New archdiocesan pastoral plan ‘provides a means for a shared vision’ for the years ahead

By Natalie Hoofer

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson issued a pastoral letter on Dec. 3 titled “Proclaiming the Gospel of Joy: Living Christ’s Mission” along with a new pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The plan will guide the vision and focus of the Church in central and southern Indiana for the next three years and will be a resource for parishes for updating their individual parish strategic plans.

Archbishop Thompson says it is his hope “that the implementation of this plan will enhance our Catholic identity, mission and presence throughout the archdiocese.”

The document is the result of several years of prayer, research, consultation, input and effort by a 25-member team of priests, religious and lay Catholics of different demographics throughout the archdiocese.

It addresses five critical areas: prayer and worship; stewardship; family and community; evangelization and catechesis; and clergy life and ministry.

“The advantage of a pastoral plan is to provide a means for a shared vision and coordinated, intentional effort of evangelization and catechesis throughout the archdiocese,” the archbishop says.

Planning team member Father Rick Gitner, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, says the document “is not meant for the shelf.” Rather, it is to be “enacted through the various secretariats of the archdiocese, by pastors, associate pastors, parish life coordinators, pastoral associates—but more so to be enacted in the very reality of our parishes, the people of God.”

Archbishop Thompson explains that “faith and hope” are the ultimate goal of this reality.

“Our ministries and services, while providing care and outreach to the spiritual and corporal needs of individuals as well as communities—families, parishes, schools, marginalized groups, etc.—ultimately exist with the eye of faith and hope in salvation of souls,” he says. “Together, through a common rootedness in word, sacrament and service, we carry on the mission of Jesus Christ as entrusted to the Church, drawing ever closer to him and providing a credible witness that leads others to a personal encounter with our Savior.”

Read the pastoral plan in English and Spanish on pages 1B-8B, or at www.archindy.org/pastoral.

Pope at Angelus:
No pandemic can extinguish Christ’s light

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—No pandemic and no kind of crisis can extinguish the light of Christ, Pope Francis said.

May people let his light into their heart, “and let us lend a hand to those who need it most. In this way, God will be born anew in us and among us,” the pope said in his remarks after praying the Angelus with visitors gathered in St. Peter’s Square on Dec. 6.

From his studio window of the apostolic palace, the pope indicated the 92-foot-tall spruce tree already standing in the square and the work underway setting up this year’s Nativity scene.

“These two signs of Christmas are being prepared, to the delight of children and adults, too,” in many homes around the world, he said. “They are signs of hope, especially in this difficult time,” the pope said.

However, it is essential that people go beyond the symbols and embrace their meaning, which is Jesus—the infinite moment ‘The ultimate moment’

By Sean Gallagher

On Nov. 1, Ryan and Sheila Borden witnessed their daughter Taylor receive the sacrament of confirmation during a Mass at St. Paul Church in Tell City.

Such a milestone in a child’s life of faith is an important moment for any parent.

But, for Ryan and Sheila, this moment in Taylor’s life was especially moving, rooted in a courageous decision they made while she was still growing in Sheila’s womb.

“All parents are proud of their children,” Sheila said. “But I feel extra blessed because, looking back, we may not have had this opportunity.”

“A lot of times in life we take things for granted. We just assume that everything is going to be picture perfect. But it always isn’t.”

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson places chrism oil on the forehead of Taylor Borden in the sacrament of confirmation during a Nov. 1 Mass at St. Paul Church in Tell City. Taylor is a member of St. Isidore the Farmer Parish in Perry County. (Submitted photo by Danny Bolin)

Parents overcome challenges in pregnancy to see their daughter confirmed in the faith

By Sean Gallagher

In October 2004, Sheila was five months pregnant with her daughter Taylor when blood test results indicated that her unborn child had trisomy 18, a genetic disorder that results in severe birth defects and often a life span of less than a year.

A subsequent ultrasound confirmed for Sheila’s doctors the blood test’s results. A later amniocentesis test showed no signs of the disorder.

But Ryan and Sheila were still faced with a choice that would put their pro-life convictions to the test.

After all, pre-natal diagnoses of trisomy 18 and Down syndrome have historically led to many abortions. But Ryan and Sheila held firm in their beliefs.

“We already knew what our decision was going to be,” Ryan said. “We weren’t going to have an abortion.”

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“We already knew what our decision was going to be,” Ryan said. “We weren’t going to have an abortion.”
Still, the future of Ryan, Sheila and their unborn child was shrouded in darkness and doubt. They needed spiritual support. So, they asked their family, friends and fellow members of St. Isidore the Farmer Parish in Perry County to pray for them. Their pastor at the time, Benedictine Father Guy Mansini, said he would ask his fellow monks at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad to add their prayers.

“We asked the monks and family and friends to pray to give us strength, and to have God give us what he had planned for us with Taylor,” Ryan said.

For months, Ryan and Sheila waited to find out what that plan would be. Would Taylor be born with a condition that would cause her to suffer and live a short time? Or would she be born as a healthy baby?

As it turned out, the plan did not include trisomy 18. Taylor was perfectly healthy when she was born in February 2005. Sheila had a terrible weight lifted off her shoulders when the nurses and doctor told her that Taylor was a healthy baby. It was a weight that had rested heavily on her and Ryan ever since they had gotten the results of the blood test and ultrasound. “It was definitely a relief,” said Sheila of Taylor’s birth. “It’s one of those things that I look back on now and think, ‘How do I ever survive?’

“That was the ultimate moment,” Ryan recalled with emotion.

“The Church has taught basically from the foundation of Jesus’ teachings that life is precious,” Ryan said. “It really kept me from breaking down at that point in time.”

In the 15 years since Taylor’s birth, the Bordens have put their pro-life beliefs more at the center of their lives. Ryan became a member of the Knights of Columbus and has worked to promote its support of the pro-life movement.

“[The Knights of Columbus] have been very protective as pro-life organizations and they are, have helped me to keep that going on in my life,” said Ryan, who oversees programs for the Knights’ Indiana State Council that strengthens families.

A few years ago, they also attended the March for Life in Washington with Taylor and her younger sister, Regan.

“The Church, the Knights of Columbus and our faith community has poured into this us, Ryan said. “We try to push it along to everybody else in the archdiocese and in especially in the [Tell City] Deanery.”

Ryan and Sheila want to encourage parents who are told that their unborn children might have Down syndrome or trisomy 18 because the abortion rate in such cases is high.

“My mom has always told me that God gives you nothing you can’t handle,” Ryan said. “So, ask God for him to give you what he wants you to have. Don’t ask for what you want. God will make it happen the way it needs to happen.”

“Pray a lot,” Sheila said. “Tell your story so that other people will pray for you also. We had strangers praying for us. We probably had more people praying for us than we’ll ever know or understand.”

“I know they already showed me so much love’”

It was around the time that the Borden family participated in the March for Life that Ryan and Sheila told Taylor about the decision they faced when she was an unborn child.

“I wanted to make sure that she was made and not a mistake,” Sheila said. “It was hard. She and her sister were in tears, knowing what choice we could have made that we didn’t make.”

Taylor was grateful to learn how much her parents loved her when she was growing in Sheila’s womb.

“They need to know that, they’re not alone,” Sheila said. “They are cherished. We were always there for them. We loved them, prayed for them, talked to them, told them we were never going to give up.”

“I know that they already showed me so much love before any of this happened,” Taylor said of the time before her parents learned of the test results. “I know [grow] stronger when they heard about it, and they were already so protective of me.”

Since receiving the sacrament of confirmation from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, Taylor now is thinking of how she might live out her faith like her parents have.

“That day [holds] a special place in my heart,” she said of the day when she was confirmed. “I was very blessed to receive this special sacrament [that will help me] keep close to God, always go to church and lead my kids to do the same someday.”

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

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

Send your submissions to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached.

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PANDEMIC

Conversion requires a change in ‘direction and orientation’ as well as a change in one’s way of thinking.

One must be sorrowful for one’s sins and want to turn “from evil to good, from time to prepare for receiving the drizzle. The Bordens are members of St. Isidore the Farmer Parish in Perry County. (Submitted photo)
WASHINGTON (CNS)—Federal executions are at odds with Advent as a season “of anticipated redemption” and must be stopped, said the bishops of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) domestic policy and pro-life committees.

“The season of Advent, of course, is a season that calls us to love one another even though we don’t deserve it. Let us repent and embrace his gift,” the committee chairman said in a Dec. 7 statement.

They called on President Donald J. Trump and Attorney General William Barr to “stop these executions” in “recognition of God’s unmerited gift of self-giving love.

“Executions solve nothing,” they said.

The statement was issued jointly by Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kan., chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

They noted three bishops’ committee chairs issued a similar statement in Advent 2019, and that the bishops as committee chairs and as a body have urged the Trump administration to halt federal executions since they resumed them in July 2019.

“We’ve asked many times to stop the federal executions,” Archbishop Coakley and Naumann said. “In fact, last Advent, three bishops wrote that the resumption of federal executions was at odds with this season of anticipated redemption.

“But the executions resumed. Eight since July. Two more this week [of Dec. 7]. Three [planned] in January. A new regulation will permit federal execution by means other than lethal injection, such as the electric chair.”

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson has asked Catholics in central and southern Indiana during Advent to pray for and fast for the victims who have been killed, the families of the victims, and the inmates who face the death penalty.

In his message, the archbishop reflected on the sanctity of all human life.

Indiana’s bishops in October of 2019 issued a statement calling for a renewed moratorium on the death penalty (www.archindy.org/archbishop/deathpenalty2019.html).

Archbishop Thompson reiterated the Church’s stance in opposition to the death penalty in June. (www.archindy.org/archbishop/deathpenalty2020.html).

As The Criterion went to press, the executions scheduled to take place in December at the U.S. Penitentiary in Terre Haute, are:

- Brandon Bernard on Dec. 10. He was convicted of murdering married youth ministers Todd and Stacie Bagley in 1999.
- Alfred Bourgeois on Dec. 11. He was convicted of abusing, beating and torturing his 2-year-old daughter to death in 2002.
- They called on Trump and Barr, who is Catholic, to recall God’s mercy during Advent.

“What does the birth of our Lord say to this? He is patient with you, not wishing that any perish but that all should come to repentance’ [2 Pt. 3:9]. Can we follow the Lord’s example?”

They added: “We are all sinners. Some have done terrible things. Victims need help. Justice is needed for peace. But executions solve nothing.”

On Nov. 27, the Justice Department published a final rule change, effective on Dec. 24, to add to the execution methods it uses for federal death sentences, permitting it to use “any other manner prescribed by the law of the state in which the sentence was imposed.”

The proposed change was announced in August and posted on the Federal Register for public comment. It calls for alternative means for federal executions if the lethal injection drug is not available in the state where the defendant is given the death sentence.

In July 2019, the Trump administration announced the resumption of federal executions and Barr ordered the Bureau of Prisons to schedule executions for five federal inmates, with all taking place in Terre Haute. That month, Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., then-chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, called on the administration to abandon its plans to resume federal executions.

Eight federal inmates have been executed this year. The most recent was Orlando Hall, who was put to death by lethal injection just before midnight on Nov. 19, about an hour after the Supreme Court denied him a stay.

In a response issued that same day, Archbishops Coakley and Naumann called on Trump and Barr to stop federal executions “as an act of witness to the dignity of all human life.”

Lisa Montgomery was scheduled to be put to death on Dec. 8 for being convicted of strangling a pregnant woman then cutting her open and kidnapping her baby. On Nov. 23, a judge ruled to postpone her execution until Jan. 12. She would be the first female to be executed in almost six decades.

Barr also said Nov. 23 that the Justice Department plans to carry out more executions before president-elect Joe Biden takes office on Jan. 20.

Summer ministry needs college students eager to share the faith

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

Totus Tuus (Latin for “totally yours”) is an initiative in which a small team of college students and seminarians go from parish to parish conducting an energizing catechetical program similar to a vacation Bible school. The program includes the rosary, daily Bible school. The program similar to a vacation ministry.

Besides planting seeds to recruit innovative catechetical leaders who, despite many challenges, have come to share how blessed we are to have so many great and dedicated missionaries of faith.

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Trump, Barr urged to stop executions, recall God's mercy during Advent

The Federal Corrections Complex in Terre Haute, Ind., is seen on May 22, 2019. Orlando Hall, 49, was executed at the facility shortly before midnight on Nov. 19. A day earlier a federal appeals court refused to delay the execution of Hall, one of five men convicted in 1994 of kidnapping and raping a teenager before burying her alive. (AP Photo/Bryan Woolston, File)
Events before Christmas

As we prepare for Christmas, perhaps a meditation on events leading up to that event, as told in the Gospels, will give us a few new insights.

