Pope sets special day to honor, study, share the Bible

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The newly established “Sunday of the Word of God” is an invitation to Catholics across the world to deepen their appreciation, love and faithful witness to God and his word, Pope Francis said.

By papal decree, the third Sunday in Ordinary Time—on Jan. 26 this year—is to be observed as a special day devoted to “the celebration, study and dissemination of the word of God.”

A day dedicated to the Bible will help the Church “experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world,” the pope said in the document establishing the special Sunday observance.

Dioceses and parishes have been invited to respond with creative initiatives, helpful resources and renewed efforts for helping Catholics engage more deeply with the Bible at church and in their lives. Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, said added emphasis on the importance of the word of God is needed because “the overwhelming majority” of Catholics are not familiar with sacred Scripture. For many, the only time they hear the word of God is when they attend Mass, he told Vatican News on Sept. 30, 2019.

The Bible is the most widely distributed book, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands.

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During a difficult period in her family’s life, Norah Kinderman, center, and her family have been blessed by the caring efforts of her former high school classmates, including Patty Belden, left, and Kelly Duggins. (Submitted photo)

The promises we make to our best friends in high school are well intentioned and straight from the heart. Forged by the good times, the tough times and the crazy times we share, we vow, “You can count on me. I’ll always be there for you. Whenever you need something, anything, just let me know.”

That’s the way it was for Norah Kinderman, Patty Belden and Kelly Duggins—close friends from the class of 1999 at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville.

Then the different directions of life separated Norah from Patty and Kelly for years, and their friendship became tugged away like a high school yearbook on a shelf.

Yet on a November day in 2019—as Norah struggled through a time that threatened her life and tested her faith—the promises that were made 20 years earlier were lived out in an unforgettable way.

“I just felt their love”

In April of 2019, Norah was a mother of two young sons who was finally pursuing her dream—becoming a nurse who would care for and touch the lives of people dealing with medical setbacks.

That’s when Norah was diagnosed with an aggressive breast cancer that required a double mastectomy and follow-up treatments that continue today. Then in October, her husband Scott suffered a heart attack that led to quadruple bypass surgery.

Recalling those harsh realities, Norah said, “My faith has been tested.”

At that point, Patty and Kelly intervened. After having reconnected with Norah a few years ago, they took their friendship to a new level by organizing a benefit for Norah’s family.

“They were my best friends in high school, but as we got older, we kind of drifted apart,” Norah recalled. “Then our kids ended up going to the same school—Our Lady of Perpetual Help [in New Albany]. We’d get together and talk and reminisce. When they called and said they wanted to do a benefit, it was amazing. Scott and I were both out of work, and our medical bills were piling up.”

Nora paused as the emotion of that moment overwhelmed her again.

“I can’t even describe the feeling I had when I heard about the benefit from them. I just felt their love, and I needed it at that point.”

“I will always be grateful”

The benefit was held at the school—a “family barbecue” featuring games, music, a bounce house, face painting and meals that included barbecue pork sandwiches and hot dogs.

Families from the school came.

Displaced Syrian children who fled Turkish violence sit in a bus waiting to go to Dohuk, Iraq, on Oct. 26, 2019. (CNS photo/Ari Jalal, Reuters)

Texas Catholic leaders oppose governor’s plan to reject the resettlement of refugees

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Texas Catholic leaders were quick to take a stand against a Jan. 10 announcement by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott that the state would no longer resettle refugees.

The governor’s decision, announced in a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, makes Texas the first state to reject refugee resettlement after last year’s executive order by President Donald J. Trump requiring governors to publicly say if they would accept refugees after June 2020.

To date, governors in 42 states, including Indiana, have said they will accept more refugees. Governors from five remaining states that accept refugees—Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi and South Carolina—have yet to respond to the Jan. 21 deadline.

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So did Norah’s family, classmates from Providence’s class of 1999, and classmates from her grade school.

Displaced Syrian children who fled Turkish violence sit in a bus waiting to go to Dohuk, Iraq, on Oct. 26, 2019. (CNS photo/Ari Jalal, Reuters)
Baptism is first step on path of humility, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In asking to be baptized, Jesus exemplifies the Christian calling to follow along the path of humility and meekness rather than striving about and being a showoff, Pope Francis said.

Addressing pilgrims in St. Peter’s Square on Jan. 12, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the pope said that Christ’s humble act shows “the attitude of simplicity, respect, moderation and conciliation required of the Lord’s disciples today.”

“How many—it’s sad to say—of the Lord’s disciples show up about being disciples of the Lord. A person who shows up isn’t a good disciple. A good disciple is humble, meek, one who does good without letting himself or herself be seen,” Pope Francis said during his midday Angelus address.

The pope began the day celebrating Mass and baptizing 32 babies—17 boys and 15 girls—in the Sistine Chapel. In his homily he urged newly baptized infants, the pope told parents that the sacrament is a treasure that gives children “the strength of the Holy Spirit.”

“Don’t get upset; let the children cry and scream. But, if your child cries and complains, perhaps it’s because they feel too hot,” he said. “Take something off them, or if they are hungry, breastfeed them here, yes, even in peace.

Later, before praying the Angelus with pilgrims, Pope Francis said that the feast of the Lord’s baptism “reminds us of our own baptism,” and he asked the pilgrims to find out the date they were baptized.

“Celebrate the date of your baptism every year in your heart. Do it. It is also a duty of justice to the Lord who has been so good to us,” the pope said. 

Summer ministry needs college students eager to share the faith

The archdiocesan Office of Catechesis is recruiting to fill its team for Totus Tuus ministry this summer.

Totus Tuus (Latin for “totally yours”) is an initiative in which a small team of college students—or recent college graduates or spiritually mature incoming college freshmen—goes from parish to parish conducting an energizing catechetical program similar to a vacation Bible school. The program includes the rosary, daily Mass and additional Catholic content, delivered in a fun way.

Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, said team members receive a modest stipend in return for about nine weeks of life-changing work as missionaries of faith.

Besides planting seeds to recruit prospective team members, Ogorek is encouraging members of the Church in central and southern Indiana to pray for the success—especially via Mary’s intercession—of this summer’s Totus Tuus ministry.

“You are the ones that make this project possible,” he said. 

