



The

Criterion

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Journey of faith

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson to lead pilgrimage to eastern Canadian shrines, page 3.

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The Spirit of Christmas

This Nativity set, one of the roughly 1,000 crèches and Nativity-related items Larry and Amy Higdon have collected, is included among the couple's display in their barn in Fairland. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Holy Trinity couple find comfort, joy in collecting, displaying 1,000 crèches

By Natalie Hoefler

FAIRLAND—Larry Higdon is near 70. His wife Amy is in her mid-50s. But catch the Fairland couple in their utility barn this time of year and you'll find two young souls walking among rows of treasures like two kids in a candy store.

"My favorite is the one my dad built in 1963," Larry says, while Amy's favorite "is a little one from Italy."

They're talking about Nativity sets. More precisely, they're talking about their favorites among the roughly 1,000

crèches and Nativity-related items they've collected in the last three years.

The mind reels a bit upon first seeing the display. In what serves as a utility barn the rest of the year, from mid-November through early January long tables and shelves laden with Nativities create a bedazzling sight several layers high and several rows deep.

Wood, porcelain, metal, plastic. Traditional, kitschy, simple, elaborate. Parts that move or spin or light up. Wall hangings, ornaments, snow globes. All in some way memorializing Mary,

Joseph and the infant Jesus upon his birth in Bethlehem.

"Sometimes I come in here and just sit, it's so peaceful," says Larry.

The members of Holy Trinity Parish in Edinburgh sit in a cozy nook at the back of the barn and tell the tale of how their collection began, and the comfort and joy it has brought them and all who come to see it.

'I felt bad leaving them there'

"When I was growing up, I used

See CRÈCHES, page 10

First woman to lead ICC brings wealth of experience to public arena

By Victoria Arthur

Angela Espada knows how to connect with people.

Her friend and former dean of Loyola New Orleans Law School, Maria Pabón, is one of many who can attest to that. In 2002,



Angela Espada

Espada was serving as assistant dean of admissions at Indiana University's McKinney School of Law when Pabón was hired for a faculty position there. Unexpectedly, Pabón received a call while she was in Indianapolis to search for a house. It was Espada, extending

an invitation to a woman she had never even met.

"Angela builds community," Pabón said. "That's who she is. She is aware of the humanity of us all."

Espada will use these attributes in her new role as the executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), which will become effective on Jan. 1, 2020. Since her Oct. 7 appointment as incoming executive director, Glenn Tebbe, the ICC's executive director for the past 16 years, has been acclimating Espada to the role. Tebbe will continue to work closely with Espada during the next session of the Indiana General Assembly before his anticipated retirement in late spring of 2020.

The ICC serves as the official public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana, requiring its leader to articulate the Church's position on key issues and speak for the bishops of the five dioceses around the state. Espada will be the first woman at the helm of the ICC since its inception in 1966, and the first woman of color to hold a Catholic conference directorship nationwide.

"The executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference is a unique position requiring a variety of skills and exceptional

See ICC, page 8

Pope asks Catholics to set up Nativity scenes as a reminder of 'God's tender love' for us

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A Nativity scene is a simple reminder of something astonishing: God became human to reveal the greatness of his love "by smiling and opening his arms to all," Pope Francis said in a letter on the meaning and importance of setting up Christmas crèches.

"Wherever it is, and whatever form it takes, the Christmas crèche speaks to us of the love of God, the God who became a child in order to make us know how close he is to every man, woman and child, regardless of their condition," the pope wrote in his apostolic letter, "Admirabile Signum" ("Enchanting Image").

Pope Francis signed the short letter on Dec. 1, the first Sunday of Advent, during an afternoon visit to Greccio, Italy, where

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Pope Francis prays during a visit to the Nativity scene of Greccio, Italy, on Dec. 1. The first Nativity scene was assembled in Greccio by St. Francis of Assisi in 1223. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)



Franciscan Father Rami Asakrieh holds a reliquary containing what is believed to be a small fragment of Jesus' crib on Dec. 1, in the Franciscan Church of St. Catherine, which is adjacent to the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, West Bank. Pope Francis gave the relic fragment to the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, which oversees the main churches and shrines associated with the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. (CNS photo/Debbie Hill)

Pope returns part of relic of Jesus' manger to Holy Land

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As Advent approached, Pope Francis gave a small fragment of Jesus' manger back to Catholics in the Holy Land.

In Bethlehem, West Bank, Franciscan Father Rami Asakrieh of St. Catherine Parish welcomed the relic's return and called it "a great blessing."

"This is more blessings for this place," he said. "You can't imagine the great joy to have this blessing."

On Nov. 22, experts from the Vatican Museums extracted a small fragment from the relic of what has been venerated as Jesus' manger. The relic, given to the Vatican in the seventh century, has been kept in a chapel under the main altar of St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome.

Pope Francis gave the relic fragment to the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, which oversees the main churches and shrines associated with the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The relic arrived in Jerusalem on Nov. 29 and was present during a Mass celebrated by the apostolic nuncio, Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, in the chapel of Our Lady of Peace at the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem.

After the Mass and time for people to venerate the relic, the Franciscan friars carried it in procession to the Church of St. Saviour, where they prayer Vespers. The relic was transferred to Bethlehem on Nov. 30 to be in place for the beginning of Advent on Dec. 1.

"May the return to Bethlehem of this piece of holy wood arouse in us the profound desire to be bearers of God. Now it is our hearts that are a manger: the holy crib of God made man," said Archbishop Girelli, apostolic nuncio to Israel and Cyprus and apostolic delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine, at the handing-over ceremony.

Reading a letter sent by Cardinal Stanislaw Rytko, archpriest of the Basilica of St. Mary Major, Archbishop Girelli said, "Pope Francis accompanies this gift with his blessing and with the fervid wish that the veneration of this illustrious relic can open the hearts of many men and women, adults and youngsters, the elderly and children, to receive with a renewed

fervor of faith and love the mystery that changed the course of history. The Holy Father wishes, in particular, that the message of peace announced by the angels on the night of Christmas to the men loved by God, which for 2,000 years has rung out from Bethlehem, brings the gift of peace and reconciliation which our world needs more and more."

Franciscan Father Francesco Patton, custos of the Holy Land, said the relic would be used to "rekindle faith in Jesus between the different Christian communities of the Holy Land."

Local Catholics in Bethlehem had the opportunity to venerate the relic at Mass at St. Catherine's on Dec. 1 before the relic was put away until a proper location and protocol for it can be arranged.

Meanwhile, as Christmas approaches, the opening hours of the Church of the Nativity adjacent to St. Catherine have been extended by three hours to 8 p.m. to accommodate the influx of pilgrims who sometimes wait up to four hours to go down to the grotto where, according to Christian tradition, Jesus was born.

On the first day of Advent, the wait was only about one hour.

"We are going to wait as long as it takes to go in," said David Williams, 67, of Texas as he waited in line with his tour group and a local guide. "It is very exciting. This is what you read, and when you read it again after having been here there will be new insight."

Local guide Jaber Saadeh, said that as a Christian he was happy to see the large number of pilgrims coming to Bethlehem.

"I feel so proud and happy to welcome them. We are a peaceful country," he said.

Coming out from the grotto, Claudia Haita, 44, of Romania, said the wait had not been an issue. Having the opportunity to visit the grotto and say a prayer there had been "good for my soul as a Christian" and strengthened her faith, she said.

Another pilgrim who identified herself only as Maria said she had been overwhelmed by the experience.

"I had an overwhelming feeling of tears of joy, but also a feeling of sadness because of the hurting of humanity, of the suffering. It is time to let that go," she said. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

December 7 – 24, 2019

<p>December 7–19 "Ad limina" visit to meet with the pope and other Vatican officials, Vatican City</p> <p>December 22 – 11 a.m. Mass, installation of pastor and dedication of renovated church at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Church, Indianapolis</p>	<p>December 24 – 10 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p><i>(Schedule subject to change.)</i></p>
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Evangelizers are like angels, bringing good news to the world, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A thirst for God and for his true and undying love is rooted in the heart of every human being, Pope Francis said.

So, in order to evangelize, all it takes is someone who can help revive that longing and be a messenger—an angel—of hope, bringing the good news of Christ, he said on Nov. 30.

The pope spoke to bishops, religious and laypeople taking part in an international meeting at the Vatican on Nov. 28-30. Sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, the meeting discussed the pope's apostolic exhortation, "*Evangelii Gaudium*" ("The Joy of the Gospel").

People long for God and his love, and so they need angels "in flesh and blood who draw near to dry tears, to say in Jesus' name, 'Do not be afraid,'" the pope said.

"Evangelizers are like angels, like guardian angels, messengers of good who do not deliver ready-made answers, but share life's questions" and know "the God of love" is needed to live, he said.



Pope Francis speaks during an audience with participants in a meeting sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, at the Vatican on Nov. 30. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

"And if, with this love of his, we were able to look into the hearts of people who, because of the indifference we breathe and the consumerism that flattens us, often pass before us as if nothing were wrong," the pope said, "we would be able to see the need" for God, their search for everlasting love and their questions about the meaning of life, about pain, betrayal and loneliness.

"Faced with such concerns," he said, "prescriptions and edicts are not enough; we need to walk together, become travel companions."

"In fact, people who evangelize can never forget to always be on the move, seeking together with others," the pope said. "They cannot leave anyone behind, they cannot be allowed to keep at a distance those who are limping, they cannot shut themselves up within their little group of comfortable relationships."

Those who proclaim God's word, "know no enemies, only traveling companions" because the quest for God is common to everyone, so it must be shared and never be denied to anyone, he said.

The pope told his audience they should not be held back by "the fear of making mistakes or the fear of following new paths," and they should not be saddened by difficulties, misunderstandings or gossip.

"Let us not be infected by the defeatism according to which everything goes wrong," he said.

In order to hold fast to "the Gospel's enthusiasm," the pope told them, call on the Holy Spirit, who is the spirit of joy who keeps the missionary flame alive and who "invites us to attract the world only with love and discover that we can possess life only by giving it." †

What was the best Christmas gift you ever received—or gave? Share it with our readers



The best gift that God ever gave the world arrived on Christmas. Beyond the gift of Jesus in our lives, *The Criterion* is asking readers to share the stories of the best Christmas gifts they have ever received—or given.

Please send your responses by

Dec. 12 to *The Criterion's* editor Mike Krokos by e-mail at mkrokos@archindy.org or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime number where you can be reached. †



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Archbishop Thompson to lead pilgrimage to eastern Canadian shrines

By Natalie Hoefer

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson will lead a pilgrimage to the eastern Canadian shrines on July 15-21, 2020.

He says he “became familiar with the various places on our pilgrimage” while earning his master’s degree in canon law from St. Paul University in Ottawa, Canada, from 1990-1992.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

“During that time, I had a few occasions to travel to Montreal and Quebec City,” the archbishop says. “The sacred places that we will be visiting—such

as St. Joseph’s Oratory in Montreal and the Shrine of St. Anne de Beaupre just outside Quebec City—are internationally known places of pilgrimage and worship.”

Archbishop Thompson appreciates the “beautiful scenery in, around and between these cities,” and says the “history surrounding the cities and other places is also fascinating.”

Encompassing the holy sites, scenery and history the archbishop references, the pilgrimage will include daily Mass at shrines, cathedrals and basilicas in the region—including Canada’s first, second and third largest churches—as well as outings such as a light show, a river cruise, sightseeing and more.

The journey begins with a morning flight from Indianapolis to Montreal on July 15, where pilgrims will spend two full days.

Begun as a missionary settlement and fur trading center in the 1500s, Montreal is now the second most populous city in Canada. It is located on Montreal Island, the largest of 234 islands comprising the Hochelaga Archipelago near the confluence of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence rivers.

Among other activities, the first day includes a private Mass and guided tour at the Basilica Notre Dame de Montreal, followed by an evening light show at the basilica.

On day two, pilgrims will visit Saint Joseph’s Oratory and national shrine in Montreal, where a private Mass will be celebrated. A minor basilica, St. Joseph’s Oratory is the largest Catholic Church in Canada.

Construction of the first church on the site began in 1904 by Holy Cross Brother André Bessette. Known for his ability to heal, Brother André is said to have performed many miracles. Pope John Paul II deemed the miracles to be authentic and

beatified him in 1982. In October 2010, Pope Benedict XVI declared Blessed Brother André a saint.

On the second day, pilgrims will also take in the Cathedral of Marie-Reine-du-Monde, “Cathedral of Mary, Queen of the World,” a minor basilica and Canada’s third largest church.

Before departing for Quebec City on the third day, a private Mass will be celebrated at Our Lady of the Cape Shrine in Montreal, followed by a guided tour of the site. That afternoon, pilgrims will enjoy a walking tour of Old Quebec City, home base for the remainder of the pilgrimage.

Old Quebec was founded as a Catholic colony in 1608. The Recollet Order arrived in 1615, followed in 1625 by the Jesuits, who soon established a college there. The walls surrounding the Old City were built in the 1600s, and the oldest building remaining within those walls is an Ursuline chapel completed in 1642.

On the fourth day of the pilgrimage, a private Mass will be celebrated at the Shrine of St. Anne de Beaupré, the second oldest pilgrimage site in North America and the second largest church in Canada. It is dedicated to Saint Anne, mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary and is known for containing an exact replica of Michelangelo’s famous *Pieta* statue.

The afternoon of the fourth day will be filled with scenery and sights as pilgrims visit the old region of Côte de Beaupré, the renowned Cooper art museum, the 276-foot tumble of Montmorency Falls, and the Isle of Orleans.

Pilgrims will stay in Old Quebec on day five, with the only scheduled planned time being Mass at the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Quebec, the oldest church in Canada and the cathedral of the Archdiocese of Quebec.

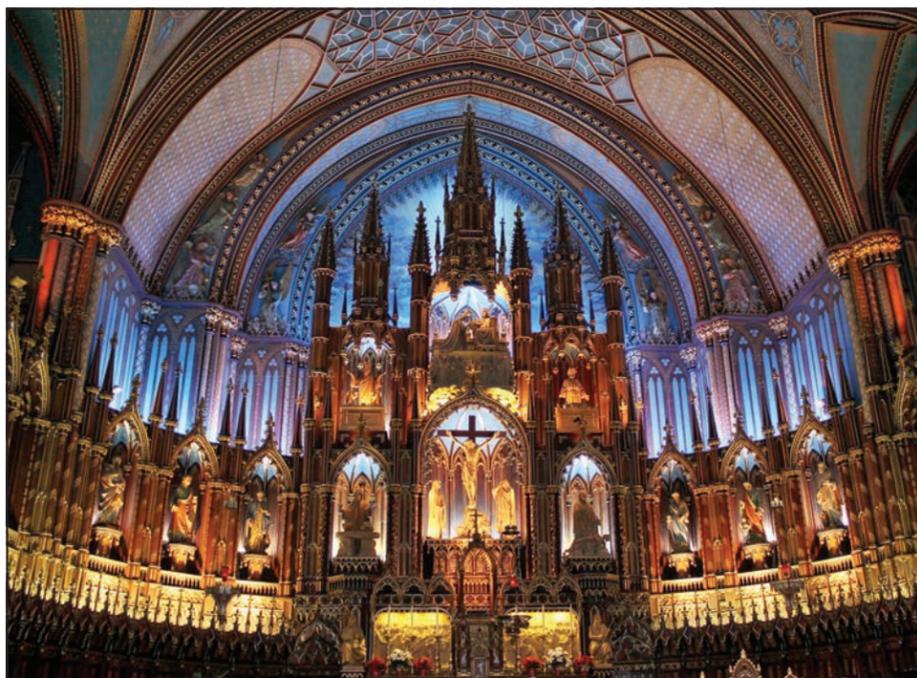
The rest of day five, pilgrims are free to explore the beautiful, well-preserved city. With its narrow brick streets, quaint cafés and shops, not to mention its many historic buildings, Old Quebec is often referred to as the “Little Europe of Canada.”

