Abuse expert: Crisis is call to new vision of priesthood, accountability

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A Jesuit priest who has been on the frontline of advocating for survivors of clerical sexual abuse and developing detailed programs to prevent abuse said the crisis unfolding, again, in the United States is a summons to a new way of envisioning the Church and taking responsibility for it.

“I am not surprised” by the new reports of abuse, “I do not think it will stop soon and, at the same time, I think it is necessary and should be seen in the framework of evolving a more consistent practice of accountability,” said Jesuit Father Hans Zollner, a professor of psychology and president of the Center for Child Protection at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

“I know that people are deeply angry and they are losing their trust—this is understandable. That is normal, humanly speaking,” he told Catholic News Service under report of abuse. “I”

The courage of survivors to speak out, the investigative work of both police and Church bodies, the implementation of child protection measures and improved screening of potential seminarians, Church workers and volunteers mean that children and vulnerable adults are safer today.

But, as Father Zollner has been saying for years, that does not mean accusations of past abuse will stop coming out, and it does not guarantee there will never again be a case of abuse or sexual misconduct.

Dealing with the reality of potential abuse and the history of clerical sexual abuse in the Church is a process, he said. See ABUSE, page 9

Couple of 65 years is fifth generation of marriages in family lasting 50-plus years

WALDRON—When asked to pose while kissing, the bride’s and groom’s lips linger a bit after the camera finishes clicking. They smile, gazing into each others’ eyes as only those deeply in love do.

“Our nieces and nephews always said we were always kissing,” admits the happy wife.

Her name is Carolyn Weintraut, 85.

She and her husband Omer, 90, are members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County. They celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Aug. 1.

“It’s been great,” says Omer. “We’ve been through a lot, done a lot, prayed a lot. We take care of each other.”

It is a pattern that has played out through 187 years and five generations of Weintrauts.

Five times 50-plus

In 1831, Franz and Magdelena Weintraut married in Germany. The couple emigrated to America, eventually moving to Morris, in southeastern Indiana, where they were members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1881.

Their son Nicholas (see “From the Archives” photo on page 16) and his wife Anna settled in Waldrin. They became members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, where they marked their 50th anniversary in 1902.

Their descendants remained in the parish, including their son George and his wife Magdalena. That couple celebrated 50 years of marriage in 1941. Their son Albert marked 50 years with his wife Theresa in 1966.

Omer, the son of Albert and Theresa, recalls both his parents and his grandparents’ golden wedding.

New partnership between archdiocese, Marian offers scholarships for future Catholic school teachers

By Natalie Hoefer

WALDRON—When asked to pose while kissing, the bride’s and groom’s lips linger a bit after the camera finishes clicking. They smile, gazing into each others’ eyes as only those deeply in love do.

“Our nieces and nephews always said we were always kissing,” admits the happy wife.

Her name is Carolyn Weintraut, 85.

She and her husband Omer, 90, are members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County. They celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Aug. 1.

New partnership between archdiocese, Marian offers scholarships for future Catholic school teachers

By John Shaughnessy

By Natalie Hoefer

New partnership between archdiocese, Marian offers scholarships for future Catholic school teachers

By John Shaughnessy

Hoping to provide a model for Catholic education in the United States, the archdiocese and Marian University in Indianapolis have formed a new partnership to recruit and retain educators dedicated to transforming the lives of students in Catholic schools.

A key part of the new effort is to provide up to $40,000 in scholarships to any high school graduate from the archdiocese who is accepted into the Klipsch Educators College at Marian and who agrees to teach in an archdiocesan Catholic school upon graduation.

Students in the program will also receive classroom experience in archdiocesan schools beginning in their freshman year, and they will participate in a yearlong, paid residency at an archdiocesan school under the direction of a master teacher.

Another defining element of the program is that the students will study abroad in a country recognized for the high educational performance of its students, including Finland, Singapore and South Korea.

“Some of the very best talent that exists in our communities can be found in our Catholic high schools,” says Gina Fleming, superintendent of Catholic schools for the archdiocese. “The future grads of our Catholic high schools who are mission-driven, highly motivated and grasped with skills and knowledge that can be passed down to future generations are the very people for whom this program is designed.”

Fleming notes that teachers in Catholic schools have a calling to “transform the world”—a sentiment echoed by Kenith Brit, the dean of the Klipsch Educators College at Marian.

“Our goal for the program is to make sure we have graduates who improve the lives of young people, not just academically but spiritually, and from a standpoint of character and values,” Brit says. “This is our obligation and duty as Catholic institutions.”

On one level, the program is a response to the reality that “fewer students are entering the field of education in many states, including our own,” Fleming says, citing significant college debt as a barrier to students entering the field.
Archdiocesan seminarians gather at retreat house to build up fraternity

By Sean Gallagher

Eight years ago, transitional Deacon Timothy DeCrane was about to enter his first year of priestly formation as a freshman at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

“The first year, I was really nervous about entering the seminary,” said Deacon DeCrane, a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove. “Everything was a completely new venture for me.”

His nerves started to be relieved, though, when he began to meet and become friends with his fellow seminarians in early August 2010 at the annual archdiocesan seminarian convocation.

“Getting to know them, they put me at ease,” Deacon DeCrane said. “It gave me an opportunity to connect.”

Earlier this month, less than a year before he is about to graduate from Deacon DeCrane made connections with new seminarians for the Church in central and southern Indiana that are now in the same place he was nearly a decade ago.

One of them was seminarian Kris Galich, a member of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon who will be a freshman at Bishop Bruté.

“Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan seminarian director, has kept the seminarians in recent convocations at Fatima,” said Deacon DeCrane. “We want to build up fraternity among the men.”

DeCrane hopes to continue building up fraternity among the seminarians throughout the upcoming formation year by working with transitional Deacon Vincent Gilmore to organize trips of seminarians at Saint Meinrad to Bishop Bruté for the two groups of men in priestly formation for the Church in a very rich way.”

“The most important goal of the convocation is to build fraternity among the seminarians,” he said. “The more time we can spend together, wherever we’re at, helps to build that fraternity. Staying local and having more free and unstructured time to be with each other is important.”

Deacon DeCrane said he wants to make sure that the men are in formation now. “I think we want to make sure that they have more time to formative time,” he said. “We are intentional about community and spending time with each other.”

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson spoke time with the seminarians at the convocation, celebrating Mass with them on Aug. 7, andhours a cookout for them and priests of the archdiocese at his home on Aug. 9. “We are going to come together,” Archbishop Thompson said. “Fraternity doesn’t begin after they’re ordained. Fraternity has to begin in the seminary. So coming together like this, praying together, studying together, reflecting together, enjoying each other’s company — this is part of their fraternity.”

In the past, seminarian convocations featured pilgrimages to parishes and shrines across central and southern Indiana. Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan seminarians director, has kept the seminarians in recent convocations at Fatima.

T his “great” Galich said of the convocation held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. “Everyone’s nice, so it’s a wonderful experience to be in to make friends. It’s good to create friendships now that could last who knows how long with those guys who will support you.”

Nearly all of the 25 seminarians of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis gathered for the convocation, which included time for fellowship and prayer for the men discerning a calling as future priests.

When the new year of priestly formation begins later this month, the archdiocese will have 14 seminarians at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis and 11 at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. Four new seminarians will be enrolled at each of the seminaries.

DeCrane said he wants to make sure that the people of the Church “may all come to cherish the dignity that his love instills in every person — at every stage of life.”

Irick, 59, died at 7:48 p.m. CDT after洞察 lawyers for Irick had filed a last-minute appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court seeking a stay of his execution until after their lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of Tennessee’s lethal injection protocol could be heard by the state Court of Appeals.

Irick was unnecessary. It served no useful purpose,” Judge Mark Spalding of Nashville and Bishop Richard F. Stika of Knoxville said in a statement after Irick was executed at Riverbend Maximum Security Institute in Nashville.

In this time of sadness, that began many years ago with the tragic and brutal death of Paula Dyer and continues with another death tonight, we believe that only Jesus Christ can bring consolation and peace,” the bishops said. “We continue to pray for Paula and for her family. And we also pray for Billy Ray Irick, that his final hour was filled with grace, mercy, if not all, of them will be ordained and serve the Church in a very rich way.”

(For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit www.HearGodsCall.com )
New superior leaves comfort zone in accepting leadership

By Sean Gallagher
OLDENBURG—Throughout much of her 50 years of religious life, Franciscan Sister Christa Franzer has been asked to serve in ministries she would never have planned for herself.

She never expected to be principal of Marian University in Indianapolis.

And she certainly didn’t foresee being elected on April 15 as the superior, known as congregational minister, of the Oldenburg Franciscans.

But Sister Christa sees venturing out of her comfort zone one time after another as an expression of her embrace of religious life, which has a vow of obedience at its heart.

Ultimately, that obedience is to the will of God.

“That’s what obedience is, after all—listening to God, [including] God speaking through other people,” Sister Christa said.

At the same time that Sister Christa was elected congregational minister of the Oldenburg Franciscans, three other sisters were elected as members of the community’s council, which will assist and work with Sister Christa as a leadership team.

They are Franciscan sisters Deloise Menges, Barbara Leonhard and Annette Grisley.

Their six-year term of office began on July 1.

“We have a wonderful team,” Sister Christa said. “I’ve already been very impressed.”

Sister Christa served two previous six-year terms on the community’s council, from 1994-2000 and from 2006-12.

The other sisters on the recently elected council are new to community leadership.

“I assured them from the beginning that, though I might share a way that we’ve done something previously,” Sister Christa said, “I do not ever want to make it seem that, though I might share a way that we’ve done other things, that we’ve had and continue to have.”

Over that time of prayerful consideration, Sister Christa learned that many of her fellow Franciscans were serious in seeing her as a possible leader for the community.

At first, she laughed off such suggestions. “Teasingly,” she said, “You mean two terms weren’t enough?”

Sister Christa recalled.

But when the calls for her to consider serving in leadership started to come from a wide variety of sisters throughout the community, she became more serious—and more prayerful—during a time when she doubted whether she could serve in this way.

by several months of discernment by the Oldenburg Franciscans of what their priorities should be as a community, and who best among them could lead them in carrying them out.

