Synod is a time to listen, discern, not despise, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Synod of Bishops for the Amazon is a time of reflection, dialogue and listening to the needs and sufferings of indigenous people, Pope Francis said.

“The Holy Spirit is the primary actor in the synod. Please, do not kick him out of the room,” the pope said, opening the gathering’s first working session on Oct. 7.

Speaking off-the-cuff, the pope said he was saddened to hear a “sarcastic” remark from a synod participant about an indigenous man wearing a feathered headdress who presented the offertory gifts at the synod’s opening Mass on Oct. 6.

“Tell me: What difference is there between having feathers on your head and the three-cornered hat worn by some officials of our dicasteries?” he asked, eliciting applause from synod participants.

Instead of becoming a series of reductive discussions that only undermine “the poetry” of indigenous people and their cultures, he said, the synod is a way for the Church to walk with them “under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”

The synod was not called to “invent social development programs or museum-like cultural guardianships or pastoral actions in the same noncontemplative style that leads to actions that give counter sign,” the pope said.

“We come to contemplate, to understand, to serve the people, and we do it by following a synodal path,” he said. “We do it within the synod because a synod is not a hidden discussions. We do it within the synod, not in roundtables, not in conferences and hidden discussions. We do it within the synod because a synod is not a parliament.”

The first full day of the synod began with a prayer service in front of the altar of St. Peter’s Basilica with members of parliament.”

By Natalie Hoefer

Archbishop Thompson urges Catholics to defend life with trust in ‘Christ Our Hope’

Perhaps it seems odd to some: The Catholic Church designates the month of October to highlight the importance of respect for life—just one month for a cause that should have no boundaries. But the Church understands the timelessness of this issue. According to Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, one need only look to this year’s theme for Respect Life Month for proof.

“This year’s Respect Life theme is Christ Our Hope: In Every Season of Life,” he said. “It is a theme worth contemplating beyond a single day, month or even a year. These words are meant to be embraced for a lifetime.”

The archbishop spoke these words on Oct. 6 during his homily at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, where he served as principal celebrant for the archdiocesan Respect Life Sunday Mass.

“In Christ Our Hope we find meaning, purpose, dignity and joy in the existence of human life from the moment of conception to natural death, culminating in eternal life with God,” he continued.

By Sean Gallagher

Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary supporters learn about team approach to promoting vocations

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson recently announced a restructuring of the staff of the archdiocesan vocations office aimed at encouraging all priests, deacons, religious and lay Catholics across central and southern Indiana to promote vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life.

The changes made in the archdiocesan vocations office were also discussed. An aspect of the priestly formation at Bishop Bruté that was highlighted during Celebrate Bruté was the fraternity that is nurtured among its current 41 seminarians who come from eight dioceses.

“These young are learning not only how to have that fraternity and community with each another,” said Archbishop Thompson, “but to take that witness to a world that’s desperately hungering for a sense of belonging, a sense of meaning, a sense of what it means to be part of a family, the human family and, more importantly, the family of God.”

Building up fraternity among future priests during their time in seminary will benefit them after they enter ordained life and the Church will benefit them after they enter ordained life and the Church will benefit them after they enter ordained life and the Church will benefit them after they enter ordained life and the Church will benefit them after they enter ordained life and the Church will benefit.
BRUTE continued from page 1

ministry, Archbishop Thompson said. “That community, that foundation that these young men are forming here is something that they’re forming for a lifetime,” he said. “They may not even appreciate it right now fully. But I think any priest would tell you how important it is to have that connection.”

Archdiocesan seminarian Liam Hosty has been part of the seminarian community at Bruté for three years. In that time, he’s begun to value the fraternity nurtured there.

“It’s grown more and more every year since I’ve been here,” said Hosty in an interview with The Criterion. “It’s helped me grow in a priestly identity while being formed academically, pastorally and spiritually.”

Hosty, a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, is a senior at Bishop Bruté and at nearby Marian University.

In remarks to those attending, Father Andrew Syberg, a formation dean at the seminary, reflected on the expansive nature of the seminary community.

“The community of Simon Bruté is not confined to our walls, but is felt in these walls,” said Father Syberg. “It is extended out to you. The future of our Church relies on all of you to bring vocations and to form men for the priesthood. We all have a part to play in this.”

Listening to Father Syberg was Crystal Platteter, a member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bloomington, who lives in the Bloomington Deanery, reflected on the expansive nature of the seminary community.

“The community of Simon Bruté is not confined to our walls, but is felt in these walls,” said Father Syberg. “It is extended out to you. The future of our Church relies on all of you to bring vocations and to form men for the priesthood. We all have a part to play in this.”

As the former formation dean at the seminary and lets fellow Catholics in the Parish in Bedford. She appreciates the work that the seminarians do and to form men for the priesthood. We all have a part to play in this.”

In an interview with The Criterion afterward, he spoke about the advantages of the new team approach to promoting vocations.

“Vocations is the work of the whole Church,” Father Marcotte said. “I think in many ways this new model emphasizes that and allows us to really work at vocations according to what our local community needs.”

“Something that works in the city of Indianapolis may be different from what works in the Batesville Deanery, which might be different from something that works in New Albany or Tell City.”

He was also encouraged by so many supporters at the gathering.

“It just re-emphasizes that the people of God in the archdiocese of southern Indiana care deeply about supporting young men who feel like they have a call to the priesthood,” Father Marcotte said. “That’s so crucial for each one of us.”

“We not only need to listen and be open to that call, but we also need to receive the support of our brothers and sisters in Christ. As we know, we’re not meant to live this life for ourselves or on our own. We’re meant to live it for and with one another.”

That was on display in a beautiful way at the Celebrate Bruté event.

(For more information on Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, and one of the new associate directors of vocations, attended Celebrate Bruté.

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(For more information about Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, visit www.BishopSimonBrute.org. For more information about vocations to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit www.HearGodsCall.com.)

October 12 – 4 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Bloomington, at St. Charles Borromeo Church.

October 13 – 2 p.m.
Blessing of new Eagle Scout projects at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis.

October 16 – 10 a.m.
Department heads meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis.

October 17 – 10 a.m.
Leadership team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center.

October 19 – 11 a.m.
Confirmation for youths of St. Michael Parish, Carlisle, and at nearby Marian University.

October 19 – 2 p.m.
Confirmation for youths of St. Mary Parish, LANESVILLE, and Holy Family Parish, New Albany, at Holy Family Church.

