Silence is Christ’s response to lies, divisiveness, pope says at Mass

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Jesus himself showed that the best way to respond to scandal and divisiveness is to stay silent and pray, Pope Francis said on Sept. 3 as he resumed his early morning Masses with invited guests.

“With people lacking goodwill, with people who seek only scandal, with those who look only for division, who want only destruction,” he said, the best response is “silence. And prayer.”

The pope’s Mass and homily came the week after Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the former papal nuncio to the United States, called on Pope Benedict XVI to resign for allegedly ignoring sanctions the Vatican had placed on then-Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick for sexual misconduct.

Asked about the archbishop’s 11-page document, which included allegations of a “homosexual current” at the highest levels of the Church, Pope Francis told reporters on Aug. 26 to read the document for themselves and make their own judgments. The Vatican press office and most officials named in the archbishop’s document also refused to comment.

The Gospel for Sept. 3 recounted Jesus’ return to Nazareth and the fury of the townspeople when he refused to perform miracles for them. The reading from St. Luke ends: “They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But he passed through the midst of them and went away” (Lk 4:29-30).

In his homily, Pope Francis said the reading should help Christians “reflect on how to act in daily life when there are misunderstandings,” but also to understand “how the father of lies, the accuser, the devil acts to destroy the unity of a family, of a people.”

Young adults share soul-lifting soundtrack that inspires, shapes their lives of faith

With that impact in mind, The Criterion posed a question to several young adults whose love of music and the Catholic faith marks their lives: “If you were asked to help put together a playlist of faith-related songs that you think would inspire, connect with and draw youths and young adults closer to God and their Catholic faith, what would you put on the playlist?”

The song choices of these five young adults have been put together to create a soul-lifting soundtrack of 15 songs. Here is a list of the songs they have chosen, the artists who perform them, and the reasons each young adult gave for adding their choices to the playlist.

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Pope Francis: Pray, act to protect clean water, and guarantee its access throughout the world

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Water is a gift of God that makes life possible and yet millions of people do not have access to safe drinking water, and rivers, seas and oceans continue to be polluted, Pope Francis said.

“Care for water sources and water basins is an urgent imperative,” the pope said in a message on Sept. 1, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, an observance begun by the Orthodox Church and now celebrated by many Christians.

While the World Day 2018 focused on water, Pope Francis drew special attention to the more than 600 million people who do not have regular access to clean drinking water.

Access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights,” the pope said.

The power of music

Catholic musicians Matt Maher and Audrey Assad perform on July 3, 2017, during the “Convocation of Catholic Leaders: The Joy of the Gospel in America” in Orlando, Fla. Both artists are among the musicians whose songs inspire young people’s lives of faith. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)
Vatican City (CNS) — Days after he called on Pope Francis to resign for allegedly ignoring sanctions placed on then-Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, provided his version of a meeting that, in the minds of many, changed the overall narrative of Pope Francis’ visit to the United States in 2015.

Archbishop Viganò, then the nuncio to the United States, had arranged for the pope to meet privately at the nunciature in Washington with Cardinal Kim Davis, the county clerk from Kentucky who had been jailed for refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

According to a Vatican News report on Sept. 19, in late August that Pope Francis had mentioned in conversation Archbishop Viganò and the Kim Davis affair.

Even in a family, the pope said, there are times when a discussion of politics or sports or money escalates. “There is no point,” he said. “It wasn’t people, it was a pack of wild dogs,” the devil, who “had sown the seeds of discord.”

“Because the truth is silent. The truth is not noisy,” he said. “The truth is meek. The truth is not powerful. The truth is meek.”

After Davis’ lawyer made news of the meeting public a few days later, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, then Vatican spokesman, had told reporters, “the pope did not enter into the details of the situation of Mrs. Davis, and his meeting with her should not be considered a form of support her position in all of its particular and concrete aspects.”

Juan Carlos Cruz, one of the Chilean abuse survivors who met the pope in April, told the New York Times in late August that Pope Francis had mentioned in conversation Archbishop Viganò and the Kim Davis meeting.

“I didn’t know that who was woman, and she struck him in the face, and I was horified and I fired her,” Cruz quoted Pope Francis as saying.

According to a Vatican News report on Sept. 19, Archbishop Viganò said on Sept. 2 that he had not intended to harm the pope with his idea to have Davis at the nunciature.

Father Rosica said that Archbishop Viganò told them verbatim: “The Holy Father in his paternal benevolence thought for his visit to the USA, but also said that I had deceived him in bringing that woman to the nunciature.”

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Archbishop Chaput: Cancel youth synod, meet about bishops

PHILADELPHIA (CNS)—Philadelphia Archbishop Charles J. Chaput is asking Pope Francis to call off the Synod of Bishops on young people this October to focus instead on the life of the bishops.

“I have written the Holy Father and called on him to cancel the upcoming synod on young people. Right now, the bishops would have absolutely no credibility in addressing this topic,” the archbishop said at an Aug. 30 conference at Philadelphia’s St. Charles Borromean Seminary, according to a report by the website LifeSiteNews.

In its place, the archbishop suggested that the pope “begin making plans for a synod on the life of bishops,” the archbishop said.

Ken Gavin, spokesman for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, confirmed the archbishop sent the letter to the pope, but he offered no additional comments.

The archbishop gave his comments about canceling the synod during a panel discussion called the “Cardinals’ Forum,” sponsored by the Cardinal John Foley Chair of Social Communications and Homiletics and the Cardinal John Krol Chair of Moral Theology, both at the seminary.

The archbishop, who is set to participate in the synod on youth, was one of three panelists speaking on the topic: “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment,” the theme of the Oct. 3-28 synod in Rome.

Hundreds of bishops and young people representing youth from across the globe will engage in discussions at that meeting, and typically the pope attends some synod meetings. After the gathering’s conclusion, the bishops make recommendations to advise the pope as he formulates pastoral policy to address the specific issues discussed.

Pope Francis had previously confirmed Archbishop Chaput, chairman of the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), as one of the American bishops to attend the synod, all of whom were elected by their peers in the USCCB.

The other Church leaders planning to attend are: Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, USCCB president; Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, USCCB vice president; Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of Bridgeport, Conn., a member of the USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth; and Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis. Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, N.J., was also appointed by the pope to attend the synod.

Calls for reform in the Catholic hierarchy have risen throughout the summer as the clergy sexual abuse scandal has intensified, with bishops across the globe coming under scrutiny for their potential role in covering up cases of abuse of children and young adults.

And confidence in the credibility of Catholic bishops has been eroding in the wake of allegations against the former Washington Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick, the Pennsylvania grand jury report on 70 years of clergy child sexual abuse in the state and the explosive letter of Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the former U.S. papal nuncio, alleging the cover-up of Archbishop McCarrick’s abuse by bishops in the United States and in the Vatican.

Dallas bishop asks pope to convene synod to discuss clergy abuse

DALLAS (CNS)—Dallas Bishop Edward J. Burns has asked Pope Francis for an extraordinary synod to address issues in the latest Catholic clergy sex abuse crisis, including “abuse of power, clericalism, accountability and the understanding of transparency in the Church.”

