A wish comes true

Teenager finds her life’s dream and meets Pope Francis during challenging journey

By John Shaughnessy

Kathleen Soller considers it the trip of her lifetime—a 10-day cruise with her family that stopped at ports in Greece, Malta and Italy, and that also included a personal moment with Pope Francis at the Vatican.

“It was amazing,” says Soller, who is 19. “Just the fact that we got to go to so many places and enjoy it as a family. “And everyone I tell thinks it’s the coolest thing in the world that I met the pope!”

Yet as special as that cruise and that meeting earlier this summer were for Soller, it was only part of a much more remarkable journey that has touched her life in the past two years. It’s a journey that began in May of 2017, when Soller received the news that would devastate nearly anyone, let alone an athletic teenager who competed in track, cross country, gymnastics and lacrosse at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

“I had been in the hospital since May 11,” recalls Soller, a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood. “I was having a lot of difficulty breathing. The cardiologist found fluid around my heart. They sent me to Riley [Hospital for Children in Indianapolis], and they did a CT scan. And they found a tumor.”

Soller was diagnosed with cancer, specifically “primary mediastinal large B-cell lymphoma.” Doctors told her that it was a journey that began in May of 2017, when Soller received the news that would devastate nearly anyone, let alone an athletic teenager who competed in track, cross country, gymnastics and lacrosse at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

By John Shaughnessy

Award winner helps others find their strengths

By John Shaughnessy

Roy Smith’s life changed forever when he turned down a full scholarship to play football in college after graduating from Cathedral High School in Indianapolis.

He instead made the choice to become a Holy Cross brother, and ever since he has been changing the lives of other people. He’s done it through his efforts in family counseling, refugee resettlement, civil rights activism and helping youths with emotional challenges. “The Lord calls us to be who we are,” Brother Roy says. “I was created as a black male and that is the gift, the vehicle, if you will, the Lord asks me to exhibit a part of the face of God. A portion of the way for me to share my gifts has been as a Holy Cross brother.”

That approach in his 57 years as a Holy Cross brother recently led to a prestigious honor for him. Brother Roy received the Father Joseph Davis Award on July 24 in Baltimore during the annual joint conference of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, the National Black Catholic Seminarians Association and the National Association of Black Catholic Deacons.

“The Holy Cross brothers at Cathedral were demanding but they were also caring. I thought I’d like to do the same for other people as they did for me and my fellow students.”

Brother Roy has primarily touched and influenced lives as a social worker. He began that influence in Milwaukee where he worked at a home for emotionally-challenged delinquent boys in the 1960s. During that time, he also became involved in the civil rights movements, advocating for improved housing opportunities for blacks. He has also been a social worker in a Catholic high school in Chicago and for

Pope Francis joins prayers for victims of bloody weekend in Texas, Ohio

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Pope Francis joined Catholic Church leaders expressing sorrow after back-to-back mass shootings in the United States left at least 31 dead and dozens injured in Texas and Ohio on Aug. 3 and 4.

After reciting the Angelus in St. Peter’s Square on Aug. 4, the pope said he wanted to convey his spiritual closeness to the victims, the wounded and the families affected by the attacks. He also included those who died a weekend earlier during a shooting at a festival in Gilroy, Calif.

“I am spiritually close to the victims of the episodes of violence that these days have bloodied Texas, California and Ohio, in the United States, affecting defenseless people,” he said.

He joined bishops in Texas as well as national Catholic organizations and leaders reacting to a bloody first weekend of August, which produced the eighth deadliest gun violence attack in the country after a gunman opened fire on the morning of Aug. 3 at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, killing at least 22 and injuring more than a dozen people.

Less than 24 hours after the El Paso shooting, authorities in Dayton, Ohio, reported at least nine dead and more than two dozen injured after a gunman opened fire on a crowd at or near a bar in the early hours of Aug. 4. The suspected gunman was fatally wounded and police later identified him as 24-year-old Connor Betts, of Bellbrook, Ohio.

On Aug. 4, after the second shooting become public, the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the chairman of the bishops’ domestic policy committee offered prayers, condolences and urged action.

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In letter, Holy Father encourages priests dejected by abuse crisis

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis acknowledged the shame and frustration felt by priests who are discouraged by the actions of fellow clergy members who betrayed the trust of their flock through sexual abuse and abuse of conscience and power. (CNS photo/Gianni Ranieri, Reuters)

The pope added that priests have the value of human life.

The revelations of sexual abuse and cover-up by clergy members, he explained, “has been a time of great suffering in the lives of those who experienced such abuse, but also in the lives of their families and of the entire people of God.”

Pope Francis also encouraged priests to find the strength to persevere while warning them not to succumb to the temptation of despair amid trials, weakness and the consciousness of our limitations.

Gratitude for all the ways God has shown love, patience and forgiveness “is always a powerful weapon” that can “restore—and not simply patch up—our life and mission,” he said.

The pope also called on priests to not be tempted by sadness which can “turn us into a hill and ‘not simply patch up—in our mission and life, and said: “What legislatures now refer to as ‘death with dignity’ is legal permission to end their own life with a lethal injection. He wrote in a July 29 letter to the 650,000 Catholics in his four-county diocese.

“Assisted suicide is a grievous affront to the dignity of human life and can never be morally justified,” he wrote. The legal permission now granted to this practice does not change the moral law. Bishop Checchio said that under the new law—called the Medical Aid in Dying or Terminally Ill Act—the elderly “could feel undue pressure to view this as an option to prevent being a burden to others and young people will begin to think that people can and should be disposable.”

“Indeed,” he added, “with this law there will be a further desensitization of others and young people will begin to think that the law puts ‘infinite pressure on Catholics in health care ministries to value the dignity of human life.’

N.J. assisted suicide law called ‘utter failure’ of government, society

DemocraticGov. Phil Murphy, a Catholic, signed the assisted suicide bill into law on April 12. In his statement the day of the signing Murphy said that “authorizing residents with terminal illnesses to make end-of-life choices for themselves is the right thing to do.”

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark called the new law regrettable, saying “whatever its motives and means,” it is “morally unacceptable.”

In a July 31 statement, the cardinal said: “What legislatures now refer to as ‘death with dignity’ is legal permission for one to end their own life with a lethal injection of prescription drugs.”

He said the new state law “has become an answer to addressing one’s fear of affliction or suffering. What is more, in a for-profit industry like health care, there is the real danger that euthanasia will be seen as a cost-cutting measure.”

The cardinal also stressed that the law puts “immense pressure on Catholics in health care ministries to value the dignity of human life.”

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WASHINGTON (CNS)—The bishop of El Paso, Texas, met with the families of those who were killed and wounded during the Aug. 3 shooting at a Walmart in the city where he ministers, and in a statement following the meeting said his heart “was breaking,” after seeing up-close the human aftermath of the crime.

“As a minister, I am called to be present to those who suffered this attack and to their families. I need to do so with a sense of compassure,” said Bishop Mark J. Seitz in the statement. “But as I visited with victims and those they love, my heart was breaking within me. Their questions are mine as well. Why the innocent children? Why the mothers with babes in their arms? Why should any human being ever be subjected to such violence?”

By early on Aug. 5, the death toll had climbed from 20 to 22 reported fatalities and 26 injured from what is, so far, the eighth-deadliest mass shooting on U.S. soil.

Bishop Seitz participated in an Aug. 4 evening vigil for the victims with other faith leaders as part of the InterFaith Alliance of the Southwest, less than a mile from where the shooting took place, the El Paso Times newspaper reported on its website. Gathered with members of the Jewish community as well as other faiths, Bishop Seitz and other Catholics from the diocese lit candles and prayed for the victims.

Authorities have Patrick Crusius, 21, who is suspected of the crime, in custody. He has been charged with capital murder and is being held without bond. Several news organizations said local and federal authorities are investigating whether the shooting was a possible hate crime since the suspected gunman may be linked to a manifesto that speaks of the “Hispanic invasion” of Texas. If that’s the case, authorities could ask for the death penalty.

“We are treating it as a domestic terrorism case,” said John Bash, the U.S. attorney for the Western District of Texas, during an Aug. 4 news conference. “We’re going to do what we do to terrorists in this country, which is deliver swift and certain justice.”

In various news shows and in his statement, Bishop Seitz concentrated on the example of Jesus as a way out of the divisions that many believe led to the killings.

“Once again in our nation, we see the face of evil. We see the effects of a mind possessed by hatred,” he wrote. “We see the effects of the sinful and insipid conviction that some of us are better than others of us because of race, religion, language or nationality.”

The residents of El Paso, a border city with a long history of brotherhood with neighboring Mexico, has set an example for others to uphold, said the bishop.

“In the last several months, the borderlands have shown the world that generosity, compassion and human dignity are more powerful than the forces of division,” he said in the statement. “The great sickness of our time is that we have forgotten how to be compassionate, generous and humane. Everything is competition. Everything is greed. Everything is cold. Tenderness and the love that knows no borders are crucified in a whirlwind of deadly self-seeking, fear and vindictiveness.”