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (CNS)—Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill said on Oct. 3 he has overseen the return of the remains of 2,246 aborted fetuses back home to Indiana after they were discovered in September at the Illinois home of the late Dr. Ulrich “George” Klopfer.

An investigation into thousands of medical records found in close proximity to the fetuses confirmed they all were aborted by Klopfer during a period from 2000 to 2002 at three clinics he once ran in Indiana, located in Fort Wayne, Gary and South Bend. The investigation has been a team effort involving multiple offices and agencies since the day it began, and it remains a team effort as we proceed forward,” Hill said at a news conference. “Our priority throughout this process is to give proper respect to the remains of these unborn children and to the women and families associated with them.”

He added, “We are still working through the decision-making process in regard to ultimate disposition of these remains, and we will continue to proceed with appropriate care and consideration at each step of the way. For now, we can simply let everyone know that these remains are back home in Indiana.”

He said the Governor’s Office of Fetal remains found in rural Illinois have been returned home to Indiana.

October 12 – 2 p.m.
Confirmation for youths of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Augustine parishes, both in Jeffersonville; St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, Floyd County; and St. John Paul II Parish, Sellersburg, at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church.

October 22 – 10 a.m.
Fall Clergy and Parish Life Coordinator business meeting at St. Joseph Parish, North Vernon.

October 22 – 2 p.m.
Council of Priests meeting at St. Joseph Parish, North Vernon.

October 23 – 2 p.m.
Pastoral Planning Committee meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center.

October 23 – 7 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

October 24 – 7 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Joseph the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

(Schedule subject to change.)
Discipleship is at the heart of United Catholic Appeal

By Leslie Lynch

NEW ALBANY—For Connie Ignacio, stewardship is a way of life. “I can’t live without God. How can I not give back? I do my best to emulate Jesus’ teachings,” said Ignacio, a member of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg and a Sept. 19 Mass and dinner at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany to support the annual archdiocesan-wide United Catholic Appeal (UCA).

The theme for this year’s appeal is “Go and Make Disciples.” Ignacio’s deliberate focus on a life of discipleship summarized both the St. John Paul II Parish and Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, noted Father Vincent Gillmore, who was ordained in June and serves as associate pastor of Our Lady of the Springs Parish in French Lick.

In his homily, Archbishop Thompson said, “If we are the Church through the lens of the annunciation process and growth. The support of priests and volunteers has been invaluable to him. “The process cleanses you. I am so much more content now,” he said. “Marilyn and I talk a lot about our faith, how we’ve grown, [and] how we can give back.”

Jim Evard, a member of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville, said of stewardship: “I need to do this spiritually. I feel we are calling. We’re not giving to just one cause; I let the archdiocese do the hard part of deciding what others who might be interested in that level of support.

Others were members of the Legacy Society. Focused on the future with planned gifts, this level of support for those in need, supporting Catholic school students and staff, providing counseling and material assistance for crisis pregnancies, sponsoring seminarian formation, and suing abuses.

The gathering at Our Lady of Perpetual Help sought to thank and honor the campaign’s most dedicated supporters. Many of those in attendance were members of the appeal’s Miter Society—people who give $1,500 or more annually to support the UCA goal of caring for priests.

In his remarks during dinner, Archbishop Thompson said, “If we are not transforming the world, the world is transforming us.

He spoke of the 24 seminarians and 48 retired priests supported, 800 homeless families sheltered, 48,000 meals served, 1,100 students in inner-city schools aided, and thousands of mothers who chose life for their babies, all served by UCA.

“Every dollar raised for the United Catholic Appeal goes directly to ministry,” he said. “Thanks to the many ministries supported, we get a glimpse of God’s love for humanity and our call to be part of his plan to love our neighbor as ourselves.”

Jolinda Moore, executive director of the archdiocesan Office of Stewardship and Development, said, “As disciples, we are called to actually serve. ‘Actively’ is a key word. That is one reason I’m so excited about the theme of this year’s appeal—Go and Make Disciples. Not sit on the sidelines or wait to be invited, but take action. Archbishop Thompson reminded us at Mass that we become disciples by our witness. It is through our words and actions that we honor Jesus Christ.”

In this year’s UCA video, Joan Hess, agency director for Catholic Charities in Tell City, said, “We’re all the hands and feet of God. If the little toe isn’t there, you’re off balance.”

Father Vincent Gillmore, who was ordained in June and serves as associate pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, noted in the video, “We have to decide to be disciples every day. To be a disciple is to be a good steward of God’s gifts. Stewardship is not a way of life; it is the way of life.

(leslie Lynch is a freelance writer and member of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville. For more information about supporting the United Catholic Appeal or the Catholic Community Foundation, contact Jolinda Moore at 317-236-1462, 800-382-9836, ext. 1462, or e-mail jmoore@ archdiocese.org. Online resources for the United Catholic Appeal can be found at www.archdiocese.org/aag. Catholic Community Foundation resources are available at www.archdiocese.org/ccf.)
Embrace the gift of life

I once entered a funeral home to pay my respects to a mother and father whose infant son had died. The child had been born with severe respiratory and neurological problems. He also had other birth defects, all of which led to him spending a significant part of his less-than-one-year life in a children’s hospital. Some people said it was better for the infant and his parents that he died recently now, though the infant will have the peaceful, beautiful life that all children deserve. But when the infant was alive, his parents never really thought that it was better for their son to die. Instead, they loved and cared for him. And they swear that he returned their love and taught them through his pain and suffering.

Standing with the infant’s father at the funeral home, I noticed a stuffed animal had been placed in the coffin. I asked the father if it was a favorite toy of his son. He answered, “No, that’s a new one that we got for him. We were kind of selfish about his toys. We wanted to keep them for ourselves, so we can’t imagine him playing with them.”

In those words, it was evident that his son had touched his life with love. That moment also revealed a glimpse of the depth of God’s love for us. God knows what it means to have a child die. God knows the pain, the heartbeat, the devastation. Yet he endured it all to offer us the gift of eternal life.

The bond between the father and the infant will never be broken. The bond between God the Father and the God the Son. Through the pain, the suffering and the death, there are lessons to be learned, a purpose, and the promise of our lives.

Our power is in the love we share in whatever circumstances we are in. Our power is to be reunited with God, the Father who longs to be with his children.

They’re all part of the gift of life we’ve been given. Embrace the gift of life.

(From this excerpt is an excerpt from John Shaughnessy’s newest book, Then Something Wondrous Happened: Unlikely encounters and unexpected graces in search of a friend. It is available on www.amazon.com.)

