



The

Criterion

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It's All Good

This year, Christmas will be alive in all those who believe, page 12.

Pope Francis creates 13 new cardinals, including first African American to be named

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—One by one 11 senior Churchmen, including two U.S. citizens—Cardinals Wilton D. Gregory of Washington, the first African American cardinal, and Silvano M. Tomasi, a former Vatican diplomat—knelt before Pope Francis to receive their red hats, a cardinal's ring and a scroll formally declaring their new status and assigning them a "titular" church in Rome.



Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory

But with the consistory on Nov. 28 occurring during the COVID-19 pandemic, Pope Francis actually created 13 new cardinals.

Cardinals Jose F. Advincula of Capiz, Philippines, and Cornelius Sim, apostolic vicar of Brunei, did not attend the consistory because of COVID-19 travel restrictions; however, they are officially cardinals and will receive their birettas and rings at a later date, the Vatican said.

In his homily at the prayer service, Pope Francis told the new cardinals that "the scarlet of a cardinal's robes, which is the color of blood, can, for a worldly spirit, become the color of a secular 'eminence,' the traditional title of respect for a cardinal.

If that happens, he said, "you will no longer be a pastor close to your people. You will think of yourself only as 'His Eminence.' If you feel that, you are off the path."

For the cardinals, the pope said, the red must symbolize a wholehearted following of Jesus, who willingly gave his life on the cross to save humanity.

The Gospel reading at the service, Mark 10:32-45, included the account of James and John asking Jesus for special honors. "Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left"

See **CARDINAL**, page 8

Young woman's struggles lead her to strive to bring hope and healing to others

Fourth in an occasional series

(Editor's note: In this series, The Criterion will feature young adults who have found a home in the Church and strive to live their faith in their everyday life.)

By John Shaughnessy

At 29, Perry Langley has a heart for people who are vulnerable or broken.

She also has an understanding that being vulnerable or broken describes most of us in some way, at some point in our lives.

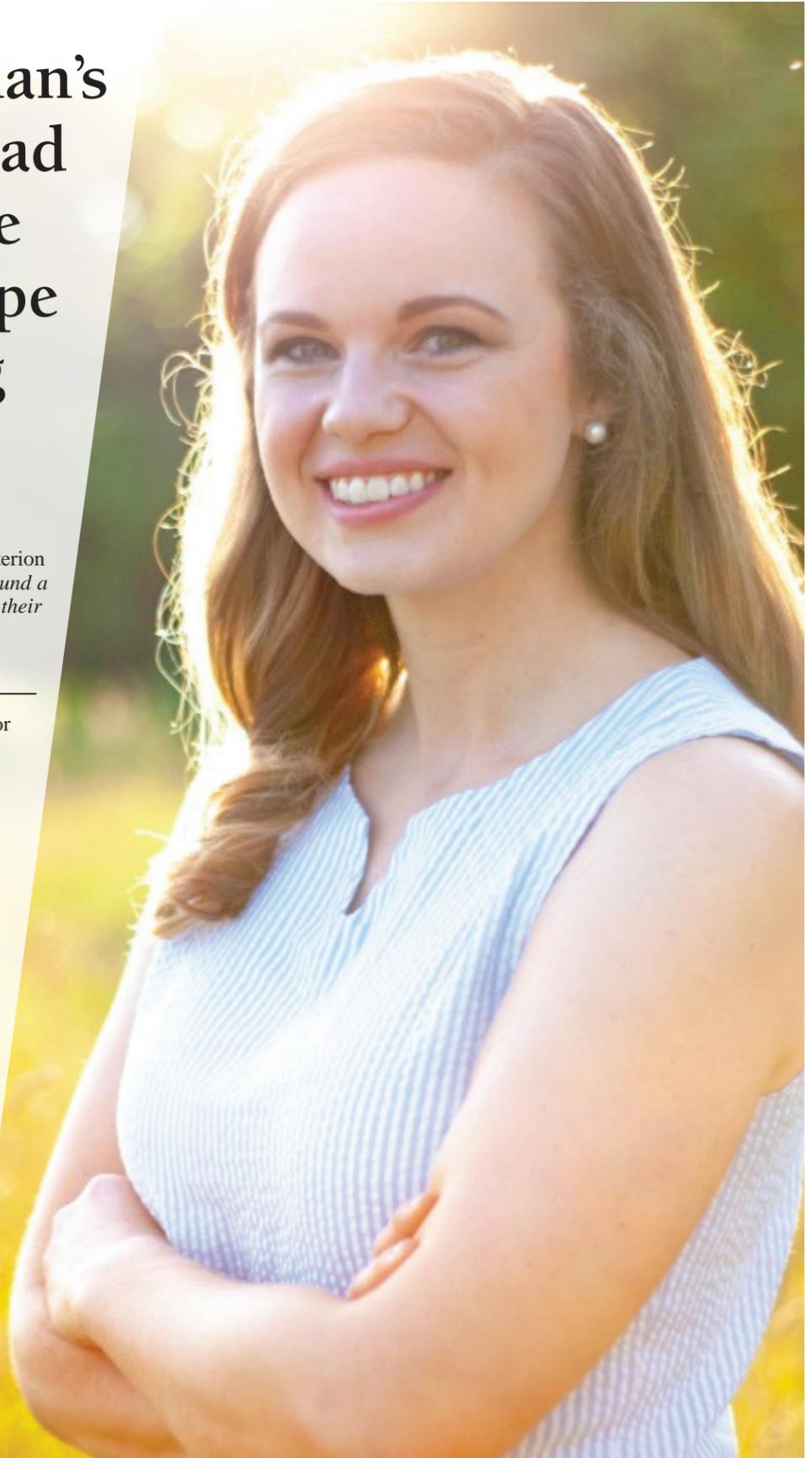
Langley identifies with teenagers who struggle, knowing from personal experience that "life for teens is just plain hard sometimes."

While she is single, her work with people whose lives have been shattered by divorce has developed her deep compassion for them.

And her recent decision to pursue a nursing degree reflects her desire to be there for others whose pain and suffering can be physical, mental and emotional.

See **LANGLEY**, page 10

Photo: St. Joan of Arc parishioner Perry Langley's story of faith and transformation began as a teenager at a "Consumed" retreat that especially touched and changed her. (Submitted photo courtesy of Andrea Kuhn Photography)



Supreme Court says N.Y. pandemic limits on houses of worship restrict religious freedom

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In a 5-4 decision issued just before midnight on Nov. 25, the Supreme Court issued an injunction which lifted the pandemic restrictions on congregation sizes at houses of worship imposed by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

The Diocese of Brooklyn, N.Y., and two Orthodox Jewish synagogues in separate filings appealed to the nation's high court, claiming the governor's executive order violated their free exercise of religion and was particularly unwarranted during a time when area businesses were open.

Chief Justice John Roberts dissented,

along with Justices Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

This summer, the court, in another 5-4 decision with a different bench, one that included Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, upheld Nevada's limits on congregation sizes, denying a request by a Nevada church for permission to have larger gatherings, like those permitted in the state's casinos, restaurants and other businesses.

The justices in the majority said the governor's order did not appear neutral and seemed to single out "houses of worship for especially harsh treatment."

Because of this, they said, the order was subject to strict scrutiny, which it failed, because there was no evidence that synagogues and churches contributed to COVID-19 outbreaks and less restrictive rules could have been used.

In a separate concurring opinion, Justice Neil Gorsuch said: "It may be unsafe to go to church, but it is always fine to pick up another bottle of wine, shop for a new bike," referring to the lack of restrictions on businesses in the same areas as the churches and synagogues.

Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas A. DiMarzio said in a Nov. 26 statement that he was "gratified by the decision of

See **SCOTUS**, page 3



Bishop Nicholas A. DiMarzio

Court unsure of Trump's plan to exclude unauthorized immigrants in census

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In oral arguments on Nov. 30, the Supreme Court weighed in on President Donald J. Trump's order to exclude immigrants living in the country illegally from the 2020 census for purposes of redrawing congressional districts.

The justices, who heard the arguments in *Trump v. New York* by teleconference, questioned the scope of those who would be excluded and also the length of time it would take to undergo this "monumental task," as Justice Samuel Alito described it.

Trump issued his order in July, and two federal courts have already found it unlawful.

During the 90-minute arguments, Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington, who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration, issued a statement: "Denying the undocumented and the states in which they reside their rightful representation in Congress is counter to the Constitution and makes people feel invisible and not valued as human beings. 'The Church's teaching is clear: Human dignity is most sacred, regardless of legal status,'" he said. "For that reason, we once again affirm the need to count all persons in the census, as well as in the apportionment of congressional representatives."



Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville

The USCCB, along with other Catholic organizations, also filed a friend-of-the-court brief in this case, arguing that excluding those without legal documentation from the apportionment base of the census sends a message that these individuals are not equal members of the human family, which contradicts the dignity of all people and violates the U.S. Constitution and the Census Act.

New York challenged Trump's census order along with several other states, cities, counties and immigrant activist

groups stressing the administration's action could leave several million people uncounted and could cause Texas, California and New Jersey to lose seats in the House of Representatives. The number of House seats accorded to the states are based on state population numbers.

Since the census started in 1790, its practice has been to count all people living in the U.S. Currently, an estimated 11 million unauthorized immigrants are living in this country.

The point of counting everyone was raised by Justice Amy Coney Barrett, who told acting Solicitor General Jeff Wall, who was representing the Trump administration: "A lot of the historical evidence and long-standing practice really cuts against your position."

Another factor in the day's arguments was the Census Bureau has not yet determined how many people could potentially be excluded from the census figures regarding congressional districts.

Chief Justice John Roberts expressed frustration with this at the outset, and other justices similarly focused on if the case was even ready for them to take up, since the Census Bureau has not provided the president with its report yet, given the bureau's extended deadline of Dec. 31.

Last year, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 against Trump's effort to add a citizenship question to the census. Critics said the question was intended to frighten immigrants from taking part in the population count and artificially reduce population numbers in heavily Democratic areas, also to benefit Republicans.

After Trump issued his order on excluding unauthorized immigrants, the chairmen of two USCCB committees described the action as "simply wrong and divisive." They urged him to rescind it and make "efforts to protect and heal our nation and all who are living in our country."

The court has put this case on a fast track and could possibly issue a decision on it before the end of the year. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

December 6–12, 2020

<p>December 6 – 10:30 a.m. Mass at Mary, Queen of Peace Church in Danville</p> <p>December 6 – 4 p.m. Seminar Prayer and Dinner at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 7 – 7 p.m. Mass of Confirmation for youths of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, at Holy Spirit Church (first of two)</p> <p>December 8 – 10 a.m. Mass at Marian University, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 8 – noon Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 8 – 3 p.m. Indiana Bishops' Province meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p>	<p>December 9 – 9 a.m. Indiana Catholic Conference meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>December 9 – 1:45 p.m. Ascension Annual Report meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>December 10 – 8:15 a.m. Judicatories virtual meeting</p> <p>December 10 – 10 a.m. Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>December 10 – 3:30 p.m. Catholic Community Foundation Advisory Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>December 12 – 10 a.m. Mass of Confirmation for youths of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, at Holy Spirit Church (second of two)</p>
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Memory, not nostalgia, helps Christians work for God's kingdom, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—For Christians, memory involves remembering God's promises for the future; it's not about "nostalgia, which is a real spiritual pathology," Pope Francis said.

Nostalgia "blocks creativity and makes us rigid and ideological people even in the social, political and ecclesial spheres," he said, while memory, which is "intrinsically linked to love and experience," is an essential dimension of human life.

The pope sent a video message on Nov. 26 to Italy's national Festival of the Social Doctrine of the Church, a three-day online event focusing on the theme, "Memory of the Future."

The title, Pope Francis said, is a call to hope.

"For us Christians, the future has a name, and this name is hope," he said. "Hope is the virtue of a heart that does not close in the dark, does not stop at the past, does not just get by in the present,

but knows how to see tomorrow."

If one has been baptized into Christ, the pope said, then one must remember the sacrifice that Christ made for the salvation of all and live a life that prepares for his promised coming again and for the establishment of his kingdom.

"We cannot live as believers in the world unless we manifest Christ's very life in us," Pope Francis said.

"This attitude helps us to overcome the temptation of utopia, of reducing the proclamation of the Gospel to a simple sociological horizon or to becoming involved in the 'marketing' of various economic theories or political factions," he said.

"With the strength and creativity of God's life in us," the pope said, Christians will fascinate others and draw them to the Gospel, as well as promote "projects of a new, inclusive economy and politics capable of love." †

How has your Catholic education had an impact on your life?