Because of similar evil forces, God sent Jesus into the world, and when it appeared that evil had won after his crucifixion, Jesus proved otherwise, Bishop Seitz said.

“This is my hope for all who have suffered this violence today and for our community,” he said. “The Christ who suffered is in our midst. He is our companion. We trust he will raise up the fallen, bring healing to the victims and console our broken community.”

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El Paso, too, will rise above the “terrible” bloody day, he said.

“Today let us mourn the dead and pray for them. Tomorrow let us recommit to love. And let us all brace ourselves for just action that will overcome the forces of division and build a more loving society,” he ended. †

Knights give more than $185 million to charity, 76 million service hours in 2018

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (CNS)—In 2018, the Knights of Columbus gave more than $185.7 million to charity and donated 76.7 million hours of hands-on service,

The New Haven-based Catholic fraternal organization announced its charitable activity over the last year in a July 31 news release.

The group, which has a membership of more than 1.9 million, said its charitable activity is threefold: fundraising by the national organization and local Knights councils; community service; and revenues from its insurance and annuities portfolio.

Using Independent Sector’s valuation of a volunteer hour for 2018—$25.43—the Knights’ service hours came to a $2.1 billion value of the Knights’ charity to nearly $1.9 billion.

“Regardless of how or who the Knights give to, the value of the Knights’ service hours came to a $2.1 billion value of the Knights’ charity to nearly $1.9 billion,” Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson said in a statement. †
Twice within our nation, our faith was shaken to its core by senseless acts of violence over the weekend. Shoppers at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, were gunned down by a 24-year-old man late Saturday morning on Aug. 3. The result was 22 innocent people dead and more than two dozen injured. The alleged shooter was apprehended by law enforcement authorities. Officials say between 1,000 to 3,000 people were in the store at the time. We believe it is only by the grace of God that more people were not killed or injured. Roughly 12 hours later, a man in body armor shot up a popular area of downtown Dayton, Ohio, where large crowds were enjoying a night out with friends and family. As a result of a 21-year-old man’s shooting rampage, nine people were killed and 27 others injured. Because the man was shot by local police, the shooter was killed before he could cause more deaths or injuries. Twice within our nation, hearts ached and tears flowed as we tried to comprehend why two individuals took it upon themselves to carry out these heinous acts. As is the case whenever these unexplained crimes occur, questions as to the motives behind these acts are already being shaped. News reports will update us by the minute on new developments, medical professionals will share their insight on mental health and why a person—or people—the minute on new developments, medical professionals will share their insight on mental health and why a person—or people—their actions by local police, the shooter was killed before he could cause more deaths or injuries. Twice within our nation, hearts ached and tears flowed as we tried to comprehend why two individuals took it upon themselves to carry out these heinous acts.

Caucasian, African-American, Hispanic, Asian—the list is longer than we can include in this space—our faith teaches us that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. There is no “yes, but … or “no …” Jesus said it simply and powerfully in Mark’s Gospel: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mk 12:31). Some in our society—and in the world for that matter—seem to lack a conscience when choosing to attack “defenseless people,” as Pope Francis said about the recent shootings during the Angelus at the Vatican on Aug. 4. We must ask this question as well: What has happened to valuing the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death? There are some in today’s world, sadly, who have no second thoughts about attacking the most vulnerable. In the recent shootings in Texas and Ohio, law enforcement officials have referred to the places where the shootings occurred as “broad public areas or places that are relatively unprotected or vulnerable, especially to military or terrorist attacks.”

When deciding what improvements to include in their action plans, participants considered “good, better and best” practices for each area of assessment, as well as estimated cost and timeline for each step. "Better" component was education. The Creation Care Commission coordinated two educational workshops for the program. The first one, conducted by Hooser Interfaith Power and Light, focused on energy efficiency in sacred spaces. The second was a workshop that covered the basics of climate science, Catholic social teaching on climate change, and best operational practices for parish facilities and schools. Both workshops gave attendees practical information on improving sustainable practices within their parish and/or school. Notice now that participants have their action plans, they will begin the implementation phase. Over the next 12 months, leaders in each school will work with support from the Creation Care Commission to carry out their plan. The Season of Creation, which begins on Sept. 1 and runs through Oct. 4, will help boost morale and get parishes involved in this ministry. As participants implement their action plans, more workshops will be scheduled to give them assistance in topics such as composting, recycling, green purchasing, etc. The commission also created a toolkit of resources for participants and parishes and schools in the archdiocese. The Creation Care Commission firmly believes that caring for creation by living sustainably is a moral imperative as it relates to respecting the inherent dignity of all life. Past and present leaders of the Church have expressed similar sentiments.

St. John Paul II once said that “the most profound and serious indication of the moral implications underlying the ecological problem is the lack of respect for life evident in many of the patterns of environmental pollution.” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI asserted that “the environment is God’s gift to everyone, and the use of it we have a responsibility toward the poor, toward future generations, and toward humanity as a whole.” There is no doubt that we as Catholic Christians are called to do our part in caring for God’s creation—no matter how small it may seem—can have a profound impact in creating positive change in caring for our common home. Therefore, we are guided by the wise words of these vicars of Christ as we complete this pilot program and integrate sustainability into the daily operations of our archdiocese.

(Alicia Nygra is an intern for Mandell A. & Anna C. Rockefeller, an environmental services consulting firm in Indianapolis. For more information about the archdiocese’s sustainability program, go to archindy.org/sustainability or contact Deacon Michael Braun, director of the Sustainability Program, at 317-236-1531 or mbraun@archindy.org. †)

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to "the responsible exchange of freely- held and expressed opinion among the People of God" (Communio et progressionis, 1). Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expression and temperate. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect. The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage services opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed. Letters must be signed, but for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org. †
"The real problem at this moment of our history is that we are losing our bearings, with increasingly evident destructive effects" (Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI).

In the fourth chapter of Letter to a Suffering Church: A Bishop Speaks on the Sexual Abuse Scandal, Bishop Robert E. Barron addresses the important question, “Why Should We Stay?” The bishop is speaking directly to Catholics “who feel, understandably, demoralized, scandalized, angry beyond words, and ready to quit.”

Bishop Barron’s response is a masterful summary of the theme that is our Catholic way of life, and he strongly urges all Catholics to meditate prayerfully on six fundamental reasons why we should remain faithful to our baptismal call.

The first reason proposed in Letter to a Suffering Church is simple, but extremely important: “The Church speaks of God.” Speaking about God is not easy or common in our contemporary culture. We are immersed in a secular, often anti-religious, environment that has effectively cut all ties with our spiritual roots. When it exists, God-talk is, with rare exception, stifled. God is less frequently attended than in previous generations, and explicit references to God are rarely heard in the public square, politics, business, social services, the arts and education.

The Church insists on speaking about God—not just on the weekends at Mass, but in every circumstance that concerns the life and dignity of human persons. We speak of God when talking about marriage and family life, immigration, poverty, addiction, health care, education and sexuality. We talk about God when it is uncomfortable to do so, especially regarding the dignity of human life from the moment of conception until natural death, and we refuse to allow secular values to override our most basic and fundamental convictions about the human person made in the image and likeness of God.

“The Church, despite its many failings, speaks of God, the transcendent Mystery, which corresponds to the most ardent desire of the heart, of the Ultimate Reality” and, Bishop Barron wrote, “especially today, is like water in the desert.” St. Augustine said it best, of course. Our hearts are wired for God, and therefore will remain restless until they rest in God. “Stay with the Church,” Bishop Barron urges all Catholics, “because as its best it properly orients the hungry heart.”

Unfortunately, we have too often witnessed the failure of the Church to speak about God with credibility. There is no excuse for this. The earthen vessels that contain the treasure of God’s truth and love are fragile. We (all the baptized) are the Church, and all of us—with the exception of Mary, the mother of God and our mother—are sinful human beings who carry on Christ’s work very imperfectly. And yet, according to Letter to a Suffering Church, we are one of “the few remaining institutions in our society that will speak to your children about God.”

The great Christian apologist G.K. Chesterton once remarked, “The first effect of not believing in God, is that you lose your common sense.” Many would argue that our secular world has indeed, lost its common sense.

Where is the sense in withdrawing food and water from a dying man? In denying the right to life to the most vulnerable of victims in the womb? In forcing children and families to suffer gross indignities as they flee their homeland in search of freedom and a better life? In pursuing wealth, power and property as the highest good of human life?

As recent popes (especially John XXIII, Paul VI, Juan Pablo II, Benedict XVI and Francis) have repeatedly emphasized, when God is absent from our minds and hearts, “humanity loses its bearings with increasingly evident destructive effects.” We need only glance at today’s headlines or read the incessant chatter on social media to see the “destructive effects” that result from our society’s denial of the presence of God.