Reflection/Laura Kelly Fanucci
The ministry of making room

Our family learned this summer that we are expecting a baby in March—due on the feast of the Annunciation. It is a delightful and joyful thought, to think of welcoming another child.

As God’s work of love progresses, our baby’s presence grows. I have to make room for my expanding waistline with looser shirts and roomier jeans. Soon the bin of maternity clothes will be dragged out from under the bed, since none of my regular clothes fit the way they did a month ago.

Making room for a new member of our family is a long and gradual process. I’m not the only one who has to adapt. Baby’s brothers are facing a demanding shuffle as we think about where another child will sleep.

We’ll pull out the bins of tiny clothes and rearrange closets. My husband will reassess the crib in our bedroom, and we’ll move the furniture again.

But making room for others is a pressing call—for our Church and country, too. The question looms: How can our communities become places of welcome? We follow a Lord who made room at the table for sinners and taught that when we welcome a stranger, we welcome him.

The weeks of this outstanding young man, let us pray for peace in our community and around the world.” Bishop Burns said in the statement.

It’s not often when we see selfless acts of love after a senseless, tragic act have such a powerful impact. But as Catholic Christians, we know God works in mysterious ways.

A reader recently reminded me to write about what she called “the ministry of moving over”—the simple act of scooting into the center of the pew to allow places for young children to sit on the end—and have an easy escape route to leave with a cranky baby or toddler.

I loved her phrase, a powerful reminder that the smallest acts of making room and extending welcome children’s huge difference.

Anyone might have good reason to need a seat on the end of a pew. But if we never shift, never make room for another’s comfort, the result is not the promise of our lives.

Our power is in the love we share in whatever circumstances we are in. Our power is to be reunited with God, the Father who longs to be with his children.

The Criterion Friday, October 11, 2019

John Shaughnessy

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and should be about the information, relevant, well expressed, compassionate, temperate in tone, courteous and civil.

The editors reserve the right to edit the letters based on space limitations, past and present content. Letters must be signed, but for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-3676.

Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
La obra de recobrar la unidad de una Iglesia dividida

Lo que nos une es mucho más grande que lo que nos divide” (Papa San Juan XXIII)

La fecha de publicación de esta columna es el viernes 11 de octubre, la festividad del papa Juan XXIII que también coincide con el aniversario 57 de la inauguración del Concilio Vaticano II en 1962. El 27 de abril de 2014 el papa Francisco canonizó al “buen papa Juan,” como se lo conoce popularmente, junto con el papa Juan Pablo II. Aunque se desempeñó papa Juan “como se lo conoce, Francisco canonizó al “buen papa Juan,” cuando el Concilio Vaticano II inició los cambios que aún hoy afectan la forma en que se practica nuestra fe católica seis décadas después. En 1953, el papa Pío XII nombró a Angelo Roncalli cardenal y lo asignó al patriarcado de Venecia. Tan solo cinco años más tarde, después de la muerte de Pío XII, fue elegido papa. La mayoría (incluidos los cardenales electores) supusieron que el papa de 76 años sería un “cuidador.” Esperaban que mantuviera el orden y que no agitara las aguas hasta que un hombre más joven lo sucediera tras su fallecimiento. Imagínense en la sorpresa cuando el buen papa Juan no se guío por el libreto!

Desde el principio, al elegir el nombre “Juan” y su determinación de escaparate del Vaticano regularmente para realizar visitas pastorales en su diócesis, Roncalli insintió en que iba a tomar sus propias decisiones y a hacer lo que fuera necesario para servir al pueblo de Roma y a la Iglesia universal.

La decisión más importante del papa Juan fue, por supuesto, convocar al Concilio Vaticano II, algo que tomó por sorpresa al mundo entero. En el concilio se iniciaron los cambios que aún hoy afectan la forma en que se practica nuestra fe católica seis décadas más tarde. Nuestra liturgia, catequesis, misiones, concellos, interreligiosos y ecuménicos; así como nuestra interacción con el mundo en general han cambiado desde 1959 cuando el papa Juan XXIII anunció su decisión de convocar al Concilio Vaticano II.

Podríamos argumentar acerca de los esfuerzos satisfactorios y fracasos de la implementación de estos cambios, pero no hay duda de que el Concilio se llevó a cabo gracias a la visión y el liderazgo pastoral del mítico buen papa Juan.

Por muchas razones, el papa san Juan XXIII es una figura importante para nosotros hoy en día, pero una de ellas se destaca, especialmente para nuestra arquidiócesis, para la Iglesia en los Estados Unidos y la Iglesia universal.

“Lo que nos une es mucho más grande que lo que nos divide,” dijo el papa san Juan XXIII. Y todo su ministerio, antes y después de su elección como Papa, se dedicó a unir el mundo entero.

Durante sus años en Bulgaria, Grecia y Turquía, Ángelo Roncalli luchó para entablar relaciones solidas entre los cristianos y los musulmanes. Durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial promovió incansablemente la unidad entre judíos y cristianos, utilizando para ello todos los medios que tenía a su disposición para ayudar a los judíos a escapar de la persecución nazi.

En su encíclica “Pacem in terris” (“Paz en la Tierra”), Juan XXIII también procuró prevenir una guerra nuclear e intentó mejorar las relaciones entre la Unión Soviética y los Estados Unidos.

Por supuesto, la frase “lo que nos une es mucho más grande que lo que nos divide” no significa que todo se valga. El papa Juan sabía que jamás podemos comprometer nuestros principios para mantener una falsa unidad. Aun así, nos exhortaba a esforzarnos por escuchar al otro, a entablar conversaciones respetuosas sobre asuntos importantes y a construir puentes en vez de muros (como dice el papa Francisco).

La paz en la Tierra requiere que todos nos perdonemos, que respetemos mutuamente nuestra dignidad y derechos humanos, y que nos comprometamos con el bien común para todos.

Que la intercesión del buen papa, Juan XXIII, nos una a todos, aquí en el centro el sur de Indiana, en nuestro país y en toda la comunidad internacional.
October 25-27
Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. “We Walk the Faith: From Where We Come—To Where We Go” Men’s Retreat. Conventual Franciscan Father Vince Peterson facilitating. Fri. 6 p.m. through Sunday 10 a.m. Mass, $215 includes four meals and single room for two nights. Information or to register: www.mountsaintfrancis.org/prayer-offerings, 812-923-8817.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5535 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. 3rd Annual “Peace in the Mourning” Retreat. October 28
Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, Retreat Center

Grief Retreat, planned by widows who want others to experience the peace they found in previous retreats, Presentation Sister Connie Kramer, Father James Farrell and Marilyn Hess presenting. Fri. 6:30 p.m.-Sun. 1 p.m., $200 includes overnight accommodations and meals. Scholarships available, contact Cheryl McCreery, 317-765-8101, ext. 610. Information and registration: Klesi Moyer, kmoyer@archindy.org, www.archindy.org/fatima.

