Oldenburg Franciscans, lay women assist and are blessed by asylum-seekers in Texas

By Sean Gallagher

OLDENBURG—Franciscan Sister Marge Wisman has “always had a heart for immigrants.” She is the daughter of German immigrants who experienced discrimination against people of that nationality in the U.S. during World War II.

So as she observed from a distance the struggles that people from Central America have experienced in recent years in seeking safety in the U.S., she couldn’t sit back and do nothing.

With the support of her Franciscan community in Oldenburg, Sister Marge, two of her fellow sisters and two lay women volunteered for two weeks at the shelter that primarily served those from Central American countries seeking asylum in the U.S. (Submitted photo)

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“It’s a disease that kills,” His statement is backed by statistics. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the suicide rate in the United States rose 33 percent between 1999 and 2017. In that last year, it was the 10th leading cause for death, with more than 47,000 Americans taking their own lives and 1.4 million attempting to do so.

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“I just couldn’t process it. That suicide changed me. I’m a priest today because of that death.” Father Ron shared this story in Indianapolis on Sept. 10. —World Suicide Prevention Day.

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“ He reached out to the leper and all those who were on the outside,” Sister Noella said.

“ They see that life is so fragile.” When they arrived in Laredo, the shelter was just getting started. Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Laredo had established the shelter, which had formerly served domestic abuse victims, because of a recent spike in the numbers of asylum-seekers arriving at the border near the Texas city on the Rio Grande River.

The sisters and two lay volunteers— reached out in love to those in need on the margins of society was simply a way of following in the footsteps of the founder of their order, St. Francis of Assisi.

Understand suicide, console mourners knowing ‘God is tender with the weak’

By Natalie Hoefer

Father Ronald “Ron” Rolheiser vividly recalls the day that led him on the path to becoming a priest. It was the day his imaculatale priest, who was in high school at the time. “I just couldn’t process it. That suicide changed me. I’m a priest today because of that death.” Father Ron shared this story in Indianapolis on Sept. 10. —World Suicide Prevention Day.

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Archbishop Thompson, bishops to take part in racism listening session on Sept. 30 at Marian University

Citation staff report

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson is one of seven bishops who will participate in a Listening Session on Racism at the Michael A. Evans Catholic Center at Marian University, 3200 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The U.S. bishops last November overwhelmingly approved a pastoral letter on racism titled “Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love.” Gatherings are being held across the country in response.

The pastoral letter states “racial acts are sinful because they violate the image of God in each person.” They reveal a failure to acknowledge the beautiful diversity present in all of creation and the unique value of each individual who is made in the image of God.

All are invited to listen with bishops, as well as groups of people tell their stories of experiencing racism. The goal is to help lay, religious and clerical leaders and bishops continue with—or start to form—an action plan against racism.

In addition to Archbishop Thompson and Bishop Fabre, the bishops of Indiana’s four other dioceses and Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Perry of Chicago are scheduled to participate in the listening session.

The event is free, although registration is requested at bit.ly/2MvZf2s (case sensitive). For more information, contact Pearlette Singleton, archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry coordinator, at esingleton@archindy.org, 317-236-1744 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1474.

40 Days for Life fall campaign set for Sept. 25-Nov. 3, rally scheduled for Sept. 22

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Archbishop Charles C. Thompson welcomes comments on his reflections and encourages dialogue on issues that can be done in good faith. He requests that comments posted on his Twitter account reflect the courtesy and civility that should always characterize conversations between people who can disagree without being disagreeable. Individuals who post offensive or uncharitable comments may be blocked from further access to the archbishop’s Twitter account.

Pope Francis has demonstrated that attentive listening is essential to effective teaching and preaching. Archbishop Thompson hopes to use this social media initiative to listen carefully to the diverse voices speaking in the Church and in society today. He also hopes that his use of social media will generate opportunities for genuine encounter—and productive dialogue—among the more than 2,000 people who currently follow him on Twitter.

We encourage anyone with access to social media to follow the archbishop on Twitter @ArchbThompson. †

40 Days for Life is a campaign of prayer, fasting and peaceful activism held in the spring and fall with the purpose of turning hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life, and bringing an end to abortion. The fall campaign runs from Sept. 25- Nov. 3. Two locations in the archdiocese are participating: Bloomington, in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility at 421 S. College Ave. and Indianapolis, in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility at 8590 Georgetown Road. Nearby churches include Evansville, Cincinnati and Louisville. Indianapolis will have an opening rally sponsored by Great Lakes Gabriel Project at St. Luke the Evangelist Church, 7575 Holiday Dr. E., in Indianapolis, at 2 p.m. on Sept. 22. Steve Dlugosz from St. Monica Parish will speak at “Looking for Jesus.” The event is free of charge.

For additional information on the Indianapolis area 40 Days for Life campaign, contact Tim O’Donnell by calling 317-372-0040 or e-mail idipsumsapere@me.com.

For additional information on the Bloomington campaign, contact Deacon Russell Woodard at 317-759-1225 or e-mail deaconross@gmail.com.

To sign up for an hour of prayer per week with any 40 Days for Life campaign location, go to 40daysforlife.com. †
New director will rely on community to bring youths closer to Christ

By John Shaughnessy

Paul Sifuentes wishes he could thank Joe DeBoo.

The new director of youth ministry for the archdiocese remembers the influence that DeBoo had on his faith life when Sifuentes was growing up in the same parish they shared in a Chicago suburb.

“He was an usher and a lector at our church,” Sifuentes recalls with a smile about that time in the 1990s. “He was in his late 70s then, a well-dressed man in his blue polyester suit. He helped me become a lector, practicing with me when I was in the eighth grade.

“That was an important time in my life. It was his reverence during the liturgy—just how important it was to him. As a lector, he wasn’t a showy guy. He was just doing his job of proclaiming the word of God. He was just a man of faith.”

DeBoo was 96 when he died in 2011, yet his influence on Sifuentes lives on in one of the crucial, guiding ways the 36-year-old father of four approaches youth ministry.

For Sifuentes, the faith of teenagers in a parish can’t just be left to one person—the youth minister. It has to involve parents, the pastor and everyone in the pews.

“Youth ministry is not just classes,” insists Sifuentes, who started at the archdiocese in mid-August. “You have to form leaders. You have to form parents. It’s having conversations with the youths and listening to them. It’s showing up in their lives. We can’t do this without everyone. That comes from discipleship. If one is following Christ, then we have to be there for one another. We have to minister to one another. And we can’t deny the youth are in need.

“Many youths struggle with anxiety. At this age, they want to fit in. They’re grappling with life’s biggest questions. They are searching. They are inquisitive. They are grappling with life’s biggest questions. They want to fit in. They’re inquisitive. They are searching. They are inquisitive. They are grappling with life’s biggest questions. They want to fit in. They’re inquisitive. They are searching. They are inquisitive. They are grappling with life’s biggest questions. They want to fit in. They’re inquisitive. They are searching. They are inquisitive. They are grappling with life’s biggest questions. They want to fit in. They’re inquisitive. They are searching. They are inquisitive. They are grappling with life’s biggest questions. They want to fit in. They’re inquisitive. They are searching. They are inquisitive. They are grappling with life’s biggest questions. They want to fit in. They’re inquisitive. They are searching. They are inquisitive. 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But what did the pope actually say? I quote both the question and the response at some length so that we are considering the truth of the matter and not provocative speculations.