Bishops require mail balloting to OK assessment increase for 2021

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. bishops, nearly two months after the issue was presented to them at their fall general meeting in Baltimore, approved a 3 percent increase in their diocesan assessment for 2021.

“Yes” votes were recorded by 130 bishops—exactly the number of votes needed to pass the measure.

On Nov. 11, the first day of their Baltimore meeting, the bishops had given their OK to a budget nearly $2.69 million for 2020. That vote 211-11 with one abstention, required a majority of bishops present and voting.

But the diocesan assessment increase required instead a “yes” vote from two-thirds of diocesan and eparchial bishops for it to pass. With 195 such bishops, two-thirds represents 130 bishops.

The final vote was 130 bishops voting yes, 62 voting no and three abstentions.

Cheicko Neguchi, director of public affairs for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), confirmed the results in a Jan. 10 e-mail to Catholic News Service, adding the bishops have been notified of the results.

The original vote on Nov. 11 was inconclusive, 111-55 with three abstentions. Under USCCB statutes, bishops not present are mailed ballots to help generate a final tally.

The bishops had voted for 3 percent assessment increases to take effect in 2017 and 2019, representing revenues of $339,000 and $349,000, respectively.

2021 increase is expected to generate close to $480,000.

“The majority [62 percent] of dioceses, this will mean an average monthly increase of less than $150,” Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati, USCCB treasurer, told the bishops in a message prior to the November meeting.

The last time a special assessment was approved, he added, was for the 2007 budget.

Rev. Todd Riebe, pastor of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, appointed temporary administrator of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis until a new pastor is named, while remaining pastor of Christ the King Parish.

(These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.)

Weekly Missal

The Criterion is available in your local Catholic church. Contact your parish for availability.

Phone Number: 317-236-1570
E-mail: criterion@archindy.org
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A life exists for the poorest in Indiana to lift themselves up in the toughest of times, but outdated guidelines keep most of them from taking full advantage of it.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program in Indiana has not been updated in more than 30 years. That includes its $288 maximum monthly payout for families in deep poverty, which went much longer way in 1988 than it does today.

Once again, state lawmakers and advocates for the poor—including the Catholic Church—aim to change that.

Sen. Jon Ford (R-Terre Haute), would bring TANF in line with current economic realities.

Among other provisions, the bill would increase monthly payment amounts and modify them annually using Social Security cost-of-living adjustment rates. It also would update eligibility guidelines to enable more Hoosiers to take advantage of the program, which includes intensive job training assistance to help lift people out of poverty for good.

“It’s time we updated this program to meet the needs of the modern family,” Ford said. “TANF is a great tool not only to help people financially, but to get the skills they need to improve their lives.”

Ford backed a nearly-identical bill authored by Sen. Jon Ford (R-Terre Haute), Senate Bill 111 in this session.

So is the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), which always aligns itself with the most vulnerable in society.

“Crushing poverty can be an assault to a person’s dignity,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana.

The goals of TANF are two-fold: to provide a cash benefit so families experiencing extreme hardship can meet their basic needs until their situation improves, and to offer support through programs and case management to help parents find and keep jobs. Under this temporary assistance program, an adult has a 24-month lifetime limit for receiving benefits. Children can receive benefits up to a total of 60 months. TANF funds flow from the federal government through block grants to the states.

But in Indiana, only a fraction of those living in poverty would currently be eligible for the program because of antiquated guidelines that Senate Bill 111 is designed to change. According to Jessica Fraser, program manager for the Indiana Institute for Working Families in Indianapolis, a mere 6 percent of poor families statewide are benefiting from the federal program.

One of the reasons is that Indiana set its income requirements to qualify for TANF in the mid-1990s, when welfare reform was signed into law by then-President Bill Clinton. Those eligibility guidelines have not been adjusted for inflation since then.

Because of these outdated rules, Indiana has the fourth-lowest eligibility for TANF in the country, Fraser said. This equates to staggering number of missed opportunities to help the most vulnerable in the state, the majority of whom are children. Under state current law, TANF serves families and children who are living under 16 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Senate Bill 111 would increase the level of eligibility to 50 percent of those guidelines.

“We have fewer than 5,500 families in the program right now,” Fraser said. “The changes proposed by Senate Bill 111 would mean that many more Hoosiers in deep poverty would be eligible for assistance.”

In addition, if the bill became law, the maximum monthly TANF payout for a family of three would jump to $513 from the $288 set 32 years ago.

As Fraser meets with legislators to advocate for modernizing TANF, she points out how much has changed since 1988, when the average rent was $420 and a dozen eggs cost about 70 cents. She also uses a powerful visual to underscore her message: a photo of herself from that year, when she was in second grade.

“It’s time for these changes,” said Fraser, a lifelong Catholic and a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, who expressed appreciation for the ICC’s consistent support on the issue.

“We have been so grateful to have the Catholic Church as a partner in this mission,” Fraser said. “It’s important to bring the voice of faith to the discussion.”

No hearing has been set yet for Senate Bill 111, but the ICC will closely monitor and report on developments.

To follow Senate Bill 111 and other priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to TCAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church’s position on key issues. Those who sign up for TCAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Malachi Parish in Brownsburg, is a correspondent for The Criterion.)

Love is never indifferent to suffering of other people, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Most Christians would agree it is wrong to hate someone, but it is also wrong to be indifferent, which is a camouflaged form of hatred, Pope Francis said.

Real love “must lead you to do good, to get your hands dirty with works of love,” the pope said on Jan. 10 at morning Mass in the chapel of his residence, the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Commenting especially on 1 Jn 4:19-21, Pope Francis said the Bible “does not mince words.” In fact, he said, the Bible tells people, “If you say you love God and you hate your brother or sister, you’re on the other side; you’re a liar” (1 Jn 4:20).

If someone says, “I love God, I pray, I enter into ecstasy, and then tosses aside others, hates them, doesn’t love them or simply is indifferent to them,” the pope noted, St. John doesn’t say, “You’re wrong,” but “you’re a liar” (1 Jn 4:20).

“The Bible is clear because being a liar is the devil’s way of being. He is the Great Liar, the New Testament tells us; he is the father of lies. That’s the definition of Satan the Bible gives us,” the pope said.