October 28
Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, Retreat Center


November 3-17

November 14

November 15
Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, Retreat Center

Dead Man Walking, which was made into a major motion picture in 1995. The day will include breakout sessions addressing the issues that this documentary addresses, and a panel discussion of former inmates on their experiences while incarcerated and how they and their families have volunteered their affects have lived. There is no charge to attend; however, there will be a freewill offering. Lunch will be provided. Registration is requested on or before Sunday, Nov. 11 at 8 a.m. For information and corrections, telephone: 317-765-5855. krcorroll@archindy.org.
Students strike for climate change

On Sept. 27, students of St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis participated in a strike for climate change, chanting “Protect our planet!” as they walked outside their school at 46th and Illinois streets, holding up signs they had created to raise awareness about the issue. St. Thomas science teacher Sandy Hoy said, “The aim of the strike is to get youth involved in trying to influence the communities of our world—in our case, Indianapolis and Indiana—to commit to tougher climate targets and faster transitions to renewable energy to stop climate change.” The student strike culminated several days of activities that included a prayer service, lessons about God’s creation, discussions about the constitutional rights of assembly and free speech, and a presentation by a speaker about climate change. (Photos by John Shaughnessy)

Pope to cardinals: Loving, loyal service requires feeling God’s love

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In a ceremony to create 13 new cardinals, Pope Francis reminded new and old members of the College of Cardinals how much their ministry and service depends on their realizing how much God loves them and has been compassionate with them.

“Unless I feel that I am the object of God’s compassion, I cannot understand his love,” he said on Oct. 5 during the consistory, a prayer service during which he personally welcomed 12 bishops and one priest from 13 countries into the College of Cardinals. There were no new cardinals created from the United States.

A person either feels God’s love or doesn’t, he said, and “if I don’t feel it, how can I share it, bear witness to it, bestow it on others?”

“Am I compassionate toward this or that brother or sister, that bishop, that priest? Or do I constantly tear them down by my attitude of condemnation, of indifference?” he asked, adding that it is a measure of one’s loyalty in ministry. “So many disloyal actions on the part of ecclesiastics are born of the lack of a sense of having been shown compassion, and by the habit of averting one’s gaze, the habit of indifference.”

Pope Francis’ meditation at the ceremony focused on the many ways God has shown his love and concern for his children.

“In fact, he said, “the Lord’s compassion is not an occasional, sporadic emotion, but is steadfast and indeed seems to be the attitude of his heart, in which God’s mercy is made incarnate.”

Jesus is the compassionate redeemer of humanity, the pope said. “He incarnates God’s will to purify men and women afflicted by the scourge of sin. He is ‘the outstretched hand of God,’ who touches our sickly flesh and accomplishes this work by bridging the chasm of separation.”

While God is “drenched with compassion,” Pope Francis said, many times people—even Jesus’ disciples—appear to lack compassion; they make excuses or feel indifferent.

The position or ministry someone has depends on their realizing how much their ministry and service are born of the lack of a sense of having been shown compassion and in the ability to show compassion in turn,” the pope said. “Otherwise, one cannot be loyal.”

The pope asked the new cardinals to pray that the Apostle Peter would intercede on their behalf for the grace “to have a compassionate heart, in order to be witnesses of the one who has looked with favor upon us, who chose us, consecrated and sent us to bring to everyone his Gospel of salvation.”

Choosing prelates from 13 different nations—eight of whom belong to religious orders—the pope had said he wanted to signal “the missionary vocation of the Church that continues to proclaim the merciful love of God to all men and women of the Earth.” The Oct. 5 ceremony fell during the extraordinary Missionary Month.

The consistory brought to 225 the total number of cardinals in the world; 128 cardinals are under the age of 80 and eligible to vote in a conclave.

After the new cardinals professed their faith by reciting the Creed and formally swore fidelity and obedience to the pope and his successors, they approached Pope Francis by one to receive their biretta, their cardinal’s ring and the assignment of a “titular” church in Rome, which makes them part of the Roman clergy.

Speaking on behalf of the new cardinals, Cardinal Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, told the pope, “It’s a bit a consistency of religious!”

The Church is a missionary Church that wants to bring God’s mercy and good news everywhere, but especially to those who are suffering because of violence or injustice, Cardinal Ayuso said.

The new cardinals, he said, were praying to have more compassionate hearts, to heal people’s wounds and promote a culture of inclusion and dialogue.
In an article in the Dec. 7, 2018, issue of The Criterion, Barbara Hinkle commented on a nursing home ministry she created in March of that year.

You gain a reward from the experience, maybe even more than the person you’re helping,” said the member of St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville.

Hinkle now has indeed received a reward—a special one. For creating the Compassionate Visitors and Vigil Keepers Group, she received the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity’s 2019 Archbishop Edward I. O’Meara Respect Life Award at the Respect Life Mass at St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 6. Standing before dispersing to their appointed posts, Deacon Michael Braun, archdiocesan director of the secretariat for human life and dignity, called the compassion and commitment of the volunteers “a visual statement of solidarity by the Christian community that abortion kills.”

Hinkle acknowledged the group—and the award—would not be possible without volunteers and the support of her husband Larry, her parish’s pastor Father Dennis Bougher and “so many others.”

To have her role in founding Compassionate Visitors and Vigil Keepers Group honored on Respect Life Sunday “means a lot,” she said.

“That’s exactly what we’re doing—we’re respecting the life and dignity of the elderly and people who have often been forgotten, alone and lonely.”

Hinkle continued: “They’re just as important as anyone else. The ones who are just waiting their day to die, it’s important not to forget them and to remember them.”

After all, one never knows the difference a little time and respect can make. As Hinkle noted in the 2018 Criterion article: “We may be the only form of God’s love they ever know. They might know Jesus through us.”

Respect Life award winners say ‘it’s important not to forget’ the lonely, dying

By Natalie Hoefer

On Sept. 25, 2018, high school Jameson Sally Jones and Margaret “Meggie” McPherson walked away from Right to Life in Indianapolis’ Celebrate Life Dinner-inspired—they felt in their hearts the need to start a pro-life club at their public high school, North Central in Indianapolis.