Journalist Jason Horowitz of The New York Times asked Pope Francis this question: “Obviously, there is strong criticism from some [American] bishops and cardinals. There are Catholic television stations and American websites that are very critical. And there are even some of your closest allies who have spoken in a polemical way against you. Is there something that these critics do not understand about your pontificate? Are you afraid of a schism in the American Church? And if so, is there something that you could do—a dialogue—to keep it from happening?”

The pope responded: “First of all, criticism always helps, always. When someone receives criticism, that person needs to do a self-critique right away and say: ‘Is this true or not?’ To what extent? And I always benefit from criticism. Sometimes it makes you angry, but there are advantages. … Critics are not coming only from the Americans, they are coming a bit from everywhere, even from the curia. … At least those who say them have the benefit of the honesty of having said them. I do not like it when criticism stays under the table: they say it at you, and then you see their teeth, and then they stab you in the back. That is not fair, it is not human. Criticism is a component in construction, and if your criticism is unjust, be prepared to receive a response, and get into dialogue, and arrive to the right conclusion. This is the dynamic of true criticism. … To criticize without wanting to hear a response and without getting into dialogue is not to have the good of the Church at heart. … This is clear: a fair dialogue is not to have the good of the hearer a response and without getting into the argument and arrive to the right conclusion. This is fair. And if your criticism is unjust, be prepared to make a difference only if we do so with kindness and humility.”

St. Peter advised the early Christians to always be prepared, which presupposes we have done our homework. A Dominican speaker at the conference emphasized the need for serious study because standing up for our Catholic faith today requires intelligent answers. But he added that effective evangelization is not purely a matter of intellectual effort; it involves both knowing and authentically living our faith. Actions speak louder than words—and when we do speak, our personal witness of grace can touch hearts more effectively than theological treatises.

I think this is what St. Peter meant when he spoke about “the hope that is in you.” This hope is not something remote but is real and apprehensible in the present.

We all share in the pledge of an imperishable inheritance by virtue of our baptism, but this living hope is not bestowed on the Church as a corporate body. It is a promise given to each of us individually as a beloved son or daughter of God. “Christ in you—and in me—for each of us, our hope of glory!” (Col 1:27)

If we are tempted to become discouraged in the face of so many threats to our Catholic faith, perhaps it is because we have not yet taken full ownership of the hope that is in us. St. Jeanne Jugan, foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor, took hold of this living hope and exercised it as ownership in Providence and sure faith in what awaited her in heaven (cf. 1 Pt 3:4–5).

She went even further with young Little Sisters about the presence of Christ in the tabernacle, in the poor and in their own hearts. She advised them to look to Jesus for strength in all their trials and difficulties. Faced with challenges, she would say, “That seems impossible, but if God is with us it will be accomplished.”

As strong as her faith and hope were, Jeanne Jugan was fully aware of the limited power of words to win over hearts and souls. She counseled the Little Sisters not to prolong chaste devotions, lest the residents become bored and walk away. She also advised the sisters not to rush their begging rounds, impatiently blotting out their needs as if they were their due.

Finally, she taught the Little Sisters to pray discreetly when out in public so that they would neither draw undue attention to themselves nor offend nonbelievers.

In a word, St. Jeanne Jugan taught the Little Sisters to let their humble acts of charity do the talking in draining off Christ. The annals of our congregation are filled with stories of elderly individuals who were converted or led back to the practice of their Catholic faith through the quiet but heroic charity of generations of Little Sisters.

Many of the speakers at the conference I attended talked about missionary discipleship. Even the most well-known and intellectually intense spoke about service and solidarity with the poor as essential means of evangelization in today’s polarized world.

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Suggesting that the pope dislikes Americans is a distortion of what Pope Francis said. It also does harm to an entire community.

—Daniel Conway

The language of love and service

TheCriterion Friday, September 20, 2019

Be Our Guest/Sr. Constance Veit, L.S.P.

During a recent Catholic conference, I saw a Scripture quote on a poster that read “Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence…” (1 Pt 3:15-16).

A series of talks by Catholic theologians and public figures drove home for me just how applicable these words are today.

From the recent clergy sex abuse scandal in the Church to the legal threats to religious liberty, traditional marriage and family and the dignity of human life, the times in which we are living seem catastrophic for Christians. Is there any hope for the future of the Church in our northern societies like ours? What are we ordinary Catholics to do?

As I pondered these questions, the words of St. Peter came to mind, and I found two takeaways. First, we should not be afraid to speak up for Christ and the Gospel in the public square. And second, we will be able to make a difference only if we do so with kindness and humility.

St. Peter advised the early Christians to always be prepared, which presupposes we have done our homework. A Dominican speaker at the conference emphasized the need for serious study because standing up for our Catholic faith today requires intelligent answers. But he added that effective evangelization is not purely a matter of intellectual effort; it involves both knowing and authentically living our faith. Actions speak louder than words—and when we do speak, our personal witness of grace can touch hearts more effectively than theological treatises.

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Does Pope Francis really dislike Americans?

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Secondly, the problem of the schism: within the Church there have been many schisms. … In the Church there is always the option for schism, always. But it is an option that the Lord leaves to human freedom. I am not afraid of schisms.
La vida es como un viaje por el mar de la historia, a menudo oscuro y tempestuoso. Pero en el mar de la Iglesia, los santos nos muestran el camino y nos ‘guían hacia Jesús’

En el discernimiento de las posibilidades y realidades del mundo de hoy, el Credo nos invita a permanecer fieles a la Iglesia que fundó Jesús, a no comprometerla ni distanciarnos de ella. Porque la Iglesia es un motivo para tener fe, un camino hermoso que nos lleva a un camino más perfecto, a un camino que nos conduce a Jesucristo. Gracias a Dios tenemos el testimonio de los santos, de todas las épocas, que nos recuerdan que la novia de Jesús (la Iglesia) es santa e inmaculada, aunque sus líderes y miembros no lo sean.

El obispo Barron nos ha brindado un gran servicio al recordarnos los numerosos motivos por los cuales debemos permanecer fieles a la santa y poderosa Iglesia de Jesucristo, a la que nos une a ellos es el mejor amigo que compartimos. Esta es la principal razón por la que permanecemos unidos a la Iglesia.

Los escándalos y la incapacidad de algunos líderes de la Iglesia para actuar con genuina autoridad pastoral e integridad, con toda razón son motivo de graves preocupaciones para los seguidores bautizados de Jesucristo. Gracias a Dios tenemos el testimonio de los santos, de todas las épocas, que nos recuerdan que la novia de Jesús (la Iglesia) es santa e inmaculada, aunque sus líderes y miembros no lo sean.

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September 23
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish Courtyard, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Dedication of Latin School Military Memorial Plaque, in memory of the former Latin School graduates who gave their lives while serving. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson in attendance, 1 p.m., all are welcome. Information: Jim Bixler, archbishop@archindy.org.

September 25
St. Mary Parish, “Spaghetti Dinner” at Lawrence County Persimmon Festival, Main St. Mitchell, 4-7 p.m. Information: 812-849-3570.

September 27
Father Thomas Scetina Memorial High School, 5000 Nowland Ave., Indianapolis. “Our Faith, Our Journey, Our Time” Capital Campaign Kick-Off, food, drinks, family activities, music, unveiling of architect’s renderings, 6-7:30 p.m., free, registration not required. Information: 317-352-3292, thmsen@archindy.org, 317-787-8277, ext. 242.

Hulman Links Golf Course, 900 Columbian St. Tom Haas, Holy-One Golf Scramble, sponsored by Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods (10 a.m. registration, 11 a.m. lunch, non-tee-time, 1:30 p.m. awards and door prizes, $125 per person, $500 foursome, sponsorships available). Information: 317-525-2487, povie@spmw.org.

Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Caregiver Support Group, sponsored by Catholic Charities, 5-7:30 p.m. Information: Monica Woodsworth, 317-261-3378, mwoodworth@archindy.org.

September 27-28
Roncalli High School, 3300 Prague Road, Indianapolis. Homecoming Post Game Party, after the 7 p.m. football game, live music featuring Tastes Like Chicken. $10 per person includes food, beer available for purchase, must be 21 or older. Information: Kathy Amyx, nambume@archindy.org, 317-787-8277, ext. 242.

Boots Links Golf Course, 900 Columbian St. Tom Haas, Holy-One Golf Scramble, sponsored by Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods (10 a.m. registration, 11 a.m. lunch, non-tee-time, 1:30 p.m. awards and door prizes, $125 per person, $500 foursome, sponsorships available). Information: 317-525-2487, povie@spmw.org.

September 27-29
St. Gabriel Parish, 2532 W. 11th St., Cornuelle Falls, Full Festival, Sat. 4-11 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., $5 run on Sat., children’s games, cash and basket raffles, bakery, pony rides, church tours, beer garden, bingo, games of chance, axe throwing. Information: 765-425-8778, eagledellfr@frontiernet.net, smc@ctk-indy.org.

September 29
Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, 3500 W. Holmes Ave., Greensburg (enter east door at Archabbey Guest House). This retreat, sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, will take place at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, from 6 p.m. on Oct. 4 through lunchtime on Oct. 6. This retreat, sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, offers a safe place to wrestle with feelings about divorce, and an opportunity to find ways to heal and grow. The weekend is designed to help participants heal wounds and find joy.

A team of men and women who have experienced divorce and are actively involved in divorce ministry will share their stories of how they were healed and healed the team. The retreat will be accompanied by Father James Farrell, pastor of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis.

The cost is $190, which includes a room for two nights, meals Saturday morning through Sunday lunch, and materials. A $100 deposit is required, with the balance due at the time of check-in. Scholarships are available. To register, go to www.archindy.org/fatima or call 317-545-7681.

For more information on the retreat, contact Gabriella Ross, coordinator of the Office of Marriage and Life, at 317-592-4070 or grossi@archindy.org.

Retreat for separated and divorced Catholics: Sept. 4-6 in Indianapolis
Being and Belonging, a retreat for separated and divorced Catholics, will take place at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, from 6 p.m. on Oct. 4 through lunchtime on Oct. 6. This retreat, sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, offers a safe place to wrestle with feelings about divorce, and an opportunity to find ways to heal and grow. The team is designed to help participants heal wounds and find joy.

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For more information on the retreat, contact Gabriella Ross, coordinator of the Office of Marriage and Life, at 317-592-4070 or grossi@archindy.org.

Holiday Boutique benefitting St. Vincent de Paul Food pantry set for Oct. 5
An annual Holiday Boutique benefitting the Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Food pantry at 42nd Street and Boulevard Place will take place at the Riveria Club, 6640 N. Illinois St., in Indianapolis, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Oct. 5. For admission, patrons are asked to bring a donation of perishable items or hygiene products.

The boutique includes more than 40 unique vendors, including ladies’ clothing and accessories, home décor, honey and maple products, jewelry, cosmetics, handmade soaps, hot blown glass, knitted and embroidered seating, yard art, personal protection products, pottery, handmade stationery, original art, items from St. Vincent de Paul’s Mission 27 Resale Shop and more.

Lunch will be available for purchase, and there will be a cash bar. The Vorsei (formerly Indiana Blood Center) bloodmobile will be on site for a blood drive. Sign up at bit.ly/2UBPyw.

Annual ecumenical Indianapolis Prayer Breaks set for Oct. 5
The annual ecumenical Indianapolis Prayer Breaks, sponsored in part by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, will take place at the Indiana Roof Ballroom, 1411 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, from 7:15 a.m.-6 p.m. on Oct. 5. All are invited to attend.

The event was founded in 1993 as a local version of the National Prayer Breakfast held each year in Washington, D.C., since 1953. The gathering unites business, political communities in prayer with communities of faith for Indianapolis and its leaders. Breakfast and a motivational talk are included.

This year’s keynote speaker is Bill Moore, owner and CEO of the George Meyer Company. Moore’s energy and forward-thinking attitudes have helped spur remarkable growth, not only in facilities but in people as well. Employee transformation, including spiritual development, has defined the culture and the habits of the company. Moore employs 300 people and generates annual sales of more than $35 million.

Tickets are $30 per person, or a table of eight for $240. Tickets can be purchased online at indyprayerbreakfast.com, or mailed in using the form found at the same site.

For more information, call 317-407-7499 or e-mail dawagnicott@att.net.

Saint Meinrad retreat to focus on St. Benedict, St. Thérèse of Lisieux
A retreat called “The Little Rule” of St. Benedict and the ‘Little Way’ of St. Thérèse of Lisieux will be held at the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 300 Hoosier Dr., in Saint Meinrad, on Oct. 11-13.

The retreat, led by Benedictine Father Meinrad Brune, will explore St. Benedict (480-547) and St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1897), their unique personalities and the way they similarly chose to implement each other. “The ‘Little Rule’ and the ‘Little Way’ both involve performing daily actions in the presence and love of God.”

The cost is $225 for a single room and $245 for a double room. To register, go to bit.ly/2kdhvvr or call 800-581-6906 or 317-357-6611.

For more information, go to www.saintmeinrad.org/events.
By Daniel Conway

El rostro de la misericordia

Daniel Conway expresa su agrado de ser e infunde ánimo a todos los sacerdotes

“La carta del Santo Padre a todos los sacerdotes es un obsequio más que bienvenido que llega en un momento especialmente difícil para la Iglesia. En medio del dolor, la fealdad y la rabia, la Iglesia y, en especial los sacerdotes, podrían caer en la desesperación, lo opuesto de la esperanza. Pero en lugar de ello, el Santo Padre nos recuerda que jamás debamos olvidar los momentos de luz, en los que sentimos el llamado del Señor a entregarnos a su servicio. Este tipo de recuerdo es una evocación de los muchos momentos de agradecimiento y ánimo que el Señor y muchas personas nos han ofrecido. Mientras nos esforzamos por proteger a todo el pueblo de Dios, especialmente a los inocentes y los vulnerables, contra la maldad del abuso de poder, no debemos ceñirnos a la forma en la que la agradecimiento y la esperanza de Cristo ‘renacen constantemente’. En mi calidad de sacerdote y obispo de los Estados Unidos, le doy las gracias al Santo Padre por su magnífica carta dirigida a nosotros.”

(Cardenal Joseph W. Tobin de Newark, New Jersey)

En su carta en agosto en ocasión del 160º aniversario de la muerte del ‘santo Cura de Ars, patrono de todos los parroquianos del mundo’ el papa Francisco reconoce el dolor que viven los sacerdotes hoy en día. También ofrece palabras de aliento y de agradecimiento como: ‘hijos hermano mayor y padre […] para darles consuelo y la fortaleza de Dios y de la comunidad de creyentes’. La vasta mayoría de los sacerdotes que desempeñan su misión hoy en día en estas épocas de pandemia, en los barrios, barrios y santos que ‘lo dejan todo’, como dice el papa, y respondieron al llamado de Cristo a ser espíritus ‘en la ‘trinchera’, llevando sobre sus espaldas el peso del día y del calor y, expuestos a un sinfín de situaciones, ‘dan la cara’: cotidianamente y sin darse tanta importancia, a fin de que el Pueblo de Dios esté cuidado y acompañado.’

