In Chile and Peru, pope tackles tough issues and urges compassion, unity

LIMA, Peru (CNS)—Pope Francis tackled politically charged issues during his weeklong visit to Chile and Peru, decrying human trafficking, environmental destruction, corruption and organized crime in speeches before audiences that included political leaders.

At the same time, he called for unity, dialogue and coexistence in each of the two countries, which have been marked by political tension and sometimes-violent conflicts. Invoking Mary, he called for compassion, which he also demonstrated as he blessed a Chilean prison’s unborn baby and consoled people who lost their homes in devastating floods a year ago on Peru’s northern coast.

He also acknowledged that the Church must address its own problems, including sexual abuse, corruption and internal divisions.

“The kingdom of heaven means finding in Jesus a God who gets involved with the lives of his people,” he said.

Pope Francis arrived in Santiago, Chile’s capital, on Jan. 15. Over the next three days, he met with young people outside the capital, celebrated Mass among indigenous people in the southern city of Temuco, and traveled to the northern desert city of Iquique, which has been a magnet for migrants.

On Jan. 18, he arrived in Peru, where he celebrated Mass in Lima and traveled to the northern coastal city of Trujillo, which suffered disastrous flooding a year ago, and Puerto Maldonado, in the heart of the Peruvian Amazon.

In both countries, the pope met with organized crime leaders.

When Shawn Gillen reflected on her participation in the inaugural Indiana March for Life, she had only one regret.

“Every unborn child is a precious gift from God,” he said. His remarks were interrupted several times by applause.

He invoked the theme of this year’s march, “Love Saves Lives,” and praised the crowd as being very special and “such great citizens gathered in the nation’s capital from many places for one beautiful cause”—celebrating and cherishing life.

“Every unborn child is a precious gift from God,” he said. His remarks were interrupted several times by applause.

When Shawn Gillen reflected on her participation in the inaugural Indiana March for Life, she had only one regret.

“I wish I’d brought my kids,” said the member of St. Lawrence Parish in Lafayette, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. “This was an historical, monumental event. We’ll look back on this and say, ‘I was there.’”

Gillen was one of approximately 500 participants in the first Indiana March for Life in Indianapolis on Jan. 22, the day when, 45 years ago, the Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton decisions by the United States Supreme Court legalized abortion across the country.

The event was the culmination of efforts by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Diocese of Lafayette and Right to Life of Indianapolis, an event coordinated by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Lafayette Diocese and Right to Life of Indianapolis. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)
Margaret Nelson remembered for her writing and service to others in life and the Church

Margaret Miriam (Vernia) Nelson, a longtime member of The Criterion staff, died on Jan. 23 at St. Andrew the Apostle Church in Indianapolis. Nelson was recognized through the years with passion for journalism, and her excellence was celebrated on Jan. 23 at St. Andrew the Apostle Church in Indianapolis, where she was a longtime member. A private burial service was held.

Margaret Miriam Vernia was born on Feb. 5, 1930, in Chillicothe, Ohio, to Thomas and Goldia (Bechtel) Vernia. She graduated from the Ohio State University in 1952 with a bachelor of fine arts degree before marrying Paul Nelson on April 27, 1957, and moving to Cleveland, and ultimately to Indianapolis. She continued her education at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis and at the Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, completing courses for an ecclesial lay ministry certificate. Nelson was not raised as a Catholic, but was later received into the full communion of the Church.

Nelson had a lifelong talent and passion for journalism, and her excellence was recognized throughout her years with more than 100 awards for writing, photography, layout and headlines by the Catholic Press Association, Women’s Press Club of Indiana (WPCI), National Federal of Press Women (NFPW) and other state and national organizations. Among the honors she received was the 2005 WPCI Communication of Archdiocesan Ministry Award—the state organization’s highest honor.

She became part of The Criterion’s editorial staff in 1969. Her focus was multicultural and educational concerns, with a knack for personality profiles. She retired in 2001 after 42 years of service.

“Margaret was a great reporter and interviewer,” said Criterion Editor Emeritus John Fink, who hired and supervised Nelson. “I could always give her assignments while nearing deadline, if necessary, knowing that she would complete them because she wrote fast but thoroughly.”

“Margaret was devout, and a Benedictine oblate, and she was happy that her career was also something that served the Church,” said Charles Schisla, who was then-archdiocesan director of communications, and later editor of The Criterion. Nelson for the job at The Criterion. They became friends as members of St. Andrew the Apostle Church. He remembers how Nelson contributed to the parish through her design and sewing skills, making vestments, a beautiful funeral pall, and other liturgical items.

“As a convert, Margaret had a special knowledge and love for the Church that she carried for her lifetime as a Catholic,” Schisla said. “[She had a] unique perspective as a widowed mother of five children, and in 1971] raising a family by herself, a convert to the faith, and a dedicated volunteer who always had time for others. Margaret’s life experience and her educational and professional background made her a remarkable journalist for our archdiocesan newspaper.”

“As her journalist friend, Julie Slaymaker, said on Margaret’s passing, ‘I have a hole in my heart and in my life.’ Julie’s quote says it best for many of us who were indeed blessed to call Margaret friend.”

Her work at The Criterion also led Nelson to interview many interesting and high-profile individuals.

“Margaret was a very kind person with a charming personality. I first met her when she interviewed me after I was elected as archbishop of Chicago (Archabbech in St. Meinrad) in 1995,” noted Benedictine Father Lambert Reilly. “We bonded very quickly and would meet rather regularly.”

She also was known for her homemade cookies, which she sent to me and to Archbishop [Emeritus] Daniel [J.M.] Buechlein. She had won prizes for them at the [Indiana State] fair,” added Reilly.

Beyond journalism, Nelson’s other creative talents were honored with more than 500 awards—including 22 sweepsstakes honors from the Indiana State Fair for baking, sewing, decorating and photography. In 1995, she was commended with the Church’s Pro Ecclesia et Pontificae award for a layperson.

Nelson enjoyed traveling, making pilgrimages to shrines in Europe, the Holy Land, Rome and Mexico. Survivors include daughter Maureen (Vince) Norris of cucumber, Ky., and her brother Peter Vernia (Sue) of Rochester, Mich. Margaret was also preceded in death by her daughter Rosemary McElhenny (John).

In lieu of flowers, her family asks that donations be made in her name to the Apostle Parish, 4052 E. 38th St., Indianapolis, IN 46218; St. Vincent de Paul Society, 3001 E. 30th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46218; or Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 4000 N. Meridian St., St. Meinrad, IN 47577-1003.

To be able to assist in making dreams a reality for these youths is an amazing opportunity. I look forward to continuing, and building upon, the strong faith, academic and professional foundation that makes this Crusoe Rey Network model transformative and successful.”

Father Verbryke will become the 12th president of Brebeuf, succeeding Jesuit Father Jack Dennis who plans to return to work for the Jesuits’ Maryland Province in his hometown of Baltimore.

Father William Verbryke currently serves as Brebeuf’s vice president of mission and Jesuit identity, and as a member of the school’s board of trustees. He has been a part of the school’s leadership team since October 2016. Ordained a priest in 1983, he served 10 years as the president of Xavier High School in Cincinnati.

“IT look forward to working with the exceptional leadership team, faculty and staff to continue Brebeuf’s history of excellence, which includes ensuring continuation of the academic and formation standards that are hallmarks of a Jesuit education,” Father Verbryke said in a press release from the school.

New school presidents named for Providence Cristo Rey, Brebeuf

New presidents have recently been named for two private Catholic high schools in Indianapolis. Margie Crooks has already begun serving as the president of Providence Cristo Rey High School, while Jesuit Father William Verbryke will become president of Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School on July 1.

Crooks previously served in the Archdiocese of Detroit as the director of the department of evangelization and catechesis and schools, overseeing several areas of archdiocesan restructuring, which included 125 schools and 720 parishes.

She also guided these schools and parishes through the development, alignment and implementation of strategic goals for quality Catholic education, according to a press release from Providence Cristo Rey.

A Purdue University graduate, Crooks most recently served as the director of mission and discipleship for Church of the Blessed Sacrament Parish in West Lafayette, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. “I am excited to be joining the Providence Cristo Rey High School team and their mission-driven, innovative work for high school students in Indianapolis,” said Crooks, who has a master’s degree in theology and a doctorate in pastoral ministry.

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Margie Crooks

Margie Crooks was most recently at Providence Cristo Rey High School as the director of mission and discipleship for Church of the Blessed Sacrament Parish in West Lafayette, Ind. She was previously the pastor at Our Lady of Providence Parish in West Lafayette, Ind., and in the Lafayette Diocese.

“The new Providence president is a perfect fit for our mission, and we are excited to have her as part of our team,” said Father Paul Herbst, Providence Cristo Rey’s current principal.

In the 1990s, Crooks was the director of faith formation at Sacred Heart Catholic Parish in Cincinnati. She once again served on the staff of Our Lady of Providence Parish in West Lafayette, Ind., and in the Lafayette Diocese.

The new Providence president is a perfect fit for our mission, and we are excited to have her as part of our team,” said Father Paul Herbst, Providence Cristo Rey’s current principal.

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Panel passes nutrition eligibility plan for reformed drug felons

By Brigid Curtis Ayers

A proposal to lift a ban on nutrition program eligibility for reformed drug felons advanced in the Senate. The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) supports the measure.

Indiana is one of a handful of states that bans convicted drug felons from receiving certain federally operated nutrition benefits.

If Sen. Michael Bohacek, R-Michigan City, has his way, former drug felons who meet certain criteria to reform their lives would be eligible for food assistance under the federal program called Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program, commonly referred to as SNAP.

Sen. Michael Bohacek

Bohacek, would remove the permanent ban from food assistance under SNAP for convicted drug felons as long as they follow their parole guidelines or their release plan determined by the court. The bill was passed 7-0 by the Senate Family and Children Services committee at St. Augustine Parish in South Bend since 2007, helps reintegrate people into society after they leave prison. “Family members can offer a sofa or couch to sleep on, but food is a problem,” she said. “Even with SNAP, people still must go to one or two food pantries a month. Most can get their canned goods and bread at a food pantry, but use their SNAP benefits to buy milk, meat, eggs and other dairy items.”

Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the ICC who serves as the public policy spokesperson for the bishops in Indiana, testified in support of the bill before the Senate panel. “All persons have a right to food and shelter. Individuals, after serving their sentence and being released from jail or prison, have many obstacles when regaining the community,” he said. “In addition to family adjustments, employment is often denied because of the conviction and prison record. Many employers refuse to hire them, which contributes to recidivism. When jobs are available, often these are temporary or part time. SNAP assistance is tangible and needed. This benefit will go a long way to help people maintain themselves and their dignity.”

Persons who have paid their debt and attempting to rectify past mistakes should be given the opportunity to prove themselves and be eligible for support and programs that can assist them and affirm their human dignity,” continued Tebbe. “Current law banning food assistance tends to punish someone after that person has already made restitution for their misdeeds. Assisting those to change their lives for the better is what all persons deserve, and I believe how Jesus responded to all those who sought his help.”

Cheryl Ashe, a volunteer with Dismas House of South Bend since 2007, helps reintegrate people into society after they leave prison. “Family members can offer a sofa or couch to sleep on, but food is a problem,” she said. “Even with SNAP, people still must go to one or two food pantries a month. Most can get their canned goods and bread at a food pantry, but use their SNAP benefits to buy milk, meat, eggs and other dairy items.”

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— Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference

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For more information on the ICC’s priority bills, go to www.indianacc.org.

(Brigid Curtis Ayers is a correspondent for The Criterion.)
Letters to the Editor

Editorial about immigration misinforms newspaper's readers

It is discouraging that the uninformed are permitted to use The Criterion as a platform to misinform its readers.

