought from Amazon and downloaded the Kindle edition of Willa Cather's book *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (it cost all of \$1.98),



the fictionalized story of Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy. The book has been selling ever since it was written in 1927, and for many good reasons.

Archbishop Lamy (Archbishop Jean Marie Latour in the novel) was the first apostolic vicar for the New Mexico territory after the United States acquired the territory from Mexico in 1849. He became the first bishop of Santa Fe when it was made a diocese in 1853, and then archbishop in 1875 when the pope made Santa Fe a province that included Arizona and Colorado. He retired in 1885 and died in 1888.

That's the thumbnail biography. But a lot happened to him during the 37 years he lived in New Mexico. I became interested in him the first time I visited Santa Fe many years ago, and saw the magnificent cathedral he constructed. If you have been there, I'm sure you will agree.

One of the things that occurred to me while reading Cather's book was how long it took to travel back in the 19th century. Although Lamy was named apostolic vicar in 1849, he didn't make it to the territory until 1851. He was born in France in 1814, was ordained a priest in 1838, came to the United States in 1839, and spent 11 years in Ohio before he left for New Mexico.

There were two ways to get there. One was the Santa Fe Trail from St. Louis, but it was dangerous because of Comanche Indian raids. Lamy chose the other route: down the rivers to New Orleans, then a boat to Galveston, across Texas to San Antonio, and then up into New Mexico. Because of mishaps along the way (his boat sank and he hurt his leg when he jumped

from an overturning wagon), it took him nearly a year.

Once he arrived in Santa Fe, the local clergy refused to accept him. They thought that they were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Durango. So Lamy got on a mule and rode 1,500 miles to Durango to show the bishop his papers from the pope. The bishop of Durango resigned his responsibilities to Lamy.

That didn't mean that the Mexican priests in Santa Fe were ready to accept a Frenchman as their bishop. It took a while for Lamy to win them over, especially some who insisted that celibacy for priests might be OK for a Frenchman but not for the Spanish. There was a schism, and Bishop Lamy traveled back to Europe to recruit priests to replace those who opposed him. He also brought back Sisters of Loretto from Kentucky to help him.

Bishop Lamy was a friend of Kit Carson, who had a home then in Taos (it's still open to tourists today).

Cather's book tells of many of Bishop Lamy's adventures in Santa Fe. †

For the Journey/Effie Caldarola

Volunteer commitment allows gladness and hunger to meet

You may have heard this before: "The place to which God calls you is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."



That line is from Frederick Buechner, an ordained Presbyterian minister, theologian and author.

Most of us, within the context of our busy lives, want to serve God, whether it's pursuing a whole new career or just

finding a volunteer role. But sometimes we get bogged down in "what is God calling me to?" and we stand still.

Maybe Buechner's quote is a good one to pray with during the new year.

Discovering the world's "deep hunger" isn't a challenge. Every day, the news bombards us with the cry of the poor in this weary world. We can all name organizations in our town that need help, and we all know our parish has hosts of ministries needing assistance.

We know where the hunger is. It's that "deep gladness" part that requires some prayer.

Years ago, when I was first married, I volunteered at a center that offered help to women caught in unexpected, and sometimes unwanted, pregnancies.

I have always felt that as Christians, our response to women experiencing this situation should be bountiful and full of compassion, and that every woman should be treated with respect.

This was in the days before pregnancy tests were available at every drug store or supermarket, so we provided free pregnancy testing. Just as with home tests today, these required a urine sample. Sometimes, women would produce one in our office, or sometimes they would come in with jam jars full of urine whose contents had splashed through and permeated the soggy paper bag they offered us.

Taking the specimen, we would run the test as we talked with the women about their fears and hopes. Surprisingly, it was only with the advent of HIV in the 1980s that the organization had belatedly begun using latex gloves.

Sharing the result, either positive or negative, was a grace-filled moment of intimacy with another woman. Reactions to either result might be happiness, fear, joy, relief and copious tears. We needed to be fully present to a woman at this moment.

The problem: I wasn't. Oh, I felt the intense emotion and reacted with compassion. But I'm really squeamish. Inevitably, I had a hard time handling someone else's urine. I could never be a

medical professional—I'm darn close to being a germaphobe.

I tried to subsume my interior repugnance in my sense of the sacredness of the moment, but finally I realized this wasn't working for me. Worse, I wasn't at my best for those whom I hoped to serve.

Deep gladness was missing. So I shifted my commitment and became the author of the organization's monthly newsletter, something I enjoyed and for which I had a wee bit of talent. I also produced handwritten thank-you notes for every single donation we received.

I loved this commitment. It was, as the old saying goes, right up my alley.

Often, we see a need, as when the bulletin screams, "The faith formation program needs 20 more teachers!" and we have a sense of "have to." Sometimes, taking on a "have to" project works out. But sometimes, an interior battle rages and gladness is missing.

Questions to ponder in the new year: What kind of service would bring me fulfillment and gladness? What do I do well? When am I sharing at my best? What gets me excited to serve? Where will I be wholly present to another?

Answer those, and then run, do not walk, to make this commitment.

(Effie Caldarola writes for *Catholic News Service*.) †

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

Remembering that all is possible with God, be hopeful in 2018

When Isaiah speaks of a bear and cow being neighbors and a baby sitting aside a viper (Is 11:1-9), what message is he sending for us in 2018?

