Jesus is life-giving bread, not just ‘side dish,’
Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Jesus wants to nourish the souls of those who are spiritually famished from the loneliness and anguish that come from life’s difficulties, Pope Francis said.

“What does he not want? To be relegated to being considered a side dish—he who is bread—to be overlooked and set aside, or called on only when we need him,” the pope told pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square on Aug. 8 during his Sunday Angelus address.

The pope reflected on the Sunday Gospel reading from St. John in which Jesus responded to those who doubted that he was the “bread that came down from heaven” (Jn 6:51).

“I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die” (Jn 6:48-50), Jesus said.

Commenting on the passage, Pope Francis said bread is a basic necessity needed for survival, especially by the hungry who “do not ask for refined and expensive food, they ask for bread.”

“Jesus reveals himself as bread, that is, the essential, what is necessary for everyday life; without him nothing works,” the pope said. “He is not one bread among many others, but the bread of life.”

Without Christ, he added, Christians could only “get by” because he is the only one who can nourish their souls, and only he “forgives us from that evil that we cannot overcome on our own.”

“He alone makes us feel loved, even if everyone else disappoints us; he alone gives us the strength to forgive in difficulties; he alone gives that peace to the heart that it is searching for; he alone gives eternal life when life here on Earth ends. He is the essential bread of life,” the pope said.

Parish secretaries across the archdiocese serve people of God as ‘ministers of presence’

By Nataile Hofer

Around lunchtime on any given weekday, Janet Peter can be found driving through the lovely terrain of the Tell City Deanery between St. Augustine Parish in Leopold and St. Mark Parish in Perry County.

Two offices. Two phone numbers. Two e-mails,” Peter notes.

Father Anthony Hollowell, pastor of St. Mark Parish, calls her and those like her “the brain stem of the parish.”

Who is Janet Peter—and those like her?

They are parish secretaries, and they are “vitally important to both priests and the parishes,” says Father John McCaslin, pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis. “They are the first contact for those who come in the door. They hear people’s stories, but hold everything in trust.”

Mary Dmitrasz, secretary for St. Joseph Parish in Rockville, notes that the priest who hired her said in the interview, “It’s not a job, but a ministry.”

Parish secretaries in central and southern Indiana for an

In-person instruction remains a ‘high priority’ as another school year in a pandemic begins

By John Shaughnessy

Masks or no masks?
In-school instruction or virtual learning—or a combination of the two?
And what about procedures for quarantining related to possible COVID-19 infections in Catholic schools across the archdiocese?

Those questions and concerns are once again at the forefront for educators and students—and their parents—as August gives rise to the beginning of another school year amid the pandemic, a time when COVID cases are once again surging in Indiana.

For now, the commitment to in-person instruction for Catholic school students is paramount, says Brian Disney, who became the superintendent of the 68 Catholic schools in central and southern Indiana on July 1.

“In-person student instruction is a high priority for the schools and the Office of Catholic Schools,” Disney said. “From an academic standpoint, our students learn...”

Complete articles may be found online at www.criteriononline.com.
SCHOOLS

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better when they are in person.

“From social, emotional and spiritual perspectives, in-person learning is extremely important. Just as God is a community in the Holy Trinity, we reflect that community when we’re together at school, at Mass and at events.”

Regarding the issue of masks or no masks—and other choices concerning COVID—Disney says those decisions are best made by the individual school communities.

“The Office of Catholic Schools provided recommendations on developing COVID procedures to our pastors, presidents and principals in mid-July,” he said. “Our recommendations primarily focused on working together and communicating with school commissions, deanery schools and public health officials in making decisions that are best for their individual school communities.”

The Office of Catholic Schools also recommended that schools use “multiple layers of preventions” regarding COVID, including social distancing and assigning specific seats to students. “Per federal government regulations, masks must be worn on public and school transportation,” Disney noted. “Additionally, our schools follow local health department orders. Like last year, our schools will report cases to their local health departments and the Office of Catholic Schools. They will quarantine unvaccinated close contacts as required.”

The recommendations and approaches are similar to many that were in place during the last academic year, when Catholic schools were mostly successful in providing in-school instruction and in-person faith-based opportunities as well as a range of extracurricular activities that included sports and theater.

After a meeting with the principals and presidents of the Catholic schools in late July, Disney says they are looking forward to a new school year.

“They are excited to work with their outstanding teachers and staff,” he said. “They are excited to serve their students, parents and communities.”

During the meeting, the superintendent shared the three areas that are his focus for the school year. It starts with “Making Saints”—“evangelize hearts and catechize minds,” Disney said. Next is “Preparing Citizens of Earth”—“providing excellent academics with living Gospel values and Catholic social teaching.”

The other focus is “Growing Every Day”—“spiritually, academically, emotionally and socially.”

Part of that meeting with principals and school presidents included a presentation called “Irresistibly Catholic” by Father Ronald Nuzzi, a nationally recognized author.

“Father Nuzzi shared four great mysteries of the faith and how teaching, living and catechizing these mysteries is what makes our schools Catholic,” Disney said.

“The mysteries are the incarnation, the Trinity, the passional mystery and the Eucharist. Father Nuzzi will present three more times this school year as we continue to champion our Catholic mission and identity.”

How has your own faith been deepened by helping others grow in their faith?

When someone strives to help others learn about their faith and grow in their faith, it often has the added blessing of leading to a deeper faith for the person leading the instruction.

With that thought in mind, The Criterion is inviting instructors of the Catholic faith—whether in programs for children and youths, preparation for the sacraments, adult faith formation or Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults—to share their stories of how their own faith has been deepened by helping others in their faith journeys.

Send your stories and personal experiences to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at shaughnessyj@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.

Memories of Sept. 11, 2001, fill the hearts and minds of people old enough to remember that tragic day 20 years ago. From shock in reaction to the terrorist attacks in the United States, to gratitude for the heroic actions of first responders, 9/11 is a day that continues to affect many Americans.

The Criterion would like to hear your stories, memories and thoughts from Sept. 11, 2001, including how your faith was a source of strength and comfort on that challenging day, and how the events of that day have shaped your faith and your life since then.

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The Criterion 1400 N. Meridian St. Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
WASHINGTON (CNS)—A top concern for Cardinal Anderson, the now-retired CEO of the Knights of Columbus, is preserving religious freedom in this country.

“It’s not so much about arguments over separation of Church and state, but the values the faith brings to our culture—the necessity of Christian witness,” he told CNS.

“We have to understand why free exercise of religion exercise is so important to America’s constitutional framework,” he said. “It is after all the first right in the Bill of Rights—they [the Founding Fathers] had a lot of other choices, but they put it in first because they believed it involved the most important issue human beings deal with.

“Many secularists are trying to reduce that right of worship—free exercise of religion goes far beyond that,” he said. “It’s about living your life according to your religious convictions—that always has been the Catholic understanding.”

To “defend what we value, we have to demonstrate the values we bring to society particularly as Catholics—hold society together” when there is so much “violence, discord, alienation” today, he said.

For the Knights, those values are the four core principles that drive all they do in Church and society: “charity, unity, fraternity, patriotism.”

Anderson retired on Feb. 28 as Supreme Knight upon reaching the organization’s mandatory retirement age of 70. He was succeeded by Patrick Kelly but continues to serve on the Knights’ board of directors.

He is the author of several books, including These Liberties We Hold Sacred, published earlier this year by Square One Publishers. It’s a collection of his speeches, essays and articles during the last few years addressing this first freedom—religious liberty—as well as the sanctity of life, faithful citizenship and the family.

“The best example of Christian witness in the book, Anderson said, is the work the Knights of Columbus did ‘defending Christians in Iraq from genocide’ by pushing the United States to officially declare it genocide, which finally happened in 2016.

The Knights and In Defense of Christians released a report that year documenting hundreds of killings of religious minorities by Islamic State fighters, which led then-Secretary of State John Kerry to make the genocide declaration.

“A perfect example of the responsibility Christians have to engage government on important issues,” Anderson said. “It’s incumbent on Catholics we are engaged in the political process, government process and that we can work in bipartisanship fashion.