The editorial, “We need more immigrants” written by John Fink in the Jan. 7 issue attempts to portray Pope Francis as a “leftist” by Donald J. Trump in a bad light. In fact, he is attempting to bring order to a disorderly situation.

The editorial asks: “Why should we be trying to discourage immigrants now?” In fact, the United States has an open border. There are hundreds of border legal stations where thousands enter our country daily merely by walking past a border guard. Others in cars and trucks line the border station highways entering the U.S. legally. There is usually some impediment that causes illegal entry to our country. Nevertheless, our government places workers’ bars in the desert for those who become lost or abandoned by traffickers. It is appropriate here to mention the danger that lost, desperate immigrants present to remote ranchers as the immigrants approach their residences for help.

Fink mentions the need for workers in agriculture and construction, traditionally low-paying jobs that continue to be that way because immigrants can be used to an employer’s advantage, and are many times forced into accommodations unfit for human habitation.

Our faith implores us to continue to stay strong and not become discouraged as we work to convince many in society that all life—from the unborn to the elderly—is precious. Despite the obstacles presented in today’s ever-increasing secular society, it is paramount for us to remind others that each of us is made in our Creator’s image and likeness, and valued members of God’s family.

Our call to missionary discipleship is by no means easy. As Archbishop Thompson said: “… Our witness is one of proclaiming the goodness, beauty and truth of God within each and every culture by means of the divine image to be safeguarded and celebrated in every human being. Our witness of prayer, advocacy, dialogue, accompaniment and mercy is cultivating that culture of encounter that brings us together to realize how we share in that image—rather than being divided by our differences.”

May we use those “encounters” to spur conversations and plant seeds, that God willing, will protect society’s most vulnerable members and bear much fruit.

—Mike Krokos

Lamy, is buried in the crypt directly behind the sanctuary at Saint Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe.

He was born Albert Thomas Daeger in 1872 in St. Anne Parish, just north of North Vernon in Jennings County. He was the sixth archbishop of Santa Fe, and broke the French line of bishops appointed there as he was German. He was ordained a Franciscan priest in July, 1850 and celebrated his first Mass in St. Anne Church.

He spent many years prior to his appointment as bishop overseeing the Indian missions of New Mexico. You may already be aware of this information and his story, but if not, I just thought you would find it interesting bit of trivia and a connection to St. Anne Parish.

Thomas G. Daeger Sr.
Indianapolis

Sister Segale’s last name is misspelled in Jan. 12 issue of The Criterion

Thanks to Editor Emeritus John F. Fink for all of his columns and for the recent one about Sister Blandina Segale in the Jan. 12 issue of The Criterion.

Sister’s family name was misspelled as “Segale” in the column. I always look forward to Mr. Fink’s work and also appreciate reading his books.

Thank you for presenting archdiocesan Catholics with such a great weekly newspaper!

Jim Waldon
Aurora

Columns show ministry coordinators in action, promote awareness of Church

Just a note to commend the publisher and editors of The Criterion for inquiring an expanded interest in your articles and columns that has me now reading it cover to cover, whereas I previously only read my favorite column on archdiocesan ‘hot button’ topics.

Erin Jeffries’s “An Advent Dialogue with the Sick” column in your Dec. 8 issue is a refreshing approach to catechesis, and Father Eugene Henrich’s “Truly celebrate Christmas by becoming fully absorbed in its meaning” column particularly touched a chord for me.

Introducing your numerous ministry coordinators to your readership through an occasional Perspectives page column is an excellent way to promote awareness of our Church in action in our awesome archdiocese.

Keep up the good work! God is with us.

Alice Price
Indianapolis

Letters Policy

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

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

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and concern for correctness (spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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

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

When it comes to life, let us heed faith leaders’ words

Pope Francis and the late Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. may have represented different faith traditions, but both men shared a passion for the rights of all people.

And as Christians called to care for each of our brothers and sisters, we would do well to follow their lead.

Rev. King, who was a Baptist minister and leader of the American civil rights movement until he was killed in 1968, and Pope Francis, elected by the College of Cardinals to be the universal shepherd of the Church in 2013, are examples of Christians valuing all human life. Both are also examples of an unshakable advocacy and witness to their beliefs.

“The Rev. Martin Luther King, our prayers and wishes about civil rights”—the right to life and to equal protection under the law, guaranteed by our constitutional and the most fragile and marginalized, and threatened, the tiny innocent baby in the womb,” said New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan during a homily at a Jan. 18 Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington that opened the National Prayer Vigil for Life. The annual March for Life followed the next day.

Rev. King “would be marching with us in the defense of unborn life not only of his own kind of either sex and the sanctity of his own life tragically violated 50 years ago this spring,” Cardinal Dolan added, referring to the pastor’s assassination in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968.

In his 2013 apostolic exhortation “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”), Pope Francis highlights the need to care for the least among us.

Archbishop Charles T. Thompson addressed the Holy Father’s words in a homily during a Jan. 22 Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis commemorating the 45th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton decisions legalizing abortion on demand in the U.S. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Among the vulnerable for whom the Church wishes to care with particular love and concern are unborn children, the most defenseless and innocent among us” (“Evangelii Gaudium,” #213), Archbishop Thompson said.

I just finished reading with excitement your latest column titled “Willa Cather’s Fe.” When I was a teenager in the 1960’s, your column particularly touched a chord for me.

To begin with, thank you for the column, “Willa Cather’s Fe.” I also find them most enjoyable and interesting.

I finished reading with excitement your most recent column titled “Willa Cather’s portrayal of Archbishop Lamy of Santa Fe.” When I was a teenager in the 1960’s, my aunt gave me a copy of the book and proudly remarked that it should be a required read for everyone in our family. As it happens, my great-uncle was also an archbishop of Santa Fe, N.M., for 13 years, from 1919 until his tragic death in 1932. He, like Archbishop Jean Baptistehemrick’s “Truly celebrate Christmas by becoming fully absorbed in its meaning” column particularly touched a chord for me.

Introducing your numerous ministry coordinators to your readership through an occasional Perspectives page column is an excellent way to promote awareness of our Church in action in our awesome archdiocese.

Keep up the good work! God is with us.

Alice Price
Indianapolis
Solidarity with migrants, refugees, and strangers among us

“Las naciones más prósperas tienen el deber de hacer que los inmigrantes, los refugiados y los extranjeros entre nosotros se sientan a la altura de sus derechos y de sus necesidades. La humanidad tiene un deber de acogerlos y de protegerlos. La dimensión humana de la solidaridad se manifiesta en la convicción de que no se trata solo de un deber moral, sino de una obligación. La solidaridad no debe ser un acto de caridad, sino un acto de justicia. La solidaridad es un acto de amor incondicional de Jesús. Recibimos a todos, damos la bienvenida y les damos la mano.” (Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica, #2242).

Nuestra Iglesia extiende a todos el amor incondicional de Jesús. Recibimos a los extranjeros y nos esforzamos por lograr que todos se sientan como en casa. Apoyamos los esfuerzos de nuestro país para resguardar nuestras fronteras y para reglamentar los procesos que rigen el proceso de inmigración y de reubicación de los refugiados. Sin embargo, insistimos en que se protejan los derechos de las personas y las familias en todas las circunstancias, y anteponemos la defensa de la dignidad humana a la conveniencia política o práctica. Tomamos tan en serio esta responsabilidad que enseñar el respeto y la compasión. Sin embargo, las oportunidades para involucrarnos activamente con los necesitados abundan en las buenas acciones. Desde hace más de 42 años, la organización de caridad católica de Indianápolis ha dado la bienvenida y ha ayudado a inmigrantes y refugiados. Y muchas parroquias de nuestro país de origen, y o a las enseñanzas del Evangelio (véase Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica, #2242).

“Compartiendo el viaje” no es una campaña política sino una forma de promover la solidaridad para con los miembros de nuestra familia que tengan una necesidad especial de nuestro apoyo devoto. Sin embargo, “Compartiendo el viaje” nos recuerda que como ciudadanos tenemos la responsabilidad de promover el bien común, por el bien de nuestra nación y el de la comunidad de naciones. La paz y la prosperidad deberían estar al alcance de todos los pueblos, sin importar su raza, origen étnico o preferencia religiosa. Debemos recibir a todos, darles la bienvenida y respetar, tanto las diferencias que nos dividen, como la condición humana fundamental que nos une.

El papa Francisco nos recuerda que Jesús, María y José (la Sagrada Familia) fueron una vez refugiados que huyeron de la tiranía política y de la cruel brutalidad del rey Herodes. Fueron inmigrantes que pasaron años viviendo en suelo extranjero, una situación que compartimos hoy en día millones de personas que han dejado atrás sus hogares en una búsqueda desesperada de seguir adelante. Lo que hagamos al más pequeño de nuestros hermanos, se lo hacemos a Cristo. Compartamos su viaje y démosle la bienvenida, estrechándole “en un abrazo sincero y amoroso.”

Solidaridad con los inmigrantes, los refugiados y los extranjeros entre nosotros

“We the more prosperous nations are called, indeed, to lead busy lives filled with work and obligations. Tomatoes are hard to find if we look for them. That’s not easy for most of us who lead busy lives filled with work and obligations. Still, opportunities for hands-on engagement with those in need are not hard to find if we look for them.”

Indianapolis Catholic Charities has welcomed and cared for our immigrant and refugee neighbors for more than 42 years. And many parishes throughout central and southern Indiana are needed. Simply writing a check and dropping it into a collection plate is not enough. Along with our financial support, the pope says, we need to face up to our responsibilities. We need to be warm, enthusiastic contact with our sisters and brothers who are poor and vulnerable.

We insist that in all instances the rights of individuals and families be protected, and we place concern for human dignity above political or practical considerations. We take this responsibility so seriously that Church teaching points out that governments have the responsibility to secure our borders, and to regulate the processes that govern immigration and refugee resettlement.

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“The more prosperous nations are called, indeed, to lead busy lives filled with work and obligations. Tomatoes are hard to find if we look for them. That’s not easy for most of us who lead busy lives filled with work and obligations. Still, opportunities for hands-on engagement with those in need are not hard to find if we look for them.”

Indianapolis Catholic Charities has welcomed and cared for our immigrant and refugee neighbors for more than 42 years. And many parishes throughout central and southern Indiana are needed. Simply writing a check and dropping it into a collection plate is not enough. Along with our financial support, the pope says, we need to face up to our responsibilities. We need to be warm, enthusiastic contact with our sisters and brothers who are poor and vulnerable.

We insist that in all instances the rights of individuals and families be protected, and we place concern for human dignity above political or practical considerations. We take this responsibility so seriously that Church teaching points out that governments have the responsibility to secure our borders, and to regulate the processes that govern immigration and refugee resettlement.
Events Calendar

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

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## Retreats and Programs

### February 9-11

**STEM grant**

Krista Konrad, left, and members of her kindergarten class at St. Louis School in Batesville smile as they hold a check representing a $500 grant from the Ripley County Community Foundation to purchase STEM-based (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) materials to provide hands-on learning experiences in the classroom. Picture along with Krista is Amelia Spielman, Parker Smith, Samson Walmays, Tess Rennekamp, Evelyn Oblender and Henry Candell. (Submitted photo)

### February 10

**Alveda King to speak at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond on Feb. 3**

Evangelist Alveda King, niece of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., will speak at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Holy Family Campus, 815 W. Main St., in Richmond, at 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 3. King currently serves as pastoral associate and director of Civil Rights for the Unborn African, the African-American Outreach for Priests for Life and Gospel of Life Ministries.