At first look, his examples symbolize peaceful coexistence. That which seems unlikely is now likely; direct opposites uniting as one.



The derivation of the word "peace" comes from the word "pact." Isaiah envisions a world

desirous of making covenants that create peaceful existence.

In our present age of bitter divisions, Isaiah is encouraging us to shake hands with those we tend to avoid. As a bear and cow enjoy neighborly peace together, so too, are we invited to practice wholesome neighborliness.

A second look at Isaiah's message

is even more heartening: to envision a future in which we coexist together just as his image of a bear and cow do and the hopefulness this inspires.

South Carolina's state motto is "*Dum spira spero*," "While I breathe, I hope." It encourages us to breathe in hope's inspiration, zestful powers and strength.

Hope is the heart of life's greatest achievements. If we didn't have hopeful inventors, progress wouldn't exist. If it weren't for musicians exploring new modes of music, much of the inspirational music we enjoy wouldn't occur. If it weren't for scholars, hopeful of uncovering exciting insights into God's word, religion would be deprived of its infinite inspiration.

And we must wonder what life would be without hope of returning to God after this life.

Hope possesses power to conceive of new possibilities and to dream of a better world. Theologian Bernard Olivier tells

us, "Hope gives us the assurance that the mystery of suffering will be solved, that it will all lead somewhere, that all problems will find adequate solution in a new earth ... wherein dwells justice. ... Truly hope is the mainstay of the Christian life on Earth."

The opposite of hope is despair. Despair takes away the very breath mentioned in the motto "*Dum spira spero*." Dreams of a brighter future are dashed and zest is snuffed out, allowing dark clouds of disillusionment and depression to blot out a hopeful future.

Our faith teaches all things are possible with God. To enjoy the best of 2018 we need to join that faith with the motto, "While I breathe, I hope." With God's breath and its hopefulness filling us with zest, the new year will possess all we hoped it to be.

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

Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Ken Ogorek

An opportunity lost, a lesson learned

I could kick myself. Rather than engaging in a conversation about Jesus, I settled for a label—and awkward silence.

It was last summer. A group of catechetical leaders, religion teachers, school principals and I were on the way home from the St. John Bosco Conference for Evangelization and Catechesis in southeastern Ohio. We stopped at a fast-food restaurant, and were having a lively conversation about the workshops we attended—about discipleship, evangelization and teaching the faith.

A somewhat elderly gentleman walking by our table stopped next to us, having overheard parts of what we were saying. With a friendly voice he said, "Are you part of a Church group?"

"We're all from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis," I said.

"So you're Catholic?" "Yes."

His face fell a bit. "Oh," he said, and walked away.

Don't get me wrong—I'm very proud of our Catholic faith. Sometimes, though, it's especially prudent to put in to practice a recommendation of Sherry Weddell, author of *Forming Intentional Disciples*; that is: Never accept a label in place of a story.

What I should have said is: "We're disciples of Jesus, living out that relationship in full communion with his body, the Church. How about you?" That way, a conversation would have unfolded. The gentleman could have felt more invited to visit for a few more minutes.

Could have, would have, should have

Hindsight is often 20/20. I would have eventually used the word Catholic in our conversation. But based on his response to the word Catholic when I did use it, this gentleman had some preconceived notions about Catholics and our faith. I could have left him with the notion, maybe surprising to him, that Catholics are laser-focused on their personal relationship with Jesus as well as their membership and participation in the Church. That it's often a deepening relationship with the real Jesus of sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition that draws people, by God's grace, to a sacramental life and a quest to live out the moral dimension of discipleship.

We should have been two disciples of Jesus, sharing briefly about the difference that daily prayer makes in our lives as we seek to understand and love God, his Church and the entire human family. Instead, my clumsy and thoughtless albeit accurate response tended toward shutting down the conversation. He went his way. I ate another French fry. End of story.

What's your story?

It's worth asking ourselves: How prepared am I to talk conversationally about my faith? When God puts people in front of me—and he will!—who broach the topic of religion, what contribution will I make to the conversation? Will I start with labels and creeds—both of which are very important? Or might I simply say something like, "What I can tell you for starters is that I have a relationship with Jesus. I live out that relationship in a lot of ways, including worshipping him at Mass. My relationship with Jesus and living it out with my fellow Catholics makes a huge difference in my life. Wanna hear some more?"

Never accept—or offer—a label in place of a story, a chance at witnessing to the power and beauty of being a disciple of Jesus and living in full communion with his one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church. Good advice I'll try harder to follow—by God's grace.

(Ken Ogorek is catechetical director within the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization. He can be reached: kogorek@archindy.org.) †

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, January 21, 2018

- *Jonah 3:1-5, 10*
- *1 Corinthians 7:29-31*
- *Mark 1:14-20*

The first reading for Mass on this weekend is from the Book of Jonah, an Old Testament writing seldom presented in the liturgy. While Jonah is the central figure in this book, he was not the author. The author is unknown. Scholars believe that the Book of Jonah was written sometime after the Babylonian Exile of the Jews.



The reading speaks of Jonah's visit to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, located roughly in the region of modern Syria. He went there at God's command to preach conversion.

Preaching conversion in Nineveh was a tall order, and the Jews who first heard this reading knew exactly how difficult the assignment would have been. No city on Earth had the image of evil and vice that surrounded Nineveh.

