In the wake of the death of George Floyd and the civil unrest that followed, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson released the following statement on May 30:

“The Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis grieves over the death of an African-American man in Minneapolis on May 25 as well as several other recent incidents of racial hatred across our country, including the violence directed at a mosque in Indianapolis last Sunday on Eid al-Fitr, one of the holiest days in the Muslim calendar.

“The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis has set off a wave of protests. As Christians, we cannot turn a blind eye to acts of racial violence and hatred. We are called to do what we can to end this injustice.

“As I wrote in my 2018 pastoral letter, ‘We are One in Christ: A Pastoral Letter on Fundamentals of Christian Anthropology,’ Social justice can be obtained only in respecting the transcendent dignity of man. … No one is ‘better’ than anyone else. All deserve respect. All share basic human rights. No one is exempt from the responsibility to support and assist fellow human beings—whether they are from the same family/community, or they are strangers who are foreign to us in some way. Every human person, as created in the image of God, is a member of God’s family. For Christians, this also means that we are sisters and brothers of Christ and each other.’

“The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has called on everyone to seek greater understanding, and to listen to the stories of those who have been the victims of racial injustice so that we can find substantive ways to enact systemic change.

“As we celebrate Pentecost this weekend, I call upon all Catholics in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to heal the brokenness that has so deeply wounded our society. Let us also pray for peaceful protests that truly seek healing against the evil of racism.”

+++

A ray of hope shines through amid the violence and unrest in Indianapolis and the country

(Edited note: In light of the recent peaceful protests and violent unrest in Indianapolis and across the United States in reaction to the death of George Floyd, The Criterion asked certain parish faith leaders to share their insights, concerns and hopes as the archdiocese and society in general face this latest tragedy.)

By John Shaughnessy and Natalie Hoefer

St. Joseph Sister Gail Trippett sees a ray of hope amid all the darkness that once again descended upon Indianapolis and many cities across the country following the death of George Floyd. Yet before she shares that hope, the parish life coordinator of Holy Angels and St. Rita parishes in Indianapolis poses a question that she believes everyone must consider:

“We’re at a place where all of us as human beings have to ask ourselves the question, ‘Do we really believe what we have been taught?’ That God’s presence is in every human being.”

If people believe that teaching, then they have to see that what happened to Floyd—a 46-year-old black man—on May 25 in Minneapolis also happened to God, Sister Gail says. Floyd died after a white police officer kept his knee on Floyd’s neck for more than}
Church united by Spirit, not personal beliefs, pope says on Pentecost

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Just as the Apostles were united once they received the Holy Spirit, the Church is united by that same Spirit and not by keeping company just with those who agree on a certain interpretation of Christian teaching, Pope Francis said on Pentecost.

Celebrating Mass on May 31 in St. Peter’s Basilica, the pope said that those who give in to the temptation to fiercely “defend our ideas, believing them to be good for everybody and agreeing only with those who think as we do,” adhere to a faith created in their own image and “not what the Spirit wants.”

“We might think that what unite us are our beliefs and our morality. But there is much more. Our principle of unity is the Holy Spirit. He reminds us that, first of all, we are God’s beloved children. The Spirit comes to us, in our differences and difficulties, to tell us that we have one Lord—Jesus—and one Father, and that for this reason we are brothers and sisters,” he said.

In February, the Vatican had announced that the pope would celebrate Pentecost in Malta. However, the trip was canceled due to the coronavirus, and instead he celebrated the Mass with a limited congregation present at the basilica’s Altar of the Chair.

After celebrating Mass, the pope spoke to the socially distanced faithful gathered in St. Peter’s Square before praying the “Hail Mary.” The pope addressed the faithful from the window of the Apostolic Palace since lockdown measures forced an end to all public gatherings.

“Today, now that the square is open, we can return here. It is a pleasure” to see you, the pope said.

Reflecting on the feast of Pentecost, the pope said the coming of the Holy Spirit turned the lives of the Apostles “upside down, and made them ‘anonymous witnesses’ to Christ’s death and resurrection.”

“The feast of Pentecost renewes the awareness that the life-giving presence of the Holy Spirit dwells in us,” he said. “He also gives us the courage to go outside the protective walls of our ‘cenacles,’ without resting in the quiet life or locking ourselves up in sterile habits.”

“The pope also recalled the seven-month anniversary of the conclusion of the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon, and offered prayers for the peoples of the Amazon region where the pandemic, along with deforestation and pollution, has added to the suffering of indigenous people.

“I make an appeal so that no one may lack health care assistance. I appeal to all of people; don’t save up for the economy. Care for people who are more important than the economy. We, the people, are temples of the Holy Spirit, the economy isn’t,” the pope said.

Earlier, in his homily at Mass, the pope reflected on the second reading from St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, in which the Apostle says that the Church, while composed of many different parts, is one body.

Despite the many differences and difficulties, the pope said, the Holy Spirit is what unites the Church’s members as brothers and sisters. He also called on Catholics “to look at the Church with the eyes of the Spirit and not as the world does. “The world sees us only as on the right or left; the Spirit sees us as sons and daughters of the Father and brothers and sisters of Jesus,” he explained. “The world sees conservatives and progressives; the Spirit sees children of God. A worldly gaze tends to see us as unproductive, whereas a spiritual gaze sees brothers and sisters pleading for mercy.”

Pope Francis said that the secret to unity is that it is a gift of the Holy Spirit and that it is important to understand that God “acts not by taking away, but by giving.”

“Why is this important?” the pope asked. “Because our way of being believers depends on how we understand God. If we have in mind a God who takes away and imposes himself, we, too, will want to take away and impose ourselves: occupying spaces, demanding recognition, seeking power.

“But if we have in our hearts a God who is gift, everything changes. If we realize that what we are is his gift, free and unmerited, then we, too, will want to make our lives a gift,” he said.

The state’s order restricting crowd sizes, he said, was a means to “address this extraordinary health emergency.”

A three-page dissent written by Judge Brett Kavanaugh, joined by Justices Clarence Thomas and Neil Gorsuch, argued that restrictions on the number of participants at church services did violate the Constitution.

Kavanaugh argued that businesses that are not subject to size restrictions, such as supermarkets, restaurants, hair salons and cannabis dispensaries, are comparable to gatherings at houses of worship.

“The church and its congregations simply want to worship together,” they wrote, adding that California ‘trusts its residents and any number of businesses to adhere to proper social distancing and hygiene practices.”

Richard Garnett, law school professor at the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind., and director of the university’s Program on Church, State and Society, said the court’s decision shows how “it can be challenging to identify discrimination or unequal treatment.”

“It is well established that governments and officials may not discriminate against religious activities, even when it is regulating in the interest of the public good. Religious freedom is not absolute, and it is subject to limits, but regulations may not single out religious exercise for disapproval or disadvantage,” he said.