On Oct. 6, the two young Catholic student volunteers walked away at St. Peter and Paul Cathedral grateful—they felt in their hearts the 2019 Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award such recognition “a great honor,” noting that “all the backlash we got was worth it.”

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Hinkle now has indeed received a reward—a special one. For creating the Compassionate Visitors and Vigil Keepers Group, she received the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity’s 2019 Archbishop Edward I. O’Meara Respect Life Award at the Respect Life Mass at St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 6. Standing before dispersing to their appointed posts, Deacon Michael Braun, archdiocesan director of the secretariat for human life and dignity, called the compassion and commitment of the volunteers “a visual statement of solidarity by the Christian community that abortion kills.”

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“That’s exactly what we’re doing—we’re respecting the life and dignity of the elderly and people who have often been forgotten, alone and lonely.”

Hinkle continued: “They’re just as important as anyone else. The ones who are just waiting their day to die, it’s important not to forget them and to remember them.”

After all, one never knows the difference a little time and respect can make. As Hinkle noted in the 2018 Criterion article: “We may be the only form of God’s love they ever know. They might know Jesus through us.”

Respect Life award winners say ‘it’s important not to forget’ the lonely, dying

By Natalie Hoefer

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Providence Food Pantry celebrates 25 years of service

By Shayna Tews

Sister Joseph said when the campus of the basement of the former St. Leonard of community from its humble dwelling in West Terre Haute, recalled Sister Joseph. of women from a few local churches was created by the late Providence Sister open once a week on Thursday mornings, 2018, we fed 6,000 families.” Four years later when the Richer's decided to sell the building, Sister Joseph said the food pantry was the first to get the news. “We were offered the building for $30,000, and they only offered it to us,” she recalled. “Oh, that’s wonderful! But I don’t have any money.” Assistance came once again, this time through The Helping Hands thrift store, a non-profit in West Terre Haute that raises money for the food pantry and other local organizations. The group originally offered to give the food pantry $10,000 toward the purchase of the building.

“The next day, I got a call from the whole board,” said Sister Joseph. “A member had prayed that morning and felt called for Helping Hands to give all $30,000!”

The first thing the Providence Food Pantry bought for its newly owned building was a walk-in freezer and refrigerator, but this required the raising of more funds.

“I put a statue of St. Joseph where we were going to put the fridge,” explained Sister Joseph. “A couple came in and saw it and gave us $10,000. The Young Men’s Club of West Terre Haute gave $3,000.” It wasn’t long, she said, before the $25,000 needed to pay for the refrigerator/freezer was raised.

John Etling, agency director for Catholic Charities Terre Haute, was on hand to help celebrate the quarter-century anniversary of the Providence Food Pantry.

“I think the people that show up here—the faces, the hands, the feet—they serve as an instrument to do [God’s] work,” he said. “This is just a wonderful example of what a community can do so that’s what their hearts direct them to do, and I think God’s right here with us right now!”

Even age doesn’t stop volunteers from being among the poor. If we’re really looking for him, then that’s where we’ll go to find him.”

Sister Joseph also sees a divine hand in the work of the organization.

“God works here,” she said. “It’s ‘Providence Pantry,’ but it’s the Providence of God, not the Sisters of Providence. He keeps giving and giving and giving.”

(Providence Food Pantry, located at 701 W. National Ave., in West Terre Haute, is open on Thursdays from 8-10:30 a.m. Clients must have residence in West Terre Haute and may visit the food pantry once a month. For questions or information on volunteering or donating, call 812-535-2544. Reporter Natalie Hoefler contributed to this story.)

During an open house at Providence Food Pantry in West Terre Haute on Sept. 22, volunteers Randi Everett, left, Grace Puller and Annie Williams smile behind boxes of items offered by the ministry. The open house was held to mark Providence Food Pantry’s 25th anniversary. (Submitted photos by Shayna Tews)
Spread Gospel of life through pro-life actions every day

By Elizabeth R. Kirk

In October, the Church in the U.S. observes Respect Life Month, under the theme, “Christ Our Hope: In Every Season of Life.”

This theme recognizes that while the gift of life is under attack in every season—from conception through the end of life—it is always a blessing at each and every stage, and that Jesus Christ, as the source of our salvation and hope, gives us the strength to persevere in suffering and crisis.

This past year, the subject of abortion has been increasingly in the news. New York and Illinois passed expansive abortion rights laws, sweeping away restrictions on abortion and allowing abortions to take place into the third trimester.

On the other hand, numerous states, including Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio, passed laws prohibiting abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected, and Alabama banned abortions altogether—except in cases of a serious health risk to the mother.

The Kansas Supreme Court found a “natural right” to abortion in its 1859 state constitution, while voters in Louisiana will soon decide whether to amend their state constitution to declare that it contains no right to abortion.

Depending upon where we live, it is easy to become despondent about our ability to impact the culture because the law enshrines abortion as a fundamental right. But whatever the legal landscape, these controversies should remind people of faith to be mindful of the call that each of us has been given to build up the culture of life by serving those around us—in our families, our neighborhoods and our communities.

As St. John Paul II said in his 1995 encyclical letter “Evangelium Vitae” (“The Gospel of Life”), “Everyone has an obligation to be at the service of life” (#79). Of course, some are called to leadership in the important fields of legislation or public policy, but most are called to be simple workers in the vineyard and to have a small sphere of influence—a small one that has a mighty impact on the dignity of human lives.

There are countless concrete ways to do this. St. John Paul II said, “Our support and promotion of human life must be accomplished through the service of charity, which finds expression in personal witness, various forms of volunteer work, social activity and political commitment” (#87). Indeed, he highlighted in a special way mothers who “devote themselves to their own family without reserve” (#86). The quiet, unsung sacrifice of an ordinary mother on behalf of her children is a countercultural witness to the dignity of each human life.

As Mary Hallan FioRito, an attorney, national pro-life speaker, and the Cardinal Francis George Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, exclaimed: “Sometimes people think they need to work for a pro-life organization to ‘do something.’ But there is so much that every single one of us can contribute. It can be as simple as sharing a story on Facebook or Twitter about perinatal hospice, or about a micro-preemie beating the odds. No matter what your station in life is, ask God to help you to know what it is you can do to build a culture of life in your community. You are more influential than you realize.”

Holly Taylor Coolman, an assistant professor of theology at Providence College, encourages people to consider creative ways of being pro-life within their communities. “Consider foster parenting or becoming a mentor to a local foster child. Send a word of encouragement to the parents of a special-needs kid. Drop a flower on the doorstep of a single mom,” she said. Coolman also recommends supporting organizations dedicated to helping parents in crisis, especially those that might be overlooked, such as Parenting Inside Out, a highly successful program that assists incarcerated parents.

