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—kneel 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.

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 Jesus and John asking Jesus for special honors. “Grant that in your glory we may sit at your right and the other at your left” (Mark 10:37). The Gospel reading at the service, Mark 10:32-45, included the account of Jesus and John asking Jesus for special honors. “Grant that in your glory we may sit at your right and the other at your left.”

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.

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

Fourth in an occasional series

(Editors’ 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.

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.

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.”
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 “administrative 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 people living in our nation and all who are living in our country.

“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.

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 e-mail at shaughnessy@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.

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.

“Memory of the Future.”

A friend-of-the-court brief in this case by Catholic organizations, also filed in support of the plaintiffs, described the action as “simply wrong and divisive” and urged the court to rescind it.

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 relating to 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.

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.

“Memory of the Future.”

A friend-of-the-court brief in this case by Catholic organizations, also filed in support of the plaintiffs, described the action as “simply wrong and divisive” and urged the court to rescind it.

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 relating to 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.

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.

“Memory of the Future.”

A friend-of-the-court brief in this case by Catholic organizations, also filed in support of the plaintiffs, described the action as “simply wrong and divisive” and urged the court to rescind it.

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 relating to 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.
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 congregations’ sizes at houses of worship imposed by N.Y. Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Catholics in Oregon and the archbishop of San Francisco filed an emergency appeal in their protest of similar restrictions on publish worship in their states. San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone described as “manifest discrimination” a remand by California 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 non-essential 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. 24 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 denouncing worship to the same status as watching a movie: ‘nonessential.’ But worship is both a natural and a constitutional right. 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, 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 governments, 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 allowed 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.”

United Catholic Appeal Christ Our Hope

The Office of Catholic Charities has the opportunity to see many people come through their doors who are vulnerable and in need. For some, their crooked lines have become overwhelming and we are their last hope.

Take a moment to watch this video from Theresa Chamblee, the Director of Social Concerns with Catholic Charities, as she shares about turning crooked lines into laughter, hope, security and peace.

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone

The Criterion Friday, December 4, 2020 Page 3

SCOTUS

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 in 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 secular businesses to operate without any 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 “superspreader” events. He also stressed that because they could potentially be but because they could potentially be “super spreader” events. He also stressed the order could even be seen as treating some 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.

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 non-essential 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. 24 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 denouncing worship to the same status as watching a movie: ‘nonessential.’ But worship is both a natural and a constitutional right. 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, 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.

On Nov. 20, Cuomo urged the Supreme Court for a final decision, seeking 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 “superspreader” events. He also stressed that because they could potentially be “super spreader” events. He also stressed the order could even be seen as treating some 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.
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 not necessarily 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 distant from the Church following a divorce and need to know how they may continue to fit in to 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 either going through a divorce 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 the 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 his body in which” that 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?

Now as a Catholic, I realize that the one thing the cross cannot do is make someone follow it, much less carry it. This is a freedom God allows all out of his own omnipotence: the freedom to have everything but the freedom to have nothing but everything.

Sonny Shanks
Corbydon

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

La necesidad de prepararnos para la venida de Cristo nos regresa a san Juan Bautista. San Marcos nos dice que “Juan estaba vestido de piel de cordero, tenía un cinto de cuero a la cintura, y comía langostas y miel silvestre” (Mc 1:7-8). Su mensaje era sencillo y modesto: “Yo predicaba, diciendo: Tras mí viene uno que es más poderoso que yo, a quien no soy digno de desatarme, 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.

Esperamos pacientemente este Advento, pero también canalizamos nuestra impaciencia, dedicándola a la ardua labor del arrepentimiento y la nueva vida en Cristo.
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, 513 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, burgerj@archindy.org. www.archindy.org/retreats Spiritual direction available for additional suggested donation, contact Georgette Breitiger, oburgerj@archindy.org, 317-545-7681, ext. 105.

December 26
Sisters of St. Francis, 22143 Main St., New Albany. 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. Compulsive Prayer, 3:30-4 p.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittkefacilitating, freewill donation. Information, registration: center@oldenburgosf.com or 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, provos@ospw.org.

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, provos@ospw.org.

January 9
Virtual Forgiveness

Parish in Indianapolis, 11 a.m. Link: facebook.com/ Ministries-Humanas/2006.

