Bishop asks Catholics to come together to focus on ‘crisis of gun violence’

BELLEVILLE, Ill. (CNS)—Bishop Edward K. Braxton of Belleville decried “a crisis of gun violence” in the United States, and asked Catholics in his Illinois diocese to come together to suggest ways to stop it.

“The crisis is caused, in part, by a small number of gun owners who abuse the firearms that are readily available to them and by the lack of consensus on the part of the American people and their elected representatives,” Bishop Braxton said in his message, issued on Aug. 6, days after the previous weekend’s mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, that left 31 dead and dozens more wounded.

Bishop Braxton said that, in the past, he has asked Catholics in his diocese for prayers for the victims, the survivors, those grieving and for elected officials after noted mass shootings, but “in recent months, I have not written to you because these heartbreakening assaults on the value and dignity of every human life have been happening so frequently that it has not been possible to keep up.”

In his reflection, “A National Crisis: A Pastoral Reflection on the Deadly Epidemic of Gun Violence in the United States,” he added: “According to published statistics, there have been 255 mass shootings—four or more victims—in this country already this year. One hundred people a day and 36,500 people a year die from gun violence.

Bishop Braxton said, “Like you, I am deeply distressed by the erosion of fundamental moral principles.”

Beyond the erosion of those principles in society, he added, “there is mounting evidence that social media platforms like 4chan and 8chan are being used to create international communities of like-minded people who reinforce each other’s ethic.

Grassroot groups are key to social change, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Popular movements can spark the change needed to ensure a future that is no longer in the hands of elites and powerful people, but includes the poor who have the inalienable right to a life of dignity, Pope Francis said.

Grassroots organizations representing the poor, the underemployed, indigenous communities and farmworkers are “a sprout that, like a mustard seed, will bear much fruit: the springboard of a great social transformation,” the pope wrote in the preface of a book that will be published in September by LEV, the Vatican publishing house.

“Popular movements, and this is the first thing I would like to highlight, represent in my opinion a great social alternative, a profound cry, a sign of contradiction, a hope that everything can change,” he said.

According to Vatican News, the new book, titled, The Emergence of Popular Movements: Rerum Novarum of Our Time, was prepared by the Pontifical Commission for Latin America and will be published in Spanish. “Rerum Novarum” was Pope Leo XIII’s 1891 encyclical on worker’s rights and other related issues. It is considered the foundational document for the Church’s social teaching.

The new book explores a series of World Meetings of Popular See PIPE, page 2
and racial hatred, encouraging and even applauding acts of violence against those who should be purged from the ‘nation’ as they narrowly define.”

At the same time, he noted, the number of Mexican immigrants has risen in the Bellevue Diocese; the alleged El Paso shooter came from the Dallas area, 10 hours by car from El Paso, specifically targeting Latin Americans.

“We deplore the fact that our sisters and brothers are sometimes seen as the object of stereotypes, hateful words, scorn and violent acts. We know their vulnerability and fear due to the lack of comprehensive immigration reform,” he said. “Words of comfort are not sufficient.”

Solutions to gun violence, though, have been hard to come by, Bishop Braxton said. “Many Catholics have told me that they truly want to do something. They feel helpless, even paralyzed. They simply do not know what to do. They see that there are no easy answers or solutions. As your bishop and pastoral leader of a community of faith, this is a stark reality, and I share this uncertainty and frustration.”

He advised Catholics not to expect God to intervene in human history to stop gun violence. “Here on Earth, God’s work must truly be our own,” he said. “I am not an expert in social science, psychology, political theory or all aspects of the debate concerning gun violence,” Bishop Braxton added. “I am also very aware that many people believe that there is no crisis of gun violence in this country.”

He asked Catholic leaders—clergy, religious and lay—to establish opportunities to pray for an end to gun violence and to search for solutions to gun violence.

Bishop Braxton also asked Catholics to come together to “listen, learn, think, pray and act regarding the present crisis.”

Groups, he said, can study Church teachings, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the documents of the Second Vatican Council, books about the U.S. Constitution and the Second Amendment, learn the positions on guns from their representatives in Congress, and ask questions of themselves on what they can do to halt gun violence.

“The goal is a Christ-centered conversation, not a quarrel,” Bishop Braxton said.

“It is good to remind ourselves,” he added, “of the words of St. Teresa of Calcutta. ‘When we encounter pain and suffering in the world, our hearts are moved with compassion, but we are frustrated when we cannot heal all of the wounds. We may be tempted to give up and do nothing. But everybody can do something! We must do what we can!’”

POPE

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Movements held since 2014 and supported by Pope Francis, Vatican News reported.

The Vatican’s news website and the Italian blog Il Sismografo published several excerpts of the book, while the Spanish-language online site Religion News reported.

“The pope praised the work of the movements, through which the poor “have not resigned themselves to suffering injustice and plundering,” but have chosen, like Jesus, to be a light and humble of heart, to rebel peacefully with ‘bare hands’ against it.”

The po stressed that to be a non-violent movement, “the politics of the false prophets who exploit fear and hatred must also preach a social well-being and a false security.”

He also expressed his hope that the book would help strengthen the efforts of the grassroots organizations to be faithful to the Gospel in concrete situations, giving witness to God and for one’s brothers and sisters” in the human family, he said.

The pope praised the young people and organizations who help the sick, the poor and differently-abled.

In order to live according to the spirit of the Gospel, Christians will have to keep making sure they are responding to so many new needs with new forms of charity.

The pope also reminded people that, together with serving others, Christians must also worship God.

To worship God also means to learn prayers of adoration, which we often forget. That is why it is I invite everyone to do this, as well as making prayers of adoration and to practice it often,” he said.†

Nominations sought for Respect Life and Pro-Life Youth awards through Sept. 12

The archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity is accepting nominations for the Archbishop O’Meara Respect Life Award and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award through Sept. 12.

The Archbishop O’Meara Respect Life Award honors an adult or married couple who demonstrates leadership in promoting the dignity and sanctity of human life from birth to natural death in a parish community and in the archdiocese.

The Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award honors a high school student who demonstrates leadership in promoting the dignity and sanctity of all human life in a parish community, school community and in central and southern Indiana.

Candidates for the respect Life Mass award will be printed in the archdiocese, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367.

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Do you have something exiting or newsworthy you want to be considered to be printed in The Criterion? E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

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VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Christians must not be hypocrites, Pope Francis said.

Not being a hypocrite, he said, means being ready to “pay the price” of being faithful to the Gospel in concrete situations every day.

Before praying the Angelus with visitors gathered at St. Peter’s Square on Aug. 18, Pope Francis reflected on the day’s Gospel reading (Lk 12:49-53) in which Jesus says he has come to set the Earth on fire and to bring “division,” not peace.

What this means, the pope said, is Jesus has come to separate “good from evil, the just from the unjust. In this respect, he has come to divide, ‘to spark a ‘cruor’— in a healthy way— in the life of his disciples, shattering the simple illusions of those who believe they can combine Christ’s teachings, the worldliness, Christian life and compromises of all kinds, religious practices and attitudes against one’s neighbor.”

“It is about living not like a hypocrite, but by being willing to pay the price” of making choices that are consistent with the Gospel.

“It’s nice to call oneself a Christian, but it demands, above all, being Christians in concrete situations, giving witness to the Gospel, which essentially is love for God and for one’s brothers and sisters” in the human family, he said.

The pope praised the young people and organizations who help the sick, the poor and differently-abled.

In order to live according to the spirit of the Gospel, Christians will have to keep making sure they are responding to so many new needs with new forms of charity.

The pope also reminded people that, together with serving others, Christians must also worship God.

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For more information, call Kerril Carroll at 317-236-1521 or e-mail kerril@ archindy.org

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August 26 – 7 p.m.

If Radio Indy Annual Dinner at Northside Knights of Columbus, Indianapolis

August 29 – 8 a.m.

Catholic Business Network Breakfast at Primo Banquet Hall, Indianapolis

September 4 – 5 p.m.

Archbishop Cincinnesis Council meeting, Mass and dinner at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

September 5-8

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Advisory Council, Baltimore, Md.

September 9-11

USCCB Administrative Committee meeting, Washington, D.C.

(Schedule subject to change.)

Moving?

We’ll be there waiting if you give us two weeks’ advance notice!

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Pro-life leaders urged to persevere, continue to teach truth ‘with love’

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (CNS)—Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kan., told diocesan pro-life leaders gathered in Louisville on Aug. 5-7 that they are part of the “most important human rights effort of our time and our age.”