There are many reasons for remaining faithful to our baptismal vocation, but the most immediate and compelling is the opportunity that active participation provides us to hear the word of God and to share it generously with others.

God-talk is not just for Sunday worship. It’s for daily living and for the most important moments in our lives as individuals and as a society.

God is with us. Always and everywhere. Let’s turn to him and ask him to help us remain faithful, as members of his body, the Church, to speak about him often, by the power of his grace.

¿Por qué deberíamos permanecer? La verdad y el amor de Dios son la razón

"El verdadero problema en este momento de nuestra historia es que Dios, efectivamente ha perdido el rumbo, con efectos destructivos cada vez más evidentes." (Joseph Ratzinger, Papa emérito Benedicto XVI).

En el capítulo cuarto del libro Carta a una Iglesia que sufre: un obispo habla sobre la crisis de abusos sexuales, el obispo Robert E. Barron aborda una interrogante muy importante: “¿Por qué debiéramos permanecer?” El obispo le habla directamente a los católicos “que, comprensiblemente, se sienten desmoralizados, escandalizados, sumamente emojados y que también quieren renunciar.”

La respuesta del obispo Barron es un resumen magistral del tesoro que es nuestra forma de vida católica y exhorta a los católicos a seguir siendo fieles a nuestra vocación bautismal.

La primera razón que expone Carta a una Iglesia que sufre es sencilla pero extremadamente importante: la Iglesia habla de Dios.

No es fácil hablar de Dios ni resulta común en nuestra cultura contemporánea. Estamos inmersos en un entorno secular, a menudo antirreligioso, que efectivamente ha cercenado todos los lazos con nuestras raíces espirituales. Cuando se da, la conversación sobre Dios se reduce al culto religioso al cual acuden cada vez menos personas, en comparación con las generaciones anteriores, y se desalientan o se prohíben las referencias explícitas a Dios en recintos públicos, en la política, en los negocios, en los servicios sociales, las artes y la educación.

La Iglesia insiste en hablar sobre Dios, no solamente el fin de semana en la misa, sino en todas las circunstancias que atañen a la vida y la dignidad de las personas.

Hablamos de Dios cuando hacemos referencia al matrimonio y la vida familiar, a la pobreza, la adicción, la salud, la educación y la sexualidad. Hablamos sobre Dios cuando se trata de algo incómodo, especialmente con respecto a la dignidad de la vida humana desde el momento de la concepción hasta la muerte natural y nos rehusamos a permitir que los valores seculares suplanten nuestras convicciones más elementales y fundamentales sobre la persona humana creada a imagen y semejanza de Dios.

"La Iglesia, a pesar de sus múltiples faltas, nos habla de Dios, nos habla sobre el Nombre de Dios, sobre aquello que corresponde a los deseos más ardiendo del corazón, a la Realidad Última y—dice el obispo Barron—esta palabra, especialmente hoy en día, es como agua en el desierto.”

San Agustín lo expresó de una forma excepcional. Nuestros corazones están preparados para Dios. Sus hijos y sus madres, somos seres humanos pecadores que llevamos adelante la obra de Cristo de forma muy imperfecta. Y sin embargo, según Carta a una Iglesia que sufre, somos “una de las pocas instituciones que quedan en nuestra sociedad para hablar de Dios a sus hijos.”

El gran apologista cristiano, G.K. Chesterton destacó una vez que “el primer efecto de no creer en Dios es que se pierde el sentido común.” Muchos podrían argumentar que nuestro mundo efectivamente ha perdido su sentido común.

¿Qué sentido tienen entregar el alimento y la bebida a un moribundo? ¿Negarle el derecho a la vida a las víctimas más inocentes que se encuentran en el vientre? ¿En forzar a niños y familias a sufrir terribles humillaciones mientras huyen de su patria en busca de libertad y de una mejor vida? ¿En perseguir la riqueza, el poder y el placer de los sentidos como la forma más elevada de vida humana? Tal como lo han enfatizado en repetidas ocasiones los papas modernos (en especial, Juan XXIII, Paulo VI, Juan Pablo II, Benedicto XVI y Francisco), cuando Dios no está presente en nuestras mentes y corazones “la humanidad pierde el rumbo, con efectos destructivos cada vez más evidentes.”

Solo tenemos que echar un vistazo a los titulares de hoy o leer la chicharra incesante en las redes sociales para ver los “efectos destructivos” producto de la negación de la presencia de Dios por parte de la sociedad.

Existen muchas razones para seguir siendo fieles a nuestra vocación bautismal, pero la más inmediata y convincente es la oportunidad que nos brinda la participación activa para escuchar la Palabra de Dios y compartirla generosamente con los demás.

Hablar de Dios no debe limitarse solamente al culto dominical; es algo para la comunidad y para los contextos más importantes de nuestras vidas como individuos y como sociedad.

Hablar de Dios es como pagar en tiempos y en todas partes. Acudamos a Él y pidámosle que, por el poder de su gracia, nos ayude a seguir siendo fieles y, como integrantes de su cuerpo, la Iglesia, a hablar sobre Él a menudo.”
Pro-life advocate Abby Johnson to speak at Pregnancy Care Center of Southeast Indiana fundraiser on Sept. 12.

Internationally acclaimed pro-life advocate and best-selling author Abby Johnson is the featured speaker at the 30th annual Pregnancy Care Center of Southeast Indiana (PCC) fundraiser banquet at The Woodlands, 9500 Cilley Road, in Cleves, Ohio, from 6:30-9 p.m. on Sept. 12.

Abby Johnson is the former director of a Planned Parenthood facility. She turned pro-life in 2009 after witnessing an ultrasound-guided abortion. She is the founder of And Then There Were None, a ministry to assist abortion clinic workers in transitioning out of the industry. She is also the author of Unplanned and the subject of a movie by the same name. Both chronicle her experiences within and departure from Planned Parenthood.

There is no charge to attend the banquet; however, there will be an invitation to make a financial gift to support PCC, which offers pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, education on abstinence and pregnancy options, parenting classes, material support and more.

Dress for the evening is business attire, and the event is for adults only due to limited seating.

Reservations are requested by Sept. 1 at www.supportpccindiana.org (click on Events) or by calling 812-537-4357.

For additional information, contact Sara Minard at sminard@ supportpccindiana.org.

For more information on Abby Johnson, visit www.abbyjohnson.org.

Fun run/walk to benefit Providence Food Pantry in Terre Haute on Sept. 7

St. Mary-of-the-Woods Parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods is hosting a benefit ‘Hunger Bus Fun Run/Walk’ on university campus of St. Mary-of-the-Woods College and the grounds of the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, on Sept. 7. Registration is from 9-9:45 a.m. at the event on Sept. 7.

All proceeds benefit the Providence Food Pantry in West Terre Haute.

Pre Race events include a free kids’ zone with face painting and games. Cost to participate is $10 per person. Registrations will be accepted through the day of the race.

Writer, director present for screening of film on first U.S.-born black priest on Aug. 10 at the Catholic Center

The archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry is hosting a screening of the film Across about the first U.S.-born black priest, Father Augustus Tolton, at the Archdiocese of Indianapolis Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis from 6-8 p.m. on Aug. 10.

Chris Foley, writer and director of the film, will be present for a question-and-answer session after the screening.

Father Tolton was born into slavery in Missouri in 1854 and baptized as a Catholic. After his father died in the Civil War, Tolton escaped with his mother and three siblings to Quincy in the free state of Illinois. His parish priest allowed him to attend the parochial school despite opposition from white parishioners. He entered a seminary in Rome because no seminary in the U.S. would accept him. Father Tolton founded a parish for black Catholics in Chicago. Through his dynamic leadership, the parish grew from 30 to 600 parishioners in just three years.

Father Tolton died in 1887. His cause for canonization began in 2010, and he was named a saint on May 21, 2017. The cause for canonization began in 2010, and he was named a saint on May 21, 2017.

There is no charge for the screening. There will be refreshments, and tickets will be available at the door.

For more information, contact e-mail Pearlette Spranger, Black Catholic Ministry coordinator, at pspringer@archindy.org.
In 50 years as a priest, Father John Fink has shared Christ’s peace with others

By Sean Gallagher

In his 50 years of priestly life and ministry, Father John Fink has ministered in parishes across central and southern Indiana, from those on the north side of Indianapolis, to others in the hills of the New Albany Deanery and along the Ohio River in Madison.

In each of them, he’s found fulfillment in a simple mission. “It comes from giving the gift of Jesus’ love to others and their response,” said Father Fink, who was born in 1943 and grew up as a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove.

Ordained on May 24, 1969, by Archbishop Paul C. Schulte, Father Fink was formed for the priesthood during the years of the Second Vatican Council. “There was more of an emphasis on reaching out to others,” he said. “During my theology years, we hoped that the Vietnam War could come to an end. Jesus’ mission when he came was to bring peace among individuals, within persons themselves. “If you don’t have a sense of peace within yourself, you’re not going to be able to bring a sense of peace to another. They’ll see the sense of unsettledness within yourself.”