In a statement, Garnett said arguments about equality and discrimination involve the question: “compared to what?” And in this case, the justices disagreed about what kinds of activities church services should be compared to for public health purposes.

Kavanaugh said the same rules for stores should apply to churches, and the court’s majority said the same restrictions on churches also are applied to gatherings like concerts, movie showings, spectator sports and theatrical performances.

Gorsuch wrote in a concurring opinion that “it does not necessarily mean that California’s current regulations are justified or constitutional or that they would be upheld after more developed and careful review.”

On May 29, the court also, without noted dissent, turned down a request from two Romanian American Christian churches in the Chicago area arguing that Illinois’ reopening guidelines, with its 10-person limit for houses of worship, violated the Constitution.

Supreme Court rejects appeals to lift restrictions on congregation size

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A divided Supreme Court on May 29 chose not to intervene in an emergency appeal by a church in Southern California to lift COVID-19 restrictions that limit congregation sizes.

“The justices responded just before midnight with a 5-4 vote in the case filed on May 26 by South Bay United Pentecostal Church in Chula Vista, Calif., under the name of the church’s pastor Tony Spell who is trying to reopen the church.”

The church had argued that California Gov. Gavin Newsom’s reopening orders violated the Constitution because they placed fewer restrictions on some secular businesses than they did on houses of worship.

The church wanted to hold its regular services on Sunday, May 31, on Pentecost. Currently, the state’s restrictions limit church attendance to 100 attendees or 25 percent of the church capacity, whichever is lower.

“The precise question of when restrictions on particular social activities should be lifted during the pandemic is a dynamic and fact-intensive matter subject to reasonable disagreement,” wrote Chief Justice John Roberts in an opinion concurring with the unsigned rulings.

In his five-page opinion, Roberts stressed these guidelines appear “consistent with the free exercise clause of the First Amendment.”

“Similar or more severe restrictions apply to comparable secular gatherings, including lectures, concerts, movie showings, spectator sports and theatrical performances, where large groups of people gather in close proximity for extended periods of time,” he wrote.

He also said the state’s order “exempts or treats more leniently or dissimilarly those who engage in religious activities.”

“The precise question of when restrictions on particular social activities should be lifted during the pandemic is a dynamic and fact-intensive matter subject to reasonable disagreement,” wrote Chief Justice John Roberts in an opinion concurring with the unsigned rulings.

In his five-page opinion, Roberts stressed these guidelines appear “consistent with the free exercise clause of the First Amendment.”

“The world sees us only as on the right or left; the Spirit sees us as sons and daughters of the Father and brothers and sisters of Jesus,” he explained. “The world sees conservatives and progressives; the Spirit sees children of God. A worldly gaze tends to see us as unproductive, whereas a spiritual gaze sees brothers and sisters pleading for mercy.”

Pope Francis said that the secret to unity is that it is a gift of the Holy Spirit and that it is important to understand that God "acts not by taking away, but by giving."

"Why is this important?" the pope asked. “Because our way of being believers depends on how we understand God. If we have in mind a God who takes away and imposes himself, we, too, will want to take away and impose ourselves: occupying spaces, demanding recognition, seeking power.

“But if we have in our hearts a God who is gift, everything changes. If we realize that what we are is his gift, free and unmerited, then we, too, will want to make our lives a gift,” he said. \"
WASHINGTON (CNS)—Even as the United States still finds itself grappling with the coronavirus pandemic, outrage, grief and anger at the latest killing of an unarmed black man outweighed caution as hundreds of thousands turned out nationwide to protest and many of the country’s Catholic bishops joined the calls for justice.

“The outrage around the death of George Floyd is understandable and justice must be served,” said Denver Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila in a May 30 statement referencing the killing of the 46-year-old Floyd, whose last moments of life were recorded on a widely disseminated video showing a white police officer in Minneapolis pushing down on his neck with his knee on May 25. Floyd was later pronounced dead.

Four officers from the Minneapolis Police Department were fired on May 26, including Derek Chauvin, with whom Floyd pleaded, “Please, I can’t breathe” as he held him down. Chauvin is facing third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter charges.

“Both the public and the police are realizing what is going on because he [his brother] was a warning signal. ... [This is] destructive unity. ... We desperately need to take our breath away—but to warn us with the coronavirus pandemic.”

Also referencing the pandemic in his Pentecost homily, Washington’s Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory said the incident has complicated a tragic situation, “The looting, vandalism and violence we are witnessing in Minneapolis and throughout our nation dishonors the legacy of Mr. Floyd and further complicates a tragic situation,” said Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Va., across the Potomac from Washington.

They were calls echoed by Floyd’s brother Terrence, who said on a national television show that the violence “overshadowing what is going on because he [his brother] was about peace... [This is] destructive unity. That’s not what he was about.”

Others said the tragic situation was being used for a variety of reasons and was a warning signal.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, Cathedral Parish rector Father Patrick Beidelman and other priests will work on plans to reopen parishes. SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish rector Father Patrick Beidelman and other priests will work on plans to reopen parishes. SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral still offering daily online Mass to archdiocesan faithful

While Church leaders throughout central and southern Indiana continue working on plans to reopen parishes for the celebration of Masses, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis will continue to offer Mass online each day.

First Communion stories continue next week

Because of our breaking news coverage, we are unable to publish the second part of our reader responses sharing memories of their first Communion. Next week’s June 12 issue will include more reader responses.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral is embracing stewardship. We are so proud of their efforts!

First Communion stories continue next week

Because of our breaking news coverage, we are unable to publish the second part of our reader responses sharing memories of their first Communion. Next week’s June 12 issue will include more reader responses.
Every hate crime against a religious community hurts us all

“Religious freedom is rooted in the perennial teaching of the Church on human dignity. It teaches that religious freedom is the cornerstone of a society that promotes human dignity, it is a fundamental human right that follows on the duty of all people to seek the truth about God.” (Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, “We are One in Christ: A Pastoral Letter on Fundamentals of Christian Anthropology”)

The Catholic community in central and southern Indiana grieves with our sisters and brothers in the Muslim community over the senseless shooting that took place at Masjid E Noor (mosque) in Indianapolis on Eid al-Adha, one of the holiest days in the Muslim calendar. Every crime committed against a religious community, every desecration of a mosque, synagogue or church, is a violation of the dignity of human persons made in the image and likeness of God. Every attack against the religious freedoms of one group is an attack on all of us.