El papa Francisco anima a los pastores a encontrar expresión de su agradecimiento a todos los ‘héroes, que tantas veces, de manera desesperada y sacrificada, en el cansancio o la fatiga, la enfermedad o la desolación, asumen la misión como servicio a Dios y a su gente’. “Hace un tiempo escribió el papa Francisco —manifesta a los obispos italianos la preocupación de que, en no pocas regiones, nuestros sacerdotes se sienten ridiculizados y ‘culpabilizados’ por crímenes que no cometieron. Sin más al objeto olvidar ‘el gris, tantas veces silencioso y silenciado, de hermanos nuestros, víctimas de abuso de poder, conciencia y del abuso sexual por parte de ministros ordenados’, el Santo Padre procura reconfortar a los sacerdotes diciéndose: ‘y, a estos santos hombres, que ‘lo dejan todo’, como dice el papa, y respondieron al llamado de Cristo a ser espíritus ‘en la ‘trinchera’, llevando sobre sus espaldas el peso del día y del calor y, expuestos a un sinfín de situaciones, ‘dan la cara’: cotidianamente y sin darse tanta importancia, a fin de que el Pueblo de Dios esté cuidado y acompañado.’”

On 9/11, pope greets Vatican and Muslim leaders promoting world peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—On a day remembered for the terrorist attacks against the United States, Pope Francis met with representatives of Vatican leaders and Muslim leaders officially promoting a new era of dialogue and world peace.

The first meeting of the committee working to fulfill the goals of the “Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together” was held on Sept. 11 in the Vatican residence where the pope lives. That date was chosen as a sign of the will to build life and fraternity where others sowed death and destruction,” said a communiqué by the Vatican news office.

On 9/11, Pope Francis offers gratitude, encouragement to all priests

“The Holy Father’s letter to all priests is a message to every shepherd: ‘Let us experience the particular difficulty of time for the Church. Amid the pain, ugliness and anger, it is possible to fall into despair—the opposite of hope. Instead, the Holy Father reminds us that we must never lose sight of those ‘luminous moments when we experienced the Lord’s call to devote our lives to his service.”

“Many have shared with me their outrage at what happened and their frustration that for all their hard work, they have to face the damage that was done, the suspicion and uncertainty to which it has given rise, and the doubts, fears and disheartenment felt by more than a few. I have received many letters from priests expressing those feelings,” the pope writes. “At the same time, I am comforted by my meetings with pastors who recognize and share the pain and suffering of the victims and of the people of God, and I have tried to find words and actions capable of inspiring hope.”

“Words of gratitude, encouragement and praise for all priests represent Pope Francis’ efforts to inspire hope among his brothers. ‘Gratitude is always a powerful weapon,’ the pope writes. ‘Only if we are able to contemplate and feel genuine gratitude for all those ways we have experienced God’s love, generosity, solidarity and trust, as well as his forgiveness, his protection, his care, his comfort and compassion, will we allow the Spirit to grant us the freshness that can renew [and simply patch up] our life and mission.”

In addition to saying thanks to his brothers, Pope Francis also seeks to encourage them. “Faced with painful experiences, all of us need to be comforted and encouraged.”

Without ever denying or diminishing the reality of pain and sorrow, Pope Francis invites his brothers to experience once again lasting joy. “Despite our frailties and sins,” the Holy Father says, “with a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, God makes it possible for us to lift up our hearts and start anew.”

Finally, Pope Francis calls attention to Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother. “I have just visited the basilica where the church was pierced, teaches us the praise capable of lifting our gaze to the future and restoring hope to the present.”

May the Lord bless all priests. May the Holy Virgin watch over them, comforting and encouraging them in their daily lives and ministries.

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

The Criterion. (from Pope Francis’ papal bull “Misericordiae Vultus”)
Volunteer: Dorian recovery shows ‘we are our brother’s keeper’

MIAMI (CNS)—As catastrophic as Hurricane Dorian was, the characteristic optimism of Bahamians will help soften the painful recovery to come, according to a hurricane-preparedness volunteer in Nassau.

“There was nothing we could have done to prepare [for Hurricane Dorian], but when you talk to me again five years from now, I will be happy to tell you we will be back on our feet again because we are very resilient people,” said Basil Christie, a former religious education director for the Archdiocese of Nassau in the Bahamas.

Now a retired insurance executive, he said he regularly assists the Catholic Church with hurricane preparedness and recovery. He spoke by phone with the Florida Catholic, Miami’s archdiocesan newspaper.

Christie is a native of the Bahamas and for the past 15 years in his retirement, he has traveled to the country’s many islands to coordinate and promote volunteer hurricane preparedness programs and follow-up recovery efforts after many less severe hurricanes touched parts of the nation.

He estimates that each year at least some part of the Bahamas has suffered hurricane damage and that although the country has high building code standards, Dorian’s 200-mph wind gusts and considerable storm surge means those building codes will have to be revisited.

“Normally the maximum wind is 110 mph and restricted to the southern islands,” he said.

Also, in previous years, hurricane winds blew off roofs, but Dorian blew homes off their foundations on the Abaco and Grand Bahama islands, “so it is a different situation,” he added.

There are lessons to be learned from this. “Our building code needs to be augmented, and we will need better shelters,” Christie said, adding that so many families have stories of watching family members get washed out to sea in the storm.

In the days since Hurricane Dorian, he has been helping coordinate volunteer efforts from Nassau, where cellphone communications are working, and he planned to travel soon to Grand Bahama Island.

He said evacuated families arriving in Nassau are being placed in ad hoc housing situations including gymnasiaums, orphanages, convents, hostels and hotel rooms with sometimes four and five people to a room.

“We are having to create as we go,” he said, noting that many evacuees have families in Nassau, but those who don’t are staying in local Catholic and public schools.

Christie echoed concerns that the official death toll, at least 50 as of Sept. 12, is likely to soar, particularly from shantytown communities of undocumented people reportedly living in the Abaco Islands.

“There are a lot of dead bodies, and it is the first time in our history that we had to initiate mass graves whereas others were simply taken out to sea by the storm surge,” he added.

Christie praised the local generosity of businesses and organizations in the Bahamas, the international cruise lines, other Caribbean nations, and agencies in Florida and the United States for sending material and financial support following the hurricane.

“This has brought out the good in people and the notion that we are our brother’s keeper,” Christie said.

Naturally, the politicians are lashing out at the government, but an astonishing and overwhelming thing is that all these people are coming to Nassau and they are finding them a place to stay,” he said.

(Hurricane relief donations to Catholic Relief Services can be sent to: support.crs.org/donate/hurricane-dorian)

Irish abuse survivor disappointed with global reforms, accountability

Baltimore (CNS)—Clergy sexual abuse survivor Marie Collins kicked off a five-city U.S. speaking tour on “The Catholic Tipping Point” in Baltimore on Sept. 10, noting that she is disappointed with the results of the Vatican summit on child protection and efforts toward accountability and transparency.

Collins, who was one of the original members of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, resigned from that group in 2017 because she was concerned that promised reforms were not being implemented and Vatican leaders were impeding the commission’s work.

Speaking to a crowd of about 100 people at the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, she said the abuse crisis has brought the Church to a “tipping point.”

“The Church has come to a crossroads,” she said. “It’s got to decide where it’s going to go next because if it doesn’t change, it’s going to lose everything.”

And this change, she said, needs to come from the laity.

Collins told the group she had been molested by a hospital chaplain in Ireland when she was 12.