The letter, posted to the Diocese of Dallas’ website on Aug. 30, was signed by the bishop and priests who serve in leadership roles in various diocesan consultative bodies in the diocese. It had been sent earlier in the day to Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Burns’ home diocese, so that it could be forwarded to the pope as soon as possible.

“The current crisis of sexual abuse by clergy, the cover-up by leaders in the Church and the lack of fidelity of some have caused great harm,” the letter said. It suggests that this synod should include topics such as “the care and the safeguard of children and the vulnerable, outreach to victims, the identity and lifestyle of the clergy, the importance of healthy human formation within the presbytery/religious community, etc.”

“We are working diligently at the local level to deal with these issues but increasing accountability at all levels of the Church is of utmost importance,” Bishop Burns said in a statement. He also noted that the priests who signed the letter “believe a real solution must be found to the heinous issue of clergy abuse of minors.”

One of the signers was Father Rudy Garcia, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Frisco, who serves on the diocesan presbyteral council.

“It’s important to come together at this time of crisis in the community of faith and respond to it through the lens of faith and with a firm resolve to create a safe environment for our young and vulnerable adults,” he said, adding that priests must go through the same Safe Environment training that lay individuals who work or volunteer in parishes and schools are required to do annually.

“I think the bishop does an excellent job in drawing the community together and addressing this difficult issue at this difficult time and marshalling us around a solid plan of spirituality and of guaranteeing the safety of our environment now and in the future,” he said.

In a news conference on Aug. 30, Bishop Burns told reporters that he did not know whether the letter would move the pope to call a synod, but he said that numerous priests encouraged him to send it anyway.

The bishop’s call for the special synod follows a similar one from the bishop of Portsmouth, England, on Aug. 22, and comes after weeks of news of clergy abuse, not only across the United States and abroad, but also within the Diocese of Dallas.

On Aug. 19, Bishop Burns told members of St. Cecilia Parish that their former pastor, Father Edmundo Paredes, had not only stolen church funds, but had also been accused of sexual misconduct by three individuals, later revealed to be three now-adult males, who said the abuse happened more than a decade ago. The bishop said that those allegations were found to be credible.

“If we are ever going to restore trust or credibility in the Church, it’s only going to come after we consistently do what is right,” Bishop Burns said on Aug. 26 at St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Plano.

“My friends, let me say to you that if this Church of ours has to go through a purification, so be it,” he said to applause. “And let us pray for the fire of the Holy Spirit, so as to purify us, in what we need to do, in being the Church that we say we are. I’m not going to cover my ears or cover my eyes or cover my mouth, and we are going to look at this head-on.”

In this 2015 file photo, Pope Francis raises the Eucharist as he celebrates the closing Mass of the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia. With him at the altar is Philadelphia Archbishop Charles J. Chaput. The Pennsylvania archbishop is asking the pope to call off the synod of bishops in Rome on the concerns of young people in the Church, set for this October. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)
In the early 2000s, when the sex abuse scandal first shocked the Church in the United States, Cincinnati Archbishop Daniel P. DiCicco (now retired), initiated a program he called “Grateful Believers.” He dedicated his weekly column in the archdiocesan newspaper to reminiscences about people and things for which he was grateful, and he invited all clergy and lay people in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to call to mind similar experiences of gratitude.

Archbishop DiCicco’s insight was that if we focus only on the negative, on the sins and scandals, we risk losing sight of the fundamental beauty and goodness of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. Yes, our Church’s leaders have sinned. Yes, we are right to be embarrassed, angry and hurt. But is that all there is to it?

Think back to the experiences for which you are grateful: For the gift of Jesus Christ, who came to save the sinner and all the sacraments; for the Word of God generously shared in the Scriptures, for the ministry of the priests and bishops; for the holy women and men in religious orders, and countless lay people, who have given their lives to proclaim the Gospel, to teach our children and to serve the poor and vulnerable among us. We should be grateful to them—more than ever—because they did not give up on the Church. We should be grateful, now more than ever.

Are you mad at the pope and the bishops for their failure to protect our children and punish those who committed horrible crimes? Fair enough. There is plenty to be mad about. But is that all there is to it?

There are more than a few reasons to be grateful for the ministry of recent popes, for the leadership of archbishops past and present, and for the good priests who have served parishes in central and southern Indiana so faithfully. Name a few of the people you are grateful for. Recall their kindness to you in times of trouble, or their ministry to the sick and elderly members of your family. Thank God for all that they shared with you in homilies or faith sharing sessions. Remember the people who cared unselfishly for the needs of God’s people, and say thank you.

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Gratitude is the best cure for anger and depression. It lifts our spirits and calls attention to the blessings we have received—undeservedly and with no strings attached. When we say thank you to God or to another human being, we acknowledge that we are not autonomous, self-sufficient beings, but members of God’s family called to love and serve one another.

Grateful believers are not naive. They do not sweep bad news under the carpet or maintain that no evil has been done by sinful men and women in positions of authority in the Church. Grateful believers are thankful that painful truths are now being told; that Church leaders are cooperating with civil authorities and being accountable for, and transparent about, abuses dating back several generations. Grateful believers are sad and angry, but they refuse to let these emotions paralyze them or cause them to give up on the Church. Grateful believers do not want the work of Christ to continue—now more than ever. The Gospel must be preached, the faith handed on to future generations, and the poor and vulnerable must be served. Whatever evil may have been committed by individual Church leaders, there is still no greater force for good in the United States than the Catholic Church. No institution or community does a better job of resettling refugees, of helping children and families break the cycle of poverty, of caring for the health care needs of the indigent poor, of inspiring young people to live lives of faithfulness. Once, while in a moment of uncertainty, I wanted to know how to lead my life. I turned to a book by Fr. Edward Flanagan, the founder of Boys Town. He explained that if we focus only on the negative, on the sins and scandals, we risk losing sight of the fundamental beauty and goodness of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. Yes, our Church’s leaders have sinned. Yes, we are right to be embarrassed, angry and hurt. But is that all there is to it?

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Thank you, Pope Francis, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, and all the holy priests and deacons, religious women and men, and lay people who serve the Church in central and southern Indiana. We are grateful believers who—in spite of everything—appreciate your ministry now more than ever.
El nacimiento de la Santísima Virgen María es un motivo de alegría especial.

“Celebremos con júbilo el nacimiento de la Santísima Virgen María, el día de la Concepcción (8 de diciembre), este es un día que celebremos con más fervor y devoción. La Virgen María es nuestra Madre, la Madre de Dios, y la Madre de todos los seres humanos. Por su nacimiento, la humanidad experimenta una nueva esperanza y salvación. A través de María, nos acercamos al corazón de Dios, y en ella, encontramos la clave para nuestra salvación. A ella la llamamos Madre, y en su persona, encontramos la mediación indispensable para alcanzar la gracia divina.

Por eso, en el Día de la Inmaculada Concepción, celebramos el nacimiento de la Virgen María, la Madre de Dios, con alegría y devoción. Este día es una oportunidad para recordar el sacrificio que María realizó al aceptar ser la madre de Dios, y para buscar en ella nuestra guía y protección.