The chance to explore the many sites of Old Quebec will continue through the morning of day six. Then pilgrims will enjoy a sightseeing cruise on the St. Lawrence River, so pivotal to the city’s history and economy.

The day will end with a farewell dinner in Old Quebec, and on day seven pilgrims will take their return flight to Indianapolis.

The cost per person, based on a minimum of 35 paid travelers, is \$3,169 per person for double occupancy, or \$3,925 for single occupancy.

The cost includes estimated roundtrip



The Notre Dame Basilica in Montreal, Canada, is one of many cathedrals, basilicas and shrines where those joining Archbishop Charles C. Thompson on a pilgrimage to the eastern Canadian shrines on July 15-21, 2020, will visit and participate in celebrations of the Mass. (Submitted photo)

flight transportation from Indianapolis to Montreal and from Quebec City to Indianapolis; deluxe motor coach transportation; a bilingual (English and French) tour leader; entrance to pilgrimage sites with guides and four private Masses; sightseeing and admission fees; two nights hotel accommodations in Montreal and four nights hotel accommodations in Quebec City; daily breakfast at the hotels; three dinners, with coffee and tea; post departure trip insurance purchased on behalf of the group; hotel portage; all taxes (local, provincial and federal) and tips on included items; onsite services of a Grueninger Travel Group travel director; and all driver tips.

Prices are based on current transportation fuel charges and taxes/fees. Any changes in these costs, over which Grueninger Travel has no control, will be passed on to travelers.

Not included in the cost are personal purchases, lunches, snacks, drinks at included meals, and any other meals not included in the itinerary.

For more information or to register, go to www.grueningertravelgroup.com/aoi2020, call Grueninger Travel at 317-581-1122, or e-mail them at info@grueningertours.com. Questions can also be directed to Rita Maguire, archdiocesan coordinator of special events, at 317-236-1428, 800-382-9836 ext. 1428, or by e-mail at rmaguire@archindy.org. †

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Editorial



A priest blesses a couple during their wedding ceremony. A recent Pew survey reveals that 74 percent of Catholics in the U.S. now think that cohabitation is acceptable. (CNS photo/Juan Carlos Ulate, Reuters)

Catholics and cohabitation

It seems that every time the Pew Research Center reports the results of its latest survey, it's bad news because it shows how far our society is abandoning traditional morality and religious practices. Pew is the research center that has reported on the growing number of "nones" (those who profess no religious affiliation) in our society, among other things.

Its latest report, in many ways, is even more alarming. A study showed that 60 percent of Americans under the age of 45 have cohabitated; that is, men and women living together outside of marriage. Even worse, 74 percent of Catholics in the U.S. now think that cohabitation is acceptable.

How can that be?

It's hard for us to believe that only 26 percent of Catholics surveyed accept the teachings of the Catholic Church when it comes to sexual activity. Does that mean that the 74 percent were never taught what the Church teaches, or that they have been so influenced by our secular society that they reject those teachings?

We believe that the older members of our Church would be as amazed as we are to see such statistics. Cohabitation instead of marriage is a relatively new phenomenon in U.S. society. It happened during earlier generations, when it was called "shacking up," but wasn't condoned. Now, according to Pew, a lot of young people are doing it.

Priests are aware of this, especially those who prepare couples for marriage in the Church. In some cases, the couples are already living together and priests have to counsel them to stop doing so, if possible, until after their wedding, or, at least, to stop having sexual relations until then.

Somewhere along the line, young people decided for themselves that there is nothing wrong with having sex before marriage. That didn't just happen among today's young people; it also was the case for some of their parents. That's the only way we believe that cohabitation could be acceptable to 74 percent of Catholics. They were influenced more by our society—and by their family and friends—than by the Church.

The Church has always been countercultural, and perhaps never more so now than when it comes to sex. Unlike our present society's culture, which sees sexuality simply as

something we should enjoy, the Church teaches that "it is a gift of God by which men and women participate in his saving plan and respond to his call to grow in holiness" (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, p. 405).

The Church's vision of sexuality, based on both natural law and revelation, sees it as involving all aspects of the human person, including the power to love and procreate, and that sexual activity should not be separated from commitments made in marriage.

It's those commitments that differentiate marriage from cohabitation. During a wedding ceremony, the couple vow to be faithful to one another. Our society's mores no longer require such a commitment, which is why the divorce rate is so high.

The Church also sees marriage as a covenant: "The matrimonial covenant by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1601).

How is it, then, that so many Catholics appear to reject those teachings? Perhaps because a smaller percentage of Catholic children now attend Catholic schools or receive instruction and formation in Catholic doctrine. We know that some parents are not fulfilling their duty to make sure that their children know what the Church teaches and practices, and why we have these tenets.

When was the last time you heard a homily about chastity? It's true that homilies should primarily pertain to the biblical readings of the day, but priests and deacons are allowed to use homilies for catechesis, such as on the virtue of chastity.

Couples these days often consider cohabitation as a trial marriage, wanting to live together to see if they're compatible before exchanging vows. But studies have shown that this doesn't work: those who cohabit before marriage have a higher percentage of divorce than do those who do not live together before marriage.

Those who minister to young people have their work cut out for them to convince them that God's plan for marriage is better than society's.

—John F. Fink

Making Sense of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Medicine and a 'sense of the sacred'

As clergy, we touch upon very holy realities when we baptize, consecrate the Eucharist, give absolution to sinners, or anoint the sick. These special moments engage divine grace in deep and important ways in the lives of those to whom we minister.

In the midst of these sacred realities, we remain, nonetheless, very human and fallible instruments. I remember one time when a bishop contritely divulged in my presence that during the consecration that morning all he could think about was a good cup of hot coffee.

We clergy need to attend carefully to the graced realities we regularly handle lest we end up squandering or losing our sense of the sacred. The old adage reminds us: familiarity breeds contempt. An elderly priest and professor in Rome used to urge us as seminarians: "Seek the grace to celebrate each holy Mass as if it were your first Mass, your last Mass, and your only Mass."

Similar challenges exist in the world of medicine. Physicians who work with frail and vulnerable human beings every day must be attentive when it comes to the sacredness of their patients and their profession.

One of the lesser-known lines from the famous Hippocratic Oath has always intrigued me: "In purity and holiness, I will guard my life and my art."

Doctors face a range of unique temptations that the Oath enumerates: it counsels them to swear off "all mischief and in particular of sexual relations with both female and male [patients]" as well as all abortions and acts of euthanasia. To engage in any of these activities is to lose one's way, forswearing the sacredness of the medical profession's calling.

Yet some doctors, not unlike some priests and bishops, end up losing touch with this "sacred dimension."

An article in the *Irish Times*, written by a physician in the run-up to the 2018 abortion referendum in Ireland, exemplified this loss and profanation of medicine's sacredness.

Following a routine 20-week ultrasound of her third pregnancy, Dr. Caroline McCarthy described her sadness at learning that her baby "had no kidneys and as a result there was no amniotic fluid. His lungs could not develop properly without the fluid, but he wouldn't need his lungs or his kidneys until after birth, so the pregnancy would probably carry to term." She was told she had two options: "Carry my baby to term and he would either be born dead or die shortly after birth, or travel to the UK to end the pregnancy."

After a few days spent in a haze of panic and tears, McCarthy and her husband Michael took a flight out of Ireland to undergo a "compassionate induction" of labor at Liverpool Women's Hospital. The terminology brought to mind an astute observation a friend had once made: "Beware of any medical procedure with the word 'compassion' in its name; it often conceals wrongdoing."

When the hospital clerk arrived to get their informed consent signature, the procedure listed on the form was: "Feticide termination of pregnancy." Feticide is a medical term referring to the killing of a human, in this case during an early stage of development—"fetal homicide." After McCarthy's labor was induced, a large-gauge needle (termed a "catheter" in the article) was used for the feticide; it passed through her abdomen and uterus into her baby's heart and potassium chloride was injected to stop its beating.

Shortly thereafter, her stillborn son was delivered: "I saw his perfect little face for the first time. I felt that same post-birth relief and elation as I had after the birth of my other two children. The midwife wrapped him in a towel, and I held him close. I felt at complete peace with my decision and just sat holding and staring at my beautiful son. In the morning, the midwife helped us dress John. We spent the day holding and looking at him and taking photographs."

It's hard to miss the jolting unseemliness of the family's taking photos of their dead child whose life they had just ended. McCarthy's actions cannot be squared with her vocation as a mother or with her sacred calling as a physician to "do no harm." That sacred calling translates into helping all those born with birth defects or afflicted by disease, without ever imposing death penalties onto them. Ahead of all others, physicians are tasked with grasping this key truth.

Hippocrates possessed unusual wisdom and foresight to codify these real dangers for the soul of the medical professional millennia ago. As we witness an unprecedented collapse of the sense of the sacred within the world of the healing arts today, we must assiduously pray for those who have turned their backs on that ancient and time-tested Oath, and vigorously support those fighting to uphold its tenets within medicine's hallowed hallways.

(Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience at Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.) †

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper's commitment to "the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God" (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary

based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org. †



Christ the Cornerstone

Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist both point to Jesus

“John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!’ It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: A voice of one crying out in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths” (cf. Mt 3:1-3)

The Second Sunday of Advent falls on Dec. 8 this year. That causes us to celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception a day later on Monday, Dec. 9.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has written that the two great Advent figures are Mary and St. John the Baptist. Both bring to conclusion the time of preparation and waiting that characterized Israel’s hope that God’s promises would be fulfilled. Both point to Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.

On the Second Sunday of Advent, the first reading from the Book of the prophet Isaiah proposes the glorious vision of hope that will be fulfilled when God’s Anointed One, the Messiah, comes:

“On that day, a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him:

a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD, and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD.

Not by appearance shall he judge, nor by hearsay shall he decide, but he shall judge the poor with justice, and decide aright for the land’s afflicted.

He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.

Justice shall be the band around his waist, and faithfulness a belt upon his hips. Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb,

and the leopard shall lie down with the kid;

the calf and the young lion shall browse together,

with a little child to guide them.

The cow and the bear shall be neighbors,

together their young shall rest; the lion shall eat hay like the ox.

The baby shall play by the cobra’s den,

and the child lay his hand on the adder’s lair.

There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain;

for the Earth shall be filled with knowledge of the LORD,

as water covers the sea.

On that day, the root of Jesse, set up as a signal for the nations, the Gentiles shall seek out, for his dwelling shall be glorious” (Is 11:1-10).

An entirely different world is prophesied from anything known before. This is the world that Mary prefigures by her sinlessness, her Immaculate Conception. And it is the future that John anticipates as he calls the people of Israel to a baptism of repentance.

“I am baptizing you with water, for repentance,” John says, “but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire” (cf. Mt 3:11-12).

What is coming (the reign of God) is a time of unparalleled peace and justice, but it will be preceded by a baptism

of unquenchable fire that burns away “every tree that does not bear good fruit” (Mt 3:10). To prepare ourselves for the coming of the Messiah, and to be ready for the new world his coming inaugurates, we must repent.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception calls attention to the way that Mary, who was conceived without original sin, is different from us. But as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has observed, “This privilege given to Mary, which sets her apart from our common condition, does not distance her from us, but on the contrary, it brings her closer. While sin divides, separating us from one another, Mary’s purity makes her infinitely close to our hearts, attentive to each of us and desirous of our true good.” Mary’s difference does not separate her from us; her purity makes her more open and accessible to all of us, her children.

During this special time, as we begin a new Church year and prepare for Christmas, we are invited to stay close to Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother.

Like John the Baptist, Mary points the way to her son. She reminds us of the miracles Jesus works in our daily lives, and she invites us to respond with open hearts, “May it be done to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38). †



Cristo, la piedra angular

La santísima virgen María y san Juan Bautista apuntan hacia Jesús

“Por aquel tiempo comenzó Juan el Bautista a predicar en el desierto de Judea. Decía: ‘Convértese, porque ya está cerca el reino de los cielos.’ A este Juan se había referido el profeta Isaías cuando dijo: Se oye una voz; alguien clama en el desierto: ¡Preparen el camino del Señor; abran sendas rectas para él!” (cf. Mt 3:1-3).

Este año, el segundo domingo de Adviento cae el 8 de diciembre, lo que nos lleva a celebrar la Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción un día más tarde, el lunes 9 de diciembre.

El papa Emérito Benedicto XVI ha escrito que María y san Juan Bautista son dos figuras destacadas en el Adviento puesto que ambos cierran el ciclo de preparación y espera que caracterizó la esperanza de Israel de que las promesas de Dios se cumplirían. Ambos apuntan a Jesús como el tan esperado mesías.

La primera lectura del segundo domingo de Adviento proviene del libro del profeta Isaías e ilustra una visión gloriosa de esperanza que se cumplirá cuando el Ungido por Dios, el mesías, venga:

“Un rebrote saldrá del tocón de Jesé, de sus raíces brotará un renuevo.

El espíritu del Señor en él reposará: espíritu de inteligencia y sabiduría, espíritu de consejo y de valor, espíritu de conocimiento y de respeto al Señor.

Se inspirará en el respeto al Señor. No juzgará a primera vista ni dará sentencia de oídas; juzgará con justicia a los pobres, con rectitud a los humildes de la tierra;

herirá al violento con la vara de su boca,

con el soplo de sus labios matará al malvado;

la justicia será su ceñidor,

la lealtad rodeará su cintura.

El lobo vivirá con el cordero, la pantera se echará con el cabrito,

novillo y león pacerán juntos,

y un muchacho será su pastor.

La vaca pastará con el oso,

sus crías se echarán juntas;

el león comerá paja como el buey.

Jugará el lactante junto a la cueva del áspid,

el niño hurgará en el agujero de la víbora.

Nadie hará daños ni estragos

en todo mi monte santo,

pues rebosa el país conocimiento del Señor

como las aguas colman el mar.

Aquel día la raíz de Jesé será el estandarte de los pueblos, a ella acudirán las naciones y será esplendorosa su morada» (Is 11:1-10).

Se profetiza un mundo completamente distinto de todo lo que se conocía hasta ahora: es el mundo que presagia María a través de su Inmaculada Concepción, sin pecado, y el futuro que anticipa Juan cuando llama al pueblo de Israel a un bautismo de arrepentimiento.