The theme of Respect Life Month this year challenges each of us to ask whether we are doing all that we can to welcome and protect human life, in every season of life.

It is through small, local efforts in our pregnancy resource centers, in our nursing homes and hospice centers and at every point in between that we help one another to bear the burdens of life, that we make it possible—and even appealing—to welcome every human life, and that we create the conditions for better laws and policies.

(Elizabeth R. Kirk is director of the Institute for Faith and Culture at the St. Lawrence Catholic Center at the University of Kansas. She serves as a consultant to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Pro-Life Activities, and is associate scholar at the Charlotte Lozier Institute.)

A woman sits at the bedside of her mother at de Greiff Hospice house in St. Louis. St. John Paul II said in his 1995 encyclical letter “Evangelium Vitae” (“The Gospel of Life”) that “everyone has an obligation to be at the service of life” (#79). (CNS photo/Law Johnston, St. Louis Review).
It's interesting how life comes full circle. I sat in the gymnasium at my son’s school during the senior awards ceremony. Toward the culmination of the program, they introduced the highest spiritual award, named for the school’s namesake, St. John xxiii. It was claimed that the following year he planned to attend Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis to discern a priestly vocation. As Liam made his way to the stage, the entire senior class spontaneously rose to their feet, clapping and giving him a standing ovation. At the time, I did not know Liam. But I was moved by the support of his peers. I was moved by the support of his peers. I was moved by the support of his peers.

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram
Compassion at the heart of senior's most important life lesson

As soon as they arrived at the address, two elderly ladies came out to greet them. They seemed to be waiting for her. Charlie took Grace's suitcase while she was seated in a wheelchair. She asked him if she could be picked up. He told her that he would be driving without any purpose, just trying to go somewhere I way I would want my mother treated.

She said, "You are a very decent person. I'm Grace." When they got into the cab, Grace told him the address and asked Charlie to drive through downtown. He told her it was not the shortest way, but she said she was in no rush. "I am on my way to a hospice," she told him, "You can drop me off at my front door." Charlie noticed tears in her eyes.

She quietly switched off the meter and asked what kind of work she was doing. "I have a left leg," she said. While they drove through the city, Grace showed him places that were important to her, the building where she worked as an elevator operator, the house where she and her husband lived just after they married, the warehouse which used to be a ballroom, where she went dancing as a young girl. After two hours of driving, Grace quietly said, "I’m tired. let’s go now."
The Sunday Readings
Sunday, October 13, 2019

- Luke 17:11-19
- 2 Timothy 2:8-13
- 2 Kings 5:14-17

The Second Book of Kings furnishes the first reading for Mass this weekend. Once the two books of Kings were a single volume, but at some time, editors divided the volume into two parts. These writings are among what Scripture scholars have categorized as the Old Testament’s “historical books.” While they focus on the careers of the early kings of Israel, as the name implies, none of the Old Testament is primarily about secular history in and of itself

Instead, the Old Testament books all are concerned with religion and, more precisely, with the relationship between God and all the Hebrew people. In the view of the ancients, the most important question in life was how to be faithful to God. Nothing else mattered.

Therefore, while the kings are prominent in these books, religious figures very much are in evidence.

This weekend’s reading is an example. The central personality is not a king, but rather a servant of God, an ENTRY INTO THE LAND OF GOD’S PROMISED

HEBRAIC LAND, OVERFLOWING WITH LIFE, AND THE

IMPORTANT BORDER BETWEEN THE PROMISED

PLACE OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE. Crossing the Jordan symbolized, and

Thus, this Sunday, the reading from 2 Kings includes the story of Elisha the prophet, who was called to succeed Elijah as leader of the chosen people. Elisha, who succeeded Elijah, was a prophet who lived about 840–760 BCE, and was one of the twelve minor prophets.

Leprosy was seen, for instance, as a punishment for sin. Disease, ancient Jews saw a curse from God in leprosy, assuming that, somehow, the leper had disobeyed God. Fearing contagion, communities forced lepers to live apart. Lepers were not allowed any communication whatsoever with those “clean” of leprosy. Lepers lived in total isolation, in starvation and to the point of starvation.

This reading also has an ethnic component. Jews scorned Samaritans. Samaritans long ago had tolerated pagan worshipers. They had intermarried with the pagans, producing offspring not pure Hebrew, thereby blurring the identity of the chosen people. Jews thought that Samaritans were the worst of the worst, incapable of anything good.

Amid all this, Jesus reaches out to lepers, heals and forgives. His actions were works of God.

REFLECTION
Presumably nine of the lepers cured in this story from St. Luke’s Gospel, as Jews, saw themselves as being entitled to God’s mercy and forgiveness.

The tenth leper, a Samaritan, was different. The Jews, at least, would have thought that his ancestors forfeited this claim to divine mercy. He had to live amid this perception. He was hopeless.

Nevertheless, the tenth leper believed in God, seeing that his mercy had come to him. He gave thanks to Jesus, whom the leper saw as the bearer of divine mercy.

By sinning we all have deserted God. We are all lepers and Samaritans in the biblical context. With unending love, God cures us of the weakening effects of our sin, restores us to life and we comes into the fold of those loyal to God.

We can repair our relationship with God with the help of his grace and mercy. God always forgives.

†

Question Corner

Fr. Kennedy Doyle

General conditions must be met before the anointing of the sick can be administered

Q Recently received the sacrament of the sick prior to a cardioversion, which involves an electric shock to the heart. After the anointing, my wife mentioned to our pastor that we might be asking for the sacrament again, prior to some planned knee surgery. If we understood correctly, our pastor said that he only administered the sacrament for “serious” medical conditions—leading us to believe that we should not ask for it for “routine” knee surgery. My wife and I are both in our 70s.

Are we aware of the consent that must be signed at the hospital prior to surgery, and we believe this document is based on the possible effects of the anesthesia. Considering this, and the fact of our ages, are we wrong to ask to be anointed prior to such knee surgery? Who makes the call on whether we should have the sacrament—we or our pastor? (Virginia)

A Both the Code of Canon Law and the Catechism of the Catholic Church offer some guidance as to when the sacrament of the sick can be administered. Canon 1004 I says that it is given “to a member of the faithful who, having reached the use of reason, begins to be in danger due to sickness or old age.” The pastoral judgment of the priest determines when a person is eligible, but my experience has been that most priests tend to be permissive, especially when the person has asked for the sacrament.