When we pick up the story, Mary is betrothed to Joseph, a descendant of King David. Unfortunately, by this time, 1,000 years after the time of David, his house had fallen into obscurity. Joseph was a carpenter.

To say that Mary and Joseph were betrothed means that they were married. Betrothal was not just an engagement. Marriage for the Jews at that time consisted of two parts. The first part was the consent of both parties in the presence of at least two competent witnesses, the actual wedding. But they continued to live apart while a celebration was planned for the solemn entry of the bride into the groom's home.

After the betrothal but before Mary moved into Joseph’s home, the archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary. He had earlier appeared to Zechariah to announce the conception of John the Baptist. Gabriel probably had a human appearance because Luke’s Gospel said that Zechariah could see him (Lk 1:12).

Gabriel told Mary that she would conceive a son who “will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father” (Lk 1:32-33). Mary would have known, as all Jews did, that this was a description of the long awaited Messiah. But Mary was still puzzled because she had taken a vow of virginity. “How can this be?” she asked, “since I have no relations of a man?” (Lk 1:34).

We have to wonder what Mary thought about Gabriel’s answer. “The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you!” (Lk 1:35). She had never heard of the Holy Spirit, although she probably knew of the various references to the “Spirit of the Lord” in Hebrew Scriptures. Mary probably thought the angel meant that the power of God would make this possible.

“Whatever she thought, it was enough for her to give her consent: ‘I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word’” (Lk 1:38).

And with those words, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity entered her womb—and, indeed, into our human race. Or, as St. John put it, “The Word was made flesh” (Jn 1:14).

Gabriel also told Mary that her relative Elizabeth was six months pregnant. We marvel at the confidence that Mary had in Gabriel’s words, because she at once made arrangements to join a caravan for the 90-mile trip from Nazareth to Elizabeth’s home in Ein Keren, near Jerusalem. Did she tell Joseph that she was making the trip? If so, how did she explain how she knew about Elizabeth’s pregnancy? All we can do is speculate.

Mary was gone for three months. By the time she returned to Nazareth, she was at least three months pregnant. We presume that this is when Joseph learned about the pregnancy. How did Mary tell him? How does a woman tell her husband that an angel appeared to her and she became pregnant without having had sex with a man?

Matthew’s Gospel makes it clear that Joseph was “her husband” (Mt 1:19) but also that Mary was found to be with child “before they lived together” (Mt 1:18). It was, therefore, during that period between the actual marriage and the time that Mary moved into Joseph’s home.

Joseph obviously believed that Mary was carrying another man’s child—which meant that she had committed adultery. He didn’t want to expose Mary to shame though (or subject her to death by stoning, the penalty for proved adultery), so he decided to divorce her quietly.

That would have been difficult to do in a small village. Nevertheless, that was his intention until he had a dream in which an angel told him, “Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her” (Mt 1:20).

Joseph did what the angel said “and took his wife into his home” (Mt 1:24), the second part of the wedding process. We are now ready for Jesus’ birth.

As we continue on our Advent journey and approach Christmas, may we reflect on Mary’s “yes” to God and Joseph’s response to the angel and have the courage to listen to God’s messengers when they speak to us.

—John F. Fink

Amid the Fray

Greg Erlandson

For unto us a child is born

There is nothing like the birth of a child to make one appreciate Christmas. Four times, I have experienced such Christmases. Now I am experiencing my fifth. It was the birth of my first grandchild. He was named after my father, Theodore, who died 25 years ago.

And though he was born in August, he is helping my experience of Advent. In prayer, I am awaiting the birth of the Savior, but the arrival of Theo makes this anticipation more real to me. In fact, a new birth is not just about arrival, but anticipation of what is to come next, what this tiny new birth will become. Birth is a moment to reveal and yet to dream.

Advent is a time of anticipation too. The daily Mass readings are meant to accompany us, to focus us, to prepare us. We are asked to make ourselves ready. We wait, marking the passage of time with our Advent candles, counting the days. Drawing closer to Bethlehem.

This year has felt more Lent than Advent, but it has been a time of waiting, a year of mandated patience. We have not all done this equally well. Many of us have grown impatient at the long duration of the COVID crisis. We don’t all feel we are sharing the same burden.

Those untouched by illness may shrug off the risks or disbelieve them. Others, try their best to abide by the rules, but even after months, the death toll continues to climb, the surges come in waves. The waiting seems hopeless sometimes.

Some may be inclined to think that surely a federal death-row inmate is not worthy of compassion and human dignity, just as Catholics, we know the truth. Every human person is made in the image and likeness of God and worthy of life.

I remember the day they scheduled inmate Lisa Montgomery’s execution: it was set for Dec. 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. It has since been rescheduled to Jan. 12. If it is not halted, she will be the first female to be executed by the federal government in nearly 70 years.

My grandmother texted me, “Mary weeps.” She founded Catholic Charities with my late grandfather in Terre Haute in the 1970s, an organization that embodies compassion, social justice and human dignity. This is who we are as Catholics.

I want to leave you with some intentions we can add to our prayers this Advent season: for those who have been executed; those who are set to be executed, those who will participate or aid in executions, those who have been harmed by the crimes committed in these cases, and for an increase in compassion in our own hearts. Each one of us is in need of God’s mercy, love and redemption.

(Mary Ann Eiting is a second-year medical student at Indiana University School of Medicine.)
**Gaudete Sunday invites us to rejoice in the Lord's nearness**

In a way, this teaching is mind-boggling. How can someone be already here and yet be coming? It’s as if we are all yearning for the return of a loved one only to discover that she or he is already with us.

In the first reading for the Third Sunday of Advent, the prophet Isaiah (Is 61:1-2a, 10-11) describes the anticipation we feel even as we rejoice in the Lord’s presence:

“Rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul, for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels. As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up, so will the Lord God make justice and praise spring up before all the nations” (Is 61:10-11).

The Lord who is present among us now acts like a gardener, planting seeds that will grow to fruition over time. We rejoice in his presence, but we also long for the day when he will harvest what has been planted in us.

In the second reading, St. Paul (1 Thes 5:16-24) tells us to “rejoice always” (1 Thes 5:16), to “pray constantly” (1 Thes 5:17) and in all circumstances to “give thanks” (1 Thes 5:18).

We are not supposed to be gloomy or impatient. We are to wait in joyful hope for the one who will make us “perfectly holy” (1 Thes 5:23), which is another way of saying that we’re waiting for the seeds planted in us by the Holy Spirit at our baptism to bear their final fruit.

We rejoice because we know that the garden of our souls will one day “make its growth spring up” (Is 61:11). Our job is to tend the garden—keep it free from weeds and vermin—and to wait patiently for the fruits of God’s labor “to make justice and praise spring up before all the nations” (Is 61:11).

This Sunday’s Gospel reading (Jn 1:6-8, 19-28) tells us that John the Baptist, was sent by God to prepare a way for the Lord’s coming. His role was to “prepare the way for the Lord’s coming” (Jn 1:23). John was the prophet, the voice crying in the wilderness (Is 40:3). In a way, John is the one who was prophesied (Is 61:1-2a, 10-11): “You will be called a herald of good news to the meek” (Is 61:1b). John is the one who heralds the nearness of God to his people. He is the one who announces the arrival of the Lord in our midst.

The third reading, from Philippians 4:4-5 (Phil 4:4-5), reminds us of the importance of rejoicing in the Lord:

“We rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near” (Phil 4:4-5).

The Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday from the Latin word which means “rejoice.” The longing we experience during this special season of the Church’s year can no longer be contained. It erupts into shouts of joy, confident that the blessed hope is nearer to us than we thought possible. In fact, he is here with us now as we wait for his coming again.

In the Collect for Gaudete Sunday, we pray:

O God, who sees how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord’s Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation; and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. We celebrate this mid-way point of Advent “with solemn worship and glad rejoicing” because we are confronted with one of the Church’s most profound “both/ and” mysteries. Christ is both present with us now, and he is coming again—this Christmas and at the end of time.

**El domingo Gaudete nos invita a regocijarnos en la cercanía del Señor**


El Tercer Domingo de Adviento se conoce tradicionalmente como domingo Gaudete por la palabra latina que significa “regocijarse.”

El anhelo que sentimos en esta época especial del año litúrgico ya es imposible de reprimir y estalla en gritos de alegría, confiados en que la Bendita Esperanza está más cerca de nosotros de lo que creíamos. De hecho, está aquí con nosotros ahora, incluso mientras esperamos su regreso.

En la colección del domingo Gaudete, rezamos:

Oh Dios, que ves cómo tu gente espera con ansias el camino del Señor. Remuevan todos los obstáculos al camino del Señor; tu presencia nos hace palidecer ante los crímenes y la esclavitud, y nos permite ver con esperanza el fruto de la labor de Dios para la nueva venida del Señor. †

En la segunda lectura, san Pablo (1 Tes 5:16-24) nos dice que debemos estar “siempregosozosos”(1Tes5:16),orar “sincesar” (1 Tes 5:17) y “alabando a Dios” (1 Tes 5:18). Se supone que no debemos ser pesimistas o impacientes sino esperar con alegría esperanza a aquel que nos “sanifique por completo” (1 Tes 5:23), que es otra forma de decir que estamos esperando que las semillas plantadas en nosotros por el Espíritu Santo en nuestro bautismo rindan su fruto final.

Nos regocijamos porque sabemos que un día el jardín de nuestras almas hará “brotar lo sembrado en él” (Is 61:11). Nuestro trabajo es cuidar el jardín, mantenerlo limpio de malas hierbas y alimañas, y esperar pacientemente los frutos de la labor de Dios para “que la justicia y la alabanza broten en presencia de todas las naciones” (Is 61:11).

La lectura del Evangelio de este domingo (Jn 1:6-8, 19-28) nos dice que Juan el Bautista, fue enviado por Dios para preparar un camino para la venida del Señor. Su papel hace 2,000 años era “vestir de luz” (Jn 1:23) y bautizar “en agua” (Jn 1:26). Juan no era el Mesías, era su mensajero, e incluso ahora, sus palabras resuenan: enderezar el camino del Señor. Remuevan todos los obstáculos, y suavicen todas las asperezas, para que la venida del Señor pueda llenar nuestros corazones de alegría eterna.

El salmo responsorial del domingo Gaudete está tomando del Magnificat, el exultante canto de alegría de la Santísima Virgen María: Proclama mi alma la grandeza del Señor; se alegra mi espíritu en Dios, mi salvador; porque ha mirado la humildad de su esclava. Desde ahora me felicitarán todas las generaciones, porque el Poderoso ha hecho obras grandezas por mí; su nombre es santo, y su misericordia llega a sus fieles de generación en generación. A los hambrientos los colma de buenas cosas, y a los ricos les desvía precios. Auxilia a Israel, su siervo, acordándose de la misericordia.

El domingo Gaudete invitamos a regocijarnos en la cercanía del Señor, a celebrar con alegría la proximidad de la venida del Señor. Es un momento para acordarnos de la misericordia, de las bendiciones que Dios nos ha dado y de la alegría que nos trae el conocimiento de que el Señor viene a nos regocijarnos en su presencia, con su bondad y misericordia.
St. John the Apostle Parish celebrates its 50-year focus as a faith family

By John Shaughnessy

There’s no doubt that other parishes will challenge the claim, but people who have worshipped at the present location of St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington are quick to say it’s “the prettiest parish in the archdiocese.” Yet even with its location on a hill spanning more than 40 scenic acres, the parish has a more defining quality as it marks its 50th anniversary this year, according to parishioners. What stands out most to them is its reputation as a “people’s parish,” “a family parish.”

“It’s just been a family to us, and I don’t know a better way to describe it,” says Ed Timperman, who has been a member of the parish with his wife Liz since 1977. “It’s been a family that we’ve always gone to and enjoyed being a part of.”

The Timpermans credit that “family” and “people” focus to the parish’s founding pastor. Father Francis “Frank” Buck, who once shared this insight: “Being a member of a parish family means having all the joys and frustrations, all the responsibilities and anxieties of belonging to any family. Our faith, not blood, is the bond that unites us.”

Father Buck immediately stressed that bond from the day that St. John the Apostle Church was dedicated on Oct. 21, 1970. With no school at this new parish, Father Buck made a strong religious education program a priority, says Denise Sawyer, who has written a history of the parish’s 50 years.

“Parishioners had been encouraged from the beginning to become actively involved in the religious education program, with the result that most children attended classes regularly and many parents were teachers,” Sawyer notes.