In his 2018 pastoral letter, “We are One in Christ: A Pastoral Letter on Fundamentals of Christian Anthropology,” Indianapolis Archbishop Charles C. Thompson stresses that human dignity is essential to social justice. Each and every person derives their worth from the fact that we are all children of God. As the archbishop writes:

“The first key principle of Catholic social teaching regarding the dignity of each and every human person—regardless of race, sex, nationality, economic or social status, educational background, political affiliation or sexual orientation—as created in the image and likeness of God. All are equal in dignity. No one is ‘better’ than anyone else. All deserve respect. All share basic human rights. No one is exempt from the responsibility to support and assist fellow human beings—whether they are from the same family/community, or they are strangers who are foreign to us in some way. Every human person, as created in the image of God, is a member of God’s family. For Christians, this also means that we are sisters and brothers of Christ and each other.”

As members of the one family of God, we have a solemn obligation to care for one another regardless of our differences. As in those cases where religious communities are attacked, it’s particularly important for all of us to stand together in compassion and solidarity and to insist, as the Indiana Muslim Advocacy Network did, that “We will not tolerate bigotry in our Hoosier State and will continue to work with our allies to ensure that worshippers in Indiana can practice their faiths safely and peacefully.”

Provisionally, this year on the Feast of Eid al-Adha, the day of the shooting, the Masjid E Noor mosque was closed due to the pandemic. Although a small group of men were inside praying, no one was injured. According to Syed Ali Saeed, the president of the mosque’s board, “It had it not been for the coronavirus, the mosque would have been filled to capacity …. It’s difficult to imagine how things could have been.”

Sadly, hatred and intolerance can be found everywhere, even among religious people who are far outside the formal teaching of their religions. For Christians, the words of Jesus are absolutely clear: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust” (Mt 5:44).

Nothing justifies the kind of hate crimes that, unfortunately, we see all too frequently today. Why we join with the Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council in expressing “our solidarity with members of the Masjid E Noor congregation and the entire greater Indianapolis Muslim community.” As fellow believers in the God of Abraham, and as Hoosiers committed to safeguarding the common good of all, we Catholics join the Muslim community and the Jewish community, “in urging local authorities to fully investigate the incident as a potential hate crime against the mosque and those present praying inside” (Statement of the Jewish Community Relations Council).

As Archbishop Thompson stresses in his pastoral letter:

“The Catholic Church opposes racism, sexism, nativism and all forms of prejudice against people who are perceived to be different from us, including strangers and enemies.”

Every crime against Muslims, Jews, Christ’s Church and those of other religious traditions is blasphemy—an unspeakable crime against the Almighty God who is One. All of us seek in our diverse ways.

Let’s all work together to denounce hatred and blind violence. Let’s work together and to build communities of respect, tolerance and solidarity here in Indiana and throughout the world.

—Daniel Conway

Reflection/Mike Krokos

Pentecost prayers for peace

“Come, Holy Spirit: you are harmony, make us builders of unity. You always give yourself, grant us the courage to go out of ourselves, to love and help each other, in order to become one family. Amen.”

( Pope Francis tweet on Pentecost)

Law enforcement officials related to the homicides, peaceful protests against the country, then, unfortunately, continues and is looking in some cities—including in Indianapolis—and senseless deaths. The actions of some led to injuries—

It’s not easy explaining how videos show a police officer stepping over the bounds of law enforcement in Minnesota as three other policemen watch, which led to the tragic death of George Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American, who was in their custody.

Sadly, it’s not the first time law enforcement has been questioned about its practices and echoes of racism fill our society. Only last month, the shooting of 21-year-old Dreasjon Reed “Reed”, also African-American, by a member of the Indianapolis Metro Police Department led to the anger of some members of the community. The case is still under investigation.

As tragic as these situations and others similar to them are, we as people of faith must understand the awesome responsibilities of our moments. But what do we tell our children?

Let us all work together and support the peaceful protests that were initially scheduled to take place in Indianapolis, Minnesota, Michigan, Alabama, Washington, New York, Los Angeles and other cities across our nation—protests meant to demonstrate how people of all races and faith traditions can come together as one to show solidarity against acts and situations they feel are terrible injustices.

As Archbishop Charles C. Thompson said in a statement on May 30 in response to the chaotic and tragic week, “As Christians, we cannot turn a blind eye to acts of racial violence and hatred. We are called to do what we can to end this injustice.”

Chairman of several committees of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops also voiced their concerns about Floyd’s death and other recent police actions.

“Racism is not a thing of the past or simply a theoretical political issue to be banded about when convenient,” the bishops said in a statement. “It is a real and present danger that must be met head on.”

As members of the Church, we must stand up to the most difficult right and just acts instead of the easy wrongs of indifference; they said. “We cannot turn a blind eye to the atrocities and yet still try to profess to respect every human life. We serve a God of love, mercy and justice.”

“Indifference is not an option,” they emphasized, and stated “unequivocally” that “The bishops in their statement pointed to their “Open Wide Our Hearts” pastoral against racism approved by the body of bishops in 2018. In it, they said: “For people of color, some interactions with police can be fraught with fear and even danger. People of good conscience must never turn a blind eye when citizens are being deprived of their human dignity and even their lives.”

In our message to our children, we must make it clear that the lotting, violence and unrest that occurred in several cities in the context of the protests caused more pain and anguish. It is not how we as Christians and as a civilized society should respond. As members of the Church, we must remind them an injustice leading to more injustice is not a Gospel value we practice either as individuals or as a family of faith.

The actions of some led to injuries—

even death—and to the destruction of property and businesses to a sense of lawlessness.

We understand the anger many people feel. We urge them to call as missionary work to bring Christ to any situation—

including these situations—to shine a light of peace and righteousness has overwhelmed the landscape.

We must also remind our children that prayer must be at the heart of our response. As I heard a priest recently share during a homily, “Prayer is an act of love.”

We are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, and that tenet of faith is deeper than we understand.

We may come from different walks of life and represent various races, but we are all children of God. As Pope Francis said, the feast of Pentecost reminds us of this truth.

“Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the Earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.”

(Mike Krokos is editor of The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.)

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the free exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God” (Communio et Progressio, 116). Letters from readers are welcomed and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters must 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 which may weaken and prolong a given text. In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers ordinarily will not have their letters published in the same issue. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters to the Editor: Address all letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to email may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
Dios es amor: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo

"Pero, cuando se cumplió el plazo, Dios envió a su Hijo, nacido de una mujer, nacido bajo la ley, para rescatar a los que estaban bajo la ley, a fin de que fuéramos adoptados como hijos. Ustedes ya son hijos. Dios ha enviado a nuestros corazones el Espíritu de su Hijo, que clama: 'Abba! Padre!' Así que ya no eres esclavo, sino hijo; y, como eres hijo, Dios te ha hecho también heredero" (Gal 4:4-7).