In offering Christ’s peace to others, Father Fink built up warm relationships with Catholics across central and southern Indiana.

Joan Livingston knew the care and support he provided. “He was extraordinary when people’s needs were presented to his parishioners simply to be with them and support them, not to solve their problems.”

“Father Fink sensed people’s needs.”

She knows this about Father Fink because she and her family lived through the Vietnam War, and she said, “I wasn’t especially happy, but I knew Father Fink was there.”

In his later years of ministry before his retirement in 2013, Father Fink experienced his own pain in various health challenges.

But Darlene Cole, who knew him at St. Michael Parish in Bradford during his time there, saw Father Fink as completely dedicated to carrying on his priestly ministry. “He would break his arm one day and would have Mass the next morning,” said Cole, a pastoral associate at St. Michael at the time. “That’s the kind of guy he was.”

Cole saw that Father Fink’s tasks as a pastor “weren’t duties to him.”

“We can’t take away the pain,” Father Fink reflected. “But we can surely, by reaching out, remind them that Jesus went through this, too.”

In his 50 years of priestly life and ministry, Father Fink has ministered to his parishioners as a natural part of the ministry to which he had been called. “Priests enter into relationships in the parishes for various reasons—sickness, death, baptisms,” he said. “In a sense, you have a family, but the family is a lot larger than your own.”

He noted, though, that he made himself present to his parishioners simply to be with them and support them, not to solve their problems.

“They’ll see the sense of unsettledness within yourself.”

Father Fink is seen in Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove in 1969 after he was ordained a priest. He grew up as a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish. (Submitted photo)

Father John Fink shares in that faith, not being discouraged by the challenges that the Church has faced in recent years.

“People have talked about the history of the Church,” he said. “You know that it has gone through many trials and tribulations, but God has always said, ‘I will not abandon you. I will not leave you.’ ”

Nor has he left Father Fink in his 50 years of priestly life and ministry.

(For more information on a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit www.HearGodsCall.com.)
her treatment would start with six rounds—of chemotherapy from May to September of that year. As frightening as that news was, Soller approached it in a surprising way.

Challenges and a cry of happiness

“Never once was I scared I was going to die,” recalls Soller, who was at the end of her junior year in high school when she was diagnosed. “I remember the doctors telling me the treatment had positive results with other kids, and they thought it would work out well. I was confident everything would be OK.”

“Going into it, my faith was strong, which helped me tremendously. I wasn’t angry at God or blaming God. They said, ‘God gives his hardest battles to his strongest soldiers.’ I just accepted it and moved on.”

Still, there were challenges along the way. After the treatments, she was exhausted. She also had the challenge of keeping up with her schoolwork while she was in the hospital at the end of her junior year and the beginning of her senior year at Roncalli.

Through it all, she prayed to Pope Francis, asking for his intercession to God. She also learned to rely on the help of others in her times of struggle.

“I missed a lot of school even after I was done with the treatments. Roncalli was very accommodating. They said they would do anything to help me graduate on time. All my teachers were very helpful. A few even came to the hospital to tutor me on the things I missed. It just proved to me that Roncalli has family values and how much they cared about me.”

She also grew to count on the care of the nurses at Riley.

“I was in the hospital for every round of chemotherapy. The nurses there are so loving, and they treat you as one of their children. They get to know you. They become really close.”

She was surrounded by them on Sept. 26, 2017, when she rang the bell at the end of her last chemotherapy round at Riley—a symbolic ringing that signified that her treatments had been a success and she was considered cancer-free.

Kathleen Soller’s goal of making a difference in the lives of children was on display again this summer as she served as a counselor at Camp Rancho Framasa, the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization camp in Brown County. (Submitted photo)

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“I cried—a happy cry, a release of emotion,” she recalls.

A dream, a dance and a wish come true

The nurses at Riley also became her role models for the future she has envisioned for herself.

She will soon begin her sophomore year at Saint Mary’s College in northern Indiana where she is studying to become a nurse. After she graduates, she hopes to return to Riley in that role.

“That would be my dream job. I just want to return to the place that gave me my life back. I hope to do the same for other kids.”

Soller is already striving to make a difference in the lives of children. When she returns to Saint Mary’s, she will continue to be on the committees that runs the college’s dance marathon that benefits Riley. She will also continue her efforts as a board member of the Make-A-Wish club at the nearby University of Notre Dame, a club that raises funds that help make wishes come true for South Bend children facing life-threatening situations.

Beyond her concern for the children, she also views these commitments as a way of giving thanks to Make-A-Wish of Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana for granting her wish: the 10-day cruise to Italy, Greece and Malta for her, her brother Ryan, her sister Lizzy and their parents, Pat and Joanne.

“I wanted to travel somewhere and do something my whole family would enjoy—something my family wouldn’t ever have the opportunity to do. I thought it would be the perfect fit.”

What also made the cruise in late June perfect for her was that it began and ended in Rome. She wanted to visit the Vatican, tour St. Peter’s Basilica and take part in a general audience with Pope Francis. She just never expected that being among the thousands of people for the pope’s general audience on June 19 would lead to her family getting the opportunity to meet the pope.

“I’m still in shock that it happened”

Soller’s mom had arranged for the family to get general admission tickets to the papal audience.

“We went to pick up our general admission tickets as soon as we got to Rome, and they handed me an envelope with a special ticket [for VIP seating],” Joanne Soller recalls. “Another family had to cancel, and they gave us that ticket. They said, ‘You will probably meet the pope.’”

When the Sollers arrived at the papal audience, their special ticket placed them in the second of the three closest rows to where Pope Francis would speak.

“There’s no training to meet the pope,” Kathleen Soller says. “I started thinking about what I would say to him. I thought maybe I should say, ‘Nice to meet you’—and thank him for all the work he’s done with the youth.”

After the audience lasted for about 90 minutes, Pope Francis began to walk toward the three closest rows.

“There were about 50 people in our section—all families with children who were ill or had disabilities,” Soller says. “He shook every person’s hand. And everyone got a picture with him. When he came to our row, I was the last in our family. No one else said anything. They shook his hand and smiled. In my head, I thought I had to say something because this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

“He came over and shook my hand. I said, ‘It’s wonderful to meet you.’ In English, he said, ‘Pray for me.’”

She says it all took about two seconds, but it’s a moment she’ll always remember.

“I’m still in shock that it happened. I thought it was kind of funny that I prayed to Pope Francis for his intercession and then I got to meet him. It’s very special fun fact I can share now: ‘Oh, I met the pope. I shook his hand.’ “

“I learned so much about being grateful”

That joyful reality led to some fun and interesting reactions when she returned from the cruise to become a counselor this summer at Camp Rancho Framasa, the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization camp in Brown County.

“I told the story to some of my campers at bedtime,” she says. “They all put their hands out of their bunk and asked me to shake their hand. It’s a little second-hand pope handshake.”

Soller shares that moment with a sense of joy and wonder. Those two qualities flow through the way she tells the story of the past 27 months of her life. So do the qualities of perspective and faith.

“Overall, being diagnosed with cancer is a very humbling experience,” says Soller, who continues to be cancer-free after her last six-month checkup. “I’m blessed to come out the other end and be healthy. I’ve met so many incredible people. It helped me realize I wanted to be a nurse. And I learned so much about being grateful and never taking anything for granted. It was hard, but it was a very important moment in my life.

“My faith has allowed me to keep a positive attitude and have a better outlook on my life. Knowing what I went through has allowed me to grow in my faith and give greater glory to God.”
Beyond prayers, bishops stress action after deadly shootings

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In response to the mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, on Aug. 3 and 4, several U.S. bishops expressed their support and prayers, but others posted links to their own statements or videos where responses in the wake of such incidents. The bishops, however, did not hesitate to speak out against gun violence and for the need for action to prevent such tragedies from occurring.

One of the bishops who issued a joint statement with Bishop Frank C. Dewane of St. Petersburg, Fla., and Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Houston, said that the weekend’s shootings were “a national tragedy that we cannot ignore.” The bishops emphasized the importance of prayer and action in response to gun violence, and they called for legislation that would address the root causes of this problem.

Another bishop, Msgr. Joseph Mark Stika of the Diocese of El Paso, Texas, said that the weekend’s shootings were “a national tragedy that we cannot ignore.” He called for legislation that would address the root causes of gun violence, and he encouraged people to support those who are affected by these tragedies.

Some bishops pointed to the need for more thorough background checks and more restrictive access to guns, but others said that these issues should not be the only focus. Instead, they called for a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of gun violence, such as poverty, mental illness, and lack of access to mental health care.

A statement issued by the USCCB’s Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development said that the bishops would continue to work with lawmakers to enact gun laws “to protect the innocent and keep guns out of the hands of criminals.” They called for legislation that would ban the sale of high-capacity magazines and limit the sale of “assault-style” rifles.