**No More Awareness Campaign, Priests for Life and Gospel of Life Ministries.**

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**Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-v) is a worldwide program that offers tools needed for husbands to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. For more than 30 years, the program has helped hundreds of thousands of couples heal their marriage.**

**To learn more about the program or to register for the Feb. 23-25 weekend and follow-up post-weekend session in Feb. 25, log on to www.HelpOurMarriage.com or www.retrouvaille.org or for confidential information e-mail Retrouvaille@gmail.com or call 317-489-6811.**

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**Indiana Holy Family Catholic Church**

The 12th Annual Indiana Holy Family Catholic Church retreat will be held at Kokomo High School, 235 S. Berkley Road, in Kokomo, in the Diocese of Lafayette, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Feb. 24.

**The theme for this year’s conference is “God is for Us! Romans 8:31.”** Scheduled speakers include Dominican Father Timothy Combs and Dr. Peter and Chantal Howard, co-founders of Heroic Families (www.heroicfamilies.com).

**The event will include a kid’s corner, a middle school track and a high school track. For more information, call Debbie Coleman at 765-977-4256 or e-mail debranncoleman@gmail.com.**

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**Retrouvaille retreat for marriage in crisis set for Feb. 23-25 in Indianapolis**

A Retrouvaille retreat for marriages in crisis will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, Feb. 23-25.

**Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you wonder if your marriage might end?**

Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-v) is a worldwide program that offers tools needed for husbands to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. For more than 30 years, the program has helped hundreds of thousands of couples heal their marriage.

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from the crowd gathered on the National Mall. He praised the pro-lifers for having “such big hearts and tireless devotion to make sure parents have the support they need to choose life.”

“You’re living witnesses of this year’s March for Life theme, ‘Love Saves Lives,’” he said. His remarks were broadcast to the crowd live via satellite to a jumbotron above the speakers’ stage, a first for any U.S. president, according to March for Life.

During their tenure in office, President Ronald Reagan, President George H.W. Bush and President George W. Bush all addressed the march via telephone or a radio hookup from the Oval Office, with their remarks broadcast to the crowd.

Trump spoke with a crowd surrounding him next to the Rose Garden, including 20 students from the University of Mary in Bismarck, N.D. One of those standing next to the president was a Marianne Donadio, a top official with Room at the Inn, a nationally accredited Catholic ministry based in North Carolina that serves homeless, pregnant women and single mothers with children.

Vice President Mike Pence, who addressed last year’s March for Life in person at Trump’s request, introduced the president as the “most pro-life president in American history” for, among other things, issuing an executive memorandum shortly after his inauguration to reinstate the “Mexico City Policy.” The policy bans all foreign nongovernmental organizations receiving U.S. funds from performing or promoting abortion as a method of family planning in other countries.

Trump also has nominated pro-life judges to fill several court vacancies, and a day before the March for Life the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced formation of a new Conscience and Religious Freedom Division in the HHS Office for Civil Rights. Its aim is to protect the conscience rights of doctors and other health care workers who do not want to perform procedures they consider morally objectionable.

For the first time in recent memory, the weather in Washington was more than tolerable for March for Life participants as they gathered on the National Mall to mark the anniversary of the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decisions legalizing abortion. The sun was shining and the blue sky was cloudless. By the time the speeches ended and the march to the Supreme Court started, the temperature had reached 50

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Young women hold pro-life signs and shout slogans as they stand in front of the U.S. Supreme Court during the 45th annual March for Life in Washington on Jan. 19. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)
Her description captured the crowd that processed to the statehouse from St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis after a pre-march Mass. (See story on page 9A.) Banners, balloons, signs and chanting voices all proclaimed the sanctity of life in the downtown Indianapolis procession.

Trying to tame a yellow “Life” balloon blowing in the gusty wind, 10-year-old Eli Elmore said he thought it was important to march “because babies don’t have the choice if they live or die. They have their entire lives ahead of them, and that shouldn’t be ruined.” Eli is a member of Southside Christian Homeschool Academy in Indianapolis.

Another youth participating in the march had a special reason to promote the pro-life cause.

“I love pro-life because I was adopted, and I’m grateful my mom didn’t abort me,” said Mary Green, 14, a member of St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish in Zionsville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. “I feel so bad for people who don’t realize abortion takes away life.”

Young adults were also well-represented in the march, including members of the pro-life club at DePauw University in Greencastle.

Father John Hollowell, right, pastor of Annunciation Parish in Brazil and St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, waves an American flag during the inaugural Indiana March for Life event ended later in the evening, when about 150 people participated in a youth-and-young adult rally and holy hour at St. John the Evangelist Church.

Abby Johnson served as the keynote speaker during this Vigil for Life, captivating the youthful audience with a message similar to the one she shared during the Rose Ceremony.

The former Planned Parenthood facility director turned-pro-life-advocate told the young people how she regretted taking so long—eight years—to leave a job where she assisted in the abortions of children.

“Being pro-life means you are advocating for the right to life every day,” she said. “One day, I had the opportunity to do something, to save a life, and I did nothing. I’m asking you tonight to find out how you can do something.”

Silent prayer and the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament followed in the darkened church before the soaring, heartfelt singing of “Holy God, We Praise Thy Name” closed the rally—and the day of witness for life—on another emotional note.

“I’m very passionate about the pro-life movement,” said Cari Welbel, the director of youth ministry for St. Lawrence and St. Matthew the Apostle parishes, both in Indianapolis. “I can’t think of anything more important than saving babies and saving lives.”

The Vigil for Life also left its impact on Matt Faley.

“The vigil gives us an opportunity to reconnect to the great miracle of our own lives,” said Faley, director of young adult and college campus ministry for the archdiocese. “Tonight’s vigil connects us to God, the source of this life and sends us back out into the world to bring others to that same reality. That is what the world is starving for the most—a witness to authentic life.”

From the opening Mass to the end of the evening youth and young adult event, the entire day was a success in the eyes of Susan Hoefer, Natural Family Planning coordinator for the Lafayette Diocese, who helped organize the inaugural Indiana March for Life.

“I am filled with joy about what I’ve witnessed today… everyone coming together to proclaim that all human life has inherent dignity and worth, given to us from God Almighty,” she said. “How beautiful it is to see such an amazing gathering.”

The plan is to have another such gathering next year, and likely for years to come. As Tuttle declared to the crowd: “We will be out here marching as long as the culture victimizes the unborn through abortion.”
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is a great blessing to celebrate the apostolate of Catholic schools with you!

Our Catholic schools throughout central and southern Indiana are an integral part of the incredible foundation that, by the grace of God and the witness of many generations of the faithful, is our shared inheritance, responsibility and opportunity.

During the Second Vatican Council, the Holy Father, in union with the bishops of the world, proclaimed that Catholic schools are of the “utmost importance.” Indeed, it is “abundantly clear in an unbroken list of statements” from both the Holy See’s Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education and from the bishops of the United States that Catholic schools are “the most efficacious means available to the Church for the education of children and young people.”

Our Catholic schools are the “fullest and best” opportunity to “promote the integration of religious truth and values with the rest of life.”

With Christ, the Master Teacher, as their cornerstone, these ministries of hope make the Gospels and the sacraments a way of life. They continue Christ’s own ministry as priest, prophet and king through their worship, faithful teaching and witness to the world.

Please join me this week in thanking and praying for all who have made, and who continue to make, the mission of our Catholic schools possible.

Please join me in praying for the future of this essential apostolate. The Church “earnestly entreats pastors and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools fulfill their function in a continually more perfect way.”

May our ministry in this generation be a “prophetic choice,” ensuring excellent and accessible Catholic schools both for today and for the many tomorrows to come.

Yours in Christ, Our Teacher,

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson
Catholic schools prepare ‘problem solvers’ bound by faith

By Natalie Hoefer

Megan Schaller and Ryan Scharr have both been basement staff and cheerleaders when it comes to the STEM approach at St. Barnabas School in Logansport.

The two recently completed the Trustee Family STEM Teaching Fellows program through the Center for STEM Education at the University of Notre Dame. The program focuses on increasing student interest and learning in STEM disciplines through the support and growth of high-quality STEM teachers.

“A STEM lesson is when you take any two topics or more [from the acronym], and both are being used and graded in a project,” explains Schaller, the school’s STEM coordinator and fifth- and sixth-grade science teacher. “Teachers plan a full STEM project, and each teacher sees how they can fill in,” such as using a religion class to brainstorm how STEM components could be used to address social justice issues like poverty, then writing about the topic in an English class.

But class time is limited. So in the fall of 2015, the school implemented STEM Days. One Friday each month is set aside to focus entirely on completing a project.

“The students enjoy that they get to do a whole project from beginning to end,” says Scharr, the school’s assistant principal. “They’re given a problem with real-world effects, and use what they learn to work with other people. They have to collaborate, engage socially, take leadership roles. The momentum didn’t stop there. “Parents hear from kids [that] they love STEM,” says Schaller. “We wanted parents to see kids engaging in STEM challenges, and also themselves to do a [project] or problem-solve or test … There are a lot of emotions involved in taking on real world challenges. [We wanted them] to see what it’s like to be frustrated or be exhilarated at success.”

So in the fall of 2016, the school hosted its first Family STEM Night. More than 300 parents and students took part in the two-hour event working on projects together. The second annual event last fall drew nearly 600 parents and children.

“There’s this void in the world today of problem solvers,” says Scharr. “We’re doing our best at St. Barnabas [to see] that all of our students, regardless of gender or socio-economic status or cultural background, can work together to solve problems, to take real world struggles and brainstorm solutions.”

STEM plants roots of ‘cool’ learning in New Albany Deanery

By Natalie Hoefer

Laura Swessels, a high school science teacher at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville, knows the importance of STEM fields first-hand — she used to own an engineering consulting firm.

“If I was working in a manufacturing environment now, you have to have some familiarity with computers, either on the user or the programming side,” she notes. “Regardless of what field you go into, the critical thinking you gain from STEM helps you with anything you end up in.”

To provide students with more hands-on STEM experiences, Swessels started STEM summer camps in 2016 for youths throughout the New Albany Deanery in first grade through ninth grade.

“The camps, which are broken down by grade ranges, participants take part in projects ranging from basic computer coding and making a volcano to creating a storm-proof house — which she tests against a leaf blower she calibrated to simulate category one through four hurricanes.

“Accommodate those on the summer camp waiting list, Swessels created a STEM club to meet five times during the school year. More than 110 students participated last spring.

Both the STEM club and the camp include visits by professionals in those fields. Among those who spoke to the youths were a dentist, an aerospace engineer, an electrical engineer, an emergency room director and a statistician. In addition to getting students excited about STEM fields, Swessels uses the camp and club as an opportunity for high school students to serve as helpers. Not only do the older teens get experience mentoring, but it helps kids to see “it’s cool” to work in the STEM fields, she says.

Fourth-grader Lydia Copsey says she likes to learn about “my interests such as chains reactions, engineering, and freestyle math,” while fifth-grader Matt Wetzel says he “love[s] being able to experiment with creating my own video games. Both are members of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg and attend the parish school.

And being deanery-wide and open to non-Catholics, the camp and club allow students to meet youths from other schools.

“I like meeting new people from throughout the deanery,” says Ginger Atingzer, a member of Holy Family Parish in New Albany who attends sixth grade at the parish school. “I love learning about the importance of STEM and how it affects how we live, and I like having something to look forward to after school.”

Students ‘dig’ discovering new ways to see the world

By Natalie Hoefer

The Thanksgiving feast at St. Bartholomew School in Columbus last month was participatory: among the fare enjoyed by students and staff members was lettuce grown by the fifth and sixth grade team at their school’s new outdoor learning lab, an area containing a permanent greenhouse nearly 25 feet by 17 feet in size built next to raised garden beds.