Este domingo 7 de junio celebramos la solemdad de la Santísima Trinidad. Esta gran fiesta, que ocurre cada año el domingo siguiente a Pentecostés, fundamenta el resto del año litúrgico (Tiempo Ordinario) en el misterio central de nuestra fe. Creemos en un Dios que es la fuente, el fundamento y la meta de todas las cosas visibles e invisibles y, al mismo tiempo, creemos que este único Dios es una comunión amorosa de personas: el Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo. Esta es la paradoja unida: la perfecta unidad en la diversidad, un Dios en tres personas. El Catecumen de la Iglesia Católica nos enseña que "al enviar en la plenitud de los tiempos a su Hijo único y al Espíritu de Amor, Dios revela su secreto más íntimo. El mismo es una eterna comunicación de amor: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo, y nos ha destinado a participar en Él" (2 Cor 13:11-13).”

“God is love: Father, Son and Holy Spirit

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption. As proof that you are children, God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God" (Gal 4:4-7).

This Sunday, June 7, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. This great feast, which comes every year on the Sunday following Pentecost, grounds the rest of the liturgical year (Ordinary Time) in the central mystery of our faith. We believe in one God who is the source, ground and goal of all things visible and invisible. And, at the same time, we believe that this one God is a loving communion of persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is the divine paradox: perfect unity in diversity, one God in three persons.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that "by sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret: God himself is an eternal exchange of love: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange" (2 Cor 13:11-13). We are invited, and challenged, to rejoice, to change our ways, and to encourage one another and live in peace among one another. Through the divine graces that make it possible for us to "mend our ways" and believe in the transforming power of God’s love, we can be united with God—now and in the life to come.

As St. John’s Gospel makes clear (Jn 3:17-18), God does not wish to condemn the world or anything created by his divine love. God wishes to be united with us in love and in peace. The choice is ours. “So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God” (Gal 4:7). We are free to accept or reject the love which alone makes lasting joy possible.

On this Trinity Sunday, let’s thank God for revealing to us ‘his innermost secret.’ Let’s ask him to help us recognize the gift of his love and mercy as it is expressed most profoundly in the mystery of the Trinity.

Let’s pray for the grace to believe in God’s ‘eternal exchange of love’ so that we, too, can share in this great mystery of faith.†
Are you searching for a new career? Check us out at: kofc.org/careers

LIFE INSURANCE • DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE • LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE • RETIREMENT ANNUITIES

Knights of Columbus®
INSURANCE
YOUR SHIELD FOR LIFE®

Phillip Stackowicz, FIFC
General Agent
574-282-1082
philip.stackowicz@kofc.org
kofc.org/joinus

Check us out: www.kofcinsuranceIN.com

Marriage ANNOUNCEMENTS

Be a part of our Fall Marriage Edition

July 10, 2020, issue of The Criterion

Couples who are planning to be married between July 10 and Dec. 31, 2020, in a marriage that is recognized as a valid sacramental or valid natural marriage, or couples who were wed between Jan. 1 and July 9, 2020, in such a recognized marriage and did not have their engagement announcement in The Criterion are invited to submit the information for the upcoming July 10 Fall Marriage Edition. Announcements can be submitted using the form below, or electronically at www.archindy.org/engagements.

E-mailed photos
Photos should be saved in jpg format and be at least 500 kb. Color photos are preferred. We recommend sending a photo where the couple’s faces are close to each other. Please send the photo as an attachment in an e-mail to alewis@archindy.org. Subject line: Fall Marriage (Last name). In the e-mail, please include the information in the form located below.

If it is not possible to e-mail a photo, a photo can be mailed with the bottom form. Please no photocopy photos. To have the photo returned, please include a return addressed envelope with a postage stamp on it.

Deadline
All announcements and photos must be received by 10 a.m. on Friday, June 26, 2020. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date.)

Clip and mail to: BRIDES, The Criterion, ATTN: Ann Lewis, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Deadline with photos: Friday, June 26, 2020 at 10 a.m.

Please print or type:
Name of Bride (first, middle, last) Daytime Phone
Mailing Address City State Zip Code
Name of Bride's Parents (first, last) City State
Name of Bridegroom (first, middle, last) Name of Bridegroom's Parents (first, last) City State
Wedding Date Church City State

— Use this form to furnish information —

Photo Enclosed
Return photo
No Picture

Signature of person furnishing information     Relationship Daytime Phone

Thomas and Catherine (Faker) Daily, members of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on June 11. The couple was married in Holy Spirit Church in Indianapolis on June 11, 1960. They have three children: Chris, Tim and Tony Daily. The couple also has nine grandchildren. †

Willard and Linda (Kemper) Kneuven, members of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on May 30. The couple was married in the former St. Martin Church in Yorkville (now a campus of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County) on May 30, 1960. They have three children: Randy, Rick and Ron Kneuven. The couple also has seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. †

George and Mary Ellen (Hollinden) Wehrle, members of St. Malachi Parish in Brownsburg, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on June 4. The couple was married in St. Ferdinand Church in Ferdinand, Ind. (Evansville Diocese), on June 4, 1955. They have two children: Chris and Curt Wehrle. The couple also has four grandchildren. †

Leo and Margaret (Ruhlman) Hartman, members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on June 10. The couple was married in the former Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis on June 10, 1950. They have two children: Susie Thompson and Marty Hartman. The couple also has eight grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. †

VIPs

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to bit.ly/2M4MQms or call 317-236-1583.

Couples who are planning to be married between July 10 and Dec. 31, 2020, in a marriage that is recognized as a valid sacramental or valid natural marriage, or couples who were wed between Jan. 1 and July 9, 2020, in such a recognized marriage and did not have their engagement announcement in The Criterion are invited to submit the information for the upcoming July 10 Fall Marriage Edition. Announcements can be submitted using the form below, or electronically at www.archindy.org/engagements.

E-mailed photos
Photos should be saved in jpg format and be at least 500 kb. Color photos are preferred. We recommend sending a photo where the couple’s faces are close to each other. Please send the photo as an attachment in an e-mail to alewis@archindy.org. Subject line: Fall Marriage (Last name). In the e-mail, please include the information in the form located below.

If it is not possible to e-mail a photo, a photo can be mailed with the bottom form. Please no photocopy photos. To have the photo returned, please include a return addressed envelope with a postage stamp on it.

Deadline
All announcements and photos must be received by 10 a.m. on Friday, June 26, 2020. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date.)

Clip and mail to: BRIDES, The Criterion, ATTN: Ann Lewis, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Deadline with photos: Friday, June 26, 2020 at 10 a.m.