The three-day conference titled “Life Will Be Victorious,” which also is his episcopal motto, “thanked diocesan pro-life leaders for helping their bishops and dioceses “build a culture of life in this particular moment in time when the Church is wounded by the clerical sexual abuse scandal, a time of pro-life promise with the current composition of the U.S. Supreme Court; and a time when supporters of legal abortion are incredibly motivated and energized.

“This is a moment of great opportunity as well as a moment of great peril for our culture and society,” Archbishop Naumann said.

The archbishop’s talk was inspiring, according to Brie Anne Varick, coordinator for the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity.

“He said that in order to judge our Catholic faith, you need to look at those who live it authentically and live it well,” Varick noted. “You shouldn’t judge Catholicism on those who have failed. You need to look at the beautiful Catholic faith, you need to look at the saints who have been exceptional failures. He also spoke of the sacraments and the gift of the Eucharist. The Catholic Church is where Jesus Christ is present—body, soul and divinity—present to us in every tabernacle and at every Mass.”

Varick was among the participants who attended a variety of break-out sessions led by experts in law and medicine, diocesan leaders and parish priests during the three-day conference.

Sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the theme of the conference was “Christ, Our Hope.”

Archbishop Naumann, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities, delivered the conference’s opening keynote address on Aug. 5.

In the talk titled “Catholicism affords us many opportunities to experience encounters with Jesus,” he said.

“I was reminded at this conference to take time in prayer to encounter Jesus Christ, the reason for our hope, to draw strength and peace. All the work we do as leaders of the Church, it’s all his work. My only hope is that I can get out of the way, so he can work.”

— Brie Anne Varick, coordinator for the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity

Participants of the Diocesan Pro-Life Leadership Conference sing during Mass on Aug. 5 at the Cathedral of the Assumption in Louisville, Ky. (CNS photo/Jessica Able, The Record)
Teaching the Eucharistic mystery

At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that, by the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, become Christ’s Body and Blood. Faithful to the Church's social ministry, as Bishop Barron says, diverse women and men across two thousand years have come to us with dignity.

It is not important to use—or understand—technical terms such as “transubstantiation” which theologians and Church historians can debate. It’s enough to say that by God’s miraculous intervention, at each and every Mass, the celebration of the Eucharist is indispensable to the intimate union of the faithful and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial of Jesus in the Eucharist is indispensable to all of us in the Church.

A worshipper prays in adoration before a monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament at S.S. Francis and Clare of Assisi Church in Greensboro, NC. A recent study of the Pew Research Forum showed that a majority of Catholics in the U.S. either do not understand or do not believe “transubstantiation” which theologians and Church historians can debate.

When ever the pew report says that “69 percent of all self-identified Catholics said they believe the bread and wine used at Mass are not Jesus, but instead “symbols of the body and blood of Christ,” we should have to probe more deeply into the respondents’ understanding of what the word “symbol” means in this context. After all, our Church teaches that all sacraments, including the Eucharist, are signs (symbols) that cause what they signify.

In any way diminishing the significance of the Pew report—saying (as Bishop Barron fears) “Oh, well, who cares?”—we believe that the appropriate response is to focus our catechetical efforts on teaching the Eucharistic mystery in all its many dimensions.

What should Catholics know about the Eucharist?

First of all, the Catechism says quite clearly in #1333: “At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine, by which the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, become Christ’s Body and Blood. Faithful to the Lord’s command the Church continues to do, in his memory and until his glorious return, what he did on the eve of his Passion: ‘He took bread...’”

“In the name of your Lord and of his Body and Blood, grant us your pardon.”

The answer is simple: God, our creator, loves all people.

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“The signs of bread and wine, become, in a way surpassingounding, the Body and Blood of Christ; they continue also to signify the goodness of creation (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1333).

Central to our Catholic faith is the teaching about the mystery of the Eucharist. We believe that the bread and wine offered back to God become—really and truly—the body and blood of Jesus Christ. How this is a mystery, and the fact that it happens each and every time the Mass is celebrated is an article of faith that defines who we are, what we believe and how we are called to act as Jesus’ disciples.

The importance of this teaching helps to explain the anger expressed by many Church leaders in recent weeks to a new study from the Pew Research Center whose findings say that a majority of Catholics in the United States either don’t understand or don’t believe that the bread and wine that are the Body and become the blood of Christ.

Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron released a statement on Twitter that said: “It’s hard to describe how angry I feel after reading what the latest @pewresearch study reveals about our fellow Catholics in the United States either don’t understand or don’t believe what we believe. It is a massive failure of the Church carrying the message of Jesus to all of us in the Church.”

“We’re all guilty,” he said. “It’s been a failure of the Church leaders in recent weeks to a new study from the Pew Research Forum showed that a majority of Catholics in the U.S. either do not understand or do not believe “transubstantiation” which theologians and Church historians can debate.

It’s not important to use—or understand—technical terms such as “transubstantiation” which theologians and Church historians can debate. It’s enough to say that by God’s miraculous intervention, at each and every Mass, the celebration of the Eucharist is indispensable to the intimate union of the faithful and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial of Jesus in the Eucharist is indispensable to all of us in the Church.

A reader called The Record (newspaper of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, LA) a couple of weeks ago to ask this question: “Does God love the illegals?”

By “illegal,” the caller was referring to our brothers and sisters who have crossed the southern border in search of hope and work, social micropoliticians try to show our brethren, making it easier to dismiss their suffering.

The answer is simple: God, our creator, loves all people.

Recently, three others contacted The Record to register their displeasure with our coverage of immigration. Their complaints centered on the notion that by caring for human treatment of immigrants, the Church is siding with “pro-abortio Democrats.”

“We’re all guilty,” he said. “It’s been a failure of the Church carrying the message of Jesus to all of us in the Church.”

The answer is simple: God, our creator, loves all people.

We all know our fresh salads, vegetables and fruits. If we eat meat, we want the best quality. However, these do not grow or raise themselves. The food comes to us thanks to the hard and dedicated work of farm laborers.

In the United States of America, there are about 3 million farmworkers. The vast majority, about 80 percent, are Hispanic. Two-thirds work for hire.

Mindful of the deepest Catholic roots among Hispanics, more than half of farmworkers in the U.S. could be Roman Catholic. We have better statistics about this. Nearly half of all farmworkers in the U.S. could be Roman Catholic. We need better statistics about this. Nearly half of all farmworkers in the U.S. could be Roman Catholic.

Farm laborers, particularly those hired seasonally, are likely to live in poverty. On average, a farmworker in the U.S. makes $10.60 per hour—or $22,048 a year. Yet, knowing this is important. We remember the work of farm laborers as a prayer and a sacrifice. As the Catechism states in #1382, “The Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacramental memorial in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord’s body and blood. But the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice is wholly directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ through communion. To receive communion is to receive Christ himself who has offered himself for us.”

Finally, devotion to the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is indispensable to the Church’s social ministry. As Bishop Barron says, diverse women and men across two thousand years of Christian history, have shown “a profound understanding and love for the Eucharist.” These are saints who see the Eucharist not as some vague or shrouded mystery, but as a powerful sacrament that unites us with the person of Jesus Christ and empowers us by the grace of the Holy Spirit to carry on his work through our labor. We use this disappoition to motivate ourselves to teach the Eucharistic mystery at every available opportunity.

It is ironic that political and legal decisions that sometimes have negative impact on laborers in the agricultural world: bodily and social dehumanization, loss of status or religious affiliation of the farmworkers, the Church is siding with those involved. The Sunday Gospel reading from Luke for Aug. 4 asked us to consider: “But God said to him, ‘You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they be delivered? For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.’”

It is not important to use—or understand—technical terms such as “transubstantiation” which theologians and Church historians can debate. It’s enough to say that by God’s miraculous intervention, at each and every Mass, the celebration of the Eucharist is indispensable to the intimate union of the faithful and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial of Jesus in the Eucharist is indispensable to all of us in the Church.

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“In the weeks surrounding this holiday to pay more attention to our social and ecclesial interconnectedness with farmworkers and to bring the best of our advocacy skills to the very bottom of our social scale or massive deportations of undocumented immigrants.

Many Catholic churches, parishes and organizations strive to serve the spiritual and physical needs of farmworkers, yet the current conditions these men are in are often scant. Farmworkers are practically everywhere, and in many places ministry to them is practically nonexistent.

Our ministries remain too centralized in churches and offices, thus proving practically inadaptable to the conditions that farmers and farmworkers face all around the country live in irregular migratory status, most in this group for 10 years or longer. Farm laborers, particularly those hired seasonally, are likely to live in poverty.