This effort on genocide involved—among others—Kerry, the Obama administration and U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo of California on the Democrats’ side and, on the Republicans’ side, Rep. Chris Smith of New Jersey and Mike Pence, both when he was a member of Congress from Indiana and after he was elected vice president in 2016.

The declaration ultimately led to the Iraq and Syria Genocide Relief and Accountability Act of 2018, signed into law by President Donald Trump to hold Iraqi Islamic State militants accountable as perpetrators of genocide and protect humanitarian relief to their victims.

The Knights of Columbus have had a role in rebuilding portions of northern Iraq since 2014; the organization has spent more than $25 million to help in the recovery of persecuted communities in Iraq and Syria, including by helping build a sustainable infrastructure amid the fraternal organization’s call for greater security for returning religious minorities in northern Iraq.

Anderson commented on Pope Francis’ historic pastoral visit to Iraq on March 5-8, saying: “I think we have a courageous pope. He has a missionary spirit, a missionary heart, and that was so evident” during the trip.

“His trip was a tremendous service to the Church in Iraq,” he told CNS. “I hope it elevates the standing of the Christian community in that part of the world that is so well treated as second-class citizens.”

The role of the Church in Iraq is “very important for our own understanding of religious liberty and our service to our own society,” Anderson said.

“Today, the Christians of the Middle East are a brilliant example to the world—and especially to Christians,” he wrote in the book. “They forgive their tormentors and practice their faith in spite of what, for many of us, are truly unimaginable costs.”

In the United States, we take religious freedom for granted, Anderson said, adding that there needs to be “a strong internalization of the faith” to stand up to the “constant pressure” to diminish this freedom.

“Catholicism isn’t something external to the American experience,” he added, saying it has been part of the nation since its founding. Each generation of immigrants from Catholic countries, like the Irish, the Italians and now those from Latin America, and their traditions “said, have added to our own understanding of being an American.”

For Anderson, the high point of his tenure as the top Knight was the Oct. 31, 2020, beatification of the organization’s founder— Blessed Michael McGivney.

But he also said that what was “most edifying” to him through the years was “the tremendous expansion of the Knights claimed to work in so many countries, not only U.S., Canada, Philippines, Mexico, Korea, France, Poland but in Africa, in Latin America and Asia.”

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Anderson: Like worship, Christian witness is essential to religious liberty

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Mary, the first Christian steward, invites us to come home to her Son

“By her complete adherence to the Father’s will, to his Son’s redemptive work, and to every prompting of the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary is the Church’s model of faith and charity. Thus she is a ‘pre-eminent and wholly unique member of the Church’; indeed, she is the ‘exemplary realization’ [typus] of the Church.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #967)

Veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and our mother, is a distinctive feature of our Catholic way of life. Mary was the first Christian disciple—the first person to follow Jesus, her Son, and to invite others to do the same.

Mary’s discipleship began when she freely chose to accept an absolutely unique responsibility in the history of salvation which was communicated to her by the angel Gabriel: “Do not be afraid. Mary, you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” (Lk 1:30-33)

Mary’s response was immediate and from the heart: “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word!” (Lk 1:38). She had no way of knowing exactly what was being asked of her, but she trusted that God would provide her with the grace she needed to do his will.

Mary was also the first Christian evangelist. By her words and her example, she proclaims the Good News of Jesus Christ. She invites us all to come home to her divine Son and to discover in him our hearts’ desire.

Mary was also the first Christian steward. By her words and her example, she proclaims the Good News of Jesus Christ. She invites us all to come home to her divine Son and to discover in him our hearts’ desire. Through Mary, we discover our true identity as Catholics.

As the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council said so beautifully in the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” “Lumen Gentium,” Mary “gathers up in her own person the great truths of the faith” and “she summons the faithful to her Son” (463).

Finally, Mary was the first Christian steward. She accepted her role as a caretaker or guardian of the precious gift of her son Jesus, and she shared him generously with all of us, her children. This is what Christian stewardship means: Taking care of and sharing all God’s spiritual and material gifts.

If we want to know what it means to be a missionary disciple, we only have to look to the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is the model of faith and charity in Christ. Her openness to God’s will (in spite of its mystery), her obedience, her patience, her willingness to stand with him during his passion and death, her experience of joy at Pentecost all show Mary to be someone we should imitate in our daily lives as Christians.

We Catholics love Mary as one of us—our sister and our mother. We ask her to intercede for us to her Son, Jesus. We listen carefully to her words in sacred Scripture. We strive to follow the advice she gave to the servants at the wedding feast in Cana: “Do whatever He tells you” (In 2:5).

Devotion to Mary does not distract us from preaching the Gospel, celebrating the sacraments or serving the needs of others—especially the poor and vulnerable whom she loves in a special way. On the contrary, Mary inspires us to grow in our knowledge of her Son. She encourages us to look beyond ourselves to the needs of others. She challenges us to be good stewards of all God’s gifts. Like any good mother, Mary makes us feel welcome and at home, but she also challenges us to move beyond our comfort zones and to accept God’s call to serve him, even when we don’t understand why or how.

Mary, our mother, invites all of us to come home to Jesus, our brother. Mary will accept our invitation wholeheartedly, without reservation or fear. As we prepare to celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Aug. 15, we may respond, with Mary, that we truly are servants of the Lord. May his will be done by each of us according to his will.

—Daniel Conway

Reflection/John Shaughnessy

‘By God’s grace,’ striving to live with freedom instead of fear

The photo captures a heartbreaking helpless moment in the life of a parent and child.

The photo shows a mother standing by the incubator where her premature, newborn daughter sleeps in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) of a hospital. The mother smiles, but it seems to be a nervous, uneasy smile, touched by the reality that there were moments during the pregnancy when both the lives of the mother and the child were at risk—and that her daughter’s life still is.

Months after that photo was taken, the mother posted it on the social media platform Instagram. She also included a message that read in part, “Almost 8 months ago, this was my entire world, staying in NICU all day and night watching my baby girl fight. I can still hear the monitors and alarms of the machines, the uncertainty, the fear.”

I thank God we are healthy.”

That Instagram post was shared by the mother, Allyson Felix, on July 25, 2019. Just a little more than two years later, Felix recently became the most decorated U.S. track and field athlete in Olympic history, winning a bronze medal and a gold medal in the Summer Games in Tokyo, to increase her overall Olympic medal count to 11.

Her achievement as a mother will forever be a part of her legacy, but there’s more that defines her, more that her life offers us as a fellow child, a fellow parent, a fellow Christian, a fellow person who struggles.

As a daughter, she credits her parents for giving her the foundations of faith and family, and she’s equally forthcoming in publicly expressing that she tries to make her life God-centered.

As a mother, she seeks to inspire her now-healthy daughter by setting an example of how to use your God-given gifts, and how to keep fighting for what you believe in and who you aspire to be. As a person, she understands that hard life can be for all of us at times, how it can lead us to the edge of heartbreak and beyond, and how our faith in God and our support of each other can help us through the uncertainty, the fear.

At the Summer Olympics—her fifth—35-year-old Felix said it was “by God’s grace” that she was able to compete again. She also reiterated another devotion Instagram post on the eve of running in the finals of the women’s 400-meter race.

“As a person, she understands how hard life can be for all of us at times, how it can lead us to the edge of heartbreak and beyond, and how our faith in God and our support of each other can help us through the uncertainty, the fear.

‘I am afraid of letting people down. Of letting myself down. I hold myself to such high standards and have realized as I’m sitting here the night before and looking at the little individual Olympic final that in a lot of ways I’ve let my performances define my worth. But right now I’ve decided to leave that fear behind.’

“I’m not sharing this note for me. I’m sharing it among other athletes who are defining themselves by their mediocrity,” Felix wrote. “I’m writing this for any woman who defines her worth based on what she’s said or what she’s done. For me it’s legitimate to talk about the Olympic games. I’m writing this for anyone who thinks that the people you look up to on TV are any different than you. I get afraid just like you, but you are so much more than enough. So take off the weight of everyone else’s expectations of you. Know that there is freedom on the other side of your fear. Go out there and be brave with your life because you are worthy of your dreams.”

In more ways than on a track, Felix strives to run the good race. By God’s grace, may we reach for that goal, too.

(John Shaughnessy is assistant editor of The Criterion.)

