Bioethicists discuss moral dilemma of seeking vaccine exemptions

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Getting vaccinated is “an act of love,” Pope Francis said in his latest urgent appeal, after more than a year of insisting COVID-19 vaccines be equitably available worldwide for everyone to get inoculated.

Nonetheless, some Catholics have been wondering if they should seek a religious exemption from an immunization requirement with vaccines tested or produced with cell lines originally derived from aborted fetuses more than 50 years ago.

Individuals are free to make a decision on getting the vaccine. Some, like the Archdiocese of New York, have said for Catholics, refusing the vaccine would be based on a personal belief, not Catholic teaching, as the Vatican and pope have made it clear some vaccines for COVID-19 are permissible and it’s a moral duty to get vaccinated.

Because there has been “overwhelming consensus within the Catholic magisterium” for years on the permissibility of using such vaccines in the absence of alternatives, “to counsel people that it is legitimate to refuse the vaccines on religious grounds—and, in fact, to facilitate it—is to actively assist people in mal-forming their consciences,” said M. Therese Lysaught, a corresponding member of the Pontifical Academy for Life.

“In fact, in actively assisting people to put the lives of others at risk, such advocates assist them in being indifferent to and even assisting them in doing evil. This sins against charity. This is the Catholic definition of scandal,” said the professor at the Neiswanger Institute for Bioethics and Healthcare Leadership of Bioethicists.

Archdiocesan seminarians gather to build fraternity before returning to seminary

By Sean Gallagher

With a new year of priestly formation just around the corner, archdiocesan seminarians gathered on Aug. 8-11 at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House for a time of prayer, fellowship and fun.

This year’s convocation saw the most archdiocesan seminarians starting a year of formation—27—since 2013.

Seven new seminarians received a blessing from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during a Mass he celebrated on Aug. 9 for the future priests.

The 27 archdiocesan seminarians come from 10 of the 11 deaneries of the Church in central and southern Indiana. Sixteen of them are enrolled at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad while 11 will receive formation at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary and Marian University, both in Indianapolis.

Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan director of seminarians, noted that the increase in seminarians for the Archdiocesan seminarians gather to build fraternity before returning to seminary

See SEMINARIANS, page 9

Forging friendships

U.S. missionary nuns fly home to organize shipment to Haiti after quake

LODI, N.J. (CNS)—Getting emergency supplies and aid into the Haiti region most impacted by the Aug. 14 earthquake will prove a major logistical challenge, said two missionary nuns who work in Haiti.

“There were some scary situations before [the earthquake], however, nothing like the last two years and especially the last two months in Haiti,” Felician Sister Mary Inga Borko, who works in Jacmel, Haiti, told Catholic News Service (CNS) by phone from Lodí, N.J.

Her congregation is organizing a container shipment of supplies to Haiti, both for her congregation and for the American Mission Hospital in Port-au-Prince.

The facility was affected by floods during Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and by the earthquake last month. The hospital now needs new medical supplies and generators.

The community of sisters fly to Haiti every year during the summer to arrange construction and educational projects.

The sisters are working with the Haitian nuns to pull the hospital out of a debt-ridden state.

Sister Mary Inga Borko describes the current situation at the hospital as “lifeline to the poor.”

A volunteer health care worker carries a young earthquake victim in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on Aug. 21. The victim was transported from Les Cayes via U.S. Coast Guard helicopter. (CNS photo/Ricardo Arduengo, Reuters)
Vaccination is an act of love, pope says in ad campaign

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—When each individual makes a small act of charity, like getting the COVID-19 vaccine, every gesture added together can transform the world, Pope Francis said in a global ad campaign.

“Being vaccinated with vaccines authorized by the competent authorities is an act of love. And contributing to ensure the majority of people are vaccinated is an act of love—love for oneself, love for one’s family and friends, love for all people,” he said in a public service announcement released on Aug. 18 in Rome.

The video message was part of a global effort by the U.S.-based nonprofit, nonprofit Ad Council and the COVID Collaborative’s “It’s Up To You” campaign to increase people’s confidence in COVID-19 vaccines by reminding them that the vaccines are safe, effective and save people’s lives. The Vatican’s Dicastery for Integral Human Development also cooperated with the educational initiative.

The three-minute video in Spanish with English, Spanish and Portuguese subtitles features Pope Francis and six cardinals and archbishops from North and South America. Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), is among them.

“The ‘It’s Up To You’ campaign has been inviting ‘trusted messengers’ like getting the COVID-19 vaccine, participating in a global effort by the U.S.-based nonprofit Ad Council and the COVID Collaborative’s ‘It’s Up To You’ campaign to increase people’s confidence in COVID-19 vaccines by reminding them that the vaccines are safe, effective and save people’s lives. The Vatican’s Dicastery for Integral Human Development also cooperated with the educational initiative.”

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At SAM Mass, archbishop says addiction ministry must be ‘rooted in Christ’

By Natalie Hofer

COLUMBUS—Rain gushed outside St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus, accompanied by a large clap of thunder, as Archbishop Charles C. Thompson ritually placed his hands in blessing upon the head of Mark John.

“When the rain and thunder came, it was just like God was talking to us, saying, ‘I’m here! I’m hearing you!’” said his wife Sue. “It was an awesome experience, because we're very grateful. God truly is the Little Rock of our lives,” she said, quoting Psalm 46:10.