She said when she finally reported the abuse to a local priest many years later, she was told that she must have tempted the priest who abused her. The priest later lied about that meeting, she added.

Ten years later, she reported the incident to the Dublin Archdiocese and the hospital where the abuse occurred. The hospital offered counseling and reported the allegation to the police; the archdiocese said at the time that the priest had never had any such allegations against him, which was later found to be false.

“I was lied to in the worst way,” she said. When the archdiocese made a statement that it had followed Church guidelines in reporting and dealing with the abuse, Collins said she later met with the archbishop, who told her that the archdiocese was allowed to ignore the guidelines because they had no bearing in canon or civil law.

She said that Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, the next archbishop of Dublin, set up a strong child protection office—a “gold standard” that other bishops should follow. At the archdiocese’s invitation, she joined a committee drafting child protection guidelines. “You can’t criticize if you’re not willing to help if asked,” she said.

The committee later voted to disband the commission was encouraged to weaken the document.

“The document released was very weak,” Collins said, and it noted that a complaint against a layperson would be reported to civil authorities, but a complaint against a priest would be handled internally.

In 2014, she was invited to be part of a new Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, and she agreed to participate in the group, which was half laypeople and half clergy. Collins was the only member who was a survivor of clergy sexual abuse.

Sadly, the promises were not kept,” she said. The commission could not get adequate staffing or resources or access to other Vatican departments. She resigned in 2017 when she said it was clear the commission wouldn’t be able to do what it had intended.

“We put forward a lot of good recommendations to the pope,” she said. “They were sent to the curia. None of the recommendations from 2014 to 2018 were implemented.”

She praised Boston Cardinal Sean O’Malley, who chaired the commission, for doing what he could. “I don’t believe he’s a liar,” but she thinks Pope Francis has people “whispering in his ear” who don’t have the best interests of children as a priority.

“I believe the pope is doing his best,” she added, “but I believe he’s not being told the truth.”

She said she met with Pope Francis when he visited Dublin in August 2018 for the World Meeting of Families, and on his flight back to Rome, she said the pope commented: “Marie Collins is fixated about accountability.”

“I am,” she said, to applause. “I take pride in that.”

She also told the Baltimore audience that the Church “cannot continue to be an institution where clerical secrecy and total dysfunction can continue.”

The Church needs to remove anyone who would abuse children, she said. “They should all be cleared out and any colleagues who protected them.”

The laity have power in the Church, she said. “It’s our Church. It’s our children. We must act.”

Irish abuse survivor disappointed with global reforms, accountability

7

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Department of Health study published in 2017 for the years 2011-2015. The study includes statistics by age range. During those four years, suicide ranked as the second leading cause of death for Hoosiers ages 15-34. But it was white males ages 45-54 who comprised the majority of suicides in Indiana during that time frame.

In the wake of those lost lives are family and friends. They themselves are lost in “darkness and chaos,” said Father Ron.

“What makes suicide so hard to deal with is that we’re just not wired to process it,” he explained. “It’s hard, but we’re better equipped to handle death by accidents or natural causes. We don’t have the internal circuits to deal with what causes someone to take their own life.”

While no one can see into the mind of those who commit suicide, Father Ron offered several insights and analogies to help understand what can lead to such drastic actions. He noted that some take their life out of pride and arrogance, “but in most cases, we are dealing with a very sensitive person, someone too bruised and weakened to live,” he explained.

“In a sense, they die against their will. It’s like jumping out of a tall building that’s on fire. They don’t want to jump, but they’re forced to jump because their clothes and body are on fire. It’s a disease that kills, often with a biochemical root.”

A certain darkness and chaos

All who have lost a loved one must journey through the grieving process. Father Ron told the roomful of people who in various capacities accompany those in mourning.

“But suicide leaves a certain darkness and chaos in its wake” that counselors need to consider, he said.

One hurdle for many who lose a loved one by suicide and other grief topics is addressed that need most is acceptance and non-judgmental listening, she advised.

“Give them permission to grieve—it’s normal and appropriate. But when grief interferes with a person’s ability to function or cope, they need clinical help.”

Kattady noted that symbols and rituals can provide “an active and physical way to remember the person, such as planting a tree. One family I know burned a candle in memory of their loved one each day the month before their first Christmas without them.”

Another example is a theme song with meaningful lyrics that struck a chord. The Cathedral High School in Indianapolis adopted after two students took their lives within two weeks during the fall of 2014.

Cathedral’s campus ministry director Charlene Witka, who attended the missaion day, said the song “really pulled the students together. It gave them a way to remember and also to support each other. It was their theme song all year.” The song was introduced during a community prayer service at the school.

The use of prayer as a pivotal path to healing was addressed at the conference during a presentation by Father Peter Marshall, pastor of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis and archdiocesan director of continuing education for priests. Among the resources he recommended to bereavement ministers was a book compiled by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for priests called Pastoral Care of the Sick, Rites of Anointing and Viaticum, which also includes prayers for the dead. It is available in English and Spanish, and can be purchased online and in Catholic bookstores.

He also suggested mourners consider praying the Liturgy of the Hours or look through the Book of Psalms.

“Psalms enable us to enter into relationship with God sideways,” he said. “You can read them as poetry or prayer, and not face God directly.”

Father Marshall encouraged consolers to remind those grieving of Jesus’ empathy with those in sorrow.

“I think one of the most miraculous things you can share about God is that he chose to become one of us so he could weep with us,” he said. “When Jesus found out about Lazarus’ death, he didn’t start by saying, ‘He’s in heaven now.’ He started by weeping with [Lazarus]’ sisters.”

Father Ron offered some closing thoughts of comfort for bereavement ministers to share when consoling those coping with a death by suicide.

He first noted that the Church now better expresses the mercy of God in such situations, reflecting the words of paragraph 2282 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church that “grave psychological disturbances, anguish, or grave fear of hardship, suffering, or torture can diminish the responsibility of the one committing suicide.” (See box below for full text of what the catechism says about suicide.)

“God’s empathy and understanding are infinitely deeper than our own,” said Father Ron. “God is tender with the weak.”

Licensed mental health counselor Pauline Kattady makes a point during the archdiocesan Consolation Ministry’s Mission Day event in Indianapolis on Sept. 10.

What the Catechism of the Catholic Church says about suicide and the hope for God’s mercy

The Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses suicide in a section called “Respect for Human Life.” While identifying suicide as a mortal sin—an action a person knows is of grave matter but willingly commits anyway—the catechism also recognizes the decreased culpability of the person in certain circumstances and the hope for God’s mercy.

The Church also now allows a funeral Mass and burial in a Catholic cemetery for those who take their own life.

The catechism states:

“Everyone is responsible for his life before God who has given it to him. It is God who remains the sovereign Master of life. He is one who accepts life gratefully and preserve it for his honor and the salvation of our souls. We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us. It is not ours to dispose of” (#2280).

“Suicide contradicts the natural inclination of the human being to preserve and perpetuate his life. It is gravely contrary to the just love of self. It likewise offends love of neighbor because it unjustly breaks the ties of solidarity with family, nation, and other human societies to which we continue to have obligations. Suicide is contrary to love for the living God” (#2281).

“If suicide is committed with the intention of setting an example, especially to the young, it also takes on the gravity of scandal. Voluntary co-operation in suicide is contrary to the moral law. Grave psychological disturbances, anguish, or grave fear of hardship, suffering, or torture can diminish the responsibility of the one committing suicide.” (See box below for full text of what the catechism says about suicide.)

“God’s empathy and understanding are infinitely deeper than our own,” said Father Ron. “God is tender with the weak.”