Please print or type:
Name of Bride (first, middle, last) Daytime Phone
Mailing Address City State Zip Code
Name of Bride's Parents (first, last) City State
Name of Bridegroom (first, middle, last) Name of Bridegroom's Parents (first, last) City State
Wedding Date Church City State

— Use this form to furnish information —

Photo Enclosed
Return photo
No Picture

Signature of person furnishing information     Relationship Daytime Phone

Thomas and Catherine (Faker) Daily, members of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on June 11. The couple was married in Holy Spirit Church in Indianapolis on June 11, 1960. They have three children: Chris, Tim and Tony Daily. The couple also has nine grandchildren. †

Willard and Linda (Kemper) Kneuven, members of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on May 30. The couple was married in the former St. Martin Church in Yorkville (now a campus of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County) on May 30, 1960. They have three children: Randy, Rick and Ron Kneuven. The couple also has seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. †

George and Mary Ellen (Hollinden) Wehrle, members of St. Malachi Parish in Brownsburg, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on June 4. The couple was married in St. Ferdinand Church in Ferdinand, Ind. (Evansville Diocese), on June 4, 1955. They have two children: Chris and Curt Wehrle. The couple also has four grandchildren. †

Leo and Margaret (Ruhlman) Hartman, members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on June 10. The couple was married in the former Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis on June 10, 1950. They have two children: Susie Thompson and Marty Hartman. The couple also has eight grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. †
COVID-19 pandemic has affected grieving for those experiencing loss

By Fr. Herbert Weber

Three weeks after her husband died, I called her widow to see how she was doing. Sadly, the man had died shortly after the state had put a shelter-in-place restriction on most gatherings because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The woman was eager to talk and filled me in on how the kids, all young adults, were doing since their father’s death.

As the phone conversation continued, we talked about the very brief gathering at the funeral home three days after the death.

At that time, I had made a virtual appearance with a Scripture reading, a shared reflection and a prayer. Everything else, including a memorial Mass, will take place once it is considered safe to have larger gatherings.

Before we concluded, the widow told me that, although she wasn’t sure what other women experienced when their husbands died, she felt very unsettled and hoped the funeral would help her grieving. In many ways, her grief work was being delayed.

Very likely, this woman was correct in what she said about the need to have a funeral Mass. Although they do not take away grief, funerals often transform grief with a process that provides hope. This seems to be especially true with Catholic funeral Masses.

After decades of pastoralizing and hundreds of funerals, I have discovered that the Catholic funeral Mass, with or without the body present, can provide a roadmap for families in their grief process.

The very essence of the Mass—with the emphasis on the paschal mystery of death and resurrection—guides people out of numbness into more firm belief. This year, however, the coronavirus pandemic has caused many funerals to be postponed, eliminated or reduced to a brief burial service. Consequently, the always-hard grief process has been put on hold and become a more treacherous road to navigate.

Nonetheless, grieving is necessary and can still take place.

There seems to be an innate need for ritual, and the steps that families take after a death are often full of ritual. The way children write a parent’s obituary, the choices spouses are required to make regarding funeral plans and the review of both the Scriptures and the music for a funeral Mass—all these allow families to participate in honoring the deceased.

If a funeral is postponed, however, that does not necessarily mean these steps have to be shelved. In fact, it can be helpful for families to take the time and prayerfully read the Scripture passages available for funeral liturgies.

Working together or alone, family members can also construct their own tribute to the recently deceased, something that can be shared online or with close-by family. Stories from each person’s perspective need to be told, and memories can be shared. Family members can even write a prayer of commendation of their loved one into the hands of God.

While such steps in a time like this marked by so many limits and uncertainties can be helpful to a degree, a memorial Mass should be scheduled as soon as possible. The healing grace that God offers to the grieving through such liturgies should not be forgotten.

Part of the challenge of any delayed funeral option is that people feel they are being overlooked or neglected. Yet that is not what happens with emotions. Not tending to them can lead to them becoming confused or exaggerated. Sometimes issues that could be easily dealt with become insurmountable.

In a recent conversation I had with someone whose friend had died, she said she so wanted to offer a hug to each of the family members of her friend. Instead, she had to settle for the use of phone calls, notes and online messages.

And it is not merely family friends that seem to be missing out; most families of deceased loved ones are also reassured by visits, kind words and physical proximity after a death. Perhaps the hardest part is more than not being able to move ahead with a funeral or even to have the direct physical contact that is often reassuring. The most challenging part may be the fact that this personal loss is taking place in the midst of a larger universal loss.

People are suffering in many ways. There are outbreaks of the virus. Others are hurting financially. And almost everyone has a certain amount of fear creeping into their lives.

When the entire world is in a state of anguish, a family’s personal loss gets swallowed up. One almost feels that his or her personal loss pales in contrast to the bigger picture.

It’s like the woman who told me years ago that she had great trouble grieving the death of her father. When I asked why, she said it was because he died on Nov. 22, 1963, the same day that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. In the wake of national crisis, she had trouble dealing with her personal loss.

When there is so much pain, a person’s personal tragedy can go unnoticed. When others do not recognize that individual loss, the hurting person has to deal with it alone.

Death is a reality for everyone. The dying process is always challenging. It can be so overwhelming when faced alone. Dealing with such loss in a time of pandemic can be especially challenging.

For that reason, faith communities and ministers have to be especially dedicated to reaching out to families of the deceased at this time.

(Father Herbert Weber is founding pastor of St. John XXIII Parish in Perrysburg, Ohio. His weekly podcast can be found at教堂.)
Pastoral Ministries/Madison Cipoletti

What type of ministry can survive a global pandemic?

During the past few months, to varying degrees, we have experienced the worry, disbelief and uncertainty that come with a crisis. Throughout my life, when I have found myself asking, “Who is God?” or “What is happening right now because we are stuck in this?” I find peace and comfort in one of my favorite prayers: “O Lord, you have searched me and known me.”

So, through the lens of faith and hope in God’s mysterious ability to make good come out of evil, I’d like to share a branch of our ministry that has been essentially untouched by the pandemic.

In case you are unfamiliar, the archdiocesan Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry is charged with serving 18-39-year-olds. We work with parishes throughout central and southern Indiana to help minister to the young adults in their parish communities.

In Indianapolis, we have a centralized outreach called InCollege Catholic. We’re trying to replicate in other places of our archdiocese. IndyCatholic gatherings for various large group events (250 people or more) throughout the year.

Large group events, because of COVID-19, are even now in the later phases of re-opening plans. Our team has had countless conversations with the public about what to do in planning these large events when the future is so unknown and restrictions are still in place.

However, there is one branch of our ministry that was not stifled, but was instead strengthened throughout the pandemic. And that is small group ministry.

Rather than having to cancel or postpone small group ministry, two weeks into the shutdown, we trained eight new leaders who joined the ranks of our 30 existing leaders throughout the archdiocese.

Those new leaders now serve more than 50 young adults by meeting weekly online and discussing the Scriptures together. No contingency plans or detailed procedures were needed: groups simply transitioned to meeting together online. Francis Chan, a well-known evangelistic preacher, has referenced a need for small group ministry. He illustrates his point by looking at religious history in both Russia and China.