“Nothing is beyond God’s... power to transform”

As the rain poured outside, the archbishop spoke the need for those “involved in substance addiction ministry—whether as health care provider, counselor, caretaker, family member or one suffering from addiction—to pour out “patience, understanding and the capacity to forgive multiple times.”

Archbishop Thompson reminded the roughly 100 people present that Christ “suffered and died for us—to heal our guilt and relieve our fears. … ‘Suffered and died for us—to heal our guilt and relieve our fears.’”

“As the wife of an alcoholic, Sue John knows the forms of death that both addicts and relatives of addicts face.”

Addiction is a struggle that many in the pews have,” said Brue Ann Varick, director of the Office of Human Life and Dignity, the umbrella office under which SAM resides.

“In his homily, Archbishop Thompson gave me the opportunity to, ‘Be still, and know that I am God,’ ” she said, quoting Psalm 46:10.

“It's a gift to have a Mass just for this”

“It can be a struggle,” she admitted, as her husband Mark looked at her that encounter. The couple are members of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour.

“We came here to this Mass because it was just about addiction,” said Mark, who readily admits he is an alcoholic. “It was an awesome experience, because sometimes [addicts] don’t get the full attention they need.”

“We even got to go to confession before Mass, so when the rain came down it just kind of wiped everything clean! It really was an inspiring Mass, especially with the archbishop here,” she said.

“I loved it. It was very spiritual, and gave me the opportunity to, ‘Be still, and know that I am God,’ ” she said, quoting Psalm 46:10.

“It was a wonderful experience and we’re very grateful. God truly is the answer, and you can’t get through anything like this without Christ. It’s a gift to have a Mass set [aside] just for this.”

“I'm here! I'm hearing you!'”

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(For more information on the archdiocese’s Substance Addiction Ministry, go to cutt.ly/ArchIndySAM [case sensitive]).

Aug. 31 webinar offers help on getting parishes involved in Respect Life Month in October

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) will offer a Respect Life webinar to help parishes become involved in Respect Life Month at noon on Aug. 31.

This webinar is for anyone who wants to help their parish observe Respect Life Month in October. Participants do not have to work at a parish to join. USCCB staff will walk through the www.respectlife.org/respect-life-month website and resources that are available, which highlight St. Joseph as a defender of life.

All registrants will receive a recording within a few business days after the webinar (even if unable to attend live).

To register for this free, hour-long webinar, go to cutt.ly/RespectLifeWebinar (case sensitive).
Let’s offer our prayers, resources to those around the world in need

No matter how you follow the news these days—be it TV, radio, newspaper, the Internet and various forms of social media—if you’re a person of faith, your prayer list is growing.

We need only look to the chaos and the uncertain present and future in Afghanistan, a devastating earthquake and tropical storm in Haiti, more hurricanes and tropical storms affecting the U.S. and other countries, and unprecedented flooding in Tennessee to help us understand so many in our nation and around the world need our prayers.

Add the ongoing concern about COVID-19 and its expanding delta variant, the uncertainty of how to best address this illness, and the challenge of how it is impacting segments of society—including children and their schools—and you get the sense that our prayer list is never-ending.

Just thinking about the state of today’s world can make us weary. But our faith calls us to look at each situation, reflect on it, and then turn to the help of the grace in the way God asks his disciples to respond.

Prayer is a gift we can easily offer to our brothers and sisters in need. In fact, it is the first gift we should offer as we learn of tragedies—be they near or far. It is also among the first practices we pass on to our children, and there is nothing more powerful than praying as a family in times of need.

As we face these unsettling times, why not offer a family rosary for those facing tragic circumstances? As Holy Cross Father Patrick Peyton, known as “The Rosary Priest,” said often, “The family that prays together stays together.” Offering special prayers throughout the day—including at bedtime—is a beautiful gift which brings families closer.

Catholics are also among the most generous when it comes to sharing their resources, including with our universal family. Simply put, it is another way we harbor deep care for people in need.

Church and its members always step to the forefront to assist those in need. In times of need—be it TV, radio, newspaper, the Internet and various forms of social media—be it natural disaster, the Catholic Church and its members always step up to the forefront to assist those in need.

In 1996, when Muhammad Ali lit the Olympic flame in Atlanta on international television, the issue of sports-related brain damage was raised to new prominence.

One of the greatest boxers in history, his evident frailty and evident Parkinson’s disease tremors led many to question the sport of boxing and its future. Since then, countless other athletes, not only from the world of boxing, but from football, hockey, mixed martial arts, soccer and beyond, have shared their stories of debilitating sports-related connections.

Although many sports involve the risk of unintentional injuries, boxing for many raises the issue to an entirely different level. Indeed, it is important for us to inquire about the intended purpose or goal of boxing.

Literature describing the ancient practice of the sport of boxing makes it clear that Greek athletes sometimes suffered permanent injuries or even died during tournaments. During the early gladiatorial boxing events, they basically fought to the death. Any sporting activity where the declared goal would be to kill or to completely destroy an opponent would, of course, automatically raise serious moral objections.

Modern boxing has no such goal, though certain elements of bodily harm and violence continue to characterize the sport, with an average of 60 boxing deaths occurring each year since 1900. Among the more serious forms of harm that can occur from competitive boxing is physical damage to the brain. From January of 1960 to August of 2011, for example, 488 boxers related deaths were reported, with approximately 65 percent of those deaths involving grave neurological damage.