As part of our coverage for the upcoming Catholic Schools Week supplement in late January, *The Criterion* is inviting our readers to share their thoughts and stories about how their Catholic education has had an impact on their lives and their families.

Send your submissions to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and

a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †



Check your parish for opportunities to receive the sacrament of reconciliation during Advent

The liturgical season of Advent began the weekend of Nov. 28-29. Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, parishioners

are encouraged to consult their local parish for opportunities to receive the sacrament of reconciliation. †



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Do you have something exciting or newsworthy you want to be considered to be printed in The Criterion?

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Catholics in Oregon, San Francisco protest against worship limits

SAN FRANCISCO AND SALEM, Ore. (CNS)—Response came quickly to the Nov. 25 injunction issued by the U.S. Supreme Court putting on hold severe restrictions on congregation sizes at houses of worship imposed by N.Y. Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Catholics in Oregon and the archbishop of San Francisco cited the injunction in their protest of similar restrictions on publish worship in their states.

San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone described as “blatant discrimination” a return by California



Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone

to more severe COVID-19 restrictions that closed churches in two of the three counties that comprise the San Francisco Archdiocese.

On Nov. 29, the First Sunday of Advent, Catholic churches in San Francisco and San Mateo counties had to be closed as of noon.

The two counties are among the 41 counties deemed to be in a “purple tier” by California Gov. Gavin Newsom in response to an “alarming surge” in COVID-19 cases. These counties account for 94% of the state’s population.

Every county in California is assigned to a tier based on its positive COVID test rate. The purple tier is the most restrictive. With a curfew in place—and set to last until Dec. 21—all nonessential activity is limited between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., including in-person dining.

In updates announced on Nov. 28, San Francisco and San Mateo counties were added to the purple tier. “After weeks of demonstrating we can celebrate the

Mass safely, the state of California has put San Francisco and San Mateo counties into the purple tier, which bans indoor worship altogether,” Archbishop Cordileone said in a Nov. 28 statement.

“The order lumps religious worship with non-essential indoor activities such as gyms, movie theaters and museums,” he said. “At the same time, the health order allows for indoor retail at 25% capacity and permits massage parlors, hair and nail salons, and tattoo parlors to operate indoors.”

He added, referring to the Nov. 25 Supreme Court injunction: “This is precisely the kind of blatant discrimination to which the Supreme Court gave injunctive relief in New York. The government is demoting worship to the same status as watching a movie: ‘nonessential.’ But worship is both a natural and a constitutional right. My people want to receive the body and blood of Christ; they need it, and have every right to be free to do so.”

Archbishop Cordileone also said in his Nov. 28 statement: “In order to discern what our faith and responsible citizenship call us to do at this time, then, I will confer with my brother bishops, review our safety protocols with infectious disease specialists, and consult with the lawyers on the legal options we have available.”

The same day that Archbishop Cordileone issued his statement, more than 400 demonstrators huddled in prayer outside the Oregon Capitol in Salem, Ore., to press against state coronavirus limits on church attendance.

“We will not surrender one more centimeter of religious freedom to any government,” said Father Theodore Lange, chaplain of the Oregon Knights of Columbus.

The Knights organized the rally after Gov. Kate Brown announced a 25-person limit in churches statewide, regardless of the seating capacity of the houses of worship. After protests from Portland Archbishop Alexander K. Sample and other leaders, Brown on Nov. 25 expanded church attendance to 25% of capacity, or 100 people, whichever is less.

The concession did not satisfy demonstrators. “We want God!” they chanted, calling for churches to be open completely.

Hundreds of Vietnamese Catholics attended. “We are here today to speak in one voice: Stop the religious repression,” said Young Tran, a refugee from Vietnam and a member of Our Lady of La Vang Parish in Happy Valley, Ore. “It happened in our former country, a communist and a socialist country, and it’s starting to happen here now.”

Allegiance is owed to God, not governors, said Kevin Mannix, a Salem Catholic, philanthropist and political leader. Reminding the crowd that the pandemic is serious and that health measures should be followed, he suggested churches should at least be afforded the same treatment as grocery stores, which are allowed 75% capacity.

Mannix contended that recent state policy amounts to too much government control over individuals. He cited the Nov. 25 U.S. Supreme Court case in which a 5-4 majority ruled that New York limits on worshippers tread too heavily on freedom of religion.

“We need to continue this,” said Ron Boyce, Oregon state deputy of the Knights of Columbus, after the demonstration. “It just can’t be a one-day thing. It needs to be an everyday thing. We aren’t going to back down.” †

SCOTUS

continued from page 1

the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court who have recognized the clear First Amendment violation and urgent need for relief in this case. I am proud to be leading the Diocese of Brooklyn and fighting for our sacred and constitutional right to worship.”

The bishop noted the governor’s restrictions “were an overreach that did not take into account the size of our churches or the safety protocols that have kept parishioners safe. Catholics in Brooklyn and Queens have adhered to all COVID-19 safety protocols to attend Mass and receive the Eucharist. Our churches have not been the cause of any outbreaks.”

He stressed that the diocese took its plea to the nation’s highest court “because we should be considered essential, for what could be more essential than safely gathering in prayer in a time of pandemic?”

“Now, with the benefit of the Supreme Court’s ruling,” he said, “we look forward to continuing the fight in the lower courts to ensure that these unconstitutional restrictions are permanently enjoined once and for all.”

The Diocese of Brooklyn filed

an emergency application with the U.S. Supreme Court on Nov. 12 for an injunction against the governor’s executive order limiting in-person congregations at houses of worship to 10 or 25 people, but allowing “numerous secular businesses to operate without any capacity restrictions.”

The Brooklyn Diocese first went to federal District Court in October to seek emergency relief from Cuomo’s new restrictions, announced on Oct. 6, on houses of worship in response to a spike in COVID-19 cases in densely populated ZIP codes he identified as “hot zones.” He said the state was creating three zones—red, orange and yellow—each with different restrictions, including on the size of congregations.

Some Catholic parishes in the Brooklyn Diocese were in the red zone, meaning their churches were forced to reduce capacity to a maximum of 10 people inside at one time, and some were in the orange zone, where only 25 people at one time could attend Mass regardless of their seating capacity. A yellow zone designation meant a 50% capacity.

On Nov. 20, Cuomo urged the Supreme Court not to get involved in the state’s battle with two synagogues, saying that because of “continued progress in containing COVID-19 spread,” the

restrictions no longer applied.

He also said his order was not focused on gatherings because they were religious but because they could potentially be “superspreader” events. He also stressed the order could even be seen as treating religious gatherings more favorably than plays and concerts which have similar risks.

The court’s unsigned opinion blocks the state from enforcing these limits on attendance while the Brooklyn Diocese and the synagogues continue their case

in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit. The case could potentially return to the Supreme Court for a final decision on its merits.

A dissent filed by Sotomayor, joined by Kagan, said these cases were “easier” than challenges in the summer by churches in California and Nevada opposing church attendance size because, they said, the New York order treated houses of worship more favorably than comparable secular gatherings. †

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Editorial



Pope Francis greets the crowd as he leads the *Angelus* from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Nov. 29. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

'Come, Lord Jesus,' fill our hearts with expectation, hope this Advent

The season of Advent offers us a new beginning.

And the way 2020 has played out, most of us are more than happy to begin the Church's new liturgical year.

In a few weeks, we will celebrate Christmas, then a new calendar year. But before we get to those important dates, we mark a time of expectation and hope during Advent.

As we move into the 10th month of dealing with the coronavirus pandemic in the U.S., expectation and hope may be the furthest things from many people's minds.

But they could be at the forefront for many others as we move closer to developing and fully implementing vaccines to prevent COVID-19. We all can no doubt agree that time cannot come soon enough.

Advent offers us a chance to reflect on our relationship with Jesus, the Christ Child born in a stable 2,000-plus years ago in humility and love.

Whether we realize it or not, we encounter Christ every day. It could be through a family member, co-worker, friend or even stranger. Our faith invites us to truly see Christ in others, and to be Christ for others. Advent is an opportune time to slow down our daily routine, be present to others and encounter Christ in everyone we see.

We can also fine-tune our routine by attending daily Mass or praying with a celebration of it viewed online, where we can receive the Eucharist—our faith's greatest gift—physically or spiritually.

Partaking in reconciliation (if possible), adding more spiritual reading or making extra time for prayer are other ways to encounter our Lord during this liturgical season.

During his *Angelus* address on Nov. 29 at the Vatican, Pope Francis reminded us that "the Lord comes every day, so that, with his grace, we might accomplish good in our own lives and in the lives of others. Our God is a God-who-comes, do not forget this: God is a God who comes, who continually comes. Our waiting will not be disappointed by him!"

The pope reminded his listeners that patience is required.

"He will perhaps make us wait, he will make us wait a few moments in the dark

to allow our expectation to ripen, but he never disappoints," Pope Francis said.

"The Lord always comes, he is always by our side. At times, he does not make himself seen, but he always comes. He came at a precise moment in history and became man to take on our sins—the feast of the Nativity commemorates Jesus' first coming in the historical moment."

Despite the highs and lows we face in life—the times we see the light of Christ shine brightly in some situations, but at other times are overwhelmed by disappointment and failure—we must not let pessimism overwhelm us, the Holy Father said, noting the ongoing pandemic which "generates worry, fear and discouragement in many people."

One way to respond to pessimism, the pope said, is to remember the words of Psalm 33: "Our soul waits for the Lord: he is our help and our shield. Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name" (Ps 33:20-21).

"That is, the soul awaiting, confidently waiting for the Lord, allows us to find comfort and courage in the dark moments of our lives," Pope Francis said. "And what gives rise to this courage and this trustful pledge? Where do they come from? They are born of hope. And hope does not disappoint, that virtue that leads us ahead, looking at the encounter with the Lord."

During a liturgy earlier in the day at St. Peter's Basilica, the Holy Father recommended a traditional Advent prayer to invite God to draw close during this new liturgical year.

"Let us make the traditional Advent prayer our own: 'Come, Lord Jesus.' ... We can say it at the beginning of each day and repeat it often, before our meetings, our studies and our work, before making decisions, in every important or difficult moment of our lives: 'Come, Lord Jesus,'" the pope said in his homily.

As we continue on our Advent journey, during this time of expectation and hope, let us remember those words: "Come, Lord Jesus."

May they fill our hearts and draw us closer to our Savior each day.

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/Gabriela Ross

Divorce Ministry offers support in new year

Catholics who have experienced divorce often find themselves in need of support and unsure where to turn.

While the circumstances surrounding a divorce may vary, there are common experiences that merit reflection, prayer and healing. Because family members and close friends are intimately connected to the individuals who are going—or have gone—through the process of divorce, it can be challenging to find the depth of support that is needed for such a significant life event.

In addition, many Catholics feel distanced from the Church following a divorce and need to know how they may continue to fit in with their Church community. This is where "Divorce and Beyond" comes in.

As a pastoral outreach of the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, the Divorce and Beyond support group offers men and women a place to grieve, to process and to pray as they begin their journey of healing after divorce.

Through the process of group meetings, participants come to see how God is still present in their lives and has not forsaken them, even after divorce.

The small group leaders are Catholic individuals who have been through the experience of divorce and have personally benefited from a support group in the past. They are committed to walking with others going through this very difficult time of life and are convinced that healing can be found within the Church community.

The following questions and answers provide a window into the format of Divorce and Beyond.

What is a typical support group like?

A support group usually consists of five to eight men and women who are divorced or are separated and working through the process of divorce. A support group will help participants to explore some of the feelings that come with divorce, such as anger, denial and guilt. The format enables participants to hear from others who have experienced similar difficulties.

Letter to the Editor

'Sight Unseen' column helps reader reflect on God's omnipotence

I found interesting Brandon A. Evans' recent "Sight Unseen" column in the Nov. 20 issue of *The Criterion* about the supposed contradiction of an omnipotent God being unable to control the human heart, which is at the same time a concession God can allow because of his own omnipotence.

It reminded me of St. Paul's comment that he "fills up in his body" that which is lacking in the cross (Col 1:24), which was a verse that troubled me for many

years. Was he somehow saying the cross of Christ was or is insufficient?

When they are ready, participants are invited to begin to share their own story in a safe and confidential environment.

Some individuals question whether this group would benefit them if it has been many years since their divorce was finalized, or if they are currently in the process of divorce. Regardless of the time frame since a person began filing for divorce or completed the process, attending a support group may provide a new opportunity for further healing.

Why is this ministry so important?