Nineveh, after all, was the capital of Assyria. Over the centuries, many neighboring powers invaded and overwhelmed the Holy Land. None of these invaders matched the Assyrians for bloodthirstiness and brutality.

To convert the people of Nineveh would have been regarded as almost impossible.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church offers us a passage from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. Paul was challenged in leading the Corinthian Christians to a fully devout Christian life. The city was in reality what Nineveh was symbolically to the ancient Jews. Corinth was known around the Roman imperial world as a center of vice and licentiousness. This distinction said very much, since vice and lewdity prevailed throughout the empire.

The Apostle called upon the Christians of Corinth to remember that time passes quickly, and that life is short. They had before them two options. The first was life in Jesus, a life that is everlasting, but it requires fidelity to the Gospel and its values. The other option was eternal death awaiting those who spurn the Gospel.

St. Paul obviously urges the Corinthians to be holy.

The Gospel of St. Mark provides the last reading. First is a brief mention that John the Baptist "has been handed over," a phrase later to describe the arrest of Jesus on Good Friday (Mk 1:14). The reading continues to say that Jesus was preaching that the "kingdom of God is near" (Mk 1:15).

Then, the Lord calls Simon and Andrew, brothers and fishermen, as Apostles, to be followed by the call of James and John.

For the early Christians, the Twelve especially were important. From the Apostles came knowledge of Jesus. It was vital to assure and present their credentials. Thus, this Gospel carefully identifies these Apostles.

The Lord's call was sudden. They were unprepared, yet Jesus and the offer of salvation caused them to drop everything and follow him.

The call of the Apostles is instructive. They were part of the Lord's plan of salvation. They continued the Lord's work.

Reflection

The Church called us to celebrate the birth of Christ in its liturgy. Two weeks later, it celebrated the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. Later, it offered us the feast of the Lord's baptism by John in the Jordan River.

All these celebrations taught critical lessons about Jesus. He is human, the son of Mary. He is also the Son of God. And he is the Savior, assuming our sins even though Jesus was without sin.

Now, the Church tells us that Jesus calls us to salvation, eternal life. He specifically called the Apostles to continue the work of salvation. He taught and commissioned them. The Apostles, through their successors, the bishops, and the Church founded upon them, still teach us and invite us to follow Christ.

These four Apostles' instant response is a lesson. Nothing is more important in life than being with Christ, than answering the Lord's call.

Directly and simply, Paul told the Corinthians that they could accept salvation or reject it. We have the same choice. †

Daily Readings

Monday, January 22

Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children
2 *Samuel 5:1-7, 10*
Psalm 89:20-22, 25-26
Mark 3:22-30

Tuesday, January 23

St. Vincent, deacon and martyr
St. Marianne Cope, virgin
2 *Samuel 6:12b-15, 17-19*
Psalm 24:7-10
Mark 3:31-35

Wednesday, January 24

St. Francis de Sales, bishop and doctor of the Church
2 *Samuel 7:4-17*
Psalm 89:4-5, 27-30
Mark 4:1-20

Thursday, January 25

The Conversion of St. Paul
Acts 22:3-16
or *Acts 9:1-22*
Psalm 117:1-2
Mark 16:15-18

Friday, January 26

St. Timothy, bishop
St. Titus, bishop
2 *Timothy 1:1-8*
or *Titus 1:1-5*
Psalm 96:1-3, 7-8a, 10
Mark 4:26-34

Saturday, January 27

St. Angela Merici, virgin
2 *Samuel 12:1-7a, 10-17*
Psalm 51:12-17
Mark 4:35-41

Sunday, January 28

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9
1 Corinthians 7:32-35
Mark 1:21-28

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Canon law allows for dispensing of abstaining from meat on Lenten Fridays

Please settle a dispute I am having with a colleague. Our society's annual St. Patrick's dinner is normally held on a Friday during Lent. We therefore request a dispensation in order to serve steak that evening.



I contend that all we must do is to request that dispensation from the pastor of the parish in which the restaurant

is located; my colleague, though, says that we need to go to the bishop of our diocese, and that only a bishop can grant it. Who is correct?

(I went to a Jesuit college, St. Peter's; he went to a non-Jesuit school, Seton Hall, and I would love to prove him wrong. Of course, if he is right, I probably won't tell him!) (New Jersey)

simply need to talk to a priest, who may grant this "for a just reason."

Generally, when a diocese on such an occasion lifts the obligation of abstinence, it stipulates that the person should choose some other penitential practice instead.

The Diocese of Dallas, for example, provided in 2017 that Catholics who chose to eat meat on March 17 should abstain either on March 16 or March 18. Creatively, the Dallas diocese offered still another option, viz., "for a person to offer a decade of the rosary for the plight of immigrants/refugees or for the intention of an increase in vocations to the priesthood."

So the answer to your question depends on what your own diocese has provided for. (I recognize that my response does not resolve the Jesuit/non-Jesuit rivalry—because both of you could be right!)

A few years ago, I had a miscarriage early in a pregnancy. While my husband and I were sad, we never really felt a substantial loss—perhaps because we quickly became pregnant again.

This is in stark contrast to the experiences of friends who suffered miscarriages later in pregnancy. They have been devastated and truly felt that they lost a person, not just a pregnancy. Are my feelings wrong—or worse, sinful? (Ohio)

Please don't punish yourself. First of all, feelings are outside of our control; morally, we are not responsible for our feelings—only for our words, actions or omissions. Yes, the Church does teach that a child in the womb is a person from the moment of conception. (And science supports this—heartbeat at 24 days, brain waves at 43 days, etc.)