The goal of a traditional boxing match is “just” to knock out the opponent to gain victory, the purpose of the competition itself still raises moral concerns, because participants are striving to inflict potentially serious harm to their opponent’s brain by causing a concussion, a type of traumatic brain injury.

Suffering a concussion can result in a variety of symptoms including, but not limited to, fuzzy thinking, painful vision, harmful reactions to light, difficulties with memory and learning, and loss of the ability to focus. Sometimes repetitive brain trauma can result in progressive neurodegenerative disease with significant symptoms arising years later, including dementia.

Our ability to recognize and understand traumatic brain injury is continuing to improve with time. Several proteins, released by nerve cells when they are damaged following a concussion, can often be detected as “fluid biomarkers” either in the blood or in the cerebrospinal fluid. Testing for the presence of these proteins can aid in identifying and confirming even mild traumatic brain injuries that may not be obvious on first examination.

Neurologists, of course, are among the first to emphasize that a concussion represents a serious medical condition. Treatment options generally remain limited and tend to include the need for extended time to allow the neurological impairment to heal.

Young athletes can be so desperate to compete, nevertheless, that they will say they are fine after suffering an injury—even when the symptoms persist—and seek to return to a competitive event. A second injury to the brain, without allowing for full recovery from the first, can significantly increase the risk for prolonged symptoms.

Considering the intensity of competitive pressures in today’s world can make us weary. But our faith calls us to look at each situation, reflect on it, and then turn to the help of the grace in the way God asks his disciples to respond.

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Santa Mónica y san Agustín venerados por su santidad

“¡Oh, Dios, que consolation los trieste y que misericordiosamente aceptaste las lágrimas maternales de santa Mónica por la conversión de su hijo Agustín, concedéndonos, por la intercesión de ambos, que lamentosamente nuestro pecados y encontremos la gracia de tu perdón!” (Colecta de la festividad de santa Mónica)

Todas las semanas estamos destinados a buscar a Dios, a encontrarlo y a unirnos Él, tanto aquí en Tierra como en nuestro hogar celestial.

La santidad es la calidad de nuestra unión con Dios, la señal de nuestra cercanía con Él. Los hombres y las mujeres santos están cerca de Dios; es por ello que los llamamos “santos”, que proviene de la palabra latina sanctus.

Santa Mónica y san Agustín son modelos de santidad cristiana. El Concilio Vaticano II enseñó que todo bautizado seguidor de Jesucristo está llamado a ser santo. Como leemos en Lumen Gentium, capítulo 5, sobre la “Universal vocación a la santidad”: “El divino Maestro y Modelo de toda perfección, el Señor Jesús, predijo a todos y cada uno de sus discípulos, cualquiera que fuese su condición, la santidad de vida, de lo que Él es iniciador y consumador: ‘Sed, pues, vosotros perfectos, como vuestro Padre celestial es perfecto!’ (Mt 5: 48). Envió a todos el Espíritu Santo para que los que nacen nuevamen...”

“Reneu en tu Iglesia, te rogamos, Señor, el espíritu con el que impregnaste el corazón de san Agustín, para que, llenos del mismo espíritu, tengamos sed de ti, la única fuente de la verdadera sabiduría, y te busquemos, autor del amor celestial.”

St. Monica, St. Augustine honored for their holiness

“This is claimed by St. Augustine, whose desire for holiness not only changed their lives but also has inspired millions of people over the centuries. Let’s join with the whole Church as we pray in the words of the Collect for the feast of St. Augustine:

“Renew in your Church, we pray, O Lord, the spirit with which you endowed your Bishop Saint Augustine, that filled with this holiness you may serve for you, the sole found of true wisdom, and seek you, the author of heavenly love.”

We are all invited, and challenged, to grow in holiness. This requires the patience and persistence of St. Monica. We are all called to grow in holiness. We will not need to resolve to learn from those mistakes. Holiness doesn’t come easy to us who are ordinary human beings. We are inclined by original sin to be selfish and sinful. But God’s grace is plentiful and his mercy is abundant. All we have to do is repent, let go of our need to be in control, and let God transform us by the power of his love.

Let’s pray for the grace to be like Monica and Augustine, whose desire for holiness not only changed their lives but also has inspired millions of people over the centuries. Let’s join with the whole Church as we pray in the words of the Collect for the feast of St. Augustine:

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All of us are called to holiness, to closeness to God, but unfortunately most of us find ourselves further away from God. Why? Because we, like Monica, like Augustine, do not understand what it means to truly love God, to become united with him—both here on Earth and in our heavenly home. Holiness is the quality of our union with God, the indication of our closeness to him. Holy men and women are close to God. That’s why we call them “saints,” which comes from the Latin word sanctus or holy.

The publication date for this column is Friday, Aug. 27, the feast of St. Monica. Tomorrow we will celebrate the feast of St. Augustine, Monica’s son and one of the greatest theologians in Christian history. Both are honored for their holiness, their closeness to Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (27), holiness is the desire for God which is written in the human heart. We human beings are meant to search for God, to find him and to become united with him—both here on Earth and in our heavenly home. Holiness is our quality of union with God, the indication of our closeness to him. Holy women and men are close to God. That’s why we call them “saints,” which comes from the Latin word sanctus or holy.