En la Iglesia Católica, el Día de la Inmaculada Concepción es una festividad importante, donde se recuerda el día en que la Virgen María recibió el don de la Inmaculada Concepción, que es el hecho de que María, en su concepción, estaba libre de toda pecaminosidad.

La celebración del nacimiento de María es un motivo de alegría y devoción. Esta festividad nos invita a reflexionar sobre la importancia de la virginidad de María, y sobre la gracia que ella nos ofrece a través de su vida, su fe y su obediencia.

A María, la Santísima Virgen María, le damos gracias por ser nuestra Madre, y le rogamos que nos guíe y proteja en su camino hacia la salvación.

Blessed Virgin Mary's birth is a cause for special joy

“Let us celebrate with joy the birth of the Virgin Mary, of whom was born the Sun of Justice. ... Her birth celebrates the salvation for the whole world. ... Her image is light for the whole Christian people.” (Liturgy of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

Tomorrow, Sept. 8, the Church celebrates the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It’s a minor Marian feast unlike the Assumption (Aug. 15) or the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8), but it is still an important day in the liturgical calendar.

In fact, only two saints are remembered on their birthdays—St. John the Baptist and Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Both birthdays represent the transition from the Old Testament faith of Israel to the New Testament’s account of the life, death and resurrection of Christ and the birth of the Church and the age of the Holy Spirit.

Both birthdays are celebrated with readings, songs and prayers that emphasize the great joy we experience through the birth of John, the final prophet of the Old Testament and precursor of Jesus, and the birth of Mary, the sinless one who was chosen to be the mother of God.

According to the Dictionary of Mary, published by Catholic Book Publishing Company (New York, 1985), “The birth of Mary is ordained in particular toward her mission as Mother of the Savior. Her existence is indissolubly connected with that of Christ: it partakes of a unique plan of predestination and grace. God’s mysterious plan regarding the incarnation of the Word embraces also the Virgin who is his Mother. In this way, the Birth of Mary is inserted at the very heart of the history of Salvation.”

Like John the Baptist, son of Mary’s cousin Elizabeth, the history of our salvation reaches a culmination point when she is born. The Bible tells us nothing about Mary’s birth or about her parents, whom tradition identifies as St. Joachim and St. Anne. Still, the devotion of Christians dating back to the earliest days of the Church testifies to Mary’s birth as a time of great joy, the fulfillment of God’s promise to free humankind from the curse of original sin by providing with a new mother, the new Eve, whose “yes” to God’s will would crush the head of the evil serpent and make possible the birth of our Savior.

In the first reading for the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Mt 1:1-4a), the prophet announces the coming of the Lord of Israel who will come forth from Bethlehem of Judah. The Mother of the Messiah, presented as one about to give birth, will give life to the prince and pastor of the house of David who will bring justice and peace. She will work with the Messiah to bring forth a new people.

The second reading (Rom 8:28-30) does not speak directly about Mary, but about the believer justified by the grace of Christ and gifted with the indwelling of the Spirit. He or she has been chosen and called from all eternity to share Christ’s life and glory. This is true in a privileged manner for Mary, Spouse and Temple of the Holy Spirit, Mother of God’s Son, and intimately united with him in a divine plan of predestination and grace.

As presented in the Gospel according to Matthew (Mt 1:1-16, 18-23), the meaning of the genealogy is theologically profound: to place Jesus, the Messiah, within the dynastic tree of God’s chosen people. Through Mary, Jesus is descended in and in fact “the descendant” of Abraham (cf. Gal 3:16), and the patriarchs in accord with God’s promises. The ring that unites Christ with God’s people is Mary, Daughter of Zion and Mother of the Lord.

The virgindom stressed by the Gospel text is the sign of the divine origin of the Son of the Son and of the absolute newness that now breaks forth in the history of human beings.

No wonder the liturgy for this feast day stresses the joy we should experience as we celebrate the birthday of our Mother Mary. Through her son, all of humanity is given a second chance. Through her, God’s promises to our ancestors in faith and to us are fulfilled.

Let’s pray that this quiet feast day will serve to remind us that Mary is the key to her divine son. Let’s also pray that the Holy Spirit will guide our Church, and all of us who are disciples of Mary’s son, to believe with all our hearts, as Mary did, that God’s promises have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Crísto, la piedra angular
September 21
Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. St., Indianapolis. Catholic Business Exchange, Truth at Work, CEO Dave Holly presenting. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. buffet breakfast and program followed by $15.10 lunch, $21 non-members. Register at www.indianapolisbusinessexchange.org and registration: 317-988-2839.

September 22
St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 7757 Holloway Dr., Indianapolis. Fall Fest, 3-10 p.m. food, beverages, entertainment, games, bingo, sports bar. Information: 317-259-4373.

September 22-23
St. Gabriel Parish, 2239 E. 23rd St., Indianapolis. Festival. Sat., 8 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sun., 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Food, games, bounce house, raffle, horse rides, live music, raffle, bands, beer tent, food tents, children’s games, corndog hole tournament, quilt and basket raffle, farmers market, face painting, cash bingo. Information: 765-825-8578.

September 23
St. Meinrad Parish, 19630 N. Fourth St., Mooresville. Septemberfest, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. food, beverages, crafts, food court, stage, boiler, wine and beer vendors. Information: 812-364-6646. †

September 25
St. Gabriel Parish, 2239 E. 23rd St., Indianapolis. Septemberfest, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. food, beverages, crafts, food court, stage, boiler, wine and beer vendors. Information: 812-364-6646. †

Right to Life of Indianapolis dinner and fundraiser planned for Sept. 25
David Beret, co-founder and former CEO of 40 Days for Life, is the featured speaker at the annual Celebrate Life Dinner sponsored by Right to Life of Indianapolis at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown, 350 W. Maryland St., in Indianapolis, on Sept. 25. Registration begins at 6 p.m., followed by dinner and awards at 6:45 p.m. and the keynote address at 8 p.m. The event is the largest fundraiser for Right to Life of Indianapolis. The cost is $75 per person, sponsorship opportunities are available. To purchase tickets or learn more about Right to Life of Indianapolis, visit www.rtlindy.org or call 317-382-1526. 

Sisters of Providence “kick of Sundays at the Woods” with photography program on Sept. 16
The Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, in Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, are hosting a Photography as a Form of Prayer program from 3 p.m. starting in the Providence Spirituality and Conference Center on Sept. 16. The program is the first in a series of programs called “Sundays at the Woods” that will focus on the aspects of life at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Upcoming topics include an architectural tour of the grounds, an art tour in the sisters’ home, a tour of the farm associated with the White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, and more. The series will occur monthly, with some exceptions. The Sept. 16 program will explore the impact of images, the healing power of photography and how to retrain one’s eyes to see divinity in the world. Technical aspects of photography will not be discussed, but technical help will be available.

For more information on this and other Sundays at the Woods events, call 812-535-2925, e-mail provrec@spov.org or visit www.spov.org and Providence Center Events.