When Russia fell under harsh religious persecution, the Church, which had been based around the building and priests alone was devastated and today is essentially non-existent. In China, however, the laity were empowered to not just follow leaders, but to be leaders. Churches in China were centered around small Christian communities, and to this day, the underground Church in China continues to grow.

When challenges like religious persecution or pandemics arise, small group ministry allows us to continue developing our faith within the community. I’m not suggesting that there is no place for large group ministry, but I have experienced the power of small group ministry. What type of ministry are we investing our resources in as a Church and as an individual follower of Jesus? Just imagine: What would the Church in the United States look like if all Sunday Mass-goers had a band of prayer warriors for each other in a small group community? How could you grow by gathering with close friends in your network and actually discuss the Scriptures to your everyday life?

Imagining a Church rooted in small group ministry gives me hope for any future crisis our world or Church may face.

(Madison Cipoletti is the director of the archdiocesan Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry in the Pastoral Ministries Secretariat. If you would like more information about small group ministry, she can be reached at madison.cipoletti@indycatholic.org. For more information, visit www.catholicnews.org or indycatholic.org.)

The Technology of Technology/Brett Robinson

We are embodied creatures and part of Christ’s mystical body. Recent events have shifted a lot more attention to our bodies, as we wear masks and compulsive hand-washing have become common. We’ve been reminded that we are dust and to dust we shall return.

Remembering that we are embodied creatures might help us ponder the crisis right now because we have been passing through an age of “weightlessness” in ways we come with spending lots of time online. We have lost the weight and physicality of body, pets, personal space, newspapers, magazines, even ourselves! As students and parents sit through countless Zoom meetings, the one room is there but not really there, a ghost on a screen.

As Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan used to say, when communication happens at the speed of light, everything is nobody. Everybody becomes a “no body.”

The word “communication” was used to mean the physical transport of goods on a ship or train. It has taken on a much broader meaning now that we communicate online, we don’t send a physical message (like a letter or a photograph), we send a “signal” (as in our bodies).

As I write this, I wonder about all the social media, online experiences and passionate thoughts that have been taken up into the cloud for all the world to see. Images, conversations and ideas, but no bodies.

Our identity is rooted in our relationship to our body. Formed from the body, the “body” of the Church is embodied and enfleshed souls made for heaven. To be made in the image and likeness of God, we humans are.

(Robin Weger, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at rweger@catholicnews.org.)

To mask or not to mask

I’ve been a bit puzzled about all the debate and outrage over wearing masks. I know some states are unilaterally, but some of it seems to be a misunderstanding of why we have been asked to wear masks in the past.

The objection is often phrased as a personal liberty: “Why would you choose not to wear a mask, it’s my own damn business whether I want to leave a loaded gun on the coffee table. The idea is not that you might get hurt, but that someone else might because of your carelessness.

We wear masks to protect others because the vast majority of us don’t know from day to day if we might be the contagious ones. It reflects our concern for others, as well as a concern for men and women, and our hope that they have a similar concern for us.

The presence of wearing a mask in public settings is also a sign that we are all in this together, not just the first responders and the ER docs, the nurses and the morticians. That little strip of cloth is a flag of solidarity.

At times, it doesn’t feel like we are all in this crisis together. We are approaching 2 million sick and 100,000 people who die. We have learned that the states aren’t treated like a box score. After 9/11, there was a rush of sympathy for the Victims. This time, there is a rush of discussion about how fast to open up, and other hot spots are getting far less national attention.

We really aren’t asked to sacrifice much these days for greater goods. We have historically long wars, but we never really teach us unless we have families serving. We run up mountains of debt, but don’t feel it small on us to pay it back.

The pandemic has exposed lots of social weaknesses and inequalities of our health care system and our educational system and even our access to the Internet. Those who are weakest are the most vulnerable once again.

Unable to afford not to go to work when the economy is in full swing, or to afford to stay home when they are called back to work while the risk is still great. In thinking about common good, we place ourselves firmly within the moral and social teachings of the Church, which in turn guides us in our decisions to mask or not to mask.

“Do to others whatever you would have them do to you,” is the way I live. This is the law and the prophets.” (Matthew 7:12)

I don’t know what the lasting effects of this pandemic will be: Whether we will rush back without a mask, or as quickly as possible, or whether we will learn new lessons from these few months of sacrifice and gatherings. For those of us who have found meaning in our isolation, we’ve learned something about fellowship.

(Greg Erlanson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at greg.erlanson@catholicnews.org)
**The Sunday Readings**

**Wednesday, June 10**
1 Kings 18:20-29
Psalm 16:1b-2a, 4-5, 8, 11
Matthew 5:17-19

**Thursday, June 11**
St. Barnabas, Apostle
Psalm 90:1-6
Matthew 5:20-26

---

**Daily Readings**

**Friday, June 12**
1 Kings 19:9a, 11-16
Psalm 7:7-8, 13-14
Matthew 5:27-32

**Saturday, June 13**
St. Anthony of Padua, priest and doctor of the Church
1 Kings 19:16-21
Psalm 16:1b-26, 5, 7-10
Matthew 5:33-37

**Sunday, June 14**
The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)
Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a
Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20
1 Corinthians 10:1, 6-16
John 6:51-58

---

**Question Corner**

**Fr. Kenneth Doyle**

God never tires of forgiving our sins, no matter how bad they may be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Who Do You Say That I Am?**

Jesus asks his disciples—“Who do you say that I am?”

It is a timeless question for people of all ages at various moments of our life. In faith, I humbly reply—“You are who you say you are.”

**You are My Good Shepherd.**

You know me better than I know myself.
You watch over me, protect me, and search for me when I wander.
And I do wander.

**You are My Vine.** I cling to you.
I hear good fruit attached to you.
I wither and die apart from you.

**You are My Bread of Life.**

The world’s “menu” is not as appetizing as it seems.
You alone give me life eternal.

**You are My Way, Truth, and Life.**

You guide me on my path. You reveal what is true.
You alone give me life eternal.

(Tom Yost is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, where he serves as its pastoral associate. Photo: A fresco of the Good Shepherd is seen in the unveiling of two newly restored burial chambers in the Christian catacombs of St. Domitilla—believed to be the world’s oldest Christian cemetery—in Rome on May 30, 2017.) (CNS photo/Carol Glatz)

---

**My Journey to God**

By Tom Yost

---

**The Most Holy Trinity**

**Msgr. Owen F. Campion**

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---

**The Criterion**

Friday, June 5, 2020

---
eight minutes despite his pleas that he couldn’t breathe. “Are we willing to fight to restore the reverence and honor that God deserves and are we willing to fight for human dignity? To me, that’s the fundamental question.”