The April 15 election was preceded by several months of discernment by the Oldenburg Franciscans of what their priorities should be as a community, and who best among them could lead them in carrying them out.

Over that time of prayerful consideration, Sister Christa learned that many of her fellow Franciscans were serious in seeing her as a possible leader for the community.

At first, she laughed off such suggestions. “Teasingly,” she said, “You mean two terms weren’t enough?”

Sister Christa recalled.

But when the calls for her to consider serving in leadership started to come from a wide variety of sisters throughout the community, she became more serious—and more prayerful—during a time when she doubted whether she could serve in this way.

“My spiritual director encouraged me to pray through those hesitations,” Sister Christa said. “It’s good to have expressed and acknowledged them. But you can get past them by praying through them.”

The community expressing its will on April 15 was an emotional experience for Sister Christa and the others elected to the council.

“It was pretty overwhelming,” Sister Christa recalled. “To have that kind of support to be called forth from the community is really a powerful experience.”

As congregational minister, Sister Christa will oversee the ministry of all the members of her community, including the many who serve the Church in central and southern Indiana.

She will also be involved in two institutions that have a long and continuing history of building up the life of the archdiocese: Oldenburg Academy and Marian University.

Sister Christa spoke with pride about how Marian in particular has for generations trained educators who have served in Catholic schools across the central and southern Indiana, and now is involved in forming future priests through its partnership with Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

“It’s all a source of real pride,” she said. “It’s a great blessing to be able to hear that and be aware of the influence that we’ve had and continue to have.”

Sister Christa hopes in the coming six years to broaden that influence by helping to carry out her community’s priorities, which include focusing on care of creation, helping women and children in poverty and becoming more rooted in their Franciscan spirituality.

But she recognizes that there will be challenges for these goals because of “the fact that we are aging, that our numbers are declining.”

That reality, though, does not dampen Sister Christa’s conviction that religious life will continue to be important in the life of the Church and that the Oldenburg Franciscans will contribute to it.

“It’s not going to be the same religious life of 40 or 50 years ago,” Sister Christa said. “But certainly some form of religious life will continue. So we want to be part of that new growth in whatever ways we can.”

An expression of religious life in the future that she sees as critical is to follow the call of Pope Francis in accompanying through times of joy and sorrow those with whom and around whom they live.

“I think the real focus this time is on our presence, who we are to people and relationships with people,” Sister Christa said. “Franciscans concentrate on relationships. That aspect of presence is what we probably are going to be remembered for more than building hospitals and teaching in schools.”

Nominees sought for Celebrating Catholic School Values achievement award

Nominations are now being accepted for people to be honored at the archdiocese’s 2019 Celebrating Catholic School Values: Scholarship and Career Achievement Awards event, which will be on Feb. 9, 2019, in Indianapolis.

Each year, archdiocesan committees of Catholic SchoolsValues steering committees ask people to nominate one or more Catholic school graduates who exemplify the values of a Catholic education for a Career Achievement Award.

Please consider nominating individuals whose ethics, leadership, service and achievements are significant to their parish, school, work and/or civic community. Nominations can include lay leaders, clergy and religious. Current Catholic school students and employees are not eligible. Nominations forms are available on the Office of Catholic Schools’ website, archindy.org.

Anyone wishing to nominate an individual should contact Joni Ripa at 317-236-1444 or e-mail at jripa@archindy.org for help in completing the nomination process.

The Celebrating Catholic Schools Values steering committee asks that you provide as much information as possible about your nominee(s). Also, nominees should not be told that they are being nominated. Incomplete forms cannot be considered. All nominations will be kept confidential until the person is selected.

Please return nomination forms by Sept. 14.

Nominations for the 2019 Celebrating Catholic School Values: Scholarship and Career Achievement Awards will be accepted through Feb. 9, 2019. Nomination forms are available on the Office of Catholic Schools’ website, archindy.org.

Anyone wishing to nominate an individual should contact Joni Ripa at 317-236-1444 or e-mail at jripa@archindy.org for help in completing the nomination process.

The Celebrating Catholic Schools Values steering committee asks that you provide as much information as possible about your nominee(s). Also, nominees should not be told that they are being nominated. Incomplete forms cannot be considered. All nominations will be kept confidential until the person is selected.

Please return nomination forms by Sept. 14.
Pope's words to young people should speak loudly to all of us

It’s not hard to understand why so many people grow disheartened by the challenges they see and hear about in our fractured world on a daily basis. Though life may be good—for the most part—for many of us in the U.S., there are still millions of our brothers and sisters in Christ who are unemployed or underemployed, have inadequate or no shelter, and struggle to find food to eat on a daily basis.

Walk certain streets in many cities, including downtown Indianapolis on an evening, and a sobering snapshot of homeless individuals will greet you. The empty expressions on some of those faces makes many of us question how, in 2018, such sadness and loneliness can still so clearly and painfully exist? Widen the picture around the globe, and you see similar circumstances and heartache.

For some, especially in developing countries, there are jobs, but they pay extremely low wages, some would even say criminally, negligent wages. There are other people being forced to flee from their homeland, and Christians and other people of faith being persecuted—and even killed—for their beliefs.

What’s a person of faith to do when they see and hear of these things?

Not sit idly in their indifference, but follow young people’s example of being “dynamic, passionate and courageous” disciples.

Many times, Christians can be tempted to “think they are saints” and justify themselves by saying, “I don’t harm anyone,” the pope told a group of young people before reciting the Angelus at the Vatican on Aug. 12.

“How many people do not do evil, but also do not do good, and their lives flow into indifference, apathy and tepidity? This attitude is contrary to the Gospel, and is also contrary to the character of you young people who, by your very nature, are dynamic, passionate and courageous,” Pope Francis said.

Even though his message was geared toward thousands of young adults on a pilgrimage as part of the Italian Church’s preparation for October’s Synod of Bishops on young people and vocational discernment, we can all use the pope’s words as our blueprint for being our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers.

If we do not oppose evil, we feed it tacitly. It is necessary to intervene where evil spreads; because evil spreads where there are no daring Christians who oppose with good, “walking in love” [Eph 5:2], according to the warning of St. Paul,” the pope said.

If we want to be true missionary disciples, it is incumbent upon each of us each day to love others through good works and deeds. Pope Francis told the young people.

In his talk before the recitation of the Angelus, the pope also reminded the young men and women to live their lives “in a coherent way, not with hypocrisy” by renouncing evil and doing good.

“To renounce evil means saying ‘no’ to temptation, to sin, to Satan,” the pope said. “More concretely, it means saying ‘no’ to a culture of death that manifests itself in escaping from reality toward a false happiness that expresses itself in lies, fraud, injustice and in contempt of others.”

Those truths remind us that living as disciples of Christ means doing things that today many would consider countercultural.

“It isn’t enough to not hate, you need to forgive; it isn’t enough to not hold a grudge, you need to pray for your enemies; it isn’t enough to not be the cause of division, you need to bring peace where there is none; it isn’t enough to not speak ill of others, you need to interrupt when you hear someone bad-mouthing another,” the pope said.

May we follow the Holy Father’s message for young people and be “protagonists of good.” And may we live the words of St. Alberto Hurtado, a Jesuit priest who served the poor in Chile before his death in 1952. “It is good to do no evil, but it is evil to do good.” —Mike Krokos

Letter to the Editor

We must not forget we are all descendants of immigrants, Critic reader notes

Bravo to John F. Fink for his “Background” column in the July 29 issue of The Criterion with the headline: “The United States has not been as welcoming as we think” concerning immigration. It is a wish I had a similar one for a long time.

I’ve reminded President Donald J. Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and our Indiana senators and congressmen, “If we don’t believe in what Lady Liberty stands for, we might as well slip back to France.

Except for Native Americans, we all descendents of immigrants. Putting restrictions on who can and can’t seek refuge in our country is a blatant condemnation of what makes America great. Trying to “make America great again” by arbitrarily limiting immigration is flat-out un-American.

Our leaders need to heed the lyrics of the song, “God Bless the U.S.A.”

Alice Price

Indianapolis

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and should be informed, relevant, well-expressed, concise, temperate in tone, courteous and respectful.

The editors reserve the right to select and edit the letters based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content.

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.
Acudamos a María quien nos enseña a ser santos

“El santo es capaz de vivir con alegría y sentido del humor. Sin perder el realismo, ilumina a los demás con buen humor. Though certainly realistic, they radiate a positive and hopeful spirit” (Pope Francis, “Gaudete et Exsultate,” #122).

Esta es la última columna sobre la exhortación apostólica del papa Francisco, “Gaudete et Exsultate” (“Alegre y alegraos”). Durante las semanas anteriores he ofrecido algunas reflexiones con respecto al significado de ser santos.

La santidad no es algo remoto o inaccesible sino algo próximo a nosotros y que se encuentra a disposición de todos. Este no significa que sea fácil; sencillamente significa que Dios se acerca a cada uno de nosotros mediante el poder de Su gracia y nos invita a ser fieles a nosotros mismos, a nuestra persona, tal como hemos sido creados. Existen muchos obstáculos, especialmente nuestra propia condición de pecadores y las tentaciones del instinto. Pero el amor y la misericordia de Dios nos sostiene y nos anima a crecer en sabiduría, valentía y amor.

Dios no nos llama a la santidad y luego nos abandona, sino que se mantiene junto a nosotros, incluso más cerca de lo que estámos de nosotros mismos, y camina con nosotros, acompañándonos en el sendero a una vida verdadera en Él. Dios nos da los dones que necesitamos para descubrir y cumplir Su voluntad. Entre ellos se encuentran la oración y los sacramentos, la inspiración de las lecturas sagradas, la reflexión sobre la palabra de Dios y el ejemplo de los santos que incluye a la gente “ordinaria,” tal como nuestras madres y abuelas quienes no son perfectas pero que viven a cabalidad el Evangelio en sus vidas cotidianas.

Hace dos días, el 15 de agosto, celebramos la Solemnidad de la Asunción de la Santísima Virgen María al cielo. La santidad de María es un modelo para todos nosotros; como la madre de nuestro Señor y nuestra madre, María nos enseña a ser santos. Comenzando por su disposición a aceptar la misteriosa voluntad de Dios que cambió radicalmente su vida, María nos enseña a decir “sí” a todo lo que Dios nos propone.