Our Lady of Guadalupe online Mass in Spanish, hosted by St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, 11 a.m. Information, registration: oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.

December 12
Our Lady of Guadalupe online Mass in Spanish, hosted by St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, 11 a.m. Information, registration: oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/programs.

December 17
St. Joseph Parish, 140 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. Third Thursday Adoration, interceding for women experiencing pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.

Our Lady of Peace Conference and Mausoleum, 9001 Havenrost Road, Indianapolis. Christmas Mass, 2 p.m. Information, registration: 317-784-4499 or www.catholiccemeteries.org.


March 10
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

March 17
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

March 18
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

March 19-20
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

March 21
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

March 22
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

March 23
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

March 24
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

March 25
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 1-2
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 2-3
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 3-4
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 4-5
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 5-6
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 6-7
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 7-8
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 8-9
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 9-10
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 10-11
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 11-12
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 12-13
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 13-14
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.

April 14-15
Benedictine Retreat Center, 602 N. Washington St., New Harmony, 7-8 p.m. Fri.-3:30 p.m. Sat., Carolyn Bergluss facilitating, $25 includes meals and room. Information, registration: www.benedictineregency.org/retreats-program.
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 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/3A5a3Z )

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
“We, too, pope and cardinals, must always see ourselves reflected in this way of the Church, for otherwise the word is a sharpened sword; it cuts, it proves painful, but it also heals, liberates and conveys joy,” he said. According to canon law, cardinals are created when their names are made public by the pope through an act 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 of cardinals at the consistory included the pastors or rector 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 has remained essentially the same: A 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 hopes for dialogue with President-elect Biden

Cardinal Gregory is a former president and current member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. While the cardinal said his hope is that “we are always close to 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, Bruno, 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 his 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 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 Toma’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 were 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.
- Avvedicula, 68.
- Cesare Ascanio of Santiago, Chile, 75.
- Sim, 69.
- Paolo Loigudice of Sienna, Italy, 56.
- Mauro Gambetti, custos of the Sacred Convent in Assisi, 55.
- Arzimendi, 80.
- Tomasi, 80.
- Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the papal household, 86.
- Enrico Feroci, 80, former director of Rome’s Caritas.

Cardinal Gregory hopes for dialogue with President-elect Biden

VENICE (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 two 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 to reflect the sacred 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 discussing a possible collaboration and when to criticize, he said, “I hope that I don’t highlight one over the other. It’s a real dialogue, because I think that’s the manner 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 that 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 countering 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 present 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 am not going to veer from that,” he said. The cardinal said there also is a need for dialogue with the “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 the Church 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, 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 Hoefer

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 Joe Culver, head of Franciscan Health’s Women and Children’s Service Line Collaborative.

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 7.1 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 Health 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 the first 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.

“Our maternal health 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—that 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 drugs from the mother’s use while pregnant.

“The word is out that if there’s food and help babies born addicted to drugs from the mother’s use while pregnant,” said Culver. “Sometimes it’s education, sometimes it’s documentation, sometimes it’s prevention.”

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, 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.”

Clearing a path for excellence

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—that we really doing what we say we’re doing.”

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 of our outcome and care, 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, 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 are clearly making a difference.”

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. (Submitted photo)

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, 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 existing 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 are alone 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 #GiftOfWisdom.

“Some of the best posts will be shared” on the dicastery’s social media accounts @laiyfamlife, 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 get in touch with older people 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.”

"Clearly making a difference’’

The list of INspire Hospital of Distinction recipients includes any 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 of our outcome and care 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, 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 are clearly making a difference.”

TheCriterion Friday, December 4, 2020 Page 9
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 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, 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 everyday: 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 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.”

“We don’t know what the future holds, but it’s all God’s work,” says Sister Theresa McGrath, OSU, 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.

Please donate at your local parish
December 12–13 or by mail at:
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
Mission Office
1520 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis IN 46202
Make check payable to Mission Office with Religious Retirement on the memo line.

retiredreligious.org
Faith
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. The 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 delayed the promise of 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 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 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.

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 repet 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.)