The bishops also emphasized the need for prayer and sacrifice in response to these tragedies. They called for prayers for the victims and their families, and they urged people to offer help to those affected by these tragedies.

Cardinal DiNardo and Bishop Dewane

The bishops’ statement ended with a call for action and for people to come together in prayer and sacrifice to address the root causes of gun violence. They encouraged people to support those who are affected by these tragedies and to continue to work for a more just and peaceful society.

Bishops urge action to prevent gun violence

In response to the mass shootings in El Paso and Dayton, several bishops issued statements calling for action to prevent gun violence. They emphasized the importance of prayer and sacrifice in response to these tragedies, and they called for legislation that would address the root causes of gun violence.

Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, said that the weekend’s shootings were “a national tragedy that we cannot ignore.” He called for legislation that would ban the sale of high-capacity magazines and limit the sale of “assault-style” rifles.

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Bishop Allen V. Vigneron of Detroit, Mich., said that the weekend’s shootings were “a national tragedy that we cannot ignore.” He called for legislation that would ban the sale of high-capacity magazines and limit the sale of “assault-style” rifles.

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Retreat made famous by pope during WYD ’93 gets makeover

ALLENSPARK, Colo. (CNS)—Mountains really don’t change much that in 26 years. So it’s a fair bet that the view of Mount Meeker and its twin, Longs, Peak, from the Camp St. Malo Retreat is the same one St. John Paul II saw when he strolled the camp’s grounds in 1993.

The retreat center was made famous during the pope’s epic World Youth Day Visit to Denver, considered a huge success for the Catholic Church in the U.S. and for the pontiff.

Situated on the northern Front Range of the Rocky Mountains and just south of the town of Estes Park—the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park—Camp St. Malo is home to a picturesque 1930s-era Chapel on the Rock. Its formal name is St. Catherine of Siena Chapel.

When he asked to have a day or two of rest during that historic visit, the pope was escorted to this mountain site by then-Denver Archbishop J. Francis Stafford. The future saint then blessed the chapel, walked the trails and took a siesta in the former conference center facility.

In 2011, a fire destroyed the retreat facility. The Denver Archdiocese later bought a church lodge down the road and created the Annunciation Heights facility for families and youth. It opened last year.

But the rustic trails and rosary walk that St. John Paul would have experienced have remained closed to the public following devastating floods and landslides in September 2013. Although heavy rains caused an estimated $1.2 billion in damages statewide, they left the popular chapel mostly intact.

The Denver Archdiocese is now in the process of restoring the St. John Paul hiking trail and a new memorial pavilion named in his honor, along with a refurbished rosary walk and outdoor stations of the cross.

A new Visitor and Heritage Center is already open and features a number of exhibits celebrating the 1993 papal visit, including a display of St. John Paul’s walking stick, which was reportedly crafted for him by a member of the U.S. Secret Service.

On a sunny mid-June day, when an African-born priest and chaplain to the camp was celebrating a weekly Wednesday afternoon Mass, some dozen guests and staff filled in the 100-seat facility.

Any chapel with so arresting a setting, and situated along the route to so popular a national park, is bound to attract local Catholics, wedding couples looking for a perfect church, as well as a trickle of spontaneous passersby.

“We see as few as 20 a day on the snowiest of winter days and as many as 500 a day in the busy summer months of June, July and August,” said Jim Richard. He and his wife are full-time volunteer greeters and self-described docents at the chapel.

Richard was busy welcoming Massgoers along with the just plain curious, as well as the tour bus crowds coming up to the mountains from Denver and stopping for a photo of the chapel, which is now open year-round.

Mass is not offered regularly, but those planning a visit can check with the Visitor and Heritage Center via the website, campstmalo.org, to see if Mass is scheduled during a particular week.

When a motorcycle-riding couple from Wisconsin stopped to look around, Richard recounted for them a story of how, a year ago, the priest in charge blessed the motorcycles for a large group of bikers as they passed through.

“My wife and I are friends with a parish priest in Denver who recommended us to be docents six days a week. We like it, and we love what is going on here,” Richard said, pointing out some of the unique features of the chapel, including a single stained-glass window situated in the rear near the entrance.

“It was made in 1936 in Munich, Germany, by the Franz Mayer company and they are still in business,” he said.

But the chapel designers didn’t want a darkened interior characteristic of stained glass, so they chose gold-colored glass windows that bathe the interior with shifting hues of diffused sunlight throughout the day.

The chapel stones used to create the building were the remnants of 6 feet of rock originally blasted off the top of a large rocky outcrop. Italian-American craftsmen from Denver were among those who offered to help build the chapel.

Visitors are invited to climb up to the second-story loft and ring the 1,000-pound church bell, and to hike up the adjacent hill to the statue of Christ, which was installed in 1948 as a memorial following World War II.

After the Mass, Richard, his cowboy hat in hand, walked around the woods property and pointed out some of the challenges of restoring the hiking trails following the damaging floods and mudslides.

There were hopes for creating more guest parking spaces, but the land is still slightly unstable and a decision was taken to defer that for now, he pointed out.

“We are trying to be good land stewards,” Richard said, pointing to an area of property that was resheathed by the surging flood and debris. “But we want to resurrect the old cabin creek trail, which is what Pope John Paul II looked on, and we want to rebuild the rosary trail and add a Stations of the Cross.”

It’s not yet clear when those projects will be completed, but there is a possibility that the St. John Paul II Memorial Hiking Trail may be ready for public use by the end of the year. Richard noted.

A statue of Christ overlooks the Chapel on the Rock, formally named St. Catherine of Siena Chapel in Allenspark, Colo., near Estes Park, on June 19. (CNS photo/Tom Tracy)

The Chapel on the Rock, formally named St. Catherine of Siena Chapel, is seen on June 19 in Allenspark, Colo., near Estes Park. The chapel is on the grounds of the Camp St. Malo Retreat Center, which was made famous during St. John Paul II’s epic World Youth Day visit to the Denver in 1993. (CNS photo/Tom Tracy)

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

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

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

1. Ethics Point Confidential, Online Reporting www.archindyconfidential.indianaled.org www.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
2. Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator 317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548 carlahill@archindy.org

St. Nicholas Annual Church Picnic

Sunday, August 18, 2019

Buffet Serving 11:00 am to 5:00 pm
Carryout available til 6:00 PM
Mass at 10:30 AM

Serving:
- All you can eat buffet dinner – Fried Chicken or Roast Beef
- Also St. Nicholas Famous Tarte Soup
- Carry out available all day for dinners and soup
- Games for the whole family

Directions:
- 7/4 to the Sunman-Milan exit #156
- Turn south on SR 101 to Sunman (approx. 4 miles)
- Also RR tracks turn right and follow signs to St. Nicholas Church (approx. 3 miles)

Contact the parish office with any questions (317) 623-2964

Contact: Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator 317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548 carlahill@archindy.org

www.archindy.org/layministry

Jim Richard, pictured on June 20, and his wife are full-time volunteer greeters and self-described docents at the Chapel on the Rock, formally named St. Catherine of Siena Chapel in Allenspark, Colo., near Estes Park. (CNS photo/Tom Tracy)
WASHINGTON (CNS)—Washington isn’t exactly known for its religious memorials.

Tourists visit D.C. to see the Capitol, the White House, the Washington Memorial and other historical sites. However, the nation’s capital also is home to a plethora of Catholic sites, symbols and memorials interwoven with the history and politics of the country, that even D.C. natives might not be familiar with.

Known affectionately as “Little Rome,” it is hard to turn around in the neighborhood of Brookland without running into some kind of Catholic monument or symbol. Home to The Catholic University of America (CUA), the basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the St. John Paul II National Shrine, the John Paul II Institute, the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America and the Dominican House of Studies, just to name a few, it is no wonder the neighborhood attracts Catholic sightseers in droves.

The basilica, with its soaring mosaic ceilings and Gothic-feeling catacombs, is the jewel of “Little Rome.” However, most tourists miss an unsung little white statue on the east side of the national shrine.

This little marble man, St. Junipero Serra, was erected in September 2015, when Pope Francis celebrated a Mass at the basilica to canonize Junipero.

St. Junipero was not born in America, but he eventually traveled here, helping to bring Christianity to the West Coast and modern-day California. Junipero Serra left his home on the island of Majorca, Spain, in 1728, when he felt called to the priesthood. The Franciscan friar first traveled to Mexico, and eventually to California, where he established 21 missions. He both worked to evangelize the region’s Native Americans and protested against the Spanish soldiers’ harsh treatment of them, though some argue he was harsh in his own treatment of Native people.

This statue is a scale replica of one in the Capitol’s Statuary Hall. In it, St. Junipero holds a cross in one hand and a church in the other. These figures symbolize his goal to evangelize people who had never heard of Jesus Christ.

Just a few hundred yards from the basilica’s statue, nestled into old, house-cracking wooden chests, are the photos, documents, books, letters and artifacts that comprise Catholic University’s Archbishop Sheen Shmunen Collection.