Según lo expresa el papa Francisco en sus comentarios finales: “Quiero que María corone estas reflexiones, porque ella vivió como nadie las bienaventuranzas de Jesús. Ella es la que se extasió de gozo en la presencia de Dios, la que conservaba todo en su corazón y se dejó atravesar por la espada. Es la santa entre los santos, la más bendita, la que nos enseña el camino de la santidad y nos acompaña. Ella no acepta que nos quedemos caídos y a veces nos lleva en sus brazos sin juzgarnos. Conversar con ella nos consuela, nos libera y nos santifica. La Madre no necesita de muchas palabras, no le hace falta que nos esforcemos demasiado para explicarle lo que nos pasa. Basta musitar una y otra vez: ‘Dios te salve, María...’” (“Gaudete et Exsultate,” #176).

Nosotros también podemos ser santos, podemos vivir las bienaventuranzas de la mejor forma posible. Podemos abrir nuestros corazones a Jesús y aceptar las alegrías y los dolores de vivir según su palabra. Podemos confiar en la misericordia de Dios para que cuando no cumplamos con Sus expectativas podamos rogar por el perdón y regocijarnos en su amabilidad. Podemos acercarnos a María nuestra Madre en cualquier momento y ella nos guiará hacia su hijo, Jesús. Podemos musitar su nombre a cada instante y ella nos enseñará a ser santos.

La santidad no es algo que esté reservado para la gente “mejor que nosotros”; es para nosotros.

Tal como lo expresa el papa: “Cuando escrutamos ante Dios los caminos de la vida, no hay espacios que queden excluidos. En todos los aspectos de la existencia podemos seguir creciendo y entregarle algo más a Dios, aún en aquellos donde experimentamos las dificultades más fuertes.” Lo único que tenemos que hacer es “pedirle al Espíritu Santo que nos libre y que expulse ese miedo que nos lleva a vedarle su entrada en algunos aspectos de la propia vida” (“Gaudete et Exsultate,” #175). Dios conoce los secretos y los peores ocultos que llevamos en el corazón. ¿Pudimosmos que nos libere! Y acudamos a la Santísima Virgen María y pidamosnos que interceda por nosotros para que, al igual que ella, podamos decirle “si” a la voluntad de Dios. Pidamosnos que nos enseñen a vivir las bienaventuranzas de Jesús y a crecer en santidad en cada aspecto de nuestra existencia. ¡Así compartiríamos una felicidad que el mundo no nos podrá quitar!” (“Gaudete et Exsultate,” #177).
Creation Care prayer service to be held at Holy Spirit Church, Sept. 1

A prayer service on the World Day of Prayer for Creation Care will be held at Holy Spirit Church, 2743 E. 10th St., in Indianapolis, at 10:30 a.m. on Sept. 1. The service is being hosted by the Holy Spirit Parish Creation Care Ministry in conjunction with the Earthside Creation Care Network.

Pope Francis has declared Sept. 1 as World Day of Prayer for Creation Care. The Season of Creation begins on Sept. 1 and ends on Oct. 4, the feast day of St. Francis Assisi. For additional information, call 317-562-0197 or visit the parish website at www.holyspirit-indy.org.

Fun run/walk to benefit Providence Food Pantry in Terre Haute, on Sept. 8

St. Mary-of-the-Woods Parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods is hosting a benefit “Hunger Bust Fun Run/Walk” on the campus of St. Mary-of-the-Woods College and the grounds of the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, on Sept. 8. Registration is from 9-9:45 a.m. with a 10 a.m. race start. All proceeds benefit the Providence Food Pantry in West Terre Haute.

The cost is $10 per person. Registrations will be accepted through the day of the race. Those who register by Aug. 23 will receive a free T-shirt at the event.

For additional information or to request a registration form, e-mail Jamie Richie at jrichie75@gmail.com or call 812-535-0484.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House to host widows’ weekend retreat on Sept. 21-23

“The Peace in the Mourning,” a retirement for widows, will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 3535 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, starting at 6:30 p.m. on Fri., Sept. 21 and ending by 1 p.m. on Sept. 23.

The retreat will be facilitated by Providence Sister Constance Kramer, a certified group counselor and grief specialist.

Presenters include Father James Farrell and Jennifer Trapuzzano Cripe, a recently remarried Catholic woman who was widowed the same year after her first husband was murdered in 2014.

The retreat offers an opportunity for widows and their families to share stories of losses, and heal from grief and allow them to remember their beloved spouses.

Widows of all faith backgrounds and ages are welcome.

The cost is $195 and includes private housing, meals, transportation, and more. For additional information, call 317-562-0197 or e-mail at 317-562-0197 or e-mail chili@archindy.org.

For events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events_submission, or by mailing an at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Cindy Clark, or by fax at 317-236-1593.
Golden anniversary couples celebrate 2,900 years of marriage

By Natalie Hoefer

Some love stories begin at first sight. Others take start as early childhood friendships that blossom and grow through the course of many years. Most originate somewhere in between. Regardless of how their narrative began, the stories of the 58 couples gathered at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis shared much in common: love, faith, commitment, sacrifice and joy written during a span of 50 years of marriage.

The couples came together from 36 parishes throughout southern and central Indiana on Aug. 5 to participate in the annual archdiocesan Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass. Together, they represented 2,900 years of marriage, 163 children, 324 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren.

As Archbishop Charles C. Thompson welcomed the couples and their families at the beginning of the Mass, he noted that 2018 also marks the 50th anniversary of the re-establishment of the permanent diaconate in the United States by the country’s bishops. The first class of deacons in the history of the archdiocese were ordained in 2008. There are now 57 permanent deacons serving in the archdiocese, plus three who are retired.

Two of the active deacons were among those at the Mass celebrating 50 years of marriage. “As a core belief of our Catholic faith, we hold that it is the very real presence of Jesus Christ made available to us in the Eucharist that sustains us in life, in our vocations [of marriage, priesthood and service],” the archbishop told the congregation during his homily. “So, it is most appropriate that we gather in honor of those celebrating a golden jubilee anniversary within the context of Mass.” He noted that the Gospel reading from John 6:24-35 was one of several in the coming weeks focusing on Christ as the Bread of Life. Such a claim caused many people of Jesus’ time to struggle and eventually walk away from him.

“We, too, struggle with challenges and uncertainties as we strive to live out our respective vocations,” Archbishop Thompson said. “We do well to take to heart the exhortation of St. Paul to the Ephesians, in our second reading, seeking truth not in ourselves, not in just anything that comes along… but seeking truth, St. Paul says, always in Christ.”

Later in his homily, Archbishop Thompson referred to Pope Francis’ recently published apostolic exhortation on holiness, “Gaudete et Exsultate” (“Rejoice and Be Glad”), which declares that “the call to holiness is rooted in baptism for each of us—not just for a few but for each and every one of us. [We’re] called to holiness, called to this righteousness in Jesus Christ alone, by sacramental grace throughout the course of living out one’s vocation.”

“The pope goes on to tell us, it’s by the little things we do daily that helps us to grow in holiness—when we are attentive to the needs of one another, as husband and wife must be to one another, and to their children, and children to their parents.”

Archbishop Thompson closed his homily with a note of gratitude “for the witness of you couples gathered with us this day, witnessing not only to your families and your communities, but to the entire world and the Church.”

“May all that we are and all that we accomplish be founded in him, the Bread of Life.”

After his homily, the archbishop asked all of the couples celebrating golden jubilees to rise and join hands. He then invited all present to pray in silence for the couples. And just as at the end of their weddings five decades ago, the brides and grooms were invited to share a kiss.

At the reception held across the street at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center after the Mass, three of these couples shared with The Criterion their love stories, the role of faith in their marriage, and advice for couples so that they, too, might one day celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. Their stories can be found below and on page 8.

(Anniversaries of 50 years or of five-year increments from 60 years and more can be announced in The Criterion by filling out the form at bit.ly/2M4MMoQ [ease sensitive], or by calling Cindy Clark at 317-236-1585 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1585.)

Sellersburg couple says ‘the right spouse ... will help you get to heaven’

By Natalie Hoefer

To marry at the age of 30 is not uncommon nowadays. But such has not always been the case.

When Betty Popp was in her late 20’s, her mother “used to tell people, ‘This is my daughter Betty.’ She’d be mortified,” says the member of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg. “I got married when I was 30. Back then, that was old to be getting married. But I was just waiting for the right one,” she says, turning to her husband with a smile.

Their love story began fittingly enough at a wedding. Betty knew Merlin Popp by sight through mutual friends, but had never met him. That situation changed when the bride needed to speak with him and asked Betty to find him.

“The first time I saw [Betty], I knew I wanted to marry her,” says Merlin.

Later, through a series of connections, he found out where Betty lived, and the two reconnected.

“I liked him,” Betty recalls. A friend’s father told her that Merlin “was a great guy and that a lot of women would like to date him. He was Catholic, he went to church. He wasn’t a stick in the mud, but he also wasn’t wild or crazy.”

In addition to knowing from the first moment that he wanted to marry her, Merlin also found Betty to be “a very attractive young lady. … Being a nurse, she ran around with a good crowd. She was a good Catholic girl, so I told myself, ‘I think I’ll marry her,’” he says with a grin.

And so, after two years of dating, Betty and Merlin were wed at the “old” ages of 30 and 33.

Two children and four grandchildren later, the couple celebrated their 50th anniversary at the archdiocesan Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass on Aug. 5 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

They take great pride and joy in the fact that their children sought Catholic spouses, are active in their faith and are sending their children to Catholic school.

“I like to think we played a role in their childhoods, and they always live up to their faith,” says Betty.

“I grew up in a little Catholic town [in Kentucky],” she says. “I always told myself I was going to marry a Catholic man. We decided early on that we wanted to give our kids a Catholic education. It’s not that we had a whole lot of money—it was just important to us.”

“When the kids were in school, we always tried to take part, and we’ve always been active in church,” she says.

The Poppins pass along some advice to young couples who want to one day revel in their own 50th anniversary.