Two girls wearing face masks pray during a Sept. 28 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)

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 Muenzer, Detroit Catholic)
**Pastoral Ministries/Madison Cipolletti**

**Engaged couples: A business transaction or a welcoming home?**

Imagining 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 for years, since she was a little girl, hoping and waiting for her prince. Down on one knee he goes and asks the question of a lifetime, 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, The Criterion found that showing that marriage rates in the U.S. dropped to an all-time low in 2019.

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 2011 Pew Research Centre called in Flux: Changes in the Religious Affiliation in the U.S.

Of course, 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 a significant step that we could be welcoming them back home forever?

When I think about young couples who have thus far considered marriage 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 “saw him off, embraced him and kissed him” (Lk 15:20). No judgment, no condemnation, only 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 welcomed 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:

1. **Who’s there?** Who made the first call or made the first phone call or made the first card? Are young adults located in the diocese being reached out to?

2. **Visit or phone?** After the initial call, what’s the follow-up? Who gets them a visit or phone call?

3. **What’s the message?** What does the message say? Is it simple, clear, and inviting?

4. **Willingness to help** does not equal an invitation to do the work. How do we maintain a willingness to help without appearing to “push”?

5. **Be present** as early in the young adult’s life as possible. In this way, young adults are blessed with the opportunity to be present and engaged with the Church from the time they are first interested.

6. **Sarah’s story** is one example of possible outreach. A young woman who was allotted a month in the Church, but ended up staying for three years, sharing her life story and inviting others.

7. **Volunteer opportunities** are another way to welcome young adults to the Church. Do you have a volunteer opportunity that they can get involved in?

8. **Commitment** (Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service). When a young engaged couple to get married and why in your parish.

9. **Clarence’s story** is one example of how we can welcome young adults back to the Church.

10. **Who** is needed to make these changes happen? It’s a call to **discipleship**.

When a young engaged couple to get married and why at this particular time? Do they take the question seriously and to heart? Are you getting 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 more volunteers, ministries, vocations and tithing in your parish.

**For the Journey/Effie Caldara**

*Advent’s call to discipleship*

During Advent, we pray about our call to be disciples. But what does “discipleship” mean? It involves more than going to church and saying your prayers. It involves a personal commitment to Jesus. One of the most accessible and enjoyable ways to start this journey was a priest named Mark Link. Father Mark was an effective pastor, he’s well known for his homilies and his anecdotes that express truth in a simple way.

In his 1963 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, Robert asked Robert for some legal help in a civil rights matter," wrote 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’re 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 one won’t cross?

I’ve just read Jon Meacham’s brilliant book about John Lewis, the civil rights activist who died from cancer age 80.

In His Truth Is Marching On: John Lewis and the Power of Hope, Meacham introduces us to the story of John Lewis’ invitation from a young age. He was just a little kid when he decided to be a preacher, and not to go into politics or poultry 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 education – a way to study to what St. Teresa of Calcutta described in her own life as “a call within a call.”

In the summer of 1959, third-year student Clarence Brower told his classmate, Robert, that he was going to Brown for his short, pithy, and he’s well known for his numerous books, named Mark Link. One of the most

**The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick**

**Maintaining mental balance in a media-crazed society**

As I perused through the news on my computer, I realized I had run through a hundred postings, all articles that touched on the election, the pandemic, political divisions, the progress of vaccines, global conflicts, sports and the weather. My attention was stuck to the ceiling. Paper planes whizzing through the air. Christmas will be alive in all those who believe.

This year, Christmas will be alive in all those who believe. As I glanced at the cover, a line from the Christmas song, “O Holy Night” reminded me precisely why it’s not.

“Not only are young people less healthy. Life must be done!”

“Nothing 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 the absence of a teacher. As I glanced at the cover, a line from the book flashed into my mind.

“Are we the kids in Room 207?” I asked myself. “Is the current state of affairs in this world the way in which the kingdom of God must be done?

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

In this reassurance, Peter parallels the death. Difficult times will not vanish, dark days and of unwelcome possibilities. The first reading was wonderfully optimistic. differs from that of the first reading. The people must 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 week’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. 