“We asked every grade level to plan a project to use the outdoor learning lab to cover the science standards for their grade,” says principal Helen Heckman.

Fifth- and sixth-grade students will collect and produce compost in decomposing piles to engineer the best composting system, and fourth graders will learn about the importance of native species and the interdependence of pollinators and flowering plants in the lab’s butterfly garden and monarch watch station.

Steele notes the importance of math in “evaluating data on growth measurements and other activities related to the greenhouse, but also on weather-related readings, data collection and graphing at our one weather station.”

And the current integration of the new space into class curricula “is just the tip of the iceberg,” she says, noting that the outdoor learning lab is still in its first phase.

“Steele is not the only one excited about the outdoor learning lab,” the students concluded in their newsletter. “We worked the dirt, then we planted the seeds by row, now,” says fifth-grader Amelia Fay of her class’ lettuce project. “It was really cool and fun. It was very delicious when we cooked it.”

Third-grader Ella Campbell, who joined her classmates in testing how plants grow in various soils, thought it was “cool because we could see how [the plants] grew each day.”

The students’ enthusiasm proves a point for Steele: “Kids learn best from doing authentic and relevant projects.”

“The motivation and depth of learning are just two wonderful outcomes of project-based STEM-related content. The Outdoor Learning Lab naturally connects our students to our community partners and real-world problems. Our students discover a love of learning, [and see that] digging in the dirt, sorting seeds, handling bees and worms — this stuff isn’t gross, boring or scary, but real and amazing.”
The “aha” moment came for Lisa Vogel as the Catholic school principal dealt with two students who were constantly arguing on the playground a year ago. Trying to find a way to change their attitudes, Vogel suddenly heard herself telling them, “We’re all on the same team. We’re all on Team Jesus!” Just as soon as she said those last two words, Vogel knew she had the theme that she hoped would guide the students, the teachers, the staff and herself at St. Mary School in North Vernon during this current school year.

So on the first day of school in August, she gathered everyone in a big huddle—“because that’s what teams do,” she says—and shared the theme of “Team Jesus.”

Trying to add a concrete symbol to that theme, Vogel showed everyone that day a huge sports bag normally used for storing and carrying baseball bats. Then she asked the students what they should put into the bag to represent Team Jesus. Soon, a Bible was placed into the bag. So was a crucifix. Then a rosary.

Vogel also told everyone that one of the things that teammates often do is give “high fives” to each other, so she encouraged everyone to adopt that practice too.

“I told them that each of the five fingers represents one of the words I wanted them to say to each other—‘I am here for you,’” Vogel recalls. “So when they see someone struggling on the playground or in the classroom, they should just offer them a high-five and they’ll know you are there for them.”

That practice has caught on at the school. Teachers high-five students. Students high-five students. And teachers high-five teachers.

“I love seeing our team having each other’s backs,” Vogel says.

That caring for each other has extended to a concern for others—a concern that’s reflected in the school’s monthly service projects that are led by a different class each month.

The eighth-grade class organized a collection of new and used shoes for the people of Haiti. The seventh-grade students went to the three Catholic cemeteries in Jennings County, grooming some of the gravesites and placing the silk flower arrangements that they had made on some of the graves.

When each service project has been completed, each class has put a symbol of their efforts into the Team Jesus baseball bat bag. So the eighth graders added a pair of flip-flops in there. And the seventh graders placed one of their flower arrangements in the bag.

The efforts for Team Jesus have left their mark on the students.

Fifth-grader Charlie Taylor confesses that he really didn’t think much about the concept of Team Jesus when Vogel initially shared it, but he saw the difference the approach made when his father, Brian, went into a hospital to receive a heart transplant. His classmates rallied around him and another fifth-grader whose mother is battling cancer. The class focused its monthly service project on raising money to help school families reeling from such concerns.

“I like that it helps people who need it,” Charlie says.

Third-grader Aubree Crane shares how her class built a “rosary walk” on the lawn of the school during October—the month of the rosary—creating and coloring pictures that showed the beads and the mysteries of the rosary. Then each class in the school used the rosary walk daily to pray at least a decade for others.

“I thought it was a really good idea—and a good opportunity to pray for people who need it,” Aubree says. “I think it’s a good way to get closer to God, and do better things.”

That’s exactly what Vogel wants for everyone on Team Jesus. And sometimes the blessings of that approach come in ways that surprise even her.

“Before Christmas, I was a little distracted walking down the hall, and this second-grader was coming toward me,” she recalls. “As she approached me, she had her hand in the air, and she said, ‘I am here for you, Mrs. Vogel.’ And she gave me a high-five.

“I said to myself. ‘I think we’re getting this.’

“I want my students to have empathy for everyone. Jesus loved everyone. I want my students to not just love their best friends, but to love everyone.” †
High schools build up relationships with nearby parish schools

By Sean Gallagher

Indiana’s state government has launched a series of initiatives over the last decade or more that recognize parents’ freedom to choose the best education for their children. They include allowing children to enroll in public school systems beyond the one in which they live, creating charter schools, establishing tax credits for contributions to organizations that provide scholarships to private schools and, most notably, the state’s voucher program, which is arguably the most robust in the nation.

This empowerment of parents to use their freedom to ensure the best education for their children has created an educational marketplace in which schools must, in a sense, market themselves to parents and students, showing them how the educational experience they offer would be best for them.

Leaders in Catholic high schools across central and southern Indiana recognize this challenge and are responding to it. “It is absolutely vitally that we can get information on Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School out to the public,” said Kyle Powers, Cardinal Ritter’s director of admissions. “Our students do so many great things academically, athletically and in the community, and we want the city of Indianapolis to see how well prepared our students are for post-high school life.”

An important way that Cardinal Ritter lets the broader community know about the education it offers is by building up relationships with parish grade schools in the Indianapolis West Deanery.

This happens in a variety of initiatives, such as academic competitions among parish schools sponsored by Cardinal Ritter and having grade school students come to Cardinal Ritter on Halloween to go trick-or-treating from classroom to classroom.

Other Catholic high schools in the archdiocese seek to work in similar ways with nearby Catholic schools.

“Building community is at the heart of a great Franciscan Catholic school,” said Diane Laake, president of the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Batesville. “Our commitment to evangelizing, empowering and educating our youth is best achieved in a K-12 educational environment. We build on the foundation of faith established in our nearby schools, and provide the essential tools and resources to address the critical decisions about the next phase of their life journey.”

Among the partnerships that the Oldenburg Academy has established is a program where academy students tutor students of St. Louis School in Batesville.

Samantha Sheets, a junior at Oldenburg Academy, was tutored in math by an academy student when she was a student at St. Louis.

“I was extremely beneficial and helped me score higher on my tests,” Samantha said, adding that having been helped in math motivated her to be a student now at Oldenburg Academy “more special because I now have the opportunity to return the help that was given to me while I was a student at St. Louis.”

Laake said that having relationships with other Catholic schools keeping and sponsoring academic competitions enhances the education it can offer.

“When students serve as an Oldenburg Academy ambassador in any of these programs with our nearby schools, they serve as role models,” she said. “This responsibility inspires them to always be and do their best. Often, it also helps to reveal a skill or talent they may possess, such as public speaking, teaching, organizational skills or writing. It helps to ensure that they experience being part of a larger community of faith, too.”

Nancy Buening, principal of St. Mary School in Greensburg, appreciates the relationship St. Mary has with Oldenburg Academy, especially in the academic competitions in which St. Mary students participate, and thinks it is a way to help her students see ways to continue their Catholic education.

“Any time you can get students working with others or performing in front of an audience, you are building on skills that they will use for a lifetime,” Buening said. “We support Catholic education and want students to know that there are other alternatives. I feel like it is a way we can extend our mission even when they are no longer in our building.”

Building up community is part of a Catholic school’s identity. So fostering relationships with nearby Catholic grade schools isn’t just a marketing ploy for Tyler Mayer, vice president for institutional advancement at Bishop Chatard High School in the Indianapolis North Deanery.

“It is our responsibility as a member of the North Deanery to share our resources,” he said. “If we have the ability to share resources that will enhance the educational experience of students across the North Deanery, then we need to do everything we can to collaborate with the parish schools…”

Bishop Chatard does this by allowing deanship schools to use their facilities free of charge for extracurricular activities, helping schools in setting and implementing technology plans, offering a wide variety of summer camps and workshops, and welcoming parish youth ministers to visit with students from their parishes in the school’s cafeteria on schools days.

While Chatard maintains such programs to assist deanship schools, Mayer said they also enhance the educational experience it can provide to its high school students.

“Our unique relationships with the parishes and schools of the North Deanery allows a level of support that can be found nowhere else,” he said. “Bishop Chatard is in large part due to the unique relationship with the North Deanery, parishes and schools, offers the strongest college preparatory academic program and faith formation experience for most students and families.”

At the same time, Mayer and other leaders at Bishop Chatard recognize that, with many other high quality private and public high schools close by, they can’t presume that families and students will choose their school.

“We have two goals for each student that comes to Bishop Chatard: college and heaven,” Mayer said. “There are many great choices in regard to high school. However, they are not the same. Each school has a different approach and focus and, therefore, a different culture. Bishop Chatard offers a genuine Catholic education. It is our responsibility to reach out to as many families as we can and provide them with a genuine understanding of who we are, and what we are all about.”

‘We were being what Jesus wants us to be,’ Seton High School senior says

By John Shaughnessy

As one of 24 seniors at Seton Catholic High School in Richmond, Sarah Gray offers an extensive list of the ways that a Catholic education has enhanced her life.

“It’s let me get a well-rounded education while helping me stay on track with my faith. Being in a small Catholic school, we’re really close to our teachers. They really focus on you as a person and on your learning.

“Plus we have theology class, we go to Mass at least once a week, and we pray in every class. That has helped me draw closer to God and my faith every single day.”

She also savors the friendships with her classmates, many of whom have been together since they began pre-school at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School 14 years ago.

“That’s made us really close. Plus we go on retreats every year in high school, and that’s made us even closer. I’ve definitely grown in my faith because of the community we have here.”

Our academic program, which is arguably the most robust in the nation, provides scholarships to private schools across central and southern Indiana foster relationships with nearby parish schools to help younger students learn more, and to enhance the educational experience in their own schools. (Submitted photo)
A dream come true’ connects school community

By John Shaughnessy

Luz Caldera had the dream for a long time. The dream connected her childhood home in Mexico, the Indianapolis Catholic school that has become part of her family, and the faith that has guided her life.

Caldera’s dream became a reality recently during a special celebration at Central Catholic School in Indianapolis on Dec. 12, 2017. On that day, the school unveiled a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe during an emotional ceremony that struck to the hearts of the 243 students—and their families—who represent 86 percent of the school’s enrollment.

“I was close to tears,” recalls Caldera, the school’s administrative assistant who played a critical role in obtaining the statue that was made in Guadalupe, Mexico. “I felt a comfort, a peace, to have Our Lady of Guadalupe so close. Every time a parent walks into the school now, they look at the statue and their eyes shine. I believe it’s brought a new pride and joy to our school.”

Caldera knows well the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the special significance it holds to natives of Mexico—how the Blessed Mother appeared to St. Juan Diego in 1531 in Mexico, and how on Dec. 12 of that year, she filled his cloak with roses, a cloak that bore her image when he removed the roses.

“It’s the only big miracle we’ve known,” she says. “When people ask for something, she’s the one we ask for help. Of course, we have to do our part always.”

That’s exactly what the community of Central Catholic School did to give the statue a home. When principal Ruth Hurrle arrived at the school for her first year during the summer of 2017, she talked to Caldera about the school’s traditions—and the traditions they should add.