On average, a farmworker in the U.S. makes $10.60 per hour—or $22,048 a year, assuming steady employment. Besides the arduous physical work, there are significant risks associated with laboring in the agricultural world: bodily injuries, exposure to pesticides and other chemicals, poor access to health care, low educational opportunities, etc.

When ordering our weekly salary for our children, perhaps our last concern is the ethnicity, immigration status or religious affiliation of the farmworkers who literally make food possible for us every day. On average, a farmworker in the U.S. makes $10.60 per hour—or $22,048 a year, assuming steady employment.

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El Espíritu Santo renueva la Iglesia a lo largo de toda la historia

"La Iglesia santa, católica y apostólica de la cual proclamamos ser fe cada domingo es la obra del Espíritu Santo. Es el fuego que ardía en Pentecostés y es el viento enérgico y conductor del renacimiento y la renovación que se desataron cuando Pedro y los demás discípulos se pararon por primera vez en la plaza pública y comenzaron a predicar en lenguas que todas los presentes podían entender" (Arzobispo Charles C. Thompson, The Criterion, 7 de junio de 2019).

La tercera razón para permanecer en la Iglesia que propone el obispo Robert E. Barron en su impactante libro, Carta a una Iglesia que sufre: un obispo habla sobre la crisis de abusos sexuales, es el Espíritu Santo. ¿Por qué el Espíritu Santo sería una razón para persuadir a los católicos a que sigan fieles a nuestra Iglesia aunque (o especialmente) cuando se sienten "desmoralizados, scandalizados, angry beyond words, and ready to quit"?

El obispo Barron escribe: "The first followers of the risen Christ felt that they had been inhabited by the Spirit of their Lord." Bishop Barron, writing in The Criterion on June 7, 2019, the Sunday before Pentecost, wrote: "Before Pentecost, no one—with the possible exception of Mary, the mother of Jesus—could stand up against the powers of darkness that were responsible for the Lord's suffering and death. After Pentecost, the fearful, tongue-tied disciples were not alone. These were ordinary men and women, with the same faults and personal weaknesses, but their manner was radically different. The power of the Holy Spirit transformed the disciples, who had gathered around Jesus during his time on Earth into fearless public witnesses to his resurrection and ascension to the Father."

"These reborn women and men were on fire with love for God and for one another. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, they formed an ecclesia, a gathering or community [the Church], and they preached, healed and sanctified throughout the known world in the name of Jesus who was crucified by the religious and secular leaders of his day, but then triumphed, raised from the dead as a sign of our liberation from the power of sin and death."

Si avanzamos y deje la Church, "we deny ourselves the many graces filled opportunities by which the Holy Spirit renews us as individuals and as members of Christ’s body." We remain angry and disillusioned, y nos negamos a participar en el importante trabajo de renovación y redención que hace posible el Espíritu de Dios. Muchas veces a lo largo de la historia de 2000 años de nuestras Iglesias los cristianos nos hemos sentido desalentados y amilanados por los fracasos de nuestros líderes—y así como por la comunidad cristiana en general—de vivir según las enseñanzas y las prácticas de nuestra fe. En todas las ocasiones, los días oscuros de la Iglesia se han disipado gracias a la luz de Cristo manifestada en la obra del Espíritu Santo. En todas las ocasiones, el Espíritu Santo ha erradicado la corrupción de las estructuras institucionales de la Iglesia y las acciones pecaminosas de nuestros líderes—Se trata del mismo Espíritu Santo—el obispo Barron—que, a través de la historia de la Iglesia hasta nuestros días, da vitalidad y energía al Cuerpo Místico."
Events Calendar

August 27
St. Christopher Church, Duncannon, Pa.
5301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis.
10 Tuesdays through Nov. 12 (except Oct. 15 and 22), resuming in mid-January for 10 sessions, 7 p.m.-8:45 p.m., sponsored by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, in increments, registration required. Information: Victoria Usen, mlj986@gmail.com.

August 30-Sept. 1
St. Joseph Parish, 1302 S. Mickle Dr., Indianapolis.
Fall Festival, Fri. and Sat. 5-11 p.m., Sun. 3:30-11 p.m., American and Vietnamese food, aquarium, rides, children’s tent, black jack, basketball, Texas poker contest. Sun. Information: 317-244-9002.

August 30-Sept. 1-2
Sacred Heart Parish, 558 Nolke St., Clinton.
Spaghetti Fest, Fri. 4-9 p.m. and Sat. 11 a.m.-9 p.m., 20th annual fundraiser.

National Catholic Youth Conference seeks 1,000-plus volunteers on Nov. 21-22
More than 1,000 volunteers are needed for the upcoming 2019 National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) at the Indiana Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on Nov. 21-23. Hosted by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and sponsored by the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, NCYC is a biennial three- day experience of prayer, community and empowerment for Catholic high school students and their adult chaplains. The theme of this year’s conference is “Blessed, Broken, Given.” All volunteers must complete an archdiocesan-approved youth protection program, a background check and training. Volunteer registration and a complete list of available positions, shifts and times can be found at www.ncyc2019volunteer.org.

For more information, contact Paul Siluettes, archdiocesan director of youth ministry, at 317-236-1521 or 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1589, or paul@archindy.org or Mary Kate Shanahan, archdiocesan associate director of youth ministry, at 317-236-1477 or 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1477, or mkshanahan@archindy.org.

The 2019 conference is “Blessed, Broken, Given.”

Divine Mercy Adoration Chapel to celebrate 30th anniversary on Sept. 19
St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3354 W. 33rd St., in Indianapolis, will host a 30th anniversary celebration of the opening of its Divine Mercy Adoration Chapel on Sept. 19. The chapel is housed in the building at 3356 W. 30th St. between the church and Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School. It was founded by Msgr. Joseph Schaeled, now pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, and the late Sister Mary Ann Schumann, an anchorite of the archdiocese.

The celebration will begin with adoration and confession at 4 p.m. in St. Michael Church, followed by the Saturday VIGIL Mass at 5:30 p.m. After Mass, there will be a eucharistic procession around the parish campus and a buffet dinner in the parish life center from 6-9 p.m.

There is no cost to attend the dinner, but reservations for planning purposes are requested by Sept. 12 by calling 317-627-2658 or e-mailing dyannahw@gmail.com.

September 1
St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Erskine, Pa., 317-515-2201.
St. John the Evangelist Campus, 9995 E. Base Road, Indianapolis.

September 2
St. Peter Parish, 2027 W. Brookville Road, Brookville.
Labor Day Festival, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., family-style fried chicken dinner, mini-cream horn, handicapped accessible. Information: 317-934-2880.

September 3
Mission 27 Roseau, 132 Leota St. S., Indianapolis.
Senior Discount Day, every Tuesday, 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., ministry.

September 4
Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis.
Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome: 317-273-0777.

September 6
St. Malachi Church, 9833 E. County Road, Brownsburg.
Passion and Purpose for Marriage, a Dynamic Catholic event featuring nationally known speaker and Catholic author Dr. Allen Hunt, music by guest George Lowell, 6:30-10:30 p.m. $25 per person, register by Sept. 7. Registration and information: 317-372-8800, women@womencenter.org.

September 7
Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis.
First Friday Prayer Meeting, celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mass 7:45 a.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, ending Mass 9 p.m., sacrament of Reconciliation, 317-833-2881 or info@指标greenwood.org.

September 8-9
St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis.
First Friday Charismatic Renewal Praise and Mass, praise and worship 7 p.m., Mass 8 p.m., registration: 317-546-7328, mkrose@indy.com.

September 6-8
Father Michael Shawe Memorial Community School, 201 W. State St. S., Madison. Shawe and Pope John XXIII Community Festival, 5 p.m.-midnight, carnival rides, food, two $5,000 cash giveaways, live music Sat. by The Louisville Crashers. Information: 812-273-5855.

September 10
St. Peter Parish, 2027 W. Brookville Road, Brookville.
Labor Day Festival, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., family-style fried chicken dinner, mini-cream horn, handicapped accessible. Information: 317-934-2880.

VIFS Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to bit.ly/2M4D3qfree or call 317-236-1585.

Robert and Joyce (Kretzer) Buehning, members of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 30.

The couple was married in St. Charles Borromeo Church in Peru, Ind., on Aug. 30, 1969.

They have four children: Andrew Bendt, Tasha Kask, James and Joshua Buehning. The couple also has 12 grandchildren.

George and Betty-Jane (Hendershot) Malley, members of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on Aug. 25.

The couple was married in St. Therese Church in Greenfield, on Aug. 25, 1953.

They have five children: Kate MacGill, Shelly Ventresca, Debra, Susan Marie and Michael Malley.