“Love is a long road,” says Merlin. “Just realize that you can’t have your way all of the time. If you can’t compromise, you’ll have a rough way.”

Betty notes that couples shouldn’t “expect to agree on everything all the time, but you have to agree on the important things.”

One thing Betty and Merlin agree on is the impact each has had on the other.

“I really think Merlin is a good influence on me,” says Betty, followed by a vigorous nodding of the head and “vice versa” from Merlin.

“If you have the right spouse—and I do,” she continues with a loving look at her husband, “they will help you get to heaven.”

“Archbishop Charles C. Thompson delivers a homily on Aug. 5 in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis during the archdiocesan Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)
For successful marriage, ‘trust and believe in God,’ says couple

By Natalie Hoeter

When Cora Jackson refers to her husband Oliver as her “knight in shining armor,” she means it a bit more literally these days.

It goes back to the night they met, when she was 15 and he was 16. Oliver recounts the tale.

“It was Halloween, and she was [taking] her siblings trick-or-treating,” he recalls. “I was living with my aunt, and they had just left her house. Someone started giving them trouble. There was two girls, so I went out and intervened.”

More than 50 years later, the two now call herself Cora St. John, the wife of Malcolm Ettel, her husband of 50 years. They said their “I do” in St. Rita Church in Indianapolis. (See related article below about the 50th anniversary of the institution of the diaconate.)

That Halloween night, says Oliver, “it seemed like every time I turned around, she was there.” Both went on to seminary and were ordained to the permanent diaconate in Indianapolis and lived just a block-and-a-half apart.

As their children attended different high schools, they were able to develop their friendship at church as they both became more involved in youth activities.

“She was always nice and quiet and friendly,” says Oliver. “She was there if I needed to talk.”

Cora, too, found Oliver to be “really nice, and he was good looking. And he had a snappy dresser — I shall add that,” she adds with a giggle finish.

The two started dating after high school, and married when she was 20 and he was 21. They have three children, and now have eight grandchildren.

“The Catholic faith that provided the foundation in which their relationship grew has been the focal point of their marriage.”

“There were good times and bad times, but we always kept the faith, and God was always there for us,” says Oliver. “And we shared it with our family.”

Cora agrees that they “always blessed our children when they left the house ... and we still bless them on the phone. Now we bless our grandchildren—it’s a long tradition with us.”

It was their deep faith that brought the Jacksons through a particularly difficult time. Their daughter was preparing for marriage when Cora suddenly became ill, couldn’t walk and was confined to a wheelchair.

“That was really a challenge, but we put our faith and trust in God,” Oliver says. “When she got out of the wheelchair the day before the wedding and walked down the aisle with me and our son assisting her, you could see tears of joy and happiness all around.”

Her recovery took several years, but the Jacksons consider that time as the “in sickness, in health” part of their marriage journey.

In light of that challenging time, Oliver would advise young couples to “be faithful to one another, no matter what happens in your marriage.”

“And always keep the line of communication open between you two,” Cora adds.

But above all, the two agree, faith is essential.

“Trust and believe in God, no matter what you go through in life and in marriage,” says Oliver.

“Ditto,” Cora says.

“There’s no way we could have gotten through those 50 years without faith in the Lord,” he says. “He’s played a big part in our lives.”

Couples celebrate 50th anniversary of marriage—and the diaconate

By Natalie Hoeter

In 1968, Oliver and Cora Jackson said “I do” in St. Rita Church in Indianapolis. “It was the same day the United States bishops said yes as well—to re-establishing the permanent diaconate in the U.S.”

This year, the Jacksons celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

But they celebrated the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the diaconate as well, for it is an act that has greatly impacted their lives. That impact began five years ago when Oliver was accepted into the archdiocese’s deacon formation program.

“I was extremely busy back 10 or 11 years ago,” says Oliver. “A personal friend of mine was saying God was sending her messages for me and asked me if I wanted to accept it. I didn’t want to accept it ... Even though I was going to church and listen to God, I felt like I wasn’t right for [the diaconate].”

His share his doubts with St. Rita’s pastor at the time.

“He said, ‘I said the same thing about the priesthood,’ “ Oliver recalls. “Then he said, ‘But you’re still attracted to Malcolm. So I’ve always talked and shared our ministry. Deacons serve in one or more of the following areas: celebrate marriages, perform funeral and burial services outside of Mass, distribue Holy Communion and preach homilies. Additionally, the deacon can be a part of their ministry, deacons serve in one or several other capacities—as priest assistants in parishes, in religious communities in hospitals, and in bereavement ministry.

Oliver is assigned to assist at his and Cora’s lifelong home parish of St. Rita. One could say they both assist—a deacon’s wife, after all, is impacted by her husband’s service.

“I'm in here to be his helper,” says Cora. “I don’t mind helping and serving. If I do that, then it pleases the Lord.”

But supporting a husband in his role as deacon does have its difficult moments.

“It can be a lot of pressure on the wife,” Cora admits. “For us, it’s been like, someone from the church might call at the last minute with something that wasn’t in our plan, and we have to change everything we were committed to.

“We always put in a lot of time volunteering at the church even before he was a deacon, and I thought, ‘Maybe things won’t change too much.’ But there have been quite a few changes. . . . The last-minute stuff—I pray on it, and the Lord will help me through it.”

But Cora adds that “the benefits outweigh the burden, most definitely.”

One benefit is the time she and her husband share in prayer. Deacons are required to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office, and Cora joins Oliver in this ancient prayer of witnesses.

“We really do that faithfully,” she says. “I think that helps us a lot, and helps me refocus.”

His wife’s support does not go unnoticed by Oliver.

“She helps keep me on track,” he says, admitting he might forget about an appointment, and Cora will remind him. “I can get upset sometimes, and we’ll talk. We’ve always talked and shared our faith, but now we do it even more, and that draws you closer.”

As he reflects on the re-establishment of the permanent diaconate in the U.S. 50 years ago, Oliver says he is “very appreciative that they brought it back. It’s given a lot of lay men and married men a way to serve not as priests, but as that bridge between the lay person and the ministry.”

“All through my life, I always felt there was something God wanted me to do. We’ve both been so active at St. Rita.

“Now God has shown me he wants me to do more, and that’s what I do as a deacon.”

And he adds, “My wife and I were married 50 years ago when they solemnly vowed, ‘I do.’”

Golden anniversary is celebration of life for Lanesville husband and wife

By Natalie Hoeter

Around 1963, 18-year-old Malcolm noticed a “pretty good-looking” girl at a church in Clarksville.

“I thought it was pretty clever the way he put his arm around me, but I knew what he was up to,” Charlene says.

Charlene later went with a smug look at Malcolm Ettel, her husband of 50 years. The couple, members of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville, share a kiss during the archdiocesan Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Aug. 5. (Photos by Natalie Hoefer)

The couple, members of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville, shared it with our family.”

“We really do that faithfully,” she says. “I think that helps us a lot, and helps me refocus.”

“Fifty years ago, I was scared. After being with us.”

They left the house … and we still bless our children when we leave the house … and we still bless them on the phone. Now we bless our grandchildren—it’s a long tradition with us.”

It was their deep faith that brought the Jacksons through a particularly difficult time. Their daughter was preparing for marriage when Cora suddenly became ill, couldn’t walk and was confined to a wheelchair.

“That was really a challenge, but we put our faith and trust in God,” Oliver says. “When she got out of the wheelchair the day before the wedding and walked down the aisle with me and our son assisting her, you could see tears of joy and happiness all around.”

Her recovery took several years, but the Jacksons consider that time as the “in sickness, in health” part of their marriage journey.

In light of that challenging time, Oliver would advise young couples to “be faithful to one another, no matter what happens in your marriage.”

“And always keep the line of communication open between you two,” Cora adds.

But above all, the two agree, faith is essential.

“Trust and believe in God, no matter what you go through in life and in marriage,” says Oliver.

“Ditto,” Cora says.

“There’s no way we could have gotten through those 50 years without faith in the Lord.” He says. “He’s played a big part in our lives.”

His wife’s support does not go unnoticed by Oliver.

“She helps keep me on track,” he says, admitting he might forget about an appointment, and Cora will remind him. “I can get upset sometimes, and we’ll talk. We’ve always talked and shared our faith, but now we do it even more, and that draws you closer.”

As he reflects on the re-establishment of the permanent diaconate in the U.S. 50 years ago, Oliver says he is “very appreciative that they brought it back. It’s given a lot of lay men and married men a way to serve not as priests, but as that bridge between the lay person and the minister.”

“All through my life, I always felt there was something God wanted me to do. We’ve both been so active at St. Rita.

“Now God has shown me he wants me to do more, and that’s what I do as a deacon.”

And he adds, “My wife and I were married 50 years ago when they solemnly vowed, ‘I do.’”

(For more information on the diaconate in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, go to www.archindy.org/deacon)
“Family was important to both of us”

Dorine Weintrautz and Carolyn Weinantz, both of Shelby County, were working together at the Statehouse in Indianapolis in 1951. Dorine’s brother Omer was on leave from the Navy. She suggested he and Carolyn join her and her boyfriend on a date. Both agreed, and the two couples saw a movie.

Carolyn says that later Omer admitted that after the date “he told his friends he was going to marry me.”

In October of the same year, Dorine invited Carolyn to her wedding. After the nuptial Mass, Carolyn was ready to leave. “I said, ‘I won’t know anyone to sit with,’” she recalls. “Dorine said, ‘You’re going to sit with my brother.’ I think it was planned,” Carolyn adds with a grin.

She didn’t know that the day before the wedding, Omer had received a hardship discharge from the Navy to farm for his father. He was home for good.

The two began to date as often as possible, given their schedules. Carolyn was studying education on a full scholarship at Butler University in Indianapolis. Omer was busy not only farming for his father, but also working nights at the Chambers Corporation, an oven manufacturer located in Shelbyville.

The couple soon discovered their similar interests and values. “We didn’t care much for going to movies,” says Carolyn. “We both liked cards, so we would play cards with family for dates. Family was important to both of us.

It is still, she says, noting that the family still “gets together all the time, at least once or twice a month, even the grandchildren and great-grandkids,” of which there are eight and six, respectively.