“Luz told me how important the Guadalupe tradition and story is to the Hispanic community, specifically the Mexican community,” Hurrle says. “She talked about how much it would mean to have a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe. I said, ‘Let’s get one!’”

“Luz’s mother was already planning a trip to Mexico to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. So we thought it would be amazing to get a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe from Guadalupe, Mexico.”

So did the school community, which began a series of grassroots efforts to raise more than $2,000 for the statue.

Parents who worked at local businesses put up boxes by cash registers, asking for donations for the statue. The school sold suckers for a quarter and cups of horchata, asking a dollar for the popular Mexican drink.

“The largest donation we got was $20,” Hurrle says. “We did a basket raffle for each class that ended up raising several hundred dollars. That put us over the top.”

The large statue was unveiled at the school on the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe during a ceremony in which students in traditional Mexican attire paraded toward the statue. There, they placed roses at its base.

The statue was then blessed and dedicated during a Mass for the students and their families at the school, which is one of the five Notre Dame Alliance for Catholic Education Academies in the archdiocese.

“Our families are very faith-filled people,” Hurrle says. “They want their children to attend a Catholic school, and they’re grateful for a Catholic education. It gives me so much hope for the future of the Catholic Church.”

The statue also symbolizes hope for the present, Caldera insists.

“The students see her as part of our life now,” Caldera says. “It’s hard to believe that we did it, that we have something like that at our school now. It’s like a dream come true.”

Luz Caldera cherishes having a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe inside the main entrance of Central Catholic School in Indianapolis because it represents the Hispanic culture of many of the school’s families. The school community used grassroots efforts to raise more than $2,000 for the statue which was made in Guadalupe, the community in Mexico where the Blessed Mother appeared to St. Juan Diego in 1531. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)
Bond of faith draws two schools together during disaster

By John Shaughnessy

As Father James Wilmoth shares the story, it soon becomes clear that it captures the heart of everything that’s good about Catholic education.

After all, it’s the story of the students of one Catholic school reaching out to help the students of another Catholic school that was severely damaged by a natural disaster—the story of two schools that once weren’t even aware of each other coming together through a common bond of faith.

Then there’s an angle to the story that Father Wilmoth would be the first to downplay—the story of how this 78-year-old pastor of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis once again showed his 53-year commitment to Catholic education by putting the needs of a devastated Catholic school community before the needs of his parish’s own school.

The story started in August of 2017 when Father Wilmoth watched televised news reports showing Hurricane Harvey roaring through Rockport, Texas—a hurricane that is believed to be the most destructive to occur in Texas in recent history.

Father Wilmoth was particularly moved by the scenes of St. Roch Catholic School in Rockport, a school that was severely damaged by the hurricane and whose students were displaced and in need of help.

The news report showed a story about Sacred Heart Catholic School in Indianapolis, an elementary school that was also severely damaged by the hurricane and was in need of help. As pastor of St. Roch Parish, Father Wilmoth was moved to action.

He said, “I saw the devastation and how it displaced people and destroyed homes.”

He recalls, “You thought, ‘Day-gone-by, we’re going to do something.’”

So he had a meeting with the staff of St. Roch School, told them he wanted to donate the school’s upcoming walk-a-thon funds to a Catholic school hit by the hurricane, and asked St. Roch’s principal Amy Wilson to call the Diocese of Corpus Christi, Texas, to find a school that needed help.

She found one in Sacred Heart School in Rockport. “Their windows were blown out. Their computers and rooms were ruined,” says Father Wilmoth, who soon shared his plan with the children of St. Roch School.

“I told the kids I’d like for you to raise $20,000, and we won’t keep any of it. All the money will go to Sacred Heart School,” he recalls. “Then I talked it up at church one Sunday. The kids caught onto it, and it took off. We got to $20,000 and met our goal. So I said, ‘Let’s do a goal plus. Maybe we can get to $25,000.’”

People really responded. We ended up sending them close to $26,500.

The people of St. Roch School and Parish also ended up receiving a wealth of thanks from the community of Sacred Heart School, a school that re-opened on Jan. 4.

“I am so amazed at your awesome total donation to our school,” wrote Sacred Heart principal Kathy Barnes in a thank you note to St. Roch. “You and your school, St. Roch, really ROCK!! I just can’t imagine how you raised so much money in having your Walk-a-Thon, but I am impressed.”

“We need to relay to your students, families and staff our gratitude and appreciation for not only your check, but for your prayers. Those heartfelt prayers are helping us, I’m sure. May God bless you all abundantly.”

God has, Father Wilmoth says. That’s why the school and the parish wanted to share their blessings.

“It didn’t surprise me that people in St. Roch would respond that way,” he says. “But the amount of money we got did surprise me. I was so proud of how they responded to other people. Those people needed to understand we are their brothers and sisters even though they didn’t know us.”

St. Roch’s efforts reflected one of his favorite Scripture passages, he noted: “Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you’re doing for me” (Mt. 25:40).

He believes that passage is the essence of the Catholic faith and Catholic education.

“I’ve loved Catholic education during my 53 years as a priest,” Father Wilmoth says. “I look back on my life and see what it’s done for me. And I just can’t imagine how you raised so much money. That’s what’s making it so successful.”

Brothers and sisters, you’re doing for me” (Mt. 25:40).

As pastor of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis, Father James Wilmoth has always had a close connection with the students at the parish school—a connection that led to the students raising more than $26,000 earlier this year to help a Catholic school in Texas devastated by Hurricane Harvey in August of 2017. (Submitted photo)

‘Catholic education has become fundamental to my life,’ student says

By John Shaughnessy

After two years at a public high school, Nick Ford is happy to be returning to his Catholic education roots by attending Bishop Chardon High School in Indianapolis.

“There’s such a big difference in the two,” says Nick, a junior at the archdiocesan high school for the Indianapolis North Deanery. “One thing that I’ve noticed is that all my teachers and classmates are kind and caring and want the best for you.”

“Catholic education has become fundamental to my life. I love having Mass every week and starting every class with prayer. I know I’m happier when I’m in the presence of so many Christians and Catholics like myself. I feel it benefits me and builds me physically, emotionally and spiritually.”

He also believes it’s leading him to one of the most important goals of his life—a better relationship with God.

“It’s what I’m striving for. It’s what we’re all striving for,” says Nick, a member of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis who graduated from St. Joan of Arc School in 2015. “My relationship with God personally is very unique. Whenever I go to receive the body and blood of Christ, I always feel that presence of God in a physical sense. And I try to listen as best as I can to what he tells me every day.”

His experiences at Bishop Chatard have helped him in that effort, he says.

“Every day, I’ve noticed that I’m just chipping away at any imperfections. I know I won’t be perfect, but I have to try. Being in this Catholic environment helps me not just as an academic scholar, but as an all-around person.”

Students from St. Roch School in Indianapolis show their joy during their walk-a-thon day when they helped to raise more than $26,000 to assist a Catholic school in Texas that was devastated by Hurricane Harvey in August of 2017. (Submitted photo)

Nick Ford

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By John Shaughnessy

Research reveals the lasting influence of Catholic education

Did you know that graduates of Catholic schools are more likely to vote, earn higher wages, be civically engaged, be more committed to service as adults, and even demonstrate more tolerance of diverse views than their peers?

Research over the past two decades continues to illustrate the favorable results produced through Catholic education and formation.

Catholic schools build communities that live and act the fundamental conviction stated so beautifully by Pope Francis: “The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free.”

This is our first and most important task in Catholic education in central and southern Indiana: evangelization. That is, proclaiming the love, mercy and grace of God. Pope Francis teaches us what this means: “Proclaiming Christ means showing that to believe in and to follow him is not only something right and true, but also something beautiful, capable of filling life with new splendor and profound joy, even in the midst of difficulties. There is an inseparable bond, our Holy Father teaches, between truth, goodness and beauty.” (“The Joy of the Gospel,” #167).

This is why we need Catholic schools.

We need schools of the Gospel, schools of truth, goodness and beauty. With exceptional Catholic school leaders and teachers, dedicated staff and volunteers, committed families and supportive pastors and religious, our Catholic schools continue to thrive and have room to grow further across the more than 13,000 square miles of our archdiocese!

Many thanks go to Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and all of you who support our Catholic schools as an essential ministry of our Church.

Through your prayer, leadership, volunteerism and financial support, our young people are grounded in the very principles of our faith that will aid them in proclaiming their love for God, and all that is good, right and just.

May God bless each of you and all those who serve in Catholic education today and in the future.

By Gina Kuntz Fleming

Archdiocesan superintendent of Catholic schools

Educator sets high expectations for students—and herself

As an educator in a Catholic school, Christine Exline sets the standard high for herself and her students.

“Quality Catholic education models the life of Christ,” notes Exline, who was a finalist for the 2017 Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for an educator in the archdiocese.

“As teachers, we must be the body of Christ. We will hold our students to high expectations, but we will guide them along the path to meet these expectations.”

That combination of challenge and Christ-like concern marks Exline’s approach as she serves as the director of support services at St. Monica School in Indianapolis.

She shares the story of one of her most rewarding experiences in her 18 years of teaching in Catholic schools. It involves a former eighth-grade student and a conference she scheduled for him—a conference to develop an educational plan for him.

“As an eighth grader, students are welcome to be part of the conversation about their education,” Exline says. “He did not want to attend the conference. He was nervous, and did not want to hear what was said about him. I encouraged him to be part of his story; that while it may be hard to listen to strengths and weaknesses, I wanted him to really take part in the conversation.

“Reassuring him that it was completely his decision, I attended the conference without him. Five minutes into the conference, he knocked on the door, having left recess to join me. He was nervous and uncomfortable, but he showed up. He knew I was showing up for him, and he wanted to show up for me.”

A few weeks later, the youth began a conversation with Exline, telling her he wanted to be like her when he grew up.

“He wasn’t sure he would be a teacher, but no matter what, he wanted to help people,” she recalls. “Tearing up in front of a small group of eighth-grade boys was a first for me, but I didn’t mind. That day, I knew how much I meant to them. I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt I was where I needed to be, doing what I needed to be doing.”

As the director of support services at St. Monica School in Indianapolis, Christine Exline leads a session with Elena Rosario, Jordan Mink and Teddy Isakson. (Submitted photo)

EASTSIDE CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK ON THE EASTSIDE OF INDIANAPOLIS
Catholic Schools

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

What Makes a Catholic School Special

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ARE …

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

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

RESEARCH SAYS …

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

(University of Notre Dame. For more information, log onto ace.nd.edu/resources/catholic-school-research/researched-case-for-catholic-schools)

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What is an Indiana School Voucher?

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

Who qualifies for a Voucher?

• A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
• A student who is coming to a Catholic school after attending at least one year (two semesters) in an Indiana public school, AND/OR
• A student living in an “F” school area, AND/OR
• A student in grades K-12 who has received a Tax Credit Scholarship or Voucher, AND/OR
• A current Catholic school student in grades K-12 who is coming to a Catholic school after attending at least one year (two semesters) in an Indiana public school, AND/OR
• A student with learning exceptionalities qualified through an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

How should I apply now?

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

How do I apply?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit www.i4qed.org/sго.

Additional local scholarships may also be available.

Contact your local Catholic school.

How can we AFFORD CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

Understanding Tax Credit Scholarships and Indiana School Vouchers

My child is enrolled at a Catholic school.

I meet these eligibility requirements:

• Indiana resident
• My family is between 100% and 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP

Note: Income levels are determined in accordance with the Income Verification Rules. Document available at www.doe.in.gov/choice.

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What are Tax Credit Scholarships?