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“O God, who consoled the sorrowful and who mercifully accepted the motherly tears of Saint Monica for the conversion of her son Agustín, we beseech...” (Collect for the feast of St. Monica)

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Trees and wildflower seeds available for suggested donation for Season of Creation

To celebrate the Season of Creation—recognized each year between Sept. 1-Oct. 30—the archdiocese’s Creation Care Ministry and Marian University’s Nina Mason Pulliam Ecolab are selling trees and wildflower seeds for a low, suggested donation through Sept. 30.

Trees are available for a suggested donation of $20. They include tulip poplar, birch, oak, crabapple, maple and more. Wildflower seed packets are available for a $6 suggested donation. They include purple coneflower, purple loosestrife, blazing star and more.

Activity kits for children are also available. Pickup is available in mid-late September at Our Lady of Grace Monastery, 1401 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis; Banneker Center, 335 S. Missouri Ave., Indianapolis; or call 317-934-6218 or stthomascatholic.org.

Elbert and Stella Wilson

Elbert and Stella (Singer) Wilson, members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Aug. 26.

The couple was married at the First Christian Church in Madison on Aug. 26, 1960, and had their marriage consolidated at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The couple also has four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. (Correction)

Elbert and Sheila Berarain

Robert and Sheila (Burke) Berarain, members of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville, will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary on Aug. 28.

The couple was married at St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral in La Crosse, Wis., on Aug. 28, 1971. They have two children: Laura Hark, Rachel Kratzer and Benjamin Fitzgerald.

The couple also has three grandchildren. (Correction)

August 30

St. Therese of the Child Jesus-Our Lady Flower Parish Center, St. Therese Room, 4720 E. 17th St., Indianapolis. Soup, 3 p.m., silent auction, 6:30-7:15 p.m., prayer and exercise, free. Information: 317-676-6076 or catherinevamos@yahoo.com or sainttherese.org.

September 1

MCL Cafeteria, 1550 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, 5-30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome. Call or text to sign up for regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605 or 317-243-0777.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 5602 Central Avenue, Indianapolis. Mary’s Treasures, 7 p.m., storyteller Sandra Gofft portrays Mary reciting the events of her life and her Son’s life, free. Information: wht@immarchindy.org or 317-257-2266.

Holy Spirit Church, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis. Day World of Prayer for the Care of Creation Ecumenical Prayer Service, sponsored by Eastside Creation Care Network, 7 p.m., bilingual, online option available, free. Information: 317-353-9949.

September 3

Women’s Care Center, 4910 W. 17th St., Indianapolis. First Friday Mass, 5 p.m., Father Michael Kuecht celebrant, open tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6000, womenscarecenter.org.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mass, 5-45 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, mae314@hotmail.com.

September 5

St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mckley Ave., Indianapolis. Fall Fest, Fall and Sat., 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Vietnamese and Mexican food, rides, kids’ games, bounce house, inflatables, N. Jackson, Todd Hold’em, free admission. Information: 317-244-9002.

St. Michael Church, 145 S. Michael Blvd., Brookville. First Saturday Marian Devotional Prayer Group, Mass, devotional prayers, rosary, 8 a.m., Information: 765-647-5462.

Clay County Courthouse lawn, 609 E. National Ave., Brazil, Pray USA Prayer Rally, noon, sponsored by Annunciation Parish Legion of Mary, prayers for the country. Information: tanya.domey@bigfantasy.com.

September 4-5

St. Roch Parish, 3600 S. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. Brutus Weekend, all weekend Masses, Father Seymore, rector of Bishop Simon Brutus College Seminary, will celebrate Mass and share the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-254-5011 or ebrutus@archindy.org.

September 8

St. Catherine of Siena Parish, 9995 E. Base Rd., Greenwood. Come and See Picnic, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., games, raffles, country store, basket booth, beer garden, live music, Inca chicken or roast beef dinners 11 a.m.-4 p.m., dine inside or out, carry out available, $12 adults, $5 children. Information: 812-934-2880 or stchefinerie@gmail.com.

Benedictine Conversations via GroupMe, 4 p.m. Sundays, Benedictine Sister Jill Marie Renner, facilitator, sponsored by St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Information: vocation@thedom.org.

September 6

St. Peter Parish, 1207 East Road., Brookville. 100th Labor Day Festival, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., country fried chicken, turkey soup, beer garden, quilt raffle, country store, basket raffles, games, free admission. Information: 765-647-5462 or mariannegillespie1962@gmail.com.


September 9

Prairie View Golf Club, 7000 Longest Dr., Carmel. Little Sisters of the Poor Swing For Seniors Golf Tournament, 10 a.m., registration, $220 for individual player, includes cart use, green fees, lunch and dinner. Information and registration: gstv@arcadianr237.com, 317-547-5675 or davidiniguidos@gmail.com.

September 10

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. Struttin’ Our Stuff, St. Vincent de Paul Indianapolis Council annual fundraiser, 6-11 p.m., cocktail hour, dinner, silent and live auction, fashion show for men and women, heads-and-tails raffle, $75 Information: 317-796-6215.

September 11


September 12

St. Joe of Arc Parish, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis, French Market, noon-10 p.m., French cuisine, live entertainment, raffle, artisans, bake sale, historic church tours, children’s food and games until 5 p.m., free admission. Information: 317-283-5508.

Pages 6 The Criterion, Friday, August 27, 2021

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to https://marriagedates.org or call 317-236-1501.