Archbishop Sheen first attended the university as a student, then returned to teach. During his 23 years as a professor, Archbishop Sheen developed a larger and larger following. He began broadcasting on television and radio, maintained a full teaching load and wrote 34 books.

He was one of the most influential Catholic “personalities.” Across the country, Protestants and Catholics alike gathered first around the radio to hear his Sunday evening Lenten broadcasts, and later around the TV to watch his show “Life Is Worth Living,” which drew 10 million viewers across the nation every week.

The CUA collection is home to Archbishop Sheen’s posy—an, huge, two-volume collection of all the documents concerning his ongoing sainthood cause. This includes letters between the prelate and St. John Paul II and information on the miracle attributed to Archbishop Sheen in 2010, among other things.

The collection also houses his complete FBI files, in which it is clear that the archbishop wielded enough public sway to cause a stir, and sometimes a memo to the president, whenever he started talking about the Germans or the Soviets. The collection is open to the public by appointment.

Looking out over the road with his familiar, friendly smile.

Just underneath that, facing a long, empty lawn, a slightly larger-than-life statue of St. John Paul stands facing the absent crowd, his arms raised in papal blessing.

This statue, by artist Chas Fagan, re-creates a scene from the Oct. 7, 1979, Mass that St. John Paul celebrated on the National Mall. Fagan captures that October day, right down to the notable breeze that swirled the pope’s robes animatedly around his ankles.

Inside the shrine, Redemptor Hominis Church and the Luminous Mysteries Chapel’s glinting mosaics invite visitors in for Mass. But the true treasures of the shrine lie on the bottom floor in the “Gift of Love” exhibit, which takes visitors on a tour through St. John Paul’s life, telling his story through photos, videos, artifacts and documents.

The exhibit houses artifacts such as his shepherd’s staff, both his sets of robes—the simple cassock and formal chasuble—and others.

But the Capitol’s Catholicity is not confined to “Little Rome.” A 10-minute walk from the U.S. Capitol, on the corner of Second and C streets, the dark brown steeples of St. Joseph’s Church peek through the buildings and trees.

An influx of German immigrants to D.C. in the 1860s decided to build their own Catholic Church in the heart of the capital. In October 1868, a group of 20,000 Catholics paraded out to lay the cornerstone for what would become St. Joseph’s on Capitol Hill.

Now, 150 years later, it is the go-to parish for Catholic members of Congress. Around the same time, on the other side of D.C. near Dupont Circle, another church began to develop. St. Augustine Church, founded by a group of emancipated slaves, was the first African-American Catholic Church in the city and is called the mother Church for black Catholics.

Originally, the group of free and emancipated African-Americans met in the basement of what was then St. Matthew’s Church because they were not allowed to worship in the nave of the church with white parishioners. Eventually, they built their own church, St. Augustine, along with one of the first black Catholic schools in the Washington Archdiocese.

Upon entering the church, it becomes immediately clear that the thriving community hinges on music. In the sanctuary of the church, just in front of the altar, a sleek, grand piano and microphone take center stage, and off to the left a drum kit stands ready for duty.

The parish’s musical bent boasts a rich history. In 1873, the St. Augustine choir became the first American opera company—black or white.

The St. Augustine community continues to advocate for and commemorate African-Americans in the Church today. These monuments commemorate the stories of only a few of the religious figures that helped shape the U.S. and the world. Some others include the Temperance Fountain, the statue of Bishop John Carroll at Jesuit-run Georgetown University, statues of St. Damien in the Capitol and of Moses in the Supreme Court and the Library of Congress, and countless others that D.C. visitors can spend time exploring at their leisure.†
Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

What would Jesus find under your roof? Leaks or love?

A few years back, I was working at a parish when the new Roman Missal translations were being introduced. As a parish marketing director, it was part of my job to communicate these changes to the congregation. The diocesan pastor and I met regularly to decipher the changes that had been released and plot a strategy for communicating the changes and the meaning behind them. Over time, I came to appreciate that change seldom comes easily, we often joke that the changes might go over more like a “missile” than the “missal.” Nevertheless, we trudged forward. At first, even I had trouble embracing the need for new language like “consubstantial” and “dewfall.”

Fast forward a few years and this language, that at one time seemed foreign, has simply become part of our vernacular. While some word substitutions here and there seem small, these changes to the language of worship have had a profound impact on my worship experience. It is the final change that has had a profound impact on me. It made the words come to life, and the meaning behind them. Knowing the changes as they moved forward to receive Communion. After some time repeating the words of the new prayer, I began to contemplate the meaning of the words, and this is when I found myself imagining Jesus entering under my roof, looking up, and what would he see? Would he find a sturdy roof? One well-constructed of strong material, built to withstand any storm? That’s my home, my roof, my family. To be completely honest, I had to admit he would probably be gazing up at a roof dotted with holes allowing all the leaks of my sins to easily fall through. This image of the roof has become my weekly examination of conscience. Now when I say, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,” I think back on the prior days to the times I have failed to act as God expected. I unceremoniously invited my son in a hard tone. Drip. Knowing I’m overweight and out of shape, I went the whole week without exercise or doing much of anything this gift of a body God gave me. Drip. Drip. I failed to love and appreciate my husband as a person. Yet, I was able to call the volunteer for you, name it—the homeless, the poor, the sick and elderly, all the clinicians on the list of these less fortunate in care—instead telling myself I’m just too busy. Drip. Drip. Drip.

What would Jesus find under your roof?

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is also the assistant executive director for Archdiocesan Education Initiatives.)

The Human Side/David Bethuram

Growing up in poverty is a threat to childhood development. Poverty and financial stress can disrupt children’s cognitive development and their ability to learn. It can contribute to behavioral, social and emotional problems and poor health.

In Indiana, there are 103,000 children age 5 and younger that live in poverty (2019 Indiana Kids Count Database). Living in poverty can include facing day-to-day struggles, finding and accessing high quality health care and education for their children can be a constant challenge.

Young children impacted by poverty are among the most vulnerable children in the regions which Catholic Charities serve. They’re more likely to have been born prematurely or have low birth weight and have unidentified behavior or developmental problems. They’re also more likely to have various chronic health issues like untreated caviites that can affect their development and chances for success in school.

The first few weeks, months and years of a child’s life are the most critical—and the most vulnerable. In their community and school; and reading and wellness habits; they are engaged in enrichment opportunities their peers have often unable to catch up. Young children must also cope with basic literacy goals like letter recognition and counting skills.

Young children come to school hungry, which makes it difficult to concentrate. Many schools are able to combat that by offering free breakfast and lunch.

Children sometimes come to school hungry, which makes it difficult to concentrate.

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

A heavenly reminder that we are temples of the Holy Spirit

Leonardo da Vinci was a genius in understanding the human body. Endless hours on end, he studied cadavers to learn the intricate functions of the body. Today his drawings of the human body are Marvel to behold. When I was in cardiology, the biology building was next to my building. We’d often see students who were aspiring to be doctors in the gross anatomy laboratory mirroring da Vinci’s desire to probe the workings of the

No doubt the more the mysteries of the human body were exposed to the gods of science, the more the fascinations with awe and awe there are for it. Recently, I had a funeral in a parish where I worked for 16 years. It had been 10 years since being back there and seeing friends I had known. As I visited with them, I felt as if I’d never been away. We had aged and weren’t the same as I knew them. As I left the parish, I could hear Peggy Lee singing, “Fever.” Those words matter our efforts to stay young and spry, time takes its toll and this wonderful body deteriorates.

It just happened that at the time of my dissection about our body, the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi Sunday) was about to be celebrated. It came as a cheering medicine on my spiritual disenchanted.

“A spiritual writer once wrote, “We must rediscover what God thought of us and we became.” Here we are reminded that our body came from the effusions of God’s blood and our spirit from the breath of God.” Furthermore, Christ became incarnate and thought of enough of us to take on our flesh and talk to us. Thus, there is in me, then rose from the dead, converting our mundane body into a glorified body. This reflection reminds us we are temples of the Holy Spirit, and lifts our earthly thoughts into the realms of the heavenly.

Twentieth Something/Christina Capecchi

Searching for silver linings: grace after the storm

Business was good. So good, in fact, that the family company had become one of the largest brewers in New England, producing 300,000 barrels a year and supporting two generations of Geisels in Springfield.

Theo and his wife, Lee, were the backbone of the business. A business he could hand down to his son, Theo Jr. A proud legacy.

But stories like these remind us. And Catholic spirituality is based in storytelling. We gather around water, with incense and oil, and tell stories. We
Sunday, August 11, 2019

Wisdom 18:6-9

Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19


The Sunday Readings

The Book of Wisdom is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. Always standing high in any ancient Jewish perception of God and the world was the story of the Exodus, when God guided the Hebrews from Egypt where they had been enslaved God sent Moses to lead the people in their escape. The people’s awareness of their debt to God and homage to him was very much a part of the story. On occasion, they failed, but overall they worshiped God, their deliverer.