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

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Why should I apply now?

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K-12 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

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Pre-K vouchers are available in Marion, Jackson, Bartholomew, Monroe, Madison, Harrison and Vigo counties. For more information, log onto www.in.gov/dss/2476.htm.

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Generations build on each other’s work to make saints and scholars

By Julie Stockman and John Shaughnessy

RIPLEY COUNTY—At exactly noon, the bells from St. Nicholas Church ring through the countryside near Summan and echo through the parish school, leading the students to stand, face the nearest crucifix and pray the Angelus.

“The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary..., ”

That daily prayer by the kindergartners through eighth-graders is just one of the traditional Catholic rituals that mark their days at their school in the Batesville Deanery in southeastern Indiana.

Throughout the year, morning offering prayer begins each school day, and an act of contrition concludes it. Students say grace before and after lunch. And every Friday during Lent, they visit the Stations of the Cross in the church.

St. Nicholas’ 130 students also wear red shirts on the feast days that celebrate martyred saints. And they participate in the celebration of the Mass three mornings during the week, including Fridays when the pastor, Father Shaun Whittington, hosts a question-and-answer session after the Mass, letting students of all ages ask questions about the Catholic faith.

Father Whittington also makes the sacrament of reconciliation available to each grade a couple of times during the school year. And when a student wants to receive that sacrament individually, a teacher will send a text to the pastor to make that arrangement.

“It’s truly amazing,” says principal Daniel Swygart about all the things I was astounded by. Here three years ago, there were two new fellowship center that will include a parish facilities. And the campaign’s success approved the campaign in the summer of 2017, the parish has raised more than $3.3 million, with 173 families making gifts.

That’s already enough for the campaign’s first phase which will create a new education center that will house the school and religious education programs, and create an endowment for ongoing maintenance of parish facilities. And the campaign’s success so far has provided a head start on the funds needed for the second phase—creating a new fellowship center that will include a gym, stage and cafeteria.

The success of the campaign reflects the essence of the parish, says Father Whittington, who offers a defining story about that commitment.

“A couple of months ago, I officiated at a wedding, and I was talking to the bride and groom,” he says. “The bride told me she was the fifth generation to be married at St. Nicholas. The long-term, multi-generational commitment to the parish is amazing. It’s a way of life.”

A way of life that is also evident in the school’s stewardship model, he insists.

“It creates a robust partnership between the school and the school’s families. There’s a lot of volunteering, and a lot of sacrificial giving.”

There’s also a deep commitment among the parish’s families to participating in the celebration of the Mass each weekend.

That combination “has given us the successes that God’s grace has allowed us to have” in the areas of religious formation, academics and financial stability, he maintains.

That combination also leads to the main hope that the parish and the school have for its latest generation of students. “The motto of the school is, ‘Building saints and scholars,’” Father Whittington says. “All the different things we do are in support of that goal.”

(See Blended photo)

Students at St. Nicholas School in Ripley County pause from eating lunch to pray the Angelus at noon every day, one of the ways the Batesville Deanery school community lives its faith. (Submitted photos)

Celebrating National Catholic Schools Week

Brebeuf Jesuit is blessed to announce

Fr. Bill Verbryke, S.J.

as its 12th president.

“I am excited to serve Brebeuf Jesuit as its next president. I am humbled by the appointment and honored to help continue the life-changing educational experiences being delivered at Brebeuf.”

Fr. Bill Verbryke, S.J.
Latino Outreach Initiative helps schools invite, support Latino families

By Natalie Hoefer

Philippe Gonzalez believes in the benefits of Catholic education for Latinos, and he has the numbers to back up his belief. “A number of studies have shown that Latino students who attend Catholic school are 42 percent more likely to graduate from high school, and 2.5 times more likely to graduate from college,” he says. But he also has numbers showing that few Hispanics are reaping those benefits.

“Within a time frame of 2000-2010, the Indiana Hispanic population grew by 82 percent,” Gonzalez notes, quoting a statistic from an article produced by the Indiana Business Research Center in July 2013. Yet according to a University of Notre Dame study, only 3 percent of Catholic Latinos nationally are sending their children to a Catholic school.

To help that situation in central and southern Indiana, the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools started a new Latino Outreach Initiative in 2017. Gonzalez serves as the initiative’s coordinator.

The goal of the program is “to support the evangelization of Latino students through the ministries of Catholic schools,” he says. “We accomplish that purpose by inviting Latino students and families into our schools and showing them they’re welcome and included, and by ensuring our schools have the academic and developmental means to meet their needs.”

The program started with a pilot group of five schools selected from among a group of applicants: Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville; St. Bartholomew School in Columbus; and Father Thomas Sceicina Memorial High School, Roncalli High School and St. Lawrence School, all in Indianapolis. Gonzalez hopes to expand the Latino Outreach Initiative to other schools over time.

Helen Heckman, principal of St. Bartholomew School, says her goal in participating in the program is to better serve the needs of the school’s Latino population of 25 percent.

“The reason I wanted to take part in the initiative is to feel like we were doing everything possible so [Hispanic] families at our school feel welcome and [feel] that we want them to be part of our school and [that] we respect their heritage.”

Projects that St. Bartholomew has undertaken through the initiative include hiring more bilingual employees; starting a soccer team; updating signs to include Spanish; and offering professional development in cultural awareness to all staff.

Even though the initiative is just getting underway, Heckman says she’s already noticed a difference. “Now that [Latinos] have seen the effort we’ve put in to better serving them, the benefit is that they want to give back more. They’re showing more volunteers and more effort to help wherever they can.”

At Sceicina, principal Joseph Therber hopes the Latino Outreach Initiative will help the school to better serve “an increasing number of Latino students, including a number of Latino families in the [Indianapolis] East Deeney parishes.”

The initiative has already led to three plans at Sceicina: having an existing bilingual staff member translate documents and communication; adding a Spanish program to the existing Spanish curriculum; and identifying a “madrina—Spanish for ‘godmother.’”

The latter plan reflects the Madrinas Model, which pairs students with a trusted woman from the Latino community to develop and strengthen the connection between the school and Latino families.

Member schools participating in the Latino Outreach Initiative have learned about the Madrinas Model through a program the initiative requires them to take—“the Latino Enrollment Institute through the University of Notre Dame.”

“At that institute, during three days, principals of each school sit down with a mentor, usually an administrator at a Catholic school in the country, who helps them write out an action plan.”

Gonzalez explains. After the institute, mentors continue to meet monthly by teleconference with small groups of principals from around the nation.

Roncalli already has a madrina, says principal Charles Weisenbach. She provides “unbelievable help” with translating, setting up visits with Latino families, and helping answer questions when Weisenbach gives presentations at churches.

Plus, he says, since “two-to-three generations [of Latinos], if not living in the same house, are at least in constant communication, word of mouth will spread quickly.” He says that’s key to increasing Latino enrollment and meeting the needs of Latino students and families.

The archdiocese’s Latino Outreach Initiative was timely for Roncalli. Weisenbach says the school’s current 7 percent Latino enrollment is double what it was the past two years. And with several feeder schools having a high Hispanic enrollment—including one at nearly 90 percent—the necessity for the school to meet the needs of Latino students and families will grow.

Roncalli has also hired a bilingual staff member, made website available in Spanish with the click of a button, and offered a college and career planning night in Spanish.

While Weisenbach notes that implementing plans developed through the initiative is “going to be a process,” he says it will gain momentum. “I think in the next one-to-three years we’ll see improvement in both enrollment and engagement with the Latino community. What we see is we’re planting a lot of seeds that will bear good fruit.”

Cherished note reveals the power of a teacher’s encouragement

By John Shaugnessy

The touching moment for Mary Alice Knott came unexpectedly during a high school football game.

As a teacher at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville, Knott was watching the Pioneers play when a former student approached her.

“He opened his wallet,” recalls Knot, who was a finalist for the 2017 Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for an educator in the archdiocese. “He showed me the torn corner of his midterm which contained a note I had written to him as a freshman. For many years, he has kept the note in his wallet as a constant source of encouragement.”

Knott has taught math for 26 years at Providence, but it’s such notes of encouragement on exam papers and in short letters where she has left her most lasting mark on students. Her greatest treasures from her teaching career are the countless e-mails, notes and cards she has received from students. “I am very humbled,” she says. “Being a Catholic educator has allowed me to be personal and prayerful in my profession. I am strong from the relationships I have built as a Catholic educator.”

Her relationship with Providence extends through much of her life, dating back to even earlier than 1973, when she was a freshman at the school. “I first entered Providence as the youngest sister of three former graduates,” she says. “For years at the supper table, I would listen to the high school stories of my siblings. Anticipating the experience of making my own stories, I was excited. High school could not begin soon enough.

Now, she sees that same excitement in the freshmen when they arrive at Providence.

“Every year, I am warmly reminded of my own family, of myself entering the same door, guided by my parents, my siblings. This place is and always will be family to me. And that is Catholic education to me. Sharing my family, my prayers, my lunch, my hard work, my guidance, the same community, the same faith, exalts me.”

Knott says that her parents can be proud because I can share my religion and my life with others around me.”

Mary Alice Knott of Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville helps Bishop Edwards with a math problem in her class. (Submitted photo)
A clarion call of Pope Francis since his 2013 election as bishop of Rome has been for the Church to share God’s loving care and mercy with people on the peripheries of society.

St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis is responding to that call by reaching out to those in need close to home in the neighborhood that surrounds it on the northeast side of Indianapolis.

But it also follows the pope’s call by reaching out halfway around the world by inspiring and offering professional development to a pre-kindergarten school in China.

Surrounded by apartment buildings and rental properties, nearly 80 percent of the students at St. Lawrence meet the low-income requirements to qualify for free or reduced lunches.

Even though she had been a student at St. Lawrence as a child, Bishop investigated other pre-K programs in the area before enrolling her children in one. She found that St. Lawrence offered a quality early childhood program to its students.

“The programs and the tools that they use to serve the parish and the community are, from my profession, what excite me,” Bishop said. “And my kids are excited to come, too.”

Bishop also appreciates the cultural diversity found at St. Lawrence School, which attracts many students from the surrounding Hispanic and African-American communities.

“It’s something to embrace,” she said. “It has a different population than when I was in school here. But as an adult, I feel that it’s something for me and my family to embrace and be a part of.”

That diversity has increased as Kids Care at St. Lawrence has developed a cooperative relationship with the Go Link Academy, a pre-K school in Shenzhen, China, just north of Hong Kong.

It began when the biological mother of a Chinese child adopted by Watson visited St. Lawrence three years ago.

She was so impressed by what she saw that she worked with a partner in China to start the Go Link Academy. Teachers from the school have since visited St. Lawrence, and Watson and Kutan have traveled to China to help the staff there with professional development.

Chinese pre-K students and their families have also visited St. Lawrence.

“Chinese students have also visited us,” Watson said. “It’s been a joy to bring them into the program. That benefits our families and their children.”

Although Watson noted that language barriers can be a challenge for visiting Chinese pre-K students, she reflected that the children share another language that brings them together.

“Our students brought them right into the fold,” Watson said. “Kids speak the language of love and acceptance more easily than adults. They took them by the hand, brought them over and incorporated them into whatever they were doing. It was really a beautiful thing to watch.”

More visitors from China will come to St. Lawrence later this school year.

The Catholic faith is embedded in the Kids Care program at St. Lawrence in the way it reaches out to people in need both near and far.

And it would seem that this is having an effect on the program’s staff.

“We’re evangelizing every day,” Kutan said. “Two of our pre-school teachers are converting this Easter and bringing their whole families in. We see it all the time. It’s just amazing. It gives me chills.”