The couple also has nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

John and June (Taylor) Tumulty, members of St. Peter Parish in Greensburg, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 22.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Greensburg, on Aug. 22, 1958.

They have three children: Teresa Hahn, Monica Overlock and Angela Tumulty.

The couple also has six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

This year’s archdiocesan Mission Day Conference for those in consolation ministries will take place at The Banquet and Conference Center, 3143 E. Thompson Road, in Indianapolis, from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. on Sept. 7.

The topic will focus on working with, ministering to and interacting with those who have been affected by suicide. Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate Father Ronald Rolheiser will be the keynote speaker.

The event, sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, is intended for pastoral ministers, parish consolation and bereavement teams, chaplains, clergy, school counselors, funeral home personnel, social workers, nurses and anyone who offers support to those who have been affected by suicide.

For questions, contact Keri Carroll at 317-802-3823, ext. 1521, 317-236-1521, or kcarrroll@archindy.org.

The criterion
Our faith calls us to preach joy in tough situations

-Life is too short. Humor is of utter importance. The problems of the world, the problems of the Church, they are many. But you cannot forget about the “Joy of the Gospel.” It’s not the “Sadness of the Gospel” (“Evangelii Gaudium”) (“The Joy of the Gospel,” #49).

Missionary disciples should not be overwhelmed by the extreme hardships faced by the people they are called to serve. If we proclaim the Gospel with an open heart and a true missionary attitude, Pope Francis says, “the mission of the Church will be marked by joy.”

During his homily for Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica on July 8, Pope Francis said: “On this sixth anniversary of the visit to Lampedusa, my thoughts go out to those ‘least ones’ who daily cry out to the Lord, asking to be freed from the evils that afflict them. These least ones are abandoned and cheated into dying in the desert; these least ones are tortured, abused and violated in detention camps; these least ones face the waves of an unforgiving sea; these least ones are left in reception camps too long for them to be considered temporary. These are only some of the least ones who Jesus asks us to love and raise up. Unfortunately, the existential peripheries of our cities are densely populated with persons who have been thrown away, marginalized, oppressed, discriminated against, abused, exploited, abandoned, poor and suffering.

“...in the spirit of the Beatitudes, we are called to comfort them in their affliction and offer them mercy, to satiate their hunger and thirst for justice; to let them experience God’s loving fatherliness; to show them the way to the kingdom of heaven. They are persons; these are not mere social or migrant issues! This is not just about migrants,” in the twofold sense that migrants are first of all human persons, and that they are the symbol of all those rejected by today’s globalized society.”

Missionary disciples are called to proclaim the joy of the Gospel to all, but most especially to the “least ones” who have been abandoned, abandoned and effectively forgotten.

Let’s remember to pray for the “least ones” and those who are struggling in our power as disciples of Jesus Christ to “walk in the company of the Lord” and to share his joy with all our sisters and brothers.

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

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*El rostro de la misericordia* / **Daniel Conway**

_Nuestra fe nos llama a predicar alegría en situación dificiles_

="La vida es demasiado corta. El humor es de suma importancia. Muchos son los problemas que enfrenta el mundo y la Iglesia pero no podemos olvidarnos de ‘La alegría del Evangelio.’ (‘La alegría del Evangelio,’ #49).” (Obispo australiano Columba McBeth-Green, citado en El Cruce, un servicio digital de noticias católicas).

Dos de los temas más constantes en las enseñanzas del papa Francisco son ‘la alegría’ y ‘el discípulo misionero.’

El Santo Padre regresa a estos temas periódicamente para ampliarlos y aplicar su significado a diversas situaciones y circunstancias. Durante sus comentarios en el Angelus del 7 de julio, el papa Francisco conectó formalmente la alegría con el discípulo, al decir que “la verdadera alegría es caminar en compañía del Señor.” La Iglesia es misionera por naturaleza, expresó el papa, y los discípulos misioneros siempre deben mantenerse alegres, llevando paz y sanación a todos.

En su primera exhortación apostólica, titulada ‘Evangelii Gaudium’ (‘La alegría del Evangelio’), el papa Francisco escribió:

‘Invito a cada cristiano, en cualquier lugar y situación en que se encuentre, a renovar ahora mismo su encuentro personal con Jesucristo o, al menos, la decisión de dejarse encontrar por Él, de intentarlo cada día sin descanso. No hay razón para que alguien piense que esta invitación no es para él, porque ‘nadie queda excluido de la alegría reportada por el Señor.”

‘El que arriesga, el Señor no lo defraudará, y cuando alguien da un pequeño paso hacia Jesús, descubre que Él ya espera su llegada con los brazos abiertos. Éste es el momento para decirle a Jesucristo: ‘Señor, me he dejado engañar, de mil maneras escapo de tu amor, pero aquí estoy otra vez para renovar mi alianza con Él. Te necesito. Rescátame de nuevo, que Él ya esperaba su llegada con los brazos redentores’ (‘La alegría del Evangelio,’ #3).

La alegría está, o debería de estar, a disposición de todos y los discípulos misioneros fieles de Cristo tienen la considerable obligación de transmitir sanación, paz y abundante alegría a todo aquel que encuentren. Esta labor representa un desafío. Muchos se encuentran en situaciones que son todo menos alegres. Independientemente de la tendencia política, del origen racial, étnico, o de la situación socioeconómica de cada cual, la vida puede llegar a ser una carga o incluso ser opresiva. Si algo debe inquietarnos sanamente y preocupar nuestra conciencia—dice el Santo Padre—es que tantos hermanos nuestros vivan sin la fuerza, la luz y el consuelo de la amistad con Jesucristo, sin una comunidad de fe que los contenga, sin un horizonte de sentido y de vida.”

‘Los discípulos misioneros no deben sentirse abrumados por las dificultades extremas que enfrentan aquellos a quienes están llamados a servir. Si proclamamos el Evangelio con un corazón abierto y una verdadera actitud misionera, el papa Francisco dice que “la misión de la Iglesia estará marcada por la alegría.”

Durante su homilía de la misa en la Basílica de san Pedro, el 8 de julio, el papa Francisco dijo:

‘En este sexto aniversario de mi visita a Lampedusa, pienso en los últimos que todos los días claman al Señor, pidiendo ser liberados de los males que los afligen. Son los últimos engañados y abandonados para morir en el desierto; son los últimos torturados, maltratados y violados en los campos de detención; son los últimos que desafían las olas de un mar despiadado; son los últimos dejados en campos de una acogida que es demasiado larga para ser llamada temporal. Son sólo algunos de los últimos que Jesús nos pide que amemos y ayudemos a levantarse. Desafortunadamente, las personas que son el último para estas ciudades están densamente poblabdas por personas descartadas, marginadas, oprimidas, discriminadas, abusadas, explotadas, abandonadas, pobres y sufriendo.”

El espiritus de las Bienaventuranzas, estamos llamados a consolarlas en sus aflicciones y a ofrecerles misericordia, a saciar su hambre y sed de justicia; a que sientan la paternal prensura de Dios, a mostrarles el camino al Reino de los Cielos. ¡Son personas, no se trata sólo de cuestiones sociales o migratorias! No se trata sólo de migrantes”, en el doble sentido de que los migrantes son antes que nada seres humanos, y que hoy son el símbolo de todos los descartados de la sociedad globalizada.”

Los discípulos misioneros están llamados a proclamar la alegría del Evangelio, pero muy especialmente a «los últimos» que han sufrido abusos y han sido efectivamente olvidados.

Recordemos rezar por “los últimos” y hacer todo lo que esté a nuestro alcance como discípulos de Jesucristo para “caminar en compañía del Señor” y compartir su alegría con todos nuestros hermanos.

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.)
A year and a half later, a sea change occurred. Through cooperative efforts of the archdiocese and the Hakha Diocese, Father Eustace Thang arrived in December 2018 to minister to the Chin of St. Barnabas in their native language. "Now that Father [Thang] is here, there’s a big push to reach out to Catholic Chins and let them know that Mass and the sacraments are offered in Chin at St. Barnabas," says Dollens.

Hinh nods enthusiastically in agreement.

"When Father [Thang] came, the ones who went to other churches started coming back," he says. "Now there are about 47 families and singles." So as they strive to master the English language, the growing number of Hakha Chin members of St. Barnabas can still be fed spiritually in their native language, not just through Mass and the sacraments, but also through catechetical instruction. Father Thang also hopes to soon start Sunday Scripture classes for church groups and a citizenship program.

"My goodness, they’re learning!" Learning about the faith is important, says Bishop Hre Kung. But so is common education.