Events Calendar
**Bishop: Church has ‘sacred duty’ to speak truth about human person, gender**

**ARLINGTON, Va. (CNS)–The topic of transgenderism is discussed generally in the news, on television shows and in schools. This prevailing ideology—that a person can change his or her gender—is impacting Catholic families, too, said Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington.**

So, following consultation with experts in theology, bioethics, clinical counseling, law, as well as with priests, Bishop Burbidge issued “A Catechesis on the Human Person and Gender Identity” on Aug. 12.

He also released policies relating to thehuman person and gender identity to be followed in Catholic schools and faith formation and youth ministry programs in his diocese.

“As a Catholic Church, we have a sacred duty and obligation—not of our love for young people and God’s family—to speak the truth,” said Bishop Burbidge. Not only to speak the truth, but to explain why we believe what we do and to give Catholics the language they need to explain this to others.

This resource was intended to assist all Catholics, but especially adults and parents of children who experience gender dysphoria.

Many reach out for help to priests such as Father Stephen Schulz, who in addition to serving as chaplain of St. John Vianney High School in chantilly, Va., ministers to individuals in these situations.

“It’s really picked up among younger people,” said Father Schulz, one of the many people consulted in the drafting of the catechetical resource.

“There’s been times this year that in a week, I’ve gotten two or three calls from parents who are concerned about their children who are reporting sexual identity dysphoria.”

The topic of transgenderism is very much a part of the cultural conversation, said Father Schulz, but it feels like a one-sided conversation. There are these movements that think we can totally define ourselves and yet we are all called to love each other and to love the individual.

The Catholic Church teaches differently. “Our bodies are a gift, and we need to receive them as a gift and understand ourselves—body and soul—in the light of God’s love,” he told the Arlington Catholic Herald, the diocesan newspaper.

The catechetical resource begins by explaining the Catholic understanding of the nature of human beings. 

“To be a human person means to be a unity of body and soul from the moment of conception,” the document said. As a result, our God-given bodies are “neither foreign nor a burden, but an integral part of the person.”

Part of that person is his or her gender. Men and women of different cultures and personalities may express their femininity and masculinity in a variety of ways, and some may have interests that are more associated with the opposite sex. But none of that changes their sex as male or female, the document said.

The differences between men and women are ordered toward their complementary union in marriage.

“Man and woman were made ‘for each other’—not that God left them half-made and incomplete. He created them to be a communion of persons, in which each can be ‘helpmate’ to the other, for they are equal as persons,” the document said.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, gender dysphoria is a psychological condition in which a biological male or female comes to feel that his or her emotional and/or psychological identity does not match his or her biological sex and “experiences clinically significant distress” as a result.

“The experience of this interior conflict is not sinful in itself, but must be understood as a disorder reflecting the broader disharmony caused by original sin,” the document said, and the person’s soul should be treated with “respect, justice and charity.”

The prevailing secular culture encourages these individuals to go by opposite gender pronouns, and turn to chemical or surgical interventions that alter the body’s appearance and destroy otherwise normal functions.

The Church’s teaching is that all are sons and daughters of God and should be treated as such.

“Every person—no matter gender—ought to be respected and treated with dignity. This means the close monitoring of what your children receive via the Internet and social media,” the document said. “Much of your good work and witness can be undone quickly by a child’s unsupervised or unrestricted Internet access.”

Bishop Burbidge knows many will be ungrounded and forlorn for their belief that men and women cannot change their sex, but he asks the faithful to speak out anyway.

“We cannot be silenced. The mandate to speak on this issue clearly and lovingly is greater than ever,” he said. “There’s no need to be afraid. It’s the truth, we’re speaking it in love, and God will give us the strength and courage and perseverance we need.”

Finally, the document addresses those who experience gender dysphoria with a word of encouragement.

“Please know that, although you may struggle with your body or self-image, God’s unrelenting love for you means that he loves you in the totality of your body as well,” it said. “Our basic obligation to respect and care for the body comes from the fact that your body is part of the person—you—who God loves.”

“Christ suffered for our sake, not to exempt us from all suffering but to be with us in the midst of those struggles. The Church is here to assist and accompany you on this journey, so that you will know the beauty of the body and soul that God gave you.”

(For the full text of “A Catechesis on the Human Person and Gender Identity” can be found online at bit.ly/gendercatechesis)
Coordinator of evangelization, discipleship seeks to build parish teams

By Natalie Hoefer

During his time as a Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) missionary on a college campus, Sam Rasp witnessed a young man who demonstrated how not to evangelize.

"His mode of evangelizing was to sit in the campus Catholic center and wait for people to walk in," recalled Rasp.

"That’s not the way to evangelize. It’s to go out into the pasture and be where the people are."

Pope Francis in [his apostolic exhortation] ‘The Joy of the Gospel’ says people say it’s for professionals to evangelize. But it’s for every Catholic to fulfill Mt 28:19—that is, to ‘Go and make disciples of all nations ....’"

As the new coordinator of evangelization and disciplership for the archdiocese’s Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization, 27-year-old Rasp will assist parishes in helping individuals “go and make disciples.”

Such has been his own work for the last five years as a FOCUS missionary, evangelizing Catholic college students and teaching them how to do the same.

Along the way, he learned that evangelization “at its core is inviting people into a personal relationship with the Lord and helping them discern truths of the faith.”

His journey started as a seminarian for the Diocese of Owensboro, Ky., for two years at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, studying at nearby Marian University.

After two years, Rasp discerned out of the seminary. He continued studying at Marian, earning a bachelor’s degree in theology with a minor in philosophy.