September 11
St. Paul Hermitage, 553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Peace in the Mourning” Christ-Focused Widow’s Retreat. Providence Sister Connie Kramer facilitating 6:30 p.m.-11 p.m. Fri., 1-5 p.m. Sun., $150 includes stay to include the night before or night after day of silence, $9 for dinner when available. Registration: Dustin Nelson, 317-547-7681. Ext. 101 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

September 23
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Peace in the Mourning” Christ-Focused Widow’s Retreat. Providence Sister Connie Kramer facilitating 6:30 p.m.-11 p.m. Fri., 1-5 p.m. Sun., $150 includes stay to include the night before or night after day of silence, $9 for dinner when available. Registration: Dustin Nelson, 317-547-7681. Ext. 101 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

September 25

Dressed as St. Theodore Guérin, fifth-grader Jule Lewis shares stories at a reunion for families and children at the Providence House in Georgetown on June 9. Providence House is operated by the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, the order founded by St. Theodora Guérin. Providence House provides a person-centered home to foster the growth, development, living and healing of children, families and older adults in need. (FileNotFoundException)
Personal approach is needed to form children to be received into Church’s family of faith

By Sean Gallagher

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Mt 28:20).

In these final words of Christ to his Apostles before he ascended to heaven, the Church was given its mission that continues to this day.

A principal way parishes across central and southern Indiana have fulfilled this mission since the Second Vatican Council has been through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) in which adults are formed to be received into the full communion of the Church.

Catechetical leaders in these same parishes often have to adapt the way this formation takes place when the people who seek to be received into the Church are children or teenagers.

The Church already offers adaptations for children of the various rites in RCIA. But catechetical leaders need to have some flexibility to meet the young people and their parents who come to them with a variety of learning levels and different take-own unique faith journey in order to prepare them to be lifelong missionary disciples of Christ in the Church.

That was a message given to catechetical leaders across the archdiocese during an Aug. 4 workshop on RCIA adapted for children. The workshop, titled called moralistic therapeutic deism (MTD). (See related story on page 8.)

It is deism because it acknowledges God, but sees him as not very involved with his creation.

It is moralistic because God is like the divine butler who helps us sometimes if we ask, but with whom we don’t often communicate in other ways (e.g., praise, gratitude, condolence).

It is therapeutic because God does not exist, that they never pray or that being nice and good (notice the vagueness in their reasoning) isn’t important to them. But for a lot of people, that’s about as far as it goes.

This way of looking at the world, God and how we should teach others is a name.

While I encourage you not to focus too much on the words (as they are a bit abstract and academic-sounding) I’ll mention them briefly here so we can move on and discuss the substance of what they describe.

The unofficial religion of North America so that we can be faithful witnesses for Jesus Christ.

Ken Ogorek (Ken Ogorek is director of catechesis for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.)

All parishioners ‘have a role to play’ in welcoming Church family, including those with special needs

By Natalie Hoeter

As the priest and servers exit the nave of the church, a flood of parishioners follows. Among them is 49-year-old Michael Risch. His progress is slowed by Down syndrome, as in Risch’s case, is just one form of special needs, which run in a spectrum.

The first step in welcoming children and youths seeking to be received into the Church in spurts, a handful one year and maybe none for a couple of more, says Deacon John Jacobi, the New Albany Deeney faith community’s director of religious education (DRE).

He said he and his team of catechists put the focus on helping the entire family.

Often the parents of the children being formed are Catholic who are returning to the practice of the faith after being away from it for many years. So Deacon Jacobs wants to help put the whole family on a firm footing to live out the faith for years to come.

“We’ve made it more of a family process, because many times the parents are kind of eager for an updating as well,” Deacon Jacobs said. “So much of RCIA is a journey where you’re walking together toward a goal of faith. When you can do that as a family, it’s a wonderful avenue for catechesis, ministry and life-sharing.”

Meeting parents who are coming back to the Church and the children received into it requires a good amount of personal ministry, says Paulette Davis, administrator of religious education at St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle.

See CHILDREN, page 10

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Mt 28:20).

In these final words of Christ to his Apostles before he ascended to heaven, the Church was given its mission that continues to this day.

A principal way parishes across central and southern Indiana have fulfilled this mission since the Second Vatican Council has been through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) in which adults are formed to be received into the full communion of the Church.

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When it involves faith, Ken Ogorek likes to stay aware of the latest approaches and developments—including the ones that trouble him. And among the most troubling developments for the archdiocese’s director of catechesis is one that he describes—not exactly glorifying—as “the unofficial religion of North America.”

Ogorek says it’s an approach to faith that has been embraced by an increasing number of youths, young adults and their parents, an approach that can be summed up by its five distinctive points:

• A God exists who created and orders the world and watches over human life on earth.
• God wants people to be good, nice and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
• The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
• God does not need to be particularly involved in one’s life except when he is needed to resolve a problem.
• Good people go to heaven when they die.

Actually, these five points are summarized in the book, *The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* that is co-authored by University of Notre Dame professor Christian Smith and Clemson University professor Melissa Landqust Denton.

“Our Catholic faith offers us something that young people are long for,” Ogorek says. “But the more we can impact their world, the more they’re going to see in the life of intentional discipleship.”

Ken Ogorek

Speaking a different language

In the same article, Smith notes, “The language—and therefore expectations—of Trinity, holiness, sin, grace, justification, sanctification, church, Eschatist, and heaven and hell are foreign among most Christian teenagers in the United States at the very least, to be being supplemented by the language of happiness, niceness and an earned heavenly reward.”

“It is not so much that Christianity in the United States is being secularized. Rather more subtly, either Christianity or the United States is being secularized. Rather more subtly, either Christianity or the United States is being secularized. Rather more subtly, either Christianity or the United States is being secularized.”

“The idea that God isn’t really all that involved in our daily life or doesn’t care about our daily life, or it’s OK to ask God for things occasionally but it isn’t like we want to have any sort of ongoing conversation with him—that completely flies in the face of having a disciple relationship with Jesus, and through Jesus, with the Father and the Holy Spirit.”

Ogorek also points out the flaws within some of the five major points of moralistic therapeutic desem.

“One thing I like to do is look at the basic tenets of moralistic therapeutic desem and compare them to what Jesus asks of every disciple.”

“His instructions are simple—be a disciple, make disciples of other people, make sure folks know how important baptism is and that they’re invited to be baptized, and teach them about doctrine and about morality, what it really means to be good.”

Ogorek is at least degenerating into a pathetic version of itself or, more significantly, Christianity is actively being colonized and displaced by a quite different religious faith.

From Ogorek’s perspective, this pervasive approach to religious faith among young people pales when compared to the depth of the Catholic faith and the personal relationship that Christ offers.

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“Holyness is contagious,” Williams says. “The more someone is around people that are living an authentic and holy life, the more people in that circle of influence are drawn to that deeper sense of holiness. And that’s what the Church offers, that’s what the Church teaches—a deeper encounter with Jesus.”

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Ken Ogorek

Near a sign is a box with pictures of the 2017 National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis. In the back row are Behira Salgado, left, Yessica Cruz, Montse Rodriguez, Jaira Salgado, Isenia Rodriguez, and Suyen Salgado. (Submitted photo)
Catholic streaming services change the way parishioners grow in the faith

By Sean Gallagher

Hundreds of millions of Americans and others around the world now watch television through streaming services in which shows, movies and sporting events are accessed through the Internet on smart phones, tablets and smart TVs.