During the coronavirus pandemic, many have experienced a time of increased isolation. This has been particularly difficult for those going through divorce who have already experienced significant isolation. Intense feelings of loss and grief accompany the emotional roller coaster following separation or divorce. Current restrictions have made it even more difficult to find someone with whom to share one's experience, which can be a first step in the healing process. A sense of isolation can worsen the process of denial and prevent someone from beginning the process of healing.

When will the next group meet?

The spring session of Divorce and Beyond will be held for six consecutive Wednesday evenings, starting on Jan. 20 and ending on Feb. 24, from 7-9 p.m. at the Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove. The cost is \$20, and scholarships are available.

To register or for more information, go to www.archindy.org/divorce.

(For more information on the ministries of the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, contact office director Gabriela Ross at 317-592-4007 or gross@archindy.org.) †

Sonny Shanks
Corydon

Letters Policy

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

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should

be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

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

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



Christ the Cornerstone

Patience and hard work prepare us for the Lord's coming

"Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths'" (Mk 1:2-3).

The Second Sunday of Advent heightens our sense of anticipation at the same time that we are told to be patient. Christ will come again, but God's time is not our time. Our responsibility is to wait patiently, making sure that we are ready for the advent of grace in our lives which will come when we least expect it.

The first reading, from Isaiah (Is 40:1-5, 9-11), is both welcome and unsettling. It assures us that we will be comforted, but it also challenges us to do the hard work of preparing a highway for the Lord:

"Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated; indeed, she has received from the hand of the Lord double for all her sins" (Is 40:1-2).

"A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the Lord! Make

straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken" (Is 40:3-5).

St. Mark's Gospel (Mk 1:1-8) applies Isaiah's words to St. John the Baptist, the prophet who preached a baptism of repentance and who prepared the way for the long-awaited Messiah. John is a key figure in our observance of Advent. He challenges us to be transparent and penitent as we ready ourselves spiritually for the transforming grace of Christ.

The second reading, from the Second Letter of St. Peter (2 Pt 3:8-14), counsels us to be patient at the same time that it warns us that Christ's coming will be unexpected:

"Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard "delay," but he is patient with you, not

wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out" (2 Pt 8-10).

The Lord is patient with us. He is willing to wait for us to acknowledge our sins and to take appropriate action. But we dare not wait too long for he will come like a thief and take us by surprise.

Patience is never easy, but after many months of hardship caused by a pandemic that has caused so much illness, loss of life, social unrest and economic uncertainty, we are understandably impatient. We long for an end to this crisis. We hope for a return to some kind of normalcy in our daily lives.

As Christians, we know that the only real source of hope and salvation is Jesus. He has promised to return to us and to bring us peace. But he has also warned us that his peace can be disturbing because it means we must change our selfish ways and live

according to the Law of Love.

The need to prepare for Christ's coming brings us back to St. John the Baptist. St. Mark tells us that "John was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He fed on locusts and wild honey" (Mk 1:6). His message was simple and self-effacing: "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mk 1:7-8).

John spent his entire life getting ready for the coming of our Savior. His methods of fasting and repentance may be too severe for most of us, but we understand why he has challenged us to live simply and wait in joyful hope for the return of our Redeemer. We have been baptized with water and the Holy Spirit, and our longing is for the fulfillment of the promises that were made when we first surrendered ourselves to the One who is mightier than we are.

Let's wait patiently this Advent, but let's also channel our impatience, devoting it to the hard work of repentance and new life in Christ. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

La paciencia y el trabajo arduo nos preparan para la venida del Señor

"He aquí, yo envío mi mensajero delante de tu faz, el cual preparará tu camino. Voz del que clama en el desierto: 'Preparad el camino del Señor, haced derechas sus sendas'" (Mc 1:2-3).

El segundo domingo de Adviento intensifica la sensación de expectativa y al mismo tiempo que se nos dice que seamos pacientes. Cristo vendrá de nuevo, pero el tiempo de Dios no es el nuestro. Nuestra responsabilidad es esperar pacientemente y asegurarnos de estar listos para el advenimiento de la gracia en nuestras vidas, que sobrevendrá cuando menos lo esperemos.

La primera lectura, de Isaías (Is 40:1-5; 9-11), es a la vez bienvenida y un mensaje inquietante. Nos asegura que recibiremos consuelo, pero también nos desafía a hacer la ardua labor de preparar un camino para el Señor:

"Consolad, consolad a mi pueblo—dice vuestro Dios. Hablad al corazón de Jerusalén y decidles a voces que su lucha ha terminado, que su iniquidad ha sido quitada, que ha recibido de la mano del Señor el doble por todos sus pecados" (Is 40:1-2).

"Una voz clama: Preparad en el desierto camino al Señor; allanad en

la soledad calzada para nuestro Dios. Todo valle sea elevado, y bajado todo monte y collado; vuélvase llano el terreno escabroso, y lo abrupto, ancho valle. Entonces será revelada la gloria del Señor, y toda carne a una la verá, pues la boca del Señor ha hablado" (Is 40:3-5).

El Evangelio de san Marcos (Mc 1:1-8) aplica las palabras de Isaías a san Juan Bautista, el profeta que predicó un bautismo de arrepentimiento y que preparó el camino para el tan esperado Mesías. Juan es una figura clave en nuestra observancia del Adviento ya que nos desafía a ser transparentes y penitentes mientras nos preparamos espiritualmente para la gracia transformadora de Cristo.

La segunda lectura, de la Segunda Carta de san Pedro (2 Pe 3:8-14), nos aconseja ser pacientes y al mismo tiempo nos advierte que la venida de Cristo será inesperada:

"Pero, amados, no ignoréis esto: que para el Señor un día es como mil años, y mil años como un día. El Señor no se tarda en cumplir su promesa, según algunos entienden la tardanza, sino que es paciente para con vosotros, no queriendo que nadie perezca, sino que todos vengan al arrepentimiento. Pero el día del Señor

vendrá como ladrón, en el cual los cielos pasarán con gran estruendo, y los elementos serán destruidos con fuego[e] intenso, y la tierra y las obras que hay en ella serán quemadas" (2 Pe 3:8-10).

El Señor es paciente con nosotros; está dispuesto a esperar a que reconozcamos nuestros pecados y a tomar las medidas adecuadas. Pero no debemos atrevernos a esperar mucho tiempo porque vendrá como un ladrón y nos tomará por sorpresa.

Nunca resulta fácil ser pacientes, pero después de muchos meses de penurias causadas por una pandemia que ha causado tanta enfermedad, pérdida de vidas, malestar social e incertidumbre económica, es comprensible que estemos impacientes. Anhelamos el fin de esta crisis; esperamos un retorno a algún tipo de normalidad en nuestra vida cotidiana.

Como cristianos, sabemos que la única fuente real de esperanza y salvación es Jesús quien nos prometió que regresará y nos traerá la paz. Pero también nos ha advertido que su paz puede ser perturbadora porque significa que debemos cambiar nuestros caminos egoístas y vivir de acuerdo con la Ley del Amor.

La necesidad de prepararnos para la venida de Cristo nos regresa a san Juan Bautista. San Marcos nos dice que "Juan estaba vestido de pelo de camello, tenía un cinto de cuero a la cintura, y comía langostas y miel silvestre" (Mc 1:6). Su mensaje era sencillo y modesto: "Y predicaba, diciendo: Tras mí viene uno que es más poderoso que yo, a quien no soy digno de desatar, inclinándome, la correa de sus sandalias. Yo os bauticé con agua, pero Él os bautizará con el Espíritu Santo" (Mc 1:7-8).

Juan pasó toda su vida preparándose para la llegada de nuestro Salvador. Sus métodos de ayuno y arrepentimiento pueden ser demasiado severos para la mayoría de nosotros, pero entendemos por qué nos ha desafiado a vivir con sencillez y a esperar con alegría el regreso de nuestro Redentor. Hemos sido bautizados con agua y el Espíritu Santo, y nuestro anhelo es que se cumplan las promesas hechas cuando nos rendimos por primera vez a Aquel que es más poderoso que nosotros.

Esperemos pacientemente este Adviento, pero también canalicemos nuestra impaciencia, dedicándola a la ardua labor del arrepentimiento y la nueva vida en Cristo. †

Events Calendar

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

December 8

Sisters of Providence **virtual “Act justly, Love tenderly, Walk humbly” Monthly Taizé Prayer Service**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence. Link: cutt.ly/Taize. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

December 11

Our Lady of Guadalupe

online celebration, hosted by St. Mary Parish in New Albany, 10 p.m., rosary, “The Apparitions of Mary to Juan Diego” play and songs. Link: facebook.com/stmarysnewalbany.

December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe online Mass in Spanish, hosted by St. Lawrence

Parish in Indianapolis, 11 a.m. Link: facebook.com/Ministerio.Hispano2006.

Our Lady of Guadalupe bilingual online celebration, hosted by St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, 4:30 p.m., rosary followed by Mass. Link: facebook.com/stjoeshelby.

Our Lady of Guadalupe online Mass, hosted by

St. Mary Parish in New Albany, 6:30 p.m. rosary followed by Mass. Link: facebook.com/stmarysnewalbany.

December 16

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

December 17

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

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Christmas Mass**, 2 p.m.

Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc. †

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

Retreats and Programs

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

December 15-18

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Advent Days of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., includes breakfast and lunch, room to use throughout the day, access to common areas and grounds, \$35 per day, overnight stay (depending on availability) additional \$28, \$9 dinner when available. Information, registration: Jennifer Burger, 317-545-7681, jburger@archindy.org, www.archindy.org/fatima. Spiritual direction available for additional suggested donation, contact Georgene Beiriger, gbeiriger@archindy.org, 317-545-7681, ext. 105.

December 26

Sisters of St. Francis, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Audubon Bird Count**, 7:30 a.m.-1 p.m., meet at Michaela Farm, no experience necessary, \$10 for lunch. Information, registration: center@oldenburgosf.com or www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.html.

2021

January 6

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Contemplative Prayer**, 3-4:30 p.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind facilitating, freewill donation. Information, registration: center@oldenburgosf.com, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.

Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Art and Soul Creation Guild**, 9:30 a.m.-noon, annual membership \$30 per person plus \$5 for each additional monthly session. Information, registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org, www.spsmw.org/event.

January 7

Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, Havlik Center at Providence Hall, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Art and Soul Creation Guild**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., annual membership \$30 per person plus \$5 for each additional monthly session. Information, registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org, www.spsmw.org/event.

January 9

Virtual Forgiveness

Retreat via Zoom, offered by Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Franciscan Sister Bernice Stenger facilitating, \$25. Information, registration: center@oldenburgosf.com or oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.

January 12

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., includes private room for the day and lunch, \$40, spiritual direction for additional \$30 (must be scheduled in advance). Registration: www.benedictinn.org/retreats-programs. Information: benedictinn@benedictinn.org, 317-788-7581.

January 20

A Good Book and a Glass of Wine virtual event via Zoom, offered by Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, 6:30-8 p.m., part one of four (Jan. 27, Feb. 3 and 10) on *Abounding in Kindness* by Elizabeth Johnson, \$25 for all four sessions, book not included, register by Jan. 16. Registration, information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org, www.spsmw.org/event.

January 22

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Quiet Day of Renewal**, self-guided retreat, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20 includes private room, \$70 with spiritual direction. Information, registration: center@oldenburgosf.com or oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.

January 23

Mindfulness Retreat, Oldenburg Franciscan Center via Zoom, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind facilitating, \$25, \$40 with CEUs. Information, registration: center@oldenburgosf.com, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.

January 24

Virtual “Mystics & Prayer” Coffee Talk via Zoom: Caryll Houslander, offered by Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 10:45 a.m.-noon, Amy Kistner presenting. Information, registration: center@oldenburgosf.com or oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.

January 29-30

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center,

1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Soul Healing with Julian of Norwich**, 7 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Berghuis presenting, \$175 includes meals and room. Registration: www.benedictinn.org/retreats-programs. Information: benedictinn@benedictinn.org, 317-788-7581.

February 1

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality virtual “Mondays at the Mount,” 30-minute study by Conventual Franciscan Father Vince Petersen and Andrew Hennessey on upcoming Sunday Scripture readings, saints and liturgical seasons, posted on Monday mornings at m.facebook.com/pg/MountStFrancis.

February 3

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., includes private room for the day and lunch, \$40, spiritual direction for additional \$30 (must be scheduled in advance). Registration: www.benedictinn.org/retreats-programs. Information: benedictinn@benedictinn.org, 317-788-7581.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Contemplative Prayer**, 3-4:30 p.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind facilitating, freewill donation. Information, registration: center@oldenburgosf.com, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.