Sister Gail finds hope in the way the protesters would answer that question through the recent peaceful protests against racism across Indianapolis and the country. “If you look at the multicolatural representations in all the protests—peaceful protests from all backgrounds—you see hope. As people become enlightened about the problem, the spirit of God rises up within them to find a solution. And that’s where I see the hope.”

At the same time, her recent conversations with members of Holy Angels and St. Rita reflect the pain and fear that is prevalent in black communities. “There is bound sadness that are in the same place as we have been—as far as the dignity of persons—for almost 400 years now toward black and brown people. “Some of the other people remember the same indignities from their past. It’s especially difficult for [black] men raising their sons now because they worry about their safety, and they know their sons don’t have to do anything wrong and their life can be taken for it.”

She says that pain and fear have become intensified in recent months by the continuous crisis has disproportionately impacted black lives—a reality she connects to the fact that the jobs that “many African-Americans and Hispanics don’t have to let them shelter-in-place in their homes.”

For Sister Gail, it’s another concern as she continues her efforts to promote a fair world “for all people,” including improved health care, a living wage and racial equality. “If we look at everything we do, we have the responsibility to think about, ‘How do we honor God in everything we do?’”

C.S.J. 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, you are encouraged to report it. If you believe you may have been a victim, there is a link to report sexual misconduct now.

• 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners
• Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
• University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University to offer the Catholic Ministry Ethics Point program, which includes a 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners.

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

RESPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a woman 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 connect the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. (The complaints may not be made to a report.

Ethics Point
• Conference, Online Reports
• www.archindy.org/ethicspoint.com 1-888-395-0410
• Curia Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator (317) 236-1548, 380-392-9836, ext. 1548 carlhill@archindy.org

A makeshift memorial stands near the spot where, according to a police report, Dreasjon Reed was killed in an exchange of gunfire with Indianapolis police on May 29-30. The scene is on the northwest side of Indianapolis on May 6. (Photo by Natalie Hammer)

While staying away from the crowd, the priest said, he went near the gathering of protesters “a few times just to pray.” He recalled witnessing their anger and frustration. “If [Reed] wasn’t the first African-American killed by police,” said Father McCasin, noting that the protesters’ reaction to Reed’s death likely built “upon the hurt and anger and frustration” they already felt. Father McCasin sees a connection between those emotions and the feelings that drove the protests on May 29-30.

“There’s a story behind every person. People want answers for what happened,” he said. “I think that’s a lingering wound right there.”

“A prayer for racial healing”

In 1963, Marvin Johnson became the first black child to ever graduate from the former St. Andrew the Apostle School in Indianapolis. Now at age 71, he is president of the parish council at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

He wishes he could say there has been a dramatic change in the country involving the issue of race during that time span, but he can’t say that’s the case. He noted that the atmosphere of violence and the aftermath of violence in the country seem like pages from his childhood.

“The same attitudes have been with us in society for so long,” he says. “It’s frustrating when you see the incidents that are happening today because of police brutality and injustices in the justice system.”

Johnson believes that if change will ever come regarding race, “we will need structural changes in society”—changes that have their foundation in the Christian principles that have been so much a part of his Catholic education.

“I would really hope that people would recognize that every person has value. “We have people of faith at every level of government, every level of business, every income level, every side of town. We have a lot of people in influential positions who could make change. It’s really up to us to represent their Christianity. We go to the conference room or the planning sessions, very seldom are the decisions based on Christian principles.”

“If we go into these political meetings and business meetings with the thought, ‘Who is going to get hurt, who is going to get left behind,’ there would be less of these violent situations where something goes wrong.”

“That’s what I like to see, but I don’t see it happening any time soon.”

Fr. John McCasin

Jesus, our Savior, we were formerly judged by your judgment; we ask for forgiveness for our judgmental nature, our unconscious biases.

We pray that our faith in you helps us to overcome all racial divisions.

Holy Spirit, open our hearts and our minds to the needs of others. Instill faith, hope and love as we learn about one another. Guide us in honesty and truth, as we learn about one another. Fill us with forgiveness and love. That all we may be one. Amen.

Written by the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Race and Culture Committee

A Prayer for Racial Healing

God our Father, we praise and worship you. We ask for forgiveness for our judgmental nature, our unconscious biases. We pray that our faith in you helps us to overcome all racial divisions.

Jesus, our Savior, we were formerly judged by your judgment; we ask for forgiveness for our judgmental nature, our unconscious biases.

We pray that our faith in you helps us to overcome all racial divisions.

Holy Spirit, open our hearts and our minds to the needs of others. Instill faith, hope and love as we learn about one another. Guide us in honesty and truth, as we learn about one another. Fill us with forgiveness and love. That all we may be one. Amen.
I knew I was protected"

St. John pastor keeps prayerful watch over parish during unrest

By Sean Gallagher

"A beacon of light in Indianapolis," is how Father Rick Nagel has described St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, the faith community he has led since 2011.

On the night of May 30-31, however, Father Nagel had to put all of his faith—his whole being—into all of his "German stubbornness"—to watch and pray. The light shining while darkness swirled in its midst was needed, too, for the faith community in the heart of downtown Indianapolis.

That was the second of two nights in which peaceful protests in Indianapolis descended into violence. The protests were in response to the May 25 killing of George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, by a white police officer in Minneapolis. Floyd had been killed in Indianapolis and more than 100 downtown businesses incurred millions of dollars of damage in the unrest.

Father Nagel kept vigil all night on May 30-31, staying outside, watching over his parish and the Most Blessed Mother of God Church, which was parked in the middle of downtown businesses.

He kept the lights on and the firehose running through his efforts to protect its buildings from violence, but perhaps more importantly to protect from the peace and sometimes profound conversations he had with protesters.

"I saw the very worst of humanity in a few seconds, but I also saw the very humanity of people, the very worst of humanity in a few hours," Father Nagel said.

"God was definitely watching over us"

Not expecting any violence in the city that night, Father Nagel was only aware that it was the vigil of Pentecost.

After the car was towed away, Father Nagel called his friend Rita Reith, a battalion chief and the public information officer for the Indianapolis Fire Department. His request for advice on what to do next was simple.

"Wait, I think they're clearing away the debris from the fire quickly turned into a trip to the parish by firefighters from the nearby Station 13.

"They cleaned it all up," Father Nagel said. "It was a bright light in the middle of all of this."

"St. John is in their district, and they feel very strongly about the businesses and the community members that are in their district," said Reith of the firefighters of Station 13. "It's their neighborhood."

She also noted how close St. John came to being severely damaged by the previous night’s fire. The car was parked under a stained-glass window that was covered by clear plexiglass.

The heat of the fire severely warped the plastic covering. If it had not been there, Reith said, the stained-glass window could have been shattered, allowing fire and smoke into the interior of the church.