Letters Policy

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

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, Pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will not necessarily be invited to write more than once every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be published.

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

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202, 367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
Blessed Virgin Mary participates bodily in heaven's joy

“Let us all rejoice in the Lord, as we celebrate the feast day in honor of the Virgin Mary, at whose Assumption the power of God is demonstrated.”

On Sunday, Aug. 15, we will celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our Lady’s assumption into heaven is a unique moment in Christian history. We believe that because she was spared from the effects of original sin, Mary did not experience the kind of death that other human beings must suffer. According to tradition, Mary did not suffer at the time of her death. Instead, she experienced something like sleep. (“Dormition” is the term used for Mary’s sleep-like death.) Her body did not undergo physical corruption. Instead, she was assumed, body and soul, directly into heaven where she participates bodily in the joy of heaven. Only Jesus and Mary have bodies in heaven now, but Mary’s assumption is a sign of hope for all humankind. Our profession of faith affirms our belief in the resurrection of the body. This means that one day our souls will be reunited with our bodies, and we will be like Jesus and Mary. We acknowledge that with Mary’s assumption, death is transformed into a bodily corruption that death causes, and we wonder how it could possibly be that the dust we will all become after we die can once again become a living body. This mystery is similar to the disciples’ experiences of the risen Lord. Jesus’ resurrection from the dead was much more than simply “resuscitation,” which is what happens when someone who appears to be dead is restored to life—only at some later time to undergo a permanent death. Jesus really died. His resurrection on the third day transformed Jesus’ body into something never seen before—a living body that will never suffer another death or undergo physical corruption. The resurrection of the body will mean something similar for each of us.

In the second reading for the Assumption (1 Cor 15:20-27), St. Paul speaks of the resurrection of the dead made possible for all of us through Christ.

“Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through man, the resurrection of the dead came also through man. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be made alive.” (1 Cor 15:21-22)

All of us will die, but our faith assures us that we will also—like Mary—experience the everlasting joy of life in Christ. The first reading for the Assumption (Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab) proclaims the vision we associate with Mary, Queen of Heaven:

“A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars” (Rv 12:1). Mary’s unique role in Christian history, and her simple beauty and goodness, shine like the sun, moon and stars. Her constant, intercessory prayers for her children are a powerful source of encouragement and hope for all. By virtue of her Immaculate Conception, and her sinless life, Mary shares in her Son’s everlasting joy and bodily perfection. She is physically present in heaven, where she intercedes for all her children, and where she rejoices with all the angels and saints who sing the praises of our triune God. From there, she prays for us—that grace may come to perfection in us and that we may share in her glory with Jesus. The Gospel reading for the Solemnity of the Assumption is Luke 1. Mary’s visit with her cousin Elizabeth and her magnificent hymn of praise:

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever” (Lk 1:46-55).

Mary is blessed by God who has done great things for her and, through her, for us. This weekend, let’s rejoice with the angels and saints in the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Santísima Virgen María participa corporalmente en la alegría del cielo

“Alégrémonos todos en el Señor, al celebrar la festa en honor de la Virgen María, en cuya Asunción los ángeles se alegran y alaban al Hijo de Dios.” (Antífona de entrada a la asamblea de la Jornada de la Asunción de la Virgen María)

El domingo 15 de agosto celebraremos la Soledad de María en la Asunción de la Santísima Virgen. La “asunción al cielo” de la Virgen es un momento único en la historia cristiana. Creemos que, al estar exenta de los efectos del pecado original, María no experimentó el tipo de muerte que deben sufrir los demás seres humanos. Según la tradición, no sufrió en el momento de su muerte sino que experimentó algo parecido al sueño. (“Dormición” es el término utilizado para designar la transición de María en forma de sueño). Su cuerpo no se corrompió físicamente; fue asumida, en cuerpo y alma, directamente al cielo, donde participa corporalmente en la alegría del cielo.

En este momento solo Jesús y María tienen cuerpo en el cielo, pero la asunción de María es un signo de esperanza para toda la humanidad. Nuestra profesión de fe afirma nuestra creencia en “la resurrección del cuerpo,” lo que significa que un día nuestras almas se reunirán con nuestros cuerpos, y seremos como Jesús y María. Reconocemos que se trata de un gran misterio. Conocemos la corrupción corporal que provoca la muerte, y nos preguntamos cómo es posible que el polvo en el que nos convertiremos después de morir pueda volver a ser un cuerpo vivo.

Este misterio es similar a las experiencias de los discípulos con el Señor resucitado. La resurrección de Jesús de entre los muertos fue mucho más que una simple “resurrección”, que es lo que ocurre cuando alguien que parece estar muerto vuelve a la vida, solo que en algún momento posterior sufre una muerte permanente.

Jesús realmente murió. Su resurrección al tercer día transformó el cuerpo de Jesús en algo nunca antes visto: un cuerpo vivo que nunca sufrirá otra muerte ni sufrirá corrupción física. La resurrección del cuerpo significará algo similar para cada uno de nosotros.

En la segunda lectura de la Asunción (1 Cor 15:20-27), san Pablo habla de la resurrección de los muertos que nos ha sido posible a todos por medio de Cristo:

“Lo cierto es que Cristo ha sido levantado de entre los muertos, como guaridios de los que mueren. De hecho, ya que la muerte vino por medio de un hombre, también por medio de un hombre viene la resurrección de los muertos. Pues así como en Adán todos mueren, también en Cristo todos volverán a vivir...” (1 Cor 15:20-22).

Todos moriremos, pero nuestra fe nos asegura que también, como María, experimentaremos la alegría eterna de la vida en Cristo. La primera lectura de la Asunción (1 Cor 11:9a; 12:1-6a, 10ab) proclama la visión que asociamos a María, Reina del Cielo:

“Aparición en el cielo una virgen maravillosa: una mujer vestida del sol, con la luna debajo de sus pies y con una corona de doce estrellas en la cabeza” (Ap 12:1).

El papel único de María en la historia cristiana, y su belleza y bondad sencillas, brillan como el sol, la luna y las estrellas. Sus constantes oraciones de intercesión por sus hijos son una poderosa fuente de ánimo y esperanza para todos.

En virtud de su Inmaculada Concepción y de su vida sin pecado, María participa de la alegría eterna y de la perfección corporal de su Hijo. Él está físicamente presente en el cielo, donde intercede por todos sus hijos, y donde se regocija con todos los ángeles y santos que cantan las alabanzas de nuestro Dios trino. Desde ahí, reza por nosotros, para que la gracia llegue a la perfección en nosotros y podamos compartir su gloria con Jesús. La lectura del Evangelio de la solemnidad de la Asunción (Lc 1:39-56) recuerda la visita de María a su prima Isabel y su magnífico himno de alabanza:

“Mi alma glorifica al Señor, y mi espíritu se regocija en Dios mi Salvador, porque se ha dignado fijarse en su humilde sierva. Desde ahora me llamarán dichosa todas las generaciones, porque el Poderoso ha hecho grandes cosas por mí, ¡Santo es su nombre! De generación en generación se extiende su misericordia a los que le temen. Hizo proezas con su brazo; desbarató las intrigas de los soberbios. De sus tronos derrocó a los poderosos, mientras que ha exaltado a los humildes. A los hambrientos los colmó de bienes, y a los ricos los despúd los con las manos vacías. Acudió en ayuda de su servio Israel y, cumpliendo su promesa a nuestros padres, mostró su misericordia a Abraham y a su descendencia para siempre” (Lc 1:46-55).

María es bendita por Dios, que ha hecho grandes cosas por ella y, a través de ella, por todos nosotros. Este fin de semana, alegrémonos con la Santísima Virgen María. 🌎
August 15, 22, 29

August 16, 23, 30
St. Therese Parish, 4720 12th St., Indianapolis. 317-727-1167, info@stthereseindy.org or www.stthereseindy.org.

August 17

August 18

August 19-21

August 20
Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. Catholic Business Exchange, business entrepreneur Dr. Jeff Worrell presenting “It’s not what happens to you ...” rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following. 18 members, 30 guests, register by 4 p.m. on Aug. 17. Information and registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Ros.