But surely, a mother's emotional link to the child grows as the pregnancy advances—which makes it not surprising that a child lost later in pregnancy would prompt deeper pain. Thank God for the children who are with you now—and look forward, one day, to meeting the one who went to heaven early.

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

My Journey to God

Soft Landings

By Stephanie Kilpatrick

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



(Stephanie Kilpatrick is a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis. A prison inmate at Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility in Philadelphia prays on his knees during a Mass in 2015.) (CNS photo/Sarah Webb, CatholicPhilly.com)

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.

ALLEN, Aileen R. (Sprigler), 95, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Dec. 31. Mother of Ruth Morrison-Lile, Diane, Linda and Stu Allen. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of four.

BEADELL, Henry, 81, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Dec. 31. Husband of Anne Beadell. Father of Dina Lamson, Debbie Price, Danny and Dennis Lee, Brian and Tim Beadell. Grandfather of 15.

BEAUSIR, Bertha M., 88, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Dec. 24. Wife of Gene Beausir. Mother of Kathy, Kevin, Mike and Terry Beausir. Sister of Rosemary Gorski. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of 10.

BROWNLEE, Clara B., 95, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Dec. 13. Mother of Peggy Jo Schaub. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of seven.

CRAWFORD, Alan W., 72, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Dec. 29. Husband of Vicki Crawford. Father of Alison Carr, Frances Herrera and Vicki Mitchell. Grandfather of six.

CULPEPPER, Joseph F., Jr., 84, Holy Angels, Indianapolis, Dec. 24. Father of Alison, Jennifer, David and Joseph Culpepper, III. Brother of Josephine Mosley. Grandfather of two. Great-grandfather of two.

DANGLER, Kary, 38, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Mother of France Tokach and Lucy Turner. Daughter of James Dangler and Janet Gadbury-Scharbrough. Step-daughter of John Scharbrough and Marianne Dangler. Sister of Shannon Poole, Mason Dangler and John Gadbury. Step-sister of Jessica Henthorn.

DETTENWANGER, Jean K., 75, Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, Jan. 5. Sister of Judith Ebbeler, Father Dennis and George Dettenwanger. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

DREW, David E., 45, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Dec. 30. Husband of Julia Drew. Father of Caroline, Maren and David Drew. Son of William and Jane Drew. Brother of Jane Pisacane and William Drew.

DUITZ, Harry, B., Jr., 91, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Jeffersonville, Dec. 17. Father of Stacy Kimmel. Grandfather of one.

ERLENBAUGH, Carl J., 58, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Nov. 23.

FINLINSON, Benjamin, 26, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 20. Son of Timothy and Mindy Finlinson. Brother of Ellen Finlinson. Uncle of one.

GRANGIER, Carolynn, 74, St. Mary, New Albany, Dec. 18. Wife of Raymond Grangier, Jr. Mother of Stephanie Furnish, Anthony and Raymond Grangier III. Grandmother of 13.

HARBESON, Robert B., 63, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Nov. 28. Husband of Connie Harbeson. Father of Natalie Bramer. Brother of Diane Tomes. Grandfather of five.

KLEIN, George W., 67, Prince of Peace, Madison, Jan. 7. Father of Amy Owen and Jeffrey Klein. Stepfather of Justin Pettit. Brother of Suzi Ashbury and Jeanine Little. Grandfather of four.

KOKOJAN, Chris, 56, St. Mary, New Albany, Dec. 23. Father of Joseph Kokojan. Brother of Karen Fentress, Kelly Willis and Julie Kokojan.

KRAMER, Evelyn M., 90, St. Catherine of Siena, Decatur County, Jan. 8. Mother of Sharon Spears, Don and Philip Kramer. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of eight.

KRAMER, Ruth T., 95, St. Louis, Batesville, Dec. 30. Mother of Lisa Knight, Yolanda Thayer, LeNita Weberding, Michael, Ronald and Steven Kramer. Grandmother of 19. Great-grandmother of 24. Great-grandmother of one.

KRAUS, Frank W., 97, St. Paul, Tell City, Dec. 28. Husband of Lois Kraus. Father of Debra Emerson, Diane and Bill Kraus. Brother of Catherine Bartholomew. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of four.

LUCAS, Georgia K., 67, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Dec. 10. Wife of Maurice Lucas. Mother of Sandra Pederson, David and Tyrus Dearth. Sister of Delores Braun, Marcia Floyd, Clare Hashemi, Mary Payne and Charles Braun. Grandmother of nine.

MARKET, Lowell P., 84, St. Michael, Brookville, Jan. 8. Husband of JoAnn Market. Father of Beth Jewell, Paul and Ron Market. Brother of Helen Cornet and Stanley Market. Grandfather of two.

MCKENNEY, Gladys, 92, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Jan. 6. Mother of Cynthia DeCamp, Teresa Tindall, Todd Kidwell, Molly, Dennis, Erin, Kelly, Kevin, Patrick and Tim McKenney. Sister of Betty Shelton, Phyllis Smith, Glenn and Ted Hodson. Grandmother of 29. Great-grandmother of 35.

MERKEL, Mary A., 92, Holy Family, Oldenburg, Jan. 9. Mother of Margie Lipsey, Ruth Roell, Jim, Joe, Marty and Tony Merkel. Sister of William Stecher. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of nine.