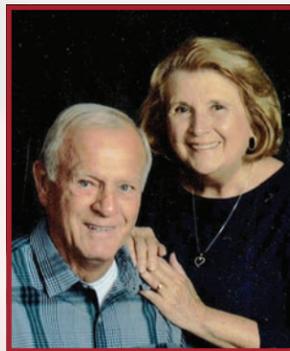
Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Art and Soul Creation Guild**, 9:30 a.m.-noon, annual membership \$30 per person plus \$5 for each additional monthly session. Information, registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org, www.spsmw.org/event.

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Wedding

ANNIVERSARIES

55 Years



ROBERT AND BARBARA (WHITE) AEMMER, members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Nov. 13.

The couple was married in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in New Albany on Nov. 13, 1965.

They have three children: Dana Kelly, Denise Smith and Robert C. Aemmer.

The couple also has six grandchildren. †

50 Years



WAYNE AND SHARON (SCHWEGMAN) HALCOMB, members of St. Michael Parish in Brookville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 27.

The couple was married in Holy Guardian Angels Church in Cedar Grove on Nov. 27, 1970.

They have two children: Craig and Douglas Halcomb.

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

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to bit.ly/2M4MQms or call 317-236-1585.

Dec. 9 webinar will address dealing with grief during the holidays

The next installment of the Catholic Charities-Social Concerns Ministry webinar series “Grieving Gracefully in a COVID World” will be offered online from 2-3 p.m. on Dec. 9.

Providence Sister Connie Kramer will discuss identifying COVID-19-related losses, coping skills for the holidays and embracing a future full of hope.

Sister Connie is a grief specialist who recognizes that the holidays can be the toughest time of year for those

isolated or mourning the loss of a loved one. Unopened presents, the empty chair at the table or the loss of a beloved tradition due to isolation or a loved one’s death can bring grief to the surface in unexpected ways.

The webinar is free, although registration is required to receive a link to the webinar.

To register, go to cutt.ly/grieving-gracefully. For more information, contact Theresa Chamblee at tchamblee@archindy.org or 317-236-1404. †

Archdiocese included in interfaith documentary set to air on Dec. 27

The Center for Interfaith Cooperation (CIC) of Central Indiana will offer an interfaith documentary that will air on WFYI-TV Channel 20 from 4-5 p.m. on Dec. 27.

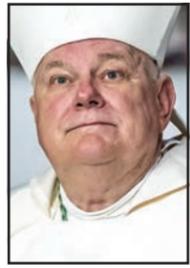
The show, titled “To Know Your Neighbor—Celebrating Religious Diversity in Indiana,” will look at the unique faith traditions and

denominations that exist in central Indiana. The documentary includes Roman Catholicism and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism works with CIC, and director Father Rick Ginther, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, serves on the CIC board. †

Prelate: Catholic social teaching can bridge divisions in society

MIAMI (CNS)—Catholic social teaching, “with its understanding of natural law,” can bridge the divisions that exist in U.S. society between religious adherents and secularists, said Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami in his column for the November issue of the *Florida Catholic*, Miami’s archdiocesan newspaper.



Archbishop Thomas J. Wenski

Archbishop Wenski portrayed the divide this way: “One side, the secularists, holds for a radical autonomy by which truth is determined not by the nature of things but by one’s own will. The religious side—our side—holds that men and women are not self-creators but creatures, that truth is not constructed but received, and that it must reflect the reality of things.

“Catholic teaching proclaims the dignity of every human being, but also acknowledges the reality of sin,” Archbishop Wenski said.

“Our police forces, our social services agencies, our schools, our courtrooms deal with the consequences of sin every day,” he added.

“Today we see much anger in our society. And much of that anger is seen in our streets and expressed in social media,” the archbishop said. “We hear warring slogans: ‘Black lives matter,’ ‘blue lives matter,’ ‘all lives matter,’ and from those who identify as pro-life, ‘unborn lives matter.’ And they all do matter—beneath these slogans there is an argument about ‘who truly belongs to our society?’ and ‘who is shut out?’”

He added, “Catholic social teaching on the life and dignity of the human person, on human solidarity, on the common good and the necessity for governments to respect the principle of subsidiarity can make important contributions to addressing the social

unrest that besets our society today as it faces the challenges of enduring racism, growing inequality and the intolerance of a ‘cancel culture.’”

When Irish novelist James Joyce described the Catholic Church as “here comes everybody,” he did so disparagingly, Archbishop Wenski said. “But the Church does welcome everybody—saint and sinner, rich and poor, the learned and the unlettered.”

Much is being made of the election of Joe Biden as president, since Biden would be only “the second president in our history who identifies himself as a Roman Catholic,” Archbishop Wenski said.

On Nov. 7, the media declared Biden president-elect, as lawyers for President Donald J. Trump challenged vote totals in some key battleground states.

“Because of his [Biden’s] apparent dissent from Catholic teachings due to his support of certain anti-life policies of his party [the Democrats], he has been criticized by many for ‘not being

Catholic enough,’” he added. “But at the same time, our newest Supreme Court justice [Amy Coney Barrett] has been criticized by others as being ‘too Catholic.’”

While Biden will be just the second Catholic among 46 men to serve as president, there are currently six Catholics on the Supreme Court, and 31% of those in Congress are Catholic despite Catholics accounting for just a bit more than 20% of the U.S. population, noted Archbishop Wenski.

“This is quite an achievement considering that for much of our nation’s history, Catholics were looked on with suspicion as being ‘un-American,’ and ‘anti-Catholicism’ remains a deeply entrenched bias in American life,” he said.

“As Catholics, we should not get caught up in internecine arguments about ‘who is too Catholic’ and ‘who is not Catholic enough.’ In any case, Jesus will sort it out on Judgment Day,” Archbishop Wenski said. †

Beatified Italian teen inspires song from Long Island Catholic high school

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Blessed Carlo Acutis, the Italian teen beatified in October, is not only responsible for a medical miracle, he also has inspired a song featuring his own quotations.

“Born an Original” had its television debut on Nov. 18 on “CFN Live,” a program on the Catholic Faith Network, which serves New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

Blessed Carlo, noted Theresa Marino, campus minister at Holy Trinity Diocesan High School in Hicksville, N.Y., “was 15 when he died” in 2006, making him a peer to students. The school is in the Diocese

of Rockville Centre.

Marino said on the show that teens can identify with Blessed Carlo, someone “whose pictures are in color. There are pictures of him that look like home videos. It makes sainthood seem real, like something they can do themselves.”

Blessed Carlo spent four years developing a database of every known eucharistic miracle.

“What makes a 15-year-old want to make a website about that instead of a celebrity?” Marino said. The blessed’s life, she added, gives teens “permission, in a Catholic way, to

become yourself ... to be your own saint. To be who God created you to be.”

Marino played guitar and sang backup vocals to Holy Trinity student Bryce Ridley’s lead, which incorporates quotations from Blessed Carlo.

“When my time comes, I’m sure I won’t have to fear,” the lyrics say. “Lord, you are my highway to heaven. In you I trust. Something extraordinary awaits us, my hope comes from you.” The chorus says: “Born an original, that’s how I’m gonna stay till my dying day.” Blessed Carlo said it was

better to be an original and “not a photocopy.”

After singing, Bryce said Blessed Carlo was “a kid just like me. I’m aiming for the kind of relationship he had with God. It makes teens want to have a relationship with God as well.” He added that Blessed Carlo “stayed after Mass and created the catalog he was known for at age 11. That inspired me.”

(A link to the Nov. 18 segment on “CFN Live” featuring the performance of “Born an Original” can be found on Holy Trinity Diocesan High School’s website, bit.ly/33Aqa3Z.) †



INSPIRED BY GOD’S GIFT OF GRACE

This year our hearts were filled with both joy and sadness. We held our families closer at home. We prayed for our healthcare heroes, all while God showed us our strength and resiliency.

In celebration of our Savior’s birth and His gift of Grace, Franciscan Health has never been more inspired to joyfully serve you, as we serve Christ through our mission of caring for the sick and needy. This Christmas season, we reflect on the year God ensured He would always be near.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS
FranciscanHealth.org

 **Franciscan HEALTH**

CARDINAL

continued from page 1

(Mk 10:37), they said. But Jesus reproaches them.

“We, too, pope and cardinals, must always see ourselves reflected in this word of truth,” Pope Francis said. “It is a sharpened sword; it cuts, it proves painful, but it also heals, liberates and converts us.”

According to canon law, cardinals are created when their names are made public “in the presence of the College of Cardinals.” While many Rome-based cardinals attended the consistory, more members of the college were “present” online.

The pandemic also meant the gathering was unusually small; each cardinal was accompanied by a priest-secretary and could invite a handful of guests, so there were only about 100 people in the congregation at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter’s Basilica.

Also missing were the “courtesy visits,” a reception lasting several hours in the early evening when the general public was invited into the Vatican to greet the new cardinals.

In addition to some Rome-based cardinals, the congregation at the consistory included the pastors or rectors of the 13 Rome churches to which the new cardinals are now associated. Cardinals are given a titular church in Rome, formally making them members of the Rome diocesan clergy, which is what the Church’s first cardinals were.

In fact, the formula for the creation of cardinals, recited in Latin by Pope Francis, says, “It chiefly concerns the Church of Rome, but it also affects the

entire ecclesial community: We will call certain of our brethren to enter the College of Cardinals, so that they may be united to the Chair of Peter by a closer bond to our apostolic ministry.”

Cardinal Gregory’s titular church is Immaculate Conception Parish on the ancient Via Flaminia in the Grottarossa neighborhood of northern Rome. The church was built in 1935 and became a titular church for cardinals in 1985.

Cardinal Tomasi’s titular church is the Basilica of St. Nicholas in Prison, a 12th-century church with a 16th-century facade built on the site of an earlier church that was constructed over the ruins of an ancient temple.

Mexican Cardinal Felipe Arizmendi Esquivel, retired bishop of San Cristobal de Las Casas, Mexico, told Vatican News on Nov. 27 that the new cardinals are called to reconfirm their commitment to making Christ the center of their lives and “to collaborate with the pope in his ministry as bishop of Rome, and so we are assigned a parish in this city, as a sign of communion between that community and the one who presides over this local Church, which is the pope.”

Maltese Cardinal Mario Grech, secretary-general of the Synod of Bishops, was the first mentioned by the pope on Oct. 25 when he announced he was creating new cardinals. As such, it fell to Cardinal Grech to address the pope on behalf of the new cardinals.

“Convoked in consistory at such a serious time for all humanity because of the pandemic, we want to turn our thoughts to all our brothers and sisters enduring hardship,” the cardinal said. He prayed that people would react to the pandemic as an “opportunity to rethink our lifestyles, our relationships, the organization of our societies and, especially, the meaning of our lives.”

Cardinal Grech also led the others in the recitation of the Creed and of an oath of fidelity and obedience to Christ and his Church and to Pope Francis and his successors.

The new cardinals came from eight countries: Italy, Malta, the United States, Brunei, the Philippines, Mexico, Rwanda and Chile.

Cardinal Gregory, like the other new cardinals coming from outside Europe, was tested for COVID-19 before flying to Rome and again upon arrival. Even after testing negative, he and the others were required to quarantine for 10 days and were tested again immediately before the consistory. Cardinal Gregory stayed at the Domus Sanctae Marthae, where Pope Francis lives, and his meals were left outside his door.

In an interview with Catholic News Service (CNS), the cardinal said he hopes Pope Francis will find him to be “supportive, encouraging and



Pope Francis places the red biretta on new Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington during a consistory for the creation of 13 new cardinals in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on Nov. 28. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

trustworthy” in his role as a cardinal, but his primary ministry is still to be the archbishop of Washington.

Of course, he said, he regrets that “my two sisters are not here, and the many people I know and love from Chicago and Belleville [Illinois] and Atlanta and Washington,” who were watching the livestream instead.

One of Cardinal Tomasi’s guests was the pastor of his boyhood parish, San Rocco in Casoni di Mussolente, a town of fewer than 8,000 people in northern Italy. In the past 80 years, the cardinal told CNS, the parish has produced more than 100 priests and religious sisters, “and now also a cardinal. I hope it will help to continue the flourishing of vocations from the parish.”

With the consistory, the College of Cardinals now has 229 members, 128 of whom are under the age of 80 and eligible to enter a conclave to elect a new pope. Pope Francis has given the red hat to 57% of electors.

With Cardinals Gregory and Tomasi, who was born in Italy but is a U.S. citizen, the number of U.S. cardinals rose to 16; nine of them are cardinal electors.