Love “is expressed by doing good,” he said.
Exercising my right to choose

I was cleaning the kitchen, the TV on in the background, when I noticed a glance of glint and glam celebrities flashing across the screen, the sounds of applause filling the room as the Golden Globes were telecast. I’m a sucker for awards shows. I don’t know those celebrities, and we probably wouldn’t be friends, but I’ve watched their shows and movies, and I enjoy the fanfare of the stories being told to a mass audience. Sometimes I step away from the television, but since I’m at home and away from my work, I’m not watching anything but the telecast.

We also have to be willing to forgive one another for past wrongs while agreeing to start over again in our efforts to build relationships based on justice and freedom.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Katie Prejean McGrady

Breaking the chains of poverty through Catholic education

When I hear that a Catholic school closes or struggles to stay open, my heart aches. There are more than 14 million school-age Catholic children in our country. 8 million of them are Hispanic. If anything, we should be building Catholic schools, especially where Catholicism is growing. At the very least, we should keep those that exist open and maybe even expand applications to the new populations.

I heard a report recently about the organization he founded: Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Schools. The organization was established to empower Catholic families to send their children to Catholic schools if it is completely free.

The organization was established to support mostly Hispanic Catholic children from Sacred Heart Parish in Austin, living in conditions of economic disadvantage, to attend Catholic schools.

More than 150 children currently benefit from this initiative. This is not a single scholarship program but a subsidy effort to help Catholic schools hire and retain Hispanic families to send their children to Catholic schools and pay the costs by giving them a boost.

This idea of “a boost” is what makes it the campaign. The fund cultivated by our own families and our own families’ businesses who everyone invests: families, schools, philanthropists, the parish community and the diocese.

The goal is to fund an “empowerment” effort to help Catholic schools send their children to Catholic schools and pay the costs by giving them a boost.

The idea of “a boost” is what makes it unique. The fund cultivated by our own families and our own families’ businesses is what everyone invests: families, schools, philanthropists, the parish community and the diocese.

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Cristo nos enseña que el amor es sacrificio, no autosatisfacción

Juan el Bautista vio que el Espíritu bendijo el cordero como una paloma y permaneció sobre él (Jn 1:32). “Ahí tienes uno que es superior a mí, porque él ya existía antes que yo” (Jn 1:30). La lectura del Evangelio de esta semana (el segundo domingo del Tiempo ordinario) presenta a san Juan el Bautista como “el Cordero de Dios que quita el pecado del mundo” (cf. Jn 1:29-34). La figura de este cordero se ilustra como un león: el Cordero se ilustra como un león. Remarcar, por otro lado, no significa que debamos ser amables y aceptar como iguales a los demás. En el libro del Apocalipsis, los demás son presentados como “corderos”, pero al mismo tiempo se les presenta como la resistencia ante la crueldad del mal y la injusticia. Esto nos enseña que debemos ser audaces y valientes como los corderos, pero que al mismo tiempo debemos ser amables y adherirnos a la voluntad de Dios. El amor es sacrificio. La paz se logra a través de la entrega; la felicidad viene con el dolor y la crueldad. En la vida, debemos aprender a ser amables y aceptar como iguales a los demás. En el contexto de la parábola, debemos entender que el amor es sacrificio y que debemos aprender a ser amables y aceptar como iguales a los demás. En el contexto de la parábola, debemos entender que el amor es sacrificio y que debemos aprender a ser amables y aceptar como iguales a los demás. En el contexto de la parábola, debemos entender que el amor es sacrificio y que debemos aprender a ser amables y aceptar como iguales a los demás. En el contexto de la parábola, debemos entender que el amor es sacrificio y que debemos aprender a ser amables y aceptar como iguales a los demás.
February 4
St. Christopher Parish, Diana Room, 5301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. Scripture Study on the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. 10 sessions through April 14 (except March 17), 7 p.m., all are welcome, $50 payable in installments. Information: Lois Jansen, miltjemail@gmail.com 317-241-6314.

February 5
Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Sisters of Providence. Catholic, educational, charitable and social services, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

February 7
Women’s Care Center, 901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. First Friday Mass 5 p.m., Father Robert Hankee presiding, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6000, wccindy.org.

February 8
St. Rose of Lima Church, 114 Lancot Dr., Franklin. Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Church. 10 a.m.-noon, free offering. Information: 317-367-5411.

February 11

February 14-16
St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Black History Month Youth Revival, Fri. 7 p.m. “Recipe for Revival,” Sat. 7 p.m. “Revival or Rebut?” Sun. 11 a.m. “No Revival Without the Spirit of Pray,” receptions to follow on Fri. and Sat., meal served on Sun., archdiocesan youth interested in presenting contact Anita Bardo, anitabard@stmaryofthewoods.org, 317-533-6207, registration not required to attend. all are welcome, free will offering. Information: contact Anita Bardo as listed above.

February 16

February 17
St. Rita Parish, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Muskegon, Michigan, 4 p.m. “The Gift of Life,” viewing of the movie I Lived on Parkerr Ave, panel discussion, opportunity for questions with adoption agencies, lawyers, mothers who have adopted and mothers who have chosen adoption, 6 p.m. dinner served, free Information: 317-364-3604, jeannie@cityofpilgrim.org.

February 18
St. Christopher Parish, 221 Washington St., New Albany. “A Celebration of Love,” viewing of the movie, Terrence Malick’s “The Tree of Life,” 7 p.m. To reserve your seat, go to spsmw.org or call 812-535-2952 to request a brochure. Information: provctr@spsmw.org.

February 20
St. Joseph Church, 2072 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. Third Thursday Adoration, interceding for the end to the crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m. Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverrstick Road, Indianapolis, Mass. 2. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.com.

February 22
East Central High School Performing Arts Center, 1 Trojan Road, St. Leon. Ep Catholic Men’s Conference: Putting on the Armor of God, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., speakers, adoration, confession, Mass, ages 26 and older $40 for pre-registration or $55 for walk-in, ages 16-25 $30 for registration or $30 for walk-in, clergy and religious free, includes lunch and materials, free parking. Information and registration: www.epcatholicmenconference.com. †

February 23
Archdiocesan youth, ages 12-18, sharing time, ages 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Registration or to request a packet: 317-253-1461.

February 24
St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, 301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. Eucharist, 10 sessions through April 14 (except March 17), 7 p.m., all are welcome, $50 payable in installments. Information: Lois Jansen, miltjemail@gmail.com 317-241-6314.