“Working together had brought parishioners together. They worshipped together, they learned together, and they played together. They began to call their parish ‘the People’s Parish.’”

That emphasis continued when the parish had to relocate.

Originally built on the land of a quiet horse farm, the first church found itself in the midst of a booming commercial area by the mid-1990s. As a parish committee searched for a new location, committee member Ann Floyd followed a “for sale” sign that led her to “this beautiful, big, wildflower-covered, flat meadow” atop a hill. It’s where the new church would be built and dedicated on Dec. 20, 1998. A dedication booklet noted, “Look closely at the 14 narrow, floor-to-ceiling windows of multi-colored, faceted glass. Each depicts a Station of the Cross, Christ’s agonizing path to Calvary.

“Also, note the three large stained-glass windows behind the altar. These and the Stations of the Cross windows were removed from the original church and incorporated into the design of the new building as symbols of the continuity of our parish life.”

The continuity of “the People’s Parish” prevailed, too.

“The people intimately involved in the building of the new church had a very deep commitment to the maintenance of the facilities, the grounds,” says Father Michael Fritsch, the parish’s pastor from 2001 to 2013. “There was the sense, ‘This is ours. We’re going to take care of this.’ It was a real part of their family.

Now the pastor of Mary, Queen of Peace Parish in Danville, Father Fritsch says about his 12 years at St. John’s: “A fun place and nice people. They took an interest in the life of the parish. When I was there, we started a young married couples’ group. I got them together and they eventually took over the social events of the parish. Really nice families. And that definitely continues.”

The Timpermans have experienced that family feeling through the years. Their two daughters, Sarah and Emily, were baptized and married in the parish church. Ed has been a constant in his 43 years at the parish, doing a lot of everything from parish council president to maintenance committee chair. Liz served snacks in the religious education program and was a member of the parish’s board of education.

“It’s always nice to see friendly faces, people you have known for a long time and you’ve watched their children grow up,” Liz says. “It’s a family place.”

Just as Father Buck noted years ago, it’s a family bound by faith, says Sawyer, the parish’s most recent historian and its 50th anniversary chairperson. She also writes stories about the faith journeys of her fellow parishioners for the Sunday bulletin.

Her own faith journey is directly tied to the parish. A member of the Methodist faith earlier in her life, she was drawn to the Catholic faith by St. John’s and was received into the full Communion of the Church in 2005.

“This parish has meant everything to me. It’s transformed my life,” she says. “It’s because of the people I’ve gotten to know, the priests I’ve gotten to know, and all I’ve learned in the process about the Church.”

Her own transformation connects to the prediction that then-Archbishop George J. Biskup made when he dedicated the first parish church in 1970: “This church will be a blessing to all people. Treasure it. Be with God in it. And as you leave, take God with you.”

Fifty years later, that blessing still guides “the People’s Parish.”

My Journey to God

GAUDITE - ROSE - Haiku

By Sister Jean Kenny, S.P.

Their voices cried out
Ransom captive Israel
Comfort my people

Be strong, fear not
Bind up the broken-hearted
One heart and one mind

The Lord is so near
Make straight the way of the Lord
Rejoicing in deed

(Providence Sister Jean Kenny is a member of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: A Christmas cactus blooms during Advent.) (Submitted photo by Sister Jean Kenny, S.P.)
By John Shaughnessy

Their football teams have been fierce rivals through the years—teams that challenge and motivate each other like brothers often do when braggadocios rights hang in the balance.

Yet on this most recent post-Thanksgiving weekend, the football teams of Bishop Chatard, Cathedral and Roncalli high schools all shared the glory as they each convincingly earned a state championship in the Indiana High School Athletic Association state finals at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

Roncalli started the championship streak for the three Indianapolis Catholic schools with a 49-7 win over the team from Hobart High School on Nov. 27, earning its 10th state championship in football, this one in Class 4A.

A day later, the communities of Bishop Chatard and Cathedral both joined in the celebration. Bishop Chatard defeated Danville High School 42-14 in the Class 3A championship game, marking the 15th time the Trojans have won a football state championship—more than any other high school in the state.

And Cathedral earned its 13th state championship in the sport as the Irish beat the team from Zionsville High School in the 5A title game, 46-28.

While each of these teams will be remembered for the championships, their coaches note that this football season will also be defined by the challenge of COVID-19.

“It was more than constant,” said Rob Doyle, head football coach of Bishop Chatard. “We had numerous close calls. COVID was an issue we talked about every day. It kept us focused. Football was our sanctuary. It was a place where we could be together and do the things we love to do. This group remained focused and kept driving through this bizarre time.”

Roncalli’s first-year head coach John Rodenberg also praised his players’ focus through the COVID challenge.

“They were asked to not hang out with their friends, to be more disciplined in school and out in public,” Rodenberg said. “They wanted to have a football season. They were able to use it as a motivating factor to play well, to stay focused.”

Each team had defining moments during the season.

Rodenberg pointed to back-to-back games in the middle of its regular season schedule that let him know his Roncalli team had the potential to do something memorable this year.

“They were trailing in the fourth quarter, and we came back to win those games,” he said. “It really unified our team and brought us together. It really helped me understand the type of team I was coaching. You understand their toughness, their fortitude, that they’re able to overcome adversity. If you’re going to win a championship, you’re going to have to overcome tough situations.”

Doyle focused on Bishop Chatard’s seventh game of the season against Merrillville High School, a team ranked second in Class 6A at the time. The Trojans won 45-28.

“Our kids played great that night,” Doyle recalled. “It was a turning point for us—that you’re not going to roll anyone out there that we can’t play with. It was awesome to see.”

For Cathedral, its defining moment came during the team’s bus ride to Lucas Oil Stadium for its state championship game. Peebles had the bus make a stop at the location where Mario was killed.

“We say the rosary on the way to every game,” Peebles recalled. “We parked our buses, put our flashers on. I thought it would be appropriate for us to start our rosary there. It was emotional.”

Hours later, Cathedral players danced across the Lucas Oil Stadium field, celebrating their state championship as many of them held up two fingers, signifying Mario’s jersey number.

In the days since the championship weekend, the players, coaches and school communities of Bishop Chatard, Cathedral and Roncalli have continued to celebrate and savor the moment. Peebles talked about that feeling in relation to Cathedral, but his comments also applied to the two other teams.

“That’s the most special part—to know they get to have that feeling,” Peebles said. “This group of kids, this is a defining moment to them. They get to make this part of their history.”
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

In his 2013 Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii gaudium (“The Joy of the Gospel”), Pope Francis invited the entire Church “to embark on a new chapter of evangelization.” He also challenged us to understand ourselves as a “community of missionary disciples” who are “permanently in a state of mission” (EG #1–3). This state of mission defines our Church’s ministry in both good times and hard times. As our Holy Father observes:

> Though it is true that this mission demands great generosity on our part, it would be wrong to see it as a heroic individual undertaking, for it is first and foremost the Lord’s work, surpassing anything which we can see and understand. Jesus is “the first and greatest evangelizer.” In every activity of evangelization, the primacy always belongs to God, who has called us to cooperate with him and who leads us on by the power of his Spirit. The real novelty is the newness which God himself mysteriously brings about and inspires, provokes, guides and accompanies in a thousand ways. The life of the Church should always reveal clearly that God takes the initiative, that “he has loved us first” (1 Jn 4:19) and that he alone “gives the growth” (1 Cor 3:7). This conviction enables us to maintain a spirit of joy in the midst of a task so demanding and challenging that it engages our entire life. God asks everything of us, yet at the same time he offers everything to us (EG #12).

Even in challenging times such as these, God takes the initiative, and he gives us everything we need to carry out his work. Our responsibility as disciples and missionaries is to gather around the Lord to pray, to listen to God’s Word and to encounter him in the sacraments and the liturgy. Then, we must accept his commission to “go out to the whole world” in our proclamation of the Gospel and in service to others.

This state of mission, that is the essential nature of the Church, has taken different forms at various times and among diverse communities in the Church’s 2,000-year history. What the Church looked like in its earliest days during the Roman Empire was far different from the forms it took in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Counter-Reformation and the succeeding periods of Church history. As the Church faced new challenges, it adapted and evolved in creative ways. What awaits us therefore is an exciting work of pastoral revitalization—a work involving all of us (Pope St. John Paul II, Novo Millennio Ineunte #29).

Pope Francis echoes this teaching when he speaks about the importance of “pastoral conversion” which is much more than restructuring our parishes, schools and diocesan institutions. The “exciting work of pastoral revitalization” that St. John Paul II called upon us all is what Pope Francis means when he talks about “pastoral ministry in a missionary key.” According to Pope Francis, pastoral planning challenges us to abandon the complacent attitude that says: “We have always done it this way.” It invites us to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in our respective communities. Planning that seeks to translate the permanent mission of the Church into pastoral initiatives that can effectively address the challenges and opportunities of our contemporary situation must reflect deeply on the Gospel and the essential teachings and practices of the Church. As Pope Francis makes clear: “A proposal of goals without an adequate communal search for the means of achieving them will inevitably prove illusory.” The Holy Father goes on to say that “the important thing is to not walk alone, but to rely on each other as brothers and sisters, and especially under the leadership of the bishops, in a wise and realistic pastoral discernment” (EG #33).

As Archbishop of Indianapolis, it is my responsibility to lead this archdiocese in assessing the needs of the Church in central and southern Indiana and planning for the future. This is not something I can, or should, do all by myself. Successful planning requires broad consultation and teamwork. It requires a profound sense of openness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit—as this is manifested both through the rich history of the Church in this region and in the present circumstances. Ultimately, sound pastoral planning demands that we be willing to trust that although we cannot predict the future, Divine Providence will show us the way to carry out God’s will for us in the years ahead.

A Future Full of Hope

On 19 February 2020, before the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic compelled us to suspend temporarily all public gatherings including Mass and the sacraments, I accepted as proposed by the planning committee a new archdiocesan pastoral plan that will guide the way we carry out the Church’s mission in central and southern Indiana for the next three years. This plan is the result of several years of surveys, assessments and research beginning during the interim between the appointment of Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin as archbishop of Newark, N.J., and my installation as archbishop of Indianapolis on 28 July 2017.

At the conclusion of my first year of episcopal ministry here, I commissioned a planning team of 25 members from around the archdiocese who represent different walks of life—lay people, priests, religious, people of good will. This plan is the result of several years of surveys, assessments and research beginning during the interim between the appointment of Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin as archbishop of Newark, N.J., and my installation as archbishop of Indianapolis on 28 July 2017.
goals and objectives that need to accomplish each goal. These goals and objectives, which have been approved, have now been given to the appropriate archdiocesan offices and agencies that will develop detailed plans for implementation, including accountability (measures for success, persons responsible, timelines, and budget implications).

For the purposes of this pastoral letter, I would simply like to offer some brief reflections on the five goals and their importance for carrying out our mission—yesterday, today and tomorrow.

**Goal 1:**

~ Prayer and Worship ~

The first goal of our Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan is: Foster a personal encounter with Jesus Christ through a rich and vibrant liturgical, sacramental and devotional, and personal prayer life. Prayer and Worship are at the heart of our identity as Catholic Christians. They prepare us to encounter Jesus in Word, Sacrament and Service, and they nourish and sustain us as we carry out our mission to joyfully proclaim the Gospel and live Christ’s mission of mercy and salvation.

The encounter with Jesus Christ that our liturgy and the sacraments foster is never a purely private affair. Mass and the sacraments, especially, are meant to be communal celebrations which both unite us in worship and strengthen the Church; as individuals and communities in love of God and love of neighbor.

Goal 1 objectives specify cultivating a sense of belonging through liturgical experiences that honor our archdiocese’s growing cultural and ethnic diversity; offering resources to parishes to be communal celebrations which both unite us in worship and strengthen the Church; as individuals and communities in love of God and love of neighbor. This is to lead us as the Church to extend hospitality to first-time visitors, and to warmly receive those seeking a church home.

**Goal 2:**

~ Stewardship ~

Our second goal is: To cultivate a culture of stewardship responding to our baptismal call to be witnesses of God’s love. It is not one task among many, but an indispensable ministry of intercession and prayer. This calls us to have an understanding of our mission that we are stewards, not owners, sent by God to share His gifts in the building up His Kingdom.

**Goal 3:**

~ Family and Community ~

Our third goal is: Support and engage families and communities in the archdiocese. Assessments, surveys and research conducted in preparation for pastoral planning show clearly that the family, which is the most fundamental unit of civil society, and which we recognize as “the domestic church,” needs encouragement, support and direction in its efforts to flourish and grow in our contemporary culture. Recent popees have emphasized that the family is the primary place where catechesis, evangelization and social awareness are nurtured, developed and put into action to carry out our Church’s mission in the world.