Entering the college on Nov. 28 were Cardinals:

- Grech, 63.
- Marcello Semeraro, an Italian who is prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, 72.
- Antoine Kambanda of Kigali, Rwanda, 62.
- Gregory, 72.
- Advincula, 68.
- Celestino Aros Braco of Santiago, Chile, 75.
- Sim, 69.
- Paolo Lojudec of Siena, Italy, 56.
- Mauro Gambetti, custos of the Sacred Convent of Assisi in Assisi, 55.
- Arizmendi, 80.
- Tomasi, 80.
- Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the papal household, 86.
- Enrico Feroci, 80, former director of Rome’s Caritas. †



New Cardinal Silvano M. Tomasi, a U.S. citizen and former papal diplomat, carries his scroll after being made a cardinal by Pope Francis during a consistory in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on Nov. 28. (CNS photo/Fabio Frustaci, Reuters pool)



Pope Francis kisses the hands of Pope Benedict XVI at the retired pope’s residence during a visit with new cardinals after a consistory at the Vatican on Nov. 28. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Cardinal Gregory hopes for dialogue with President-elect Biden

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As Washington’s new cardinal and with a Catholic soon to be living in the White House, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory said he hopes to collaborate where possible while respectfully pointing out where President-elect Joe Biden’s policies diverge from Catholic teaching.

In a Zoom interview from the Vatican’s Domus Sanctae Marthae, where he was in quarantine for 10 days as a COVID-19 precaution, the cardinal said he would not prevent the new president, who goes to Mass every Sunday, from receiving Communion in the archdiocese.

“The kind of relationship that I hope we will have is a conversational relationship where we can discover areas where we can cooperate that reflect the social teachings of the Church, knowing full well that there are some areas where we won’t agree,” the cardinal said. “They are areas where the Church’s position is very clear,” particularly its opposition to the president-elect’s support for legal abortion.

In deciding when to collaborate and when to criticize, he said, “I hope that I don’t highlight one over the other.

“I hope it’s a real dialogue, because I think that’s the mantra of Pope Francis—that we should be a Church in dialogue, even with those with whom we have some serious disagreements,” he said.

The archbishop of Washington said “informed Catholics” know the Church’s teaching on the sacredness of human life from conception to natural death, so he does not believe they would be confused by the Church cooperating with a Biden administration on other issues.

“It’s not a matter of confusion,” he said. “On my part, it’s a matter of the responsibility that I have as the archbishop to be engaged and to be in dialogue with him, even in those areas where we obviously have some differences.”

While some Catholics believe Biden should not be allowed to receive Communion when he goes to Mass, Cardinal Gregory said that for eight years as vice president, Biden went to Mass and received Communion. “I’m not going to veer from that,” he said.

The cardinal said there also is a need for dialogue within the Church among people who think differently.

“Conflict within the Church is not a new reality; it goes back to apostolic times,” he said. “What seems to be new is the capacity for people to broadcast the conflicts and to allow social communications to intensify the conflict.”

Ordained to the priesthood in 1973 for the Archdiocese of Chicago, Cardinal-designate Gregory spoke about the late Chicago Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin’s efforts to promote a way for Catholics to find “common ground”

and reaffirm communion among them.

One key, he said, is developing “the capacity to have civil disagreements—serious disagreements, you know, really pointed disagreements—but done in such a way that the focus is on the argument, not on the demonization of the people with whom we disagree.”

Disagreements are part of “being a family, a family of faith,” he said. “The difficulty is too many people want to throw out of the family of faith people with whom they have disagreements.”

“I’ve had a lot of time to do some prayerful reflection, some thoughtful moments in prayer,” Cardinal Gregory said about his time in Rome. But he also has been using the time to calmly write letters that “ordinarily, I would do rather quickly.”

As the first African American cardinal, he said he thinks Pope Francis’ choosing him is a sign that “the Catholic Church says we have to be more inclusive, to be more engaging with people of different backgrounds and races and ethnic traditions.”

For more than 60 years, going back to St. John XXIII, the popes have been sending that signal by expanding the College of Cardinals, “and Pope Francis has, of course, put that in hyperspeed, because he’s now appointed cardinals from countries that have never had a cardinal.” †

Catholic hospitals receive state recognition for care of moms, babies

By Natalie Hoefler

On Oct. 1, Gov. Eric J. Holcomb announced that Indiana's infant mortality rate fell in 2019 to its lowest level in state history.

Four Catholic-based delivery hospitals in the archdiocese were recognized on Oct. 29 for their help in achieving this goal.

On that day, Ascension St. Vincent Dunn in Bedford, Ascension St. Vincent Women's in Indianapolis, Franciscan Health Indianapolis and Franciscan Health Mooresville were announced among a list of facilities receiving the Indiana Hospital Association's (IHA) new INspire Hospital of Distinction recognition for their role in care for mothers and babies.

"It is paramount to ... protect the lives of mothers and their babies," said Joan Culver, head of Franciscan Health's Women and Children's Service Line Collaborative.

Julie Schnieders, vice president of Ascension Indiana's Women's Service Line, agreed.

"Everyone in the state has their heart in the right place to help moms and babies," she said. "It's part of who we are."

Reversing a dangerous trend

Indiana has historically been listed among states with the highest infant mortality rates, according to an Oct. 4 Associated Press article. It noted that from 2013 to 2017, "Indiana's average infant mortality rate was 7.3 per 1,000 compared to the national average of 5.9 [during] the same time period."

The article reported that 2019 marked the third year the infant mortality rate declined in Indiana, making the number "the lowest it's been since record-keeping [in the state] began."

Decreasing the infant mortality rate has been a state goal for several years, said Schnieders. The most recent step was the 2019 passing of the Indiana State Department of Health's proposed Perinatal Hospital Services Act.

"It created defined levels of care for delivery hospitals," ranking them from Level I to Level IV, with "level four hospitals offering the highest level of care and services," Schnieders explained. Ascension St. Vincent Women's is one of the state's two Level IV delivery hospitals.

When the Indiana Hospital Association (IHA) announced a program called INspire Hospital of Distinction to recognize Level III and IV delivery hospitals' commitment to infant and maternal health, Franciscan Health and Ascension St. Vincent applied.

"There were five key practice areas evaluated—infant safe sleep, breastfeeding, tobacco prevention and cessation, perinatal substance use and obstetric hemorrhage," Culver explained.

Hospitals had to pass in four of the five areas to receive INspire Hospital of Distinction recognition. The eligible Franciscan Health and Ascension St. Vincent hospitals in the archdiocese each passed in all five areas.

The recognition proves that the hospitals "provide what we say we'll provide," said Schnieders. "It makes all of us get our house in order—are we really doing what we say we're doing."

'Take away all the barriers'

To prove a hospital's success in the five key areas, "We had to look back at our programs to see what we offered," said Culver. "Sometimes it's education, sometimes it's documentation, sometimes it's prevention."

One example she cited is Franciscan Health's "Eat, Sleep, Console" program to help babies born addicted to opioids or other drugs from the mother's use while pregnant.

The program "is an evidence-based method of care that helps new parents care for their infants who may be suffering from neonatal abstinence syndrome [NAS]," according to information on the health system's website.

Rather than send the baby to the neonatal intensive care unit for treatment with withdrawal medication, "We try to keep mom and baby together," Culver explained. "We screen for withdrawal symptoms, but continue to make efforts to keep mom and baby together so mom can learn coping skills and learn her baby's cues, and feed and cuddle her baby as much as possible."

The program has led to a marked decrease in intensive care stays, fewer days in the hospital for affected newborns and significantly fewer infants requiring medication assistance for NAS, according to the website.

Schnieders noted services offered by Ascension St. Vincent delivery hospitals that contributed toward their INspire recognition.

"One I really like is, at the Indianapolis [Women's] hospital, we have a community health worker who goes several days a week to the [local] Women's Care Center so she can get moms in for care early," she said.

The health worker offers mothers presumptive eligibility—short-term coverage of health care services for those with limited incomes who are not currently receiving Medicaid.

"She has helped women in 42 different zip codes get the help they need that is closest to them and most convenient for them, even if it's not an Ascension St. Vincent hospital," said Schnieders. "The word is out that if there's food insecurity, if a mom needs a ride, she'll help. We try to take away all the barriers we can to help moms."



Angela Bratina, third from right, administrative director of Franciscan Health Indianapolis' Center for Women & Children, poses with nurses Christine Hunkele, left, Erin Neu, Melanie Boosey, Jennifer Naessens and Stephanie Lee in front of a banner noting the recognition they helped earn for Franciscan Health from the Indiana Hospital Association as an INspire Hospital of Distinction in the area of care for mothers and babies. (Submitted photo)

'Clearly making a difference'

The list of INspire Hospital of Distinction recipients includes many secular facilities. What sets Franciscan Health and Ascension St. Vincent apart is their distinct Catholic missions.

"A basic construct of our mission is that we respect all life," said Culver. "And we want all moms and babies to get the care they need, and to do that in a financially responsible way. We are there to provide care whether they can pay for it or not."

She is proud of the staff who helped earn the recognition.

"We do this work because we're called," Culver said. "But this recognition helps our staff understand their work is meaningful. They're being noticed, and moms and babies are getting better care because of what they are doing."

Ascension St. Vincent hospitals also offer care with a Catholic Christian mindset.

"If you think of how [St. Vincent hospitals' founding order] the Daughters of Charity started with treating the poor and vulnerable, it starts right there," said Schnieders. "We don't let anything be a barrier in the care of mothers or babies."

She said she was "thrilled" when she learned the hospitals in her area of responsibility received the INspire Hospital of Distinction recognition.

"What I try to do is get everyone to roll the same way," she explained. "If we all do the same thing, we'll improve the quality and outcome of care. So, for our staff and facilities to receive that recognition was really awesome."

This was the first year for the INspire program. If it is offered again next year,



A statue of the Blessed Virgin holding the child Jesus stands outside of Ascension St. Vincent Women's Hospital in Indianapolis. The facility was one of four Catholic hospitals in the archdiocese to earn the Indiana Hospital Association's INspire Hospital of Distinction status in the area of care for mothers and babies. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

both Culver and Schnieders said their hospitals will apply.

"It's a really good idea," said Schnieders. "If you take care of mom and keep her healthy, then the rest of the family stays healthy."

Culver agreed.

"When you look at the impact we've all made, it's clear the infant mortality rate has improved," she said. "We're doing it as a city and a state to make a difference. And we clearly are making a difference." †

Vatican tells young people to ask for 'words of wisdom' for Christmas

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—One present young people should ask for this Christmas is words of wisdom from older people they know, a Vatican dicastery said.

"Today, in the difficult circumstances of a Christmas

still overshadowed by the pandemic, we are proposing that young people post on social media a memory, a piece of advice or a 'gift of wisdom' they have received from one of the elderly people with whom they have formed a bond in recent months," said the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life.

The invitation was part of a new campaign launched on Nov. 27 aimed at encouraging young people to reach out to their grandparents and other older people, not only to help alleviate the isolation and loneliness caused by pandemic restrictions, but also to create new and creative bonds.

The unusual circumstances caused by the pandemic means "there is an opportunity for young people to receive a special gift" for Christmas this year, the dicastery said in a news release.

"Because of the pandemic, there are more elderly people who live alone. We can create bonds with each of them—this is a treasure waiting to be discovered!"

The Vatican office asked that people reach out to older people and ask for "the gift of their wisdom." People can then take the advice, memories and nuggets of wisdom they collect and post them on social media using the hashtag #aGiftOfWisdom.

"Some of the best posts will be shared" on the

dicastery's social media accounts @laityfamilylife, it said.

"Unfortunately, in many cases, because of the health regulations in force, visiting can only take place remotely, via telephone, video calls and messaging. But it is possible to participate in this campaign [by sharing] the wise words of grandparents and the elderly on social media," it added.

The latest campaign follows a similar effort the dicastery launched in July in which it "collected virtual hugs sent by many young people to both their own grandparents and to 'adopted grandparents,'" it said. The effort was meant to encourage young people to show kindness and affection to older people who may be feeling lonely.

For other ideas and guidance, the dicastery has posted on its website, laityfamilylife.va, a free e-book called *The Richness of Many Years of Life*, which offers a toolkit in multiple languages "for the development of a true pastoral ministry that reaches out" and involves the elderly as active participants in the Church.

The e-book includes the proceedings of the first international conference on the pastoral care of the elderly the dicastery held in January 2020 to promote a "renewed concern for the pastoral care of the elderly in every ecclesial community." †



LANGLEY

continued from page 1

Yet even with all her compassion, there has sometimes been the challenge of finding a foundation that can help her heal others and attain peace in her own life, too.