A decade ago, this mode of viewing video content was barely imaginable. Netflix, the leading streaming service around the world, launched in 2007 in the United States. Today, it is available in 190 countries, has 130 million subscribers and produces its own content.

In just three years, though, thousands of parishes across the country, including many in central and southern Indiana, have started using Catholic streaming services like Formed, Ascension and Word on Fire Engage.

Michelle Fessel, a pastoral associate at St. Mary Parish in Lanesville, has seen a tremendous change in how the members of the New Albany Deanery faith community see content grow in their faith since the parish began subscribing to Formed three years ago, shortly after the streaming service was launched.

“When I first got to Lanesville, we barely even collected e-mail addresses of parishioners,” Fessel said. “Very few people had it. It was unmanageable.

“Now we’re at a point where parishioners are downloading the Formed app and telling me that, when they’re traveling on trips, they’re doing faith formation in the car or listening to it on an airplane. It’s very reaching, because I would never have thought before that’s what we’re here for.”

St. Mary isn’t the only parish in the archdiocese that has subscribed to Formed. There are currently 44 faith communities across central and southern Indiana, nearly a third of all archdiocesan parishes, who are subscribers.

That’s in part because the archdiocese, along with more than 40 other dioceses, has entered into a partnership with Formed in which the archdiocese promotes the streaming service to its parishes and the parishes receive a discount on its annual subscription.

Formed, a ministry of the Augustine Institute in Greenwood Village, Colo., was launched in September 2013. At the time, it offered a handful of faith formation video series and movies on Catholic topics made available through Ignatius Press.

Today, Formed partners with 50 content providers to offer more than 100 movies, more than 100 books, scores of videos and audio recordings on the faith for adults and children, and sacramental preparation videos. Much of this content is also available in both English and Spanish. The service is considered offering content in other languages, including Vietnamese.

People primarily access Formed when their parishes subscribe to it, and then the parish shares with its members a log-in code for the site. More than 3,800 parishes in the English-speaking world are now subscribing to Formed with more than 620,000 current users. Formed expects to reach 1 million users by the end of the year.

“When you look at how many people access the Internet every day, the percent is huge from teen to young adult. However, even when you go over age 65, it’s still 64 to 66 percent of that age group, mostly using a mobile device,” said Jim Knowles, manager for diocesan partnerships at the Augustine Institute. “People are accessing the Internet every day. Not everything on it is good. So if we’re able to give an alternative that’s going to help people grow in their faith, that’s what we’re here for.

“Formed is accessed by the number of older St. Mary parishioners accessing Formed. “We expected millennials, busy working adults who don’t have time to come to the parish campus for a Bible study or faith sharing group,” she said. “But what we found is a lot of retired and homebound parishioners have taken advantage of the subscription. That was a surprise to us.”

To facilitate parishioner use of Formed, St. Mary has had a “bring your technology to church” weekend where less tech-savvy members brought their smart phones or tablets and got help from other parishioners to access Formed. Some parishioners even went to the homes of homebound members to do this.

“I know we can reach people who never would have been able to come to the church,” Fessel said.

And that’s not just the case with homebound parishioners. Fessel also said that engaged couples who live out of state but plan on having their wedding at St. Mary can access videos through Formed that complement the marriage preparation program in which they’ll eventually participate at the parish.

“This is the way we reach out to families that are technology-based culture,” Fessel said. “This is as current and as practical as any faith formation product we could have found.”

(For more information about Formed, visit formed.org)

Other options are available for Catholic streaming services

By Sean Gallagher

In addition to Formed, there are two other streaming services available to Catholics through Ascension and Word on Fire on Catholic Ministries.

Ascension’s streaming service offers the video content of more than 50 of its popular faith formation programs featuring such well-known presenters as Jeff Cavins, Mark Hart and Christopher West. It’s been available in its current format for more than two years and currently has approximately 140,000 users around the world.

Word on Fire’s two streaming services—Digital and Engage—were launched respectively in September 2017 and February of this year.

Digital offers all of its video content featuring the Bishop Robert E. Barron’s popular faith formation presentations and Catholic documentaries, such as the Catholicism series. It is geared for individual subscribers.

Engage helps parish staff members send Word on Fire videos to its members through Flocknote, an online platform that helps parishes send e-mails and text messages to its members.

Bishop Barron, the founder of Word on Fire, is an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Matthew Dunn helped Ascension develop its streaming service and now serves as its customer support manager. He said that streaming services like Ascension are especially helpful for parishes by letting members watch videos for faith formation programs or Bible study groups on their own time.

“People are time-crunch,” Dunn said. “They may not join [a faith formation group] at all in the first place if they knew that they had to lock in for eight weeks. “But I think that people want to gather in groups. There is something that causes me to inconvenience myself and go out of my way to go to the parish on a Tuesday night for a Bible study. People want that fellowship.”

Drew Pulterak is the sales and distribution manager at Word on Fire. He noted that while there are variations in content and means of accessing it in the different Catholic streaming services, they all have the same final goal.

“Ultimately, that’s the goal, to bring people back to the faith and to have a relationship with Jesus Christ,” he said.

Whether people or parishes choose to subscribe to one streaming service or another, Dunn sees in their tremendous growth in the Church and the broader society as becoming a more ordinary part of daily life.

“As our platform has expanded, as Formed has expanded and as Word on Fire has gotten into the game, what we’ve seen is that it’s now mainstream,” Dunn said. “It’s the norm. It’s expected that this is offered at your parish.”

(For more information on Ascension’s streaming service, visit ascensionpress.com. For more information on Word on Fire Digital, visit www.wordondigital.org. For more information on Word on Fire Engage, visit engage.wordonfire.org)
people with Alzheimer’s, dementia and feeding tubes.

“What the bishops make clear from the beginning [of the document] is the dignity of each person,” says Erin Jeffries, archdiocesan coordinator of ministry to persons with special needs. “And the Church keeps continuing to grow in knowledge of members with disabilities. Part of the reason they [updated the document] was to denote a shift in this [knowledge] in recent years and recognize that there’s still room for growth.”

‘Ask my name. I’ll ask your name.’

One of Jeffries’ duties is to “provide tools to help parishes build a relationship [with members with special needs] and to help provide ideas for adaptations based on the needs of a person,” she says. She has developed a questionnaire for catechetical leaders to use to identify a person’s “skills, challenges, triggers, interactions and reactions to behavior that might pop up, without asking for a specific diagnosis,” Jeffries explains.

She also offers onsite workshops for catechists and teachers, and recently developed an online tool offering “practical tips to support parishes in building relationships with parishioners who have disabilities, as well as supporting their families,” available at bit.ly/2NJQXzg (case sensitive).

One point of advice on the site is to “look at, smile and talk to individuals with disabilities, not just their parent, siblings or caretaker[s].”

Risch agrees with this advice. Imaging himself in a different church, he describes what he would like to see happen: “Ask my name. Find my first name. Say, ‘You’re a Colts fan!’” he says, pointing to his blue horseshoe tie.

Donnalee Snyder, a member of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg who also works as the parish’s director of evangelization, says such interaction is “a vital part of a parish.”