“Yo los bautizo con agua para que se conviertan—dice Juan—pero el que viene después de mí es más poderoso que yo, y yo ni siquiera soy digno de llevarle las sandalias. Él los bautizará con Espíritu Santo y fuego. Llega, horqueta en mano, dispuesto a limpiar su era; guardará el trigo en el granero, mientras que con la paja hará una hoguera que arderá sin fin” (cf Mt 3:11-12).

Lo que viene (el Reino de Dios) es una época de paz y justicia sin precedentes, pero a la cual le antecederá un bautismo con un fuego que arde eternamente y que quema “todo árbol que no dé buenos frutos” (Mt 3:10). Para prepararnos para la venida del mesías y estar listos para el nuevo mundo que inaugura su venida,

debemos arrepentirnos.

La Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción resalta el hecho de que María, concebida sin pecado original, es distinta de nosotros. Tal como señaló el papa emérito, Benedicto XVI: “Este privilegio otorgado a María, que la distingue de nuestra condición ordinaria, no nos distancia sino que, al contrario, nos acerca a ella. Si bien el pecado divide y nos separa, la pureza de María la coloca infinitamente cerca de nuestros corazones, atenta a cada uno de nosotros y deseosa de que alcancemos el verdadero bien.” Lo que distingue a María no la separa de nosotros; su pureza la predispone y la hace más accesible a nosotros, sus hijos.

Durante esta temporada tan especial, mientras comenzamos un nuevo año litúrgico y nos preparamos para la Navidad, se nos invita a mantenernos cerca de María, la madre de Jesús y nuestra madre.

Al igual que Juan el Bautista, María señala el camino hacia su hijo. Ella nos recuerda los milagros que obra Jesús en nuestra vida cotidiana y nos invita a responder con corazones abiertos: “Hágase en mí según tu palabra” (Lc 1:38). †

Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/events.

December 8-9

Holy Name of Jesus Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **National Night of Prayer for Life and Adoration**, uniting the feast of the Immaculate Conception with the feast of St. Juan Diego, prayers and adoration for an end to abortion and God's blessings, Sun. 9 p.m. to Mon. 1 a.m. Information: 317-784-5454, parishadmin@holyname.cc.

December 8-10

St. Vincent de Paul Church, 1723 I St., Bedford. **Parish Mission: 60 Minutes for Jesus**, Missionary of Mercy Father Jim Sichko presenting, 7-8 p.m. each evening, freewill offering. Information: 812-275-6539, parish@svsbedford.org.

December 10

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild**, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-223-3687, vlgmimi@aol.com.

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **"Be Light" Monthly**

Taizé Prayer Service, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

December 11

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Community Open House**, public viewing of church's interior restoration, tour guides available, refreshments, 6-8 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508, mrivelli@sjoa.org.

December 12

Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Caregiver Support Group**, sponsored by Catholic Charities, 5:30-7 p.m. Information: Monica Woodsworth, 317-261-3378, mwoodsworth@archindy.org.

December 12-15

St. John the Evangelist Parish, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Christkindl Village Christmas Festival**, indoor/outdoor heated activities and events for all ages; live animal Nativity, alpine slide, heated craft tent, German food, beer garden and

wine tasting, vendors, church tours, caroling, Thurs. 5-9 p.m.; Fri. 5-10 p.m.; Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sun. 11 a.m.-6 p.m., free admission. Information and schedule of events: www.stjohnsindy.org/village.

December 14

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House Chapel, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Service of the Longest Night**, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presiding, prayer and Scripture for those who mourn and struggle with loss during the Christmas season, 6 p.m. CT, refreshments to follow, free parking in Guest House lot. Reservations requested but not required by Dec. 13. Reservations and information: info@abbeycaskets.com, 800-987-7380.

December 15

St. Christopher Church, 5301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. **Christmas Choral Concert**, 3 p.m., freewill offering to benefit the Sr. Marie Wolf fund. Information: 317-241-6314, ext. 142, pschaefer@stchrisindy.org.

December 16

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish Cenacle House, 6118 Smock St., Indianapolis. **Caregiver Support Group**, sponsored by Catholic Charities, 5: 30-7 p.m. Information: Monica Woodsworth, 317-261-3378, mwoodsworth@archindy.org.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Leave the Light On**, reconciliation available 9 a.m.-7 p.m., no appointment necessary. Information: Jennifer Burger, 317-545-7681, jburger@archindy.org, www.archindy.org/fatima.

December 17

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **"Abide" Adoration Service**, sponsored by Catalyst Catholic, 7-8 p.m., every third Tues. of the month, featuring guest speaker, praise band, silence and confessions, child care available. Information and child care reservations: Chris Rogers, chris@nadyouth.org, 812-923-8355.

December 18

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel,

435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Christmas Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

December 19

St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Christmas Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

December 21

St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Helpers of God's Precious Infants, Indianapolis**. Third Saturday of the month, Mass at 8:30 a.m. followed by Divine Mercy Chaplet and rosary at the Clinic for Women abortion center, 3607 W. 16th St., concluding between 10:30-10:45 a.m., with continued prayer at the church for

those who wish to remain. Information: peggygeis@att.net.

January 3

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., Father David Huemmer presiding, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, www.womenscarecenter.org.

January 4

All Saint Parish, St. John the Baptist Campus Hall, 25743 State Route 1, Guilford. **Growing the Faith: Finding Time for God**, Stacey Sumereau presenting, Mass and catered meal, 6-9 p.m., freewill offerings accepted, registration requested by Jan. 2 online at bit.ly/2DdCxp6 (case sensitive) or by calling parish office: 812-576-4302.

John Paul II Parish, St. Paul Chapel, 216 Schellers Ave., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Marian Devotion**, 8 a.m. rosary, meditation, prayer; 8:30 a.m. Mass with confessions prior. Information: 812-246-3522. †

Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/retreats.

January 8

Providence Hall, Havlick Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Sunday at the Woods: Dementia Basics and Helpful Tips**, Katie Harish presenting, 1:30-3:30 p.m., freewill offering. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event.

Providence Hall, Havlick Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Dementia: Approach is Everything**, Katie Harish presenting, 6-8 p.m., \$15, register by Jan. 6. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event.

January 8, January 9

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Art to Lift your Spirit!**, Wed., 9:30 a.m. or Thurs., 6:30 p.m., Providence Sister Rosemary Schmalz presenting, \$30 membership fee to join group, \$5 per session after. Contact Jeanne Frost,

812-535-2952 to request a brochure. Registration and information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event.

January 10

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Painting with the Padre**, paint with Franciscan Father Vince Peterson, 6:30-9 p.m., \$40 includes all painting supplies and assorted cheeses, bring your own beverage. Information and registration: www.mountsaintfrancis.org/event-tickets, 812-923-8817.

January 11

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Coffee with the Mystics**, Providence Sister Jan Craven presenting, 10 a.m.-noon, \$10, register by Jan 10. Registration and information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event.

January 14

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence,

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Coffee with the Mystics**, Providence Sister Jan Craven presenting, 9:30-11:30 a.m., \$10, register by Jan. 11. Registration and information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event.

January 16

Providence Hall, Havlick Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Memory Café**, 2-4 p.m., third Thursday of the month, for those living with moderate dementia, caregivers and friends, Katie Harish presenting, freewill offering. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event.

February 4, 11, 18

Providence Hall, Large Parlor, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **God at the Coffee House**, for ages 19-39, Providence Sister Jan Craven presenting, 7-9 p.m., free, coffee and snacks provided. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event. †

VIPs

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to bit.ly/2M4MOms or call 317-236-1585.



Lee and Sarah (Keough) Banks, members of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Dec. 19.

The couple was married at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis on Dec. 19, 1959.

They have five children: Karla Cazares, Tina Ervin, Sophia Harris, Jennifer and Jeffrey Banks.

The couple also has 11 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. †

Archdiocese's schola cantorum to hold Advent and Christmas concerts on Dec. 14 and 21

Vox Sacra (Sacred Voice), the schola cantorum of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, along with the archdiocesan youth choir, will present its fourth annual concert of Advent and Christmas music at two parishes in the coming weeks as follows:

- Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., in Indianapolis.
- Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of

Lourdes Church, 5333 E. Washington St., in Indianapolis.

The free concerts will feature the works of Byrd, Palestrina, Pearsall, Stopford and more.

For additional information, visit www.voxsacra.com or contact the archdiocesan Office of Worship at 317-236-1483, 800-382-9836, ext. 1483, or e-mail ctuley@archindy.org. †

Simbang Gabi novena of Masses to be held on Dec. 16 through Christmas Eve

The Filipino Catholic community and the archdiocesan Office of Intercultural Ministry invite all to join in a Christmas tradition of the Filipino culture, a nine-day novena of Masses called Simbang Gabi. The novena begins on Dec. 16 and ends on Christmas Eve.

Participants will join in the following already-scheduled parish Masses as follows:

- Dec. 16, 6 p.m., St. Louis de Monfort Church, 11441 Hague Road, Fishers (Lafayette Diocese).
- Dec. 17, 5:30 p.m., St. Monica Church, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis.
- Dec. 18, 6 p.m., St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis.
- Dec. 19, 6 p.m., St. Jude Church,

5353 McFarland Ave., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 20, 6 p.m., St. Simon the Apostle Church, 8155 Oaklandon Road, Indianapolis.

- Dec. 21, 4 p.m., St. Ann Church, 6350 S. Mooresville Road, Indianapolis.

- Dec. 22, 11:30 a.m., St. Luke the Evangelist Church, 7575 Holliday Dr., E., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 23, 5:45 p.m., Extraordinary Form (Latin), Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 24, 10 p.m., SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis.

For more information, contact Maria Solito at 317-201-0196 or mariasolito@yahoo.com. †

Longest Night service to be held at Our Lady of Perpetual Help on Dec. 20

A service called "The Longest Night: A Mass of Consolation" will be held at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 1752 Scheller Lane, in New Albany, at 7 p.m. on Dec. 20.

The service provides an evening of

prayer, ritual, word and Scripture for those who mourn and struggle during the Christmas season.

For more information on this free event, contact Tom Yost, parish pastoral associate, at 812-945-2374 or tyost@olphna.org. †

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events/submission, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Cindy Clark, or by fax at 317-236-1593.

Parishes to host Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrations

Criterion staff report

The following Masses and special events for the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe throughout central and southern Indiana were reported to *The Criterion*.

Holy Spirit Church, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis.
Dec. 10—7 p.m. rosary; 7:30 p.m. Mass, followed by re-enactment of apparitions.
Dec. 11—7 p.m. rosary followed by dance and re-enactment of apparitions; 9 p.m. Mass.
Dec. 12—7 p.m. rosary; 7:30 p.m. Mass followed by *mariachi* music, dance and reception.

Holy Trinity Church, 100 Keeley St., Edinburgh.
Dec. 11—10:30 p.m. prayers and songs until start of Mass.
Dec. 12—1 a.m. Mass.

St. Ambrose Church, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour.
Dec. 3-11 rosary novena in church:
• Dec. 3-6 and 9-11 at 6 p.m.
• Dec. 7 at 7 p.m.
Dec. 12—4-6 a.m. *mañanitas*, coffee, hot chocolate and sweet bread in parish center; 2:30-3 p.m. re-enactment of apparitions by St. Ambrose School students; 5-6 p.m. procession; 6 p.m. bilingual Mass followed by fellowship and dinner in the gymnasium.

St. Anthony Church, 337 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis.
Dec. 6—7 p.m. Mass in Spanish; 8 p.m. rosary
Dec. 7—7 p.m. rosary
Dec. 8 and 9—6 p.m. rosary
Dec. 10—5:45 p.m. Mass in Spanish; 6:30 p.m. rosary
Dec. 11—7 p.m. rosary; 7:45 p.m. traditional dance; 8:45 p.m. re-enactment of apparitions; 9:15 p.m. traditional dance; 10 p.m. serenade by St. Anthony choirs and parishioners; 10-10:30 p.m. bread and hot chocolate served outside the church; 11 p.m. Mass.

Dec. 12—midnight *mariachi* serenade; 1 a.m. choirs and serving of bread and hot chocolate; 5:30 p.m. procession; 6:30 p.m. rosary; 7 p.m. Mass; 8 p.m. dinner and celebration in gymnasium; 9:30 p.m. closing remarks.

St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus.
Dec. 11—7-7:30 p.m. silent reflection; 7:30 p.m. welcome, presentation of dancers; 7:40 a.m. first dance; 7:50 p.m. children's choir and procession followed by second dance; 8:15 p.m. children's rosary and blessing; 9 p.m. procession followed by bilingual rosary; 10 p.m. narrative of the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe; 11 p.m. Mass; 11:45 p.m. dance
Dec. 12—midnight *mañanitas* followed by reception with hot chocolate and sweet breads; 6 p.m. Mass in Spanish; 6:45 p.m. dance; 7 p.m. dinner in lower level of church.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis.
Dec. 11—7 p.m. celebration
Dec. 12—midnight Mass in Spanish; 8:30 a.m. Mass in English; 6 p.m. bilingual Mass; 8 p.m. Mass in Spanish.

St. Joseph Church, 312 E. High St., Corydon
Dec. 12—7 p.m. Mass in Spanish.

St. Joseph Church, 125 E. Broadway St., Shelbyville.
Dec. 12—6 p.m. rosary followed by Aztec dance; 7 p.m. Mass.

St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis.
Dec. 3-11—7 p.m. novena in church
Dec. 12—4:30 p.m. *mañanitas*; 7 p.m. Mass in Spanish, procession and dance followed by gathering.

St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis.
Dec. 11—7 p.m. procession, 8 p.m. rosary, 10 p.m. Mass, 11 p.m. *mañanitas* and *mariachi* music.



This painting by artist Lalo Garcia seen on Nov. 20 is part of an exhibit in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles. St. Juan Diego's feast day is on Dec. 9, and Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day is on Dec. 12. (CNS photo/courtesy Archdiocese of Los Angeles)

Dec. 12—7 p.m. Mass followed by fellowship in the Marian Center.

St. Mary Church, 415 E. Eighth St., New Albany.
Dec. 11—10 p.m. rosary, re-enactment of apparitions, singing.
Dec. 12—7 p.m. Mass in Spanish followed by reception with traditional Mexican food.

St. Michael Church, 101 St. Michael Dr., Charlestown
Dec. 12—7 p.m. Mass.

St. Monica Church, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis.
Dec. 11—7-7:45 p.m. rosary; 7:45-8 p.m. music and praise; 8-10 p.m. neighborhood procession; 10-10:30 p.m. reenactment of apparitions; 10:30-11 p.m. explanation of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe; 11 p.m.-midnight *mañanitas*, singing, *mariachi* music.

Dec. 12—midnight Mass; 1 a.m.-8 a.m. church remains open for private prayer; 8 a.m. St. Monica School Mass; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. church open for private prayer; 3-6 p.m. music and praise; 6-7:30 p.m. Mass with Aztec dancers; 7:30-8 p.m. procession to gymnasium for reception.

St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington.
Dec. 11—10:30 p.m. presentation of the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe; 11 p.m. *mariachi* music.
Dec. 12—midnight Mass, followed by breakfast.