The couple’s two children, Linda and Mark Weintraut, both live on farms just down the lane from Omer and Carolyn’s farm. Linda, 63, lives on George and Magdalena Weintraut’s farmstead, which Linda still plows, plants and cultivates.

After a year-and-a-half of dating, Omer proposed to Carolyn. She left Butler, and the two set their wedding date for Aug. 1, 1953.

“Except about where to eat,” Carolyn adds with a chuckle. “Or where to turn.”

“We’re just joined together”

While Omer credits their 65 years of peaceful marriage to the fact that he “married a good woman,” Carolyn cites the couple’s many similarities.

“We both have mild personalities,” she says, “and we enjoy the same things.”

One of the pastimes they share is fishing—an activity new to Carolyn upon their marriage, and one she came to enjoy.

“After Dad finished in the fields, after supper we would take a blanket and snacks and go fishing” as a family, Linda recalls.

It was a pastime the family enjoyed at a cabin the couple owned near Brookville Reservoir. Later, Carolyn and Omer spent many hours fishing in the winter while at the condominium they rented in Port Aransas, Texas. Last winter was the first season they did not return to Port Aransas in 25 years.

Carolyn and Omer enjoy traveling, too. “We’ve been to Europe four or five times, been to almost every country there, and all the states,” Carolyn notes. The couple also traveled to Canada, Mexico, and several countries in Central America.

“I never saw my parents fight”

The same hard-working ethic defined the couple after they wed. They lived as tenants on a farm owned by Omer’s aunt. He farmed both for her and for his father during the day, then worked nights at his aunt’s canning factory in Waldron, “sometimes getting only two hours of sleep,” says Carolyn.

She worked hard as well, helping on the farm and raising their two children. She then spent the next 30 years teaching, first at St. Joseph School in Shelbyville, and then at Waldron Elementary School.

 Summers were no time to relax during those years. Taking classes during the summers while still helping on the farm (the Weintrauts bought their own farm in 1969), Carolyn earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Marian College (now Marian University) in Indianapolis, and a master’s degree in education from Indiana University in Bloomington.

“Something that always impressed me is [how] they always worked together,” says Linda. “Mom helped in the fields in the summer, and in winter Dad cleaned, cooked and did the laundry. Whenever they saw the other needed something, they were there.

“We enjoy life, and we enjoy being together,” she says. “We believe in God. I think he intended for us to be together. We love each other, we take care of each other, and God has blessed us.”

After 65 years of marriage, Carolyn summarizes, “We’re just joined together.”
Take clear action, young Catholics urge U.S. bishops in open letter

NEW YORK (CNS)—A group of young Catholic women has urged U.S. bishops to “take clear action” by conducting an independent investigation of who knew what and when about actions by Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick, who has been accused of sexual abuse.

The women, who were inspired by Father James Martin, SJ, to take clear action, expressed concern that the bishops should engage in “public penance and reparation” for what he has done.

“The Open Letter from Young Catholics” was published online on Aug. 8 on the website of First Things, a journal of the Institute on Religion and Public Life, which is an ecumenical research and education center based in New York. The journal is printed 10 times a year.

The letter, addressed to “Dear Fathers in Christ,” had 43 signatures. The group includes authors, writers and editors; the heads of Catholic and other organizations; and professors, assistant professors, doctoral candidates and research scholars in various disciplines at Catholic and secular universities in the U.S. and elsewhere.

“You are the shepherds of the Church. If you do not act, evil will go unchecked,” the letter said.

It asked the bishops to “agree to a thorough, independent investigation into claims of abuse currently being made by Mr. McCarrick, both of minors and of adults. We want to know who in the hierarchy knew about his [alleged] crimes, when they knew it and what they did in response. This is the least that would be expected of any secular organization, it should not be more than we can expect from the Church.”

The letter also asked that “the silence surrounding sexual impropriety in the Church be broken,” and that the bishops “take clear action when priests flout the Church’s sexual teaching and abuse minor or young people.”

It said good priests should have the freedom to tell their bishops what they know, without fear of reprisal.

The letter writers described themselves as some being younger than others, but that they were “all children in the decades leading up to the sexual abuse crisis of 2002.”

They committed themselves to the following actions:

• “We will refuse to be silent when we see or hear of sexual assaults taking place where in the Church and by any person, clerical or lay.”

• “When those we know are assaulted, we will encourage the victim to speak out and forward. We will stand with them until justice is done.”

• “We will not accept silence and inaction. Rather, we will publicly name and expose those who harm others and superiors who fail to act when wrong is done.”

• “They said they are ‘grateful for the way good priests and bishops lay down their lives for us on the day of the Cross. May the Mass, absolve us from sin, celebrate our weddings and baptize our children.’ The letter writers also said they would speak out when they ‘discover clerical sexual impropriety,’ and would ‘protect the good priests and seminarians who are threatened when they refuse to condone the sins of their fellow clerics, or when they speak out about them.’

• “We are also angry,” the letter said, about the “credible and sustained” report of Archbishop McCarrick’s abuse of a minor and over allegations of his abuse of seminarians and young men. The group also is angry that “everybody knew about these crimes, that so few people did anything about them and that those who spoke out were ignored.”

The letter mentioned “reports of networks of people who promote each other and threaten those who do not join in their activities: [and of] young priests and seminarians having their vocations endangered because they refused to have sex with their superiors or speak against them.”

The writers said: “We need bishops to make clear that any act of sexual abuse or clericalunchastisygrades the priesthood and gravely harms the Church.”

They wrote that they were “scandalized” that Archbishop McCarrick held a position of authority in the Church, and said they “are alarmed by reports that Pope Francis acted on McCarrick’s guidance in creating cardinals and appointing men to senior positions in the Church,” adding that “men McCarrick mentored and lived with are now important archbishops and heads of Vatican dicasteries.”

Responding to comments that the cleric is highlighted as a major contributor to the sexual revolution and the loss of sexual morals, Father Zollner urged caution and an objective study of the facts.

“The statistics from the Royal Commission in Australia indicate that the abuse had its peak in Australia in the ‘50s and early ‘60s, which was before the sexual revolution took place, so this goes against that argument,” he said. Studies from the United States, Ireland and Germany also showed that victims did their seminary training and were ordained before the sexual revolution.

Father Zollner said there were “new allegations from the last 20 and especially the last 10 years has dropped almost to nil,” he said.

At the same time, Father Zollner urged a renewed vigilance because of “the whole area of the Internet, and the availability of pornographic material and all kinds of sexual exploitation that are facilitated by that, it brings a new dimension to this and to society at large.”
WASHINGTON (CNS)—In a June 15 letter to Boston’s Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley obtained by Catholic News Service, a former friend of the prelate about “sexual abuse/harassment/ intimidation” allegations he had heard concerning the late Archbishop McCarrick of Newark, N.J., wrote that the matter “doesn’t fall under his purview, to forward it to the proper agency in the Vatican.”

The letter “has taken me years to write and send,” wrote Father Boniface Ramsey, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Union, N.J. It is addressed to Cardinal O’Malley, who has been leading the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., since 2000.

In it, the priest describes for Cardinal O’Malley conversations with the rector of a seminary in New Jersey about trips then Archbishop McCarrick, as head of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., would take with seminarians to a beach house.

During the time period he mentions in the letter, from 1986 to 1996, he says he was teaching at Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J. He writes of the accounts he had heard of Archbishop McCarrick’s repeated behavior, that were not told to him, as well as other stories he was told after too many seminarians were involved for too few beds, “the extra seminarians would be called the archbishop’s bed.”

“One of these stories was not presented by the rector of the seminary himself, but were told by persons directly involved,” he wrote.

In an Aug. 13, phone interview with CNS, Father Ramsey said he didn’t know any sexual acts were taking place, “but I thought his [McCarrick’s] behavior was extremely inappropriate at the least.” He said he was careful about what he wrote in the letter to Cardinal O’Malley because he didn’t want to be spreading rumors he had heard, but he had concerns about the bed-sharing after hearing it was weighed on one of his friends who was tasked with finding seminarians for the archbishop’s beach house.

“I’d never heard of any adult who had sex with McCarrick,” he said, but felt the constant bed sharing he had often heard about was “something he shouldn’t have been doing.”

In the letter dated June 17, 2015, was sent just shortly after the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, headed by Cardinal Sean O’Malley, received its statutes in May 2015.

Father Ramsey said he sent it then because he had heard of the formation of the commission, and had recently been at the funeral for New York Cardinal Edward E. Cardinal McCarrick, who died in March 2019, and saw Cardinal McCarrick there. At that point, the priest, which was the retired archbishop of Washington.

“I was angry,” Father Ramsey told CNS. “I said, ‘this guy is still out and about.”

Father Ramsey said it made him “upset” to see then Cardinal McCarrick, after “this long history which so many people knew about, could come to show his face.”

He had written a letter about his concerns more than a decade before, in 2000, and it didn’t seem to go anywhere, but his new motivation came about when he heard Cardinal McCarrick and “wanted this guy to stop with the seminarians” as he said in the interview. So, he sat down to write a letter—again.

“The matter does not have to do with the abuse of minors, but it does have to do with a form of sexual harassment/intimidation or maybe simply taking advantage of young men who did not have the abuse of a Catholic Church official, but did have to do with the presence and influence of a man who was the Archbishop of Washington,” writes Father Ramsey to Cardinal O’Malley.

In a July statement, Cardinal O’Malley said he did not personally receive the letter, but the statement said “at the staff level the letter was reviewed and determined that the matters presented did not fall under the purview of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.”

However, the response from the cardinal’s office did not say whether it had been forwarded to the proper agency, as Father Ramsey had requested.

Father Ramsey wrote in the letter that after Archbishop McCarrick was appointed to the Archdiocese of Washington in 2000, he tried to speak to the apostolic nuncio in Washington, but was then Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo Figueroa, about what he knew. The nuncio told him to write a letter, which Father Ramsey said he sent. He told a priest friend about the letter and that friend tried to deliver it to him, sending it, telling him it could hurt him.

“I never received any acknowledgement, although I have certainly been certain that the letter was received, and that the information was forwarded to somewhere in the Vatican,” he wrote Cardinal O’Malley.