“I love to see special needs people butterflies,” she says. “Sometimes people are physically afraid of them. So when someone with special needs reaches out to shake their hand, the people in the parish realize each person is special. It’s such a gift to have those with special needs in the parish interact with all members of the parish. I’ve seen it firsthand.”

Snyder says two parishioners with disabilities serve as ushers. One of those two is non-verbal. To help the parish become comfortable with the situation, a fellow member of the special-needs usher spoke at each Mass one weekend.

“The interaction has been absolutely wonderful,” she says. “No one gets frustrated.”

‘One characteristic of a greater whole’

The two ushers also have the opportunity to learn about their faith through New Albany Deanery’s Adult Special Needs Religious Education Group, which is hosted by St. John Paul II Parish. Snyder serves as advisor to the group, which is hosted by St. Mark. Once a year in the spring, a special SPRED Mass is celebrated in which its members participate as lectors, altar servers, gift bearers and more. Risch recently served on the hospitality team for the SPRED Mass.

“Special needs-children are incorporated into adapted parish youth religious education programs, the adult group is for those age 18 and older,” Snyder says. “Anyone in the [New Albany] deanery with a physical or mental disability is welcome,” Snyder explains. “Non-verbal, slight to severe, Asperger’s, autistic, non-hearing, Down syndrome—we will accommodate anyone with any kind of disability. We want them here.”

The same is true for the Indianapolis South Deanery’s Special Religious Education (SPRED) group, which is hosted at St. Mark. Once a year in the spring, a special SPRED Mass is celebrated in which its members participate as lectors, altar servers, gift bearers and more. Risch recently served on the hospitality team for the SPRED Mass.

St. Mark has proven to be a natural fit as host to SPRED. For years, the parish has had an active Inclusion Ministry. According to the parish website, the ministry “educates and raises [parishioners’] awareness regarding accessibility. … [It] also assesses the accessibility of the parish environment and determines ways to improve and facilitate implementation of those changes.”

One way the ministry educates parishioners is including a spot in the weekly bulletin with inclusion information and tips. In the Aug. 26 bulletin, for example, the spot included that a person’s special needs is “just one characteristic of the much greater whole of who they are as individuals.”

“We are all wonderfully made.”

Such a statement speaks to the dignity of the entire person, regardless of the existence of any special needs.

“We people in the pew need to understand that we can’t exclude people because they’re different, no matter what the difference is,” says Snyder. She describes an image of children with various special needs she once had printed in the parish bulletin.

“It had the words, ‘We are all wonderfully made,’” she recalls. “We want people in the pews to know that just because [someone] can’t speak or hear or has Down syndrome, they are all wonderfully made, just like you.”

When it comes to parishes and parish members welcoming those with disabilities, Jeffries cites the recently revised guidelines document: “The Church continues to affirm the dignity of every human being, and to grow in knowledge and understanding of the gifts and needs of her members who live with disabilities.”

She says that whether a parishioner feels “like there are some great things going on” in regard to special needs at their parish, or “that this is an area for growth, it is good to be reminded that we are all a work in progress as we seek to be parish communities where people have a sense of belonging.

“What is important is that, with our bishops, we continue to open our eyes to those around us, to the gifts they have to share, and to see what supports might make all the difference in enabling each person to be a thriving member of the Body of Christ. In that endeavor, we truly are in it together, and we are here to help.”

For more information on meeting the needs of those with disabilities in parishes, visit www.archindy.org/specialneeds, or contact Erin Jeffries at 317-236-1448, 800-382-9836 ext. 1448, or jeffries@archindy.org. Jeffries can also be contacted for more information on SPRED groups throughout the archdiocese. For more information on New Albany Deanery’s Adult Special Needs Religious Education Group, contact Donnalee Snyder at 812-246-5088 or dsnyder@stjohnpaulparish.org on Mondays from 8 a.m. 4 p.m. or on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. The group’s next meeting is 7-8 p.m. on Oct. 25 in the former school building on the St. Joseph Chapel campus, 2605 St. Joe Road W., in Sellersburg.”

“Nine months is just not enough for the kids and their families to come from no church attendance and no religious education to trying to become Catholic,” she said.

No matter if a parish experiences only a handful of children seeking to be received into the Church from year to year or if there are dozens of families coming forward, doing the hard work of ministry of welcoming them has tremendous benefits, says Deacon Jacob.

“If it’s such a blessing to be able to walk with people in their journey of faith,” he said. “But when you see a whole family come into the Church together or you see parents coming back to the faith and children receiving the faith, as a DRE, it’s a beautiful thing to witness.”
represents how we try to frame our message.”

Thinking of oceans and seas also led the pope to think of the thousands of migrants and refugees who “risk their lives at sea in search of a better future.”

“Let us ask the Lord and all those engaged in the noble service of politics that the more sensitive questions of our day, such as those linked to movements of migration, climate change and the right of everyone to enjoy primary goods, may find in us generous and farsighted responsibility and in a spirit of cooperation, especially among those countries most able to help,” he wrote.

Pope Francis also offered prayers for people who fish and others who earn their living at sea, for those who minister to them and for all the scientists and public policy experts who help the public recognize the treasures of the sea and work to protect them.

And, as the Catholic Church prepares for a world Synod of Bishops on young people in October, he urged Christians to educate and pray for the young “that they may grow in knowledge and respect for our common home and in the desire to care for the essential good of water, for the benefit of all.”

• “A Man Named Job” by Ryan Proudfoot. “This song beautiful tells the story of Job and his ultimate trust in and faithfulness to the Lord and his goodness.”

Song choices from Rebecca Kovert, event and volunteer coordinator in the archdiocese’s Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry.

• “Wonder” by Bethel Music and Amanda Cook. “I love this song because I think it is important to remember to have the wonder of a child. I often complicate things by trying to make sense of them. This song is especially powerful when contemplating the beauty of Christ in the Eucharist.”

• “Wake” by Hillsong Young & Free. “It breaks outside of what I think a lot of people think of when they think of Christian music. It’s a great song to jump around and dance to, and to shout your thankfulness to Jesus.”

• “O Come to the Altar” by Elevation Worship. “It is such a beautiful song to meditate on the gravity of what Christ did for us. The sacrifice of the Mass is so powerful, but it’s easy to get wrapped up in the motions of Mass and forget about the reality of what it means for us: salvation and new life.”

Song choices from Scott Williams, director of the archdiocese’s Office of Youth Ministry.

• “Ave Maria” by Matt Faley. “Matt brings the joy of Christ in his songs. This version of ‘Ave Maria’ leads me deep into the mystery of Mary’s love for us.”

• “Fear Is A Liar” by Zach Williams. “This song just reminds me to be fearless and helps bring courage during difficult times.”

• “What A Friend” by Matt Maher. “I like the lyrics in this song. ‘For ever and ever, His heart is my home.’”

Song choices from Mary Kate Shanahan, assistant director of the archdiocese’s Office of Youth Ministry.

• “Blessed Are The Ones” by Audrey Assad. “I love this song because I think it is important to remember to have the wonder of a child. I often complicate things by trying to make sense of them. This song is especially powerful when contemplating the beauty of Christ in the Eucharist.”