This book, along with the other books of the wisdom literature, presents itself as the fruit of human logic as well as of faith, stressing that there is no conflict between the two. The second reading for this weekend is from the Epistle to the Hebrews, written for Jewish converts to Christianity who faced the same difficulties as those experienced by pagan converts in the first generations of the Church.

After the Jews’ rebellion against Rome, quashed so brutally by the Romans in 70, the legal system of temple worship was no friendlier to Jews than it was to Christians. Christians were beginning to face persecution because they defied the laws requiring worship of the Roman gods and goddesses, including the emperor. The writer of this epistle encouraged and challenged these Jewish converts to Christianity.

The reading is eloquent. It literally sings of the Hebrew’s view of life as both a journey to God and a preparation for eternity. The writer of this epistle encouraged these Jewish converts to see the Christian faith as integral to the Hebrew tradition.

My Journey to God

Staying Faithful

By Sandy Bierly

When grace abounds
And God’s presence surrounds me,
I want to stay in this moment,
Like St. Peter on the Mount.
I don’t want to come down,
For it is good, Lord, to be here!

These moments are rare.
But they make a difference.
When trials and tribulations
Seem to never end.
It’s the good times.
That pick me up, when times are bad.

(Sandy Bierly is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. Photo: This mosaic in the Church of the Transfiguration in Galilee depicts St. Peter, James and John looking on as Moses and Elijah appear on either side of the transfigured Christ, an described in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. The feast of the Transfiguration, which is commemorated every year on Aug. 6, took place on Tuesday.)

Daily Readings

Monday, August 12

St. Jane Frances de Chantal, religious

Deuteronomy 10:12-22

Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20

Matthew 17:22-27

Tuesday, August 13

St. Pontian, pope and martyr

St. Hippolytus, priest and martyr

Deuteronomy 11:8-9 (Response) Deuteronomy 32:3-4b, 7-9, 12

Matthew 18:5-10, 12-14

Wednesday, August 14

St. Maximilian Kolbe, priest and martyr

Psalm 66:1-3a, 5, 8, 16-17

Matthew 18:15-20

Vigil Mass for the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1 Chronicles 15:3-5, 16-16, 16-1:2

Psalm 132:6-7, 9-10, 13-14

1 Corinthians 15:48-57


Thursday, August 15

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab

Psalm 45:10bc, 11-12ab, 16

1 Corinthians 15:20-27

Luke 1:39-56

Friday, August 16

St. Stephen of Hungary

Psalm 136:1-3, 16-18, 21-22, 24

Matthew 19:3-12

Saturday, August 17

Joshua 24:14-29

Psalm 16:1-2a, 5, 7-8, 11

Matthew 19:13-15

Sunday, August 18

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

Psalm 40:2-4, 18

Hebrews 12:1-4

Luke 12:49-53

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Other options available for abstinence for vegans, vegetarians on Lenten Fridays

What do persons who don’t normally eat meat do about the Church’s rules on abstinence, such as on the Fridays during Lent? Nowadays, many Catholics are mainly fish eaters anyway, or they are vegans or vegetarians. What can they do to participate in the discipline of the Church? (Indiana)

A first, it’s good to point out that vegans eat no animal products at all, while vegetarians do eat animals but may eat products that come from them such as dairy and eggs.

Yes, there are many of each: I’ve read, that at some point in their lives, more than 10 percent of Americans are vegans or vegetarians.

Next, you might consider simple, practical, options have relevance, and the answer is simple: Pick your own penance.

For example, if you’re a Catholic and don’t eat meat for religious reasons, you can choose a different, meatless meal. And it doesn’t even have to be food-related. Since Fridays are set aside for grateful remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus, how about taking an extra five minutes of prayer on Lenten Fridays to thank Jesus for dying on the cross?

We just learned that our daughter is engaged. Her fiancé is not a Catholic and probably not a member of any religion. We raised our kids in the Church, and they always attended Sunday Mass. But our daughter has problems with some of the Church’s teachings and has stopped going to Mass. How can she say that she doesn’t want to be married in the Church, particularly since she’s horrified by the recent scandals?

As to your participation in her wedding ceremony: You have explained to your daughter, and will again, your strong preference that she be married in the Church and your disappointment should she not be. If you have not told her already, you might share with her—kindly, but that you are not willing to let this event go on without the proper dispensation from Church authorities, she would separate from the Church.

So long as she understands your feelings and your disappointment should she not be. If you have not told her already, you might share with her—kindly, but that you are not willing to let this event go on without the proper dispensation from Church authorities, she would separate from the Church. But you probably won’t change your mind. She is our only daughter and this is heartbreaking for us, but we don’t want to offend the Lord, even for the sake of our daughter. Any insight you could give would be appreciated—as would your prayers for her and for us. (Texas)

A man is edified by your question—both by your clear love for your daughter and by your strong commitment to the Church. I assure you that I will add my own prayers for her happiness in marriage and for her eventual return to Catholic practice.

As regards your daughter’s horror at recent scandals, would it help if you told her that you yourself are equally appalled, but that you are not willing to let this criminal and sinful behavior do any more damage by depriving you of the support you experience from the sacraments?

As to your participation in her wedding ceremony: You have explained to your daughter, and will again, your strong preference that she be married in the Church and your disappointment should she not be. If you have not told her already, you might share with her—kindly, but also clearly—that if she chooses to marry outside the Church in this way, without the proper dispensation from Church authorities, she would separate herself from the possibility of receiving Communion until she accepts her faith family and your husband could participate in the celebration of the sacrament of holy matrimony.

At the same time, I agree that your absence from the ceremony might well eliminate any chance of her ever coming back to the sacraments.

As to your wife’s understanding of your feelings and your regard for the faith in which you raised your children, I think that you and your church have celebrated the wedding ceremony in the ways you mention.

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

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


STAPP, Lilburn, Jr., 93, St. Jude, Indianapolis, July 27. Husband of Mary Stapp.


STAPER, Lilburn, Jr., 93, St. Jude, Indianapolis, July 27. Husband of Mary Stapp.


Williams, Brother of Judy Gradinger, Mary Kay Don and Larry Williams. Grandfather of 10.


Nigerian Catholic celebration

A woman raises her arm in prayer during a Mass for Catholics of Nigerian descent on July 21 at St. Thomas the Apostle Chapel in West Hempstead, N.Y. The liturgy capped a four-day revival/retreat that provided an opportunity to more than 600 participants from the New York metropolitan area and beyond to renew their spiritual lives while celebrating their faith, culture and ancestry.

Franciscan Sister Louise Stiker

Franciscan Sister Louise Stiker ministered in Catholic education for 48 years

Franciscan Sister Louise Stiker died on July 23 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of Francis in Oldenburg. She was 94. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 30 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Jeanette Stiker was born on April 29, 1925, in Indianapolis. She attended Holy Name of Jesus School in Beech Grove as a child and later graduated from the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg. She entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 8, 1942, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1948.

Sister Justin Louise earned a bachelor’s degree at Marian University in Indianapolis. During 77 years as a Sister of St. Francis, Sister Louise Stiker ministered as an educator for 48 years in Catholic schools in Illinois and Indiana. In the archdiocese, she served at St. Joseph School in Sheboygen from 1953-60; at St. Mary School in Rushville from 1974-80, and at St. Vincent de Paul School in Bedford from 1983-89. She also served at her community’s motherhouse from 1960-74, and 1980-83. Sister Louise Stiker retired from ministry in 1999.

She is survived by two brothers, Joseph and Robert Stiker, both of Indianapolis. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †

Franciscan Sister Virginia Ann Streit

Franciscan Sister Virginia Ann Streit ministered in Catholic education for 40 years

Franciscan Sister Virginia Ann Streit died on July 28 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of Francis in Oldenburg. She was 97. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on August 5 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Emma Josephine Streit was born on Nov. 20, 1921, in North Vernon. She grew up as a member of St. Ann Parish in Jennings County and later graduated from the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg.

Sister Virginia Ann entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 8, 1939, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1945. She earned a bachelor’s degree at Marian University in Indianapolis. During 80 years as a Sister of St. Francis, Sister Virginia Ann ministered as an educator for 40 years in Catholic schools in Indiana and Ohio. In the archdiocese, she served at St. Mary School in Greensburg from 1947-49, at the former St. John the Evangelist School in Enoshaw in 1957-58, at St. Joseph School in Sheboygen from 1957-69, at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Aurora from 1969-73. She later served as a nursing assistant at the motherhouse from 1981-86 and as assistant coordinator of Olivia Hall there from 1985-96. Sister Virginia Ann retired from ministry in 1996.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †
Pro-life groups’ campaign provides items to mothers, babies at border

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Shoelaces, rosaries, diapers, shampoo, Chapstick, baby wipes, water. Basic things that affirm our humanity. These are the items that the #Bottles2TheBorder campaign fought to provide for immigrant mothers and their babies as they crossed into America.