The writing of the letter didn’t seem to hurt Father Ramsey, as his friend had feared. But its revelations also didn’t seem to hurt Archbishop McCarrick, since I have little doubt that many persons in the Vatican were aware of his proclivities before he was named,” he wrote in the letter to Cardinal O’Malley. “And then, of course, on to the cardinalate, which was to be expected for the Archbishop of Washington, but still distressing.”

“Some of these stories were not presented by the rector of the seminary himself, but were told by persons directly involved,” he wrote.

Stay informed. Subscribe to The Criterion.

Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston, president of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, is pictured before a consistory in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on June 28. A U.S. priest, Father Boniface Ramsey, wrote to Cardinal O’Malley in 2015 regarding the alleged sexual abuse of seminarians by Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Cardinal O’Malley, and asks that if the matter “has taken me years to write and send,” wrote Father Boniface Ramsey, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Union, N.J. It is addressed to Cardinal O’Malley, who has been leading the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., since 2000.

In it, the priest describes for Cardinal O’Malley conversations with the rector of a seminary in New Jersey about trips then Archbishop McCarrick, as head of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., would take with seminarians to a beach house.

During the time period he mentions in the letter, from 1986 to 1996, he says he was teaching at Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J. He writes of the accounts he had heard of Archbishop McCarrick’s repeated behavior, that were not told to him, as well as other stories he was told after too many seminarians were involved for too few beds, “the extra seminarians would be called the archbishop’s bed.”

“One of these stories was not presented by the rector of the seminary himself, but were told by persons directly involved,” he wrote.

In an Aug. 13, phone interview with CNS, Father Ramsey said he didn’t know any sexual acts were taking place, “but I thought his [McCarrick’s] behavior was extremely inappropriate at the least.” He said he was careful about what he wrote in the letter to Cardinal O’Malley because he didn’t want to be spreading rumors he had heard, but he had concerns about the bed-sharing after hearing it was weighed on one of his friends who was tasked with finding seminarians for the archbishop’s beach house.

“I’d never heard of any adult who had sex with McCarrick,” he said, but felt the constant bed sharing he had often heard about was “something he shouldn’t have been doing.”

In the letter dated June 17, 2015, was sent just shortly after the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, headed by Cardinal Sean O’Malley, received its statutes in May 2015.

Father Ramsey said he sent it then because he had heard of the formation of the commission, and had recently been at the funeral for New York Cardinal Edward E. Cardinal McCarrick, who died in March 2019, and saw Cardinal McCarrick there. At that point, the priest, which was the retired archbishop of Washington.

“I was angry,” Father Ramsey told CNS. “I said, ‘this guy is still out and about.”

Father Ramsey said it made him “upset” to see then Cardinal McCarrick, after “this long history which so many people knew about, could come to show his face.”

He had written a letter about his concerns more than a decade before, in 2000, and it didn’t seem to go anywhere, but his new motivation came about when he heard Cardinal McCarrick and “wanted this guy to stop with the seminarians” as he said in the interview. So, he sat down to write a letter—again.

“The matter does not have to do with the abuse of minors, but it does have to do with a form of sexual harassment/intimidation or maybe simply taking advantage of young men who did not have the abuse of a Catholic Church official, but did have to do with the presence and influence of a man who was the Archbishop of Washington,” writes Father Ramsey to Cardinal O’Malley.

In a July statement, Cardinal O’Malley said he did not personally receive the letter, but the statement said “at the staff level the letter was reviewed and determined that the matters presented did not fall under the purview of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.”

However, the response from the cardinal’s office did not say whether it had been forwarded to the proper agency, as Father Ramsey had requested.

Father Ramsey wrote in the letter that after Archbishop McCarrick was appointed to the Archdiocese of Washington in 2000, he tried to speak to the apostolic nuncio in Washington, but was then Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo Figueroa, about what he knew. The nuncio told him to write a letter, which Father Ramsey said he sent. He told a priest friend about the letter and that friend tried to deliver it to him, sending it, telling him it could hurt him.

“I never received any acknowledgement, although I have certainly been certain that the letter was received, and that the information was forwarded to somewhere in the Vatican,” he wrote Cardinal O’Malley.

The writing of the letter didn’t seem to hurt Father Ramsey, as his friend had feared. But its revelations also didn’t seem to hurt Archbishop McCarrick, since I have little doubt that many persons in the Vatican were aware of his proclivities before he was named,” he wrote in the letter to Cardinal O’Malley. “And then, of course, on to the cardinalate, which was to be expected for the Archbishop of Washington, but still distressing.”

“Some of these stories were not presented by the rector of the seminary himself, but were told by persons directly involved,” he wrote.

Cardinal O’Malley said he also has appointed a group “to oversee an inquiry into the allegations made this week, the culture of the seminary regarding the personal standards expected and required of candidates for the priesthood, and any evidence of sexual harassment or other forms of intimidation or discrimination.”

He said he has asked the group to submit its findings as soon as possible.

“The allegations made this week are a source of serious concern to me as archbishop of Boston,” he wrote. “The ministry of the Catholic priesthood requires a foundation of trust with the people of the Church and the immediate integrity in which our priests serve. I am determined that all our seminaries meet that standard of trust and provide the formation necessary for priests to live a lifelong vocation of service in our contemporary society.”

Cardinal O’Malley is one of Pope Francis’ chief advisers on clerical sex abuse and heads the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

Boston was the epicenter of the abuse scandal that erupted in the Church in the United States, and the Archdiocese of Boston was then headed by Cardinal Bernard F. Law.†
Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Teresa Venatta

Are you being ‘called to listen’? If so, take that step

One of the “personality gifts” that I inherited from my father was that of not knowing a stranger.

My father would engage almost all of the people he encountered in genuine conversation, truly desiring to know something about or from the person he just met.

As a child and young adult, I remember noticing how the prospect of sharing one’s story or ideas with my father would make those he met come alive. I believe we can all learn from him and his journeys and be heard and honored, that in this telling we are called forward to more intimate relationship and personal growth.

If any of this resonates with you, maybe there’s a sign from God guiding you toward the ministry of spiritual direction.

Fundamentally, this ancient ministry serves to offer means of entering into those seeking greater connection and growth with God.

This offering is not through counseling.

That All May Be One! Fr. Rich Ginter

Interfaith and ecumenical resources available for us all

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis covers a great deal of ground: 13,757 square miles, which includes 39 counties!

Our 129 parishes and missions—and the majority of those are outside our Indianapolis metro area.

Any organization which numbers “headquarters” is located in a city which itself is only interested in the organization to the organization struggles to be perceived as “remembering the only city”.

I have lived the experience of having served parishes as “far outlying” as they come. Tell City, Richmond and Terre Haute. Each complained or opined how they seemed forgotten by “the big city,” the “ivory tower” in Indy.

But, like, I said, this perception comes with the territory (pun intended).

Interfaith and ecumenical efforts in and among our parishes in central and southern Indiana need close resources upon which to tether their mission. Theirs remain vibrant and attuned to the current patterns and connections in such ministry.

With this in mind, I am going to highlight two “closer resource cities” for our southern and southeastern parishes.

Louisville, to the east, has some wonderful interfaith resources. The Center for Interfaith Relations is sponsored in part by the Archdiocese of Louisville. It celebrates “the timeless wisdom contained in the diversity of the world's faiths...the richness of the union between thinking globally and acting locally.” Its 24th annual “Festival of Faiths” will take place on April 23-27, and it is “a nationally acclaimed interfaith event of music, poetry, film, art, and dialogue with internationally renowned speakers, thinkers, and practitioners.” For more information, go to centerforinterfaithrelations.org.

The Center for Interfaith Relations at the University of Louisville houses the offices of Hillel (a Jewish student organization) and the Cintas Center for Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Unitarian faiths. Congregations provide overnight shelter and meals for homeless families in an emergency shelter program.

They have grown to include more than 100 congregational partners, representing progressive Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Unitarian faiths.

Interfaith Paths to Peace (IPP) is a grassroots community peace organization, established in 1996. It serves the Louisville community, promoting interfaith understanding and peacemaking through interfaith dialogue, worship and resources. For more information, visit www.pathstopeace.org.

Cincinnati is to our southeast.

Interfaith Cincy began as a joint academic and interfaith project between the Brueggerman Center for Dialogue at Xavier University and the Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati Fellowship through Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

Interfaith Cincy has grown into a very large consortium of cooperation. Its goal is to seek out interfaith groups and the seeds they provide in order to enable them to expand its capacity services. Its website, www.interfaithcincy.org, is also a resource for those who want to design and strengthen interfaith dialogue.

Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati (IHNC) began in 1999 with a day center and eight congregations which opened up the doors of their churches and synagogues to homeless families.

They have grown to include more than 100 congregational partners, representing progressive Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Unitarian faiths. Congregations provide overnight shelter and meals for homeless families in an emergency shelter program.

They have also grown and enhanced the services offered to area “cars to provide wraparound support for the whole family that extends beyond emergency shelter.”

Go to ihncincinnati.org for more information.

I hope this information will whet your appetite to learn more about the services to be found in your own community. It’s way no-brainer, right?

(Father Rick Ginter is director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism. He is pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.)

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Henrich

Uplifting spiritual food abounds waiting for us to digest it

Delicious food often treats us to the best in life. Many find that the spiritual food in our midst that we often underrate.

One great food is found in the book by W. Morton’s book In the Steps of St. Paul, that I read. St. Paul was a thriving intellectual center with a progressive and occidental seaport. One of its noted philosophers was Seneca, who taught people like Augustus, the first Roman emperor and the great-nephew of Julius Caesar. At the end of the lessons he passed down addresses our temper when you are incensed, rectify the atmosphere before acting.

Reading this makes us wonder if this influenced St. Paul’s burning desire that he moved on the mission of digestion and live in the peace of Christ. Definitely the insight created for us is Gregory of Nazianzen.

Three times I visited the past exhibit “Painting Mary: Woman, Mother, Idea” at the National Gallery of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. Each time, it was spiritual meditation at its best.