NELSON, Virginia (Hartz), 88, St. Paul, Tell City, Dec. 24. Mother of Barbara Ewing and John Nelson. Sister of Ruth Minnette. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of three.

OLEKSIK, Mary (Marchinsky), 97, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Dec. 23. Mother of Jean Pole and Carol Shelbourne. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of six.

PENNINGTON, Lowona, 67, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Dec. 26.

PETRAITS, John J., 86, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Dec. 20. Husband of Margaret Petraits. Father of Ellen, Margaret, Greg and Jay. Brother of Robert and Michael Petraits. Grandfather of one.

PFLUMM, Paul E., 92, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 29. Father of Pam Chermansky, Peggy Price, David and Paul Pflumm. Grandfather of 11.

POWERS, Alma, 87, St. Mary, Greensburg, Jan. 8. Mother of Judy Anderson, Barb Christianson, Pat Dehner, Carol Faris, Kathy Farr, Chris and Marilyn Helms, Ginny Rose, Sandy Russell, Lisa Sweezy, Bill, Mike and Rick Powers. Sister of Charles Jackson. Grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother of 132.

REAGAN, William J., 88, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Dec. 22. Father of Susan Monihon, Kathleen Russ and Paul Reagan. Brother of Joseph Reagan. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of 14.

SCHUMACHER, Paul E., 89, St. Mary, Greensburg,

Jan. 2. Father of Paula Kenner. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of two.

STUHLREHER, Donald J., 82, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Dec. 26. Husband of Antoinette Stuhlreher. Father of Lori Stanley, Jennifer, Mindy, Tim and Tony Greene, Sharon, Kevin, Kurt, Mark, Michael and Pete Stuhlreher. Brother of Marjorie Tobin and William Stuhlreher. Grandfather of 19.

SULLIVAN, Elizabeth J., 86, Prince of Peace, Madison, Dec. 31. Mother of Beverly Barnes, Carla Greger, Janet Konkle, Maggie Lakins, Libby, John and Keith Lueders. Stepmother of Patricia Richins, Ann Stuck and Mike Sullivan. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of 16.

SULLIVAN, Steve M., 54, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Dec. 17. Husband of Diana Sullivan. Son of Louise Sullivan. Brother of Patty Brown, Beth Pangallo, Mary Sedam and Mark Sullivan. Uncle of several.

SUMMERS, Mary F., 90, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Dec. 22. Mother of Joan Blodgett, Fred and Joe Summers. Sister of Nancey McConkey, Gloria Powers, Loretta Rodman, Bonnie Seifert, Linda Staten,

Betty Steinmetz, Deborah Tietz, Nina Wilson and Michael Graves. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of one.

TADDEO, Grace M., 92, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 11. Mother of Hubert, James and John Riedeman. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of 10.

TRINKLE, Joan M., 73, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Dec. 28. Mother of Mary Margaret and William Trinkle. Grandmother of two.

VENARDI, Mildred, 95, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Dec. 29. Mother of Pam Balaban. Grandmother of one.

WEIKER, Phillip W., 74, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Dec. 15. Husband of Leah Weiker. Father of Sandy Matthews, Debbie Suckow and Kim Weiker. Brother of Judy Bisselberg. Grandfather of two.

WOOLEN, Paul R., 86, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Dec. 27. Father of Kelly, Greg and Mike Woolen. Brother of Jack Woolen. Grandfather and great-grandfather of several. †



Faith in the Philippines

Pilgrims climb to touch the Black Nazarene during a Jan. 9 procession in Manila, Philippines. The wooden statue, carved in Mexico and brought to the Philippine capital in the early 17th century, is cherished by Catholics, who believe that touching it can lead to a miracle. (CNS photo/Mark R. Cristino, EPA)

Canada: Groups fight policy that bases job grants on abortion support

OTTAWA, Ontario (CNS)—Faith-based groups and pro-life organizations are mobilizing to fight a new federal government policy that allows summer job grants only for employers who endorse abortion.

The Toronto Right to Life Association has sued the federal government over the policy, announced just before Christmas. The policy requires all applicants to the Canada Summer Jobs program to sign a statement attesting support for “safe

and legal” abortion and gender identity theory.

Canada Summer Jobs provides wage subsidies to eligible charity and small-business employers to encourage them to hire high school and university-age students.

“Our conscience compels us to not sign that attestation,” said Blaise Alleyne, president of Toronto Right to Life. “It is a violation of our freedom of conscience and freedom of expression for the government to compel speech or else

punish us by withholding an unrelated benefit.”

The pro-life educational group is seeking to have the “attestation be declared unconstitutional” because it contravenes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Alleyne said.

“It’s not illegal to disagree with the government on a social issue,” he said.

The Toronto Right to Life Association successfully sued the government last year. It joined with the Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform

and Guelph & Area Right to Life after the three groups were denied summer jobs grants due to pro-life positions.

The government settled that suit by paying them the funds to which they were entitled under the program. Then it rewrote the funding criteria for 2018 to explicitly require applicants to affirm that the “core mandate of the organization” and the jobs it creates respect a woman’s reproductive rights, as well as several other rights, including sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. †

Franciscan Sister Wilhelmina Burkemper died on Jan. 6 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 93.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 10 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Virginia Rose Burkemper was born on Jan. 25, 1924, in Old Monroe, Mo.

She entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Jan. 2, 1940, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1945.

During 78 years as a Sister of St. Francis, Sister Wilhelmina ministered as an educator for 49 years in Catholic schools in Ohio, Missouri and Montana. After retiring from education, she served her community in Oldenburg as its archivist from 1991-2008.

She is survived by a sister, Roseann Coon of Florida.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †

Young adults gather for fellowship, learn ways to share faith

CHICAGO (CNS)—More than 50 young adults from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis were part of the nearly 8,000 people from around the country who gathered at McCormick Place in Chicago in early January to gain the tools to share their faith with the world.

They were attending SLS18, a biennial conference sponsored by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, known as FOCUS.



Matt Faley

The main message of the conference resonated with the participants from the archdiocese, according to Matt Faley, the director of young adult and college campus ministry for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

“Really, [it’s the message] that a life of missionary discipleship is both necessary and possible wherever the Lord has us,” Faley says. “We received practical tools on how to live a life of active participation with Jesus in the mission of the Gospel and how to bring others into that life as well.”

Besides Faley, the archdiocesan contingent included Father Eric Augenstein, the archdiocese’s director of vocations, and chaplains and students from Indiana University in Bloomington, DePauw University in Greencastle and Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis (IUPUI).

During the conference in Chicago, it was also officially announced that the SEEK 2019 conference will be held in Indianapolis on Jan. 3-7, 2019.

“This is the largest Catholic young adult and college ministry conference in the country and potentially the world,” Faley notes. “They are expecting anywhere between 15,000-20,000 people. We are thrilled. This will be on par with the National Catholic Youth Conference as far as numbers, influence and potential fruitful impact to the archdiocese.”

At the Chicago conference on Jan. 2-6, Mass was the focal point of each day, along with talks by keynote speakers such as Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron; actor Jim Caviezel, who played the role of Jesus in *The Passion of the Christ*; and Sister Bethany Madonna, a Sister of Life. Christian recording artist Matt Maher performed an evening concert on Jan. 5.

Organizers said priests heard more than 4,000 confessions, and many of the young people attended eucharistic adoration held in a special area during the entire event.

In the past, SLS, which stands for Student Leadership Summit, was limited to college students and FOCUS missionaries. The missionaries—who this year number 700 on 137 campuses

in the U.S. and Europe—serve on college campuses, accompanying students on their faith journeys.

However, this year, SLS18 included lay ministers, parishioners, seminarians, men and women religious, and others who minister in the wider Church, even if they are not involved with FOCUS. Each group—students, missionaries and others—had its own track of workshops, and all came together for Mass and keynotes. This year’s emphasis was equipping participants with tools to evangelize.

“For the last 20 years, we have seen that conferences have played a really important role in helping students and young adults take the next step in leadership,” said John Zimmer, vice president of apostolic development for FOCUS.

Conferences, much like the international World Youth Days—where young people from around the world gather in one country for several days of prayer, teaching and Mass with the pope—help young adults see that Catholicism is broad and encompasses all people, Zimmer said.

Much like other national and international Catholic gatherings, faith was the center at SLS but so was fun, with concerts, magicians and events such as a “Tacky Christmas Sweater Party” one evening.

“When you come to an event like this and you see 8,000 other people from all walks of life, and all colors and all ethnicities and everyone is bowing down on their knees in front of the Blessed Sacrament, it quite honestly blows your mind and helps you think of the Church in a different way,” Zimmer said. “There’s something about recognizing ‘I’m not alone’ that really helps launch a young person into missionary discipleship.”

To engage this age group, you have to combine truth and beauty, he said.

“This generation wants the truth, everybody hungers for the truth, our hearts were made for the truth,” he said. “So, we have speakers who come and teach the truth, who are willing to come and proclaim it in all of its beauty and wonder.”

FOCUS and the SLS18 conference is an example of “discipleship in action,” of seeing a need and going out and filling it, said Father Peter Wojcik, director of the Archdiocese of Chicago’s Department of Parish Vitality and Mission.

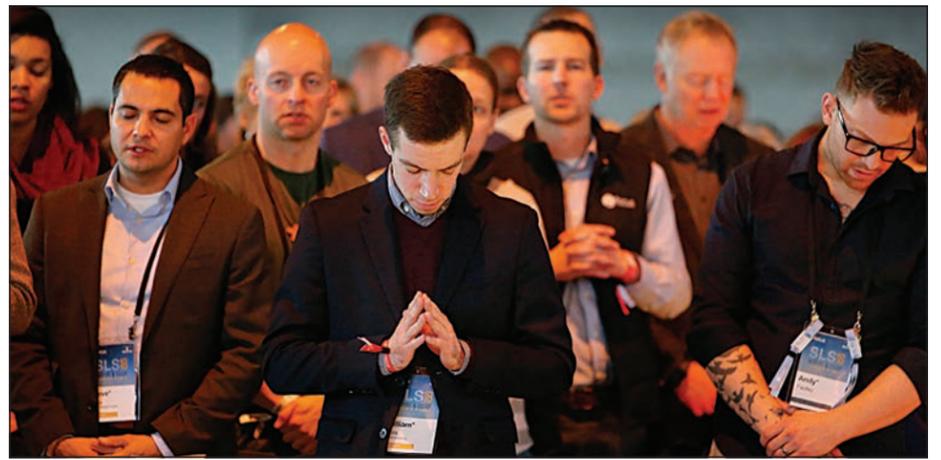
For its part, the Archdiocese of Chicago hosted an evening Theology on Tap session with Sirius XM Radio host Jennifer Fulwiler on Jan. 5. Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich celebrated the conference’s closing Mass on Jan. 6. The archdiocese also sent a delegation of young-adult leaders to the conference.