St. Philip Neri Church, 550 N. Rural St., Indianapolis.
Dec. 11—7 p.m. rosary, singing dancing, re-enactment of apparitions and *mañanitas*.
Dec. 12 midnight Mass; 6 p.m. Mass followed by dancing. †

50 years since White House conference on food, hunger issues remain

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Fifty years ago, the White House sponsored a Dec. 2-4 conference on food, nutrition and health designed to set the groundwork for a national nutrition policy and to advise President Richard M. Nixon on the best ways to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in the United States.

The conference succeeded in initiating policies to improve school lunch programs and nutrition education and to give more consumer protection—which led to the nutritional labeling food buyers are now accustomed to.

The conference also helped develop the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, which offers supplemental food assistance to low-income pregnant women and mothers and their children up to age 5, and it paved the way for the first major expansion of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which helps low-income individuals and families buy food.

Fast forward 50 years and food policy



A man eats a sandwich at St. Mary's Soup Kitchen in Memphis, Tenn., on Nov. 5, 2016. Fifty years after a White House conference on food, nutrition and health, policy advocates say the overall lack of access to healthy food and good nutrition remains a major issue today in the United States. (CNS photo/Karen Pulfer Focht)

advocates still have a lot on their plates, so to speak, in efforts to address food insecurities across the country as well as growing food-related epidemics of diabetes and obesity. They also want to ensure policies that took shape 50 years ago do not face pending cuts proposed by President Donald Trump's administration.

Panelists at a Capitol Hill gathering on Oct. 30 marked the White House food conference's anniversary and discussed ways to move forward. Even though Americans are not besieged by scurvy, they said, nor are there constant images of children with extended bellies from starvation, the overall lack of access to healthy food and good nutrition remains a major issue.

The event, which offered healthy snacks and water, was sponsored by the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University in Boston and Hunger Free America, a nonprofit advocacy group based in New York.

Several of the panelists cited troubling statistics on hunger. Notably, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2019 Household Food Insecurity in the United States report said more than 37 million people in the U.S. struggle with hunger.

Other statistics they shared, compiled by Hunger Free America, include:

- 14.3 million American households were food insecure with limited or uncertain access to enough food in 2018.
- More than 11 million children live in food-insecure households.
- Many households that experience food insecurity do not qualify for federal nutrition programs and need to rely on their local food banks and other hunger relief organizations for support.

No one needs to tell these facts to

those who work in public policy at Catholic Charities USA or its local agencies providing food to those in need every day.

Anthony Granado, vice president of government relations for Catholic Charities USA, said there are a number of food and nutrition policies that have the support of Catholic Charities, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Catholic Health Association, Catholic Rural Life and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Those groups submitted a joint comment objecting to the Trump administration's proposal to tighten eligibility standards for SNAP that would cause about 3.1 million people nationwide to lose their food stamp benefits.

The comment, submitted on Sept. 23, called SNAP the "first line of defense against hunger for those struggling to make ends meet," noting that just last year the program served 40.3 million people.

They warned that the proposed policy change would impact individual and community health since food insecurity is linked to chronic conditions such as diabetes and is associated with increased risks of hypertension, coronary heart disease, stroke and arthritis, to name a few.

They also said the proposed changes to SNAP would bring more people to charities for help when they are already feeding millions each year.

"Our organizations already struggle to meet the needs in our communities and are forced to turn away many for lack of resources. The proposed rule, if implemented, will only add to a demand that we cannot meet," their comment letter said.

Lizanne Hagedorn, director of Nutritional Development Services for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, an agency that got its start just two years after the White House conference, knows all about food needs and hasn't seen them decrease by any means.

As the head of agency that administers local federally funded child nutrition programs and a community food program, Hagedorn said those who come for help are not always typical; in recent years, the agency has seen more senior citizens and college students. She also has seen a shrinking pool of volunteers to serve those in need at food pantries.

Hagedorn said over the years the agency also has changed its offerings because of clients' health conditions and also to educate children about healthy food choices and exercise so they don't develop health problems. "We want to make sure we are helping their lifelong existence," she told Catholic News Service on Nov. 21.

She said she is honored to do this work, which she admits is "not always easy and the [government] regulations are ridiculous" because on any given day they have given people a meal that can help them to face the next day.

"It's in our blood as Catholic Christians to be good stewards of food and money and to bring everybody along," she said, adding: "Not in an overbearing way but understanding 'there but for the grace of God go I.'"

As she sees it, the agency's job will remain for the long haul but with good reason. She said the employees are using their gifts and talents to "help everyone live a better life and be healthier. I know that's what we're supposed to do." †

Trajectory of hateful rhetoric led to Holocaust, say speakers

WILMETTE, Ill. (CNS)—Hate speech must be stopped “in its tracks,” Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich said in remarks during an interfaith dialogue at Loyola Academy in the Chicago suburb of Wilmette.

The cardinal joined Holocaust survivor Fritzie Fritzshall and Chicago ABC7 news anchor Alan Krashesky in talking about their July visit to Auschwitz, the concentration camp operated by the Nazis in occupied Poland, and to make the point that the horror of the Holocaust started with hateful rhetoric.

During their visit, Fritzshall, president of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, asked Cardinal Cupich as a religious man, a man of God, how such things could happen. At the time, the cardinal had no answer.

About a month later, he wrote a column titled “Words Matter,” published on July 28 in the *Chicago Catholic*, the archdiocesan news outlet.

It took some time for him to formulate his response, Cardinal Cupich told more than 800 people who attended the mid-November dialogue in Wilmette.

“I reflected on it, and there is an answer,” Cardinal Cupich said. “It happens in the human heart when we begin to criticize people, marginalize them, and then eventually call them ‘other,’ ‘alien,’ to ourselves.

“Then we begin to look at the ills of society, and there’s always the tendency to scapegoat, and so we scapegoat those people who are other as the reason for our problems,” he said. “It becomes a lot easier then to get rid of the scapegoat. That’s what a scapegoat is.”

He explained that “there is a dynamic that happens. It just doesn’t happen overnight.

“That’s why right away we have to

stop the words,” the cardinal said. “We have to stop the hate speech in its tracks, lest it begin to define people as ‘other,’ and that other becomes the enemy that we have to get rid of. There is a trajectory to those words that we can’t ignore.”

Krashesky said that when he first learned of the trip, he immediately thought it was newsworthy enough for him and a crew to travel to Poland.

“We have someone who is Jewish, someone who is Roman Catholic, coming together and having that shared experience at a time when, in our country and locally too, we see a rise in anti-Semitic incidents, we see a rise in violence that is fueled by anti-Semitism, we see worldwide an increase in the type of rhetoric and language that unfortunately leads people to place other groups of people into categories ... for all these reasons it felt like we must tell this story and share it,” he said.

“I also felt the responsibility for those who will never make that journey, for those who have never visited the Holocaust museum here or elsewhere,” he added.

Fritzshall was a teenager when she was sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau, she said, and part of the reason it happened was that her neighbors in the former Czechoslovakia had taken in anti-Semitic rhetoric and were spreading it even to the children in their homes.

“We had nowhere to turn,” she said.

Fritzshall had returned to Auschwitz several times, first with an aunt 30 years ago and then leading groups as a Holocaust educator, but the fear always comes back when she sets foot in the camp.

She was contemplating one last trip over the summer, as she was approaching her 90th birthday, but she wasn’t sure about it. That was when Cardinal Cupich agreed to accompany her.

“When he offered to go back with me, I grabbed the opportunity,” Fritzshall said. “I felt I was going with a friend. I was going back because I feel in years to come, the camps are not going to remain the way they are today. Even now, the camps are being torn apart. My fear has been and is today that in times to come, the young people are not going to see and get the story of Auschwitz and other camps.”

She fears that as survivors pass away, the story will fade.

“To me, going back, and especially going back with the cardinal, has been educational,” Fritzshall said. “It was our way, and the Church’s way, and the cardinal’s way, of saying, ‘We are there for you, I am there for you. We will never allow this to happen again.’ So it truly was a special, special trip.”

Cardinal Cupich had visited Auschwitz before, but this trip was different, he said.

“I kept quiet for the most part because I wanted Fritzie to talk,” the cardinal said. “I wanted to see this terrible place through her voice, through eyes. That’s what really made it real.”

She was the one who told him details, such as how the latrines at the death camp became holy ground because it was



Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich chats with Holocaust survivor Fritzie Fritzshall, president of the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center, during a Nov. 18 talk at Loyola Academy in Wilmette about their July visit to Auschwitz and makes the point that the horror of the Holocaust started with hateful rhetoric. (CNS photo/Karen Callaway, *Chicago Catholic*)

the only place where prisoners had the privacy to pray.

Toward the end of the war, she said, she was the youngest of 600 women taken from the camp to serve as slave labor in a munitions factory. Those women helped her survive so that she could tell their story.

“I have lived all of these years with the promise I made to 599 women that I would be their messenger,” said Fritzshall. “It was always, ‘Who will believe us? Who will believe that humanity can do such horrible, horrible things to other human beings? Somebody must live. Somebody must tell the story.’

“So those women gave me extra rest. They took care of me,” she said. “They gave me the crumbs of their bread so that I could survive. If anyone had a chance, it was me because I was the youngest. If I survived, I was going to tell their story.” †

ICC

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intellect as well as a strong Catholic faith,” said Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, speaking of Espada’s selection following an exhaustive search.

“Angela strikes me, first and foremost, as a lifelong Catholic who takes her faith very seriously and lives according to her Catholic beliefs,” he said. “She has a great deal of experience in education, diversity training and resource management. I have been impressed with her people skills and quick learning ability. There is quite a learning curve for anyone to step into this role, serving with bishops and staffs of five dioceses, engaging in dialogue with political representatives from different perspectives and both sides of the aisle, coordinating various groups and organizations, and maintaining a consistent Catholic ethos while working with people of various faith traditions and beliefs.”

Archbishop Thompson noted that while women have held key leadership positions in the archdiocese and other dioceses around the state and the nation, “especially in light of comments and encouragement provided by Pope Francis, I believe that it is very timely and appropriate to have the first woman to serve as ICC executive director in Indiana.”

The archbishop also acknowledged the groundbreaking nature of having an African-American woman in this role. “To be clear, although it is quite

historic to have a woman of color in this very important position for the Catholic Church in Indiana, Angela was chosen as the best person from among several highly qualified candidates,” he said.

“While Glenn will be greatly missed upon his retirement next year—his contributions have been immeasurable—I am excited about Angela stepping into this role, and I look forward to working with her,” Archbishop Thompson added. “She exudes confidence, compassion and enthusiasm, and along with her distinguished professional background, these qualities will serve her—and the Catholic Church in Indiana—exceedingly well.”

In approaching her new position, Espada will draw upon her varied personal and professional experiences as well as her solid grounding in the Catholic Church, whose teachings she is now charged with conveying to a wide variety of audiences in the public arena.

‘A catalyst for good’

Angela traces her Catholic roots and strong moral compass to her family and the parish where she was baptized. She was a member of St. Rita Parish and was a student in its school in Indianapolis, which was founded a century ago as the city’s first parish for African-American Catholics.

Later, she was a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish, also in Indianapolis, before enrolling in public school. Unfortunately, the curriculum was not challenging enough and Espada returned to St. Rita School, graduating from there and then

from Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis. After earning two undergraduate degrees from the University of Indianapolis, she headed to Indiana University in Bloomington, where she earned her law degree as well as a master’s degree in higher education.

Newly married to José Espada, whom she met when they were both graduate assistants, she worked as a deputy prosecutor. She then moved to the Indiana Supreme Court as a staff attorney before joining the administration of the IU McKinney School of Law in Indianapolis while her husband also pursued a career in administration at the IU School of Medicine. By this time, she had been a guardian for a younger sister, a therapeutic foster parent for a niece and nephew, and finally a parent to her daughter, Maya.

After being appointed the first African-American associate dean in the IU system, Espada was selected by the American Council on Education for its prestigious fellows’ program. ACE fellows, identified as emerging leaders in higher education, immerse themselves in administration at a host institution. Espada’s fellowship year was in Nashville, Tenn. While there, the chancellor of Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis appointed her to a new position: associate vice chancellor for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Dr. Dereck Rovaris, Sr., vice provost for diversity and chief diversity officer of Louisiana State University, has been a friend of the family since Espada’s days in university admissions and was a member of her fellows’ cohort. Espada’s gifts were apparent to everyone in the program.

“Angela is a very focused, compassionate, intelligent individual who is always on the right side of justice,” Rovaris said. “And that’s not just from her education and legal training, but her family. She comes from a family where doing the right thing was always the expectation, and nothing short of that was acceptable. She and José have raised their daughter Maya, a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard University, in the

same fashion.”

A lifelong Catholic himself, Rovaris predicts that Espada will be “a catalyst for good” in her new role.

Those sentiments were echoed by Stephanie Whitley, director of religious education at Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis, where the Espadas have been members for the past decade. Whitley got to know Espada during their work together on the parish’s capital campaign to construct a new church. She also noted Espada’s diligent efforts on the Holy Angels social concerns commission.

“Angela is very passionate about the things she cares about,” Whitley said. “She wants the very best for people, and she advocates for those in need of social justice.”

Making connections

Since early October, Espada has been traveling the state with Tebbe, meeting key individuals and entities. The 2020 session of the Indiana General Assembly begins on Jan. 6, and the ICC will once again weigh in on the issues facing the legislature. Tebbe and Espada anticipate the return of many issues that have dominated past legislative sessions—from predatory lending to pro-life matters.

“The key issues continue to be protecting religious freedom, promoting the common good, and the dignity of life and dignity of the person,” Espada said. “Glenn has been wonderful in connecting me with key players on all the issues. I have met so many people who are passionate about their faith and who try not only to do good, but to be led by the spirit and to do God’s will. It is inspiring.”

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, is a correspondent for *The Criterion*. For more information on the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org.) †



‘[Angela] exudes confidence, compassion and enthusiasm, and along with her distinguished professional background, these qualities will serve her—and the Catholic Church in Indiana—exceedingly well.’

—Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

Mary's WAY promotes 'Women Answering Yes' to God

By Victoria Arthur

Special to *The Criterion*

BROWNSBURG AND ST. LEON—Growing up in their Cincinnati home, Teresa Schutzman and her 10 siblings frequently heard the same message as they were rushing out the door.

"Take the Blessed Mother with you."

Those words came from their earthly mother, Rose, whose lifelong devotion to Mary grew even deeper when she survived a brain aneurysm while pregnant with her 11th child. Schutzman, a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, was a sixth-grader when she nearly lost her mother and baby brother in 1966. She remembers a hundred people—many not even connected to their family—praying the rosary in the hospital waiting room on that agonizing day.

The 36-year-old mother who wasn't expected to live not only survived but went on to raise all 11 of her and her husband's children and to welcome 61 grandchildren.

"Our life was far from struggle-free after what happened, but in that struggle and through Mary's intercession and God's mercy, we made it through those times," Schutzman said. "And our faith only grew stronger."