It is a model of excellence. My mind’s eye was filled with Mary with Christ and her children at her side. It had never occurred to me until then that Christ had grandmothers—saints who also nurtured him. This left me gazing at the heart of Mary and live in the peace of Christ. Definitely the insight created for us is Gregory of Nazianzen.

Reading St. Ambrose on the beauty of the psalms is ever so nourishing! In the Book of Psalms, “beauty is profit for all, with healing power for our salvation. There is instruction from the book; meditation for instruction from prophecy, chastisement from denunciation, persuasion from moral gloriousness.”

“All who read it may find the cure for their own individual failings. All with resolve: I want to change!” he writes. “Let your childlike enthusiasm for the gymnasium for the soul, a stadium for all the virtues, equipped for every kind of exercise. It is for our innermost delight that he judges best to help him gain the prize.”

Spiritual food abounds just waiting for us to digest it.

(Father Eugene Henrich writes for “Called to News Service”)

Summer enchantment puts us in the presence of God

For prayer, I sit next to a window by a small tiered terrace. During the summer, it overflows with a sea of blooming pink and hyacinth flowers and slender plants and sprays hands plants that sends shoots of flowers higher and higher. The branches of the begonias extend out like what one might imagine as dragon wings. The flowers flutter in loose garlands painting the space red. Inevitably, I am mesmerized. My mind empties, time passes and I have no open book.

This experience prompted me to ask others what is enchantment for summer about for you.

One panned her words with gestures of messy juice dripping down her chin from a peach. Another who read St. Paul, as if she did a virtual tasting; a friend described seeing the 57-year-old mother-in-law into which her husband was about to jump in with their two grandchildren; I recalled watching my 37-year-old new high school teacher, who screamed when the unwrapping did its business on her.

Unfortunately, enchantment is not the sentiment that captures our current events: floods, raging fires, scorching heat, buckering political parties and separated families. The public airwaves invade our mental space with fighting words that are shrill, destructive. Facts are contested to fortify positions rather than to enlighten and inform deliberations. We are not given tools to think.

What we face is a serious corrosion of principles, values, manners, civic responsibility, bonds that sustain us in friendship, solidarity and community.

We must indeed engage with our voices, efforts and energy. Spiritual ministry cannot be the only fuel we can run on. It casts those who disagree with us as uncaring rivals and mortons. When we take up the cause, we enter as warriors equipped with war chests, power, dirt and combustible materials.

We cannot find common ground as we do not understand the other’s fears, and we dismiss them.

Unhappiness, disenchantment leads to cynicism, which discards hope for pessimism and despair. We say what we give up on the other, we give up on God.

When we throw up our hands, we do not acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world—working in our midst, guiding us, multiplying our work, patching us up, sending us forth again and making good out of whatever it can use. When all we aim for is victory, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.

Enchantment is to put ourselves in the presence of God and particularly in his love for the world. Captivating beauty, simple moments, juicy peaches connect us to the presence of God. The Psalmist intones, “We give you up, we give God on us.”

When we throw up our hands, we do not acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world—working in our midst, guiding us, multiplying our work, patching us up, sending us forth again and making good out of whatever it can use. When all we aim for is victory, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.

Enchantment is to put ourselves in the presence of God and particularly in his love for the world. Captivating beauty, simple moments, juicy peaches connect us to the presence of God. The Psalmist intones, “Give us in our times, we wait for your good news, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.”

When we throw up our hands, we do not acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world—working in our midst, guiding us, multiplying our work, patching us up, sending us forth again and making good out of whatever it can use. When all we aim for is victory, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.

Enchantment is to put ourselves in the presence of God and particularly in his love for the world. Captivating beauty, simple moments, juicy peaches connect us to the presence of God. The Psalmist intones, “Give us in our times, we wait for your good news, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.”

When we throw up our hands, we do not acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world—working in our midst, guiding us, multiplying our work, patching us up, sending us forth again and making good out of whatever it can use. When all we aim for is victory, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.

Enchantment is to put ourselves in the presence of God and particularly in his love for the world. Captivating beauty, simple moments, juicy peaches connect us to the presence of God. The Psalmist intones, “Give us in our times, we wait for your good news, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.”

When we throw up our hands, we do not acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world—working in our midst, guiding us, multiplying our work, patching us up, sending us forth again and making good out of whatever it can use. When all we aim for is victory, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.

Enchantment is to put ourselves in the presence of God and particularly in his love for the world. Captivating beauty, simple moments, juicy peaches connect us to the presence of God. The Psalmist intones, “Give us in our times, we wait for your good news, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.”

When we throw up our hands, we do not acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world—working in our midst, guiding us, multiplying our work, patching us up, sending us forth again and making good out of whatever it can use. When all we aim for is victory, we jeer at the Christian mandate for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peacemaking.
The Book of Proverbs is the source of the first reading for Mass on this weekend. Proverbs is part of what is known as the Old Testament’s wisdom literature. These books came to be in an interesting development of history.

As the years passed, and as circumstances occurred, good and bad, many Jews left the land of their heritage and moved to other areas in the Middle East or North Africa. In another movement, the armies of Alexander the Great swept across and conquered much of this same territory.

The Jews, descended from their forebears who had come from the Holy Land, found themselves in an overwhelmingly Greek cultural context. They then sought to reinforce their faith and ancient religious practices, and to convey this tradition to new generations.

The Greeks cherished the sciences and process of logic. So, in places where Greek culture dominated, the Jews sought to show how revelation, as it had been given them by God through Moses and the prophets, was consistent with logic. In other words, the Jews had to convince others—their own communities and their own children—that the teachings of the prophets and Moses made sense.

Proverbs was one such effort in this process. In this reading is an interesting technique used by the author of Proverbs. It is the personification of wisdom. Thus, wisdom, as if a person, speaks in the first person.

In this passage, wisdom invites anyone who is “simple” to come (Prv 9:4). Awaiting is a marvelous meal of the finest food and wine.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians provides the second reading.

Here, as in all New Testament epistles, the use was both to strengthen and to encourage the early Christians. In this case, the early Christians were those followers of Jesus who lived in Ephesus, then a great seaport and home to an important pagan shrine on the Mediterranean coast of what today is Turkey.

Paul admonishes these Christians of Ephesus to watch their conduct. They should live as true disciples of Jesus. Liturgy service is not enough for true discipleship.

St. John’s Gospel supplies us with the last reading.

It is one of the most memorable passages in this thoroughly memorable Gospel. It is familiar to all believers by the teaching of the prophets and Moses. It is the message of the Eucharist, the bread truly is the Lord. Those who consume this living, life-giving bread will be raised on the last day.

Reflection

For weeks this summer, the Church has called us to discipleship. Having put before us the image of Jesus, the crucified, the risen Lord, at Holy Week and Easter, with all the accompanying lessons of the Ascension and Pentecost, the Church has invited us to follow Jesus.

It also frankly has reminded us of our limitations. We cannot find peace and true happiness alone. We cannot secure eternal life alone. We need God.

This is a difficult lesson for Christians, for humans, to learn and accept. The Church repeats it again and again, but whilewarning us, the Church reassures us. Although we are limited, even though we cannot achieve salvation of ourselves alone, God is lavishly and mercifully forthcoming. He envelops us in mercy, love and strength. He guides us. He sustains us.

God gives us all this in Jesus, the very bread of life. In the Eucharist, we, even imperfect, are united with Jesus, the Son of God. He is our life and our joy and our hope.

Ed McNamara

My Journey to God

Always

By C.S. Likins

Is Jesus trying to tell you something?

Listen everywhere

His word is carried on the breeze through the cities and trees

Look for His presence in all places on all faces

He is here always

He is near always

The Way, the Truth and the Light

Open yourself to Jesus

Shine bright

(C.S. Likins is a member of St. Malachi Parish in Brownsburg. Photo: The moon makes a rare pass over the dome of St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome on Sept. 9, 2016.)

CNS photo/Paul Haring

Daily Readings

Monday, August 20

St. Bernard, abbot and doctor of the Church

Ezekiel 24:15-24

(Responsorial) Deuteronomy 32:18-21

Matthew 19:16-22

Tuesday, August 21

St. Pius X, pope

Ezekiel 28:1-10

(Responsorial) Deuteronomy 32:26-28, 30, 35-36

Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday, August 22

The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Ezekiel 34:1-11

Psalm 23:1-6

Matthew 20:1-16

Thursday, August 23

St. Rose of Lima, virgin

Ezekiel 36:23-28

Psalm 51:12-15, 18-19

Matthew 22:1-14

Question Corner/ Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Church has long revered Michael the Archangel as a saint

Q I am not a Christian, but I enjoy reading your column and learn a lot from it. I am hoping that you can explain why St. Michael the Archangel is regarded as a saint. I have always been under the impression that a saint is a deceased believer who is recognized by the Church.

A In the contemporary Church, what you have said is true. A saint is a deceased believer who, after a lengthy investigation, is formally declared by the Vatican to have reached heaven and to be worthy of veneration. But in the early centuries, there was no such formal process.

The first saints were martyred for their faith during the Roman persecutions, and Christians began spontaneously to honor their memory and to commemorate annually the dates on which they had died. It was only in the 12th century, under Pope Alexander III, that the process of canonization began to be more defined and to involve the Holy See in Rome.

St. Michael, as you point out, was never a human being. Like the other angels, he was created by God as a pure spirit— with intellect and will, but no physical body. The word “saint,” though, is derived from the Latin word “sanctus,” meaning “one who is holy.” The holiness of Michael has long been recognized by the Church.

Michael is one of the three angels mentioned by name in the Scriptures—the others being Raphael and Gabriel. In Chapter 12 of the Book of Revelation, Michael is portrayed as leading the faithful angels in defeating the hosts of evil and driving them out of paradise. He has thus been revered in Catholic tradition as the protector of the Church.

As early as the fourth century, Christian churches were dedicated to St. Michael, and since the ninth century his feast day has been celebrated in the Church’s liturgy on Sept. 29, which today is also the feast day for the archangels Gabriel and Raphael.

Q My father died earlier this week, and his body has been cremated. He loved his Cats, and a few years ago he told me that he wanted me to scatter his ashes in the backyard where his cats are buried, so that he could be with them. The problem is that, although he was not a Catholic (an avowed atheist, in fact), I am. So would it be a sin for me to honor his request?