"When Bishop Lucius came here two years ago, he said the Hakha Chin need to build a community, so the children need to be educated," says Hihn. St. Barnabas pastoral associate Patty Cain, who works closely with the parish’s refugee community, says the Chin families, the parish and its school took the bishop’s words to heart.

"He came in June 2017," she says. "By the time that school year began, we had 23 [Chin] kids enrolled. We’ve got close to 50 this year."

This fact makes Father Mahan beam with pride.

"We really enjoy having their children in our school," he says. "They’re learning—my goodness, they’re learning!"

He notes that teachers were concerned about the students regressing in their English during the summer. So the teachers, along with other parish volunteers, offered a summer language skills camp “with fun word games to keep [the children’s] interest,” says Father Mahan.

"We’ve noticed that the children are feeling much more confident in their use of the English language," he says. "That will help them so much at St. Barnabas and beyond.

"A pastoral heart for his people"

"What impresses me most is that he doesn’t have to do this. The [former] bishop grins and says, "But later, when he was in the missionary field," he adds, the grin turning into a hearty laugh. "I lost the matches, but I won the souls!"

He also paid a courtesy visit to Archbishop Charles C. Thompson on Aug. 6 before heading to Illinois, the next of many stops to Catholic Chin communities around the country during his monthlong tour.

"Because of his pastoral care to the Chin community and helping them to survive in their faith, I want to express my gratitude to the bishop and all of the community," Bishop Hre Kung explains. "For two bishops to meet is good and natural. We inspire and encourage each other."

Archbishop Thompson was, indeed, inspired. "He’s a very kind bishop, a good man of faith and devotion," he said of Bishop Hre Kung. "He truly has a pastoral heart for his people, coming so far to visit them and the priests."

"How to break down barriers"

While there has been good progress, there are still great needs within the Hakha Chin community at St. Barnabas.

With Hihn translating, St. Barnabas Chin member Martin Ling, 50, notes that one need is for “transportation to get our children to school. We don’t want our kids to go to the public schools, but transportation [to St. Barnabas School] is hard because there is no bus.”

Cain chimed in, explaining that many Chin families “only have one car, which is usually gone when the kids need to go to school because a lot of the jobs [their parents] can get are second shift. And the moms often don’t drive because they can’t get a license.”

Lack of transportation also impacts the ability for Chins to attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

Even if the means are found to attend ESL classes, says Dollens, “they don’t have a network to have someone watch their children. And many citizenship classes don’t allow children.

“Every situation, there’s things we need to figure out how to break down barriers so we can help them become fully participating members of the community.”

Bishop Hre Kung had one suggestion to resolve the networking problem. “He spoke about all being one in Christ, for Burmese at St. Barnabas, St. Pius and St. Mark to be friends, to pray together and grow a community of faith,” Hihn translates for Ling, who referred to the bishop’s homily during a Mass he celebrated in Hakha Chin on Aug. 4 at St. Barnabas.

While Bishop Hre Kung acknowledges the language barrier between the Hakha Chin and the other two Burmese refugee communities, he suggests they “come together for Christmas, Easter and other times, led by priests and the archdiocese. This will overcome the barriers.”

"Truly inspiring and uplifting"

Despite the existing hurdles, the bishop is pleased with the progress of the Hakha Chin community in the last two years.

And the community was delighted by his presence. Hihn and Ling struggled to express their joy, repeating the words “happy,” “so happy” and “very, very happy” with bright smiles when asked how they felt about Bishop Hre Kung’s visit.

Father Mahan had a few more words to express the Chin community’s gratitude for the bishop’s presence.

“They were so pleased that he would make the long journey from Myanmar to visit them,” he says. “It was truly inspiring and uplifting for them. What impresses me most is that he doesn’t have to do this. The [former] bishop grins, and he doesn’t have to do this. They’re truly a shepherd who is looking after their needs.”

As for Bishop Hre Kung, he says he merely wants “to accompany [the refugees] and encourage them to be good Catholics and good citizens in this land.”

Asked when he might return, the bishop grins and says, “When God allows.”

He went on to acknowledge that it’s “important to accompany these people in their faith.” Then with a look of quiet certainty, he smiles and adds, “But later, maybe they won’t need that.”

In his office, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson chats with Bishop Lucius Hre Kung, right, leader of the Hakha Diocese in Myanmar, on Aug. 6, the last of his five-day visit with the Hakha Chin Catholic community of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. The bishop was joined by St. Barnabas associate pastor Father Eustace Thang, second from right, who is also of the Hakha Diocese, and Patty Cain, the parish’s pastoral associate.
Explaining history, dispelling myths of refugees from Myanmar

(EDITOR’S NOTE: The following is an abridged version of an article originally published in the Feb. 24, 2017, issue of The Criterion. It has also been edited to include recent additional comments.)

By Natalie Hofer

Myths and misunderstandings about Burmese refugees in Indianapolis abound, says Heidi Smith, director of Indianapolis Catholic Charities’ Refugee and Immigrant Services (RIS).

To provide background and dispel the myths, The Criterion talked with Smith, as well as with refugees and priests from the war-impacted country. Below are their insights and information.

Historical snapshot

• A civil war in Myanmar (formerly Burma) began in 1948.

• Current refugees from Myanmar— who are still called “Burmese” despite the country’s official name change in 1989— started arriving in Indianapolis in the late 1990s as victims of attacks carried out by both the government and rebels opposing the government. Attacks were still being carried out as recently as 2017.

• If the government came into a village, you [had] to do whatever they say. And when the rebels came in, they [said], “You are helping the Burmese government.” That’s why they kill everyone.” –Rita Si Si Lwin, member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis and a refugee from Myanmar’s Karen State

• “There was always fighting, murder by the government troops. Some of them, their villages were burned down and they had to flee. Many lived there [in refugee camps in India, Malaysia and Thailand] for more than a decade.” —Father David Bu Nyar, associate pastor of St. Pius and St. Mark the Evangelist parishes in Indianapolis, sent from Myanmar’s Loikaw Diocese to minister to the Burmese of both parishes

• “There are so many refugees left in the camps. They can’t go home to Myanmar. They need many prayers.” –Paul Hnin, member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis and a refugee from the Hakha region of Myanmar who lived for seven years in a refugee camp

Tribal ties and language barriers

• The refugees do not consider themselves “Burmese,” but rather identify with one of the country’s 135 ethnic groups, or tribes.

• Consequently, there are three distinct refugee communities in Indianapolis: those primarily of the various Karen (or Kayin) State tribes at St. Pius, those predominantly of the Zomi Chin tribe at St. Mark, and those of the Hakha Chin tribe at St. Barnabas.

• Each tribe speaks a unique dialect. Additionally, the Karenni (or Kayinni) of St. Pius and the Zomi Chin of St. Mark learned to speak the national Burmese language in school, so they are able to communicate and worship in a common language.

• Because the Hakha Chin live in remote mountain villages, “Many Hakha Chin had no chance to go to school. They only know their local language.” –Bishop Lucius Hre Kung, head of Myanmar’s Hakha Diocese.

Finding a new home—and help

• Burmese (and all) refugees come to Indianapolis through RIS. The agency represents the archdiocese as a participant organization in a partnership between the federal government and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Migration and Refugee Services.

• “They receive very short-term financial aid that’s meant to cover rent and utilities. They do not receive government money to buy houses and cars as some believe. [Burmese refugees] are very family-oriented and hardworking, so they’re able to save the money they earn very quickly. They start working in the first few months of when they arrive here. They don’t have much control over their lives, so the minute they can make a life of their own and be independent, they run for it. That’s why people see them buying homes and cars so quickly. It’s all with the money they earned themselves.” –Heidi Smith

(For more information on this and other myths about refugees in Indiana, go to www.in.gov/isdh/24670.htm. For more information on RIS and how to volunteer or donate, go to www.archindy.org/ris/ or contact Heidi Smith at 317-236-1518, 800-382-9836, ext. 1518, or hsmith@archindy.org.)

St. Catherine of Siena Enochsburg

82nd Annual Church Picnic
Sunday, September 1, 2019
(The Sunday of Labor Day Weekend)
“Famous Fireside Inn Fried Chicken” or Tender Roast Beef Dinners
Dinner served 11:00am–3:00pm EST
Adults - $12.00; Children 12 & under - $5.00
Additional items from 3:00-5:00pm
Mock Turtle Soup, Pies, Sandwiches and more
Carry Outs available all day Beer Garden from Noon-5pm
Games! Raffles! Basket Booth! Country Store!