“The things that happen in our program every day are magical,” Watson said. “To me, it’s a blessing to work in a parish and school that is willing to serve the community around them. It truly embraces who we are as Catholics. We’re universal.”

(For more information about St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis, including its Kids Care pre-kindergarten program, visit saintlawrence.net/school.)

Helping children make a connection with God guides teacher

By John Shaughnessy

BATESVILLE—The three words have always left a lasting impression on Janice Narwold in her 20 years of teaching in a Catholic school.

For her, they’re the three words from a child that let her know she is making a difference.

“God created each child to be a unique learner with a tremendous amount to offer to the world,” she says. “I want each child to be who God created them to be, and hope to push them to grow into that unique person that I know is within each of them.”

“As a teacher, I plan lessons that educate the whole child. I teach children that they are gifts from God. I teach them that we need to take care of ourselves. I teach them that we are special to God.”

Her teaching reflects her view that “quality Catholic education is educating the mind, body and spirit of each child.”

― John Shaughnessy
anywhere
STARTS HERE.

Indiana’s only Holy Cross school celebrates its 100th birthday September 13, 2018!

Cathedral transforms a diverse group of students spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically to have the competence to see and the courage to act.
Mass attracts 1,000 to give witness to the dignity, sanctity of life

By Sean Gallagher

St. John the Evangelist Church in downtown Indianapolis was filled to overflowing on Jan. 22 as some 1,000 Catholics from across Indiana gathered to give witness to the dignity and sanctity of life.

The Mass for Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life celebrated at St. John kicked off a series of events that made up the inaugural Indiana March for Life, co-sponsored by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Diocese of Lafayette and Right to Life of Indianapolis.

It took place on the 45th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 ruling Roe v. Wade, which legalized abortion across the country. Jan. 22 is observed by the Church in the U.S. as the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant of the Mass. Lafayette Bishop Timothy L. Doherty and several priests concelebrated, just blocks away from the Indiana Statehouse where legislators were in session and adjacently to St. John where march participants gathered after the Mass. Bishop Doherty said “it did my heart really good” to see St. John filled for the pro-life liturgy. He also spoke about the importance of the march’s destination—the Statehouse.

“It’s a witness of the responsibility we have in our own state,” Bishop Doherty said. “We look past the state capital to Washington too often. We have a lot of great people working here in government. And it’s good to acknowledge them.”

(For more photos from Indiana March for Life events, visit CriterionOnline.com)†

Speakers from all walks of life inspire crowd at Indiana March for Life

Compiled by Natalie Hoefler

During the inaugural Indiana March for Life on Jan. 22 in downtown Indianapolis, several speakers shared news, stories and inspiring words at a rally on the lawn of the Indiana Statehouse.

Afterward, former Planned Parenthood director-turned-pro-life advocate Abby Johnson shared a bit of her story and news of her foundation, And Then There Were None, which seeks to help abortion workers leave their jobs and embrace Christ and the truth of the sanctity of life. Below are excerpts from the speakers.

• Archbishop Charles C. Thompson: “There are seven key teachings of the Catholic Church. The very first key is that of always opting for the most vulnerable, for the poor, … those on the margins, those sometimes overlooked or maybe not treated as well as others should be. These are our brothers and sisters. Even in the womb, we believe they are part of the human family.”

• Anna Allgaier, Great Lakes Regional Coordinator for Students for Life of America: “Young people understand this [pro-life movement] is not a women’s issue—it’s a human rights issue.”

• Dan Bartemus, pastor of College Park Church in Indianapolis: “We worship God. He gave us life. It is a blatant violation to destroy the life he creates in the womb. … [God’s] law is the law of life.”

• Sue Swayze-Leibel, coordinator of the Susan B. Anthony List’s National Women’s Pro-Life Caucus and pro-life lobbyist: “Here in Indiana … we have a pro-life governor, Senate, House [of Representatives], attorney general. … We are one of the most pro-life states in the country. In 2011, we became the first state to defy Planned Parenthood. … We banned abortion based on race or gender in 2016 [now under federal review].”

• Robin Schilling of Silent No More: “We [members] have experienced the physical, emotional and spiritual consequences of abortion. It is not just a women’s issue but a men’s issue, a grandparents’ issue, a siblings’ issue. … Abortion is like a Band-Aid: when you rip it off, the scar is still there.”

• Archbishop Charles C. Thompson elevates the Eucharist during a Jan. 22 Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. Lafayette Bishop Timothy L. Doherty, right, and several priests concelebrated the Mass.

Kellee and Keith Echternach, with their children, Leona, left, and Clara listen during a Jan. 22 Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis that began a series of events for the inaugural Indiana March for Life. The Echternachs are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

Abortion is like a Band-Aid: when you rip it off, the scar is still there.”

“Sit here and pro-life! I encourage you all today to find your place in this movement so that we can give witness to the dignity, sanctity of life.” †
in the encyclical “Laudato Si’,” on Care for Our Common Home.”

“The defense of the Earth has no other purpose than the defense of life,” he said.

The trip was the pope’s fourth to South America. It came at a time when politics in the region are increasingly polarized, and political and economic problems have prompted many people, particularly from Haiti, Venezuela and Colombia, to seek better opportunities in other countries, where they often face discrimination.

Various countries, including Peru, are also reeling from revelations of corruption, especially multimillion-dollar bribes and kickbacks from the Brazilian construction company Odebrecht.

Speaking to an audience of diplomats and politicians that included Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, who had narrowly escaped impeachment a month earlier because of accusations of influence peddling, Pope Francis called corruption a “social virus, a phenomenon that infects everything, with the greatest harm being done to the poor and mother Earth.”

He warned political and civic leaders in both countries against the seduction of “false goals” of money and power, and urged them to maintain unity by listening to their people, including native peoples, with their ties to the Earth, as well as youth, migrants, the unemployed, children and the elderly.

The pope stressed the inextricable bonds between humans and the environment, telling leaders in Chile that “a people that turns its back on the land, on the earth, on everything and everyone on it, will never experience real development.”

Both countries have seen violent clashes in recent years over large-scale development projects in indigenous territories.

In southern Chile, Mapuche communities are fighting to regain territory lost to mining companies and later to settlers who moved to the area after the country gained independence. Native forests, sacred to the Mapuche, have been razed for timber plantations, and springs and streams are drying.

There have been clashes between protesters and police, and attacks against landowners, including a high-profile case in 2013 in which a couple was killed when their house was set on fire.

Churches, both Catholic and evangelical, also have been burned. Four churches in Santiago were firebombed just before Pope Francis’ visit, and a chapel south of Temuco was set ablaze three days after his visit.

Speaking to an audience that included both Mapuche people and descendants of settlers, the pope called for unity, saying, “Each people and each culture is called to contribute to this land of blessings.”

He added, “We need the riches that each people has to offer, and we must abandon the notion that there are superior or inferior cultures.

“Acts of violence and destruction that end up taking human lives,” the pope also spoke out against the signing of ‘elegant agreements that never get put into practice,” which he said is also violence, “because it frustrates hope.”

In Peru, 34 people died and hundreds were injured in protests by indigenous groups in June 2009, after the government passed a series of laws that could have given timber, mining and other industries easier access to indigenous people’s lands.

At the time, then-Environment Minister Ana Garcia said indigenous people were being blocked development in the Amazon.

Speaking in Puerto Maldonado to some 2,500 people from more than 20 indigenous groups, Pope Francis responded directly to that accusation, which has been repeated by government officials and industry executives in other countries.

“If, for some, you are viewed as an obstacle or a hindrance, the fact is your lives cry out against a style of life that is oblivious to its own real costs,” he said. “You are a living memory of the mission that God has entrusted to us all: the protection of our common home.”

The pope listed a number of threats that members of his audience had described to Amazonian bishops during an encounter the day before his visit. Governments and corporations promote oil and gas operations, mining, logging, industrial agriculture and even conservation projects without regard for the people living in the affected areas, he said.

He linked the survival of native cultures—especially groups that continue to shun contact with the outside world, many of which live along the border between Peru and Brazil—to protection of the Earth.

“Native Amazonian peoples have probably never been so threatened on their own lands as they are at present,” he said. “We have to break with the historical paradigm that views Amazonia as an inexhaustible source of supplies for other countries without concern for its inhabitants.”

He urged indigenous peoples to work with bishops and missionaries to shape a Church with “an Amazonian face and an indigenous face.”

The pope also linked environmental destruction to social problems, mentioning unregulated gold mining that has devastated forests and been accompanied by human trafficking for prostitution and labor.

He urged women to work against violence against women, urging his listeners to combat the violence that happens “behind walls” and to “understand” the murder of women because they are women, usually perpetrated by men.

At every stop along his route, the pope was greeted by enthusiastic young people, many of whom were volunteers helping with organization and logistics.

In Chile, he urged them to make everyday decisions about their actions by asking, “What would Christ do?”

He also encouraged them to continue their education and work for a better future for their countries, while pointing to the need for improved schooling and job opportunities. Education, he said, should be “transformative” and “inclusive,” fostering coexistence.

In a moving encounter with youngsters in a home for abandoned and orphaned children founded and directed by a Swiss missionary priest in Puerto Maldonado, the pope asked their forgiveness for “those times when we adults have not cared for you, and when we did not give you the importance you deserve.”

Speaking with bishops, he addressed problems that included sexual abuse and divisions within the Church.

In Chile, Pope Francis met privately on Jan. 16 with sex abuse survivors. He drew public criticism, however, for his defense of Bishop Juan Barros of Osorno, who has been accused of covering up sexual abuse by his former mentor, Father Fernando Karadima. The Vatican sentenced Father Karadima to a life of prayer and penance after he was found guilty of sexually abusing boys.

The pope told reporters on Jan. 18 that there was no evidence that Bishop Barros knew of the abuse by his mentor, and that the accusations were “slander.” Boston Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley said, “Words that convey the message ‘If you cannot prove your claims then you will not be believed’ abandon those who have suffered reprehensible criminal violations of their human dignity and reject survivors to discredited exile.”

Helping sexual misconduct victims

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

• Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
• Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
• CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church
• 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners

Online Lay Minors Formation

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For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry

Order of Missionaries of Charity"
Faithful of the Church are made one in Christ in the Eucharist

By Fr. Herbert Weber

It was Sunday morning in the village of Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala, and I was concelebrating Mass with the pastor of the church there. Almost all those at the Mass were T’z’utujil Mayans, sharply dressed in their T’z’utujil traditional clothing, women in bright colored woven skirts and embroidered blouses, and the men in their vertical-lined white "pantalones." The men also sported great bright coloredashes around their waists and wore big cowboy-style hats to and from church.

Right after Communion, several men came up to the altar. Each received a pyx with a Communion host to take to the sick. They then walked out of the church and into local neighborhoods, each accompanied by another person with a votive candle, heading for some homebound individuals. The Mass had ended, but the celebration of the Communion continued.

Of course, we don’t have to go to Guatemala to see extraordinary ministers of holy Communion take the Eucharist to the sick. But seeing the opportunity to discuss the sacrament as a sacrement has to address more than the reception of the Lord in Communion.

Any discussion of the Eucharist as a sacrament begins with understanding the Mass itself.

Every year, I take the time to interview every first Communion recipient in the parish which I serve during the weeks ahead of their big celebration of this sacrament. Other adults also address the full power of the words of consecration. What the priest speaks are not static words, but involve the redemptive action of Jesus. He says, "For this is my body, which will be given for you," and "for this is the chalice of my blood— which will be poured out for you and for many."

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become the true body and blood of Jesus, which are also the same body and blood given up and poured out on the cross. Participation in the Eucharist is participation in Jesus' redemptive self-giving at Calvary.