She believes she has found it.

“For me, it’s very simple: If God is who he says he is, we can trust that he is more powerful than our sins, failings and the darkness that inevitably comes in life,” she says. “We can trust that he is the same God who offered himself on the cross more than 2,000 years ago; the same God who pulls us out of the mess and the muck of our lives, just as he did for me as a teenager.”

It’s where her story of faith and transformation begins.

‘I jumped in head-first’

“I grew up going to Mass every Sunday, but it wasn’t until I was a teen that I really met Jesus Christ for the first time,” she says.

“It was also in those years that I really struggled—just because life for teens is just plain hard sometimes. Trying to navigate the pressure of being an honors student, extracurriculars, boys, friendships and the like, can be trying.

“What I know now and what I didn’t realize then was that I probably was struggling with some undiagnosed mental health issues and didn’t have the language to describe what was going on in my head and my heart. By the grace of God, I have received incredible healing since that time.”

She credits part of her healing to being welcomed into the youth group at her parish at the time, St. John the Apostle in Bloomington. One experience especially

touched and changed her.

“I went on a retreat as a teen that was called ‘Consumed,’” she recalls. “It was on that first retreat that I met Jesus Christ in the Eucharist for the first time and understood who he was. I knew without a shadow of a doubt that he was truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, that he loved me, and that he wanted a personal relationship with me.

“I left that retreat completely on fire for Christ, wanting to chase after him with everything I had, which wasn’t much for a 14-year-old kid. I jumped in head-first, and my heart was the Lord’s from then on. Or should I say, the Lord continued to pursue me daily, and I found myself coming back to him again and again.”

During that time, she started participating in daily Mass more frequently. And every time she received Communion, she experienced “genuine joy and peace.”

“The burdens I was carrying began to feel that much lighter, even though life still had its ups and downs,” she says. “My youth minister and youth group friends encouraged me in my walk with Christ, as we all became a part of a small faith community that was pursuing an authentic relationship with Christ.”

That pursuit continued for her when she attended Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., finding her new faith home at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish there.

“It was there, at St. Tom’s, that I was given the skills to have a consistent daily prayer life,” notes the 2014 graduate of Purdue. “I continued to go to daily Mass, read my Bible, and spent time in the quiet of our tiny campus chapel.

“My relationship with Christ flourished and became intertwined with every aspect of my life. Even now, as a 29-year-old college graduate, I find myself still longing

for that deep intimacy with Christ.”

‘God gives me opportunities’

Seeking that deep connection with Christ has also led to her deepening concern for others—a quality first instilled in her by her parents as she was growing up.

“They were kind, understanding, patient, and they advocated for the downtrodden of society,” says Langley, now a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis. “My mom spent time praying with me, talking to me about social justice issues in the faith, taking me to daily Mass, and educating me on who God was in my life.”

She has used her own gifts of faith, kindness and understanding to help people who are divorced. For more than three years, she has served as an advocate in the archdiocese’s Metropolitan Tribunal, which primarily helps Catholics in central and southern Indiana seeking an annulment. She works one-on-one with people, advising them in their cases.

“What I have found is that God gives me opportunities to minister to very broken people every day: people who have experienced grief, loss, judgment, and who often live in shame because of a divorce that they—usually—never imagined would take place.

“While I have never experienced divorce personally, God has gifted me with a great capacity for compassion and



Then-high school student Perry Langley (in the second row in the white sweater) and members of the St. John the Apostle Parish youth group in Bloomington take part in an Antioch Retreat at their parish in 2008. Purdue University students led the retreat. (Submitted photo)

a desire to help people. He has allowed me to use these gifts in a unique way: to attempt to bring my clients hope and to encourage reconciliation and healing in their lives through the sacraments.”

Langley now wants to bring hope and healing to others through a career as a registered nurse. She plans to start her nursing education in January.

“Just as I experienced a call to work at the tribunal, it is clear to me that God is calling me in this direction. As providence would have it, nursing will play upon many of the gifts that I use at the tribunal.”

She considers a nursing career as another part of her journey to her ultimate destination.

“Our time on Earth is not a given, and we aren’t meant to be here forever,” she says. “Heaven is our forever home, which means that our time here on Earth should be spent with our eyes fixed on heaven, living our lives in a way that will help us to get to our final goal: being with God forever in eternity.” †



Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

“We don’t know what the future holds, but it’s all God’s work,” says Sister Theresa McGrath (center), 86, a member of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio. In good times and bad, she and the religious shown here have devoted themselves to God’s work. They are among nearly 30,000 senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who benefit from the Retirement Fund for Religious. Your gift helps provide medications, nursing care, and more. Please be generous.

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Above, from left: Sister Alice Garcia, SSCJ, 91; Brother Martin Gonzales, OCSO, 95; Sister Theresa McGrath, CCVI, 86; Sister Anne Cecile Muldoon, OSU, 93; Abbot Emeritus Peter Eberle, OSB, 79. ©2020 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington DC • All rights reserved • Photo: Jim Judkis

Faith *Alive!*

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Advent, pandemic are both occasions for growth, conversion

By David Gibson

Long months of the vicious COVID-19 pandemic preceded the arrival of this year's Advent season leading to Christmas. Neither Advent nor Christmas in 2020 will escape the pandemic's shadow.

But Advent is a season for conversion, a hopeful, forward-looking period that keeps spiritual growth high in mind. The season asks where God is found.

Is God present despite the pandemic's ravages? It entails real pain and is stunningly disruptive. Yet, many attest that God-like developments occurred in all kinds of homes and communities during this time.

Conversion during Advent is, in particular, "a question of converting our idea of God," Pope Francis says. It is a time "to welcome not a fairy-tale character, but the God who challenges us, involves us and before whom a choice is imposed," he remarked on Dec. 15, 2019.

How might a person's idea of God need to grow? A speech Pope Francis gave in December 2018 described several ways the idea of God goes awry.

"The Bible and the Church's history show clearly" how believers "can frequently come to think and act as if they were the owners of salvation and not its recipients," Pope Francis explained. He cautioned:

"Being Christian ... does not mean acting like an elite group who think they have God in their pocket, but as people who know that they are loved by the Lord" despite their imperfections.

Clearly, disturbing events in our surrounding world can shake us and leave us asking once again who God is for us or, more simply, how life suddenly could become painfully frustrating and confusing. Has the 2020 pandemic often been such an event?

Early in Christian history a different kind of event, but also one stemming from the early Christians' immediate world,



Two girls wearing face masks pray during a Sept. 26 Mass at St. Jude the Apostle Church in Lewes, Del. Neither Advent nor Christmas in 2020 will escape the pandemic's shadow. But Advent is a season for conversion, a hopeful, forward-looking period that keeps spiritual growth high in mind.

(CNS photo/Chaz Muth)

shook believers and left them wondering if they had misunderstood a promise of God. We hear about this on Advent's second Sunday in 2020.

A reading that Sunday from the Second Letter of St. Peter (2 Pt 3:8-14) describes a big issue that arose at that time and ultimately prompted many to refocus their understanding of God. The issue involved Christ's second coming in glory at the end of time, which is a key Advent theme today.

Many early Christians apparently expected the second coming of Christ to occur quickly. But parents and grandparents died as time passed, and some Christians began to wonder if God had delayed the promise of the second coming.

Unsurprisingly, there were scoffers who began to suggest not only that God had delayed the second coming, but that there might be no second coming at all. Some insinuated that God no longer was intimately involved with this world's life, according to a note in the New American Bible.

But God's promise remained, the Second Letter of Peter affirmed. It advised the Christian community that "with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day." Moreover, "the Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard 'delay,' but he is patient with you" (2 Pt 3:8-9).

It was a disturbing moment in time among early Christians.

It seems, though, that conversion and renewed faith followed in its wake, as Peter urged Christians to turn to asking "what sort of persons" they ought to be and to focus their energies on conducting themselves "in holiness and devotion" (2 Pt 3:11).

To hear God's voice, Christians pray, reflect, participate in worship or consult Scripture and the faith community, for example. But cannot an incarnate Lord also speak within the world and through its ongoing events?

Did this occur for the ancient Christian community or with today's 2020 pandemic? Is God found and heard in the context of disturbing current events?

The pandemic threatens and changes human lives. It does this in ways that feel painful. Nonetheless, doors somehow are left open for good outcomes.

Suffering is no stranger during the pandemic. But the online, virtual methods that have emerged for fulfilling the demands of jobs, schoolwork or essential shopping frequently have yielded surprising human rewards.

Then there is the simple fact that so many now spend much more time at home in the company of family members or friends. How many of them find during this time that they are developing a renewed appreciation of each other and of their relationships?

The pandemic "has enabled us, perhaps for the first time in our lives, to recognize the deeply interconnected relationship of all living things, and the urgent need for us to repent and change our lives," Franciscan Father Michael Perry, a priest born and raised in Indianapolis who is minister general of the Order of Friars Minor, observed in an Aug. 1 homily in Assisi, Italy.

"The call to repentance, conversion, to open our minds, hearts and lives to a new way of living together on this planet is more urgent now than at any other moment in human history," he said.

Christians are called, Father Michael stressed, "to seek the way back toward God, toward one another, toward ourselves and toward creation."

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



Children are seen helping prepare a family meal at their home. The coronavirus pandemic has led many people to spend more time with their family and close friends than in the past—a sign that this challenging time for society can also be an occasion for conversion. (CNS photo/Melissa Moon, Detroit Catholic)

Pastoral Ministries/Madison Cipoletti

Engaged couples: A business transaction or a welcoming home?

Imagine the scene: A young man planning for a surprise proposal, all dressed up, a ring in his pocket. A young woman who has dreamt of her wedding day since she was a little girl, hoping and waiting for him to ask. Down on one knee he goes and asks the question. An exclamatory, "Yes!" from his future bride



follows.

Unfortunately, this story is happening less and less in the U.S. today.

In a recent report, census data is showing that marriage rates in the U.S. dropped to an all-time low in 2019. (cutt.ly/2hkF7s7)

Not only are young people less likely to get married, they are leaving the Church in droves. Eighty percent of those who leave the Catholic faith do so by the age of 23, according to a 2009 Pew research study called "Faith in Flux: Changes in the Religious Affiliation in the U.S."

Of course, serving in young adult ministry, these statistics grab my attention and reaffirm some

perspectives I believe we as a Church should consider when it comes to marriage preparation.

When a young engaged couple reaches out seeking the sacrament of holy matrimony, how do we treat them? Are we treating them as a business transaction with boxes to check, or are we recognizing that we could be welcoming them back home forever?

When I think about young couples who have drifted from the faith, but seeking marriage in the Church, I see the Father's compassion in the parable of the Prodigal Son as a perfect example to all members of the Church.

When the father "caught sight of him, [he] was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him" (Lk 15:20). No judgment, no questions, no explanation needed, the father simply rejoiced at his son's return.

The father provides us with a model of mercy and joy that we should follow to welcome young adults who return to the Church, whether for marriage, the baptism of their child or Christmas.

When young adults return to the Church, do they feel like they're home? No matter where they've been, what they've done or how long they've

been away, do they feel accepted and welcomed?

To help us better welcome young couples to our communities, here are some practical thoughts to consider:

Parish staff: Who answers the phone or makes the first phone call to a couple seeking to get married? Do they take the time to get to know the couple's story, how they met, why they want to get married and why at this particular parish? Consider adding inviting and celebratory language to your parish website's page about the sacrament of matrimony. Again—it's a big deal to commit your life to marrying someone, especially in today's culture. Make them feel celebrated!

Priests: We appreciate everything you do and know that you're extremely busy. But one small step you can take when you meet with a young couple if you don't already, is to get to know the young couple, how they met, what they like to do together, why they want to get married and why in your parish. This future family could lead to more volunteers, ministries, vocations and tithing in your parish.

Parishioners: We are the family of God! How are you greeting young

See CIPOLETTI, page 14

For the Journey/Effie Caldarola

Advent's call to discipleship

During Advent, we pray about our call to be disciples. But what does "discipleship" mean?



One of the most accessible and enjoyable Jesuit writers of the 20th century was a priest named Mark Link. Father Mark wrote numerous books, and he's well known for his short, pithy anecdotes that express

truth in a simple way.

In his 1993 book, *Challenge*, Father Mark tells the story of two brothers, Clarence and Robert, who had committed their lives to Jesus when they were young. Clarence grew up to become a political activist, Robert an attorney.