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

Ethics Point

Contact: Online Reporting www.archdioceseindiana.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810

Chile: 317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548

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

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

• Offer certificate or Lay Ministry program

• Complete 12 courses online with NDSTEP program

• CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church

For more information, please log on to

www.archindy.org/layministry
Dark days remind us our hope remains in the Lord

People ask how I can do my job as a Catholic editor and journalist these days without being depressed.

Actually, it is depressing. How could it not be? When I was baptized in 1962, I was 7 years old. I had just been3

been through the attacks on the streets of child abuse. Pastors break down and cry as they apologize to their flock.

Colleagues are Bewildered. Division is God's grace. However, the more we push the boundaries of artificial intelligence and the "Internet of things," the more our technology is creating a world where people get connected to one another digitally but remain isolated from one another.

But there is more to this. The Church is not just a building. It is a living, breathing community of faith that provides the sacraments, most centrally to the laity. It offers prayers and somehow God delivers grace. However, the more we push the boundaries of artificial intelligence and the "Internet of things," the more our technology is creating a world where people get connected to one another digitally but remain isolated from one another.

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The first reading for Mass this weekend, from the Book of Isaiah, speaks of the blind, the deaf and the lame. Today’s culture is different from that in which this section of Isaiah was written. Physical impairments now can be managed in most cases. People with physical challenges now lead lives that would only have been dreamed of long ago in ancient Israel.

Moreover, today no scorn accompanies physical disabilities. People in this day and age know that these impairments have physical explanations. Now, it is understood that genetics, disease or injury causes such difficulties.

In Isaiah’s time, transportation was limited. So the inability to walk was a major disadvantage. Even more a disadvantage was being unable to hear or see. Communications for almost everyone was verbal or visual. Immobility, blindness or deafness therefore severely isolated people. As much as at any time in human history, being alone was a fearful thought. It also was a peril.

Finally, physical impairments were seen as the consequence of sin. Physical inadequacies, and ultimately death, came because of Adam’s sin. Individual sin by people weakened and afflicted them as well.

God, in great mercy and love, restores vision, hearing and the ability to move, and thus restores a place in the human community. Isaiah displays his typical eloquence in this passage. Because of God’s goodness, the mute not only will speak but sing! The lame not only will walk, but they will leap like a stag!

Springs will water burning sands! Islands will rise out of the sea. Nations will join with the Lord.

The first reading this weekend is a great lesson in the destiny of all humans before God. Everything earthly will pass away. Only the spiritual will endure.

We can see and hear. We can find our way. We can know the right and wrong way.

We can see and hear. We can find our way.

We can know the right and wrong way. But we are helpless. We are doomed.

When God forgives us, however, we are restored, refreshed and strengthened. We can see and hear. We can find our way.

It is simple: God, in Christ, is our hope and life. Sin is our burden as humans, with dire effects. No one is too bad to receive God’s healing, forgiveness and power. Just ask for forgiveness.

Jesus of the Cross
By Sonny Shanks

Abed and asleep I found myself walking across fields of green. Up ahead there was a white picket fence, stretching left to right as far as I could see.

On the other side of the fence everything was golden, and I understood it to be Heaven.

On this side of the fence there were at least a dozen Jesuuses, all of whom had people listening to them.

The first one appeared solemn and judgmental, like a record keeper.

The second one seemed quite angry and spoke of hellfire.

The next one seemed like an insurance salesman: nice suit, big smile, kind, considerate and poor? Or someone who attends Mass sporadically but is a kind, considerate and helpful individual.

(Ohio)

As it is better to walk on your right leg or your left leg? That question, in my mind, matches your own (whether it’s better to go to church or to be kind).

Obviously, we need both legs to walk correctly and well. And similarly, the Church is committed to regular sharing in the Eucharist—not only because that was Christ’s command to us, but also because it is from the strength of the Eucharist that we are enabled to live our lives unselshishly.

Jesus, of course, did say: “I give you a new commandment: Love one another.” (Jn 13:34). He even suggested in Matthew 25 that the final standard on which each of us will be judged is whether we have helped people when they needed it most.

But Jesus also, on the night before he died, gathered the Apostles to share his body and blood at the first Eucharist and told them that “they should do this in memory of me” (Lk 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24-25).

The Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has determined that for Catholics this means the obligation of worshippers to prepare the Church Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation.

In doing so, we are following the example of the early believers, who “devoted themselves to the teaching of the Apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42).

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

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

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

Send material for consideration to Faith Column, The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367 or e-mail to nhoefer@criterion.com.

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 78:1-13, 17-18
John 19:17-27

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Saturday, September 15
Our Lady of Sorrows
1 Corinthians 10:14-22
Psalm 116:12-13, 17-18
John 19:25-27

Friday, September 14
The Exalation of the Holy Cross
Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 78:1-2, 34-38
Philippians 2:6-11
John 3:13-17

Sunday, September 16
Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 50:5-9a
Psalm 116:1-6, 8-9
James 2:14-18
Mark 8:27-35

Worship at Mass and being good to others done in fidelity with Jesus

Who is a better person? Someone who attends Mass every Sunday and receives Communion, but is not nice to people (rude, insulting, doesn’t help the poor)? Or someone who attends Mass sporadically but is a kind, considerate and loving individual?

(Abbey)
Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in This Week. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.


CARRASCO, Shirley J., 92, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, Aug. 20. Husband of Amada. Father of Frederick McCarthy. Mother of Sharon Brandon, Mary Kondrathe, Margaret Lang, Terrance Lyon-Lyn, Christopher and Michael McCarthy. Grandmother of eight.


HUSK, Michael J., 57, St. Thomas the Apostle, Indianapolis, Aug. 18. Son of Terry Huser and Mary Armstrong. Brother of Bethany Huser. Great-grandson of Jim and Jeanne Huser.


MCCARTHY, Shirley J., 92, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, Aug. 23. Wife of Fredrick McCarthy. Mother of Sharon Brandon, Mary Kondrathe, Margaret Lang, Terrance Lyon-Lyn, Christopher and Michael McCarthy. Grandmother of eight.


Praying for Senator McCain


Another study puts Puerto Rico's hurricane deaths in the thousands

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Few believed the initial official figures that said 64 people died in Puerto Rico as a result of Hurricane Maria in September 2017, a stunningly low statistic that officials released shortly after what is considered one of the island's worst natural disasters on record.

After many disputed the official number, Puerto Rican officials, commissioned a study from George Washington University in Washington to get a more accurate number of deaths, and when its results were released on Aug. 28, it confirmed what many had suspected. An estimated 2,975 people lost their lives because of the natural disaster. As a result, Puerto Rico has now revised the official death toll.

The study, carried out by the university’s Milken Institute School of Public Health, said death certificates may not have reflected conditions caused by the hurricane that lead to fatalities in the days and months following the disaster.

Lack of electricity and water and a general pounding of the island nation’s infrastructure by the storm made it difficult for hospitals and health care professionals to care for those who were struggling to recover in the aftermath of the disaster. Death certificates may not have taken into account all those factors, and how the fatalities were a result of the conditions created by the hurricane. In a statement, those who conducted the study said that “lack of communication, well established guidelines and lack of training for physicians on how to certify deaths in disasters, resulted in a limited number of deaths being identified as hurricane related.”