A In October 2016, the Vatican clarified that the remains of the deceased should be treated with respect and laid to rest in a consecrated place. That teaching is based on the Church’s belief that the human body constitutes an essential part of a person’s identity and will one day be reunited with the soul. This Vatican instruction simply reinforced what had already been the Catholic Church’s practice.

In 1997, an appendix to the Church’s Order of Christian Funerals had explained that “the practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air or on the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend of the deceased are not the reverent disposition that the Church requires.”

These regulations represent a discipline of the Church, and do not have the force of its doctrines. And, in any case, the way in which respect is shown to cremated remains varies from culture to culture and even within our own culture here in the United States.

Your father, as a non-Catholic, was not bound by the Church’s regulations. Nor would I imagine that he meant his wish as a public repudiation of the Church’s belief in a bodily resurrection. So I would say that you are free to honor his wishes. And I know that, when you visit his backyard, you will remember to pray for your father’s eternal happiness in the company of the saints.

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbus Circle Dr, Albany, New York 12203.
Vatican makes progress on pushing drug availability for kids with HIV

AMSTERDAM (CNS)—An initiative to identify and promote private companies providing HIV care to children living with HIV has gained new momentum as international organizations and pharmaceutical companies responded to a Vatican push to look past profit to doing the right thing.

Surgical and pharmaceutical companies responded to a Vatican push to look past profit to doing the right thing.

"It's the power of someone standing before you who looks at you with the right thing. Authorities and says, 'This is the right thing to do, this is the ethical thing to do. And you, Company X and Organization Y, you are doing the right thing by making sure we get treatment to children,' " Thuman said.

"keeping children on the agenda has been difficult because they're not physically here and they're not making noise. So it's other people who have to speak up for them. Which is why the meetings in Rome are great. We finally got all the people who need to listen into the same room," Kean said.

The initial focus of the meetings, according to Msgr. Vitillo, was to get children interested and they did not have the mass of supply of electricity in many countries. Some of the formulations taste terrible, so children won't tolerate them. Some companies have begun to develop what they call sprinkles, like granulated sugar, and you can mix it with porridge. We need more of that," Msgr. Vitillo told Catholic News Service (CNS).

In the last year, the series of Rome meetings has expanded to include manufacturers of diagnostic devices that allow for a quick diagnosis of a child's status.

"We now have machines at testing sites which return test results in about 90 minutes, instead of the average of 50 days it takes when they send a blood sample off to be tested somewhere else," explained Chip Lyons, president and CEO of the U.S.-Based Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

Lyons, who has participated in the Rome meetings, helped get 1,700 diagnostic machines placed at clinics and testing sites in eight African countries, many of them in Church-run facilities.

"Going from 50 days to zero days to get the results is a really big deal," Lyons said. "That means immediately diagnosing and initiation of ARVs [antiretroviral drugs] for the child. The difference for the caregiver, usually the mom, is dramatic. She gets the meds right away that she and her infant need, instead of coming back several times over two or three months."

The diagnostic machines in the foundation's pilot program are all located in sub-Saharan Africa, home to 86 percent of the world's HIV-positive children and adolescents.

In West and Central Africa, 80 percent of infected children are not receiving any antiretroviral therapy. And it's getting worse. The number of 15- to 19-year-olds dying of AIDS in West and Central Africa increased by 55 percent between 2010 and 2016, even while it fell elsewhere in Africa.

Yet it's not just Big Pharma that has up its game. The Vatican meetings have also pushed the Church to fight harder against the stigma and discrimination that can be just as deadly as the virus.

"Stigma is very high in West and Central Africa. There are clinics with space, but the people aren't there," said Deborah Von Zinkeninkel, director of the Community Support, Social Justice and Inclusion Program for the United Nations Joint Program on HIV/AIDS.

Religious leaders gathering publicly tested and spoken from the pulpit about HIV will go a long way in breaking down the barriers to testing and treatment," she said.

At a meeting at the Vatican last November, participants adopted a 41-point “Rome Action Plan” with specific milestones for corporations and international organizations. A monitoring group meets monthly and updates a public website displaying progress toward those goals. Another meeting in December will discuss what more needs to be done.

We are constantly monitoring progress. We try to tick the boxes to see what has happened and not happened and figure out how to follow up. We still don't have all the formulations we need for children, drugs that kids want to take and mothers can easily give. There are some companies that we need to push harder," said Gottfried Otto Hurnschall, director of the World Health Organization's Department of HIV/AIDS.
U.S. physician is a reluctant hero in Sudan’s Nuba Mountains

NUBA MOUNTAINS, Sudan (CNS)—A U.S. physician who has won accolades for his service in a war-torn corner of Africa said he had no idea what any missionary is called to do.

“I’m a lay missionary. We’re supposed to show the face of Christ to people, but how can you do that if you fail when you take off going through tough?”

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

“Jesus Christ” because he heals the sick and helps the blind see. For some, the world’s focus on Catena is unfair.

“Tom is a hero. He has given 10 years of his life to the people of the Nuba, and he’s a rock star in that hospital,” said John Ashworth, a former Mill Hill missionary priest who serves as an adviser to the Catholic bishops in Sudan and South Sudan.

“But there are lots of heroes there, hundreds of heroes, yet they are not white and they’re not American. They are Africans, and they all have interesting stories, but the journalists aren’t interested in them,” Ashworth told CNS.

Catena said he is embarrassed by the attention he has received. “I think everyone in the world would love to come here and interview me. But if people come, fine. I can be the one to get the message out, to show another face of the Church and the good it’s doing in the world, then let me give it a shot,” he said.

“But I haven’t been alone. The sisters never left. The priests didn’t leave. The Nuba nurses and other incredible hospital workers didn’t leave. But when I tell that to a journalist, they often respond, ‘They’re from Africa,’ as if Africa was just one country. They want to write about the Khawaja [a local Arabic term for white person] from the United States, because that’s what people in the U.S. want to read about. Otherwise, nobody cares.”

At the end of the day, Catena said he just wants people to care.

“One way I’ve tried to get comfortable with the recognition is to remember when I first went here, I’ve been given a chance to show both the world how the Nuba are suffering, as well as the great work that the Catholic Church is doing here.”

Dr. Tom Catena, a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, examines a patient during.meds in late April at the Mother of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena said he is embarrassed by the attention he has received. “I think everyone in the world would love to come here and interview me. But if people come, fine. I can be the one to get the message out, to show another face of the Church and the good it’s doing in the world, then let me give it a shot,” he said.

“But I haven’t been alone. The sisters never left. The priests didn’t leave. The Nuba nurses and other incredible hospital workers didn’t leave. But when I tell that to a journalist, they often respond, ‘They’re from Africa,’ as if Africa was just one country. They want to write about the Khawaja [a local Arabic term for white person] from the United States, because that’s what people in the U.S. want to read about. Otherwise, nobody cares.”

At the end of the day, Catena said he just wants people to care.

“One way I’ve tried to get comfortable with the recognition is to remember when I first went here, I’ve been given a chance to show both the world how the Nuba are suffering, as well as the great work that the Catholic Church is doing here.”

Dr. Tom Catena, a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, examines a patient during.meds in late April at the Mother of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

Catena is not just a doctor, he is a Catholic lay missionary from the United States, who serves as an associate director of Mercy Hospital in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The Catholic hospital, at which Catena is often the only physician, is the only referral hospital in the war-torn area. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)
Silver Jubilee in Shelby County

In 1905, St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County, which was founded in 1880, celebrated the silver jubilee of its church building, which was constructed in 1880. This photo from the occasion features several priests and two lay Catholics who gathered for the celebration. Father Joseph Bauer, who was pastor of the parish in 1905, appears at left in the front row. Standing in the first row, second from right, is Nicholas Weintraut, great-grandfather of Omer Weintraut, who is featured in an article that begins on page 1 of this issue. The church was destroyed by a fire on April 4, 1924. The cornerstone for a new church building was laid within the same year.

Cardinal shares message of encyclical at Ghana World Youth Day event

ACCRA, Ghana (CNS)—A top Vatican official urged young people at a local World Youth Day gathering to protect the planet and actively live the teachings of Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment.

Expressing concern for the accelerating degradation of Earth, Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, told 3,000 Ghanaians on Aug. 5 to learn, know and spread the message of the 2015 papal teaching.

Cardinal Turkson returned to his native Ghana for the country’s fourth local observance of World Youth Day. The event allowed young people unable to travel to the Church’s global World Youth Day in January in Panama to gather in their homeland for a celebration.

Emphasizing that Earth is a mother to humans, Cardinal Turkson called for deeper respect and more concrete steps to protect the planet during the event’s closing ceremony. He also appealed for greater attention to the needs of poor and disadvantaged people.

The cardinal also addressed the importance of the need to change lifestyles to reduce environmental abuse. He noted that Pope Francis acknowledges that environmental awareness is growing as the world better understands the impact of the damage being done to Earth and all life on the planet.

He said, remains hopeful about the possibility of reversing the trend of environmental abuse as people adopt the encyclical’s teachings.

The cardinal explained to the young Ghanaians that the full title of the encyclical, “Laudato Si’,” On Care for Our Common Home,” was inspired by the invitation of St. Francis of Assisi, “Pray to me Lord,” in his “Canticum of the Creatures.”

Climate change, he said, is a growing concern because it affects everyone and that the well-being of future generations is at stake.

He noted that scientific consensus holds that human activities have led to global warming, which has caused climates to change as shown through now unpredictable rainfall patterns, the extinction of some plant and animal species and the disappearance of islands and atolls under rising seas.

To save the Earth and the environment from destruction, he called for an end to the felling of trees at current rates. He also advocated for the reforestation of the Arbor Day celebration in Ghana and elsewhere to encourage the planting of trees.

Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, holds a copy of Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment, “Laudato Si’,” during its release in 2015 at the Vatican. Expressing concern for the accelerating degradation of Earth, Cardinal Turkson told 3,000 Ghanaians on Aug. 5 to learn, know and spread the encyclical’s message. (CNS photo/Alessandro Di Meo, EPA)