August 20-21
St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. SausageFest. 5:30 p.m. — midnight. Kid’s sausages, Sun King beer, sides from Illinois Street Food Emporium. Byrnes pizza, live music, snack goodies, kid zone, prizes, bounce houses, live music, free admission. Information: 317-253-1461.

August 21
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Rosary, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk, 10:45-11:45 a.m. meet in front of church. Information: faithfulcitizens2020@gmail.com.

August 25

August 26
St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, south gym, 7575 Holiday Dr., Indianapolis. Moms in the Middle. 6:30 p.m., Catholic movie producer of Roe v. Wade film Chérie Ballinger screening, wine, door prizes, hors d’oeuvres, free. Registration: cutt.ly/momsintheMiddle or Vicki Yamashita, 317-313-0255, groupchurchresourcesandpractice@gmail.com.

August 26-28
St. Ann Parish, 6350 S. Mooresville Rd., Indianapolis. Summer Festival. Thurs. 5-10 p.m., Fri. and Sat. 5-11 p.m., food, carnival rides, free admission. Information: 317-821-2969.

August 28
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in front of church. Information: faithfulcitizens2020@gmail.com.


St. Elizabeth of Hungarian Church, 333 W. Maple St., Cambridge City. Benzid Weekend at St. Elizabeth of Hungarian Church, all weekend Masses, Father Daniel Bedel, spiritual director of Bishop Simon Brant College Seminary, will celebrate Mass and share how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sentinel, 317-236-1501 or esender@archindy.org.

August 28-29
St. Mary Parish, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. Parish Festival Sat. 5:30-11 p.m., Adult Night: games, beer garden, live music by Nuttin’ Fancy, pork burger, pork chop or pulled pork dinner, kids, sole, slaw, apple sauce, silent auction, concessions; Sun. 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Family Day: kids games, live music by Keith Swanby Band, fried chicken and pulled pork dinner with cheese, green beans, cole slaw, dessert and drink, free admission both days. Information: 812-663-8427.

SausageFest

Tennis Tournament

Greenwood Shelbyville

Bread and wine, kids’ games, live music, fried chicken and pulled pork dinner, free admission. Information: 752-447-3606.

Choir Re-Boot

Tom and Lanna L Yale

and wine, kids’ games, live music, fried chicken and pulled pork dinner, free admission. Information: 752-447-3606.

Tom and (Hayana) Lytle. members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 21.

The couple was married at St. Joseph Church in Shelbyville on Aug. 21, 1971. They have four children: Megan Baugh, Beth Cwinnings, Barbara Mack Farland and Mary Schene.

The couple also has 14 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. †

SausageFest

D’Orio Family 50th Wedding Anniversary celebration

Jennings County Right to Life will host free comedy show and dinner on Aug. 22

Jennings County Right to Life will host free comedy show and dinner on Aug. 22.

The Little Sisters of the Poor will host a golf outing at Prairie View Golf Club, 7000 Longview Dr., in Carmel, Ind., starting at 10 a.m. on Sept. 9. Registration begins at 10 a.m. Lunch will begin at 11 a.m., and the golf begins at 11:30 a.m. Dinner and an awards ceremony will follow when the golf is finished.

The cost for individual golfers, which includes everything listed above plus a golf cart and green fees, is $220. Sponsorships are also available.

Money raised will assist the Little Sisters of the Poor with their care for the elderly in need. Home for the Aged in Indianapolis. To register, call 317-415-5747 or e-mail destineym@littlesistersofthePoor.org.

NORMAN AND JANE KUHN

The couple also has 10 grandchildren. †

NORMAN AND JANE KUHN

The couple also has 14 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. †

Ray and Barbara (Gallagher) Riley. members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 5.

The couple was married at St. Joseph Church in Shelbyville on Aug. 21, 1971.
Food and drink of eternal life sustain us on our journey

On Corpus Christi, June 6, 2021, Pope Francis reflected on the Eucharist centered on three fundamental ideas:

First, to celebrate the Eucharist, “we need to recognize our need for him, to long for his presence and love, to realize that we cannot go it alone, but need the food and drink of eternal life to sustain us on our journey.”

Second, in the Eucharist, Christ makes himself small, a morsel of bread. To recognize him, our hearts must be open. “God’s presence is so humble, hidden and often unseen,” the pope said, “that, in order to recognize his presence, we need a heart that is ready, alert and welcoming.”

Third, Pope Francis reflected on the image of Jesus breaking the bread at the Last Supper and sharing it with the Apostles. “This is the eucharistic gesture par excellence,” the pope said. “It is the distinctive sign of our faith and the image of Jesus breaking the bread that, in order to recognize his presence, our hearts must be open. ‘Where that is lacking, our celebrations become dry and lifeless.’”

When we allow our hearts to become indifferent to the magnificent gift that our Lord offers us in the sacrament of His Body and Blood, the thirst for love and for truth, for joy and peace, goes unquenched. The Holy Father challenges us to reflect that and return to the Eucharist, “to keep this attitude of indifference in ourselves or in others.”

“A Church, it is not enough that she be present; she must also be seen. In the Eucharist, we too are called to share in this love. For we can neither break bread for others, nor open our hearts to our brothers and sisters, if our hearts are closed to our brothers and sisters. We cannot partake of that Bread if we do not give bread to the hungry. We cannot share that Bread unless we share the sufferings of our brothers and sisters in need. In the end, and the end of our solitude eucharistic liturgies as well, only love will remain. Even now, our eucharistic celebrations are transforming the world to the extent that we are allowing ourselves to be transformed and to become bread broken for others.”

Of course, we cannot transform the world if we are not hungry or thirsty enough to seek spiritual nourishment. We cannot alleviate the sufferings of others if our hearts are hardened to the pain and injustice we witness all around us.

Our eucharistic liturgies only succeed as genuine worship if they acknowledge that “we cannot go it alone, but need the food and drink of eternal life to sustain us on our journey.” Let’s turn to the Lord in wonder and adoration and open our hearts to his transforming love.

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee.)

“Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.”

—Pope Francis, “Misericordiae Vultus” (“The Face of Mercy”)

“Jesus of Nazareth with his word, with his actions and with all his person reveals the misericordia of God.”

—Papa Francisco, “Misericordiae Vultus” (“El rostro de la misericordia”)
SECRETARIES
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inside look in their ministry and to honor all parish secretaries for their ‘vitally important’ work.

‘Even more than a ministry—a blessing!’

Laurie Miller has been secretary for St.
Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond for five years.
Her experience embodies the role of parish secretary as a ministry.

“It’s a humble way to share the love of the risen Christ with people I’m in touch with on a daily basis,” she says of her position. “You do it for our Lord. I’m there to support and help people along in their journey at that time.”

St. Monica parish secretary Julia Arciniega-Gonzalez agrees.

“My role is to serve the people of God and to serve our pastors,” she says. “I don’t see this as a job. I see it as even more than a ministry—it’s a blessing from God.”

Father Hollowell describes it as a “ministry of presence.”

“For 95% of people who come to church outside of Mass, the person they first see is the parish secretary. They represent the Church to the people,” he said.

“They receive new people, maybe someone who needs help, maybe they just need to talk. There’s just so much ministry that they do.”

Of course, there are the typical secretarial duties. Those vary from parish to parish and range from answering phones to recording sacraments to working with finances.

“I like ordering things for the church, like when we were remodeling and I found a 4-foot wooden [corpus] carved of Italian wood for our cross at St. Mark,” says Peter. “And I found two beautiful angels for our adoration chapel that I ordered. That was a nice break from the paperwork.”

After 19 years as a priest, Father McCalin decided to hand his calendar over to the parish secretary.

“I wish I’d done that before!” he said. “It’s made me more accessible to parishioners. It’s allowed me to have a more pastoral presence with people.”

Miller too, speaks of dealing with calendars—three, one for each campus of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish.

But as each parish secretary described their duties, the role of “minister” prevailed.

“It’s a lot to juggle and it can be stressful, but it’s not a job—it’s a ministry, to me maybe 90% ministry,” says Miller. “It’s something I enjoy doing, even when it’s stressful.”

“I’ve discovered that what it takes to be a parish secretary is love, patience, understanding,” said Arciniega-Gonzalez. “And being able to listen—a lot.”