**Goal 4**

To recognize the family as the core of our evangelization and pastoral ministry, to offer resources and experiences to Catholic households in fostering and discerning vocations; cultivate communities that are centered on invitation and evangelization for people in all their stages of life; affirm and promote the role of parents as the primary teachers and formators of their children’s faith; and develop programs and resources to actively invite and welcome inactive Catholics, to extend hospitality to first-time visitors, and to warmly receive those seeking a church home.

**Goal 5**

To cultivate a culture of stewardship responding to our baptismal call to be witnesses of God’s love. It is not one task among many, but an indispensable ministry of intercession and prayer. This calls us to have an understanding of our mission that we are stewards, not owners, sent by God to share His gifts in the building up His Kingdom.

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Jesus’ teaching and example make Mary the perfect image of the Church—true mother of mercy, mother of Holy Hope and mother of our salvation. Each of our pastoral plan’s five goals are of special importance to Mary. Through our prayer and worship, we invoke our Blessed Mother’s intercession and her unfailing help. Through responsible stewardship of her Son’s abundant gifts, we follow her example of gratitude, accountability and generosity. Through Mary’s intercession, we strive to form holy families and communities that bear witness to the dignity of human life and the common good of all. Through our acceptance of the baptismal call to evangelization and catechesis, we say “yes” to God’s will as Mary did, and we rely on the grace of her Son to successfully carry out our mission. Finally, when we call on our Mother to intercede for all clergy and lay leaders, we affirm her special love for all who share in her Son’s mission of mercy, hope and salvation.

Recent months have seen a tragic resurgence of the COVID-19 virus, as well as the scourge of racism, bigotry and violence in our communities. We pray that Mary, Mother of the Church, will guide us as we plan for the future of our Archdiocese, and help us all to be conscious that we are all one in Christ, sisters and brothers in the one family of God. As we move beyond the demands of social distancing and physical isolation, and work to achieve true equality and justice for all, let us turn to the Virgin Mary who inspires us to proclaim the Gospel of Joy and strive to live Christ’s mission of mercy, hope and salvation.

Conclusion

Enshrining all of our efforts in the endeavor of carrying out this archdiocesan pastoral plan, echoing the words of blessing by St. Paul upon the Thessalonians, let us pray:

May the God of peace himself make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will accomplish it. Brothers and Sisters, pray for me too (1 Thes 5:23-25).

Given in Indianapolis at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, on 3 December in the year of Our Lord 2020.

The Most Reverend Charles C. Thompson, D.D., J.C.L.
Archbishop of Indianapolis

Archdiocese of Indianapolis: A Brief History

Catholic identity and mission have a rich history in Indiana. Pope Clement X established the Diocese of Quebec, in 1674, which included the territory known today as Indiana. Sacramental records have been kept by Bishop Louis Xavier Church, in Vincennes, in 1749. In 1770, Father Pierre Gibault became the pastor at Vincennes.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 guaranteed religious freedom throughout the territory. In 1789, Vincennes came under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Diocese of Baltimore. The Indiana Territory was established in 1800, with Vincennes being designated as its capital. The Diocese of Bardstown, in Kentucky, was established on 8 April 1808, which included all of the Indiana Territory. Flaget Elementary School, the current Catholic grade school in Vincennes, is named after the first Bishop of Bardstown, Joseph Benedict Flager. Bishop Flager was the first known Catholic bishop in the Indiana Territory, in 1814, administering the sacrament of confirmation in Vincennes. In 1816, Indiana became the nineteenth state.

The Diocese of Vincennes—now the Archdiocese of Indianapolis—was established by Pope Gregory XVI on May 6, 1834. The territory then comprised the eastern two thirds of Illinois and the eastern third of Illinois. The latter was separated from the Diocese of Vincennes upon the establishment of the Diocese of Chicago, November 28, 1843.

Fr. Simon Bruté, trained as a physician in France, was named the first Bishop of Vincennes. Bishop Bruté served for five years until his death In 1839. His successors included several bishops appointed and several parishes established until the diocesan see was transferred to St. Louis in 1849. The first four bishops are buried in the crypt of St. Francis Xavier Basilica, in Vincennes.

By decree of Pope Pius IX, January 8, 1857, the northern half of the state became the Diocese of Fort Wayne, the boundaries being that part of the state north of the southern boundaries of Fountain, Montgomery, Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Delaware, Randolph, and Warren counties. The remaining southern half of the state made up the Diocese of Vincennes, embracing 50 counties. It covered an area of 18,479 square miles extending from the north boundaries of Marion and contiguous counties to the Ohio River and from Illinois on the west to Ohio on the east.

The second bishop of Vincennes was permitted by apostolic brief to establish his residence at Vincennes, Madson, Lafayette, or Indianapolis; Vincennes was, however, to remain the see city. This permission, with the subtraction of Lafayette, was renewed to the fourth bishop.

Upon his appointment in 1878, Bishop Francis Chatard, the fifth bishop of Vincennes, was directed to fix his residence at Indianapolis. Although the site of the cathedral and the title of the see were continued at Vincennes, Bishop Chatard used St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis as an unofficial cathedral until the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul was completed in 1907. St. John the Evangelist Parish,
Pastoral Letter and Plan

GOAL 1: Foster a personal encounter with salvation.

Objective 1.1 Cultivate a sense of belonging for all God’s people through liturgical experiences that honor our growing cultural and ethnic diversity.

Objective 1.2 Offer resources to parishes to encourage participation in all levels of pastoral ministry as a means to build up the leadership capacity, skills and talents of all.

Objective 1.3 Enrich and complement the faithful’s understanding of the Gospel, scripture and liturgy through music and song that honors and celebrates our growing cultural and ethnic diversity.

Objective 1.4 Foster the spiritual life of God’s people through “popular piety” devotions.

Objective 1.5 Promote sacramental preparation as a tool of new evangelization, as an encounter for candidates, families and sponsors with the risen Lord.

Stewardship

GOAL 2: Cultivate a culture of stewardship responding to our Baptismal call through the giving of one’s time, talent and treasure in the service of God and one’s community.

Objective 2.1 Foster a greater sense of discipleship among the people by helping them identify the gifts that God has given them, and how those gifts can be put into service to build up His kingdom.

Action 2.1.1 Issue a call to action for a plan to build a culture of stewardship.

Objective 2.2 Design and implement an archdiocesan-wide system that connects/coordinates the parish’s gifts/talents with the needs of the archdiocese, wider community, and the parish and invites and actively encourages the service of others.

Action 2.2.1 Assess communication structures within the archdiocese and respond with the development of effective models that utilize a variety of methods and address needs.

Objective 2.3 Conduct a comprehensive assessment or audit of all capital assets and facilities within the Archdiocese regarding short/long term maintenance and usability (building on previous audits/assessments) and develop standardized methods and reports to assess resources and the pastoral needs throughout the Archdiocese.

Objective 2.4 Continue to utilize the tools and resources gained from Empowering Pastoral Leaders as a means to build up the leadership capacity, skills and talents of all.

Family and Community

GOAL 3: Support and engage families and communities in the Archdiocese.

Objective 3.1 Recognize the family as the core of our evangelization efforts and pastoral ministry.

Action 3.1.1 Nurture Catholic marriages and Catholic family life through experiences that deepen encounters with Jesus Christ.

Action 3.1.2 Develop ways to engage and support the needs of families.

Action 3.1.3 Encourage the use of a spiritual gifts assessment or inventory in our parishes, agencies, schools, and organizations.

Objective 3.2 Offer resources and experiences to Catholic households in fostering and discerning vocations.

Objective 3.3 Cultivate communities that are centered around invitation and evangelization for people in all phases of life.

Objective 3.4 Affirm and promote the role of parents as the primary teachers and formators of their children’s faith.

Objective 3.5 Design outreach programs and resources to actively invite and welcome inactive Catholics, to extend hospitality to first time visitors, and to warmly receive those seeking a church home.

Evangelization and Catechesis

GOAL 4: Live with an attitude of missionary discipleship of all people, reaching out to the peripheries of our diocese, parishes, and communities.

Objective 4.1 Foster a sense of belonging in our archdiocese through an attitude of encounter.

Objective 4.2 Restore the meaning of joy by proclaiming and evangelizing the Good News.

Objective 4.3 Create a culture of intentional discipleship.

Objective 4.4 Make youth and young adults participation in all levels of pastoral ministry a priority.

Objective 4.5 Promote effective instruments of evangelization through solid catechesis.

Action 4.5.1 Develop an understanding that evangelization is not limited to Sunday liturgies.

Action 4.5.2 Accompany and support small ecclesial groups within the parish.

Action 4.5.3 Foster the integration of ethnic communities and people with disabilities into the parish and diocesan structures.

Objective 4.6 Identify and develop catechetical training models with an emphasis on the use of technology and social media.

Objective 4.7 Promote comprehensive life-long formation in the faith by facilitating emotional, spiritual and intellectual conversion.

Clergy Life and Ministry

GOAL 5: Ensure the spiritual and physical well-being of the clergy (priests and deacons) by spiritual vitality, organizational efficacy, and sound stewardship principles and practices.

Objective 5.1 Ensure the spiritual and physical well-being of the clergy.

Objective 5.1.1 Identify opportunities for clergy and lay subordinates and professional development.

Objective 5.1.2 Foster a culture of priestly identity and support through local and archdiocesan-wide opportunities that promote and affirm the priestly vocation.

Objective 5.2 Create a framework identifying the necessary components of a thriving parish as we prepare for the existing and future changes of clergy, religious and lay leadership in the Archdiocese.

Action 5.2.1 Create new and innovative strategies, structures, and systems that respond to the needs in changing parish life and at the same time support the well-being of our parish leadership.

Action 5.2.2 Develop standardized methods and reports to assess resources (human, material and financial) and the pastoral needs throughout the Archdiocese.

Action 5.2.3 Review existing strategic and pastoral plans to coordinate needs and human resources.

Action 5.2.4 Conduct and analyze a comprehensive assessment of Mass times, clergy availability, staffing and parishioners in every deanery.

Action 5.2.5 Examine the current deanery structure in light of emerging trends and assumptions regarding future clergy.

Action 5.2.6 Develop a comprehensive communications plan to educate the local Church and promote awareness and understanding of future changes.

Action 5.2.7 Identify, call forth and clarify lay ecclesial leadership to serve the needs of changing parish and diocesan structures.

Action 5.7.1 Develop a new model of pastoral care and support through the implementation of a comprehensive plan to serve the needs of changing parish and diocesan structures.

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis:
Strategic Goals, Objectives and Strategies

January 2020

We, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis, joyfully proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people by living His mission of mercy, hope and salvation.

Prayer and Worship

GOAL 1: Foster a personal encounter with Jesus Christ through a rich and vibrant liturgical, sacramental and devotional, and personal prayer life.

Objective 1.1 Cultivate a sense of belonging for all God’s people through liturgical experiences that honor our growing cultural and ethnic diversity.

Objective 1.2 Offer resources to parishes to encourage participation in all levels of pastoral ministry as a means to build up the leadership capacity, skills and talents of all.

Objective 1.3 Enrich and complement the faithful’s understanding of the Gospel, scripture and liturgy through music and song that honors and celebrates our growing cultural and ethnic diversity.

Objective 1.4 Foster the spiritual life of God’s people through “popular piety” devotions.

Action 1.4.1 Identify and design resources as necessary to deepen the faithful’s understanding and use of Catholic prayers and devotions.

Objective 1.5 Promote sacramental preparation as a tool of new evangelization, as an encounter for candidates, families and sponsors with the risen Lord.

Stewardship

GOAL 2: Cultivate a culture of stewardship responding to our Baptismal call through the giving of one’s time, talent and treasure in the service of God and one’s community.

Objective 2.1 Foster a greater sense of discipleship among the people by helping them identify the gifts that God has given them, and how those gifts can be put into service to build up His kingdom.

Action 2.1.1 Issue a call to action for a plan to build a culture of stewardship.

Objective 2.2 Design and implement an archdiocesan-wide system that connects/coordinates the parish’s gifts/talents with the needs of the archdiocese, wider community, and the parish and invites and actively encourages the service of others.

Action 2.2.1 Assess communication structures within the archdiocese and respond with the development of effective models that utilize a variety of methods and address needs.
La Proclamación del Evangelio de la Alegria: Vivir la misión de Cristo

Nosotros, la Arquidiócesis Católica Romana de Indianápolis, proclamamos con alegría el Evangelio de Jesucristo a todas las personas que viven su misión de misericordia, esperanza y salvación.