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Take New Point Exit 143 off I-74, Go North on County Road 850 E for 1/2 mile, Turn Right on Base Road, Go 2 miles

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Season of Creation

Join the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Christians and other faith traditions from around the world in prayer and action to protect creation

Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change

(Laudato Si’ #202)

ACTION PROGRAMS

Meatless Mondays
Energy Awareness Tuesdays
Water Conservation Wednesdays
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Thursdays
Walk, Bike, Share-a-ride to Work Fridays
Take-a-hike Saturdays
Laudato Si’ Sundays

Full action programs, best practices and registration for groups, parishes, schools, and individuals at

www.OurCommonHome.org

Register Now for St. Francis Feast Day and Tree Planting OCT 4
Love of faith and community has guided parish for 150 years

By John Shaughnessy

Father Richard Eldred still remembers his mother’s words of reassurance when he made his way to the southern Indiana community of Mitchell to become the pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish 15 years ago.

"When we do something like this 150th anniversary," says parishioner Amy Marshak. "The celebration was fabulous—a lot of excitement and energy. Very upbeat.

"It was fun to see the pews fall, like a Christmas or Easter celebration. And everyone was excited that the archbishop would come down and celebrate with us. He went to every table and talked to everyone there. He was very easy at, with a great sense of humor. All around, there was just a happy feeling—a lot of smiles."

For Marshak, the celebration was an extension of the special feeling she’s had for the parish ever since she and her family moved here from upstate New York 13 years ago. That’s when her husband John was transferred to the General Motors power train plant in nearby Bedford.

"When we first moved here, our son Trevor was in the third grade and our daughter Teagan was in pre-school," she says about her children who are now 21 and 17. "The Catholic community here has seen them grow up, and people always want to know about them. That’s the way they are for all the kids. They embrace them. They are always trying to build up the young people and help them in any way they can."

"They did the same for her when she became interested in becoming a Catholic."

"When I came here, people said, “If you think about becoming a Catholic and want to talk about it, we can help you.” That was a comfort. They just embrace their faith in this era, and isolation needed to be done."

"Two things must be remembered here: the Catholics were largely from European countries—the earliest from Ireland and later from Hungary, Serbia, Poland—and the Church of the mid-nineteenth century America was the center of all social activities."

“Religion was a unifying concept, and that the first baby baptized at St. Mary’s—Margaret Anna Keane—was a distant cousin of mine,” Father Eldred recalls. “When I found that out, it was really exciting. I had far more roots than I really expected.”

Now, that feeling of being part of a special faith-filled family at St. Mary has grown exponentially for Father Mitchell, and that the first baby baptized at St. Mary's was born in 1871. The current church—constructed of limestone—was completed and dedicated in 1967—a cornerstone that has kept the parish going for 150 years.†

"In the days when no Catholic would consider missing Mass on a Sunday during a vacation, walls of rubber could not have accommodated all who came from Spring Mill State Park during the 1960s."

"In the days when no Catholic would consider missing Mass on a Sunday during a vacation, walls of rubber could not have accommodated all who came from Spring Mill State Park during the 1960s."

"A community meal at the parish followed. And each anniversary was on Aug. 11 when Archbishop Charles C. Thompson came to celebrate Mass at its church."
Traditionally black Catholic parish in Indianapolis celebrates 100 years

By Sean Gallagher

As members of St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis were gathered in their church on Aug. 3 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the historically black Catholic faith community, St. Joseph Sister Gail Tippett reflected on what had happened back in 1919.

“Traditionally black Catholic parish in Indianapolis celebrates 100 years”

Sr. Gail Tippett, C.S.J.

“For the first time, black Catholics were able to worship in a church that was established specifically for them. It was a place for African-Americans to be a part of the Catholic faith.”

Growing up just a few blocks from the parish, 15-year-old Marissa said, “It feels kind of good to be a student at this church in its 100th year.”

Growing in her faith at St. Rita has helped Marissa witness to it as a member of the parish. “I’ve never left. I’ve never wavered. I just continue to put my all into it.”

For much of its history, most of the people who lived around St. Rita were African-American, some of them Catholic, but mostly not. “We still have a responsibility to provide service to the broader community. We are a neighbor … that you are welcoming.”

In more recent years, re-development around St. Rita has attracted residents from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds. “Even though in the beginning this was a place for African-Americans to be able to worship, we have always had our doors open to everyone,” Sister Gail said. “The parish community is becoming more diverse.”

Shana Golden, a member of St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis, bows her head in prayer during an Aug. 3 Mass at her faith community’s church to mark the 100th anniversary of its founding.

Members of the choir of St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis sing during an Aug. 3 Mass at the faith community’s church to mark the 100th anniversary of its founding.

Deacon Oliver Jackson, left, and Archbishop Charles C. Thompson elevate the Eucharist during an Aug. 3 Mass at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of St. Rita Parish, a faith community founded to serve black Catholics. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

Catholic faith community, St. Joseph of the founding of the historically black Catholic faith community, St. Joseph. Sister Gail Tippett reflected on what had happened back in 1919.

“This celebration, this day of recognition, is actually a tribute to God and the Holy Spirit,” said Sister Gail. St. Rita’s parish life coordinator. “Oftentimes, we don’t think that God is making decisions for this moment. But he was making decisions for 100 years down the road. All of us are tribute that he made the right decision.”

Bishop Joseph Chartrand had mixed feelings about establishing a parish specifically to serve black Catholics in the year following the end of World War I. While he did not like the idea of separating out black Catholics in this way, he also recognized that many African-American dominant Protestant congregations quickly attracted many new members.


Throughout these past 100 years, St. Rita Parish has been a beacon of hope and missionary discipleship for both the Catholic faith and this larger community,” he said. “Drawing strength from the word of God and the grace of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, St. Rita parishioners have made great sacrifices to help us to learn how to answer that question.”

One strong leader who made St. Rita a parish that can today form faith-filled young people like Marissa was Father Bernard Strange, who was its pastor for 38 years, from 1935-73.

“St. Rita didn’t know how to do it, he would see what could do anything that any other parish could do,” said Guynn. “And if you didn’t know how to do it, he would see that you learned or [were] trained how to do it.”

That included learning how to effectively serve the neighborhood around St. Rita, a tradition which continues today.

“We still have a calling within the area to reach out to minister to anyone, not just Catholics,” said Anita Bardo. “We still have a responsibility to continue to do what we did in the past and bring it forward, so our kids now can see that when you have a neighbor … that you are welcoming.”

St. Rita does this today in part through using buildings on its campus that previously served as a rectory and school to serve the broader community. Homeless families and individuals can find temporary housing and programs at the parish center to help them with job training through Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis.
Corrections Corner/Deacon Steven Gertzen

Seeking the lost who are our brothers and sisters in Christ

So often we hear the comment “lock them up and throw away the key” in regard to those in our jails and prisons. The incarcerated are oftentimes viewed as an untapped and disposable segment of society, incurrible and therefore worthy of any consideration or hope of change. However, when these people occupy cells in the jails or prisons, they are assumed to be locked away and in order to “teach them a lesson.” As long as the offenders are behind bars, they are deemed a failure in every way of being viewed as people who “got what they deserved,” and “will never change.” That is not what Jesus taught forgiveness, and he reached out to everyone. He was a friend to outcasts, sinners and prostitutes.

As Catholic Christians, we are called to emulat our Lord, and this includes going out of our way to reach out and minister to all who have strayed, particularly those who have made poor choices and run afoul of the law.

I would suggest that when we begin to doubt the need and purpose of ministering to the incarcerated, we re-read the Gospel of Luke: “What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one…” (Lk 15:4-5). This mandate, which was given in order to search out those who have wandered away from or never discovered Christ. There are places like jails and prisons. Many of the offenders are eager to start over for their families and themselves, but they are confused about where and how to begin anew.

Of course, we know that the answer is to go to them. Many of them have made their way to this point in their search that the inmates look for someone to turn to in order to receive help and guidance as they begin to journey toward Jesus.

It is at this point that they are looking for someone to lean on, someone that they can begin to trust, someone who actually cares about them and can begin to help.

That is the purpose and the goal of those of us who minister to the incarcerated: to be that one to whom the offenders can turn to. This is what motivates us to walk through those often- foreboding doors and to enter a world that can seem to be hostile. We voluntarily allow those steel doors to slam shut behind us because it is our Christlike tasks of us in order to seek out the lost sheep.

There are many who do not understand why we take our time to reach out to those who are accused or convicted of crimes. My response is: “Why would I not seek out and try to help those who are incarcerated, for after all they are my brothers and my sisters?”

(Deacon Steven Gertzen ministers at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish and the Federal Corrections Complex, both in Terre Haute, and is a member of the archdiocese’s Corrections Advisory Committee.)