Today, Schutzman is dedicated to strengthening others' faith through Mary's WAY (Women Answering Yes), a Catholic women's organization launched by her younger sister Ann, who was only a kindergartner when the events of 1966 swirled around her. But Ann Winkle never forgot the Blessed Mother's role in what she and countless others consider a miracle.

After attending a Marian retreat in Illinois as a busy mother of four, Winkle felt called to start her own program. Her goal was to create beautiful, memorable events for women that would free them from their hectic lives for a few precious hours, inspire them and ultimately encourage them to deepen their love for and faith in Jesus Christ by following the perfect example of his mother, Mary.

Winkle founded Mary's WAY in her then-home parish in the Chicago suburbs in 2002. Schutzman brought it to Indiana two years later, with the first event at St. Luke.

Now, 19 parishes in Illinois, Indiana, North Carolina and Ohio offer the program. With 11 of those parishes in Indiana—seven of which have active chapters in the archdiocese—the state has by far the largest number of Mary's WAY chapters, and a new chapter in South Bend, Ind., is in the works.

"Indiana is the powerhouse of Mary's WAY," joked Winkle, who now calls North Carolina home. "We had no idea when we started how it would grow. But when women come to these events, sometimes the Blessed Mother puts it on their heart to start something of their own."

'Go to Our Lady'

A tragedy calling for deep faith and prayer struck the lives of Winkle and Schutzman again, this time involving Teresa's daughter, Brigette Schutzman.

Then a sophomore at St. Louis University in St. Louis, Brigette was traveling to Illinois on Dec. 31, 2007, when her car lost control on an icy road and was struck by another vehicle. She was given a 1 percent chance of survival.

But with the help of many "prayer warriors," survive she did.

"I'm alive, I can walk, and I am so grateful," the 31-year-old parishioner of St. Luke told *The Criterion* in her parish's school gymnasium on Oct. 24 as she waited for a Mary's WAY event there to begin.

Her mother was present, too, and both listened as that evening's speaker, Gayle Bischel of Harrison, Ohio, shared her own story of faith.

Bischel's daughter was just 20 months old when the toddler was killed in a tragic accident. Although the loss was unbearable, Bischel said, she and her family found that "complete surrender" to "God's divine providence" was the only way to solace.

"God uses trials to draw us closer to him," Bischel told the gathering of approximately 160 women. "Accidents do happen, but nothing happens by accident."

She passed along this message to the women when they encounter such times: "Go to Our Lady."

While the subject of talks given at Mary's WAY events might be serious, they are delivered against a backdrop of beauty, in an atmosphere of joy. Table "hostesses" often use their own formal dinnerware to dress the tables. Flowers, statues of Mary and other sacred images are used for decoration.

"When the ladies arrive at the location, I want it to take their breath away," Winkle said. "I want it to be so special that they think to themselves, 'They did all of this for me?'"

Men of the parish, and often students, serve the guests. Winkle explained that the idea is for the women in attendance, many of whom spend so much time serving their own families, to relax and be fully present in the moment.

'A sight to behold'

So it was for the more than 350 women who attended a Mary's WAY dinner on Oct. 15 held by the chapter of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County. The parish life center on the St. Joseph Campus in St. Leon was bedecked in tones of blue and white for the event.

"It's always a sight to behold," said All Saints parishioner Debbie Yeager, who served as emcee for the event and has been involved in Mary's WAY since it came to her parish five years ago. "The women are just so excited about the evening every time."

All Saints pastor Father Jonathan Meyer brought Mary's WAY to the parish upon his arrival in 2014. He had previously been an associate pastor at St. Luke, where he became familiar with the program and noted its impact.

Father Meyer said he has been amazed to witness the growth in Mary's WAY attendance at All Saints. As he offered the blessing before the catered buffet, he thanked the hundreds of women present for saying "yes" not only to coming, but to following God's will in their everyday lives.

That evening's speaker, St. Luke parishioner Dr. Beth Wehlage, shared her journey of faith and hope in battling a rare form of cancer. Her story was featured in the Oct. 25 issue of *The Criterion*.

The most recent Mary's WAY dinner was held on Nov. 7 at St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg—the faith community's ninth annual event. As in previous years, the dinner was a sellout with a waiting list due to its location in a smaller hall near the church sanctuary.

"We held the event in the [school] cafeteria one year," said St. Malachy parishioner Nancy Sangl, who has chaired the program for the past nine years. The space did accommodate more women. But the school is not attached to the church, and "the Mary's WAY committee believes that going into the church with the guests to pray a decade of the rosary before the Blessed Sacrament is a very important part of our evening."

This underscores a point that Winkle emphasizes to anyone interested in adopting Mary's WAY at their parish. While leaders should adhere to the core elements and spirit of the program, they also are encouraged to tailor it to what works best for their individual parish.

"Mary's WAY events are all similar, yet they have a different flavor at every place," Winkle said.

"But everywhere, the objective is the same: to remind women that they are beloved daughters of God, and that they can look to the Blessed Mother to relate to every aspect of their life."

(For more information about Mary's WAY, including locations and guidelines for starting a chapter, go to www.mymarysway.com.) †



Mother and daughter Teresa, left, and Brigette Schutzman, members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, greet each other in the parish's school gymnasium during a Mary's WAY event on Oct. 24. (Submitted photos by Victoria Arthur)



Karen Thomas, left, and Debbie Fry Rolfes, right, both of Harrison, Ohio, discuss the table set by Lindy Ranz of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, center, at the Mary's WAY event in Guilford at the Parish Life Center on All Saints' St. Joseph Campus.

Mary's WAY chapters are present in seven archdiocesan parishes

Mary's WAY is a Catholic women's organization whose mission is to deepen love and faith in Jesus Christ by following the perfect example of his mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This is achieved through candlelit dinners with inspirational speakers, prayer, fellowship and service to others.

The organization has 19 chapters at parishes in Illinois, Indiana, North Carolina and Ohio, including seven parishes within the archdiocese.

Stephanie Engelman, a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, has attended many Mary's WAY dinners at different parishes for several years, and is "impressed how each parish brings its own unique flair to the events, while remaining focused on the goal: bringing together like-minded women to support them as they strive to say 'Yes!' to the call to follow Mary's example."

Following are the parishes with an active Mary's WAY chapter, plus contact and event information (if available):

- All Saints Parish, Dearborn County; next event is on Oct. 20, 2020. For more information, contact Debbie Yeager, yeager849@hotmail.com.

- Christ the King Parish, Indianapolis; next event is in 2021. For more information, contact Phyllis McNamara, nanam5944@gmail.com.

- Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Indianapolis; next event is on Feb. 6, 2020 (tentative). For more information, contact Bridget Bain, bridget.bain@gmail.com.

- St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis; next event is on May 7, 2020. For more information, contact Mary Ellen Henn, mhenn10@gmail.com, or Barbara Fahringer, bmfahringer@sbcglobal.net.

- St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis; next event date is on Oct. 15, 2020 (tentative). For more information, contact Teresa Schutzman, tcschutzman@yahoo.com.

- St. Malachy Parish, Brownsburg; next event date is in 2020, typically the third Thursday in November. For more information, contact Nancy Sangl, nsangl@hotmail.com.

- St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis; next event is on May 13, 2020. For more information, contact the parish office at 317-787-8246.

For information on other Mary's WAY chapters, go to www.mymarysway.com. †

CRÈCHES

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to love getting out the Nativity scene at Christmas and seeing the big Nativity scenes at church," says Larry.

The collection he and Amy have accumulated "kind of started when I wanted to replace the figures from the set we had that my dad made when I was growing up," he explains.

It was 2016. He'd searched high and low for figurines similar to the ones he grew up with. Having no luck, he purchased wooden ones carved by hand at a shop in Oldenburg.

But he continued his thrift shop search for other items to add to the stable his father had made more than 50 years prior.

About two weeks after visiting Oldenburg, the Higdon's were at a Goodwill store.

"I saw these three camels with wise men," he says, pointing toward the top of a cabinet adorned by the figures. "They're the ones who started it all. I felt bad just leaving them there.

"When I was growing up, [crèches] were sacred. We had them blessed. I just



This statue of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and the Christ Child was found by Larry and Amy Higdon along the side of the road—just after the couple had discussed ceasing their search for crèches and Nativity-related items. Despite several missing arms, the statue is proudly displayed among the Higdon's roughly 1,000 Nativity sets, statues, trinkets and more.

couldn't imagine people giving them away or them getting split up."

So began what Larry calls the couple's "mission to save" Nativity sets.

'Something was telling us to keep going'

They shopped in thrift stores in nearby towns.

"It got to be a kind of competition between us who could find more," says Amy, looking with a playful grin at her husband.

"We bought 15 in one day," she says, shaking her head at their exuberance.

Larry recounts the couple stopping for lunch and admitting, "We've got to stop doing this. It's expensive, and we have no place to display them. We've had fun, and we hate to do it, but we need to quit."

But as Larry pulled out of their parking space at the restaurant, he says Amy called out in amazement, "Is that St. Joseph?"

Larry drove around the block, returned to the scene and there, propped against a metal utility case, was a statue of Joseph and Mary with the Christ Child in a manger. Mary's arms and one of Joseph's arms were missing, all the more reason for the Higdon's to save the statue.

"We didn't know what to make of it," says Amy. "We'd just talked about quitting, then here's this statue just sitting by the side of the road like someone wanted it to be found. We were like, 'Is this a sign? What does this mean?'"

Larry's youngest sister, Pam Brooks, had passed away in 2015, the year before the Nativity hunt began. Pam loved Christmas.

"It felt like something was telling us to keep going," he says. "I think she is driving this [mission]."

'So much enjoyment, and we get to share it'

Unusual Nativity sightings kept occurring. The couple found a unique Joseph and Jesus at a Goodwill in Columbus, then found the matching Mary



Larry Higdon discusses the wind-up mechanism on one of the approximately 1,000 crèches and other Nativity-related items he and his wife Amy, pictured at left, have collected and display in their barn through the month of December. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

the same day at a Goodwill in Greenwood.

Another time, Amy saw a yard full of "free stuff." She stopped and found a large Nativity set.

Like the statue by the side of the road, some of the Nativities need a little tender care.

"We've got a complete hospital kit with glue, string, tape. We call Larry, 'Dr. Higdon,'" Amy says in a humorous tone.

Larry nods with a grin.

"She'll call me to do something, and I'll say, 'I'm in here with a patient performing a critical surgery—I can't just leave my patient,'" he says, the two laughing at their inside joke.

But laying out the crèches is serious business.

"It takes about three weeks if you do it right," Larry explains.

The staging process begins in late October or early November with help from Larry's four granddaughters, whom the couple adopted 11 years ago.

"We were married on July 30, 2008," says Amy. The couple became guardians of the girls—then ages 2, 3, 4 and 5—just three days later. The adoption process was completed in 2011.

Larry recalls someone telling him, "You realize one day you're going to have a 13-year-old, 14-year-old, 15-year-old and 16-year-old all at the same time?"

That time has come, and Larry admits

the girls now complain a bit when it comes to helping set up the Nativity display.

"But deep down, they honestly do enjoy it," he says.

So do he and Amy.

"When we're unwrapping them, we'll say, 'Oh, do you remember when we got this one?'" Some are complete sets that we got for just \$1.99," says Amy.

As the Higdon's walk amid the rows of crèches large and small, they pause to ponder if their collecting crèches is a hobby, a passion, an obsession or something else.

"It's madness," says Larry, who nevertheless calls the display "a barn-ful of awesomeness."

But with more reflection, he again states that "something is driving this. We don't know what, and we may never know why.

"But it's brought us so much enjoyment. And we get to share it with others."

Memorializing Christ's birth, spreading joy. The Higdon's have not just saved Nativity sets—they have collected and now share the spirit of Christmas.

(The Higdon's welcome visitors to come view their collection free of charge from 1-8 p.m. on Dec. 7 and 14, and from 3-8 p.m. on Dec. 8 in their barn at 209 W. Burnside Ave., in Fairland. The collection can also be viewed by appointment on weekdays by calling Larry Higdon at 317-509-9284.) †

POPE

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St. Francis of Assisi set up the first Nativity scene in 1223.

When St. Francis had a cave prepared with a hay-filled manger, an ox and a donkey—no statues or actors or baby, even—he "carried out a great work of evangelization," Pope Francis said, and Catholics can and must continue that work today.

"With this letter," he wrote, "I wish to encourage the beautiful family tradition of preparing the Nativity scene in the days before Christmas, but also the custom of setting it up in the workplace, in schools, hospitals, prisons and town squares.



Franciscans and others pose with Pope Francis after a visit to the Nativity scene of Greccio, Italy, on Dec. 1. The first Nativity scene was assembled in Greccio by St. Francis of Assisi in 1223. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

"It is my hope that this custom will never be lost and that, wherever it has fallen into disuse, it can be rediscovered and revived," the pope said.

At the heart of even the simplest Nativity scene, he said, there is a reminder of "God's tender love: the Creator of the universe lowered himself to take up our littleness."

Then, he said, there is the fact that this baby is "the source and sustenance of all life. In Jesus, the Father has given us a brother who comes to seek us out whenever we are confused or lost, a loyal friend ever at our side. He gave us his Son who forgives us and frees us from our sins."

The magic of the season goes deep when someone—child or adult—gazes upon a Nativity scene, he said. And whether or not they can put what they experience into words, they come away knowing that "God's ways are astonishing, for it seems impossible that he should forsake his glory to become a man like us.

"To our astonishment, we see God acting exactly as we do: He sleeps, takes milk from his mother, cries and

plays like every other child! As always, God baffles us. He is unpredictable, constantly doing what we least expect," Pope Francis wrote. "The Nativity scene shows God as he came into our world, but it also makes us reflect on how our life is part of God's own life. It invites us to become his disciples if we want to attain ultimate meaning in life."

Knowing that some families keep to the essential characters and setting while others add all sorts of characters and buildings and streams and towns, Pope Francis said even "fanciful additions show that in the new world inaugurated by Jesus there is room for whatever is truly human and for all God's creatures."

But he focused in the letter on some key elements, starting with the starry night, the simplicity of the stable and the poverty of the shepherds.

Giving the Nativity scene a nighttime backdrop, he said, respects the Gospel account of Jesus' birth, but also serves to remind people of times when they've experienced darkness. The crèche, he said, says, "Even then, God does not abandon us, but is there to answer our crucial questions about the meaning of life. Who am I? Where do I come from? Why was I born at this time in history? Why do I love? Why do I suffer? Why will I die?"

"It was to answer these questions that God became man," the pope wrote. "His closeness brings light where there is darkness and shows the way to those dwelling in the shadow of suffering."

The simple shepherds, who were the first to go to the stable to see the

newborn Jesus, are reminders that "the humble and the poor" are the first to welcome the good news, the pope said. "In a particular way, from the time of its Franciscan origins, the Nativity scene has invited us to 'feel' and 'touch' the poverty that God's Son took upon himself in the incarnation."

That, in turn, calls Jesus' disciples "to follow him along the path of humility, poverty and self-denial that leads from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross," the pope wrote. "It asks us to meet him and serve him by showing mercy to those of our brothers and sisters in greatest need.

"Jesus, 'gentle and humble in heart,' was born in poverty and led a simple life in order to teach us to recognize what is essential and to act accordingly," he said.