A person’s own situation, I find your argument about anesthesia to be persuasive. In looking at parish websites with regard to this sacrament, I found, for example, that St. Mary Parish in Sandusky, Ohio, says that “you may ask to receive the sacrament prior to surgery that you are to undergo surgery under general anesthesia.”

Q In my new diocese, parishes do not seem to offer the precious blood at Communion time. Do certain dioceses restrict that as a privilege, when in fact it is a command from Jesus? Christ opted to offer the two species to us separately: “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.” (John 6:53-54, NABRE) (New Jersey)

A For the first 11 centuries of the Church’s history, the Eucharist was customarily received by the faithful under the forms of both bread and wine, but then that custom fell out of practice, in part because Catholics began to receive holy Communion less frequently.

In 1963, the bishops of the Second Vatican Council restored the option for the faithful to receive also from the chalice. The “Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds” issued by the U.S. Catholic bishops in 2002, leave to local bishops the determination as to the occasions on which both species are to be made available, and in practice, most bishops have ceded that judgment to local pastors.

However, there is a clear preference expressed—both in those norms and in the “General Instruction of the Roman Missal,” which provides the Church’s norms for the celebration of the Mass, for the availability of both species.

The general instruction says: “Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it takes place under both kinds” (281).

Both the general instruction and the norms do make it clear that distribution under both species is not mandatory, and that Christ is fully present when either the consecrated bread or wine is received alone.

My own experience, in celebrating Mass at many churches throughout the U.S., is that most parishes make both species available at most liturgies.

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

Pro-life leaders built a petition in front of the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington on Oct. 1 with more than 250,000 signatures calling for the court to overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that legalized abortion across the country. ( CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)


CISLAK, Peter J., 88, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Benton, Betty of Pier Angela and Cephas Bandy, Frances M. Coulter, Carol R.

CoULTER, Carol R., 61, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Sept. 25. Mother of Juanita Cline, Margaret Kang, Lydia Sheckrell, Eric, Kevin and Steve Coulter. Grandmother of seven.


Miller, Sylvia (Ellingsworth), 65, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, Aug. 6.

Morehead, Kristy Pavlata, Badgley, Jamie Kelly, Jill Brook, Gabriel, and Byron Ratcliff, Jr. Son of Harrison Payne and Kathryn Golden.

Of Providence Sister Eugene Francis Keaveney served in education, Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries

Pro-life leaders built a petition in front of the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington on Oct. 1 with more than 250,000 signatures calling for the court to overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that legalized abortion across the country. ( CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)


Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Oct. 2 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

During her 74 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Francis Eugene Keaveney served for 45 years as an educator in Catholic schools in Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. In 1993, she retired from education and began ministry at Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries in Georgetown in the New Albany Archdiocese until returning to the motherhouse in 2005. Beginning in 2011, she dedicated herself entirely to prayer.

In the archdiocese, she served at St. John Paul II School in Sellersburg from 1957-59, Providence Retirement Home in New Albany from 1959-93, and at Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries in Georgetown from 1994-2005. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876.

Judge temporarily stops ‘heartbeat’ law from taking effect in Georgia in January

ATLANTA (CNS)—A U.S. District Court judge on Oct. 1 temporarily blocked a Georgia law that would ban abortions once a fetal heartbeat is detected, which is around six weeks.

Known as the “heartbeat bill,” it was signed into law on May 7 by Georgia Republican Gov. Brian Kemp and was to take effect on Jan. 1, 2020. The ruling by Judge Steve C. Jones will put it on hold while a lawsuit against it is argued in court.

The suit was filed by Planned Parenthood Southeast, Sisters for Life and the Georgia Republican Party. It seeks to have the law declared unconstitutional.

In response to Jones’ ruling, a spokesman for Kemp was quoted by USA Today as saying, “Despite today’s outcome, we remain confident in our position. We will continue to fight for the unborn and work to ensure that all Georgians have the opportunity to live, grow and prosper.”

The measure makes exceptions to save the life of the mother and in the case of rape and incest if a police report is filed. It also makes exceptions to allow abortions when a fetus has serious medical issues.

When it was passed, Republican Rep. Ed Setzer, the bill’s author, said the legislation was one of “common sense” to “balance the difficult circumstances women find themselves in with the basic right to life of a child.”

In response, Democratic Sen. Jen Jordan said, “There’s nothing balanced about it. It’s an all-out abortion ban.”

The law also prohibits doctors from performing an abortion in the event of a fetal heartbeat, and added that she was worried the new law would push obstetricians away from practicing in Georgia.

Current state law allows abortions up to the 20th week of pregnancy.

Kemp’s signing of the “heartbeat” bill came after weeks of protests and amid outcry for legal action against it.

“We will not back down. We will always continue to fight for life,” the governor said at the time about expected legal challenges to the new law.

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

• Ethics Point
  • Call the Ethics Hotline, Online Reporting
    www.archindyfindabuseellipses@pointellipsc.com or 888-395-6810
  • Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator
    361-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548 carlilhill@archindy.org

Pro-life leaders built a petition in front of the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington on Oct. 1 with more than 250,000 signatures calling for the court to overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that legalized abortion across the country. ( CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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suffering, pain and desire for resources and magnifying the ongoing "drip" of sensational headlines, draining Pope Francis. "Catholic civil war" over the papacy of the hierarchy. Catholicism even though just a fraction of Christ over the centuries, Steinfels said. Statistics cannot be ignored. The "excruciating" devastation caused by a sex abuse cases, declining by almost a precipitous drop in the number of clergy who continues a long career writing for the Trust and Compassionate Care.

The sex abuse scandal will always remain "unimaginable" to anyone who has seen the "tsunami" of new cases, and "a living witness" to the "excruciating" devastation caused by a sex abuse cases, declining by almost a precipitous drop in the number of clergy who continues a long career writing for the Trust and Compassionate Care.

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Transform the world through your witness, archbishop tells leaders

By John Shaughnessy

Drawing from the wisdom of Pope Francis, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson shared a succinct lesson about faith and discipleship during a Mass that celebrated the leaders who serve on the front lines of religious education in the archdiocese.

“The Holy Father points out that faith always remains something of a crisis. It is said in his homily during the ‘Co-workers in the Vineyard’ Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Sept. 25.

The archbishop then quoted this reminder from the pope, “We need to remember that all religious teaching ultimately has to be reflected in the teacher’s way of life which awakens the heart by its nearness, love and witness.”