Sharing ‘the love of the risen Christ’

Whether it’s in person or on the phone, listening is a good portion of what secretaries do.

Father McCalin recalls the secretary at his first assigned parish, St. Barnabas in Indianapolis, hearing “so many stories from so many people. They’d sit in her room and just pour their hearts out, and their struggles.”

Such opportunities are rewarding for Peter, who also serves as secretary for Holy Cross Parish in St. Croix.

“What I enjoy most is talking to people and meeting their needs,” she says. “It’s rewarding when you can hear the happiness and relief in their voices, especially when you talk with shut-ins or people who are anxious. Like during the pandemic, people talked about how they missed going to church.”

Miller agrees with Peter about the favorite part of her job: “I just love making our parishioners happy and comforting them if I can in any way.”

Dmitrasz feels the same way.

“I like to make everyone feel like they’re important and recognized,” she says. “Being able to call everyone by name. I like being able to do that.”

Dmitrasz has been secretary for St. Joseph Parish for only a year. Her predecessor Pat Owens held the position for 38 years.

“They’re my faith family,” Owens says of the parishioners. “You see them more than just at church. You feel like you know them, and they know you. And it’s nice to welcome new people.”

She enjoyed her ministry as a secretary so much that she still comes to the office regularly “and helps, like calling parishioners just to let them know we’re thinking of them,” says Dmitrasz. Owens describes the approach of treating all who came to the parish office “as if they were coming into your own house.”

Arciniega-Gonzalez’s approach is similar.

“I have met a lot of people and families,” she says, noting St. Monica’s diversity with English, Spanish and French-speaking members. “I get to see their joys and sorrows.”

“I try to think and pray that they can see the welcome of God in this office and their joys and sorrows.”

Arciniega-Gonzalez shares a happy memory that brings a smile.

Then-Indianapolis Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin was visiting the parish campus.

“He knows so many languages, and as soon as he met me, he switched to Spanish,” she says.

As he was leaving, he called out “goodbye.”

“Then he turned around and started singing a sweet song in Spanish about farewell!” Arciniega-Gonzalez says, incredulous. “The archbishop sang to me in Spanish!”

‘God bless our secretaries’

Both Fathers Hollowell and McCalin sing the praises of parish secretaries.

“They’re critical,” says Father McCalin. “It’s really such an important role. They’re witnesses of hospitality.”

Returning to the “brain stem” concept, Father Hollowell recalls the body of Christ.

“We are one body with many parts, and parish secretaries are the brain stem,” he says. “They have so much to support, and without it the body itself cannot function.”

He calls the role of parish secretary “hidden” to most of the parish, “who see the priest as the pastor.”

“But there is so much work parish secretaries do in the background that make sure the government recognizes us as a legitimate entity.”

He lauds parish secretaries like Peter, who are “under-appreciated and don’t complain” but rather hold the attitude of, “I’m here to do what I do and to do it well.”

Father McCalin agrees.

Parish secretaries “deserve our appreciation immensely,” he says. “Talk to any pastor, and they’ll tell you how grateful they are and how stressful it is to be without a secretary.”

“God bless our secretaries!”
Anniversary Mass commemorates victims of Beirut blast

BEIRUT (CNS)—A year after the catastrophic Beirut port blast, the wounds of the people in Lebanon are scarred by the memory of the tragedy, and cries for justice escalate. This year, Aug. 4 was declared a national day of mourning in Lebanon.

Clutching a framed photograph of her husband Elias, 27-year-old Nancy Khourzami told Catholic News Service (CNS): “It’s a hard day. But today is a day of strength. I’ve been weak every day for a year,” she added.

Elias Khourzami was one of 10 firefighters from the Beirut Fire Brigade who died at the port. The couple had been married just for 31 years and was married just one month when he died. “He was full of life. Full of energy.”

Time was very precious to him,” Nancy Khourzami added.

Maronite Father Elias Maroun Gharious comforts relatives of victims during a Mass to mark the one-year anniversary of Beirut’s port blast on Aug. 4. The explosion killed more than 200 people, injured more than 6,000, and displaced more than 300,000. (CNS photo/Mohamed Azakir, Reuters)

“Whether the port bombing was a result of negligence or a terrorist act, it is, in any case, an attack on our sacred land,” Cardinal Rai said.

Cardinal Rai offered encouragement: “I say to you, people who are wounded in the depths of your hearts: Trust and believe that God loves you, suffers with you, lives in you, and relieves your sorrows. On the fourth of August, Jesus was on the cross with us, and today he invites us to the resurrection with all those who await the depth of faith, inner peace and life.”

Thanking Pope Francis for his solidarity and prayers, Cardinal Rai cited the words spoken by the pope that same morning: “My dear Lebanese, my love for Lebanon made up of world leaders urged authorities on Aug. 4 to denounce a lack of justice, transparency and accountability for the victims of the Lebanon’s port explosion on July 1 at the Vatican, in which leaders of Christian Churches reflected on the hopes and expectations of the people of Lebanon, who are also “tired and disillusioned,” and prayed that God give the “light of hope to overcome this difficult crisis.”

Pope appeals for aid to Lebanon, still suffering one year after blast

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Marking the one-year anniversary of a deadly explosion in Beirut, Pope Francis said Lebanon needs concrete help—not just words—from the international community so it can emerge once again as a symbol of fraternity and peace for the Middle East.

“I think, above all, of the victims and their families, the many injured, and those who lost their homes and livelihoods. So many people have lost the desire to go on,” he said at the end of his general audience in the Paul VI audience hall on Aug. 4.

“Dear people of Lebanon, I greatly desire to visit you and I continue to pray for you, so that Lebanon will once more be a message of peace and fraternity for the entire Middle East,” he said.

In the early evening of Aug. 4, 2020, a massive blast in a port warehouse destroyed large sections of the center of the capital, killing at least 214 people and injuring thousands more. It displaced 300,000 people.

The explosion—caused by a poorly stored stock of ammonium nitrate fertilizer—was one of the largest non-nuclear blasts in history. Protests in the city on Aug. 4 denounced a lack of justice, transparency and accountability concerning the causes behind the blast and responsible.

Meeting on Aug. 3, an international support group for Lebanon made up of world leaders urged authorities to complete their investigations and bring justice to survivors.

French President Emmanuel Macron and U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres hosted a donor conference on Aug. 4 seeking to raise $357 million in aid to meet the country’s most urgent needs, providing food, education, health care and clean water.

However, some world leaders have said their help would be conditional on Lebanon establishing a government that can fight corruption. Leaders in Lebanon have been unable to reach an agreement on forming a new government for the past 10 months, delaying reforms and tackling current crises.

After his Aug. 4 audience talk, Pope Francis appealed to the international community, asking it to help Lebanon, “not only with words, but with concrete actions in undertaking a journey of resurrection.”

He said he hoped the conference led by France and the U.N. would prove fruitful.

Students affiliated with the Lebanese Forces hold white roses and shout slogans during a ceremony to mark the one-year anniversary of the Beirut port explosion. During his general audience on Aug. 4, Pope Francis urged the international community to help Lebanon overcome the crisis it is facing by taking action so it may rise again as a sign of peace and fraternity for the Middle East. (CNS photo/Erik Medie, Reuters)

“After a year of pain and suffering, Lebanon needs a government that will allow the country to find a path to emerge once again as a symbol of fraternity and peace,” he said. “I urge the international community to help Lebanon overcome the crisis it is facing by taking action so it may rise again as a sign of peace and fraternity for the Middle East.”

Francis repeated the same idea during his weekly general audience in the Paul VI hall, and asked people to pray for Lebanon, as well as for the people of India, which is battling a major wave of COVID-19 infections.

“Pray for Lebanon,” he said, “and also for India, which is undergoing a new wave of the coronavirus.”

Addressing the diplomatic corps, Francis condemned Lebanon’s political crisis, saying the country has become “a prison for its own people.”

“Dear friends,” he said, “I am thinking of you, the Lebanese people, affected by the explosion that struck Beirut on Aug. 4, 2020, the city that is the heart of the country.”