En su Exhortación Apostólica Evangelii gaudium (La alegría del Evangelio), publicada en 2013, el papa Francisco invitó a toda la Iglesia a embarcarse en “un nuevo viaje de evangelización”. También nos desafió a concebirnos como una “comunidad de discípulos misioneros” que “esfuerzan” cada día “sin descanso” (Evangelii gaudium, #1-3). Este estado misionero define el ministerio de nuestra Iglesia tanto en los buenos como en los malos tiempos. Tal como nuestro Santo Padre señala:

Si bien esta misión nos reclama una entrega generosa, sería un error entenderla como una honrosa tarea personal, ya que la obra es ante todo de Él, más allá de lo que podamos descubrir y entender. Jesús es “el primero y el más grande santificador” (1 Cor 1:31). En cualquier forma de evangelización, el primado es siempre de Dios, que quiso llamarnos a colaborar con Él en e impacientes para la fe de los gentiles (Ef 2:21). En la que cita el salmo 118, versículo 2: “La piedra que los constructores desecharon, en piedra angular se ha convertido,”. Esta convicción nos permite conservar la alegría en medio de una tarea tan exigente y desafiante que toma tiempo y de nuestras necesidades y oportunidades.

Hace más de 20 años, el papa Juan Pablo II esbozó la tarea que la Iglesia enfrentaba al vivir la misión de Cristo en el mundo: “la piedra que los constructores desecharon, en piedra angular se ha convertido, en la que Dios mismo misteriosamente ha preparado el inesperado para nuestro tiempo.” Adecuadamente a las demandas de nuestro tiempo, la planificación pastoral requiere una amplia consulta y realista discernimiento pastoral” (Evangelii gaudium, #53).

Como arzobispo de Indianápolis, me responsabilizo dirigir esta arquidiócesis en la evaluación de las necesidades de la Iglesia en el centro y el sur de Indiana y la planificación para el futuro. Esto no es algo que yo pueda o deba hacer por mi cuenta. Para tener éxito, la planificación requiere una amplia consulta y trabajo en equipo. Esto implica un profundo sentido de apertura a la guía del Espíritu Santo, como se manifiesta, tanto a través de la rica historia de la Iglesia en esta región, como en las circunstancias actuales. En definitiva, una planificación pastoral sólida exige que estemos dispuestos a confiar en que, aunque no podemos predecir el futuro, la Divina Providencia nos dará el camino a seguir. Nosotros, la Arquidiócesis Católica Romana de Indianápolis, proclamamos con alegría el Evangelio de Jesucristo a todas las personas que viven su misión de misericordia, esperanza y salvación.

Un futuro lleno de esperanza

El 19 de febrero de 2020, antes de que la propagación de la pandemia de COVID-19 nos obligara a suspender temporalmente todas las reuniones públicas, incluyendo la misa y los sacramentos, acordamos un nuevo plan pastoral arquidiocesano, tal como lo propuso el comité de planificación. Dicho plan guiará la forma en que llevaremos a cabo la misión de la Iglesia en el centro y el sur de Indiana durante los próximos tres a cinco años. Este plan es el resultado de un profundo discernimiento pastoral, entre los que está el arquidiocesano, tal como lo propuso el comité de planificación. Dicho plan guiará la forma en que llevaremos a cabo la misión de la Iglesia en el centro y el sur de Indiana durante los próximos tres a cinco años. Este plan es el resultado de un profundo discernimiento pastoral.
Misión y metas

Especialmente ahora que retomamos el compromiso y compromiso de los ministerios de nuestra Arquidiócesis, existen muchas ventanas de tener un plan pastoral que pueda servir como guía práctica para todos nuestros ministerios. Nuestro plan pastoral constituye un medio para compartir nuestras esperanzas, tanto los esfuerzos coordinados e intencionales. El plan también identifica metas y objetivos específicos que deben ser abordados en este momento de la historia de nuestra Arquidiócesis. Por último, gracias al plan podemos trabajar juntos como una familia de fe, en lugar de tratar de abordar cada tema como individuos aislados.

El Comité de Planificación Pastoral de la Arquidiócesis ha propuesto, y yo he aprobado, la siguiente Declaración de Misión para nuestra Arquidiócesis:

Nuestros, la Arquidiócesis Católica Romana, de Indianaapolis, proclamamos con alegría el Evangelio de Jesucristo a todos aquellos que viven que Dios nos oiga: la misericordia, esperanza y salvación.

Tal como nos lo recuerda el papa Francisco en su carta a los diócesis, y el llamado a la fe y la salvación en Jesucristo forma parte de la obra de Dios y esto es congruente con el núcleo de nuestra Declaración de Misión. Por su gracia, nosotros, la Iglesia en el centro y el sur de Indiana, nos ofrecemos como una vía para proclamar el Evangelio con alegría por nuestro testimonio vivo de su misión de misericordia, esperanza y salvación. En la alegría del Evangelio, nuestro Santo Padre escribe:

La salvación que Dios nos ofrece es obra de su misericordia. No hay acciones humanas, por más buenas que sean, que nos hagan merecer un don tan grandioso. Dios, por pura gracia, nos atiende para nosotros a él. Él envía su Espíritu a nuestros corazoncitos para hacernos sus hijos, para transformarnos y para volvernos capaces de responder con nuestra vida a este amor. La Iglesia es enviada por Jesucristo como sacramento de la salvación ofrecida por Dios. Ella, a través de sus acciones evangelizadoras, profetizas, y como instrumento de la gracia divina que actúa incesantemente más allá de toda la imposible supervisión (Evangelii gaudium, #112).

Llevamos a cabo nuestra misión como Iglesia en el centro y el sur de Indiana mediante nuestra cooperación con la gracia de Jesucristo y, en el proceso, nos comprometemos a cumplir las cinco metas generales que se enumeran a continuación:

- celebrar en oración los resultados de las evaluaciones, las encuestas y demás investigaciones realizadas como preparativos para la planificación pastoral. Este fue realmente un proceso de discernimiento piadoso en el cual se emplearon como guías las Sagradas

Escrituras, las enseñanzas y las prácticas de la Iglesia durante los últimos dos milenios y las enseñanzas recientes de la Congregación para la Evangelización del Pueblo de Dios (Evangelii gaudium). El resultado fue la formulación de una serie de metas y objetivos en las siguientes áreas:

- Oración y adoración
- Corresponsabilidad
- Familia y comunidad
- Evangelización y catequesis
- Vida y ministerio del clero

Estas cinco áreas no abarcan todos los aspectos de la vida: laicos, sacerdotes, religiosos, personas que trabajan en ministerios arquidiocesanos y parroquiales, así como personas de diferentes etnias y de diversas edades. La primera tarea del equipo de planificación fue leer La alegría del Evangelio del papa Francisco y reflexionar sobre sus enseñanzas a la luz de las oportunidades y desafíos que enfrentamos al tratar de proclamar el Evangelio en nuestra situación actual. Deseábamos que nuestros planes futuros emanaran de la visión del Santo Padre para la Iglesia de ayer, hoy y mañana, tal como se expresa en las Sagradas Escrituras: “Porque yo se lo han tenido que vosotras—decía el Señor—planes de bienestar y no de calamidad, para daros un futuro y una esperanza” (Jer 29.11).

Estoy profundamente agradecido por el comité de coordinación del plan pastoral por: monseñor Jerome J. Joseph, canciller. Mons. William F. Stumpf, vicario general, David Bethurum, director ejecutivo de la Oficina de ventilación pastoral y Greg Otolski, director ejecutivo de comunicaciones. Todos ellos trabajaron incansablemente para supervisar la formulación del plan y para asegurar que el plan mismo reflejara los temas identificados en La alegría del Evangelio nuestro documento guía.

También quiero reconocer con gratitud a los otros 21 miembros del Comité de Planificación Pastoral de la Arquidiócesis:

- Julie Alberton
- Lorraine Brown
- J. Patrick Byrne
- Oscar Castellanos
- Christine Eppert
- Matt Foley
- Padre Rick Ginther
- Steven Goebel
- Kara Gresh
- Amy Higgins
- Dùcôn Christopher Hodges
- Richard Jeff
- Dùcôn Marc Kellams
- Hermana Joanita Koors, OSF
- Padre Dolores des Cotte
- Bernie Paradise
- Lidia Pasillas
- Richard Pohlman
- Pearllette Springer
- Sue Weber (facilitadora)
- Lynne Weisenbach

Su dedicación piadosa que la tarea se les encomendó fue una inspiración y una considerable fuente de esperanza para el futuro de nuestra Arquidiócesis. Independientemente de los obstáculos que enfrentamos, somos una comunidad llena de fe decidida a escuchar a la Palabra de Dios y a vivir la vida de la comunidad del Señor para nosotros y a actuar con la gracia de Dios cuando reconocemos que Él es el dueño y estamos llamados a ser sus corresponsables. Protegemos los dones de Dios. Protegemos los dones de Dios cuando reconocemos que Él es el dueño y estamos llamados a ser sus corresponsables. Protegemos los dones de Dios cuando reconocemos que Él es el dueño y estamos llamados a ser sus corresponsables. Protegemos los dones de Dios cuando reconocemos que Él es el dueño y estamos llamados a ser sus corresponsables. Protegemos los dones de Dios cuando reconocemos que Él es el dueño y estamos llamados a ser sus corresponsables. Protegemos los dones de Dios cuando reconocemos que Él es el dueño y estamos llamados a ser sus corresponsables.
En el párrafo inicial de La alegría del Evangelio, el papa Francisco esboza el plan de los Evangelios, lo que san Juan Pablo II llama un "modelo" que no se transforma con los cambios de los tiempos y las culturas, aunque tiene en cuenta el "ciclo" en unas de verdaderas alianza y de comunicación eficaz." De acuerdo con el papa Francisco.

La alegría del Evangelio llena el corazón de la Iglesia de todos los que se encuentran con Jesús. Quienes se dejan salvar por Él son liberados del pecado, de la tristeza, del vacío interior, del aislamiento. Con Jesucristo, siempre nuestra promesa de alegría (Evangelii gaudium, #1).

Este es el significado exacto de nuestra cuarta meta: facilitar la misma actitud que los discípulos misioneros de San Juan Bautista tenían desde el primer Pentecostés. Sabemos que este "programa" nunca cambia, pero también sabemos que la actitud que la Iglesia es nuestra responsabilidad presentar este programa a la gente de hoy y de mañana en un espíritu de diálogo y de comunicación efectiva.

Meta 5: Vida y ministerio del clero – Nuestra última meta es: Asegurar el bienestar del clero como garantía de la personalidad del clero mediante la vitalidad espiritual, la eficacia organizativa y personal y la capacidad de corresponsabilidad. Todas las metas de nuestro plan pastoral son de vital importancia para esta meta de vida y dinero signficativo hoy en día a medida que emergen de décadas de crisis y humillación. La respuesta a este desafío implica crímenes y graves pecados de algunos obispos, sacerdotes y líderes de la Iglesia. Como religiosos y laicos de nuestra Iglesia queremos a nuestro clero y desafamos que tengan éxito en la vocación que Cristo les ofreció de servir a su Iglesia y todo el pueblo de Dios. Sabemos que la ayuda y el apoyo en ocasión de tan grandes desafíos son necesarios para nutrir, afirmar y guiar a nuestros diáconos, sacerdotes y obispos mientras nos esforzamos para crecer espiritualmente y madurar como ministros pastorales eficaces. Necesitamos crear un clero sano y felices, llenos de esperanza y de alegría, que se sienten realizados en su ministerio, no sólo por la gracia de Dios para inspirar y dirigir parroquianos que sean centros vibrantes de oración, formación en la fe y servicio y para alentarnos a y apoyar a nuestro clero, nos comprometemos a construir y mantener comunidades parroquiales felices y sanas. Los objetivos de la meta 5 buscan: asegurar el bienestar espiritual y físico del clero, el que identifique los componentes necesarios para tener parroquianos prósperos, mientras nos preparamos para los cambios actuales y futuros del clero, los religiosos y el liderazgo laico en la Arquidiócesis. El papa Francisco dirá algunas de sus ideas, estrategias y metodologías para lograr esta meta tan importante y estas se explicarán con mayor detalle a medida que se implemente el plan. El papa Francisco ha señalado que cada obispo tiene el deber de que se mantenga una relación fuerte e estrecha con el clero, los obispos y la comunidad que le rodea (1 Corintios 13:1-13).