“Certain groups—they in lower income areas and the elderly—faced the highest risk,” said Dr. Carlos Santos-Burgoa, the principal investigator of the project and a professor at George Washington University, in a statement. The study looked at excess deaths from September 2017 to February 2018 and found “a number that is 22 percent higher than the number of deaths that would have been expected during that period in a year without the storm,” the statement said.
Australian bishops, religious say seal of confession is sacred

SYDNEY (CNS)—Australia’s Catholic bishops and religious orders, responding to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, accepted 98 percent of its suggestions, but said they could not accept recommendations that would violate the seal of confession.

“We are committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable people while maintaining the seal. We do not see safeguarding and the seal as mutually exclusive,” said the preamble to a 57-point response to dozens of recommendations concerning child safety, formation of priest and religious workers, ongoing training in child safety and even out-of-home care service providers.

The response, published on Aug. 31, came eight-and-a-half months after the Royal Commission released its 17-volume report on child sexual abuse. The report was based on five years of hearings, nearly 26,000 e-mails, and more than 42,000 phone calls from concerned Australians. In February 2017, Australian Church leaders spent three weeks testifying before the commission.

In a statement published with their response, Josephite Sister Monica Cavanagh, president of Catholic Religious Australia, and Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane, president of the Australia Catholic Bishops’ Conference, expressed “their deep sorrow that vulnerable children were abused, weren’t believed and weren’t supported when seeking justice.”

Sister Monica said, “The process is already underway to reform the Church’s practices to ensure that safeguarding is integral in all that we do as part of our ministry and outreach in the community.”

The statement said Archbishop Coleridge acknowledged that the Church’s response to the abuse scandal had been “too slow and too timid.”

“Many bishops failed to listen, failed to believe, and failed to act,” he was quoted as saying. “Those failures allowed some abusers to offend again and again, with tragic and sometimes fatal consequences.”

The Catholic Church’s response to the Royal Commission’s recommendations, he said, is “a plan of action; it is our pledge to the Australian people; it is our promise of transparency and accountability.”

The Royal Commission recommended that the bishops consult with the Holy See to clarify whether “information received from a child during the sacrament of reconciliation covered by the seal of confession,” and whether “if a priest confesses during the sacrament of reconciliation, absolution can and should be withheld until they report themselves to civil authorities.”

The response said the bishops had sought canonical advice and consulted with the Holy See, but noted that “the pontifical secret”—the confidentiality of the seal of confession—“is inviolable for the Vatican to eliminate the ‘imputability test’ of canon law so that ‘the pontifical secret’—the confidentiality surrounding a canonical investigation and process—‘does not apply to any aspect of allegations or canonical disciplinary processes relating to clergy or religious abuse.”

Recommending that the bishops urge the Vatican to change canon law so that “the pontifical secret”—the confidentiality surrounding a canonical investigation and process—“does not apply to any aspect of allegations or canonical disciplinary processes relating to clergy or religious abuse,” the commission acknowledged that the Church’s response to child sexual abuse was “too slow and too timid.”

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In response to a recommendation that the bishops work with the Royal Commission to develop standards and protocols, the response said the bishops had sought canonical advice and consulted with the Holy See, but noted that “the pontifical secret”—the confidentiality surrounding a canonical investigation and process—“does not apply to any aspect of allegations or canonical disciplinary processes relating to clergy or religious abuse.”

The bishops and religious noted that they had marked a few recommendations “for further consideration,” and about a dozen about which the Holy See had been noted. In October, leaders of the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference and the chair of the Church’s Truth, Justice and Healing Council met with Vatican officials to discuss issues emerging from the royal commission investigations.

For instance, the Royal Commission said the bishops should urge the Vatican to change canon law so that “the pontifical secret”—the confidentiality surrounding a canonical investigation and process—“does not apply to any aspect of allegations or canonical disciplinary processes relating to clergy or religious abuse.”

The Royal Commission asked that the bishops urge the Vatican to eliminate the “imputability test” of canon law when dealing with cases of clerical sexual abuse. The imputability test basically means that a person’s level of guilt for a crime is lessened to the degree that he or she was not aware that the action was wrong; if the imputability is diminished, canon law would recommend a lesser penalty for the guilty.

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Children at St. Ambrose in Seymour

The Criterion published this photo along with two others in an “Out of the Past” feature in its Aug. 31, 1979 issue. A follow-up in the Sept. 21, 1979, issue stated that the photo was believed to be from St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour during the 1950s, but included no other information. If you have information regarding this photo, please contact the archives.

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

FREE LIVE ENTERTAINMENT!
• FrenchAxe • First Impression Band
• Groove Theory • The Bishops

ACTIVITIES FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!
• Raffle - Something for Everyone!
• Artisans!
• Bake Sale!
• French-Themed Children’s Area until 5:00 p.m.

FRENCH MENU
• Tartes flambées
• Quiche
• Crab cakes
• Escargot and oysters
• Shrimp bisque
• French bread and herb butter
• Cheese & fruit
• Red snapper chicken
• BBQ ribs
• Crawfish etouffee
• Beef Bourguignon
• French pastries & desserts
• Tarte flambée

Free Admission!
Saturday, September 8, 2018
12:00 noon – 10:00 p.m.
(Children’s area closes at 5:00 p.m.)
St. Joan of Arc Church
4217 Central Avenue
Passenger drop-off on 42nd Street
IGC Annual Raffle License 147640
JOIN US FOR MASS IN FRENCH
AT 5:30 PM
Visit our website: www.sjoa.org

Message of hope
International singer and songwriter Tony Melendez brought his message of hope, encouragement and faith to St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County on Aug. 24. Born in Nicaragua without arms and a clubbed foot, Melendez taught himself how to play the guitar with his feet. He made national headlines when he performed before St. John Paul II in Los Angeles in 1987. A special afternoon performance was also held for the St. Nicholas School students, in which Melendez shared the importance of self-esteem, prayer, family support, disability awareness, drug abuse, and using your gifts and talents. He invited students to join him in singing, emphasizing the importance of using their voices for empowerment to build up rather than to tear down. Pictured, from left, are St. Nicholas students Jacob Trimble and Gabby Moore, and musician Tony Melendez. (Submitted photo)

Right to Life of Indianapolis Invites you to the 36th Annual
Celebrate Life Dinner
Tuesday
September 25, 2018
Marriott Downtown Indianapolis

Registration – 6:00 p.m.
Dinner and Awards – 6:45 p.m.
Keynote Speaker, David Bereit – 8:00 p.m.

David Bereit is the co-founder and former CEO of 40 Days for Life. He led the global movement through its first decade, mobilizing 750,000 volunteers in more than 700 cities across 48 nations. David has worked alongside many of today’s most successful pro-life leaders, helping hundreds of organizations increase their life-saving impact and raising more than $55 million for pro-life causes. David is an internationally sought-after keynote speaker. His work has been featured in nearly every major media outlet.

FOR MORE INFORMATION — AND TO REGISTER visit www.rtlindy.org or call (317) 582-1526