LIVING WELL/Maureen Pratt

What’s in a number? Nothing, if you let your mindset guide you

This month, I will celebrate a milestone birthday. I’ve done the math and know what the numbers say, but I’ll let you in on a secret. I do not feel like my age, not by a mile. I feel like a young child filled with faith, life graced with God’s goodness and wonderful friends and family—these bring a sense of youth that no number can erase. And, I know I’m not the only one who feels younger or older than her (or his) age.

According to news reports, in 2018, a Dutchman was so convinced that he was younger than his legal age that he would benefit from actually being younger that he took legal steps to make it so. Emile Ratelband, who was 69 at the time, petitioned a court in the Netherlands to allow him to alter the date on his birth certificate, and officially shave 20 years off his age, going from 69 to 49.

With people seeming to be able to accept most things of this world, we all surgery, whim or other methods of self-identification, I wasn’t surprised to hear of someone seeking to alter numerical age, but Ratelband’s effort was for naught, although he even reportedly offered to postpone his pension for 20 years, in December 2018 to 2038 to meet required him, and his numerical age stands. However, the BBC reported, the judges said Ratelband had the liberty to feel 20 years younger than his real age and to act accordingly. He then had me back to my starting point. Without “court approval,” there still are many like Ratelband who feel, act and think younger than their age on earth would indicate, people who defy figurative, age-based gravity.

And there are examples of people from biblical times to now doing things that are usually only associated with younger persons. Sarah, Abraham’s wife, was pregnant with her son to the age of 90 (119) (although I understand calculations of age were different, then).

Anna Mary Robinson (aka Grandma Moses) began painting in her 70s. One of my uncles, who just went home to God a few months ago, drove a car well into his 90s, using his skill to drop in on my mother, read newspapers at the local church potluck, and just move around town to see what was going on. Clearly, age doesn’t have to correlate with specific activities that we take up or give up. Rather, there is more of a mindset to it, a way of approaching it with intentionality, rather than a benchmark by which we live and act on our dreams, hopes and what God wants us to do.

And, there are more resources for those who are aging to stay active and enhanced new interest in training existing second and even third acts. To this point, UCLA’s alumna association has a lecture program called “Second acts where alumni who have gone into a new endeavor later in life talk about their experiences—and the room is always packed!”

As my milestone birthday approaches, I take great heart that I am not suddenly adept to some preconceived notions of what this new age means. Rather, I’m inspired by the examples close to me and from ages past, of people who acted on God’s direction no matter when they discerned it. And I am grateful for this time, no matter how it is calculated numerically.

What’s in a number? Reason to celebrate, certainly, and joy-filled potential!

(Maureen Pratt’s website is www.maureenpratt.com)
The Sunday Readings
Sunday, August 25, 2019

- Isaiah 66:18-21
- Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13

The Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. Isaiah is a fascinating book of Scripture. It covers a long period of Hebrew history. Its early chapters deal with events and conditions in the southern Hebrew kingdom of Judah, before the kingdom’s conquest by the mighty Babylonian army. The last two chapters progress, it tells of the plight of the Hebrews taken to Babylon, the imperial capital, where they and their descendants languished for four generations.

At last, the Hebrews were allowed to return, but the homeland that they found was hardly the “land flowing with milk and honey.” It was sterile, lifeless, and bleak. It must have been difficult not to succumb to cynicism or outright rejection of God. Why did God lead them to this awful place after all that they have experienced in Babylon? Was this God’s confirmation of the covenant? This dreary, despondent situation is evident as we hear the words of the book read on this weekend, but the prophet unconsciously calls the people to reaffirm their devotion to God. He will rescue them and care for them.

For its second reading for Mass this weekend, the Church presents a reading from the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the late part of the first century when this epistle was composed, the plight of the Jews was anything but good. In the year 70, the Jews rebelling against the Romans. They paid a dreadful price for their audacity. Things were as bad as they were in the days of the last part of Isaiah, from which we came the reading heard earlier this weekend. Nevertheless, as the prophets so often had encouraged the people in the past, the author of Hebrews assured the people of the first century that God would protect them, despite all their trials and woes, and lead them to life eternal.

St. Luke’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is a somber reading, indeed a warning, but also a lesson. This world is imperfect. God lives and reigns in an eternal kingdom.

Jesus has the key to God’s kingdom, but entry into the kingdom is possible only for those who are faithful to him.

Reflection
For several weeks the Church, either directly or indirectly, has taught us in the weekend readings at Mass that earthly life is not the only experience of living for humans. Earthly life will also pass. Life is eternal, or better said, human existence is eternal. Earthly life will end, but then will come either eternity in the kingdom of God, or despair in hell.

God offers us every opportunity and every aid to enable us to reach heaven. He could show us no greater love than to give us Jesus as our Redeemer and companion as we move toward heaven. The Son of God, one with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the Blessed Trinity, Jesus forgives us, strengthens us, guides us, restores us, and finally places us at the banquet table of heaven.

All this being the case, however, humans can ignore or outright reject God’s love so lavishly given in Jesus.

Humans, therefore, create their own destiny. Will they live in eternal joy with God? Or will they live in eternal despair and pain? The choice belongs to them.

Therefore, each of us individually has a choice. By our faithfulness, or by our sin, we select the eternity in which we shall be.

Human pain can be quite disturbing if it occurs unexpectedly or in an unmerited form. It is even more disturbing if it is a recurring problem. In these cases, we may be tempted to question God’s presence and love in our life.

“Lord, guide us in wisdom to grow in Your knowledge, and lead us to lasting happiness.”

The Church offers the precious blood to worshippers in a common cup

Q: I’ve been wondering about this for a long time: Why, at holy Communion, do we have to drink from the same cup when holy Communion is distributed in individual disposable cups, as some of the Protestant churches do? (Arkansas)

A: Over the years, the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has several times answered inquiries regarding the risk of disease transmission from the common cup.

As the American Journal of Infection Control has explained in its October 1998 issue, within the CDC there is a consensus that a “theoretical” risk might exist, but that “the risk is so small that it is undetectable.” And further, “no documented transmission of any infectious disease has ever been traced” to this practice.

Anne LaGrange Loving, a New Jersey microbiologist who has conducted a study on the subject, stated in a Los Angeles Times article in its Jan. 1, 2005, issue that “people who sip from the Communion cup don’t get sick more often than anyone else,” and that “it isn’t any riskier than standing in line at the movies.”

Nevertheless, common caution should be observed: Ministers should clean their hands thoroughly before distributing the Eucharist, and the Communion chalice should be washed with soap and hot water after every liturgy. Those currently suffering from an active respiratory disease should have the good sense to receive the host only, not from the chalice, and a number of Catholic dioceses have actually suspended the use of the Communion cup during outbreaks of influenza.

While some ecclesial communities utilize individual and disposable cups, the Catholic tradition is the use of a common cup when holy Communion is distributed under both kinds.

It seems to me that the common cup more closely carries on the traditions of the Last Supper and highlights our joint participation in the eucharistic sacrifice. In Matthew’s Gospel, for example, Jesus “took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you, for this is the blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins’ “ (Mt 26:27).

As one faith community in New Mexico explains it, Jesus “could have easily blessed all the wine that was already poured in the various cups that were already on the table on the night he was betrayed. But he didn’t. Instead, he blessed the one cup to be given to many. The common cup fulfills this symbolism beautifully.”

Another important consideration in this matter is the Catholic practice of using unleavened and precious metals. This is done to show due reverence for the precious blood of Christ and for proper gratitude to God for this wondrous gift. Using disposable cups would be inconsistent with these sentiments.

A: A neighbor of ours, age 66, just completed the Rite of Christian Initiation to be received into the Church. However, she has been told that she cannot receive Communion or be confirmed until she secures an annulment.

She was not married in a Catholic church and has been divorced for over a decade. She states that she has “no intention of getting married again.” Does she really need an annulment? (Ohio)

A: If she has no intention of marrying again, there is no need for her to have an annulment because she is received into the Catholic Church and able to share in the sacraments. If the time ever came, however, when she wanted to enter into a new marriage, she would first have to have that earlier marriage examined by the Church.

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

My Journey to God
Hidden Mysteries
By Gayle Schrank

God is the author of reason. He made what is absolute.

Slowly, we discover His Hidden Mysteries; God’s creations we cannot dispute.

All unseen truths we have to know first came hidden. “Lord, guide us in wisdom to grow in Your knowledge, and lead us to lasting happiness.”