He then embarked on his five-year journey as a FOCUS missionary from 2016-2021. Along the way he met fellow missionary Elizabeth. The two started dating in 2017 and married in 2019, all while continuing in their roles as missionaries together.

Now, Rasp is eager to start “helping to equip priests to be able and willing to help organize peers—both inside the parish and outside—into faithful disciples."

“I’m here to bring some helpful guidance under Archbishop [Charles C.] Thompson’s vision in the pastoral plan, to be a contact for each parish to help start an evangelization movement within parish boundaries."

Rasp, who took the coordinator position in June, has already taken concrete steps.

“I’ve started meeting existing contacts in parishes and started building relationships and brainstorming what they can do next,” he said. “I’ll help training their evangelization teams to reach out to theunchurched."

One method he’ll employ is the use of small group Bible studies within parishes.

“These faith sharing groups will build community based on evangelization and will be able to reach those on the outskirts,” he said.

As he makes strides in his new position, Rasp plans to take strokes at his favorite pastime, golf, as well as disc golf and ultimate Frisbee.

“Of course, my number one favorite way to spend time is with my wife,” he noted. The couple, members of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, enjoy board games, discovering local coffee shops and hiking. He’s also taken up the hobby of “making things,” including a cookie rack, a raised garden box, and more projects to come.

Rasp said he has enjoyed a warm welcome in his new position.

“Everyone has been receptive to what I have to say, both at parishes and here” at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis.

“We’re glad Sam’s on board to help our 126 parishes establish and maintain evangelization teams,” said Ken Ogeois, who as archdiocesan director of catechesis collaborates on various evangelization and discipleship efforts. “As more parishes get these disciplership-focused teams in place, our overall outreach to the unchurched and to alienated Catholics will multiply nicely by God’s grace.”

(For more information on the services offered by the Office of Evangelization, go to evangelizeindy.com.)

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Pandemic shows us courage is needed to place needs of others first, cardinal says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The sense of shared responsibility for the common good requires the courage to place the needs of others before one’s own, a Vatican official said.

As the new coordinator of evangelization and disciplership for the archdiocese’s Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization, 27-year-old Rasp will assist parishes in helping individuals “go and make disciples.”

Such has been his own work for the last five years as a FOCUS missionary, evangelizing Catholic college students and teaching them how to do the same.

Along the way, he learned that evangelization “at its core is inviting people into a personal relationship with the Lord and helping them discern truths of the faith.”

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said the pandemic has reawakened “fundamental questions about the meaning of existence and the utility of living that had been dormant or, about the meaning of existence and the utility of living that had been dormant or, indifferent to everything and everyone.”

“Where, then, do we find the self to decide, to determine the way to spend time is with my wife,” he noted. The couple, members of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, enjoy board games, discovering local coffee shops and hiking. He’s also taken up the hobby of “making things,” including a cookie rack, a raised garden box, and more projects to come. Rasp said he has enjoyed a warm welcome in his new position.

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Season of Creation

NATIVE TREE & FLOWER SALE

ORDERS DUE SEPT 8

Visit OurCommonHome.org/trees for ordering, species, and pickup info

Sponsored by Archdiocese Creation Care Ministry & Marian University EcoLab

DID YOU KNOW THAT AUGUST IS MAKE-A-WILL MONTH?

FOR GOD, FOR OTHERS, FOREVER.

WILL ORDERS DUE SEPT 8

Sponsored by Archdiocese Creation Care Ministry & Marian University EcoLab

All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation.

(Laudato Si’ #14)
archdiocese comes at a time when many dioceses in the U.S. have experienced a drop off in their number of future priests. He attributes the growth in seminarians for the archdiocese to the change in November 2019 to a team approach to promoting priestly vocations. At that time, Father Michael Keucher was appointed archdiocesan vocations director and several priests across central and southern Indiana began ministry as associate vocations directors.

Father Augenstein said that the associate vocations directors have been “able to maintain contact with men who are discerning the priesthood a little more easily, even during COVID, because they’re closer to where people are.”

“When vocations is on the mind of a lot of people in a lot of different places,” he said, “you’re naturally going to see more people responding, more people being able to think about and answer the call.”

Emiliano Enriquez De Alva was one of the new seminarians who responded to God’s call. A member of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour and an incoming freshman at Bishop Bruté, he was glad to begin building relationships with his fellow seminarians during the convocation.

“It’s been amazing and a blessing to get to see these guys dedicate their lives into the priesthood,” said Father Bedel, “I’m looking forward to learning from each other, sharing lessons, praying together, taking outings as a group—supporting each other—all of this happens during the seminarian convocation. It is a way for them to begin building up the fellowship that will be vital when they, God willing, are ordained and become part of the archdiocese’s presbyterate. Father Daniel Bedel knows the importance of that fellowship from experience. Ordated in 2014, he reflected on the importance of the seminarian convocation on Aug. 9 at Fatima during a cookout for current and future archdiocesan priests.

“I forged friendships with guys that were way ahead of me in seminary, or behind, and those friendships have lasted into the priesthood,” said Father Bedel, who recently begin serving as director of spiritual formation at Bishop Bruté. The convocations, he said, “helped lay a foundation” for priestly fellowship for him.

“In the priesthood, it gets expanded, of course, because you know in ministry that another priest has that shared experience,” Father Bedel said. “They know where you’re coming from. You can relate to them and talk to them about things going on in your parish. Those experiences were instrumental for the priesthood.”