February 25

February 26

February 27

February 28

February 28

April 2
Archdiocesan Catholic Women’s Conference: Putting on the Armor of God, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., speakers, adoration, confession, Mass, ages 26 and older $40 for pre-registration or $55 for walk-in, ages 16-25 $30 for registration or $30 for walk-in, clergy and religious free, includes lunch and materials, free parking. Information and registration: www.epcatholicmenconference.com. †

Register by Feb. 1 and 2 for Valentine’s Day dinner/dance events in Greenwood and Batesville

Two parishes in central and southern Indiana are offering Valentine’s Day dinner and dance events. The St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Greenwood and the Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Batesville will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Feb. 14. The couple was married at St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 17, 1970. They have two children: Shaine Harlow and Casey Campbell.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren. †

James and Helen (Lauer) Heffernan, members of St. Mary Parish in Mitchell, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 17. The couple was married at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 17, 1970. They have two children: Anne Simpson and Daniel Heffernan. †

Larry and Margaret Ann (McDowell) Campbell, members of St. Anne Parish in Rushville, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 17. The couple was married at St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 17, 1970. They have two children: Shaune Harlow and Casey Campbell.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren. †

The date is $50 per couple or $180 for a table of four couples. Beer and wine will be available and there will be a cash bar. Reservations are requested by Feb. 1, by calling the parish office at 812-934-7900 or e-mailing olgmarrriageministry@gmail.com. †

Register for the 2020 E6 Catholic Men’s Conference by Feb. 2 online at bit.ly/2N8k65L (case sensitive). For additional information, call 317-489-1557 or e-mail olgmarrriageministry@gmail.com. †
En el Sermón de la montaña, Jesús dijo: “Felices los que trabajan en favor de la paz, porque Dios los llamará hijos suyos” (Mt 5,9). Lograr que la paz sea posible en el futuro es una responsabilidad que corresponde a cada uno de nosotros, como habitantes del mundo, ciudadanos y habitantes del futuro. La paz es un elemento central de la misión de los discípulos de Cristo.

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

La paz es un elemento central de la misión de los discípulos de Cristo.

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days at the former St. Mary School in New Albany. The parish men’s club made and donated the sandwiches, and a deejay played the music for free.

The list goes on, a list of people that helped in some way to bring us a family. The benefit also raised the spirits of the Kinderman family.

“We are a family and friends, and pulled us through a really rough time,” said Patty. “I couldn’t have made it through this time for Scott and myself without this community.” They helped with kids. They picked them up to take them to school and to bring them home. They fed the kids. “I think it will always be grateful for that. It’s unbelievable all the people who have come together to help us.”

It’s all part of the bond they formed in high school, says Norah’s classmate Patty Beyl. “We are also another part of the bond that connects them.”

“It gave us a feeling of hope and happiness”

“Norah is special to me,” said Patty. “I know what’s it’s like to be a mom, and to see her struggling emotionally, physically and financially, we just wanted to help her in every way. Our friend Kelly is a big part of that. She asked me, ‘What can we do to help her?’ It was a call to action. With the school, with the church and our parents at Providence.”

In his letter, Pope Francis wrote, “A day devoted to the Bible should not be seen as a ‘high test’ moment or even a yearlong event, for we urgently need to grow in our love of the Bible and its message and to recognize themselves in the text, bless or commission lectors of the Sacred Scripture, and to further strengthen their bonds with the Jewish people and to pray for Christian unity.”

The pope also suggested pastors provide parishioners with the Bible, a book of the Gospels or other catechetical resources, “enthusiastic in the Bible in order to express the beauty of God’s word and to see it applied to their daily lives.”


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On the feast of St. Jerome, patron saint of biblical scholars and doctor of the Church, who said, “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.” The title, “Apertura Illa,” is based on a verse from the Gospel of St. Luke, “Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures” (Lk 24:45).

The pope said it is impossible to understand the Scriptures in depth without the Lord who opens people’s minds to his word, yet “without the Scriptures, the events of the mission of Jesus and of his Church in this world would remain incomprehensible.”

“The Bible is the book of the Lord’s people, who, in listening to it, move from dispersion and division toward unity; as well as to come to understand God’s love and become inspired to share it with others, he added.

“The celebration of the Sunday of the Word of God also has ‘ecumenical value, since the Scriptures point out, for those who listen, the path to authentic and firm unity,” he wrote. The third Sunday in Ordinary Time falls during that part of the year when the Church is encouraged to strengthen its bonds with the Jewish people and to pray for Christian unity.

Pope Francis continued: “It is essential to appreciate the Lord’s word, to understand the Scriptures in depth without the Lord who opens people’s minds to his word, yet “without the Scriptures, the events of the mission of Jesus and of his Church in this world would remain incomprehensible.”

Texas bishops responded individually on Twitter to the governor’s decision, urging him to reconsider. In a Jan. 10 tweet, the Texas Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the state’s bishops, said the move to “turn away refugees from the great state of Texas” was “deeply discouraging and disheartening.”

In a statement released it “respects the governor,” but added his decision in this case was “simply misguided” because it “denies people who are fleeing persecution, including religious persecution, from being able to bring their gifts and talents to our school and contribute to the gentle, warm, and good of all Texas.”

In his letter to Pompeo, Abbott, who is Catholic, expressed the work that Texas has done in welcoming refugees, saying that since fiscal year 2010 “more refugees have been resettled in Texas than in any other state.”

Norah Kinderman, left, and her husband Scott pose for a family photo with their children Lincoln (in Norah’s arms) and Mason. (Submitted photo)
Residents fear what may come next after quakes, archbishop says

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Hurricane Maria was a body blow to Puerto Rico in 2017, one from which it has yet to fully recover. Then came the series of 5-magnitude-and-higher earthquakes that began on Dec. 29—tope by three such tremors in a 30-minute span on Jan. 7 and followed by a magnitude 5.9 quake on Jan. 11—that has resulted in only two confirmed deaths, but untold losses in property damage. And not only the earthquakes, but their many aftershocks.

Archbishop Roberto Gonzalez Nieves of San Juan lives on the northern part of the island, which was spared most of the worst effects of the quakes. But on a Jan. 10 visit to the island’s southern region in the Diocese of Ponce—he what he could see of it—the damage was much worse. “I got around by car,” Archbishop Gonzalez said. “But I wasn’t able to go everywhere I wanted to because a bridge here or there collapsed.”