The pope also mentioned the upcoming commemoration of the one-year anniversary of the blast, which is set for Aug. 4.
Lay Dominicans profess vows

A group of lay Dominicans professed temporary vows on July 18 at St. Peter Catholic Center in Bloomington. They are, from left, Michael Faris, Jennifer Faris, Mary Sue Veerkamp-Schulz, William Joseph and Paul Marion; back row, from left, Tim Johnson, Robert Kravchuk and Michael Ware. These lay enthroned Dominicans have dedicated themselves to living in the world as people of the Gospel, to proclaim the spirituality of prayer, study, community and apostolate with an aim of proclaiming the Gospel in their daily lives, for continuing their formation and discernment for three more years, they may profess permanent vows.

Domestic peace: Vatican commission looks at impact of household debt

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Catholic Church’s advocacy for debt relief is focused primarily on enabling nations with high foreign debt to provide for their people, but the Vatican COVID-19 Commission also is worried about families staggering under debt burdens. In fact, the commission’s executive task force has recommended “extensive debt standstills and reductions for indebted households,” and the training and deployment of “debt advisers,” including through parishes and Catholic charities, to help households get out of debt.

While many families with steady incomes from remote working use the pandemic lockdowns to spend less and pay down their debts, people who lost income or lost their jobs often survived thanks only to food banks, charity, government aid and eviction moratoriums.

Pope Francis launched a fund in his 2016 encyclical, “Laudato si’,” to help households “survive and restore their freedom” and said the Catholic Church needs to do more to help them.

During his weekly general audience on Aug. 5, 2020, the pope acknowledged the impact of the pandemic lockdowns on the household debt of some of his fellow Italians who have lost their jobs or are working part-time.

“Here is the problem: people are living one day after another on credit,” he said. “The meagre income from work is used to pay the bills and to make ends meet.”

The pope, who was speaking to an audience seated socially distanced in the Vatican’s Paul VI Hall, said his country’s government’s response to the pandemic lockdowns has been too slow.

“I ask you, religious, political, in all walks of life, to work for this,” he said. “The church, of course, will be involved in this. We must work more and speak more.”

In a10-page presentation about the impact of COVID-19 on the household debt of households across the globe, the Vatican COVID-19 Commission noted the impact that the pandemic lockdowns have had on financial stability.

The Vatican document, “State of the World’s Poor,” noted a global economic downturn during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to address the economic crisis that stems from that downturn.

The Vatican document also addressed the need to address the economic crisis that stems from the pandemic lockdowns.

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Charity ‘demands’ renewed focus, says top Knight

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (CNS)—Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly, the CEO of the Knights of Columbus, told his fellow Knights that their charity—“demands our renewed focus.”

“‘Your pain, let us heal. Where there’s grief, let us comfort. Where there’s need, let us meet it, in new and creative ways,’” he said on Aug. 3.

At the end of the period of “Faith-based approaches supporting vaccine uptake” on action “almost every front,” Kelly said, calling on Knights to find creative solutions to adapt to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the cultural challenges facing Catholics for the societal pressures on their values.

He made the remarks in his first report to the Knights of Columbus, delivered during the Knights’ 139th annual convention on Aug. 3. It was held virtually for the first time, with nearly 35% broadcast from the Supreme Council’s headquarters in New Haven and members from around the world participating.

Kelly was elected to the Knights’ top post by the organization’s board of directors on Feb. 5. He succeeded Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, who held the post for more than two decades and retired after Pope Francis reached the organization’s mandatory retirement age of 70.

In his annual report, Kelly committed his tenure to strengthening the faith of men and their families and serving others “as the face of the Church is presented as dauntless health, economic and social challenges. A faith that depends on empowering men to be the husbands and fathers that God wants us to be,” he said. “It is harder than ever, and for that reason, we must be bold in God wants us to be,” he said. “It is harder than ever, and for that reason, we must

Kelly said the Knights are called to defend the life of its members and the children of those who are injected with the vaccine. The percentages were a little smaller among vaccinated parents who have reported a vaccine refusal.

Among other groups, 35% of white mainline Protestants, 35% of Black Protestants and 35% of religiously unaffiliated “are vaccine acceptant for their children,” PRRI said.

Early this year the Food and Drug Administration gave emergency use authorization for COVID-19 vaccines for those younger than 12, and testing is taking place among younger children to determine a safe dosage level for them. With the school year just a matter of weeks away, the labor day for virtually all schools in the U.S. amid growing controversy about mask and vaccination mandates, approaches of the Delta variant of the virus that sparked the mandates—the results are instructive.


Examples of faith-based approaches the report gave included a religious leader trusted by respondents getting a vaccine or enhancing the vaccine to a nearby religious congregation hosting a pop-up clinic—where vaccines would be available in a local religious community providing people assistance in getting an appointment to get a vaccine.

Three in 10 parents with children under the age of 18 who are not yet vaccinated (25%) indicate that one or more faith-based approaches could help sway them and among vaccinated parents, 22% said one or more faith-based approaches helped convince them to get vaccinated, the report said.

Nearly half of unvaccinated parents who attend religious services say that faith-based approaches could convince them to get vaccinated, compared to 16% of those who seldom or never attend religious services (12%).

Among parents, 69% of Republicans are in favor of religiously based vaccine refusals, as are 49% of Independents and 69% of Democrats.

“A reason for the jump in support for religiously based vaccine refusals could be that the recent rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines for school-aged teens was top of mind for respondents in June, whereas questions of COVID-19 vaccine requirements for children were not prevalent in January, even though the question did not specify any particular vaccine,” the report said.

The survey started with a random sample of 5,123 adults age 18 and up living in all 50 states who are part of the Ipsos Knowledge Panel. Added on to the sample were 382 who were recruited by Ipsos using opt-in survey panels to increase the sample sizes in smaller states. An additional 346 Hispanic Protestants were recruited to increase sample sizes among this group. All interviews were conducted online.

The full survey can be found online at https://bit.ly/3C4hL 1

A member of the Knights of Columbus stands during a prayer vigil at St. Mary’s Church in New Haven, Conn., on Oct. 30, 2020, the eve of the beatification Mass of Blessed Michael McGivney, founder of the Knights. (CNS photo/Barry L exploit/Catholic Sun)
Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

Reality checks remind us to be grateful for our blessings

I have never watched a reality show. Contrary to their name, I find them devoid of the true reality of life. I’m sure some find them a type of entertainment even if anything, I consider them a reality check. I understand that their producers conclude their intent is to make you feel better about yourself, however, I don’t think we should feel better about our life at the expense of others. We should be grateful for the abundant blessings we do enjoy. I’ve recently been pondering reality checks as a backdrop for today’s article.

Years ago, my husband suffered through life-threatening cancer. Praise be to God, I was there for him, but I spent a lot of years with the thought of a recurrence in the back of my mind. My friends and husband endured brain cancer earlier this year, and it was a reality check to stop waiting for the worst and enjoy today. After all, I have been given life.

I recently met a woman in her 70s who works a physically demanding job to make ends meet. It is hard on her.

It’s All Good/Lauri Lattis

Steps to help your children back into a school routine

As the summer comes to a close and school gets back into session, here are a couple quick reminders to help make the transition from the carefree summer classroom easier for you and your child.

Validation: Let your child know that his/her nervous, comprehensive feelings about the start of school are normal. All kids—and adults!—have a hard time getting back into the routine of the school year. It is normal to feel that he or she is not alone in this experience will help your child feel he’s being heard.

Morning routines: A common change that occurs as we begin the school year is a new morning routine. To help your child be successful, discuss what her morning routine will look like during the school year. This way, your child knows what will be happening and has clear expectations that are valuable to him or her under the time constraints of getting ready for school.

Provide your child with simple, well-defined and easy steps for his or her morning routine. If your child has a clear idea of what you expect so that it’s easy to follow along with you! Having an easy-to-reference schedule, maybe with pictures, can engage a child and provide a helpful visual guide for what they need to do next. Giving specific praise when they complete each step will let them know that you love what you’re seeing. This will increase your child’s chances of success in the future and helps build self-esteem.

Homework: Another transition that can be rough after a summer break is completing homework. Like the morning routine, provide your child with a structured schedule that can help them stay focused and motivated. Completing homework as soon as school is over takes advantage of the daylight hours, and continuous parent support provides encouragement, motivation and assistance when needed. Setting a great way to keep your child’s energy up while he or she works through those tough math problems.