In an interview with The Criterion after his Aug. 9 Mass with the seminarians, Archbishop Thompson said building fraternity can’t wait until after a man is ordained; it must start in the seminary. This fellowship, he also said, isn’t just important for the priests, but for the whole Church.

“It’s been a good, really exciting time to invest myself in it.”

The convocations, he said, are “a way for them to get to know where they’re going to be healthy and our parishes are healthy, happy priests lead to healthy, happy parishes and dioceses.”

At the heart of fellowship among seminarians and priests is Christ. Archbishop Thompson told the seminarians in his homily during the Mass.

“The focus is not on ourselves, but on Christ,” he said. “He’s always present in our midst. Keep that focus whether there’s suffering or joy. … Always keep the proper focus and do not lose sight of who we are as God’s children. Keep Christ at the center of it all.”

New seminarian Thomas Day experienced the importance of fellowship among those discerning a life of service in the Church when he was previously in formation as a member of the Order of Preachers, commonly known as the Dominicans.

“One of the ways we get to know the love of God is by seeing it in our brothers and by learning to love our brothers,” said Day, a member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis.

“I think fellowship is going to be an incredibly important part [of my formation]. I’m really going to have to invest myself in it.”

It’s been an important part of the priestly formation of transitional Deacon Michael Clawson, who is entering into his final year as a seminarian before being ordained a priest for the archdiocese next June.

“I enjoy being here with all of the guys, hanging out with them, the fraternity,” said Deacon Clawson, a member of Annunciation Parish in Brazil. “It’s exciting to realize that I’m so close to the goal that I’ve had for the last eight years.”

Deacon Clawson likened the seminarian convocation to spring training for Major League Baseball.

“Everybody gets together after a couple of months off from the season,” he said. “They get back in shape and get to meet all new guys. And, of course, there were more new guys to meet at this convocation.

“It’s been good, really exciting to realize how well the archdiocese is doing with vocations,” said Deacon Clawson. “Over the summer, I was trying to encourage as many guys as I could.”

Father Augenstein has hopes that more new seminarians for the archdiocese are coming down the road.

“We’re already starting to work on next year,” he said. “I’ve had two guys already starting applications for next fall.”

(For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.)
Saint Meinrad monk professes solemn vows in Aug. 15 Mass

Seek God through a relationship with Christ, others, pope says at Angelus

Cardinal Burke remains hospitalized, but he is off ventilator, out of intensive care
The Stritch School of Medicine at Loyola University Chicago.

She and other experts in bioethics and information; an

Vaccines, however, are “a fundamental...
Love’s Litmus/Natalie Hoefer

Couples’ actions and attitude show love is not resentful

It was a deal gone bad. The results were unintended, but the damage was financially substantial. A friend of mine shared the story with me. His parents, devout members of a non-Catholic congregation, had contributed money into an investment opportunity offered by a member of their church.

But the investment fell through. Rather than talk to his parents about the loss of their money, he “falsified statements for some time.” He was eventually found out and spent time in prison.

His parents lost a significant amount of money. Yet it is possible that they lovingly saw that he was a stay-at-home mother of two and not involved in her husband’s actions. They looked beyond the hurt and recognized she was a loving, caring person.

Their actions and attitude are a prime example of love not just forgiving, but forgetting.

When St. Faustina Kowalska—whom Christ gave the Divine Mercy image and message—told her confessor she had an apparition of Christ, the priest wondered if it was manifesting as a demon or a devil. “If we visit again, ask him what I confessed the last time I received the sacrament of penance,” he requested.

The next time they met, St. Faustina had had another apparition. She had asked the priest’s question, and the answer she shared with the priest convinced him it was indeed Christ appearing.

“But I don’t remember,” Christ had responded to the question—the true response of a God who forgives and forgets our sins, a God who shows mercy, a God who is not resentful.

We are called to imitate God’s example. If we find it difficult to make the choice to not be resentful and forgive, Christ reminds us that “when we find it hard to forgive a wrong and move on, we always fall into the open arms of our loving God and say, ‘I can’t do it. You be the one to act in me. You be the one to love, and help me forgive through your grace.’”

(See your stories of people you know who live out love as described by St. Paul in 1 Cor 13:4-7 to Natalie Hoefer at nhoefer@archindy.org, or call 317-236-1486 or 800-932-9836, ext. 1490. Include your parish and a daytime phone number where you may be reached.)

Faith and Family/Seann Gallagher

Mutual support among families is needed to form children well

My five sons all started school recently, as have children and adults across central and southern Indiana, with an added range from being in college down to the second grade. It’s a lot of loving going on in their lives.

That’s why the prime responsibilities of my wife Cindy and I as the oldest and most educated of our children, which the Church names as in its teachings on the family.

Of course, this learning is not limited to our boys. Our learning something—good or bad—all the time. We learn from the example Cindy and I give each other, the days of learning well as in specific advice we give them, and in heart-to-heart conversations we have with them from time to time.

They also learn from each other, their friends and classmates and the broader culture in which they live, which often comes to them through increasingly ubiquitous computers, phones and other digital devices.

This last channel of education for our boys and today’s children can sometimes grab their attention more than they might the more subtle means of formation that come through parents and teachers. That’s especially true when education becomes more opposed to the Gospel.

So, Cindy and I and other parents today face challenges and decisions about forming our children that our parents couldn’t even imagine when they were our age.