Driving around Ponce, the archbishop told Catholic News Service (CNS) in a Jan. 10 telephone interview from near San Juan, “I saw a number of people in Ponce now with their suitcases and looking for a place to find shelter. “I can see lots of damage,” he said. Archbishop Gonzalez added, “I didn’t see many buildings that had collapsed, but you see buildings with pieces of cement, pieces of the roof that have fallen off. It will take a while for structural engineers to make an assessment. The cathedral has been quite damaged. I say it might take a year or two to fix the cathedral.”

People are sleeping in tents and spending most of their waking hours outside, he noted, fearing an aftershock might cause more of their homes to collapse.

Complicating people’s quest to find shelter is the weather. It has been raining on the island. Archbishop Gonzalez, during the interview, said it was raining heavily, and that the quake also has affected telephone and internet service on Puerto Rico.

Another fear is people not knowing where their next meal is coming from. “There are many people without food,” Archbishop Gonzalez told CNS. He mentioned one district where “there are at least 400 people homeless. Caritas has been doing their best to provide them with food. Yesterday [Jan. 9] we purchased $150,000 for our Catholic Charities for that group of 400 or so.”

One difference that Archbishop Gonzalez noted between a hurricane and an earthquake: “One can prepare for a hurricane—there’s a hurricane on its way—but you cannot prepare for an earthquake. It just happens.”

Every day there have been replicas”—the archbishop’s word for aftershocks—“that group of 400 or so.”

For people on the U.S. mainland, “first of all, we appreciate your spiritual solidarity and prayers, your awareness, your concern,” Archbishop Gonzalez said. “Secondly, if you are able to make monetary donations to assist in the relief effort—I’m speaking mainly of food and shelter—that would be a big help.”

Catholic Charities USA has established a Puerto Rico disaster relief fund that can be accessed online at bit.ly/WorldMarriageDay.

Feb. 3 is deadline to register for Feb. 9 World Marriage Day celebration

Marriage Day Celebration

For questions about the event, contact the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life by phone at 317-236-1521 or toll free at 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1521, or e-mail kcarroll@archindy.org.
Jerusalem (CNS)—In addition to a sense of isolation, young people in the Gaza Strip are experiencing an unemployment rate of 80 percent, and most see emigration as their only solution, said Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese of Washington.

“This is a challenge for young people,” he told Catholic News Service (CNS) on Jan. 13. “They are facing uncertainty and insecurity about their future.”

Broglio was one of 15 bishops mostly from the United States and North America—taking part in the annual weeklong Holy Land Coordination visit to support the Holy Land’s local Christian communities. Several talked to Catholic CNS after visiting Gaza.

“The future for the young people is very tenuous,” Archbishop Broglio said. “Basically, the only solution they see is to leave, and this is very problematic, because once they do get out, there is no coming back [because of travel restrictions]. Leaving means an indefinite separation for families.”

Basics such as water and electricity are interrupted daily.

The Gaza Strip has been under an air, land and sea blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt in 2007, when Hamas took control of the Palestinian area from the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority.

The 1.8 million Palestinian residents of the coastal Gaza Strip are cut off from the remainder of the country by the blockade, which also restricts their free travel access to the rest of the world.

The United States, the European Union, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Egypt, Israel and other countries list Hamas as a terrorist organization, charging that it is funded by Iran.

The bishops began their visit in Gaza and celebrated Mass with members of Holy Family Catholic Parish there on Jan. 12. They also met with local families and religious sisters working in Catholic charitable institutions and visited the Daughters of Charity, the Thomas Aquinas Training Center and the Caritas Medical Center.

With slightly more than 1,000 people, the Thomas Aquinas Training Center in Gaza is very tiny, but the educational, vocational and health services it provides to the general population are highly regarded.

Archbishop Broglio said that slightly more than 10 percent of the 700 students attending Catholic school in the Gaza Strip are Catholic; the majority of students are Muslim.

Irish Bishop Noel Treanor of Down and Connor noted that while the threatening new year does not seem to be marked by encouraging signs.

Nevertheless, acknowledging the challenges confronting the world today and courageously finding ways to open them a path to hope, he said in his speech on Jan. 9.

“The protection of the home given to us by the Creator, if reduced or to an elitist concern,” the pope said. “Young people are telling us that they cannot live as they want. At the level we are being urgently challenged to protect our common home and to bring the true common home and to seek a sustainable and integral development.”

He also addressed the political crises in Latin America, including Venezuela, where he said he hoped “efforts to seek solutions will continue.”

“Greater polarization does not help to resolve the real and pressing problems of citizens, especially those who are poorest and most vulnerable, nor can violence, which for no reason can be employed as a means of dealing with political and social issues,” he said.

Pope Francis also expressed concern for conflicts in the Middle East, particularly in Syria and Lebanon, where growing tensions risk “endangering the fragile stability of the Middle East.”

He also called the international community to task for the “general indifference” toward the conflicts in Yemen and Libya, where intense violence “provides fertile terrain for the scourge of exploitation and human trafficking.”

Another sad consequence of such conflicts, he lamented, are the thousands of people requesting asylum who often risk their lives in perilous journeys by land and above all by sea.

“It is a painful truth to acknowledge that the Mediterranean Sea continues to be a vast cemetery,” the pope said.

However, he said, what is needed is “efforts made by countries to share the burden of resettling refugees, in particular those fleeing from humanitarian emergencies.”

Turning his attention to Africa, the pope expressed his concern for the “continued episodes of violence against” Christians, especially in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria.

He also expressed hope for the resolution of conflicts in Sudan and the Central African Republic. The pope also said he hoped to visit South Sudan this year.

Recalling his final trip of 2019, which took him to Japan, Pope Francis renewed his appeal for a world without nuclear weapons because “true peace cannot be built on the threat of a possible total annihilation of humanity.”

“These weapons do not only foster a climate of fear, suspicion and hostility, they also destroy hope. Their use is immoral, a crime not only against the dignity of human beings but against any possible future for our common home.”

When Hispanic families get involved, things change. Besides traditional philanthropic sources, Our Kids at Heart relies on the fundraising efforts of these families. Families pay for their children’s education. The fund helps them. That creates a sense of healthy stewardship.