Mary is a model of discipleship, faithfully accepting God's will for her life and sharing him with others, inviting them to obey him. Joseph, too, accepts the role God assigned him, protecting the baby Jesus, teaching him and raising him.

And, of course, the pope wrote, "when, at Christmas, we place the statue of the Infant Jesus in the manger, the Nativity scene suddenly comes alive. God appears as a child, for us to take into our arms."

The whole scene, he said, reminds adult Catholics of their childhood and of learning the faith from their parents and grandparents. Each year, it should be a reminder that the faith needs to be passed on to one's children and grandchildren.

Standing together before a Nativity scene, in wonder and awe, he said, is a simple way to start. †

Faith *Alive!*

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Like a prophet, John the Baptist preached the coming of the Messiah

By David Gibson

The story of St. John the Baptist really begins when he ... But wait! His story is multifaceted in ways that history often overlooks. How should it start?

It typically starts today with John preaching to crowds who came to the Judean desert to hear him and receive his baptism. Perhaps, though, its starting point could be located in earlier times, when Israel was younger and its people began to anticipate the future work of someone like John.

A belief developed in Israel that somehow the rather ancient prophet Elijah would return one day to announce the coming of God's kingdom, serving as a forerunner to the Messiah by helping prepare the people for his arrival.

Belief that there is just one God came under threat in Israel during Elijah's time. There would be good reason to esteem Elijah's legacy as a prophet of the one, true God.

"I am sending to you Elijah the prophet, before the day of the Lord

comes," the Lord says in the Old Testament Book of Malachi (Mal 3:23).

Some speculate that people were inclined to think Elijah could return because they were not certain he actually died. Scripture declares that Elijah "went up to heaven in a whirlwind" (2 Kgs 2:11).

According to Scripture, Elijah dressed in a "hairy garment" and wore "a leather belt about his waist" (2 Kgs 1:8). Similarly, John the Baptist "wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist" (Mt 3:4). Did this austere appearance of John remind many of Elijah, causing them to wonder if the moment of his return had arrived?

John would serve "in the spirit and power of Elijah," St. Luke's Gospel affirms (Lk 1:17).

To begin John the Baptist's story, might it help to ask why the first Christians went to such lengths to keep the memory of him alive? Scripture mentions him numerous times.

Did the Gospel writers convey his story to future generations simply due to a role he had, the function fulfilled by

announcing in the desert that the one coming after him, Jesus Christ, would be "mightier than I," someone whose sandals he would not be worthy to carry (Mt 3:11), and by calling all to live justly (Lk 3:10-14)?

That was a role of great distinction. Still, it seems that for early Christians John was remarkable both in what he did and who he was at a key time in their history.

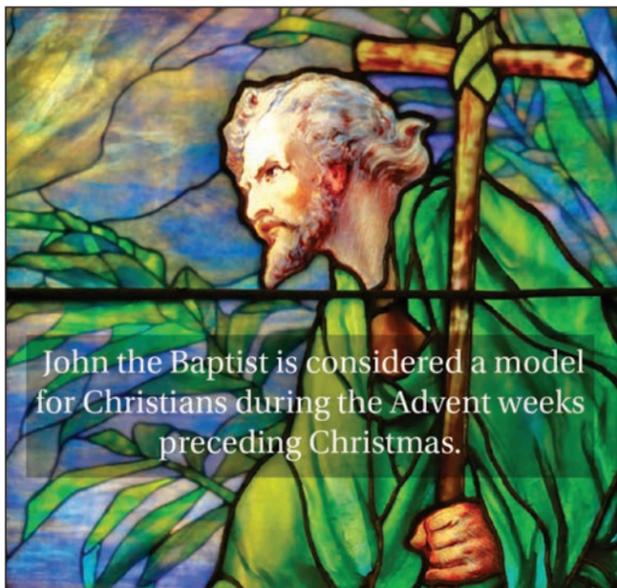
Some today may know John the Baptist best for his violent and unjust execution, depicted in films and opera. Herod's wife Herodias bore a grudge against John for considering the king's marriage to her unlawful. Herod acceded on one occasion to her wish that he have John beheaded.

Her wish was communicated to Herod by Herodias' daughter, infamously known to history as Salome. Scripture says John's head was brought to the girl on a platter (Mt 14:6-11).

But surely it is less with his execution than his birth that John the Baptist's story should begin. In welcoming their child's birth, his parents, Elizabeth and Zechariah, must have sensed that his future promised something wonderful. John was touched by God from the start.

The announcement of John's coming birth appears at the beginning of Luke's Gospel. And guess who makes the announcement? It is the angel Gabriel, always remembered by Christians as the one who bore the news to Mary that she would become, most surprisingly, the mother of Jesus.

The angel tells Mary in Luke's Gospel that Jesus



John the Baptist is considered a model for Christians during the Advent weeks preceding Christmas.



Elijah is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Bernard Church in Madison, Wis. According to Scripture, Elijah dressed in "a hairy garment" and wore "a leather belt about his waist" (2 Kgs 1:8). Similarly, John the Baptist "wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist" (Mt 3:4). (CNS photo/Crosiers)



Christ's baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Greenlawn, N.Y. To hear John the Baptist is to hear the "voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord'" (Mt 3:3). (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz, Long Island Catholic)

"will be great and will be called Son of the Most High" (Lk 1:30-33). Notably, Luke's Gospel says that Elizabeth and Mary were relatives (Lk 1:36).

Gabriel announced John's coming birth to Zechariah. He and Elizabeth, an older couple, had no children. They hardly could imagine this news.

"Many will rejoice" over this child's birth, said Gabriel. He "will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord" (Lk 1:15-16).

It must have been no small thing for Luke to speak of the Spirit's presence in John the Baptist's life and work. Luke also is recognized as the author of a second New Testament volume, the Acts of the Apostles. Its opening pages describe how the Spirit, "like a strong driving wind" (Acts 2:2), came to the

earliest Christians on the first Pentecost.

The Spirit is viewed in Acts as powerful, a unifying force enabling the many gathered in Jerusalem at that moment, from different areas, to understand each other, even though they did not know each other's languages.

To be filled with the Spirit was, for Luke, an amazing gift of God.

In the Gospel of St. Matthew (Mt 3:3), words of the Hebrew prophet Isaiah are applied to John the Baptist directly, clarifying why today he is considered a model for Christians during the Advent weeks preceding Christmas.

Thus, to hear him is to hear the "voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord'" (Mt 3:3).

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service's editorial staff for 37 years.) †

For the Journey/Effie Caldarola

Allow God to be born in you and from you during Advent

It was a chilly March night in a small Midwestern town. Maybe it was windy, because in my memory the Great Plains are always windy.



I had a room-and-board arrangement in the tiny upstairs of an old woman's house. She was sweet, but bordering on senility. She was probably lonely and wanted my company, but I didn't particularly enjoy hers

and, at least initially, wished I could be anywhere else.

I had graduated from a Jesuit university the spring before and narrowly missed out on a teaching job in a large Catholic school in the city. That was where I wanted to be. But I needed a job, and this small town Catholic school needed an English and history teacher. So, here I was, seemingly at Earth's end.

Advent began for me in that small upstairs bedroom. You might wonder what a windy, lonely night in March has to do with Advent. Advent, I think, can be more than the few weeks before the feast of Christmas, more than a liturgical season, although of course it's all of that, too. Advent can be an idea born of hope.

Advent is the beginning. Advent is joyful expectation, when you accept that miracles happen, when you grasp what it means when we say we believe "in things seen and unseen." Mostly, Advent is the time when we accept Jesus. What's the point of this crazy season, this preparation, if we don't think that this Jesus whose birth we celebrate was the best thing that ever happened? What does it all mean if we're not waiting for him?

I had grown up Catholic on this side of the Second Vatican Council. But in the rural area where I lived, Vatican II hadn't yet taken root. My childhood image of God was frightening. Yes, God was loving, but he had a brutal hell prepared for transgressors. My childhood confessions were full of angst, guilt, unhappiness.

This was long before the Internet, and I realize now how woefully limited was my Catholic catechesis. So, when I got to college, I soaked in diverse ideas. I remember, as a 17-year-old freshman, being struck by James Joyce's description of the Irish as "an unfortunate priest-ridden race."

I left college thinking I must be agnostic but, remembering those images of hell, I kept going to Mass just in case.

This small town Catholic school was

brimming with religious sisters and employed two full-time priests. Most of them were young and very kind to me. They drew from me, slowly and in embryonic stages, a new spirituality. They too were in the midst of change, growth and uncertainty in the turbulent wake of Vatican II. Nevertheless, they introduced me to a Jesus I had never really met.

So, on a night in March, as the school year labored on, I surrendered. I discarded my faltering agnosticism and, in some kind of act of faith whose words I no longer remember, I accepted Jesus.

I'm much older now. I'm not sure how well I've gotten to know this Jesus. I have friends who talk about casual conversations with him, but I often find myself sitting like a shy student in his classroom. Or like the character in Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood*, seeing Jesus dart from tree to tree, "a wild ragged figure" in the back of my mind.

Nevertheless, despite me he's been faithful. Meister Eckhart, the medieval mystic, said, "We are all meant to be mothers of God ... for God is always needing to be born." May God be born in and from each of us this Advent.

(Effie Caldarola writes for *Catholic News Service*.) †

The Theology of Technology/

Brett Robinson

Child's impending arrival a reminder of Advent, waiting

My wife and I are expecting our fifth child in February. It's been six years since we had a newborn in the house, so there



are some things we need to relearn about life with a baby. Most pressing perhaps is the role that technology will play in our family life when the new baby arrives.

Six years ago, our kids were much younger. We had a

newborn and three kids under 8. Nobody looked at phones or played on tablets. They just weren't part of our daily routine. Now we have a teenager who uses the computer for research and has his own Kindle for reading and games. Our younger children are granted screen time after homeschooling is over so that my wife can catch her breath.

My oldest son never had regular screen time, and he is now an incredible pianist and artist who loves woodworking and metalsmithing.

He is a digital native in the alternative sense. He uses his digits, his fingers, to create beautiful things that give him satisfaction and pleasure. His music fills the house and his art hangs on the walls, allowing the rest of us to share in that pleasure.

Our other children have thankfully followed suit by developing various artistic and athletic interests, which are entirely analog experiences. But you can see a difference among the ones who grew up with more screen time. They are less tolerant of being bored.

As many others have pointed out, boredom is the seedbed of creativity. If you don't allow a space for boredom, the interior life of reflection, silence and creativity has less room to grow.

This sounds counterintuitive and maybe a little cruel. As a parent, it's hard to tell a child that their misery (their word, not mine) is good for the soul. Pascal said that the source of man's misery is our inability to sit quietly in a room alone. In a world of constant activity and productivity, it is no small act of rebellion to try and sit quietly in a room alone.

Pope Pius XII said that society's stress on material progress has upset the balance and harmony of man. He cautioned that someone who grows up in an atmosphere that is centered on technology will "inevitably discover that one whole part of his make-up ... is missing."

The ability to think, judge and act in ways that are most fully human can be lost in a technological environment that favors particular ways of thinking, judging and acting that reflect the logic of the machines around us.

We are expected to do things very quickly. A text message that is not answered instantaneously is seen as a slight. A work e-mail that is not responded to immediately is viewed as a lack of productivity. We live in an environment dictated by speed. There is an implicit preference for that which gets things done faster.

We are a couple months away from the birth of our son. We can't wait for his arrival, but we know God's careful work of creation takes time. It's not the schedule we would pick, but that is partly due to the artificial expectations fostered by our environment.

We are so thankful this waiting coincides with Advent because it helps remind us of the patient waiting that God has ordained for all of creation. The Savior is not Siri. He does not obey our commands like our other technological genies. It is our obedience to God that brings us back into harmony with Christ in the midst of so much "progress."

(Brett Robinson is director of communications and Catholic media studies at the University of Notre Dame McGrath Institute for Church Life.) †

It's All Good/Patti Lamb

Please God by using your gifts and strengths to serve him

I'd forgotten how difficult it is to be a middle school girl until recently.

My daughter is 12, and she's reminded me that navigating the uncharted waters of adolescence isn't easy.



Margaret shares stories about the girl drama *du jour*, and provides updates that are meaningful in her world. I'll change the names as I provide an example of a daily

rundown.

"Annie was invited to sit at the popular girls' table today at lunch," Margaret explains, as she walks in the door, her phone pinging with text notifications.

"Oh, and Kate got the newest phone before it was even released to stores," she notes, "but I don't think she and Erin are best friends anymore because they didn't talk to each other in choir class," she adds.

I don't remember too much from middle school. I think I've mentally blocked out the majority of those days since they contained neither my proudest moments, nor my best fashion choices.

Adolescence is a time of growing into yourself and bridging the gap between being a kid and being a "grown up."

This year, Margaret presented me with her Christmas wish list in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, complete with slides of fashion models wearing the items she's requesting. This is quite a switch from wish lists of the past that contained baseball cards, football jerseys and basketball shoes.

Each slide carefully specified name brands at expensive price points.

"Am I to pick *one* item from this entire presentation since that's more in line with our budget?" I asked.

"Mom!" she exclaimed. "Cecilia has, like, three pairs of those shoes, all in different colors," she informed me.

I suppose it's worse these days with the Internet and cell phones, but marketers are colluding and there is definitely a "cool kid" wish list circulating out there. Tweens and teens are desperate to secure these items so they can all show up to school in January dressed entirely alike.

I know I used to be in Margaret's shoes, and to some extent, I still am. But it's morphed from overconcern with trendy clothes to other areas of life. Now I spend too much time foolishly comparing my job title and my graying hair with my 40-something peers.

I think we all play the "comparison" game at some point.

I stumbled upon a quote I like by a

musician named Dave Grohl, and I shared it with Margaret.

"No one is you and *that* is your power."

She looked at me like I had three heads and my hair was blazing on each of them.

I explained to my daughter that God intricately fashioned each one of us uniquely, and that we are called to serve him in our own way, in our own place, in our own time.

And that cannot happen if we're all trying to live the same life and keep up with others and their business.

I'd like to thank you, Margaret, for the reminder that we are called to be our own best selves—not imitations of someone else.

"You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; Wonderful are your works" (Ps 139:13-14).

My daughter has encouraged me to embrace this truth, and recognize that we please God by using our unique gifts and strengths to serve him. Glorifying God might look different and far less impressive than we originally thought. But when we seek to please him with a sincere heart, wonderful things happen.

(Patti Lamb, a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, is a regular columnist for *The Criterion*.) †

Seeking Life/Moises Sandoval

Tuning in to our souls and nourishing them for our mission

Timothy Egan, a *New York Times* opinion writer, recently wrote: "We are spiritual beings. But for most of us, malnutrition of the soul is a plague of modern life. That is one reason 200 million people worldwide a year make some sort of religious pilgrimage."



So, he made one himself, looking for "something durable: a stiff shot of no-nonsense spirituality."

To affirm that we are spiritual is to acknowledge that we have a soul. And to go on pilgrimage denotes seeking its nourishment where past generations worshipped, struggled and died. The process leads us to think about our own death, unmentionable in our crass, materialistic society.