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 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 croche display of Larry and Amy Higdon, members of Holy Trinity Parish in Edinburgh, photographed on Nov. 26, 2019.) (The photo by Natalie Hoefer)

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 90:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Luke 1:26-38

Wednesday, December 9

St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatouzin

Isaiah 65:25-31
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday, December 10

Our Lady of Loreto

Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 145:1, 9-13b
Matthew 11:11-15

Friday, December 11

St. Damarus I, pope

Isaiah 6:1-8
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday, December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zechariah 9:1-17
or Revelation 11:19a, 12:1-6a, 10ab (Response) Isaiah 11:1bc; 19
Luke 19:29-36
or Luke 1:39-47

Sunday, December 13

Third Sunday of Advent

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

Q

A

Question Corner/ Fr. Kenneth Doyle

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

I 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. It bothers my daughter when she sees my hands uplifted. Am I doing it right or wrong? (Michigan)

I 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 Instructions 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 does not seem to me to constitute a grievous violation of that canon of universality. In what you might do is just explain to your daughter that this is the way you’ve been trained, the way you feel most appropriately praying and the way that helps you lift your mind and heart to God—which, after all, is what prayer is.

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

A

First, 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 recognition of 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 askfd@yahoo.com and 20 Columbus Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.)

The Criterion Friday, December 4, 2020

Page 13
Religious leaders must offer respect of cooperation, pope says

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Conflict and violence in the world need not be the only option if people come to understand their responsibility to each other as members of one human family, Pope Francis said in a written message.**

“In light of this, 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 yeal 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. 

---

**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 no direct connection to it; these are separate obituaries on this page.


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


---

**25% Off All Advent!**

Shop our wide selection of wreaths, candles, calendars & more! (While supplies last. In store only.)

**Vatican Christmas tree**

The Vatican Christmas tree is a special tradition each year. This year’s tree is a 9-foot-tall spruce from near Koczen, Slovenia. (CNS photo/Cindy Wooden)

25% off all Advent! Shop our wide selection of wreaths, candles, calendars & more! For more information on the Indianapolis-based ministry to young adults, visit indycatholic.org.

---

For more information on the Indianapolis-based ministry to young adults, visit indycatholic.org.
WASHINGTON (CNS)—"The core mission of Planned Parenthood is to destroy innocent human life," 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, 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 activists 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.”

Classified Directory

For advertising rates call (317) 236-1585.

Call 317-236-1585
TO ADVERTISE IN The Criterion

D & S ROOFING
317-507-0259
Call Dale for free estimates!
24-hour service! Rubber, torch downs, hot tar roofs, reroof and tearoffs.
317-357-4341

Special Care

Trained and Compassionate Care
Serving people with Autism & Developmental Disabilities
- Medicaid Waiver (CH & FSW)
- Residential, Community, Respite and PAC Services
- Staff screened and trained
- Kathy and Terry Hauser
- 317-213-1700
www.HauserSpecialCare.com
Career Opportunities Available

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:

Ed Isakson
Director, Human Resources
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: eisakson@archindy.org

Equal Opportunity Employer

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:

Ed Isakson
Director, Human Resources
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: eisakson@archindy.org

Equal Opportunity Employer

Employment

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 is essential. The Associate Director will 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 disciples.

Since its inception in 2008, IndyCatholic and The Office of Young Adult and College Ministry (YACCM) have seen the Lord work in tremendous ways. Since its inception in 2008, IndyCatholic and The Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry (YACCM) have seen the Lord work in tremendous ways.

Group Leaders, as well as assisting in the launch of a regional, Deanery Young Adult programs throughout the entire archdiocese. The Associate Director will assist the Director in the support and formation of Campus Ministry and parish adult programs throughout the entire archdiocese. The Associate Director will assist the Director in the support and formation of Campus Ministry and parish adult programs throughout the entire archdiocese.

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:

Ed Isakson
Director, Human Resources
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: eisakson@archindy.org

Equal Opportunity Employer

Employment

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:

Ed Isakson
Director, Human Resources
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: eisakson@archindy.org

Equal Opportunity Employer

Employment

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:

Ed Isakson
Director, Human Resources
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: eisakson@archindy.org

Equal Opportunity Employer

Employment

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:

Ed Isakson
Director, Human Resources
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: eisakson@archindy.org

Equal Opportunity Employer
WE WILL BE FREE.

Exodus is a 90-day Catholic spiritual exercise for men that provides a path to freedom through prayer, asceticism and fraternity.