This is a way of returning Catholic education to the poor, says Father Mark. Poverty continues to chain the lives of many Hispanics. We cannot solve that problem with Band-Aids. The chains need to be broken. Catholic schools must serve as “chain cutters.” The image reminds us that Catholic evangelization is about freedom. Yes, let us break the chains of poverty with Catholic education. Nonetheless, make sure that Hispanic Catholic families participate in the formation of active agents, not just as passive recipients.

(Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.)
Gift of understanding unfolds by listening to those different from us

By Effie Caldarola

“I just can’t understand …” How often do we utter those words in contention, confusion and anger during these troubled times?

Often, what we don’t understand, or refuse to consider, is the behavior or attitude of another person, either a co-worker, a neighbor or a public person on the national stage. And often, our lack of understanding leads, not to a productive conversation, but to a refusal to communicate.

Turn the television off in anger, add a nasty note in the comments section, decide not to accept a dinner invitation, go to bed seething. Stop listening.

We Catholics love numbers. Twelve tribes of Israel, Twelve Apostles. Forty days in the desert, 40 days of Lent. And hopefully many of us recalls learning about the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit in confirmation class. But if we gave a pop quiz at Mass this Sunday, how many could name all seven?

Here’s one gift of the Holy Spirit we could use more of today: the gift of understanding.

Of course, you might say, don’t the gifts of the Holy Spirit relate to things of God, not why my neighbor is committed to voting for the wrong candidate or why my co-worker, a relative or a public person refuses to consider, is the behavior or attitude of another person, either a co-worker, a neighbor or a public person on the national stage. And often, our lack of understanding leads, not to a productive conversation, but to a refusal to communicate.

That’s what the gift of understanding is about.

But how do we pray to understand old Uncle Al, who spouts racist invective at the family reunion? Or understand the person who won’t accept a legitimate source of fact-checking, but prefers? How do we understand the suffering of refugees today, or the taking of life from the unborn or those on death row?

Understanding helps us to recognize why people believe the way they do. Understanding reaches out and narrows the chasm between people by committing to listening.

Prayer is central to realizing any of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the beginning and the end of our quest. Prayer should be our habit when we arise, and our refuge in the lonely night. Prayer continually invites God who continually invites us.

When seeking that interior light that leads to truth, Scripture is a primary resource. But there may be other aids that help you reach an interior spot of peace and clarity. Is there music that especially soothes and uplifts you? It may be a hymn or something from your personal playlist. Another source of insight and grace is poetry. Poetry can take you away from the fray and uplifts you? It may be a hymn or something from your personal playlist. Another source of insight and grace is poetry. Poetry can take you away from the fray and brings you closer to the presence of God.

Poets of nature have a particular ability to lift you above the fracas. Wendell Berry, Jesuit Father Gerard Manley Hopkins, Seamus Heaney, Mary Oliver—their poetry can take you away from the fray and uplifts you? It may be a hymn or something from your personal playlist. Another source of insight and grace is poetry. Poetry can take you away from the fray and brings you closer to the presence of God.

The beloved Irish poet Seamus Heaney said it well: “I can’t think the way I used to think. Understanding of what’s going on in the world.”

The late Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh, who served as president of the University of Notre Dame for 35 years, told audiences that there was one prayer that never failed him: “Come, Holy Spirit.”

May the Holy Spirit, through the gift of understanding, lead us to a search for justice that guides us in prayer, peace and love.

(Effie Caldarola is a freelance writer and a columnist for Catholic News Service.)
No matter the situation, there's a saint for that!

Years ago, I walked into my then-parish on New Year’s Eve and was greeted by a parishioner who invited me to pick one of the small pieces of paper in the box outside. Not familiar with the tradition, I asked for further explanation. Apparently on the verge of the new year, people would pick out a saint. The idea was to randomly select a saint, learn more about that saint, and then pray for this saint’s intervention throughout the coming year. Recalling the tradition, I decided to adopt a saint for 2020. Where else to turn in modern times for a saint but the Internet? I visited the Saints Name Generator website (saintsnamengenerator.com/index.php), clicked a button and found that my patron saint is St. Vitus. I assumed there would be some sign that this was divinely inspired. However, I was disappointed to find out that, to determine what he is a patron—comedians, actors, thieves. On the more random side, there is such because after her own father had been beheaded, he was immediately struck by lightning and killed. Seeing that he was too late for redemption, there are patron saints for arms dealers, murderers and repentant thieves. On the more random side, there is a saint against wasps, one to keep spelunkers safe and yet another who is the patron of wasps in general. (I’m not sure if he’s actually any help when you need a sunny day for your upholstery.)

All joking aside, I love stories about saints. Clearly, they are interesting. But what makes the most interesting, that they were once ordinary people like you and me. They were children, they were teenagers, they were young adults with everyday life while trying to answer God’s call to faithfulness. Although many meet with unfortunate deaths—beheadings, crucifixions and at least one died by a swarm of wasps—they stand as Christian models for us to emulate.

As I researched saints, I came across the following: God is busy, so the Church has blessed some saints to act as “receptionists” to sort through your requests. While I thought it funny at first, I rather like the idea of the saints helping God sort.

As you begin 2020, I hope you find the saint that will help God answer your prayers.

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

Catholic Charities seeks to break the cycle of poverty with comprehensive programming. But for others who live in poverty, it’s taking a lifetime to get away from the last generation’s poverty. In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau states that the U.S. poverty rate remains higher than many years ago. This means that poverty requires more than just solving one problem at a time. It requires addressing the whole person. Catholic Charities programs do just that.

Our approach is to offer life-changing anti-poverty programming to help struggling families connect with resources they need to break from the cyclical nature of poverty. Since January marks Poverty Awareness Month, I thought I’d introduce you to an amazing woman, Kimberly, who lived in poverty for most of her life.

Kimberly said as a child, she remembered the smell of mold and mildew. She said as a young woman, she had no running water and were very unsanitary. She and her siblings would go to their grandparents’ house to take baths. People who are raised like this simply pass it on down the line. And you grow up thinking that it’s OK to live like this. Kimberly told me about the food they had but they were hungry. They ate whatever they could afford. This is where the past affects the present. Kimberly describes herself as “somewhat of a food hoarder”—afraid of not having enough food for her and her daughter.