"We all were very thankful," she said. "Had it gotten in, we would have been in big trouble. We would have had a much different situation. God was definitely watching over us on that one."

"I knew I was protected"

Because he expected violence in the city for a second night, Father Nagel cancelled the Mass scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on May 30—the first weekend Mass for the parish in 10 weeks.

In its place, he quickly organized a livestreamed prayer of the Divine Mercy Chaplet. More than 1,200 people viewed the prayer service.

"First, we prayed for victims of racial violence," Father Nagel said. "We're certainly aware of that injustice. We also prayed for peace in our city and nation."

It was a hopeful way for Father Nagel to start his nightlong vigil over his parish. "People were looking for a way to pray and make sense in the midst of it," he said. "They saw what happened the night before, and it was pretty clear it was going to happen again. It was good for all of us to come together."

As day turned into night in the city and a peaceful protest once again became violent, Father Nagel continued praying as he walked on the parish grounds.

"I credit the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Mother for keeping me safe, because I was praying through them through the night," he said. "I was very aware that the vigil of Pentecost was at hand. I had to trust that the Holy Spirit was present in a very particular way."

"I knew I was protected."

He also knew of that protection by a flood of text and social media messages letting him know of the prayers of many people for him and the parish.

"The people were amazing," Father Nagel said. "They took to prayer. I felt like I was surrounded by a great army of prayer warriors and faithful people."

"Many of those people offered to come to St. John to help Father Nagel. He politely declined, however, telling them that the police were outnumbered, that there was no access to the area and because many of them were parents of young children who needed to stay out of harm's way.

"One of the greatest gifts"

Owen Duckett came to the parish without contacting Father Nagel. He wrote about his experience in a Facebook post, saying that, while he knew it was dangerous, he felt "a very strong draw within myself" to go. Father Nagel recalled the encounter in his conversation with The Criterion.

Duckett parked his car in a location far from St. John and went the rest of the way by bicycle. There he saw Father Nagel in the parish’s parking lot, "deeply immersed—standing over his parish and the most Blessed Sacrament, rosary in hand."

After unsuccessful trying to persuade the priest to go indoors, Duckett, a member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, received a blessing from Father Nagel and began to ride away.

Then he heard shouting and turned around to see four protesters approaching Father Nagel, who had peacefully asked them to leave the parish property.

"One of the men stepped up to confront Father [Nagel], and appeared to be an instant away from striking him when I began shouting ‘Don’t touch him. He’s a Catholic priest,’ and ran into the scene," Duckett wrote. "One of the group members had the sense to call off his companions from the confrontation and the young men walked on."

This was single-handedly one of the most Christ-like acts I have witnessed from the peaceful protest.

Father Nagel takes a more modest view of his witness that night.

"Any of my brother priests would have done the same thing," he said. "We love our holy mother Church. We love the Eucharist, which is inside. We try to stand by it and protect that which we love."

While Father Nagel had a handful of combative confrontations on the night before, most were positive. In May of May 30-31, most were positive. In many, he learned of the pain protesters had experienced from racism.

"That was one of the greatest gifts of the whole night," he said. "I learned so much. You could see the brokenness, heartache and deep wounds of the people. Lord, show us how you want us to be a voice for that injustice."

"You’re welcome here, too"

The nighttime vigil ended peacefully. Father Nagel was unharmed and the only damage done to the parish was great spray-painted by protesters on the wall of its courtyard and parking lot. After Father Nagel posted photos of the graffiti on Facebook, parishioners from St. John, Our Lady of the Greenwood in Greenwood and a humaneness loving human being near St. John cleaned the walls by the middle of Sunday morning.

Father Nagel joyfully celebrated Sunday Mass with his parishioners at 8 and 10:30 a.m., after such liturgies had been suspended for more than two months because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"It was so good to be back together to worship and gather as the body of Christ," he recalled.

The last Mass of the day began at 7 p.m. The congregation was small because a strict curfew in the city was set to begin an hour later. Police were out in force on the streets as the Mass began.

"You could hear the sirens," Father Nagel said. "You could hear the helicopters overhead. I told them, ‘You’re small, but mighty. We prayed for peace for our city, for a change of heart in all the grave injustices in our society.’"

Alexandra Makris was in the congregation. The violence of the night before had at first made her anxious about going to the liturgy.

"There was a lot of fear lately," Makris said. "I wasn’t sure if I would definitely feel something of that fear, too. . . . But I was tired of letting evil have control over me in that way. Going to Mass is a good thing, especially on Pentecost."

Makris has loved St. John Parish since she was a student at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and was received into the full communion of the Church there. She is proud of how her parish is an active part of the broader community, a pride that has only increased because of how her faith and Father Nagel responded to unrest that surrounded it.

"You can close off and be suspicious, or you can open up," Father Nagel said. "And St. John is a great example of how to open up so it can show people the Church. We’re not going away. You’re welcome here, too."
TheCriterionFriday,June5,2020

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Father Michael McGivney, the founder of the Knights of Columbus, may be an ideal prospective saint for the current age, said Carl Anderson, supreme knight of the international fraternal order.

“We’ve been praying for years for this to occur, and finally this day has arrived,” he told Catholic News Service on May 27. First, he’s a pro-life hero. The miracle recognized by the Vatican paving the way for his beatification occurred in 2015 and involved a baby born ill in utero, with a life-threatening condition that, under most circumstances, could have led to an abortion. He was found to be healed after his family prayed through the intercession of Father McGivney. “The Vatican likes to be the one to discuss more details than that,” Anderson said.

The Vatican announced earlier on May 27 that Pope Francis had approved a second miracle attributed to the intercession of Father McGivney, clearing the way for his beatification. (CNS photo/John L. {

Father McGivney (1852-1890), ordained as part of a new collective, has returned to the chaotic dynamics of online, a retribalization of humanity. We tend engaged in activities that require very much embodied creatures. The natural result of such a forgetting is to see in our world today. This much social dynamic online, a retributionalization of humanity. We have returned to the chaotic dynamics of tribal living and the rancor online stems in large part from the tribal warfare that comes with trying to assert one’s identity as part of a new collective. That spills over into daily life as physical symbols like masks become totems of the new tribalism rather than a prudent precautionary measure for limiting the spread of disease. We even see it in the Church, as traditional groups square off against more progressive groups in wars of words and images. What has got lost in all of this is the reality that we are all part of the mystical body of Christ. Christ is the head and we are the members. Our identity is grounded in being part of a body, and having a body. Take this moment when we engage in some embodied practices. Go for a long walk, plant a garden, stretch, run, lift, pray on your knees. You might even feel the passing threads of online tribalism fading away as you recall your true identity as a member of Christ’s body, the Church.

(www.fathermcgivney.org)