Of course, your child should have active schedules, with team sports, music classes or after-school clubs, which can make engaging in homework even more difficult. Letting your child know that you understand he or she is not alone in the being with frequent positive feedback for their effort can help motivate him to get homework done.

Bedtime: Bedtime is one of the hardest transitions. Children may be accustomed to going to sleep later and/or waking up later during the summer, so a new school schedule can be difficult to get acclimated to. As with the morning routine, having a nighttime schedule can assist in creating a structure for your child. Set your child up for success with clear expectations, simple step-by-step instructions and praise at the completion of each step.

Additionally, visual reminders can help your child have something to cuddle to as they drift off to sleep. If your child wants more time watching their favorite TV show or finishing that last level of a video game, setting time limits can be a great way to put a boundary around the winding-down time that they need each evening.

And if you find that these transitions are harder than expected or if your child needs additional help? It is vital to always contact the doors at one of our Catholic Charities agencies are always open! (David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan)

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

Emmanus story in Gospel offers a model for evangelization

“I can’t preach to others. ‘I won’t know what to say.’ ‘That is not my gift.’ Have you ever thought this? Is there another and more direct way to approach evangelization besides indiscriminately preaching to the ‘right’ setting? I believe the Gospel accounts of the Holy Family appearing to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35) offers some insights.

This happened immediately following the resurrection of Jesus. And the first lesson that one might learn from this story is that Jesus comes upon two of his followers as they are walking along the road, sharing personal stories and information shared. They did not recognize Jesus until they were “at table, and he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them” (Lk 24:30). Only then were their eyes opened—only after walking along, sharing personal stories and then sharing an meal together did they come to know the risen Lord.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote, “Being Christian is not the result of a great choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction” (“Caritas in Veritate,” 5).

It is in relationship that evangelization can flourish. And something remarkable happens to the Apostles and other followers of Jesus because one day they are huddled in darkness and overcome with fear. Hours later, Peter is leading them, proclaiming the Messiah in public with abandon (Acts 2:14-41). Something simply changes in their hearts.

Who are the individuals that you move among and share your life with: family, friends, co-workers, neighbors? Listen to their stories and you will find an opportunity to share an insight about your relationship with the one who could walk on water and cure the sick.

(Richard Etienne has a degree in theology from St Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St Meinrad and resides in Newburgh, Ind.)

For the Journey/Effie Caldarola

The face in the mirror

When my granddaughter Alice was just months old, she would lie on a blanket, surrounded by a plastic toy structure that had been hanging from it. When the structure was living, she would flip and rotate. But the best part, a platonic relationship with the center so Alice could see her own reflection in that mirror delighted Alice, who would smile and coo at it.

Her face would become animate, and so would the baby in the mirror. She would try to “talk” to that adorable baby, and the baby would talk back right. Alice loved her reflection. That baby was the best.

It was funny to watch, but some moments later, I would confront my early morning reflection in the bathroom mirror. I think about Alice’s mirror in a more sober light. Ruffled pajamas, no makeup, bed hair angling in every direction, wrinkles accentuated by the bright bathroom light. How delighted am I with my reflection?

And on a deeper level, how delighted am I with that person I have become? I wonder how odd a little girl in our society is before she’s disappointed with the face in the mirror! I imagine my daughters being inculcated by their own reflections even after they were old enough to realize they were looking at themselves. When they began sneaking into my makeup, bright slashes of lipstick smeared across their face, and even I still found the mirror a source of delight.

Unfortunately, as we grow up and older, the mirror becomes a source of self-criticism and disappointment.

Am I fat? Is my nose too large? Is my skin too pale? Is my hair too thin? Is my curvy too hair, or why is my hair so straight? And most important, do I conform to the false standards of beauty that are imposed by social media influencers, television ads, magazines? Is there something wrong with my skin? Or am I disappointed on a deeper level?

Because this is more than just a question about my skin. It is a basic spiritual concept, as Pope Francis often reminds us, that we are “loved sinners.”

We know this is a basic spiritual concept because we are, all of us, loved sinners, and that the equation can weigh us down if we forget the first part, that God loves us unconditionally. God is so much bigger than our sins.

As we grow older, we have wonderful memories but also regrets. Sometimes the regrets grow deeper as we age, and it’s a temptation—a temptation from the evil one—to dwell on those things—the “coulda, woulda, shoulda,” as once someone put it. It’s the evil one’s sins prevents us from exploring God’s love for us this day. It’s an impediment to our spiritual growth moving forward.

Think of how often we worry about how people see us. And yet, some of the most joyful people we know are the least obsessed by their appearance and least consumed by regret. We can’t go back to being like God. We can’t just sell on those things, the “coulda, woulda, shoulda,” as someone once put it. It’s the evil one’s sins prevents us from exploring God’s love for us this day. It’s an impediment to our spiritual growth moving forward.

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The Sunday Readings
Sunday, August 15, 2021

- Revelation 11:19a, 12:1-6a, 10ab
- 1 Corinthians 15:20-27

The Book of Revelation supplies the first reading for Mass on this Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Some Catholics remember Revelation by its more historic name, at least in Catholic biblical translations, of Apocalyptic. Protestant editions long ago began to title this book Revelation, and this name has become more popular. Now it appears in Catholic translations of the Scriptures. Apocalyptic comes from a better term, since apocalyptic describes the book’s style of literature, a highly symbolic, dramatic, poetic way of writing.

Unfortunately, the magnificence and hopefulness of the Book of Revelation often is obscured by an unformed and occasionally outlandish misunderstanding of it, as if it were all about doom and gloom, or ridiculous forecasts of terrible things to come.

This book looks to the present, but with a glance to the future. It speaks of the battles between good and evil, between God and the forces of sin. It speaks in the conviction that the Redeemer has come, but redemption is still being achieved. Ultimately, it insists that God’s triumph over evil, life over death, and God over sin and despair.

In this Scripture the “woman clothed with the sun” is in flight, as is the virgin bride of Christ (Rv 12:1). The light of God envelope the Church, guides the Church. Twelve stars, perhaps representing the holy Apostles, surround her head. Nature, represented by the moon, is below her.

For its last reading, the Church presents a passage from the Gospel of St. Luke, the magnificent recollection of the prayer spoken by Mary herself as she arrived at the home of Elizabeth and Zechariah. It is traditionally known by the first word in its Latin text, the “Magnificat.”

This passage reveals much about Mary. It shows her as the human mother of the Son of God. It reveals her holiness. Fervent prayer was part of her life. Mary knew the divine identity of her unborn child. She knew her role. She trusted and obeyed God.

Mary was essential to God’s historic unfolding of salvation. She was the indispensable, solely human, instrument in the fulfillment of redemption, the first and greatest Christian.

Reflection
Pope Pius XII infallibly declared belief in Mary’s Assumption to be part of Catholic teaching in 1954. It was a great event, but his pronouncement only echoed Christian belief throughout history. He mentioned this history, seeing it in the living, constant faith of the Church. Evidence of this history is plentiful.

As soon as the capital of Paraguay, founded in 1537, was named to honor Mary’s Assumption. The capital was the first cathedral in the United States, opened in 1821. Countless other old churches bear this name around the world.

Assumption Parish, or county, in Louisiana, was founded and named in 1807.

This historic belief makes sense. It acknowledges the trust that God rewards the faithful, as Jesus promised many times.

Mary, “full of grace,” to quote St. Luke’s Gospel, completely believed in Jesus, as John’s Gospel indicated in its accounts of the wedding at Cana and of the Lord’s crucifixion on Calvary (Lk 1:28).