Reception of the Eucharist, then, is participation in both the Last Supper and the sacrifice on the cross, both Holy Thursday and Good Friday.

As the Mayan men in Santiago Atitlán made so clear, the Eucharist that they carried to the sick was an extension of the Mass that had just been celebrated. They gave testimony to the reality that Christ is active on Earth through their desire to share Christ's sacramental presence with those who could not come.

As Pope Benedict XVI wrote, in the Catechism of the Catholic Church the Eucharist teaches that the sacrament "completes and surpasses all the sacrifices of the Old Covenant" (Heb 9:11-15; #1330). As God provided manna, bread from heaven, to the Israelites in the desert (Ex 16:4-5, 13-15), so Jesus revealed himself as the true, life giving bread from heaven that promises eternal life (Jn 6:51). "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" (Jn 6:54-56).

Understanding that Jesus' words were no metaphor, many abandoned him, no faith or religious practice. For him, baptism was truly the beginning of a new life. Each week, I would talk with Glenn and share the Eucharist. Since I had five sections of the prison to visit, I would rotate Mass and then the Eucharist to those in the other sections. Glenn impressed me with his deep love for the Lord in this sacrament.

As Glenn's execution approached, he asked me to accompany him to his death. The night before he was to die, I had some personal time with Glenn. After a final celebration of the sacrament of penance, he and I and another friend celebrated Mass as the guards looked on. It would be his last meal. It was also one of the Masses I recall best. He received the Redeemer with a smile and complete trust in a God of mercy.

So, somewhere, that Mass and that final Communion highlighted that through this sacrament we are all made one in Christ, who gave up his body and whose blood was poured out for us.

(Father Herbert Weber is the founding pastor of St. John XXIII Parish in PERRYSBURG, Ohio.)

By Barbara Hosbach

“He said to them, ‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it again until there is fulfillment in my blood, which will be poured out for you and for many.’”

Jesus, “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn 1:29), established the new covenant at that first Eucharist. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that the sacrament ‘completes and surpasses all the sacrifices of the Old Covenant’ (Heb 9:11-15; #1330).

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Black Catholics in U.S. history: This week, Pierre Toussaint

February is Black History Month. I'll observe it by telling you about some black Catholics you should know about. I'm getting a jump on the month because I have five black Holy Heroes.

Venerable Pierre Toussaint, a former slave, was laid to rest in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. No other place seemed as appropriate for a man regarded as a saint.

If he is ever canonized, he could become the patron saint of hairdressers because that's what he did for a living. (Hairdressers already have Sts. Martin de Porres and Mary Magdalene as patron saints.)

Pierre was born in 1766 as a slave in Haiti. He was apprenticed to a Frenchman Jean Jacques Berard. Since Toussaint worked as a domestic servant, he learned to read and write, and play the violin.

In 1791, Berard foresaw that Haiti's Toussaint, a former slave, was almost 450,000 of them, were getting a jump on the month because I have five black Holy Heroes.

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Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msg. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings
Sunday, January 28, 2018

• Deuteronomy 18:15-20
• 1 Corinthians 7:32-35
• Mark 1:21-28

The Book of Deuteronomy furnishes the first reading for Mass on this weekend. Deuteronomy appears in the Bible as the fifth book in the Old Testament. It is part of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament, all of them attributed to Moses.

In this reading, Moses addresses the chosen people whom he has led with God's help from Egypt where they were enslaved. He promises that God will send prophets with whom the people can relate. If anyone presumes to take the role of prophet upon himself without having been called by God, death will follow because God always will take care of his people.

St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians is the source of the second reading. From the earliest days of Christianity, virginity has been treasured. Christians have never been forbidden to marry, although all Christians are bound to be chaste, according to their state in life. From the Church’s first days, however, Christians have chosen lifelong virginity for religious reasons.

Corinth in the first century was a city notorious for its outrageous sexual excesses. Indeed, Aphrodite, the goddess of love and carnal desire, was the city’s special deity.

Paul saw virginity as a powerful Christian witness reflecting Jesus. And from a more pragmatic point of view, he thought that Christians not of love and carnal desire, was the city’s special deity.

Paul saw virginity as a powerful Christian witness reflecting Jesus. And from a more pragmatic point of view, he thought that Christians not obligated by marriage and parenthood should devote much of their time to Christian witness reflecting Jesus.

Put these two impressions together. The result is the ancient Christian link between virginity and discipleship.

St. Mark’s Gospel is the source of the third reading. It is an interesting story, the resolution, equal to that urged by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians. †

The people are amazed. No devil can overcome the power of God.

Reflection
Thanks be to God, few people today would say that they or great numbers of people are possessed by the devil, although the Church still teaches that such possessions occur.

An unfortunate reality of our own irreligious times is that fewer and fewer people have any sense of sin. Few regard themselves as sinners. They succumb to selfishness and often eventually to hopelessness in their hearts. They imprison themselves. They rob themselves. Sin is not the consequence of freedom. It is just the opposite. Sin is no reward. It brings nothing but the bad.

Jesus, the Son of God in the words of St. Mark, rescues people from sin, forgiving them for sins committed, and pointing the way to holiness.

Resisting sin, nevertheless, requires the help of God’s grace as well as personal resolution, equal to that urged by Paul in his message to the Corinthians.

Unborn Apology

By Stephanie Jackson

My thoughts travel back to that December day. I made the choice to take your life away. You weren’t allowed to build your own life’s story. For that, little one, I am truly sorry.

I was so afraid, unsure, and young. For my very own life had just begun. Would you have liked a little boy?

No, I’m sure a girl would’ve been my pride and joy. I daydream of the woman you might’ve been and then I start to feel blue. Hearing my own mother telling me, “The best thing I ever did in life was you.” I’ve thought of you throughout my entire life and attempted to make amends.

I will continue to do so until my own life’s story ends. If I’m blessed someday to finally meet you— I pray that I do— please find it in your heart to tell me I’m forgiven, and I can respond with: “I’ve always loved you.”

(Stephanie Jackson is a member of St. Vincent’s in Bedford. A life-size statue portrays Jesus holding an aborted baby in this April 1, 2015, photo taken at a memorial to the unborn at the Shrine of Christ’s Passion in St. John, Ind., in the Gary Diocese.)

Bonuses for deacons for parish ministry can be given at a pastor’s discretion

Q

I am the bookkeeper at our parish. Our deacon does wonderful work and puts in a lot of extra time for the good of the parish—sacrificing hours he could be getting paid for in his full-time job.

When I was arranging our staff Christmas bonuses, I suggested to our pastor that we give our deacon something as a thank-you. He said that would not be appropriate, because deacons serve the Church without being paid.

So the deacon had to watch as the rest of the parish staff received checks during our Christmas lunch. Where does the Church stand on this? (City and state withheld)

A

Perhaps surprisingly, some dioceses have issued guidelines to cover this. The Diocese of Bridgeport, Conn., for example, stipulates that a deacon in active pastoral ministry will receive a monthly stipend—fixed, for the year 2016, at $300 per month. Further, those same guidelines suggest that “the Christmas bonus for a deacon should be equal to his basic monthly stipend.”

I believe that most dioceses are far less specific and that usually the question of a Christmas bonus for a deacon falls under the discretion of the pastor. Parish lay staffs, in my experience, are typically underpaid, and a Christmas bonus can be a morale boost at an important time.

Whether a deacon should be included might depend on whether he has another income from a full-time job in the working world.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle or askfatherdoyle@email.com and 30 Columbus Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

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

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

Angela Merici

1470 - 1540
feast - January 27

By age 26, Angela had lost most of her wealthy Italian family to death. As a Franciscan tertiary, she performed good works and taught catechism to girls in her home in Desenzano del Garda. Two visions inspired her to found a congregation dedicated to the religious training of young women, she began this mission with a school in Brescia. Earlier she had endured an episode of blindness while on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and had rejected a papal request to run all charities in Rome. In 1353, she founded the Ursulines and served as superior until her death. This mystic, a patron of catechists, reportedly was fascinated from childhood by the legend of St. Ursula, an early virgin-martyr.

The Criterion

2018-01-26

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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. Obligations of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in this edition. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections; see separate obituaries on those pages.


STREINOS, Mary Lou (Goddette), 86, St. Gabriel the Archangel, Indianapolis. Jan. 10. Mother of Jo Cally, Kathy, Bob and Perez Streinos. Great-grandmother of five.


New baslica

Washington (CNS)—New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan invoked the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. during a homily on the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Jan. 18 in Washington.

Cardinal Dolan invoked the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in march vigil homily

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Bishop Robert E. Barron has become the ninth bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana. Meet Indypls. owner.

It’s hard to see how one man can get so much accomplished while still maintaining a spiritual life. But Fulton J. Sheen did it, and so is Bishop Barron. A chapter of the book is about his prayer life and his ministry a movement, and one of the duties won’t hurt Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

In 2000, its videos on the internet. Since 2002, he has over 1.4 million followers on Facebook. Bishop Barron has also written 14 books.

Bishop Barron is now 57. He had a great theological education at The Catholic University of America in Washington and the Institut Catholique de Paris. He tries to get into arguments between the left and right, especially his past when he’s more liberal, and he’s more conservative than liberal.

Bishop Barron has become a worthy successor to Archbishop Sheen. Call Susie @ 317-966-2376.

His most recent book is titled To Light a Fire on the Earth: Proclaiming the Gospel in a Secular Age. However, he didn’t write this book; John L. Allen, Jr. did. But Allen, who has been called the best journalist in the Catholic press, wrote about Bishop Barron, and it’s about him and his ministry.

Allen agrees with me that Bishop Barron is the greatest U.S. evangelist since Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen.

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Walls between respect life, social justice camps tumbling down

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The annual poll of Americans’ views on abortion sponsored by the Knights of Columbus indicates that more than three-fourths of those polled continue to view “significant exceptions” on abortion access, though a slim majority describe themselves as “pro-choice.”

The poll, conducted by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion, surveyed 1,350 adults in December and another 1,350 adults earlier this month. Seventy-six percent indicated support for “significant” limits, with 92 percent of those who identify as Republican, and 61 percent as Democrats. Fifty-one percent of respondents overall called themselves “pro-choice.”

“I think what you see that’s encouraging is that this is not, strictly speaking, a partisan issue,” said Andrew Walther, vice president of communications for the Knights of Columbus, at a Jan. 17 news conference. “The labeling (of pro-choice and pro-life) don’t quite tell the full story.”

“Policy change,” he observed, “could be done with the support of three-quarters of the American people.”

Sixty-three percent indicated they support a ban on abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy. “That’s up a bit from last year,” Walther said.

The Senate is expected to vote soon on a 20-week ban called the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, which passed the House last year.

The bill is not expected to pass in the Senate, since it will require at least 60 votes. President Donald J. Trump has said that if the Senate passes the bill he would sign it into law.

Walther demurred on a question of whether the Knights are supporting Trump. “Some of the actions he’s taken have tracked very well and with where the American people are.”

He cited Trump’s 2017 expansion of the “Mexico City Policy,” which requires that nongovernmental organizations receiving American health assistance to certify that they do not use other nongovernmental funds to pay for abortions.

Other poll findings include:

—A majority of respondents, 56 percent, see abortion as “morally wrong,” of those, most said they practiced a religion. The survey does not break out Catholic respondents.

—If it was considered likely that an unborn child will have a genetic disorder, more than 60 percent found abortion morally wrong.

—52 percent felt that an abortion “did not improve a woman’s life in the long run.”

—78 percent agreed that “laws can protect both a pregnant woman and the life of her unborn child.”

Poll shows a strong majority want restrictions on abortion