Some years ago, I had a small investment account managed by a broker named Phil Genusa, whom I called every once in a while for advice and reassurance. But one day a strange voice answered the phone and said: "Phil is no longer with the firm."

"What happened?" I asked. "Did he retire? Get sick? Go to another firm?" A long pause followed and then he said: "No, he died."

Death is all around us. We sense it in the passing of the seasons, the waning light of autumn, the growing chill in the air, our weakening limbs no longer capable of the effortless miles we walked.

Recently, while spending a few days in our vacation home in New Mexico, one of our neighbors, Sonia Berg, informed us that her husband was dying of cancer in hospice at home. She said her husband, Adam, still enjoyed having visitors.

I went because I remembered how important it had been to receive visitors when I had been gravely ill. Moreover, we had been friends for decades and worked together in many conservation projects. He died three days after I saw him.

Similarly, we feel drawn to the cemeteries where our loved ones lie. On the same trip west, I wanted to visit the graves of my mother and father in the Denver suburb of Brighton, where most of us grew up. My thinking was that it might be the last time we would be able to do it.

In tune with the season's messages, the liturgy annually celebrates two feasts, All Saints' Day on Nov. 1, and All Souls' Day on Nov. 2, in Mexico called the Day of the Dead, a national holiday. The festival harks to the ancient traditions of pre-Columbian cultures, observed for 2,500-3,000 years. Similar observances occur in

See SANDOVAL, page 14

Second Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, December 8, 2019

- Isaiah 11:1-10
- Romans 15:4-9
- Matthew 3:1-12

Indicating the importance of Advent and the message of these readings, the Church this weekend celebrates the



Second Sunday of Advent, rather than the great Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (This feast will occur this year on Dec. 9.)

This weekend's first reading is from Isaiah. The prophet

was unhappy with the turn of events of his time. As was so often the case with the ancient Hebrew prophets, Isaiah saw the misfortunes facing his people as the result of their own disloyalty to God.

His words, however, were neither menacing nor hostile. Rather, they were reassuring. They declared the prophet's firm belief that, despite the sins of the people, God would not forsake them. Furthermore, in due time, God's holy will would be vindicated. Wrongs would be righted. Errors would be corrected. Justice and peace would prevail.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans supplies the second reading. In this reading, St. Paul repeats the basic message given earlier by Isaiah. It is a testimony to God's love. Throughout history, St. Paul maintains, God guided the chosen people to righteousness and ultimately to union with him. Paul sees God as the source of all patience and encouragement. Human failings notwithstanding, God's love is constant.

The Apostle also counsels the Christian Romans to accept each other in love and good will. After all, he insists, Christ accepted them. Christ was the visible and effective instrument on Earth of God's goodness, the model for all human behavior.

For its third reading, the Church offers us a passage from the Gospel of St. Matthew. The central figure is St. John the Baptist, mentioned in St. Luke as the child of Elizabeth and Zachariah. Elizabeth was a kinswoman (probably a cousin) of Mary. Therefore, John was related to Jesus.

From the earliest days of Christianity, John the Baptist has been a favorite figure. His absolute commitment to the all-encompassing majesty of God's perfect order has made him a paragon of devotion.

John was clearly on a mission. Testimony to this is plentiful in the New Testament. Travel in ancient Palestine was understandably rare. It was very difficult and time-consuming. It was unpredictable and risky. Very few would ever have traveled for diversion or leisure.

That John journeyed far and wide evidenced his sense of mission, and he encountered many people.

John was not hesitant or vague in confronting sin. He chastised his listeners, in effect, for their differences of opinion. Self-interest drove them too much. Their lack of obedience to God only strengthened the reign of sin in the land. Thus, their personal failings contributed to the burdens weighing heavily upon the entire society.

Understandably, he challenged the people to purge themselves of this self-interest and sin and humbly to turn to God.

Reflection

Throughout Advent, the Church calls us to receive God in our hearts. The Lord's coming at Christmas reveals to us the entry of God into human life.

It frankly places before us our own sins and the sins of all humanity. John himself was stark and direct, absolutely and completely committed to God. His words are sharp and unequivocal. In like manner, for our own good, the Church calls us to a thorough examination of conscience.

Using the very words and example of John the Baptist, the Church bluntly urges us to put first things first. Following worldly self-interests will lead nowhere—certainly not to God.

Advent's purpose is not just to plan for a memorial of Christ's birth. It primarily calls us to make our hearts fitting dwelling places for the Lord. To be such fitting dwelling places, we must rid ourselves of sin. It is that simple.

Isaiah and Paul remind us that God will empower us in our quest for holiness. God wants us to live. He loves us. †

Daily Readings

Monday, December 9

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Genesis 3:9-15, 20
Psalm 98:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday, December 10

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 96:1-3, 10-13
Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday, December 11

St. Damasus I, pope
Isaiah 40:25-31
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday, December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe
Zechariah 2:14-17
or Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
(Response) Judith 13:18bc, 19
Luke 1:26-38
or Luke 1:39-47

Friday, December 13

St. Lucy, virgin and martyr
Isaiah 48:17-19
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday, December 14

St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church
Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Sunday, December 15

Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10
Psalm 146:6-10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Low-gluten hosts are available for people suffering from celiac disease

More and more people are being diagnosed with celiac or wheat allergies. Because of the particle of the host that is placed into the celebrant's chalice right before Communion, someone who is gluten-intolerant cannot receive the precious blood from that chalice. What is your suggestion? (Missouri)



It is true that celiac disease is now more prevalent than had earlier been realized. (This disease is an immune reaction to eating gluten and can damage the lining of the small intestine.) A Mayo Clinic study in 2012 estimated that some 1.8 million Americans suffer from this disease.

For most of those so afflicted, low-gluten Communion hosts provide a solution. The parish from which I recently retired purchased these hosts from the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Missouri.

Dr. Alessio Fasano, then the director of the Center for Celiac Research at the University of Maryland, had estimated in 2004 that the percentage of gluten in these hosts was so remote that someone who suffered from celiac disease would have to consume 270 of them daily before reaching the danger point.

To accommodate victims of celiac disease who wish to receive the precious blood, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops recommended in their 2016 newsletter on divine worship that a separate small chalice of wine be consecrated that would not be a part of the commingling rite. (At the commingling rite in the Mass, just before the Lamb of God prayer, the priest places a small particle of the host into his chalice as a sign of the mingling of Christ's body and blood.)

I had a petition for an annulment of a previous marriage denied, and I don't understand why since my previous spouse committed adultery during our marriage. Can you help me understand this? (Georgia)

I cannot speak regarding your specific petition for a declaration of nullity (commonly known as an annulment) since I know only what you have told me in your question about your previous marriage.

In the Catholic Church's view, adultery itself is not a valid reason for an annulment. For an annulment, one must be able to go back to the start of the marriage and be able to show either that the couple was prohibited from marrying by the laws of the Church, or that the consent of one or both of the spouses was invalid.

Some common grounds for that lack of consent (from the website of the Diocese of Rochester, N.Y.) are: "inability to assume the essential obligations of marriage for psychological reasons," or "willful exclusion of essential elements or properties of marriage, such as children, fidelity or permanence."

So, while the fact of adultery itself does not render a marriage invalid, it is possible that infidelity could offer evidence that one or both of the spouses had not entered the marriage with the proper commitment required for a valid marriage to come into existence. Practically speaking, I would think that the sooner into the marriage the adultery took place, the easier it might be to show a lack of proper commitment at the outset.

One of the Church's grounds in the Code of Canon Law for annulment is "error concerning the unity ... of marriage" (#1099). As the Archdiocese of Atlanta explains on its website, some questions to be raised are these: "At the time of marriage, did either you or your former spouse believe that it was acceptable to have other sexual partners after marriage? Was there anything in the family background to explain the belief that marriage was not an exclusive (totally faithful) relationship?"

And so, I would say to the writer of our question: If you simply offered the fact of your spouse's adultery in petitioning for an annulment, I understand why it was denied. But if you can go back to the very time of the marriage ceremony and show that your spouse lacked the requisite consent to exclusivity, you might want to re-submit the case to your diocesan tribunal.

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

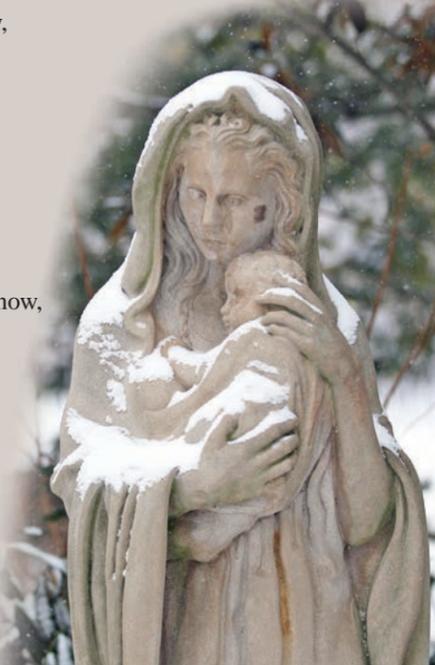
My Journey to God

SILENCE

By M. Lynell Chamberlain

I stand in the silence of the new fallen snow,
Nothin' to hear but the cries of my soul.
Searching for God in the stillness so pure,
Knowing he's here, but not quite sure
How to express myself to Ultimate Truth,
Stammering and shaking as if I need proof.
But I feel more than see his presence here,
Drawing me close and pulling me near
To a love so immense, so deep and sincere
That I forget what it was I thought to fear
As I stand in the silence of the new fallen snow,
With nothin' to hear but the joy in my soul.

(M. Lynell Chamberlain is a member of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg. Photo: Snow falls on March 3, 2014, on a statue of Mary and the Christ Child in Mary's Garden on the grounds of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.) (CNS photo/Bob Roller)



Rest in peace

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

BEDEL, Thelma A., 90, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 21. Mother of Annette Faust, Rose Remmler, Margie Williams, Vernon and Victor Bedel. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of eight.

BROWN, Norman D., 94, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 21. Husband of JoAnn Brown. Father of Gary Brown. Brother of Robert Brown. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of five.

DEVINE, Patrick J., 89, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Nov. 16. Husband of Maria Devine. Uncle and great-uncle of several.

FISCHER, Anthony, 87, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 19. Husband of Wilma Fischer. Father of Jill Bates, Kerri Brinkman, Debbie Julian, Cindy Wahl and Raymond Fischer. Brother of David Fischer. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of 11.

LANE, Theresa, 73, St. Mary, North Vernon, Oct. 13. Mother of Sara Skinner, Melissa Taylor and Tony Lane. Sister of Barb Biehle, Carol Collins, Louise Schlatterer, Leona Schoettmer, Jerry, Jim and Thomas Matern. Grandmother of seven.

LEKENS, Frances L., 98, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 11. Mother of Larry, Richard and Thomas Lekens. Sister of Helen Heid. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of nine.

MASCHINO, Dorene, 79, St. Joseph, Jennings County, Nov. 10. Mother of Amy

Densborn, Peggy Garcia, Vicki Joslin, Annette Pollert, Kathy Wehmiller, Jeff, John and Tim Maschino. Sister of Clarence, Gilbert and Melvin Vogel. Grandmother of 24. Great-grandmother of five.

MCMAHON, Tom, 55, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Nov. 10. Husband of Patsy McMahon. Father of Annie Bowers, Jeremiah, Joe and Tim O'Connor. Brother of Kelle Hall, Gerard, Jeff, Larry, Pat and Robert McMahon, Jr. Grandfather of 11.

MILLER, Jean M. (Miller), 59, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Nov. 12. Wife of Gary Miller. Mother of Benjamin and Jerry Miller. Sister of Camilla Mautzy, Laura Simmons, Edith, Mark, Matt and Richard Miller.

MISEK, Joel, 73, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 12. Husband of Susan Misk. Father of Sabrina Paxton and Hether Wenger. Brother of Kathryn Carpenter. Grandfather of two.

SCHILDMEIER, Mary, 94, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 14. Sister of Kathleen Kempinger. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

SCHNEIDER, James C., 81, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 3. Father of Alyson Canto, Gregory, Jason and Matthew Schneider. Grandfather of eight.

SCHUMAN, David, 57, All Saints, Dearborn County, Nov. 20. Husband of Susan Schuman. Son of Joseph and Martha Schuman. Brother of



Vatican Christmas tree

A worker places a decorative ball as another snaps a photo during the decoration of the Christmas tree in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Nov. 29. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Sharon Bischoff, Mary Jayne Cull, Sue Hartman, Theresa Norman, Donna, Dale and Lawrence Schuman. Uncle and great-uncle of several.

SCHUSTER, David P., 71, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Nov. 17. Husband of Mary Schuster. Father of Gregory and Timothy Schuster. Brother of Diane Bayer and Richard Schuster.

SOPKO, Edward J., 84, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Nov. 21. Husband of Regina Sopko. Father of James and

Michael Sopko. Brother of Thomas Sopko. Grandfather of four.

SPRINGMEYER, Ruth M., 87, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 24. Mother of Regina Badgley, Dorothy Lecher, Linda Meyer and Sharon Siefert. Sister of Joe Lambert. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of four.

THOMAS, Carolyn R. (Heckman), 82, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Nov. 22. Mother of Cynthia Knopp, Nancy O'Donoghue and Gordon

Lamb. Sister of Raymond Heckman. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of four.

WELSH, Joshua Alexander G., 15, All Saints, Dearborn County, Nov. 16. Son of Jessica Welsh. Grandson of Jerry and Susan Covert. Great-grandson of Doris Welsh.

WERNKE, Paul, 86, St. Mary, North Vernon, Nov. 12. Husband of Kathryn Wernke. Father of Taryn Broadus, Sandi Kirchner, JuneAnn Rigney, Karol Speer, Dale and Jim Wernke. Brother of Wanda

Wernke. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of 17.

WICKENS, John, 75, St. Mary, North Vernon, Nov. 4. Husband of Reda Wickens. Father of Scott Hall and Chad Wickens. Brother of Linda Vawter. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of two.

WILSON, Patricia A., 91, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Nov. 2. Mother of Mark and Neal Bowlen. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of six. †

Most Americans support life in prison over death penalty, says new poll

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Most Americans support life imprisonment over the death penalty, according to a Gallup poll released on Nov. 24, revealing a shift in the majority opinion on this issue for the first time in 34 years.

The poll, based on results from telephone interviews conducted on Oct. 14-31 with a random sample of 1,526 adults in the U.S., showed 60 percent prefer that convicted murders receive a sentence of life imprisonment, while 36 percent said capital punishment would be better.

This view marks a shift in Americans' opinion over the past two decades. In the 1980s and 1990s, the majority opinion leaned toward the death penalty. The survey also

is just the second time more people said they thought life in prison was a better punishment than the death penalty; in 2007, they did so by 1 percentage point, with 48 percent favoring life in prison and 47 percent favoring the death penalty.