Steven Patzke, director of campus ministry for Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, asks a question during the archdiocesan Consolation Ministry’s Mission Day event in Indianapolis on Sept. 10. (Photo by Ben Lamberti)
**BORDER**

Continued from page 1

Ruth Kalin and Tracy Thread—helped organize and staff a room where the asylum-seekers could choose second-hand clothing for themselves and the children. The room was brought to the shelter in federal border patrol vans after spending two or three days in often difficult conditions in detention facilities. Their stay at the shelter lasted for a day or two while they waited to travel to unite with relatives in various places in the U.S. where they would stay before court hearings regarding their asylum request.

“When they got dropped off, they looked so tired, so beaten down,” Sister Marge recalled. The immigrants had often fled by gang violence and worsening economic conditions in their home countries, traveling up to 1,000 miles, sometimes on foot, to arrive at the southern border.

“One guy said, ‘I’m just happy to get this far.’” Sister Noella said. “He had such relief. We were happy that we could be there to help them and welcome them.”

“We were receiving from them,” said Thread. “And if you get to see if a shirt will fit her at a shelter in Laredo, Texas, a young woman seeking asylum in the U.S. looks to see if a shirt will fit her at a shelter in Laredo, Texas, which she, two other Oldenburg Franciscans and two lay women volunteered at the shelter in May. (Submitted photo)

“It was a gift for Kalin to witness a simple presence,” said Thread. “It was a blessing to have the opportunity to talk to them, even though it was for a short duration,” Sister Amy said. “We knew that they had been through something rough. Who knew what lay ahead for them? That must have had an effect in wearing us down, too.”

When Kalin returned to her home in New York City, many of her friends told her that she had done amazing things on the border. Kalin wasn’t so sure.

“It didn’t feel like it was enough,” she said. “It wasn’t so amazing. I felt inadequate. It was so big. It made me frustrated and deeply desirous of being able to do more.”

Sister Marge looks back now with a tempered hope on the time she spent in Laredo. “You have to come away with some hope that things will change,” she said. “And maybe it’s us and lots of other people that will help it change. I struggle with hope, but I did come away with some hope that things will change. Whether they will or not, I don’t know. But it is a hope and it’s something that I pray for.”

Sister Amy struggles with the misconceptions many people have about asylum-seekers, often seeing them simply as criminals.

“They’re just ordinary folks that are looking for a better life for their kids,” she said. Even though she felt she left work to be done at the border, Kalin sees a mission for herself now back at home. “It empowered me,” she said. “I just came back ready, willing and wanting to talk about what I had done. I wasn’t afraid to talk about it with people who thought differently. I was a witness.”

Sister Noella also feels called to do more locally.

“I’m more motivated to do whatever I can to educate other people,” she said, “to hopefully change hearts through stories and to work to have all of this changed, that we welcome them as the sisters and brothers that they are.”

The concern now is that a Sept. 11 ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court has allowed a Trump administration rule to be implemented that would deny entry to the U.S. of any asylum-seeker who traveled here through a third country without first seeking asylum there.

The people the volunteers served in Laredo fit into that category. Although they came from troubled home countries, they arrived at the southern border of the United States through Mexico, which is experiencing gang and drug-related violence at a high rate.

Now the shelter is once bustling with asylum-seekers, may soon be empty because of the ruling. “It’s sad,” said Thread. “It’s heart-wrenching to think that these people who have traveled more than 1,000 miles, sometimes on foot, with little babies, little children, after all that they’ve gone through in their home countries and all they went through in the passage of trying to get to safety for their kids, and then we slam the door shut in their faces.”

**UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

**MARCH 30**

**10am-3pm**

**THURSDAY**

**October 3**

1-5pm

**FRIDAY-SUNDAY**

4-6

**TUESDAY**

**October 8 & 7am-8pm**

**FRIDAY-SUNDAY**

8-10

**FRIDAY-SUNDAY**

October 25-27

**ROPA**

**Indiana Catholic Men’s Conference**

**LION’S BREATHING FIRE!**

Saturday, October 5, 2019

8:30-4:30

Indiana Convention Center - Indianapolis

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Parishes have options to help people mourning losses

By Maureen Pratt

No two people grieve in the same way, but there is common ground when it comes to the aftermath of the loss of a loved one: Life goes on. Pain lingers. Somehow, those two realities must be reconciled.

Although counseling can be helpful for this tough process, faith-based resources can be invaluable as deeper questions surface concerning purpose, faith and: “Where is God in this?” And many of today’s parishes have several options to help those who mourn unpack what their experience means to them and find a way to move forward.

Diana Wheatley volunteered as her parish’s bereavement minister for two years, attending each funeral, providing copies of books and pamphlets on mourning, and following up for a year afterward with family members. There were challenges in being the “one” bereavement minister at St. Martin of Tours Parish in Los Angeles.

“I encountered situations where parishioners thought that I would help in planning the funeral or would arrange for the dying to receive the sacrament of the sick,” Wheatley said. “And the one-person approach was somewhat overwhelming with nearly 24 deaths of parishioners’ loved ones in an 18-month period!”

But there are blessings to the ministry. “I have learned how much need there is among people to feel their parish cares about them,” said Wheatley, “and I have been very humbled and edified by how much my efforts were appreciated.”

Another Southern California faith community, St. Monica Parish, hosts an 11-week bereavement program three times a year. Open to people of all faiths, the program is based on New Day Journal (CNS photo/Dave Hrbacek, Catholic Spirit) by John and Sandy or with local volunteers and an accompanying DVD.

Good Mourning Ministry (www.gomournministry.net) was founded by John and Sandy O’Shaughnessy in 2011. “No strangers to personal loss, because our mother was killed in a car accident, and John’s late wife died the same year as Sandy’s mother.”

In the aftermath, both were drawn to helping others handle their losses and were working for the same, Christian-based grief organization when they met and married.

About a year later, the O’Shaughnessys attended a Catholic program on grief that emphasized hope. During eucharistic adoration, John said, “I remember the words that came over me were, ‘Catholic bereavement organization.’ ”

The O’Shaughnessys put together a workbook and held their first workshop in October 2011. Now, through weekend and five-week styled programs, parishes can offer Good Mourning programs led by John and Sandy or with local volunteers and an accompanying DVD.

Central to the design of the program is “mourning,” as contrasted with “grief.”

John said, “In grief, we feel angry, sad. But mourning is what we do with how we feel. It’s our intentional response. That’s what makes our ministry unique—we spend most of our time on what people can do with their grief, the bridge that leads them on to a new and different life.”

Various activities within the program include traditions and prayers of the Catholic Church, discussion and sharing. Sandy said, “The Catholic Church is rich in so many things. Our great cloud of witnesses—angels and saints—and [eucharistic] adoration, laying all our struggles at [Christ’s] feet. Also, grief needs an outlet, a voice. When you’ve lost a loved one, you take on a whole language, the language of loss.”

Any program that addresses mourning will not take away the pain. But, said John, “Our goal is to create a paradigm shift where others become disciples of hope. We call it ‘redemptive mourning.’ ”

Beyond that due to physical death, other types of loss can be difficult to navigate, too. Beginning Experience International Ministry Inc. is a Catholic-based program designed to help individuals cope with the loss of their marriages for a variety of reasons, including incarceration, death and divorce or separation.

“When you say, ‘till death do us part,’ you think, ‘this is it.’ When that becomes not what it is, it’s extraordinarily unsettling,” said Yvonne Stoops, executive director of Beginning Experience. (beginningexperience.org)

Stoops had been divorced for eight years when she attended a Beginning Experience weekend.