Para el papa Francisco, se le ordenó fijar su residencia en Vincennes, en 1814. En 1816, el obispo Peter Pierre Gaultier se convirtió en el obispo de Vincennes. La Ordenanza del Noreste de 1787 garantizó la libertad religiosa. El territorio de Indiana se convirtió en el de la Diócesis de Vincennes en 1800 y se designó a Vincennes como su capital. El 8 de abril de 1808 se fundó la Diócesis de Bardstown, en Kentucky que abarcaba todo el territorio de Indiana. La Escuela Primaria Flaget, la actual escuela católica de Vincennes, lleva el nombre del primer obispo de Bardstown, Joseph Benedict Flaget, quien fue nombrado obispo en 1809. El obispo Flaget fue el primer obispo católico en administrar el sacramento de la confirmación en el estado de Indiana, en Vincennes, en 1814. En 1816, Indiana se convirtió en un convencimiento estatal. La Iglesia en el centro y el sur de Indiana, la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis, fue fundada por el papa Gregorio XVI el 6 de marzo de 1844. En aquel entonces, el territorio de la diócesis comprendía todo el estado de Indiana y el sur de Ohio. En 1845, el obispo Robert Gibson se separó de la Diócesis de Vincennes con la fundación de la Diócesis de Champaign-Urbana. En 1878, el obispo Robert Gibson se separó de la Diócesis de Vincennes con la fundación de la Diócesis de Indianapolis. En 1890, un grupo de obispos abrazó la diócesis de Indianapolis, luego de cuatro obispos designados de que se fundaran parroquias. Los primeros cuatro obispos están enterrados en el cristo de la Basílica de San Francisco Javier, en Vincennes. Por decreto del papa Pio IX, el 8 de enero de 1857 la mitad norte del estado se convirtió en la Diócesis de Fort Wayne, siendo los límites la parte del estado al norte de la frontera sur de los condados de Fountain, Montgomery, Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Delaware, y Randolph. La otra mitad al sur del estado conformaba la Diócesis de Vincennes, que también cubría el condado de Vincennes. Cubría un área de 184.779 millas cuadradas que se extendía desde los límites norte de Michigan y los condados contiguos hasta el río Ohio y desde Illinois al oeste hasta Ohio al este. El segundo obispo de Vincennes se le permitió, por mandato apostólico, establecer su residencia en Indianapolis, Madison, Lafayette y Vincennes; sin embargo, seguiría siendo la ciudad sede. Este permiso, exclusion al entregar, se extendió al cuarto obispo. Su residencia en Indianapolis, la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis, la designación de la iglesia matriz de la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis, la historia de la diócesis de Indianapolis, la meta de vivir con Alegría, la meta de vivir con Alegría, la meta de ser una familia y la meta de ser un clero. Las metas de la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis son: Historia Breve
Arquidiócesis Católica Romana de Indianápolis:

Métas estratégicas, objetivos y acciones de implementación

Enero de 2020

Noostros, la Arquidiócesis Católica Romana de Indianápolis, proclamamos con alegría el Evangelio de Jesucristo a todas las personas que viven su misión de misericordia, esperanza y salvación.

Oración y adoración

META 1: Fomentar un encuentro personal con Jesucristo a través de una vida litúrgica, sacramental, devocional y de oración personal rica y dinámica.

Objetivo 1.1 Cultivar el sentido de pertenencia de todo el pueblo de Dios a través de experiencias litúrgicas que honren nuestra creciente diversidad cultural y étnica.

Objetivo 1.2 Ofrecer recursos a las parroquias para fomentar la participación plena, activa y consciente de los fieles en la fe de sus hijos.

Objetivo 1.3 Fomentar la formación integral de toda la juventud, etc.?

Objetivo 1.4 Desarrollar formas de involucrar y adaptar los recursos humanos, materiales y financieros a las necesidades pastorales en toda la Arquidiócesis.

Familia y comunidad

META 3: Apoyar y fomentar la participación de las familias y comunidades de la Arquidiócesis.

Objetivo 3.1 Reconocer a la familia como el núcleo espiritual e intelectual de nuestras esfuerzos de evangelización y del ministerio pastoral.

Objetivo 3.2 Dar una nueva visión de la familia católica y la vida familiar que sea más acorde con las actuales circunstancias.

Objetivo 3.3 Fomentar el uso de una evaluación o inventario de los dones espirituales en nuestras parroquias, agencias, escuelas y organizaciones.

Objetivo 3.4 Promover la formación de personas que sean capaces de desempeñar roles de liderazgo en el ámbito de la vida familiar.

Objetivo 3.5 Desarrollar programas de formación y recursos que permitan a las familias católicas crear un espacio propicio para la comunidad de la familia.

Objetivo 3.6 Fomentar la formación de líderes en el ámbito de la vida familiar.

Corresponsabilidad

META 2: Fomentar una cultura de corresponsabilidad en el proceso de nuestro llamado bautismal a través de la entrega de nuestro tiempo, talentos y recursos en el servicio de Dios y de los demás.

Objetivo 2.1 Fomentar un mayor sentido de discipulado en la gente ayudándola a identificar los dones que Dios les ha dado, y de que manera pueden ponerlos al servicio para construir Su reino a través de la Iglesia.

Objetivo 2.2 Diseñar e implementar un sistema a todos los niveles del círculo de discípulos que nos permitan evaluar las necesidades pastorales.

Objetivo 2.3 Realizar una evaluación o auditoría integral de todos los bienes de capital y las instalaciones dentro de la Arquidiócesis en relación con el mantenimiento y la utilidad a corto y largo plazo (sobre la base de auditorías y evaluaciones anteriores) y desarrollar métodos e informes estandarizados para evaluar los recursos y las necesidades pastorales en toda la Arquidiócesis.

Objetivo 2.4 Seguir utilizando las herramientas y recursos obtenidos del programa “Empoderamiento de líderes pastorales” (Empowering Pastoral Leaders) como medio para aumentar la capacidad de liderazgo, las aptitudes y los talentos de todos.

Vida y ministerio del clero

META 5: Asegurar el bienestar espiritual y físico del clero (sacerdotes y diáconos) mediante la vitalidad espiritual, la eficacia organizativa y principios y prácticas coherentes de corresponsabilidad.

Objetivo 5.1 Identificar oportunidades para el desarrollo personal y los años sabáticos para el clero y los laicos.

Objetivo 5.2 Fomentar una cultura de identidad y apoyo al sacerdocio a través de oportunidades y reuniones locales y arquidiocesanas que promuevan y afírmén la vocación sacerdotal.

Objetivo 5.3 Crear un marco que identifique los recursos espirituales y materiales que las parroquias, agencias, escuelas y organizaciones tienen para servir a las necesidades de las estructuras parroquiales y laicos.

Objetivo 5.4 Crear una situación de sucesión sostenible para el liderazgo espiritual y eucarístico en la Arquidiócesis.

Objetivo 5.5 Identificar estrategias, estructuras y sistemas nuevos e innovadores que respondan a las necesidades cambiantes de la vida parroquial y al mismo tiempo apoyen el bienestar de nuestros fieles parroquiales.

Objetivo 5.6 Desarrollar métodos estándarizados para evaluar los recursos (humanos, materiales y financieros) de nuestras parroquias y diócesis de manera constante.

Objetivo 5.7 Comprender las necesidades de nuestros fieles y planear estrategias que promuevan y afirmen la vocación sacerdotal.

Evangulización y catequización

META 4: Vivir con una actitud de discípulo que fomente bautizar a todas las personas, llegando a las periferias de nuestra diócesis, parroquias y comunidades.

Objetivo 4.1 Fomentar el sentido de pertenencia en nuestra Arquidiócesis mediante un actitud de discípulo.

Objetivo 4.2 Restaurar el significado de la alegría en nuestra diócesis, parroquias y comunidades.

Objetivo 4.3 Crear una cultura de discípulo intencional.

Objetivo 4.4 Convertir en prioridad la participación de los jóvenes y los adultos jóvenes en todos los niveles del ministerio pastoral.

Objetivo 4.5 Promover instrumentos eficaces de evangelización mediante una catequesis sólida.

Acción 4.5.1 Crear conciencia de que la evangelización no se limita a las liturgias domingueras.

Acción 4.5.2 Acompañar y apoyar a los pequeños grupos eclesiásticos de la parroquia.

Acción 4.5.3 Fomentar la integración de nuevas comunidades y las personas con discapacidades en las estructuras parroquiales y diocesanas.

Objetivo 4.6 Identificar y desarrollar modelos de formación catequética con énfasis en el uso de la tecnología y las redes sociales.

Objetivo 4.7 Promover la formación integral de toda la vida en la fe facilitando la conversión espiritual, intelectual e intelectual.

Acción 5.1.1 Identificar oportunidades para el desarrollo personal y los años sabáticos para el clero y los laicos.

Acción 5.1.2 Fomentar una cultura de identidad y apoyo al sacerdocio a través de oportunidades y reuniones locales y arquidiocesanas que promuevan y afírmén la vocación sacerdotal.

Objetivo 5.2 Fomentar el desarrollo personal y los años sabáticos para el clero y los laicos.

Objetivo 5.2.1 Establecer relaciones con la Iglesia católica en otras partes del mundo para el compartimiento de experiencias y recursos.

Acción 5.2.2 Desarrollar estrategias e iniciativas que promuevan la formación de líderes espirituales y comunitarios.

Acción 5.2.3 Realizar y analizar una evaluación exhaustiva de los horarios de las misas, la disponibilidad de clérigos, la dotación de equipos y el liderazgo al que se ha llegado.

Acción 5.2.4 Examinar la estructura actual de la Arquidiócesis en relación con la expansión y la renovación de nuestras parroquias y diócesis.

Acción 5.2.5 Comprender las necesidades de los fieles y planear estrategias que promuevan y afirmen la vocación sacerdotal.

Acción 5.2.6 Establecer una relación estrecha con los diferentes niveles de los medios de comunicación para asegurar que los mensajes de la Arquidiócesis sean visibles y accesibles para el público objetivo.

Acción 5.2.7 Establecer una relación estrecha con los diferentes niveles de los medios de comunicación para asegurar que los mensajes de la Arquidiócesis sean visibles y accesibles para el público objetivo.

Acción 5.2.8 Evaluar las necesidades de los fieles y planear estrategias que promuevan y afirmen la vocación sacerdotal.

Acción 5.3.1 Identificar oportunidades para el desarrollo personal y los años sabáticos para el clero y los laicos.

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Pandemic causes shift in liturgical music expectations for Christmas

By Ann Margaret Lewis

During the Christmas season, we expect to hear and sing carols at Mass as an expression of joy in the birth of Christ. With the COVID-19 pandemic, however, one of the Church’s complex liturgical challenges has been with its music. Due to the pandemic, some common safety accommodations have included removing hymnals from pews, forgoing choirs and wind instruments, and discouraging congregational singing. This will likely alter what people will experience musically in the liturgy at Christmas.

‘Congregational singing … would be risky’

In July, while churches were re-opening after the lockdown, Andrew Motyka, director of archdiocesan and cathedral liturgical music, provided guidelines to archdiocesan parish musicians on how to deal with the pandemic in their ministries.

“We didn’t forbid congregational singing,” Motyka says, “even at that time we put it on people’s radars that, especially in smaller spaces, that would be risky.”

Since COVID-19 spreads through droplets emitted from sneezing, coughing, yelling and even speaking and breathing, singing especially becomes an issue with trained singers who can expel droplets and aerosols up to 20 feet.

As a result, the choirs one would normally hear singing at Christmas Masses simply cannot rehearse. For example, in March, a 2.5-hour choir rehearsal in Skagit County, Wash., made up of 61 choir members, resulted in three confirmed and 20 likely secondary COVID-19 cases. Three of these people were hospitalized, and two died.

Transmission of the disease in this case, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was linked to singers performing within 6 feet of each other during practice, augmented by the physical act of singing.

It is the potential for this type of spread that led Motyka to advise parish music leaders to also discourage congregational singing. Many parishes are using a single cantor or exploring different musical options.

“They’re starting to rediscover the antiphons,” Motyka said. “Every Mass of the year has a proper text that can be sung during the entrance procession, offertory and communion. As someone who has always been a proponent of using the antiphons and a greater use of the different options that the Church provides, it makes me a little happy to see that this is maybe an opportunity to grow a bit in a difficult time.”

Joseph Chrisman, pastoral associate for music and faith formation at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, is one parish music leader who has incorporated the antiphons as part of his music planning.

“We have a great tradition in the Roman Liturgy of using antiphons and psalms,” he said. “Our music is not only inspired by the word, it is the word, the psalms. In many parishes, the psalms and antiphons have been supplanted by the use of hymns and songs.”