The current poll, with a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points, breaks down respondents by age, sex and party affiliation. Within these groups there were differing opinions: Women showed stronger support for life in prison (66 percent) than men (53 percent). Younger people also were more likely to show support for life in prison (68 percent) than older people (57 percent). Along party lines, 58 percent of Republicans supported the death penalty over 38 percent who said life in prison was the better option, and 79 percent of Democrats preferred life in prison while 19 percent preferred the death penalty be administered.

Five years ago, the American Values Survey by the Public Religion Research Institute showed that 48 percent of Americans preferred life without parole as the punishment for murder, and 44 percent preferred the death penalty. This poll revealed religious divides on the issue and showed that Catholics, Jews, members of other non-Christian religions and the religiously unaffiliated

preferred life without parole as a punishment over the death penalty. Only white evangelicals (59 percent) and white mainline Protestants (52 percent) expressed majority support for the death penalty.

Catholics in the 2014 survey were sharply divided by race: Among white Catholics, 45 percent favored the death penalty and 50 percent favored life in prison. In contrast, only 29 percent of Hispanic Catholics favored the death penalty while 62 percent said convicted murderers should be given life imprisonment sentences.

In an Oct. 10 roundtable discussion about the death penalty with Catholic bishops, Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City said: "It's really important for our Catholic people to really dig into and learn, study, read the teachings of the magisterium of the Church" on this issue.

He said with the popes—St. John Paul II and Popes Benedict XVI and Francis—there has been "a steady movement toward a greater clarity in terms of the morality and the inadmissibility of the death penalty."

In August of 2018, Pope Francis ordered a revision of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to assert "the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person," and committed the Church to working toward its abolition worldwide. †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

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



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you 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:

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2** Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
carlahill@archindy.org

SANDOVAL

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other Latin countries, many U.S. communities, and even in Australia.

Mexicans go to the cemeteries to be with the souls of the dead. They build altars containing their favorite foods and beverages, as well as photos and memorabilia. Thus, they encourage visits by the souls of their loved ones to hear the prayers of the living, and to dance and feast with them.

We communicate with the dead when we pray to the saints, canonized or not. So it is not a far stretch to believe that souls are close by and in touch. My sister

Lucy, whose husband, Charlie Branch, died seven years ago, senses his spirit nearby.

For years, my son Michael, a cook in Connecticut, had been preoccupied with placing a proper stone on the grave of his grandfather, Harold Gartman, who died in 1974 in Las Vegas, New Mexico, and was buried in Our Lady of Sorrows Parish cemetery.

Decades later, learning the grave was unmarked, we had a headstone made. But the grave could not be located until recently. Michael went to New Mexico to supervise its installation and spruce up the site. It felt as if Michael had received a special mission from his grandfather's soul!

(Moises Sandoval writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Foundation marks 25 years of supporting the Church in the Holy Land

By Sean Gallagher

The Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land (FFHL) was founded 25 years ago to help native Christians of the region where Christ founded the Church to continue to live there under difficult political and economic conditions.



Fr. Peter Vasko, O.F.M.

Catholics in central and southern Indiana have for many years been among the FFHL's strongest supporters. Franciscan Father Peter Vasko, who has led the foundation from the start, recently visited Indianapolis to meet with some of its donors.

He spoke with *The Criterion* about the continuing work of the FFHL, and of the conditions currently facing Catholics in the Holy Land.

"The Catholics in Indiana love their Church," Father Peter said. "And they've become more informed of the

situation that is happening in the Holy Land. They have a sensitivity, I think, for their Church, their heritage, their roots. They know that is in the Holy Land. And because of that, they're the ones who want to make sure that there will always be a Christian presence there."

Another factor for the strength of support of Catholics in central and southern Indiana for the FFHL is that many of them have taken pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

Additionally, many priests serving in archdiocesan parishes have visited the Holy Land and used their experience of the region to shape their homilies.

"That's a big factor," Father Peter said. "Once they get there, they're made aware of the problems facing the Christians there. It's an important avenue if you want to know more about what's happening."

Over its 25 years, the FFHL has provided college scholarships to 700 Holy Land Christians so they can enter professional fields of work.

"They had nothing. They were dirt poor," Father Peter said. "Now these

people are doctors, architects, nurses, pharmacists. If that isn't helping to build up the Christian society in the Holy Land, I don't know what we're doing then."

With its track record of helping young Christians build a life in the Holy Land so they can stay there, the FFHL is attracting attention from more Christians in the region.

"We're getting more and more young people coming to us every year asking to secure a college education," Father Peter said. "We're now very well known in the Holy Land. They know there's an avenue where they can be assisted and get help."

The FFHL also supports the ministry of the Franciscans in the Holy Land who have cared for its many holy sites for hundreds of years.

They were recently given the task for bolstering the ground underneath the "edicule," the part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem that is believed to be the place where Christ was buried.

The two-year project, Father Peter estimated, will cost between \$3-\$6 million. He was encouraged, though, that donors

quickly stepped forward with \$3 million.

"That's another part of the Franciscan Foundation, maintaining the tomb of Christ," Father Peter said. "It's a big project."

Although Father Peter and the FFHL have been dedicated for a quarter of a century to strengthening the Church in the Holy Land, the threats to the faithful there and the motivations for them to leave are as strong as ever.

That doesn't discourage the priest, though, because he, as a follower of St. Francis of Assisi, has taken the long view of the life of the Church in the Holy Land.

"The Franciscans have been there for 800 years," Father Peter said. "We've been taking up challenges in different areas, some more serious than others. The work we are doing may seem like a drop in the bucket. But every person is important."

"We're doing it slowly, but surely. There were 700 families that were going to leave. They're not leaving."

(For more information about the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land, visit ffhl.org.) †

Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Advent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

Dec. 6, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Martin Campus of All Saints, Dearborn County
Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
Dec. 16, 6 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Campus of St. Catherine of Siena, Decatur County
Dec. 20, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville

Bloomington Deanery

Dec. 11, 6-9 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo and St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington, at St. Paul Catholic Center
Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer
Dec. 19, 6 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington

Connersville Deanery

Dec. 11, after 6 p.m. Mass at St. Gabriel, Connersville
Dec. 18, 6 p.m. at St. Anne, New Castle
Dec. 20, 6 p.m. at Holy Family Campus of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery

Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville
Dec. 16, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), at Our Lady of Lourdes
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Philip Neri
Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenfield

Additionally, reconciliation in the East Deanery is available on the following dates:

Mon.-Fri. after 5:15 p.m. daily Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral
Every Tuesday at St. Mary, 6-7 p.m.
Dec. 16, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., no appointment needed

Indianapolis North Deanery

Dec. 15, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Simon the Apostle

Dec. 16, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist

Indianapolis South Deanery

Dec. 11, 7 p.m. for St. Jude and Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, at St. Jude
Dec. 14, 9 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood
Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. for St. Barnabas, St. Mark the Evangelist and St. Roch, at St. Mark the Evangelist
Dec. 23, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
Dec. 23, 7 p.m. for St. Ann and St. Thomas More, Mooresville (West Deanery), at St. Ann

Indianapolis West Deanery

Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. for St. Joseph and St. Susanna, Plainfield, at St. Susanna
Dec. 23, 7 p.m. for St. Thomas More, Mooresville, and St. Ann (South Deanery), at St. Ann

New Albany Deanery

Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul Campus of St. John Paul II, Sellersburg
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany
Dec. 22, 4 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Additionally, other opportunities for reconciliation in the New Albany Deanery are as follows:

Dec. 19 at St. Francis Xavier, Henryville, 5-7:30 p.m.
Every Wednesday at St. Michael, Charlestown, 5-7:30 p.m.

Seymour Deanery

Dec. 10, 7 p.m. for St. Bartholomew, Columbus, and Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, at St. Bartholomew
Dec. 11, 6 p.m. at St. Patrick, Salem
Dec. 12, 6 p.m. at Church of the American Martyrs, Scottsburg
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Ambrose, Seymour

Tell City Deanery

Dec. 15, 2 p.m. CST at St. Paul, Tell City

Terre Haute Deanery

Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Patrick, Terre Haute
Dec. 18, 1:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
Additionally, other opportunities for reconciliation in the Terre Haute Deanery are as follows:
First Sunday of the month at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, 8:30 a.m., and St. Paul the Apostle in Greencastle, after 11 a.m. Mass-3 p.m.
Every Sunday at Annunciation, Brazil, 8-8:45 a.m.; St. Patrick, 8-8:30 a.m.; and St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle, noon

Every Tuesday at St. Joseph, Rockville, 4:30 p.m.

Every Wednesday at St. Benedict, 7-8 p.m.

Every Thursday at St. Joseph University Parish, 7-8 p.m.

First Saturday of the month at Annunciation, Brazil, 9-11 a.m.

Every Saturday at St. Margaret Mary, 3-3:45 p.m.; Sacred Heart, Clinton, 3:30-4 p.m.; St. Joseph University, 3:30-4:30 p.m.; St. Benedict, 4 p.m.; Sacred Heart of Jesus, 4 p.m.; St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle, 4-4:45 p.m.; and St. Patrick, 7:15-7:45 p.m. †

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Help Wanted

Principal

Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School,

Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, East Deanery high school, is accepting applications through January 15, 2020 for the position of Principal. The ideal candidate will value and articulate the Catholic character of the school, demonstrate a thorough understanding of Indiana Graduation Pathways, and have proven skills and experience in leading and supporting faculty and programs in service to students and mission. Applicants must possess an educational administrator's license or have made substantial progress toward this license and be a practicing Catholic.

For more information and/or to submit a letter of interest, resume, and professional references contact:

Mr. Rob Rash
Assistant Superintendent
Office of Catholic Schools
1400 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-236-1544
rrash@archindy.org



School at St. Mary-of-the-Woods

The school at St. Mary-of-the-Woods Parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods is seen in this photo from 1967. The school was founded by St. Theodora Guérin in 1842 and operated until 1969. The school building shown in this photo was built in 1923.

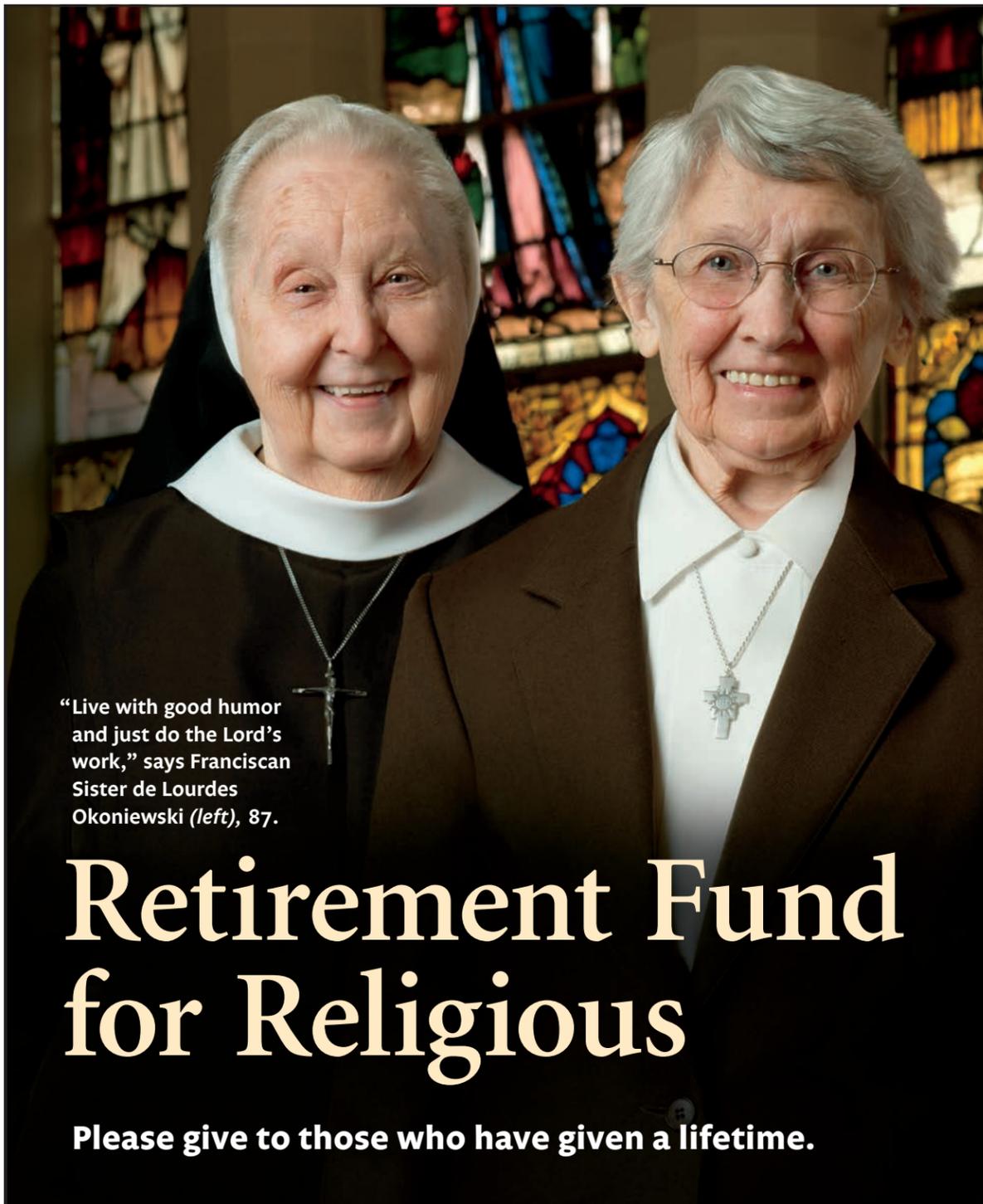
(Would you like to comment on or share information about this photo? Contact archdiocesan archivist Julie Motyka at 800-382-9836, ext. 1538; 317-236-1538; or by e-mail at jmotyka@archindy.org.)



Combatting racism

Professor Agustin Fuentes, chair of the Anthropology Department at the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind., delivers a Hesburgh lecture on race and racism on Nov. 13 at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Indianapolis. His lecture, titled "What Race is and What Race is Not," drew a crowd of about 200 parishioners and guests. His visit was sponsored by the Notre Dame Club of Indianapolis and the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish community conversations committee. Fuentes' presentation was part of the parish's efforts to heighten awareness of racism and combat it. Under the theme "That They All May Be One" (Jn. 17:21)—Racial Justice Through Reconciliation, those efforts include hosting diversity dinners, implicit bias training and routinely offering prayers for racial healing at Mass. The lecture may be viewed on the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish website at: www.staindy.org/church/sta-community-conversations.

(Submitted photo)



"Live with good humor and just do the Lord's work," says Franciscan Sister de Lourdes Okoniewski (left), 87.

Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

Like Sister de Lourdes and Sister Florence Kruczek (right), 91, some 30,000 senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests have spent their lives doing the Lord's work. Most served for little or no pay, and now their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious offers vital support for necessities, such as medications and nursing care. Please be generous.

Roughly 94 percent of donations aid senior religious.

Please give at your local parish December 7-8.

To donate by mail:
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 Mission Office
 1400 North Meridian Street
 Indianapolis, IN 46202
 Make check payable to Mission Office with Religious Retirement on the memo line.

retiredreligious.org