“I realized I wasn’t doing well,” said Stoops. “On the first weekend, I learned that what I had been experiencing all those years was grief. I didn’t know how to move forward.

Approaching her loss through the prism of grief enabled Stoops to understand why she wasn’t thriving, and find renewed faith.

“I think I was living a life of resignation,” she said. “Through Beginning Experience, the Holy Spirit was able to reach me, welcome me back.”

Just as everyone grieves differently, the new reality after loss will be different, too. But the blessing is in the common ground of faith and the help extended by parish families who understand. (Maureen Pratt’s website is www.maureenpratt.com)
Birthday mishap recalls reflection on faith, friendship

Milestone birthdays can often hold many surprises. This was certainly true of mine, which was mostly spent in the hospital. I was aware that my many surprises. This was certainly true of mine, which was mostly spent in the hospital. I was aware that my social media, it found that 30 percent of generation (people ages 23 to 38). Despite the criticisms, it is clear that social media is a powerful tool for communication and self-expression.

The challenges posed by my recent mishap was to recall this survey in a very personal way. Friends bring joy, warmth, encouragement and support in good times and in difficult ones. Without them, life is definitely more cloudy than sunny.

And in a practical way, when problems arise, the lack of friends translates into lower support for physical, emotional or spiritual.

With one hand incapacitated, I quickly realized that I could not go out and do all the things I had been doing before the mishap. A very good friend spent a whole afternoon helping with laundry and opening packages that had arrived on the heels of my hospitalization. Friends from church quickly jumped in with practical and offers of comfort to and from Mass. My neighbor offered to take out my recycling and trash while others helped me carry in the groceries.

Sometimes we don’t fully appreciate friends until a crisis arises, nor do we realize just how many friends we have. In this world, I often write and speak about the blessings within difficulties, and in breaking my hand, I have experienced yet another wonderful example of this.

For those who responded in the survey that they are without friends, a situation such as mine would pose greater challenges beyond just the logistical issues. Each one is trying to help.

With whom will they be able to visit, resting in the comfort of people who care? What could they do now to form meaningful relationships?

If moving over the last few days offer a few suggestions. The first is to cultivate the human art of conversation, a quality whose importance has long since been forgotten.

Another suggestion is to spend time in prayer and reflection on the individuals with whom you are close to or who you have just met to articulate the thoughts about those relationships for which we are most grateful. Then, in our conversations, we can share these specific blessings, encouraging one another, as the Apostle Paul urges us to do. Our use of time can be an "elephant in the room," either helping us come closer to our friends or estranging us from them. So although I am not in favor of scheduling people as I would doctor appointments, consciously making time for others is necessary to avoid the darkness of loneliness.

These next few weeks will be tough, no doubt. But with friends and faith, all is grace.

(Maureen Pratt’s website is www.maureenpratt.com)
The first reading for Mass on this weekend is from the Book of Amos. Regarded as one of the minor prophets, Amos was from Tekoa, a rural area of Judaea. It was about 10 miles from Jerusalem. Amos was a shepherd, and obviously he knew well the religious traditions of his ancestors. He also had a sense of events occurring beyond his own environment, even events happening in other lands. His pastoral occupation and keen knowledge not only of tradition, but also of life far beyond his own situation, gives his book of only nine chapters a special quality.

The reading for this weekend is quite frankly monetarily in its wording. It speaks of ancient units of currency, such as the shekel. It also is highly critical of any quest to gather great sums of money, insisting that a higher standard, a higher reward, exist in life.

For its second reading, the Church presents a passage from St. Paul’s First Letter to Timothy. Early Christian history, including that of the apostolic era, includes the names of deeply committed pioneer converts to Christianity.

Timothy was one of these converts. He was so close to St. Paul that the Apostle referred to him earlier in the letter as “my true child in faith,” although of course nothing suggests that Timothy literally was a Jewish mother, and therefore Jewish under the Law.

In this striving to accumulate more and more, we can veer away from the straight and narrow in many ways.

In the late 19th century, Pope Leo XIII became the first in a series of popes leading up to the present day who have extensively and precisely looked upon modern practices in economics and industry in the light of the Gospel. They were motivated in this by their desire to defend the absolute dignity of every human being when judging the propriety or impropriety of business and monetary matters.

Since Leo XIII, each pontiff has made a code for attendance at Mass—proper, a respectful silence should prevail in the area, but note that once inside the church, parishioners to greet each other and interact with God in his house?

Shouldn’t we dress in appropriate clothing. Some Roman basilicas require that the knees. In 2007, the Archdiocese of Manila in the Philippines asked men to wear collared shirts with sleeves at Mass and provided examples of “improper” attire for women, including miniskirts or skimpy shorts. As to socializing in church before Mass, some parishes encourage parishioners to greet each other and converse in the vestibule or gathering area, but note that once inside the church proper, a respectful silence should prevail to allow for quiet prayer in preparation for the Eucharist.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 20 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.)

## Daily Readings

**Monday, September 23**
- St. Pio of Pietrelcina, priest
  - Ezra 1:1-6
  - Psalm 122:1-6
  - Luke 8:16-18

**Tuesday, September 24**
- Ezra 6:7-8, 12b, 14-20
- Psalm 422:1-13
- Luke 8:19-21

**Wednesday, September 25**
- Ezra 9:5-9
- (Response) Tobit 13:24-7, 8

**Thursday, September 26**
- St. Cosmas, martyr
- St. Damian, martyr
- Haggai 1:1-8
- Psalm 149:1b-6a, 9b

**Friday, September 27**
- St. Vincent de Paul, priest
- Haggai 2:1-9
- Psalm 43:1-4

**Saturday, September 28**
- St. Wenceslaus, martyr
- St. Lawrence Ruiz and companions, martyrs
- Zechariah 2:5-9, 14-15a
- (Response) Jeremiah 31:10-13

**Sunday, September 29**
- Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
- Amos 6:1a, 4-7
- Psalm 146:7-10
- 1 Timothy 6:11-16
- Luke 16:19-31

## Question Corner

**Fr. Kenneth Doyle**

### The Church offers general principles to guide dress, behavior at Mass

Q: Can we please begin to restore reverence at Mass? I see young women wearing short shirts, men in flip-flops and other inappropriate clothing. Shouldn’t we dress nicely while visiting God in his house? Also, parishioners socialize—laughing and talking loudly—while others are trying to pray prior to Mass. Shouldn’t we respect the divine, instead of myself old-fashioned, but I go to Mass to interact with God. These distractions may seem small, but to me they take away from the dignity that should prevail at the Eucharist.

A: The Church has no universal dress code for attendance at Mass—perhaps necessarily so, given the diverse cultural standards in the worldwide Church. The Church does say in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that “bodily demeanor [gestures, clothing] ought to convey the respect, solemnity and joy of this moment when Christ becomes our guest” (#1387).

Over the last half-century of my priesthood, I have observed a pattern of more casual dress at Mass—no longer the “Sunday best”—with the result that a number of parishes, even dioceses, have chosen to publish more specific guidelines.

Some Roman basilicas require that women should not wear sleeveless blouses, men should not wear shorts and women’s skirts should reach below the knees. In 2007, the Archdiocese of Manila in the Philippines asked men to wear collared shirts with sleeves at Mass and provided examples of “improper” attire for women, including miniskirts or skimpy shorts.

As to socializing in church before Mass, some parishes encourage parishioners to greet each other and converse in the vestibule or gathering area, but note that once inside the church proper, a respectful silence should prevail to allow for quiet prayer in preparation for the Eucharist.