“We know that like every diocese, we have a way to go to engage the next generation of young Catholics,” Father Wojcik told the *Chicago Catholic*, the archdiocesan newspaper.

“We also know that three or four people

surgery after birth and let the child die. We know what Solomon the Wise would say: Give that child to the mother who would let him have his own chance at life.

Now “gene editing” may soon allow parents to tailor the genetic makeup of



Young people pray as Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago celebrates the closing Mass on Jan. 6 at a conference sponsored by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students in Chicago. More than 8,000 young adults from around the country gathered on Jan. 2-6 for the SLS18 conference. Among the attendees were lay ministers, parishioners, seminarians, and men and women religious.

(CNS photos/Karen Callaway, *Chicago Catholic*)

on our archdiocesan team will not be able to do it themselves,” he said. “So SLS18 created a perfect opportunity for us to reach out to a number of recently ordained priests, youth and young adult ministers, campus ministers, religious, seminarians and directors of religious education and others to join us for this gathering.”

The priest described it as a “first step” for the archdiocese to build more regionalized young adult ministry to help young people “easily connect” with one another, “and find faith and service offerings relevant to them” wherever they are in the Chicago Archdiocese.

Father Wojcik said that young adults are an important part of Renew My Church, the archdiocese’s wide-ranging pastoral approach to all programs, including evangelization, vocations, education and parish life.

“The bold vision Cardinal Cupich has put before us is the foundation of all our programs as we develop ways of support and guidance for parishes going through changes and rethink what pastoral vitality is,” he said.

“Eight in 10 young adults who were raised Catholic don’t practice their faith, and as a Church we cannot ignore those numbers and pretend that we are doing great,” the priest noted.

Chicago’s cardinal and other archdiocesan officials hope that having a “dedicated resource engaging young adults ... will bring them back to parishes,” Father Wojcik said.

For Fabian Pato, a freshman at Loyola University Chicago and a member of St. Bede the Venerable Parish, conference organizers met their goal for him on at least one level.

“I go to a Jesuit college and am taking the first year of theology, and I kind of needed to see a little bit more in depth about Catholicism, more focused toward youthfulness,” said Pato. “This was pretty enticing.”



Katie Brown from the University of Toledo, Ohio, and Anna Davis from the University of Missouri Columbia, write their prayer intentions on a wall on Jan. 3 during a conference sponsored by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students in Chicago. More than 8,000 young adults from around the country gathered on Jan. 2-6 for the SLS18 conference. Among the attendees were lay ministers, parishioners, seminarians, and men and women religious.

Northwestern University junior Ben Paoletti attended SLS18 after family and friends told him it would be an enriching experience.

“I’ve really taken in a lot about being authentic and being authentically Catholic,” Paoletti said. “It’s a lot about what Bishop Barron said [on] the first night. We need to speak boldly, we need to speak bold words like when the Apostles were first given the tongues of fire over their heads at Pentecost.”

“Sometimes, it’s not going to be what people want to hear, but it’s what people need to hear,” he added. “That’s something that I feel a lot of Catholics today don’t do. That’s something I’m definitely going to take away from this.” †

CHILDREN

continued from page 4

mother refused to abort a child with a prenatal heart defect, the contracting couple initially said they would refuse

their offspring, producing the “perfect” child.

Technology can be used for good or ill. To know how it applies to our children, we must understand what loving them means. Our faith calls us not to control them as our instruments,

but to accept them with unconditional love and raise them to seek their own God-given destiny.

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

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Pray with courage, conviction, not mindlessly like a parrot, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Prayer is a “high stakes” endeavor, requiring courage, perseverance and patience, Pope Francis said.

Courage is needed to stick one’s neck out and “challenge the Lord,” pursuing and confronting him with one’s appeals, the pope said on Jan. 12 in his homily at Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

“If prayer isn’t courageous, it isn’t Christian,” he said.

The pope reflected on two Gospel readings from St. Mark—one describing Jesus’ healing of a leper and another recounting his healing of a paralytic. The leper challenged Jesus, begging him on his knees, “If you wish, you can make me clean.” Meanwhile, the paralytic and the four men carrying him refused to let a huge crowd prevent him from seeing the Lord, so they broke through the roof and lowered the man down to Jesus.

In both cases, the pope said, Jesus saw the great faith, courage and persistence in the people asking him for healing.

“Always, when we draw near to the Lord to ask him something, you must start with and [ask] with faith,” even challenging him like the leper, he said.

The other role model for prayer, he said, is the paralytic, who was someone in great need and who faced many difficulties, and yet he never gave up because “where there is a will, there is always a way.”

“So often, you need patience and to know how to wait over time and not give up, to always go forward,” Pope Francis said.

It is necessary to have “courage to fight to get to the Lord, courage to have faith from the start, ‘If you wish, you can heal me. If you wish, I believe.’”

These Gospel readings should prompt people to reflect on how they pray, he said. Do people pray like “parrots,” echoing words with no interest or care in what one is asking or do people “beg the Lord to help us [in] our little faith,” and keep at it no matter the difficulties, he asked.