Focusing on the congregation filled with teachers, principals, school presidents, youth ministers, parish catechetical leaders and other pastoral leaders, Archbishop Thompson emphasized that “it is what it means for us to go out in the vineyards as co-workers—not only with other co-workers, but remembering always that we are being given the privilege of participating in the life and mission of Christ.”

That participation requires Catholics to share the life and mission of Christ with others, the archbishop continued.

“This missionary impulsion of discipleship is evident in our Gospel reading as Jesus sends out the 12 [Apostles],” the pope said. “They are to take nothing with them but their faith and the power of God burning into their witness to bring about release, healing and restoration of hope.”

“We who carry on those teachings—’All that Jesus has given us through the Apostles—we are sent to proclaim that Good News as well.’”

The archbishop also stressed that followers of Christ should never take for granted the divine mercy that has saved us from ourselves—from the lasting effects of sin and death.

“We gather here as co-workers in the vineyard with grateful hearts for the mercy of God that has been shown us. You are sent,” he said.

“Drawing grace and inspiration from the celebration of word and sacrament, may the missionary impulse of discipleship fuel our efforts in working together and transforming the world as we go about building the kingdom of God. This is the witness of our faith, word and deed.”

Near the end of the Mass, Archbishop Thompson took part in an awards ceremony honoring three leaders in the archdiocese who exemplify the “witness of our faith, word and deed.” Their stories are shared below.

Award winner’s ‘true gift’ is leading people to God

By John Shaughnessy

Marianne Hawkins has this way of always giving credit to others.

She praises “all the great volunteers” who help with the faith formation of the children, youths and adults in her parish, downplaying that she coordinates all these programs.

She marvels at the people who want to enter into full communion of the Church through the parish’s Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program, sidestepping the fact that she leads them toward that faith.

She also glows about the parish youths who lead fund raisers so they can attend the National Catholic Youth Conference. “I gave them an idea and they ran with it,” Hawkins, coordinator of faith formation at St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville, said.

Yet, it seems, everyone in the parish says Hawkins’ true gift is helping lead people to a closer relationship with God. Indeed, a wealth of tributes from parishioners of all ages led to her being selected for this year’s Excellency in Catechesis Award from the archdiocese.

“I’m walking on a cloud,” the mother of five and the grandmother of eight says about the honor—and then she praises the teamwork of the parish staff.

The award is especially meaningful to her because she views her Catholic faith as the root of her life, saying, “I have to have my Church to grow.”

My oldest son, Kaleb, was getting to be middle-school aged,” recalls Robinson about that turning point 13 years ago. “I hadn’t done much with teenagers, and that age was a little scary to me. I thought, ‘My son is getting there soon, and I really need to get involved with them.’”

So the mother of three signed up to be a small group leader with the youth ministry program at St. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, and she discovered something wonderful about the youths and herself.

“I loved it in the ‘60s and ‘70s,” she said. “It was my gift then to work with youth and to share that with youth.”

So the mother of three signed up to be a small group leader with the youth ministry program at St. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, and she discovered something wonderful about the youths and herself.

“I loved it in the ‘60s and ‘70s,” she said. “It was my gift then to work with youth and to share that with youth.”

That close bond with youth who want to grow in their faith has continued ever since for Robinson—a quality that has led the now-youth minister of her parish to be honored as the archdiocese’s Youth Ministry Service Leader of the Year.

She insists the true honor for her is sharing a faith journey with the youths.

“It’s a wonderful, mutual growing. I see the beauty of God in young people,” she says.

“Working with young people keeps me young. It keeps my mind open to the presence of God. I think I have a gift for a ministry of presence. That’s really important, I tell them. I’ll say, ‘You’re the ones we’ll share together.’

“The whole idea of the ministry of presence isn’t just with the youths. It’s with Christ as well. And it’s more in touch with the Church’s teachings, and I can share that with young people. The more that my faith is alive, they can tap into that faith and seek it out themselves. It’s important for me to stay steeped in Christ.”

Her connection with the youths shows every Tuesday when as many as 15 of them join her at a coffee shop at 6 a.m. on a school morning to talk about their faith.

“We want to dialogue, and they want to grow. They walk with each other. It’s a beautiful thing.”

Any fear she had has long ago been replaced by complete joy.

“It was totally the Holy Spirit that brought me to this. I absolutely love it. I’m 59, and I still have a passion. I still feel I can impress them to be the Church of today, not just the Church of the future.”

Being present helps youth minister bond with teens

By John Shaughnessy

One of the greatest joys of Monica Robinson’s life has come by facing one of her fears.

“My oldest son, Kaleb, was getting to be middle-school aged,” recalls Robinson about that turning point 13 years ago. “I hadn’t done much with teenagers, and that age was a little scary to me. I thought, ‘My son is getting there soon, and I really need to get involved with them.’”

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Approach of faith, joy and care guides principal

By John Shaughnessy

Sarah Jean Watson’s flair for fun shows in the wacky costumes that the principal wears on special days at her school.

Her appreciation for her school’s teachers is defined by the time she told them there would be a staff meeting, and instead she took them on a field trip to an apple orchard.

Then there is the way she lives her Catholic faith so fully that it has a dramatic impact on the community of St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis.

Because of her approach to life, students, parents and staff members at the school have entered into full communion of the Catholic Church.

“We set as our goal as Catholic schools to get everyone to heaven and make saints of our students and colleagues,” Watson says. “That’s how I try to approach everything.”

Her approach of faith, joy and care for others led her to be honored earlier this year with the 2019 “Lead, Learn, Pray” award from the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). Chosen from more than 150,000 Catholic teachers and administrators across the nation, Watson earned the award for her dedication and commitment to excellence in Catholic education.

She also received recognition for that honor during the archdiocese’s “Co-workers in the Vineyard” awards ceremony at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Sept. 25, a ceremony that celebrated the contributions of people who work in the areas of Catholic education, catechesis and youth ministry.

Watson stresses inclusion at St. Lawrence, a school where the student body is 55 percent African-American, 25 percent Hispanic, 15 percent white and 5 percent multi-racial. She also leads one of the five pilot schools in the archdiocese’s Latino Outreach Initiative. And she is an advocate for families who face deportation in the Indianapolis area.

“Those who are new to our country or who are first or second generation, they need Catholic schools,” she says. “We are truly being ‘Church’ when we reach out to the community around us.”

Watson is always reaching out to her students, starting with the announcement she shares every day with them: “If no one yet has told you today, I love you very much.”

“I believe Catholic education is the best education we can provide to children holistically,” Watson says. “It’s part of who I am. It’s what I believe in.”