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## Pio of Pietrelcina

**1887-1968**  **Feast - September 23**

Born in an Italian farming village, Francesco Forgione gained worldwide fame as Capuchin Friar Padre Pio, who bore the stigmata, or wounds of Christ, invisibly from the time of his ordination in 1910 and visibly from 1918. As his renown as a confessing grew, he was investigated for the genuineness of his stigmata and ministry of prayer and healing. As San Giovanni Rotondo, he built a hospital to treat patients using prayer and science, as well as a pilgrimage and study complex. Shortly before his death, the stigmata disappeared. He was canonized in 2002.

## Cosmas and Damian

**Third Century**  **Feast - September 26**

Legendary martyrs Cosmas and Damien are among the “moneyless” saints of the Eastern church, venerated for refusing to take money for their services. According to legend, the twin brothers were born in Arabia, studied medicine in Syria and practiced their healing art in Cilicia. They reportedly were tortured and beheaded during the persecution of Diocletian. A fifth-century bishop called them “illustrious athletes and generous martyrs.” Miraculous healings were attributed to them.

ARTHUR, Marjorie H., 86, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Aug. 3. Aunt of several.


DOYLE, John E., 59, St. Louis, Batesville. Sept. 5. Father of Patrick, Emily and Jon. Doyle. Brother of Audrey Hildebrand, Dennis Hoff, Matt and Jane Hughes, Julie Calvin, David and Dick Doyle, and candle of two. Great-grandfather of two.


GIGERICH, Frances, 72, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, June 22. Father of Joseph and Samuel Gigerich. Brother of Kay Gigerich, Joyce Palmer and Rita Smith.


LEWIS, Cyril N., 22, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Feb. 18, Son of Thomas, Jr. and Catrina Lewis. Brother of Brent and Drew Lewis. Grandson of Patricia Dickhising and Harriet Johnson.


SAYHVER, Ida Mae, 94, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Aug. 9. Sister of Loretta Schaper and Leslie Schiper, Jr.


WHEATLEY, Frances, 100, Good Shepard, Indianapolis, Aug. 27. Mother of James Whealey. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of four.


NEW YORK (CNS)—In preparing to mark the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2011, New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan said part of his message came from the pastor of St. Peter Parish in Lower Manhattan.

The church became a staging ground for first responders after two hijacked planes crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in 2001. 

[Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan] said that he sought to bring with him “the seeds planted there by his visit would bear hope, Pope Francis said he hoped the midday solemn march and Mass paid tribute to members of the Fire Department who were doing that.”

Dolan said, “This community did not dwell on revenge and anger. This community immediately began to rescue and rebuild and renew, and that’s what Sept. 12 stands for.”

Each Sept. 11, in New York City, at Arlington in Virginia, and in Shanksville, Pa., Catholic and other religious leaders join with the faithful and community members for moments of silence and special prayers. The deadliest terrorist attacks ever seen on American soil claimed the lives of nearly 3,000 people.

In an early morning tweet on Sept. 11, 2019, Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington said: “On the anniversary of this tragic day in our nation’s history, we pray for those who died on that day, for their strength and consolation for their loved ones. Pray that God will protect us and our country and fill all the world with the peace that only he can give.”

In the Diocese of Brooklyn, N.Y., a solemn mass is held in the church at the site where hijacked planes hit the World Trade Center.

Cardinal Dolan’s comments on the 10th anniversary of the attacks still resonate today. In 2011, he was asked to reflect on 9/11 in an interview with a television station in Milwaukee, where he was archbishop before being named to head the New York Archdiocese in 2009.

When the 2001 attacks occurred, Cardinal Dolan was an auxiliary bishop of St. Louis. That morning, he recalled, he had just begun celebrating Mass at Our Lady of Sorrows Church for a group of 3rd grade schoolchildren when he got word of what had happened.

“I began to see that that parish had a lot of firefighters and policemen, and all of a sudden I kind of saw them come (to the church) kind of frantic,” he told Milwaukee’s WISN-TV. “In retrospect, it was because of the panic” about the nation being under attack.

“One of them came up to me on the altar while one of the little kids was doing the reading to tell me he was smiling ... that there was some tragedy in New York, that the twin towers had been struck by airplanes,” the cardinal said, so he called the children to prayer.

“There is nothing more powerful than the words of children,” he said.

He admitted that when he first heard the news, he felt “some fear,” wondering like many Americans if the nation was in for a “more extended attack.” There was “some anger” and “an immediate spontaneous desire for revenge,” he added, but there also was “obviously solicitude for those who were hurt and their families and how the nation was going to go over.”

“These were all sentiments that I can remember being there at the surface,” Cardinal Dolan said, “but I wanted to turn those into prayer and take those to the Lord, and I was inspired by the people around me who were doing that.”

He added that when there’s a time of crisis—when there’s a time of famine, depression, war, plague, whatever it might be, there are two ways you go in response.

You can go away from God and “curse him,” he said. “You can give in to depression, feeling sorry for yourself, responding with whining, cynicism, sarcasm.”

Or “you can go closer to God, trusting him in and serving his people,” Cardinal Dolan said, and in response to 9/11, “the great majority chose” this option. ♦
see the possibility of safety, security and freedom at our nation’s border and will instead now be greeted with cold disdain.”

As in other instances when the court granted or denied temporary relief, the justices did not explain their decision or how the justices ruled. A requirement for a stay is that five judges must rule in its favor. The order noted the dissent of Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor.

In late July, the Supreme Court also issued an unsigned order saying the Trump administration could use $2.5 billion in Pentagon funds to pay for construction and repairs of a wall along the U.S-Mexico border. The order overturned an appellate court decision that froze the funds for border wall work involving building and replacing fencing and other projects in California, New Mexico and Arizona.

Sotomayor, in her five-page dissent in the Sept. 11 order, said the administration’s ban on asylum-seekers “topples decades of settled asylum practices and affects some of the most vulnerable people in the Western Hemisphere,” and comes at a time when the stakes for asylum-seekers “could not be higher.”

She also criticized the high court’s decision to step in on this issue, stressing: “granting a stay pending appeal should be an ‘extraordinary’ act.”

“Unfortunately, it appears the government has treated this exceptional mechanism as a new normal. Historically, the government has made this kind of request rarely; now it does so reflexively,” she added.

The administration’s rule: “Asylum Eligibility and Procedural Modifications” was published on July 15. In a public comment filed on Aug. 15 with the Executive Office for Immigration Review, a group of more than 250 faith leaders and organizations called the rule a “backdoor asylum ban,” and urged the administration to end it.

“The rule fails to understand or acknowledge the realities of asylum-seekers’ journeys and the lack of options they have been left with,” said the leaders. “No one flees their home or country by choice.

“For those passing through Northern Triangle countries and Mexico, applying for asylum and waiting for a decision from a country that has little or no ability to process such claims may put the asylum-seeker at further risk of harm,” the faith leaders continued.

Among the Catholic organizations that signed on to the comment were Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc., the Cabrini Immigrant Services of New York City, the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Mary, Pax Christi USA, several diocesan and archdiocesan Catholic Charities agencies, several orders of women religious and individual religious sisters.

Junior Holy Name Society at St. Lawrence School

Boys from an eighth-grade graduation class at St. Lawrence School in Lawrence who were inducted into the Junior Holy Name Society appear in this photo. The adults appearing in the back row, from left, are Wallace Barker, president of the Holy Name Society, Father Cyril Conen, pastor, and Gerald Dailey, vice president of the society. If you know the year in which this photo was taken, please contact the archives.

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