New Wave Feminists and Abby Johnson’s And Then There Were None organization, along with nine other pro-life groups, sponsored #Bottles2TheBorder. Together, they took more than $133,000 in supplies and $72,000 in funds to respite centers on the Texas-Mexico border.

This is the second trip New Wave Feminists has made to the border in the past year. The feminist pro-life group subscribes to a whole life ethic that seeks to preserve dignity at all stages of life, not just in the womb. Last December, they organized a similar initiative, delivering $10,000 to the McAllen, Texas, respite center.

“You have people fleeing for their lives. And the desperation, you can see it on their faces. They just want to get to their families to safety, and as someone who works in the pro-life realm, I can recognize that desperation,” said Destiny Herndon-De La Rosa, founder of New Wave Feminists, in an interview with Catholic News Service.

Herndon-De La Rosa and Johnson, a former Planned Parenthood director turned pro-life advocate and founder of And Then There Were None, led a group of 30 women to the border.

Roasting in 110-degree heat, they unloaded more than 27,000 pounds of bottled water and other supplies from an 18-wheeler and onto the conveyer belt that would carry them into the Catholic Charities respite center in McAllen. The women distributed the remaining supplies to other respite houses in Texas.

These facilities are all respite houses for illegal immigrants who have been approved and released from processing. They provide immigrants with a night or two of shelter, food, a hot shower and travel instructions to wherever they are going.

Both Johnson and Herndon-De La Rosa said that they would have had to halt donations because they ran out of space to transfer them, but that day a truck driver offered up his 18-wheeler for the project.

They reopened the registry, and within two weeks had collected the entire $205,000.

According to Herndon-De La Rosa, 100 percent of the money went straight to helping immigrant families.

“People are going to be members of our community, if they are traumatized and feel less than or unwanted it can be difficult for them to assimilate,” Herndon-De La Rosa said.

“It is important for volunteers to go and welcome them and show them that we see their dignity and that we want them here.”

Biannual grants awarded to parishes, schools and archdiocesan agencies

During fiscal year 2018-19, more than $646,269 was awarded in grant monies to parishes, schools and agencies in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The grants, awarded twice a year, are made available through the St. Francis Xavier Home Mission Endowment Fund, the Growth and Expansion Endowment Fund and the James P. Scott Endowment Fund. These grants were made possible through the generosity of archdiocesan parishioners, who set up the endowments.

The grant process is jointly administered by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Office of Stewardship and Development.

Grant applications are due to the archdiocese for the two allocation periods on April 30 and on Oct. 31 each year.

The Fall/Winter grants awarded for fiscal year 2018-19 are as follows:

• St. Anthony Parish, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; $7,000 for school safety and security upgrades.
• St. Joseph Parish, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; $8,250 for vertical lift project design.
• St. Joseph Parish, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; $8,500 for school security project.
• St. Patrick Parish, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; $20,000 for roof restorations.
• St. Roch Parish, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; $20,000 for classroom technology.
• St. Malachy Parish, Brownsburg; James P. Scott Fund; $11,500 for technology upgrades and security improvements.
• Father Thomas Scovina Memorial High School, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; $25,000 for safety and security upgrades.
• Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; $2,412 for safety and security upgrades.

The Spring/Summer grants awarded for fiscal year 2018-19 are as follows:

• SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; $28,500 for fire alarm system.
• Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; $10,900 for school safety and security upgrades.
• Our Lady of Lourdes Parish/Earthside Catholic Community, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; $1,000 for combined pastoral council meetings.
• St. Joseph Parish, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; $20,000 for platform lift project.
• St. Lawrence School, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; $14,000 for school counseling costs.
• Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; $20,000 for Burmese Collaborative Outreach Program.
• St. Patrick Parish, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; $22,000 for roof repairs.
• St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Bedford; James P. Scott Fund; $1,500 for chair LED lighting.
• St. Malachy Parish, Brownsburg; Growth and Expansion/James P. Scott funds; $15,000 for school technology.
• Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, Danville; James P. Scott Fund; $15,000 for exterior church renovations.
• St. Michael Parish, Greenfield; James P. Scott Fund; $14,461 for school safety and security upgrades.
• Prince of Peace Catholic School, Madison; Home Mission Fund; $10,000 for roof repairs.
• St. Agnes Parish, Nashville; Home Mission Fund; $25,000 for parish life coordinator residence repairs.
• St. John the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; $8,000 for school safety and security upgrades.
• St. Agnese Parish, Plainfield; Growth and Expansion Fund; $13,000 for school safety and security upgrades.
• St. Mary School, Rushville; Home Mission Fund; $9,523 for school safety and security upgrades.
• St. Patrick Parish, Terre Haute; James P. Scott Fund; $5,000 for facilities master plan.
• CYO Camp Rancho Frasama, Brown County; Growth and Expansion Fund; $2,000 for pilot science program.
• Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; $7,000 for kitchen A/C unit.
• Roncalli High School, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; $13,000 for safety and security upgrades.
• Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; $20,000 for safety and security upgrades.

(For information on how to apply for the grants, go to www.archindy.org/finance/grant.html or contact Stacy Harris in the Finance Office at sharris@archindy.org, or by phone at 317-236-1535 or 800-382-9836, ext. T315.)

Employment

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality Business Manager

Seeking a part-time candidate for a business manager. Applicants must be experienced in all areas of accounting, bookkeeping, financial analysis, payroll processing and will supervise one direct report. The candidate should be proficient in Microsoft excel and word, and the Sage Accounting program. This candidate should have an BS in accounting and MBA or equivalent and 5+ years of experience. A good communicator is a plus as he/she will report directly to the Director of Retreats. Please send resume to:

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality
Attn: Br. Randy Kim OFM Conv.
101 St. Anthony Drive, Mt. St. Francis, IN 47146
Or email to: nrestedl@mountsaintfrancis.org
Attn: Br. Randy Kim OFM Conv.

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317-236-1585
WESTPHALIA, Texas (CNS)—The Church of the Visititation in Westphalia, a nearly 125-year-old wooden church with bell towers on each side, burned to the ground on July 29. The fire, which began in the morning, is still under investigation. Parishioners ran into the burning church to save what they could, including its tabernacle.

“We got some stuff out, but it wasn’t near enough,” parishioner Marvin Meyer told the Waco Tribune Herald daily newspaper.

“We just saw the smoke, and everyone came. Everyone just tried to do what you could to save what you could, but it went so fast. In like 15 minutes, it was over.”

“The church, which is in the Austin Diocese, serves 244 families. “I am saddened for the people of Westphalia who have suffered this tremendous loss,” said Austin Bishop Joe S. Vasquez in a July 29 statement. “I am grateful for all the firefighters and departments that responded to the fire. Please join me in keeping the people of this historic parish in your prayers today as they try to piece together this tragedy.”

The bishop, who spoke to reporters near the grounds of the charred parish church on July 30, noted that the community is “brokenhearted” about this loss. He said the church was “truly one of our treasured churches” because of its history, tradition and the love and the faith of the people, which has not diminished and will grow stronger “out of these ashes.”

He said the parish community will continue to come together and pray and support one another. He also noted that the parishioners had been busy making plans to celebrate the parish’s 125th anniversary next year.

The bishop said he was grateful for those who risked their lives to save the tabernacle and thankful for the work of many volunteer firefighters.

He said parishioners will hopefully be able to worship nearby and when asked if the parish would rebuild, he said he thought they would because the church “means so much” to the parishioners.

The church was designed in the shape of a Latin cross with a bell tower on each side. It contained more than 20 stained-glass windows. Construction was completed in February 1895, and most of the carpentry was done by parishioners. The church was dedicated three months later.

In 1978, the church received official recognition with a Texas Historical Marker. And in 1996, the community was recognized as a Rural Historic District, which encompasses 5,500 acres of farmland, the church and many other historic sites in the area.

The district is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Recess at St. Francis de Sales

Students play outside during recess near the former St. Francis de Sales Church in Indianapolis in this photo from May 15, 1983. The former St. Francis de Sales Parish in the Brightwood neighborhood was founded in 1881 but closed on June 30, 1983, along with its school, due to declining membership caused by the construction of Interstate 70. The church building is now the home of the Archdiocesan Archives.

(August 16-17, 2019)

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The bishop said he was grateful for those who risked their lives to save the tabernacle and thankful for the work of many volunteer firefighters.

He said parishioners will hopefully be able to worship nearby and when asked if the parish would rebuild, he said he thought they would because the church “means so much” to the parishioners.

The church was designed in the shape of a Latin cross with a bell tower on each side. It contained more than 20 stained-glass windows. Construction was completed in February 1895, and most of the carpentry was done by parishioners. The church was dedicated three months later.

In 1978, the church received official recognition with a Texas Historical Marker. And in 1996, the community was recognized as a Rural Historic District, which encompasses 5,500 acres of farmland, the church and many other historic sites in the area.

The district is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.