Courage is needed to “throw one’s hat in the ring,” he said, even if people do not get what they ask for right away because prayer is a “high-stakes game.” †



St. John the Baptist School dedication

In this photograph, Father Charles Noll speaks at the dedication of St. John the Baptist School in Starlight in September 1962. Archbishop Paul C. Schulte officiated at the dedication. St. John the Baptist Parish was founded in 1861, and the school opened the following year. The building shown in this photo was constructed to replace a wooden structure that had been built in 1929. The school closed in 1991.

(Would you like to comment or share information about this photo? Contact archdiocesan archivist Julie Motyka at 800-382-9836, ext. 1538; 317-236-1538; or by e-mail at jmotyka@archindy.org.)

Laity take their rightful place in pro-life work and ministry

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Building a culture of life is not solely the work of bishops and ordained clergy. Laypeople take the lead in diocesan and parish settings, and in independent organizations, to make the case for life.

Johanna Coughlin is one such example, but far from the only example. In her eighth year of working for the Archdiocese of Baltimore’s Respect Life Office, she took over as director last year when her predecessor retired.

To Coughlin, it seems to her, “I’ve always been in pro-life ministry.” Growing up in Memphis, Tenn., where her mother was involved with the local Birthright chapter, “we had several young moms stay with us,” she said. When Coughlin was in middle school, she recalled, “one of the moms invited my mom and me to witness the birth of her son.”

“I thought I might be drawn to this type of a ministry, maybe as a

volunteer, but not as a profession,” she told Catholic News Service (CNS). That changed, though. “Initially, I thought I’d be a lobbyist. I was a lobbyist for National Right to Life [Committee] for a very short time,” Coughlin said, but “after getting a family of my own I started working for the archdiocese.”

She said the Baltimore Archdiocese has been greatly helpful to her, letting her work part time, and also work from home, as her family has grown to five children, ages 9, 7, 5, 3 and 1. Coughlin’s mother lives with the family and helps out with the children, she added.

There are “so many good and faithful people in our parishes who do the real work, motivating parishioners to come down for the March [for Life],” Coughlin said. This year’s march in Washington is set for Jan. 19.

“You know it’s a call when you can step back from those moments and those

conversations and say you can keep going,” she added. “I’m inspired by all the people around me. I tell them all the time, ‘You are the guys doing the good work ... making sure these things happen.’ I’m inspired looking at these folks—especially the ones who have been doing it for so long.”

Thomas O’Neill, head of the Respect Life Office in the Diocese of Harrisburg, Pa., had life issues added to his portfolio six months ago, he told CNS. “This first year is getting a sense of where we’re at,” O’Neill said. “I’m going down [for the march], witnessing everything, taking notes.”

O’Neill has been involved in pro-life efforts since 2008, when he started working in the Family Life Office of the Diocese of Arlington, Va. He was active in family life and men’s ministries while there, but he also loved speaking—often at lobby days at the state Capitol in Richmond with lawmakers representing districts in the diocese who were not pro-life. “It is,” O’Neill said, “the pre-eminent rights issue of our day.”

In Harrisburg, he wants to double the turnout for next year’s March for Life. As he was being interviewed by CNS, the diocese sent a news release outlining local respect life efforts: 30 parishes holding holy hours for life, and 13 parishes sponsoring buses to Washington for the march.

“Most of the impetus for the March for Life comes from the parishes. The parishes organize their own buses. We centralize that information and promote it, giving people around the diocese an idea of where they can go. We almost have two months dedicated to respect life,” O’Neill noted, with Respect Life Month in October, while “January ends up being a de facto second month for respect life.”

A “dark night of the soul” feeling is not uncommon to those in pro-life ministry. “I think all of us have” felt it, said Kristan Hawkins, founder of Students for Life. She likened it to “trying to swim to the top

of the pool and people are trying to dump more water on you.” She said faith gets one through those rough spots.

Hawkins is no longer a student. She founded Students for Life in 2006, a year or so after her college days ended, and is now busy in the run-up to the March for Life, as are most people engaged in pro-life ministry. Her organization’s national conference takes place the day after the march. “We distribute thousands and thousands of signs” for the march itself, she told CNS. Then she flies to San Francisco for the annual Walk for Life West Coast in that city, followed by another conference.

She got her start in pro-life activity at age 15, when she said yes to a request from a friend at her church to volunteer that summer at a pregnancy resources center. After that experience, Hawkins said, “it got put on my heart that I needed to do more.”

She started a pro-life group at her high school in West Virginia and at her college. Hawkins said she couldn’t find a pro-life faculty member to sponsor the group, but a professor who was not pro-life sponsored the club. He “didn’t agree, but he thought we should have the right to form a pro-life group on campus.” She said she got known as “the pro-life girl” at school.

These days, “my husband is a great source of support. I can go home at the end of the day and talk about things,” Hawkins said. “My oldest child was born with cystic fibrosis [CF]. I have four children, and two were born with CF. In a way, it’s been a huge help in my professional life—keeping things prioritized, keeping things balanced.”

Hawkins added, “We struggle with burnout in the pro-life movement—a lot of people in the pro-life movement. We want to do better, and we want to win it. God has put this on my heart. This is something I was specifically called to do, and I want to see it through.” †



March for Life participants carry a banner past the front of the U.S. Supreme Court building in 2014 in Washington. (CNS photo/Leslie Kossloff)