‘Balance between singing … and safety’

Chrisman explained, “This has given me the opportunity to look at many of the different options that the ‘General Instruction of the Roman Missal’ allows for singing.”

He described it as the difference between “singing the liturgy” rather than “singing at the liturgy.”

The principle refers to the component parts of the Mass rather than singing songs at various stages during the Mass. “I find that music directors in the Church are extremely creative people. Because we work in an idiom that has a strict form to it, you always have to be creative to follow those forms in a beautiful way and in a way that your parish, choir and musicians can handle.

“So, the creative juices are always flowing on that front,” he said. “And I look forward to seeing how people are going to approach it.”

Motyka believes that, like Chrisman, all archdiocesan musicians will be resourceful with their Christmas plans.

‘You can expect some of the traditional Christmas carols, or parts of carols, used in conjunction with the psalms. You can also expect some less familiar music as we continue to limit congregational singing.’

After consulting Holy Name pastor Father Robert Robeson, it was decided to aim for a “simple and balanced approach,” he said. “We would continue to sing the ordinaries of the Mass—Gloria, the Holy, Holy, etc.—as a community, but we would do something a little less familiar with the other parts, for instance, the entrance, offertory and Communion [antiphons],” he continued.

Dealing with the Christmas season, however, has required Chrisman and his parish to make some painful musical sacrifices. One of the greatest was canceling its annual Christmas concert, “which would have been our 57th,” Chrisman said.

“The concert is more than just a concert. It is a whole community event, a fixture in our community, that marks the beginning of Christmas for many people. It is months of hard work that culminates in a magical evening of song and praise that we have sacrificed this year in the name of public safety.”

During the Christmas season, “singing the liturgy” rather than “singing the psalms,” he said. “Our music is not only inspired by the word, it is the word, the psalms.”

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“Christmas is the culmination of Advent,” he explained. “In Advent, we curb our enthusiasm and prepare our hearts for the coming of the Savior. We finally get the ‘Glory to God’ back after four Sundays of eager anticipation to proclaim with the angel choirs the joyous announcement of Christ’s birth. And, we somehow have to hold a balance between Christmas joy and public safety.”

He said the parish is anticipating the usual increase in attendance for the Christmas Masses. Therefore, in addition to mask-wearing and social distancing, the Christmas Masses will also involve less communal singing.

“You can expect some of the traditional Christmas carols, or parts of carols, used in conjunction with the psalms. You can also expect some less familiar music as we continue to limit congregational singing.”

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“So, the creative juices are always flowing on that front,” he said. “And I look forward to seeing how people are going to approach it.”

(Ann Margaret Lewis is executive assistant in the archdiocesan Office of Communications and the author of several books. E-mail her at alexwa@archindy.org. Creenon reporter Sean Gallagher also contributed to this article.)
VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Marking the 150th anniversary of St. Joseph being declared patron of the universal Church, Pope Francis proclaimed a yearlong celebration dedicated to the foster father of Jesus. It began on Dec. 8 and will conclude on Dec. 8, 2021.

In a Dec. 8 apostolic letter, “Patris Cordis” (“With a father’s heart”), the pope said Christians can discover in St. Joseph, who often goes unnoticed, “an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble.”

“St. Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. A word of recognition and of gratitude is due to them all,” he said.

As Mary’s husband and guardian of the son of God, St. Joseph turned “his human vocation to domestic love into a superhuman obligation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home.”

Despite being troubled at first by Mary’s pregnancy, he added, St. Joseph was obedient to God’s will “regardless of the hardship involved.”

“In every situation, Joseph declared his own ‘fiat,’ like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Getsemane,” the pope said. “All this makes it clear that St. Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through the exercise of his fatherhood and that, in this way, he cooperated in the fullness of time in the great mystery of salvation and is truly a minister of salvation.”

St. Joseph’s unconditional acceptance of Mary and his decision to protect her “good name, her dignity and her life” also served as an example for men today, the pope added.

“Today, in our world where psychological, verbal and physical violence toward women is so evident, Joseph appears as the figure of a respectful and sensitive man,” he wrote.

Pope Francis also highlighted St. Joseph’s “creative courage, not only in finding a stable and making it a ‘welcoming home for the son of God [who came] into the world,’ but also in protecting Christ from the threat posed by King Herod.”

“The Holy Family had to face concrete problems like every other family, like so many of our migrant brothers and sisters who, today, too, risk their lives to escape misfortune and hunger. In this regard, I consider St. Joseph the special patron of all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty,” the pope said.

As a carpenter who earned “an honest living to provide for his family,” Christ’s earthly guardian is also an example for both workers and those seeking employment and the right to a life of dignity for themselves and their families.

“In our own day, when employment has once more become a burning social issue, and unemployment at times reaches record levels even in nations that for decades have enjoyed a certain degree of prosperity, there is a renewed need to appreciate the importance of dignified work, of which St. Joseph is an exemplary patron,” he said.

The Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican tribunal that deals with matters of conscience, also issued a decree on Dec. 8 stating that plenary indulgences will be granted to Catholics not only through prayer and penance, but also through acts of justice, charity and piety dedicated to the foster father of Jesus.

Among the conditions for receiving an indulgence are a spirit detached from sin, receiving sacramental confession as soon as possible, receiving Communion as soon as possible and praying for the Holy Father’s intentions.

However, the decree also highlighted several ways to obtain the indulgence throughout the year, including to those who “meditate on the prayer of the ‘Our Father’ for at least 30 minutes or take part in a spiritual retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on St. Joseph.”

As a “just man,” the document continued, who guarded “the intimate secret that lies at the bottom of the heart and soul,” St. Joseph practiced the virtue of justice in “full adherence to the divine law, which is the law of mercy.

“Therefore, those who, following the example of St. Joseph, will perform a corporal or spiritual work of mercy, will also be able to obtain the gift of the plenary indulgence,” it said.

Indulgences will also be granted to families and engaged couples who recite the rosary together and thus imitate the “same climate of communion, love and prayer lived in the Holy Family.”

Other acts of devotion include entrusting one’s daily activities and prayers for dignified employment to St. Joseph, reciting the litany or any “legitimately approved” prayer to St. Joseph.

During this time of pandemic, the Apostolic Penitentiary also decreed that special indulgences will be granted to the elderly, the sick and all those who “for legitimate reasons are prevented from leaving their home” by “reciting an act of piety in honor of St. Joseph and committed to fulfilling the conditions as soon as possible.”

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

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Faith Alive!

Advent can help believers discover joy in bleak times

By Effie Caldarola

The 19th-century English poet Christina Rossetti never heard of COVID-19, climate change or many of the woes that beset us in the bleak midwinter of 2020. Yet, in her poem, “In the Bleak Midwinter,” she paints a Christmas scene that endures and brings an odd, consoling joy into these troubled times.

She sets the stage for Jesus’s appearance into our chaotic world with these sobering lines, “In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.”

Not everyone celebrates Christmas in the middle of a hard winter, but for many in the northern hemisphere, there are Advent days when ice forms on window panes and chilly winds whip through sullen grey skies.

And for all of us, the challenges of this particular Advent can make life seem hard as stone. Many have experienced the death of loved ones from COVID. Some of us are unemployed, face food insecurity or homelessness. Shelters are overflowing.

Many will not travel to see loved ones this season.

Some ache to see new grandchildren they’ve never met, or regret missing family weddings, funerals and reunions.

Into the midst of these dark times come the bright lights of Christmas and the beautiful celebration of Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent.

Rose-colored vestments and a rose candle on the Advent wreath remind us that the very word Gaudete is our Advent command: Rejoice!

So how do we rejoice in this crazy world of 2020?

One fundamental lesson of the spiritual life is that joy and consolation are not predicated on possessions, wealth or the perfect situations that we dream of for our life. Those tidy Hallmark Christmasses make good fictional stories and colorful advertisements, but they are far from the heart of the real Christmas story, the one that brings us joy and a peace the world cannot give.

The incarnation of Jesus and his coming among us into this world drives this point home. The Hebrew people were looking for a Savior, but the one they most often envisioned would come with power, majesty and entitlement.

Instead, the birth of Jesus happened in the most humble of circumstances. This is a powerful lesson for us about our own aspirations in life. In the Gospel of St. Luke, Jesus’ first visitors were shepherds, a despised and derided group of laborers among the people of Israel.

An exhausted Mary, who had gone through all the difficulties, hardship and pain of childbirth, probably greeted them with warmth.

No doubt she was aware of the presence of angels that surrounded her labor and her child.

Sometimes we forget that we, too, are called to welcome the weary and be aware of the angels that surround our Advent and Christmas, no matter the circumstances.


Joy, peace, grace and consolation can come, and perhaps most usually come, in moments of quiet and thoughtfulness. Maybe this Gaudete Sunday, and this strange year, is beckoning us to quiet down, do less, be more prayerful, take intentional time to count our blessings and give thanks for the fundamental things.

Maybe we can find room to rejoice when we won’t be exhausted by constant parties, obligatory entertaining, hurried travel, frenzied gift buying.

Will we miss some of it? Of course.

But can we find joy in what Christ is offering us in this unique and unusual Advent of 2020? Yes.

St. Paul tells us to pray constantly. Make time and space to pray. Count, each day, the things for which you are grateful.

Call someone you love. Be intentionally joyful.

And spend time with those Jesus spent his entire life with those on the margins, so it was no accident that a group of shepherds got the first peek at God’s arrival.

It was a foretelling of the Savior who would befriend the sinner and tax collector, touch the leper and humiliate those who wanted to stone a woman accused of sin.

Spend time in prayer embracing the marginalized. Be with those seeking asylum at our border who have been turned away without a hearing or separated from their children. Pray with those condemned to die on death row. Pray with the poor, the victimized, the lonely and the ill.

The refrain for the responsorial psalm for Mass on Tuesday of the Third Week of Advent reminds us that “the Lord hears the cry of the poor.” Place yourself with the poor and struggling.

In Rosetti’s poem, she shares a line both joyful and a good companion to prayer: “Our God, Heaven cannot hold him.”

Here, we have the image of our Creator, so eager to join us in our humanity and earthly struggle, that in the person of Jesus, God literally bursts the bounds of heaven to be with us in our lives. This is the incredible joy we feel on Gaudete Sunday.

This is our invitation to the kingdom of God, where shepherds and sinners are welcomed. This is the joy that spills into our current history.

( Effie Caldarola is a freelance writer and a columnist for Catholic News Service.)
Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

Family donation makes a significant impact to those in need

I vividly remember the boxes of fruit lining the entire perimeter of our garage and tossing nearly to the roof. Every Christmas, Dad would have the fruit delivered to our home which became a make-shift fruit assembling business. As part of my Dad’s fruit delivery business, he would sell hundreds of festive fruit baskets during the holiday season. The whole family was part of the operation. My parents and siblings all participated in the assembly, backing the fruit into baskets, wrapping them in cellophane and tying it off with a beautiful bow. I was assigned bow-making duty. This was back in the day before you could purchase pre-tied bows with sticky backs. We had an industrial bow-making machine in which you would thread the ribbon through a crazy contraption which would zigzag back and forth until its machine in which you would thread the backs. We had an industrial bow-making lining the entire perimeter of our garage.

One of the most familiar and well-loved stories in the Bible is that of the good Samaritan. However, we must ask ourselves whether we leave it in the past thinking of it merely a good story, or look at it from a modern-day perspective. We certainly live in days when the story of the good Samaritan is needed, and the place it should be displayed is in our lives.

The Church’s vision and that of Catholic Charities awaken in us the parable of the good Samaritan as it is lived out in our world today. When we engage in charity, we are instructing a lawyer to as who is to neighbor to the victim. Jesus repeatedly asked: “Which of these three, in your opinion, was a neighbor to the robbers?” (Lk 10:30). “But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion. He covered the man’s wounds with oil and wine and took him to an inn and cared for him.” (Lk 10:33)

Let’s examine the following characteristics of the good Samaritan and ask if these qualities are true of us:

1. He saw a need The yearning of the critically wounded man, only the Samaritan looked and stopped to help. Before we can meet needs, we must be aware of them.

2. He responded with action He saw the need. Although all three men physically saw the injured man needed time to recover. Instead of simply dropping him off and leaving, the Samaritan paid the innkeeper to look after him. He then paid for his return to the inn and gave him the innkeeper for whatever more he had to spend for this man’s care.

3. He had compassion The Samaritan didn’t just feel sorry for this poor man, he relieved his suffering by pouring oil and wine on his wounds and bandaging them. He didn’t leave him behind, but lifted him onto his donkey, brought him to the nearest inn, and took care of him.