"One day, Clarence asked Robert for some legal help in a civil rights matter," writes Father Mark. "Robert refused, saying it could hurt his political future."

What about Robert's commitment to Jesus?

"Robert said, 'I do follow Jesus, but I'm not going to get crucified like he was.'"

To which Clarence replied, "Robert, you are not a follower of Jesus; you are only a fan."

This story gives me pause. Of course, I admire Jesus and hope that his teachings make an impact in my life. But am I a disciple? Or merely a fan? Is there a line I won't cross?

I've just read Jon Meacham's brilliant book about John Lewis, the civil rights activist who died this year at age 80.

In *His Truth Is Marching On: John Lewis and the Power of Hope*, Meacham introduces us to a man who heard Jesus' invitation from a young age. He was just a little kid when he decided to be a preacher, and his first audience was the chickens he fed daily. When his mom killed one of his congregation for supper, Lewis would refuse to eat.

This childhood experience didn't lead to vegetarianism, but it did lead to a Baptist seminary after high school, and eventually to what St. Teresa of Calcutta described in her own life as "a call within a call."

Lewis entered seminary in 1957, just as the South was still reeling from—and resisting—the school integration decreed by the 1954 Supreme Court decision, *Brown vs. Board of Education*. Lewis had grown up in an environment of racism—white-robed klansmen walked the streets, lynchings stalked the countryside.

He saw the abuse heaped on students brave enough to integrate public schools, and made his decision to pursue nonviolent protest against a violent system. He modeled this decision on the Gospel. For him, the Gospel was a social gospel.

When we remember Lewis as a respected member of Congress, where he spent the last years of his life, we forget the many beatings he took. We forget the times he was drug from lunch counters and refused service. We forget the mobs that gathered outside the buses that he and other Freedom Riders rode to integrate travel. We forget the decision Lewis made to board one of those buses after a firebombing destroyed another.

Lewis' skull was fractured at the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Yet his commitment to nonviolence and love were unwavering.

Discipleship calls us to be, somehow, indifferent to our own life, even if it's just in the small opportunities we have each day to give generously of ourselves.

On Dec. 2, we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the killing of the four Catholic missionary women in El Salvador, another example of people who were "all in" for Jesus. Remembering their discipleship, and Lewis', is a good way to honor Advent.

(Effie Caldarola writes for Catholic News Service.) †

It's All Good/Patti Lamb

This year, Christmas will be alive in all those who believe

"The kids in Room 207 were misbehaving again. Spitballs stuck to the ceiling. Paper planes whizzing through the air. They were the worst behaved class in the whole school."

That's the beginning of one of my favorite childhood books, *Miss Nelson is Missing*, by Harry Allard. I stumbled upon it recently in the children's section of a bookstore when shopping for a Christmas book for my godchild.

I distinctly remember the plot. Miss Nelson was a mild-mannered and kind-natured teacher, and her disrespectful students misbehaved and refused to learn.

As I glanced at the cover, a line from the book flashed into my mind.

"Something must be done," Miss Nelson said, as the students repeatedly talked over her and made poor choices.

The next day, Miss Nelson didn't show up. Instead, a substitute who looked like a witch took her place as teacher. Miss Viola Swamp was strict and mean and gave the children loads of homework. Miss Swamp showed up day after day. The kids greatly missed Miss Nelson and regretted their wicked behavior. At the end of the book, Miss Nelson returns and the students rejoice and treat her with the respect and dignity they failed to give before.

That afternoon in the bookstore, my jaw dropped as I stared at the cover illustration.

A thought occurred to me.

"Are we the kids in Room 207?" I asked myself.

Is the current state of affairs in this world the way it is because "something must be done?"

We're living in a pandemic, forced to social distance, and even isolate in some instances, making this Christmas one like never before. Most of us can't spend it with those we

love most. No Christmas parties. Nativity plays and choir performances have been cancelled. Hugs are prohibited. Masks are mandated to cover our faces, preventing us from the simplest kind gesture of sharing a smile. Warm hugs and handshakes feel like things of the past.

I thought back to this time a year ago. Apparently, those were the good old days, and how I regret taking them for granted. Last Christmas Eve, our church was packed so full that many were standing and those lucky enough to be in a pew were packed in like sardines. The choir sang, the children put on a lovely Nativity pageant and we hugged at the sign of peace. All those things that enriched the celebration of the Eucharist are now simply not allowed.

This December, it feels like Christmas is missing, but it's not. And seeing one of my favorite books in the bookstore that day reminded me precisely why it's not.

More than 2000 years ago, God looked down at his troubled world and said, "Something must be done," so he sent his only Son to teach us about love, service and mercy. He allowed his son's blood to be used to seal a new covenant.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16).

By his life, death and resurrection, Jesus opened the gates of heaven for us. Each December, we celebrate the birth of our Redeemer, who won the victory for us. That's why we proclaim "joy to the world!"

While this year's celebration may look different from years past, it's every bit as meaningful and worthy of celebration in our hearts. Even without turkey and tinsel, Christmas is not missing. It's alive in the hearts of all who believe.

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

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

Maintaining mental balance in a media-crazed society

As I paged through the news on my computer, I realized I had run through a hundred postings within an hour

that touched on the election, the pandemic, protest marches, the progress of vaccines, global conflicts, sports and ways for staying healthy.

While I experienced this media blitz, I was struck by my psychological

reactions to it: fear, jubilation, disgust, anger, unbelief, sorrow, depression and overall anxiety. Most of all was a strong desire to get away from it and go outdoors for a quiet walk.

The thought then occurred, "When is too much too much? Undoubtedly, we

are blessed with resilience, but to what extent? Where is the breaking point?"

During the walk I eventually took, jubilant people had flooded the streets and horn-blowing cars raced up and down in front of the Supreme Court and U.S. Capitol at the news of President-elect Joe Biden's win.

In talking with several elated people, their joy was not so much over Biden's victory but about a sense of relief. A weight had been lifted. The air was fresher, the sun brighter and the sky bluer.

What is this weight of which I speak?

Although a new hopeful chapter in our country was being written, the jubilation was about more than this. The weight of too much being too much was lifted. News 24/7 is addictive. It also creates an environment that engulfs us.

We were inhaling too much

strife, untruthfulness, invectiveness, discontentment and conflict. Many felt they had reached their limits: Too much is too much was sinking them into depression and unrelenting anxiety.

In the book *Habits of the Heart*, researchers point out freedom is imperative to American life. But once achieved, most people do not know what to do with it. To do what we desire and be able to freely choose unhindered is freedom's beauty. But freedom also comes with the duty of responsibility and refraining when necessary; it has rules.

Will disturbing news blitzes continue? Yes! Employing our liberty to refrain from it when necessary is our best use of freedom and maintaining mental balance.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.) †



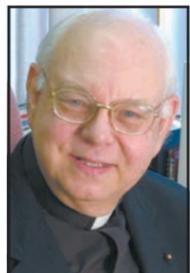
Second Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, December 6, 2020

- Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11
- 2 Peter 3:8-14
- Mark 1:1-8

The second part of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for Mass on this Second Sunday of Advent.



When this book was written, God's people were happy. Their long, dreary exile of four generations in Babylon was about to end. They were looking forward to returning to their homeland. This

reading captures well the people's joy and relief. It clearly shows their longing to return to their homeland.

These verses also and importantly convey well the sense that this happy circumstance occurred as a result of God's mercy and faithfulness to the covenant.

It was not as if the people had earned God's munificence in this regard, or that they had been unusually loyal to the covenant themselves. To the contrary, their sins had brought misery upon themselves. Nevertheless, God's mercy endured.

Isaiah insists that, upon returning to their homeland, the people must go to Jerusalem to the holy mountain where stood the temple, and there proclaim aloud the goodness of God.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church presents a passage from the Second Epistle of St. Peter. Its theme differs from that of the first reading. The first reading was wonderfully optimistic. This reading is grim in its predictions of dark days and of unwelcome possibilities in the future.

This is critical, however. Things are bad, but it does not predict everlasting death. Difficult times will not vanish, but God always will protect the faithful. In this reassurance, Peter parallels the message of the first reading.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is the beginning of the Gospel, as the first verse of the reading states, and the very opening verse states its purpose. It is the "Good News" about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

In these relatively few words, the entire reality of salvation is revealed. Something new is being proclaimed, utterly different from the sadness and dreariness of human life, totally unbound by the variances of earthly existence. The news is good! Jesus, the Son of God, both conveys this Good News and brings its effectiveness into human life.

This reading quotes Isaiah's prophecy that God will send a representative to guide the people from death to life, from the deadly effects of their sins to the bright realms of God's forgiveness. God has been true to this pledge. He gives us Jesus.

Mark then tells of John the Baptist, who went throughout Judea calling people to repentance. John recognized Jesus. Anyone can recognize Jesus, the Son of God. Too many people yield to an unrealistic assumption, to take the easy way out or to dilute the requirement of absolute conversion.

Reflection

In Advent, the Church clearly, frankly and directly calls people to remember who they are as humans and importantly also to realize sin's devastating results. Such was the message of John the Baptist.

These steps require frankness and humility. We first must admit our sin and our human limitations. We must see what sin and its estrangement from and rejection of God actually means. It is the cause of eternal death, and often of misery, in earthly existence.

The ultimate message is not of doom, gloom and impossible goals. While we are limited and have sinned, while we may be weak, while we may have made quite a mess of things, this weekend's readings remind us that God's mercy is overwhelming and unending. So, we have reason to hope. God will forgive and strengthen us.

The key to obtaining this mercy is in truly dedicating ourselves to the Lord. God does not drag us kicking and screaming into heaven. We must cooperate with God's grace to be worthy of heaven. Jesus will help us. †

Daily Readings

Monday, December 7

St. Ambrose, bishop and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 85:9ab-14
Luke 5:17-26

Tuesday, December 8

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

Wednesday, December 9

St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin
Isaiah 40:25-31
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday, December 10

Our Lady of Loreto
Isaiah 41:13-20
Psalm 145:1, 9-13b
Matthew 11:11-15

Friday, December 11

St. Damasus I, pope
Isaiah 48:17-19
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday, December 12

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

Sunday, December 13

Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11
(Response) Luke 1:46-50, 53-54
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Church does not forbid worshipers from raising hands in prayer at Mass

QI am a practicing Catholic, and my daughter is in the third grade at a Catholic school. In my former parish in Arizona, I used to have my hands raised in prayer during Mass. But now that I live in Michigan, we don't do that, and it bothers my daughter when she sees my hands uplifted. Am I doing it right or wrong? (Michigan)



AI am guessing that your question has to do with the posture of the congregation while praying the Our Father. Not infrequently, I have seen individuals lift their hands during this prayer, and occasionally I have witnessed entire congregations do the same.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has evidently been asked this question so often that, with regard to a congregational posture during the

Lord's Prayer, the bishops now say on their website, "No position is prescribed in the *Roman Missal* for an assembly gesture."

I take that to mean that you are free to do as you wish—and praying with outstretched arms is, after all, one of the historic postures of prayer.

I am, of course, familiar with the distinction between private prayer and liturgical prayer, and I recognize that the "General Instruction on the *Roman Missal*" says that "a common bodily posture, to be observed by all those taking part, is a sign of the unity of the members of the

Christian community gathered together for the sacred liturgy, for it expresses the intentions and spiritual attitude of the participants and also fosters them" (#42).

But having your hands uplifted in prayer doesn't seem to me to constitute a grievous violation of that canon of universality.

I think what you might do is just explain to your daughter that this is the way you've been trained, the way you feel comfortable praying and the way that helps you lift your mind and heart to God—which, after all, is what prayer is.

QWhy is the pope approving of civil unions for homosexuals? Isn't this still one of the deadly sins? (Indiana)

AFirst, to clarify: I have never seen homosexuality mentioned as one of the seven deadly sins. In fact, many people with a homosexual orientation are celibate. The seven deadly sins are commonly listed as pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony and sloth.

Now, to the matter of Pope Francis' recent quote: A documentary titled *Francesco*, released in Rome in October, quoted a comment the pope made in a 2019 interview with the Mexican network Televisa.

There, the pope said, "Homosexual people have a right to be in a family. They are children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out or be made miserable over it. What we have to create is a civil union law. That way they are legally covered."

In saying this, Pope Francis was not changing the Church's moral teaching or its understanding of marriage. Marriage is an indissoluble union between one man and one woman, a union open to the transmission of life; as a result, marriage between two people of the same sex is unacceptable, and Pope Francis has often affirmed that.

In the quote in question, he was speaking simply of the need to provide legal protection for the rights of non-married people living together in a stable way—rights, for example, involving inheritance, health care decisions and visitation when one is ill.