The glory that came to Mary in her Assumption, because of her faithfulness, will come to us if we too are faithful.†

Daily Readings

Monday, August 16
St. Stephen of Hungary
Judges 2:11-19
Psalm 106:34-37, 39-40, 43ab, 44
Matthew 19:16-22

Tuesday, August 17
Judges 6:11-24a
Psalm 85:9-11-14
Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday, August 18
Judges 9:6-15
Psalm 21:2-7
Matthew 20:1-16

Thursday, August 19
St. John Eudes, priest
Judges 11:29-39a
Psalm 40:5, 7-10
Matthew 22:1-14

Friday, August 20
St. Bernard of Clairvaux, abbot and doctor of the Church
Ruth 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22
Psalm 146:3-5
Matthew 22:34-40

Saturday, August 21
St. Pius X, pope
Ruth 2:1-3, 8-11, 4:13-17
Psalm 128:1-6
Matthew 23:1-12

Sunday, August 22
Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
Joshua 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b
Psalm 54:2-3, 6-10
Ephesians 5:21-32
see Ephesians 5:2a, 25-32
John 6:60-69

Question Corner
Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Assurance that a child will be raised in the faith needed before infant baptism

A friend of mine asked me recently to find out if the parish in which I was raised would baptize her new baby. My friend is not a Catholic, so I was surprised that she asked me this. The priest at my parish said that he could not baptize the baby because the parents were not Catholic.

I was disappointed that the Catholic Church would turn away anyone seeking baptism. I think that the Church should welcome people from all paths of life; that would open the way for them and eventually they might come to the Church.

I wondered what Jesus would do. I think that he would baptize anyone who sought it, regardless of their faith. I am wondering what your take is on this.

(Mother of God)
“Mater Dei”

Reflection
By Gina Langferman

My Journey to God

Praying Twice
By Gina Langferman

The human voice
in song
is floating on the wings of prayer—

“Ave Maria” (Hail Mary)

I see the statue of Mary. She is young and beautiful, but so holy and loving.

“Mater Dei” (Mother of God)

I remember those who have gone before us and are looking down from heaven.

“Aura nobis pecatoribus” (pray for us sinners)

pray for us, all of us, now and at the hour of our death.

The notes resound, then silence.

The prayer is ended, but there is a calm and I know that the music has touched many hearts, including my own.

发展战略

Not a mortal sin—or any sin at all. It was simply—as you said—a mistake, done without any thought at all. Sin requires a deliberate intention to do something wrong.

I appreciate the seriousness with which you approach your participation in the sacraments and the value you put in it. Perhaps you can ask God in prayer to help you be more mindful of the eucharistic fast in the future.

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

(Emily Langferman is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: A woman holds her daughter in front of one of the many Marian chapels at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on Aug. 15, 2012, the feast of the Assumption.) (CNS photo/Bob Roller)
St. Mark the Evangelist, DEVLIN, Thomas L. Grandmother of five.

Batdorf and Amanda Troxell, 66, DARRAH, Patty Clapper. Grandfather of three.


BRIDGEWATER, Delores 10. Great-grandmother of five.

Holy Family, Oldenburg, AMBERGER, Rita J.

Black-eyed Susan flowers grace the yard of a home on July 30 in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

The Criterion  Friday, August 13, 2021

Only Jesus reveals true Gospel, pope says at first audience after surgery

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The true Gospel has been revealed by Jesus Christ, not by individuals or founders of movements, Pope Francis said during his weekly general audience.

With the truth of the Gospel, one cannot negotiate. Either you receive the Gospel as it is, as it was announced, or one embraces something else, he said on Aug. 4 to those gathered in the Paul VI audience hall at the Vatican.

“One cannot compromise. Faith in Jesus is not a bargaining chip; it is salvation, it is encounter, it is redemption. It cannot be sold off cheaply,” said the pope, as he led his first general audience since his colon surgery on July 4 and after the usual suspension of general audiences for the month of July.

Continuing with a new catechesis series reflecting on St. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians, Pope Francis focused on the Apostle’s insistence that the faithful be loyal to the Jesus Gospel preached, and not swayed by new missionaries who “wish to pervert the Gospel of Christ.”

St. Paul understands the need to keep the young community safe from that which threatens its spiritual life, the pope said.

In this complicated situation, he said, “it is necessary to be ‘inspired by fidelity to the tradition received from the fathers and believe that genuine faith consists in observing the law’”.

St. Paul, therefore, seems unorthodox with regard to tradition, but he knows “that his mission is of a divine nature—it was revealed by Christ himself, to him” as something that is radically and always new, the pope said.

In this complicated situation, he said, “it is necessary to disentangle oneself in order to grasp the supreme truth that is most consistent with the person and preaching of Jesus and his revelation of the father’s love.”

“This is important: knowing how to discern,” he said. “Many times we have seen in history, and we also see it today, some movements that preach the Gospel in their own way, sometimes with their own real charisms; but then they exaggerate and reduce the entire Gospel to the ‘movement.’”

When that happens, it becomes a gospel of the founder and not of Christ, he said. “It may help at the beginning, but in the end, it does not bear fruit with deep roots. For this reason, Paul’s clear direction is important: knowing how to discern,” the pope said.

The true proclamation is “that of the death and resurrection of Jesus as the source of salvation,” he said. “Whoever accepts it is reconciled to God, is welcomed as a true son or daughter and receives the inheritance of eternal life. Instead, some of the Galatians seemed to be veering off onto another path: listening to new missionaries who think ‘that by circumcising they will be even more devoted to the will of God and thus be even more pleasing to Paul,’” the pope said. “They seem to be ‘inspired by fidelity to the tradition received from the fathers and believe that genuine faith consists in observing the law.’”

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The pope said the true Gospel is “Christ’s gift to us; he himself revealed it to us. It is what gives us life.”

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Men with ties to local Church ordained priests for religious orders

Known as the St. Joseph Project, the initiative gives Catholics and people of faith throughout the world the opportunity to support the Christian community in the Holy Land, which is enduring ongoing trials, including religious persecution, a lack of human rights and economic hardships, among other things.

Rami M. Qumsieh, founder of Christians of the Holy Land, noted that the majority of Christians live in and around Bethlehem, and 80 percent of them work directly in pilgrimage-related businesses. He added there have been no pilgrimages since March 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The hand-carved statues are available in two sizes: 9-inch St. Joseph statues are $90, and 11-inch St. Joseph statues sell for $120 each. There is a flat $20 shipping fee per statue.

To purchase a statue online, go to holylanddirect.com/shop. Credit cards are accepted. Those wishing to pay by check are asked to send their payment and include their name, e-mail address, street address, city, state and Zip code to: Christians of the Holy Land, 301 Camino Gardens Blvd., Suite 103, Boca Raton, FL 3342. Make checks payable to “Christians of the Holy Land.” The deadline to order statues is Sept. 15 to help ensure arrival before Christmas.

“Thank you for helping our Christian community in the Holy Land,” said Qumsieh. “Truly these are very hard times for our faithful in Bethlehem.” 

Purchase of St. Joseph statue assists economically challenged in Holy Land

In honor of the Year of St. Joseph, the organization Christians of the Holy Land has begun an initiative with a two-fold purpose: to celebrate the patron saint of the universal Church, and to help Christians in the Holy Land earn much-needed revenue in a very challenging time.

Men with ties to local Church ordained priests for religious orders

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Turning 65, retiring, SS disability, or Medicare supplement premium continuing to increase? Confused with what type of plan fits your needs, or how to enroll into Medicare Part B?

→ Give us a call and allow us to review your needs, for your unique circumstances.
→ With over 35 years experience we represent several companies for Medicare Supplements, Rx., & Advantage plans, as well as Life companies.
→ Serving 126 Parishes in 39 Counties

Give us a call or send us an email, we will set up a visit today!

Ph: 574-765-4638
dan@sherruh@gmail.com

Employment

St. Monica Catholic Church - Director of Music Ministry

Saint Monica Catholic Church is looking for a full time Director of Music Ministry. This person is responsible for the effective preparation, coordination, performance, development of musicians, cantors, and choral groups; and leadership of music within the liturgical celebrations of an multicultural and multi-lingual parish. This person of faith is both a pastoral minister who possesses a vision of how a local Church can develop its potential as an integrated musical community and a professional who holds specialized credentials in music and has a thorough understanding of Roman Catholic liturgy. The complete position description can be found online at www.stmonicaind.org.

Please send resume and cover letter to: St. Monica DMM Search Committee, 6331 Michigan Rd. Indianapolis, IN 46228 or email to: jmcaslin@stmonicaind.org.

The deadline for priority consideration is August 17th, 2021.

Two of the hand-carved statues of St. Joseph that are available through the St. Joseph Project are pictured above. (Submitted photo)