(Photograph courtesy of Los Angeles Times)
Rest in peace


DAUGHERTY, Joyce C., 98, St. Mary-of-the-Keys, Floyd County, Aug. 10. Mother of Cynthia Buick, Linda Lowood and Harry Daughtery II. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 12.


MEYER, Ronald C., 84, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Aug. 1. Father of Debbie Stevens, Kathy Woolworth, Rick and Rod Meyer. Grandfather of seven.


Franciscan Sister Francis Ann Lewis

Franciscan Sister Francis Ann Lewis died on Aug. 11 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 94. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 16 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Dorothy Ann Lewis was born on May 31, 1925, in Terre Haute where she was a member of the former St. Ann Parish. She entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Jan. 31, 1943, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1946. During 76 years as a Sister of St. Francis, Sister Francis Ann Lewis ministered in Catholic education for 28 years in Catholic schools in Indiana and Ohio.

In the archdiocese, Sister Francis Ann Lewis served at St. Andrew School (now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School in Richmond from 1944-45) at the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg from 1945-48, at Indianapolis at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School and St. Francis Academy from 1949-52 and Our Lady of Lourdes School from 1952-53. St. Louis School in Batesville from 1959-60, and at the former St. John the Baptist School in Osgood from 1979-81. She also served at the motherhouse in Oldenburg from 1982-86.

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

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone

Sauerkraut festival

Parker Bessette rolls a head of cabbage down a makeshift bowling alley on Aug. 4 during the 55th annual St. Mary’s Sauerkraut Festival in Bear Creek, Wis. (CHS photo/Sam Lucero, The Compass)
Bishop Chatard High School
Coordinator of Special Events & Alumni Relations

The coordinator of special events and alumni relations for Bishop Chatard High School advances the mission of the school through developing relationships with all alumni and facilitating the production of all special events. As a collaborative member of the advancement team at Bishop Chatard, the coordinator of special events & alumni relations will be responsible for the organization, implementation and execution of all special events, fundraising and alumni-related events, including the Annual Fund dinner and Chatard-a-thon. The coordinator of special events and alumni relations, in collaboration with the advancement team, will be responsible for the organization, implementation and execution of the school’s alumni program, including but not limited to, working with the high school’s alumni board, basketball league, class reunion chair and submitting information for the institution’s monthly alumni newsletter.

Desired qualifications:
- The ideal candidate will have a college degree, be a practicing Catholic, have at least three years of experience working with alumni and/or special events, be an alumni/alumna of Bishop Chatard, be proficient in basic Mac software platforms, possess outstanding relationship building and communication skills, and have experience in database management.

To apply:
- Interested candidates are asked to submit a résumé, cover letter and references by September 3 to Director of Development Margaret Ruffing. Professional information may be emailed to mruffing@bishopchatard.org or mailed to Margaret Ruffing, Bishop Chatard High School, 5655 Criterian Ave., Indianapolis IN 46220. Visit www.BishopChatard.org/about/employment to view the full job description.
Goats horn in, helping to save life at Catholic cemetery

APPLETON, Wis. (CNS)—Goats tend to get a bad rap in church traditions—
with the devil often portrayed with goat horns and hooves. But at St. Mary Cemetery in Appleton, goats are getting positive reviews.

The solution came from landscaper Ron Wolff, who owns Lakeshore Cleaners in Appleton. Wolff was working with a property owner near the cemetery and suggested using goats to clear the pesky plants there.

“It turns out goats don’t hate buckthorn like humans do. In fact, it’s the opposite,” Dressang quoted Wolff as saying. “Buckthorn is like hot apple pie to goats, it’s like their favorite thing.”

Using goats for weed control is becoming popular around the country. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Nebraska Department of Transportation and various fire departments in California also have turned to goats to clear weeds and brush.

The Sierra Club’s website notes, “thanks to their voracious appetites—goats can eat up to 10 pounds of vegetation per day—and [with an] ability to navigate difficult terrain—the ravenous ruminants are also the front lines of prevention.”

St. Mary Cemetery got clearance from the town of Grand Chute, purchased and placed electric fencing to keep the goats from the cemetery’s hedges, roads and gravestones, and turned them loose. Seven goats were added on Aug. 2.

“Not a lot of cemeteries have a family foundation that wants to keep the cemetery beautiful,” Dressang noted. “A small cemetery like us loses money every year. The cemetery business is a hard business anyway. There is no way we would be able to do this without them.”

When we pitched the idea (of goats), Dressang added, the family “loved it because of the more natural way of doing it and because they like creative, out-of-the-box thinking.”

New York opens yearlong ‘window’ allowing abuse victims’ lawsuits

ALBANY, N.Y. (CNS)—New York’s state-yearlong “window” in the statute of limitations opened on Aug. 14, allowing suits to be filed by victims alleging abuse by priests, church workers and employees of public schools, hospitals and other institutions, no matter how long ago the alleged abuse occurred.

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, who gave his life at the Nazis’ Auschwitz death camp in Poland in 1943, is a young father.

The saint, the cardinal said, is revered by his bravery but also for something else: “He kept his faith and hope and love in a very dark time.”

“Today I don’t mind admitting to you this is a dark time in the life of the Church,” Cardinal Dolan said probably been hearing that this is the first day of the opening of the statute of limitations, so it would be a good time to hear a lot about people bringing suit against the Catholic Church and other organizations. It is the best to know the truth will set us free.”

“Today is a day for survivors to tell their stories and to take an important step on their long journey toward healing.”

“Today is a day for survivors on this journey, to thank them for bravely coming forward, and to again apologize unconditionally for what they endured at the hands of those who so grievously abused their trust,” he said in a statement.

“The bishops want to accompany survivors on this journey, to thank them for bravely coming forward, and to again apologize unconditionally for what they endured at the hands of those who so grievously abused their trust,” he said in a statement.

“Today is a day for survivors to tell their stories and to take an important step on their long journey toward healing.”

“The truth is the only way through this, and the truth will set us free.”

He added, “We admire the bravery of those who have come forward to share their stories of betrayal and pain to help other survivors of childhood sexual abuse.”

In Syracuse, Bishop Douglas J. Lucia, who has headed the diocese for just over a week—he was ordained and installed on Aug. 8—issued his first letter in that new role to address the Child Victims Act.

Under the new law, the Church and other public and private institutions will “collectively ... experience amidst the pain of sacred trust violated and of the victims and their families whose spirits and lives have been so demoralized and harmed,” he said in a Aug. 10 letter issued after the law taking effect.

He apologized in the name of the diocese “for the heinous acts perpetrated against them [victims] by their abusers who were supposed to be the caregivers of souls.” Bishop Lucia renewed his offer to meet with victims, “if there is any way we can assist them in their search for healing and peace.”

In the days and weeks ahead, if parishes and other diocesan institutions are contacted regarding a civil lawsuit, “we will turn all such matters over to legal counsel to ensure they are handled properly and fairly,” he said, adding he is committed to be as forthcoming as possible while respecting confidentiality that comes with due process.

He urged Catholics to not forget the strides the Syracuse Diocese has made in acknowledging its failures, addressing abuse and “seeking to ensure that our children are safe” through its child protection protocols, providing victims assistance outreach, and the work of an independent compensation program for victims/survivors.

“I know this might not be what one might think a letter of a new bishop to his new family should be, but I have always considered myself a realist,” Bishop Lucia wrote. “This is where we are at our journey as Church and so I ask myself and you, brothers and sisters, how can we make the light of Christ more real and let it cast out the darkness? For me, that is the mission ahead and so I rely on your prayers and assure you of mine.”

Bishop Nicholas A. DiMarzio of Brooklyn said: “Today, we stand with victims who were sexually abused as children. We have reached this point because too many victims across all society have sadly carried this heavy cross for far too long. Sexual abuse is a heinous crime, and victims/survivors now have a new avenue to seek redress through the Child Victims Act.”

For anyone abused by a priest, employee or volunteer, I am sorry that a member of our Church who violated their trust became the source of pain and anguish,” he said in an Aug. 14 statement, which was posted on the diocese’s website with various links in response to its support to the abuse crisis and resources.

You should know the Diocese of Brooklyn has instituted the most aggressive policies to prevent any future abuse and to protect children.”

A goat consumes buckthorn shrubs and other unwanted vegetation at St. Mary Catholic Cemetery in Appleton, Wis. (CNS photo/Brad Birkholz, for the Diocese of Green Bay)

Goats are being used to eat invasive shrubs at St. Mary Catholic Cemetery in Appleton, Wis., instead of using herbicides that pose a threat to wildlife in the cemetery. (CNS photo/Birkholz, for the Diocese of Green Bay)