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

My Journey to God

Jesus, Our Lord and King

By Sandy Bierly

Jesus is coming!
The time is drawing near.
Let us open our hearts,
To welcome Him.

Jesus comes in the silence
To our Bethlehem town.
He comes to a manger so lowly,
Wearing a King's crown.

Jesus is not of this world.
The angels proclaim,
Singing Gloria in the highest,
To our newborn King.

Jesus brings glad tidings,
And peace to all men.
He is our Savior,
Our Lord and our King.
Let us welcome Him!



(Sandy Bierly is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. An angel serves as the center of a wreath hanging in the large annual creche display of Larry and Amy Higdon, members of Holy Trinity Parish in Edinburg, photographed on Nov. 26, 2019.) (File photo by Natalie Hoefer)

Rest in peace

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

AVIS, Mindy M., 41, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Nov. 20. Daughter of Francis Avis. Sister of Shannon Main and Branden Avis. Aunt of several.

BISCHOFF, Rick G., 63, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 21. Husband of Brenda Bischoff. Father of Benjamin and Derick Bischoff. Son of Phyllis Bischoff. Brother of Nancy Busse, Sharon Cumberworth, Linda Gerty, Cathy Graf, Pam McMillin, Cindy Westerfield, Lisa Wilson, Ken, Leroy, Paul and Steve Bischoff.

COLLINS, Linda C., 71, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Oct. 10. Mother of Missy Vail. Sister of Janine Workman Wigglesworth. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of one.

COSSAIRT, Alice E., 93, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Nov. 6. Mother of Marjorie Herridge, Ann, Beth, Jim and Will Cossairt. Sister of Janice Crane, Margie Long, Nick and Steve Runnebohm.

Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of eight.

FORD, Catherine, 68, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 13. Wife of Joseph Ford. Mother of Sara Berscheit. Sister of Beth Shaw, Therese, Edward, James, John, Michael and Patrick Avelis. Grandmother of three.

GARCIA, Jose G., 84, St. Louis, Batesville, Nov. 22. Husband of Gemma Garcia. Father of Monina Baker, Jaime, Joel, Joselito and Joseph Garcia. Brother of Alejo, Manuel and Romulo Garcia. Grandfather of eight.

GERDES, Corwin, 82, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, Nov. 11. Father of Patty Charest, Gail Samay and Charles Gerdes. Grandfather of six.

GILLASPY, Adriana C. (Briscoe), 89, St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer, Nov. 3. Mother of John, Philip and Thomas Gillaspay. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of two.

HELLMANN, Dorothy T. (Matkovic), 95, St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer, Nov. 13. Mother of Maureen Anderson, Sharon Blattner, Jean Marie Buffington, Annette Meyers, Rita Shoup, Cecelia Trueblood, Brian and Jerome Hellmann. Sister of Joan Garbish and Patty Matkovic. Grandmother of 25. Great-great-grandmother of three.

HOOG, Ronald J., 84, St. Peter, Franklin County, Nov. 20. Husband of Glenna Hoog. Father of Julie Trammell, Darrel, Roger and Ronald Hoog. Brother of Shirley Roots. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of 19.

HOWARD, Elza, 89, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, Nov. 2. Uncle of one.

Natican Christmas tree



A Christmas tree is positioned in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Nov. 30. The tree is a 92-foot-tall spruce from near Kocevje, Slovenia. (CNS photo/Cindy Wooden)

JOHNSTON, James, 92, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Nov. 16. Husband of Mary Carolyn Johnston. Father of Lucia Begley, Mary Jane Blackwell and James Johnston. Brother of Patricia Lyster. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of seven.

MCARTHY, Robert J., 83, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Nov. 19. Husband of Sally McCarthy. Father of Kathleen Haberthy, Christopher, Michael and Timothy McCarthy. Brother of Joan Armbruster. Grandfather of seven.

MCMULLEN, Janet M., 84, St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer, Nov. 15. Wife of John McMullen. Mother of Cynthia Lane Slavens, Colleen, Kevin and Michael McMullen. Sister of Rebecca Holley and Carolyn McGuire. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of 15. Great-great-grandmother of two.

SMITH, John J., 93, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, Nov. 7. Father of Susan Hopper and James Smith. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of one.

SMITH, Laura (Anger), 76, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 14. Sister of Frances Anger.

STAND, Theresa (Margherone), 87, St. John the Apostle, Bloomington, Nov. 9. Mother of June Blaire, David, Paul and Thomas Stand. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of three.

TANNER, Rosemary, 87, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, Sept. 25. Wife of L. Gene Tanner. Mother of Susan, James and Karl Tanner. Grandmother of 11.

TOUSSAINT, Joseph L., 87, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, Dec. 24, 2019. Husband of Gail Toussaint. Father of Joseph, Kevin, Mark and Neil Toussaint. Grandfather of two.

WAGNER, Darlene (Esteves), 74, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Nov. 16. Mother of Nicole Robison and Debbie Steck. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of one. †

Religious leaders must offer example of respect, cooperation, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Conflict and violence in the world will never end if people do not fully understand their responsibility to each other as members of one human family, Pope Francis said in a written message.

“In light of this, the Christian churches, together with other religious traditions, have a primary duty to offer an example of dialogue, mutual respect and practical cooperation,” he said in the message to Ecumenical

Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

“With profound gratitude to God, I have experienced this fraternity at first hand in the various encounters we have shared,” he told the Orthodox patriarch.

Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, delivered the message to the patriarch in Istanbul on Nov. 30 during services to mark the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, the patriarchate’s patron saint. The cardinal led a Vatican delegation to Istanbul to take part in the Divine Liturgy presided over by the patriarch.

St. Andrew’s charity, apostolic zeal and perseverance are a “source of encouragement in these difficult and critical times,” the pope said.

“Giving glory to God also strengthens our faith and hope in the one who welcomed into eternal life the holy martyr Andrew, whose faith endured in time of trial,” he said.

The world is facing numerous trials right now, the pope said. “Together with the challenges posed by the

current pandemic, war continues to afflict many parts of the world, while new armed conflicts emerge to steal the lives of countless men and women.”

The many efforts by national and international entities to promote peace “are useful and necessary, yet conflict and violence will never cease until all people reach a deeper awareness that they have a mutual responsibility as brothers and sisters,” he said.

With this in mind, he said, religious leaders have an important responsibility to offer the world a good example.

Pope Francis expressed his gratitude for the strengthened relations between the Catholic Church and the Ecumenical patriarchate, “even as we continue to yearn for the goal of the restoration of full communion expressed through participation at the same eucharistic altar.

“Although obstacles remain, I am confident that by walking together in mutual love and pursuing theological dialogue, we will reach that goal,” he said. †



Pope Francis

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

1 Ethics Point
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www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810

2 Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
carlahill@archindy.org

CIPOLETTI
continued from page 12
people at Mass? Many long for intergenerational relationships, and the parish family is a great place to

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form those relationships.
Community: Consider connecting the young couple to a young adult group, or another young couple in the parish so they can build personal connections to the parish family. Our office would be happy to have a longer conversation with your parish about welcoming young couples into the fold. Please email us.

Just like the young woman declared her “Yes!” to the young man’s invitation to marriage, so too, we hope for the people of God to invite young couples into their parish families with great love and enthusiasm.

(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 to talk more with her about welcoming engaged couples at your parish, she can be reached at mcipoletti@archindy.org. For more information on the Indianapolis-based ministry to young adults, visit indycatholic.org.) †

Court says Texas, Louisiana can block Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The president of the Susan B. Anthony List, a national pro-life organization, welcomed the Nov. 23 federal appeals court decision allowing Texas and Louisiana



Marjorie Dannenfelser

to exclude Planned Parenthood from Medicaid funding.

“This ruling is a huge victory in the battle to stop taxpayer funding of America’s biggest abortion business—Planned Parenthood,” Marjorie Dannenfelser, President of the Susan B. Anthony List, said

in a statement.

“The core mission of Planned Parenthood is to destroy innocent human life, the antithesis to real health care,” she said. “We thank pro-life leaders

in Texas and Louisiana for working tirelessly to disentangle taxpayer dollars from the abortion industry.”

The full 16-member 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, based in New Orleans,



Ken Paxton

heard the case, and in an 11-5 decision reversed an earlier ruling by a three-judge panel of the court. The case is expected to go to the U.S. Supreme Court.

According to the Associated Press, Texas and Louisiana’s efforts to stop Medicaid funding from going to Planned Parenthood followed an assessment of what was documented in videos secretly recorded by pro-life activist David Daleiden in 2015.

A state inspector general said the

videos showed “Planned Parenthood had improperly changed how abortions were performed so that better specimens could be preserved for medical research.”

In a statement about the 5th Circuit’s ruling, Alexis McGill Johnson, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, accused Texas Gov. Greg Abbott of “hurting ... people of color, women and people with low incomes” by forcing Planned Parenthood out of the Texas Medicaid program.

“Patients should be able to go to the provider they know and trust regardless of their ZIP code and income level,” she said. “Accountability is coming, and we will fight back against any politician who doesn’t prioritize expanding accessible, affordable quality health care.”

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton said in a statement: “Planned Parenthood is not a ‘qualified’ provider under the Medicaid Act, and it should not receive public funding through the Medicaid program.” †

Employment

Ecclesiastical Notary

The Tribunal is seeking a full-time Ecclesiastical Notary. Responsibilities include clerical duties, assembling marriage cases according to canonical and office procedures and interacting with clients on the telephone or in person.

Qualifications include strong typing skills, experience using personal computers, ability to maintain a high level of confidentiality and well-developed interpersonal and organizational skills. A college degree or commensurate work experience is required.

Canon law requires that the person in this position be a baptized Catholic and, if married, be validly married according to the laws and teachings of the Catholic Church.

The position is an opportunity to work directly in Church ministry that serves people’s human and spiritual needs. Please e-mail cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to:

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Employment

Associate Director, Young Adult and College Campus Ministry

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Associate Director of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry (YACCM). The opening is for a full-time, lay minister to assist the Director in essential leadership duties for outreach to the 18-39 demographic in central and southern Indiana. The Associate Director has an integral role in the day-to-day operations of the ministry but also the authority to create and implement vision and practice that serves the young adults in our parishes, 15 colleges and universities, and young adult programs throughout the entire archdiocese. The Associate Director will assist the Director in the support and formation of Campus Ministry and parish staff and volunteers. Specifically, the Associate Director will lead the expansion of Emmaus Group (small group) ministry and the ongoing formation of Emmaus Group Leaders, as well as assisting in the launch of a regional, Deanery Young Adult Ministry program.

Since its inception in 2008, IndyCatholic and The Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry (YACCM) has seen the Lord work in tremendous ways among the 18-39 demographic in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. We are blessed to lead a vibrant, ever-growing community of young adults around Central and Southern Indiana with a mission to seek, find and invite young adults to authentic life in Jesus Christ and to spiritually equip them to become lifelong, missionary disciples.

Candidates must be professed and practicing Catholics with a love for and understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church. A minimum of a bachelor’s degree in theology, religious education, or a related field is required. Previous paid or volunteer ministerial experience with young adults and/or college students is preferred.

Please e-mail cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to:

Ed Isakson
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 1400 N. Meridian St.
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Office and Events Coordinator, Office of Marriage and Family Life

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Office and Events Coordinator to assist the Director of Marriage and Family Life with administrative and professional support. Responsibilities include the development and implementation of programs and events, including regular marriage preparation retreats, annual divorce ministry retreats, and Archdiocesan events for marriage enrichment. Office administrative duties include overseeing the production and maintenance of electronic, social, and print media, and facilitating office communication with clergy, Archdiocesan agencies, parishes, and individuals who are seeking information or resources from the office.

Applicants should be practicing Catholics with an enthusiasm for and deep commitment to their faith, especially Church teachings on marriage and family life. A bachelor’s degree in a related area is preferred. Initiative, organizational ability, interpersonal skills, and proficiency with Microsoft Word and Excel are all essential. Graphic design experience is preferred. The ability to communicate verbally and in writing in Spanish is a plus. The position involves access to confidential information which must be safeguarded. Some evening and weekend work is involved.

The Office of Marriage and Family Life exists to promote the vocation of marriage and family life, to assist individuals facing difficulties in their marriage and family, and to accompany families on their mission to build the Kingdom of God. We accomplish this mission through marriage preparation formation, retreats and support groups for Catholics who are separated or divorced, opportunities for marriage enrichment, and resources for family discipleship.

Please e-mail cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to:

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