4. He shared his treasure. Since the Samaritan was on a journey, he needed to continue traveling even though the injured man needed time to recover. Instead of simply dropping him off and leaving, the Samaritan paid the innkeeper to look after him. He then paid for his return to the inn and gave him the innkeeper for whatever more he had to spend for this man’s care.

5. He offered his time. The Samaritan was willing to have his journey delayed in order to help the man. Instead of simply passing by, he put his journey on hold for a while to do that which was more important—show compassion and care to someone in need.

Today we don’t lack opportunities to be good Samaritans, but we must first see the needs, feel compassion and be willing to be inconvenienced in order to give of our time and resources to help. As we allow the love of Jesus to flow through our hearts, we will understand more and more what it means to love our neighbor.

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

Invite God into your pain, ask him to begin process of healing

Grief is an inevitable part of life. If we are blessed to live long enough, we will experience some form of loss. The death of a loved one is the greatest form of grief, but there are countless other smaller forms of loss that are part of life—a breakup, the sale of a home, a loss of close friendship, loss of our own health.

How are we as Catholic Christians supposed to deal with these losses? In the Book of Psalms, we hear, “Listen, God, to my prayer; do not hide from my pleading; hear me and give answer. I rock with grief” (Ps 55:2-3). And in another Psalm, “Lord, rescue me! Come quickly to help me; Lord!” (Ps 30:2).

When we are suffering the deep pangs of grief, it is difficult to imagine that we will ever feel better again. It is hard to place trust in a loving God who loves us. But with time, God will heal us.

In the Book of Jeremiah, we read, “Oh Lord, you are my strength; you are my song; you are my shield in the day of distress!” (Jer 16:19) And in Psalm 46, we read, “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble” (Ps 46:4).

I eventually began to feel joy again. My marriage, while a bad idea, was the result of a recent experience, or something that happened many ago that still hurts when you remember it? Have you invited God into your pain and asked him to begin the process of healing? Would now be a good time to do that?

(Richard Etienne is a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Newburgh, Ind., in the Diocese of Evansville.)

Perspectives

Twenty Something/Christina Capocci

Of mice and men: a salad for all times

“Synchronicity” is that word one journal-writer uses to describe the fact that Election Day fell on the feast day of St. Martin in 2020. I appreciate the irony, but I also thought of the dominant layman brother trying to bring about change.

The icon caught my eye: a robed Peruvian man with a broom at his side and a mouse at his foot. I was intrigued. Who was this saint? (And what could he teach us today?)

I texted my Aunt Jan, my own personal Catholic Charities of Chicago director if that grief would ever subside. “I just finished a novena to St. Martin,” she wrote.

Now I was hooked. After some research, I became clear how uniquely suited this saint is for our times.

St. Martin de Porres is the patron saint for public health workers, for multi-racial people and for all those seeking racial harmony. If that doesn’t say 2020, I don’t know what does. It’s his name; a Zoom app.

St. Martin was called an “illegitimate son,” born of a Spanish nobleman who quickly abandoned his wife and child, and of a free slave of African and Native descent. She died in mourning to make bread, but had to send his family to a poor, cold shelter. The lonely child spent hours a night in prayer, a great solace.

St. Martin longed to enter religious life, but Peruvian law banned descendants of Africans and Native Americans from becoming full members of religious orders. St. Martin was untested. There was another way, he learned. He could apply to become a brother—someone—someone to do the grunt work.

At 15, the Dominican Convent of the Rosary in Lima accepted him as a servant boy, letting him stay at the monastery and wear its habit. Just as his mother had done, St. Martin took on the laundry. He cleaned, managed the kitchen and worked as a barber.

After eight years of faithful service, St. Martin was accepted as a lay confrere. At the age of 30, he was made a professed brother. His superior had prior had decided to turn a blind eye to the law and allow St. Martin to take his vows. After that, he was a Dominican. While he was scorned by some fellow brothers, he was unfaxed. He dreamed a dream, now lost.

St. Martin devoted himself to work in the inner-city, for being recognized for his care of the sick and credited for miracles.

His gift was that he could see Jesus in anyone. Once, when an elderly beggar approached the convent, St. Martin gave the stranger his own bed. The man was never asked and overheard in tears, but he looked like Jesus to St. Martin.

When a fellow Dominican reclaimed him, St. Martin hesitated. Compassion, my dear brother, is preferable to cleanliness. Reflect that with a little soap I can clean my hands, but I cannot do so, even with a torrent of tears I would never wash from my soul the stain that my harshness toward my brothers leaves me create.

In these polarizing times, when wearing a mask is not merely a public health measure but a political statement, St. Martin looks to us. He exhorts us to stop judging our neighbors and our Facebook friends. He stands for compassion.

Amid this resurging virus, he calls us to persistence and prayer.

Perhaps the lesson he has to teach us to big problems is to focus more intensely on the little things. The littlest things. Now is a time to be present. To make like the “saint of the broom”—to fold the laundry, to talk to the mice and to pray to a sanctuary.

(Christina Capocci is a writer from Inver Grove Heights Min.)
Third Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings
Sunday, December 13, 2020

- Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- John 1:6-8, 19-28

This weekend, the Church celebrates Gaudea Sunday. The title comes from the opening word of the original Latin text of the entrance antiphon for this weekend’s Mass. In Latin, “gaudea” means “rejoice.” It is the Church’s liturgical invitation for us to faithfully rejoice because Christmas is near.

Another reason for rejoicing is that, hopefully, all feel closer to God as a result of observing Advent with prayer, reflection and penance. If we have used Advent as intended by the Church, we are nearer to a fuller communion with the Lord, the “light of the world.”

The third part of Isaiah furnishes the first reading. When this passage was written, God’s people were weary and frustrated.

They, or their forebears, had undergone the humiliation, uncertainty and misery of exile in Babylon. When allowed finally to leave Babylon and return to their homeland, they understandably were overjoyed.

A sterile and parched land, hardly flowing with milk and honey, awaited them. Had God tricked them, providing for their release from Babylon only to subject them to worse trials at home? Did God even exist?

Typically for this section of Isaiah, this reading glows with optimism. Whatever may be the reality of the moment, for those loyal to God, a wondrous future awaits.

My Journey to God

Timber
By William LeCroy

From this barred window
Browning at the edge of a grass field,
I behold those crooked pines,
Lanes of sap oozing freely
Down the brown spots on their trunks,
Perhaps weeping, remembering a time
In youth when they were green.
Orange bands bright like nooses
Strangle them, condemn them.

No longer part of the living eco-system,
Differing somehow—infested, an eyseone,
Or carriers of fungus or death rot contagion—
They are marked for death, quarantined.
An attempt to be something else—
What do they contemplate that fate?
Are they conscious, struggling to breathe,
Soiling the ground, eternally as if they were alive?
Listening for the thrum of their heartbeats,
Of looming axes, whose vibrations tremble every dry, brown needle?

William LeCroy was a federal death-row inmate at the United States Penitentiary in Terre Haute which was executed on Sept. 22. He wrote this poem in 2011 while on death row. As of this issue going to press, the federal executions of Brandon Bernard and Alfred Bourgeois were set for Dec. 10 and 11, respectively.

Finally consumed. Just ashes. Dead and gone. Will there be something more for them
Than numbing oblivion, finality?
Is there someplace eternal, fertile,
Beside a tranquil lake with lots of sunshine
Waiting to greet the roots of their spirit?
Or can they only focus upon the culling
Coming along today or tomorrow, or the next.
To all living things eventually,
Even the men here on death row,
Isolated, praying, dying like those before?
Perhaps they are resigned in knowing
That much too soon, to even the mighty,
Foolishness comes along to cut them down.
And maybe they dread the only arid waiting.

Question Corner/Rev. Kenneth Doyle

God desires to forgive all sins in the sacrament of penance

Q Have done something terrible. I committed a mortal sin, and then I received the Eucharist. Am I going to be condemned? I am very worried. I am 17, and I was baptized just two months ago. If I go to confession, will I be forgiven?

I was afraid that my parents would question me if I did not receive Communion, so I went up to receive even though I knew it was wrong. Please help me to know what to do at this point. (City and state withheld)

A Please be at peace. You are not going to be condemned, and you will surely be forgiven in the sacrament of penance. It strikes me that some of our best-known saints made their way back from moral wrongs to find healing and joy in God’s forgiveness.

I am thinking of St. Paul, once persecuted those who believed in Jesus; of St. Peter, who during Christ’s Passion denounced that he even knew Christ; of St. Augustine, who had fathered a child out of wedlock. God can forgive anything—and he wants to. His very purpose in creating us was so that we could experience eternal happiness in his presence.

Just go to confession and tell the priest what you sin and the fact that you received holy Communion despite recognizing the gravity of doing so in that situation. And congratulations on your recent baptism.

Q Recently, you answered a question on distraction in prayer, which I found to be helpful. You mentioned that even some of the best-known saints struggled to remain focused while they were praying. If you don’t mind, I have a further question on that topic.

For some months now, due to the COVID crisis, my family and I have been attending Mass virtually, as two of the four of us have high-risk health issues. We miss attending in person, but we have created certain rituals at home to make the Mass sacred—including dressing appropriately, responding to the prayers and standing and kneeling at the appropriate times.

However, I find it difficult to turn off “Mother” when the call to prayer is present. And the fact that I have been knitting while we view the Mass.

But my teenage daughter thinks this is inappropriate. Since the Mass is a sacrament, she feels that my knitting is disrespectful to God. I would be grateful for your advice. (Pennsylvania)

A I am impressed by your family’s efforts to keep the Mass sacred despite being forced to view it at home. And I am sure you are aware that, during the current pandemic, you are not under obligation to watch the Mass on television; you are doing it not because you are bound to, but because you want to. If knitting while you watch helps you to focus your thoughts on Jesus, I would say: By all means, knit away!

Your daughter’s concerns about your knitting during Mass may focus in part on the fact that you have a conversation with her about God’s mercy and his love for us despite our personal brokenness and limitations.

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

Daily Readings

Monday, December 14
St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church
Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a
Psalm 25:4-5ab, 6, 7bc, 8-9
Matthew 21:23-25

Tuesday, December 15
St. Thaddaeus, a disciple of Jesus
Psalm 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19, 23
Matthew 21:28-32

Wednesday, December 16
Isaiah 45:6b-8, 12c-13, 18, 21c-25
Psalm 85:9ab, 10-14
Luke 7:180-23

Thursday, December 17
Genesis 49:2-8, 10-12
Psalm 72:3-4, 7-8, 17
Matthew 1:1-17

The Criterion Friday, December 11, 2020

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Read in peace

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


BUCKLEY, Mary Lou, 90, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 25. Sister of Kathleen Allen, Diane, Da Vis, Katherine F., and John, III. Great-grandmother of 23.


BUCKLEY, Mary Lou, 90, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 25. Sister of Kathleen Allen, Diane, Da Vis, Katherine F., and John, III. Great-grandmother of 23.


CAMERON, Cathy, 81, Holy Guardian Angels, Cedar Rapids. Grandfather of one.


WASHINGTON (CNS)—A federal judge on Dec. 4 said the Trump administration must fully restore the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, after the program that protects qualifying young adults from deportation was suspended this summer by Chad Wolf, acting Homeland Security secretary.

Judge Nicholas G. Garaufis of the U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, N.Y., said the program must be reopened for U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, N.Y., said the program must be reopened for

immigration attorney to consider filing as soon as possible."

The judge’s ruling follows one he gave in November which said Wolf’s suspension of DACA was invalid because he did not legally hold his position when he issued the order.

In July, Wolf issued a memorandum rejecting first-time applications for DACA and limiting DACA renewals to one-year extensions instead of two. The memo drew criticism from immigrant advocates and Catholic officials. Leaders of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said they were "deeply disappointed" by it, and Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento, Calif., said it was "irresponsible and recalcitrant."

The memo was issued more than a month after the Supreme Court ruled against efforts by the Trump administration to end DACA. President-elect Joe Biden said he plans to reauthorize DACA, and he also is expected to use executive orders to reverse other immigration policies of President Donald J. Trump.

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**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: esisakson@archindy.org

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**Office and Events Coordinator, Office of Marriage and Family Life**

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

Applicants should be practicing Catholics with an enthusiasm for and deep commitment to their faith, especially Church teachings on marriage and family life. A bachelor’s degree in a related area is preferred. Initiative, organizational ability, interpersonal skills, and proficiency with Microsoft Word and Excel are 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: esisakson@archindy.org

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**Associate Director, Young Adult and College Campus Ministry**

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

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

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

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

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