Kimberly knows what it feels like to be hungry. She must constantly remind herself that she no longer lives that way. But it’s the only way she has ever known. This kind of living goes back in time, too. She said, “I’m now in my thirties, and I’m still haunted by the trauma and food insecurity.” Yes, the long-lasting effects of trauma stick with you. But Kimberly refused to let her past dictate her future because she had never learned how to live. She worked hard to walk with her when she was a teen and young adult. She was shaped not by the commonly assumed “fact” that since she grew up in poverty, she’ll always live in poverty. Instead, Catholic Charities helped her through the trauma, and she changed the past, can she change the future. Today Kimberly is far from her childhood of malnutrition. And even though she has healed much and doesn’t have to live that way anymore, the effects of early poverty and trauma are still a part of her being. She says they have shaped her into the woman she is today. Kimberly’s father didn’t work and works hard to make sure that her daughter will have more opportunities than she had growing up.

“Catholic Charities help me take what I saw and experienced as a child. Kimberly said, “and use that to drive me to be a better person for myself, for my family, and for others who live through the trauma of poverty.”

(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. E-mail him at dbethuram@archindy.org.)

Catholic judges living their faith are under a microscope

Catholics wanting to serve our country in the legal system are coming under intense scrutiny.

In 2017, University of Notre Dame law professor Amy Coney Barrett, who is familiar with the cases of the faith. Sen. Diane Feinstein said Barrett “is in recent years lived loudly within your, and that’s a concern.” This sparked a public backlash, and a cottage industry in selling “The Dogma Lives Loudly Within Me” T-shirts to proud Catholics. Barrett was confirmed as a federal judge, supported by 52 Republicans and three Democrats.

Some said she lacked trial and litigation experience. But Sen. Tammy Duckworth launched a different attack: Pitlyk had expressed “extreme” views in coverage of Catholic fraternal service organization. Their problem: The Knights defend Catholic family life, and marriage. Sen. Harris asked Buescher if he would leave the Knights if confirmed, “to avoid any appearance of a conflict.” Buescher was confirmed, with every Democrat present voting “no.”

In recent years lived loudly within your, and that’s a concern.” This sparked a public backlash, and a cottage industry in selling “The Dogma Lives Loudly Within Me” T-shirts to proud Catholics. Barrett was confirmed as a federal judge, supported by 52 Republicans and three Democrats.

So what is the solution?确实，许多人都在经历这一问题。我作为一位律师，也面临着同样的挑战。我试图尽可能公正地处理案件，按照法律的原则，为当事人提供最佳的法律服务。同时，我也在努力理解并尊重每个客户的故事，试图在法律之外找到解决问题的方法。这是一个不断学习和成长的过程，也是一个不断努力的过程。我相信，只要我们共同努力，我们一定能够找到解决问题的途径。
The Book of Isaiah furnishes the first reading for Mass this weekend. There is the overtone of relief and joy. There is the promise of a bright future. It was all because of the fact that after the humiliation and anguish of being abandoned by Babylon and then after generations of exile that the people were entering a new day of return to their homeland and hopefully to lives of prosperity and security.

Lest anyone think this fortunate turn of events was the mere result of changing politics or luck, the prophet eloquently insists that the plight of the people is improving because of God’s direct and merciful intervention into human affairs. God brings their relief. He had promised to protect and sustain the people, despite the misfortunes that might befall them. They were God’s people. In turn, the Hebrews, God’s people, human instruments on Earth of the divine, might expect mercy and intervention into human affairs.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend selects a passage from St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians. Today the Apostle Paul ranks among the greatest religious figures of all time, and certainly he stands as a most extraordinary figure in the development of Christianity in the crucial time of the first century.

The Sunday Readings

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Catholics are required to confess serious sins at least once a year.

Q

In one of your recent columns, you stated: “Strictly speaking, one is obliged to go to the sacrament of penance only for serious sins—although it certainly is a good idea to confess regularly even for lesser sins and imperfections.”

A

As I stand by my recent answer, and it is consistent with Catholic teaching. The position to which you refer (#1457) in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, referencing the Church’s Code of Canon Law, actually says this: “After having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year.”

Again, though, I make a plea for much more frequent confession, even for venial sins. The introduction to the Church’s Code of Penance states: “Frequent and careful celebration of this sacrament is also very useful as a remedy for venial sins. This is not a mere ritual repetition or psychological exercise, but a serious striving to perfect the grace of baptism so that … his [Christ’s] life may be seen in us even more clearly” (#78).

Q

Since it is now known that incense is medically harmful—causing asthma, contact dermatitis and lung cancer—why does the Church continue to use it? I am severely asthmatic, and a fairly large number of our elderly parishioners are oxygen-dependent. Our pastor will not make concessions, which means that a number of us have no way of attending Mass. (Oregon)

A

At least once a year someone submits a question to this column about the potential health hazards caused by the use of incense in church—or at least raises the complaint that it is bothersome to the writer’s respiratory system. The frequency of the question inclines me to think this issue merits a serious study—perhaps outsourced by the Church’s medical authorities.

Incense, an aromatic substance made from the resin of certain trees, has been used in religious rites as far back as the 15th century B.C. in Egypt. Its use was common in Jewish worship and was carried over into Christian practice, where the smoke of the incense has been viewed as a symbol of the prayers of worshippers rising to heaven. A U.S. News & World Report article in 2008 made note of a study that linked long-term incense exposure to an increased risk of respiratory cancer, and I uncovered one reference to an Environmental Protection Agency concern about the nexus between incense smoke and lung inflammation.

But I would think more research needs to be done for a link between the occasional use of church incense and medical problems to be established definitively. I do remember a 2014 Catholic News Service article, where the Diocese of Allentown, Pa., suggested the use of a certain hypoallergenic incense to prevent worshippers from developing headaches or breathing problems.

All of which leads me to recommend that a pastor be especially solicitous to parishioners’ concerns. Incense is not mandated by the Church at any particular Mass. Why make it harder for people to come to church?

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

Submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column. Seasonal reflections are also appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God.” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367 or e-mail to nhoefer@archindy.org.


STREIT, David C., 62, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Dec. 5. Father of Sue Hur and Mary Rose Lee. Uncle and great-uncle of several.


WASHINGTON (CNS)—CNN reached an undisclosed settlement on Jan. 7 with Nick Sandmann, a Kentucky Catholic high school student who sued the cable news outlet for defamation over its coverage of an incident that occurred after last year’s March for Life.

Sandmann, a junior last year who was at the center of the viral video controversy, sought $275 million in damages in his lawsuit filed against CNN last March. He has also sued The Washington Post and NBC Universal. A federal judge let part of the suit against The Post continue after the paper filed a motion to dismiss it. Trial dates have not yet been set for these two cases.

Sandmann’s attorney, Todd McMurtry, declined to comment on the dollar amount or other elements of the settlement with CNN. He told news outlets that lawsuits against “as many as 13 other defendants will be filed in 30 to 40 days.” Among them are ABC, CBS, The Guardian, The Huffington Post, NPR, Slate, The Hill, and Gannett which owns the Cincinnati Inquirer, as well as miscellaneous other small outlets, according to McMurtry.

After the announcement, Sandmann tweeted: “Yes. We settled with CNN, which gained more than $82,000.00 the next day and hundreds of comments, primarily of support.”

Sandmann sued media outlets for what he claimed was biased coverage of what transpired at the Lincoln Memorial on Jan. 18, 2019. That day, Sandmann, wearing a “Make America Great Again” hat, smiled just inches away from Nathan Phillips, a Native American leader, as Phillips chanted and beat a drum.

The day after that encounter, clips from a video of that encounter went viral almost immediately, which showed students surrounding Phillips while appearing to be mocking him. The clip caused immediate outrage, particularly on social media. But by the next day, extended footage of how the situation unfolded revealed that another group had taunted the students and some responded back. Phillips said he had walked over to the students and the group as an intervention.

After the initial video went viral, Sandmann said in a statement that he had “received physical and death threats via social media, as well as hateful insults.”

Sandmann’s school and the Diocese of Covington initially condemned the students’ behavior, but then backed down as more information came forth and they called for a third-party investigation into the situation.

The conclusion of that report, released by the Covington Diocese on Feb. 13, 2019, found no evidence that the students had issued “offensive or racist statements” that they had been accused of doing.

In a letter to parents of Covington Catholic High School last year, Bishop Joseph Binzer wrote that he would not get custody of the “extra” child he had wanted killed.

Pitlyk’s brief cited numerous medical journal articles and other secular sources to argue that a law demanding enforcement of such contracts against a birth mother was harmful to the health and well-being of women and children.

According to Sen. Duckworth, Pitlyk’s brief “cruelly implied” that children conceived by in vitro fertilization are “inferior.” She had said exactly the opposite, that these children have the same rights as other children and should have those rights respected.

Is Pitlyk’s view extreme? Surrogacy contracts have been criticized by secular feminists, who understand that a coerced abortion is not “pro-choice” and that commercial exploitation of women’s bodies demeans their dignity. In vitro fertilization, which treats women’s bodies as machines, has long been criticized by Leon Kass and other non-Catholic ethicists.

But the brief was written by a Catholic and was consistent with Catholic teaching, so Pitlyk was attacked for holding extreme “personal beliefs.”

Some senators, especially Democrats, should recall that under our Constitution “no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.”

(Richard Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.)

And a powerful follow-up to any statement—“Why do you say that?”—are the questions we should ask our parents, our neighbors, our colleagues, our cashiers.

When asked with sincere interest, they reflect a core Catholic social teaching: Each of us has value and dignity, each of us has an interesting story.

May we scribble them wherever we can: on napkins, in notepads, across the lines and against our hearts.

(Christina Capecci is a freelance writer from Iver Grove Heights, Minn.)

Executive Assistant for Communications

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Executive Assistant for Communications to perform editorial duties for the Criterion, including preparing the Wedding and Parish Festival/Vacation supplements, gathering information regarding Advent and Lenten penance services, publishing a list of new Catholics after Easter, creating listings of special Masses for Christmas, Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday, and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and maintaining information on retreats, events and obituaries. There is also significant interaction by phone and e-mail with individuals and organizations seeking information. The position requires outstanding verbal and written communications skills, attention to detail, flexibility, the ability to prioritize and multi-task and the ability to exercise discretion and maintain confidential information. A bachelor’s degree or equivalent experience in communications or a related field is preferred. Applicants should be proficient in or willing to learn a variety of software, including Word, Excel, InDesign, Dream Weaver, Contribute, Adobe and Adbuilder. Experience in administrative support and communication, particularly involving matters pertaining to the Catholic Church, is required. Proficiency in effectively speaking and writing both English and Spanish is also preferred.

To apply, please e-mail a cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to:

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Retired pope wants his name removed as co-author of book on celibacy

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—At the request of retired Pope Benedict XVI, his name will be removed as co-author of a book defending the celibacy vow.

Cardinal Robert Sarah, the Vatican official who coordinated work on the book, said in an interview last week that removing the pontiff's name would "c breed confusion and raise the polemics provoked by the publication of the book "From the Depths of Our Hearts," which was published in January.

"I have been asked to remove the name of the 92-year-old former pope," said Cardinal Sarah, who has been president of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments since 2014.

In a separate interview with Le Figaro, Cardinal Sarah said: "This is a book that is about mandatory priestly celibacy already begun before the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon. It is about mandatory celibacy." He then added: "Pope Benedict would not think the time was right for him to intervene on the subject because of "not being able to do it in the newspapers."

The book was to be published in November by the French newspaper Le Figaro, which published excerpts of the book late on Jan. 12 and, almost immediately, some people were questioning just how much of the work actually was written by the 92-year-old former pope.

The introduction and conclusion were attributed jointly to the retired pope and to Cardinal Sarah, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments; the book has two other chapters, one attributed to each of them.

The book was to be published in French on Jan. 15 and in English on Feb. 20 by Ignatius Press.

Given Pope Benedict's declining health and energy, many questions were raised about just how much of the work actually was written by him and about the decision to list "Benedict XVI" as co-author of the book, rather than "Joseph Ratzinger/Pope Benedict XVI," the form he used for his series of books on Jesus of Nazareth.

The two authors had decided early on that the text in favor of celibacy, "the second chapter, attributed to Pope Benedict on Sept. 5, he wrote to the cardinal that he agreed to publish a text about mandatory priestly celibacy already begun before the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon. It is about mandatory celibacy." He then added: "Pope Benedict would not think the time was right for him to intervene on the subject because of "not being able to do it in the newspapers."

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