That doesn’t mean that we are left without assistance in this sacrificial mission. Practitioners such as Cindy and I are regulating the use of “screens” as we call them in our house (e.g., computers, phones, tablets), router-based Internet filters are helpful.

Through them, parents can set time limits on how much time our children spend on a “bedtime” at night after which users can no longer surf the net, and limits on what websites and kinds of websites can be accessed.

Such filters are by no means perfect. So, parents should monitor as best they can what their children are doing on digital devices. More importantly, and perhaps more effective in the end, parents need to nurture relationships with their children and encourage them to build face-to-face relationships with their peers who are seeking to grow in their faith and in virtue.

Helping our children to value and find life in face-to-face relationships will cut off the negative potential of screens at the choke point of the desire to be on screens in the future. Helping young adults today find fulfillment more and more exclusively through screens.

That’s why it’s so important that what a person does online is otherwise wholesome.

I hesitate to a certain extent to give this advice because we all know the difficulty in how challenging it can be as a parent to put it into practice. But the future of our children is at stake, and we need to just throw up our hands and give up in the face of such challenges.

It’s hard, no one can deny the influence of our broader culture in the lives of our children that comes through digital devices.

That’s why it’s important for parents who want to form their children well in the faith and similar values to support each other through prayer and in nurturing relationships among each other.

When that happens, the light of the Gospel will reflect off the faces of our children more than the light of digital

 Amid the Fray/Greg Erlanson

COVID and other challenges remind us we must act now

The human tendency to postpone and procrastinate is at times breathtaking. It can also be fatal.

Now that Americans and others are beginning to believe that COVID-19 variations can be more efficiently lethal, hundreds of thousands of us are finally getting vaccinated. For some, they will have delayed too long.

A 92-year-old father in Florida, a father of five, died last month from the virus. Before he died, he texted, “I should have gotten the vaccine.”

We all do this, putting off a task or a decision, despite warnings that delay may be harmful. Only after the decision has been made does the decision—renewing a license, filling a prescription, writing a term paper. The penalty may be small, the punishment minor.

But sometimes our tendency to delay can be much more treacherous.
The Sunday Readings
Sunday, August 29, 2021

• Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
• James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27
• Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

The Book of Deuteronomy provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. In this passage, Moses presents to the people the revelation that he received God’s law. It is God’s law, revealed by God, not Moses’ invention given on a whim. While a towering, indeed unsurpassed, figure in Jewish religious history, Moses was only human.

As are all humans, Moses was limited, lacking insight, knowledge and a view into the future. He was impaired therefore from making decisions wisely and open to missteps and their consequences. The good news in the face of these universal human limitations is that God constantly and lavishly gives guidance and mercy.

“Law” here is not an arbitrary edict. It is not relative. It is not necessarily a test. Instead, it is like the law of gravity. It is reality. To violate God’s law introduces confusion or worse into life. So, when humans behave in ways counter to God’s law, they upset things. They create the punishment that befalls them.

The Epistle of St. James furnishes the second reading.

Several men in the New Testament bear the name of James. Any of these men, or another, could have been the author of this letter, but scholars today tend to think that the author was James, a foster brother of Jesus.

Reference to James as the Lord’s brother always raises questions. What about the most ancient Christian belief that Mary always was a virgin? Was Jesus her only child? Who were James and the other brothers and sisters of the Lord? What did James believe about the most ancient Christian belief that the Lord’s disciples are the eponymous founders of the twelve apostolic churches?

In humility and by facing facts, we must accept that we are not that wise. In every generation, we are not that wise. The Catholic Church has always accepted that we are not that wise.

A colleague in religious art, which depicted Joseph as Jesus’ stepfather, was told that almost everyone will have some purgatory time. This may have caused while still alive and of purgatory time can start in the here and now.

My Journey to God

Incarnation

By Quannah Jeffries

Heart of hearts beatless beating
Ageless aging
Power emptied manifestly omnipotent
Unchanged changing without change
Glory veiled, pierced unveiled
Rising Sun darkening, illuminating night
In darkness I lay and unseeing I remain
But warm is the darkness enlightened by Pure Light, Fiery Love
Embodied not consuming

(Quannah Jeffries is a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: A sign in Latin at the site of the Incarnation in Nazareth reads, “The Word became flesh here.”) (Was photo by Natalie Hofer)

Question Corner/ Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Existence of purgatory has been a consistent teaching of the Church

I’m confused about the Catholic teaching on purgatory, as we never really covered it in our Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program. I understand it to be a “stopover” of sorts, for a soul’s purification on its way to heaven. But I’ve also been told different things as to the nature of this purification—anything from a final confession, to a burning off of sins, to a witnessing of harm the person may have caused while still alive and of which they may have not previously been aware.

I’ve also been told that a person’s purgatory time can start in the here and now, while still alive, and even that some of the suffering in this life may be to help others already in purgatory. Finally, I’ve been told that almost everyone will likely go to purgatory. Can you comment? (Indiana)

The Catholic Church has always believed in the existence of purgatory. That belief is defined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which says: “All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven” (#1030). It is also reflected in the words of Jesus himself, who says in the Gospel of St. Matthew that certain sins “will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come” (Mt 12:32), which suggests that some purging of the soul may need to occur after death.

There are indications from the earliest centuries of the Church that this belief was common among Christians. For example, St. Monica, in the fourth century, asked her son St. Augustine before she died to continue to remember her soul in Masses. Even before the advent of Christianity, we read in the Second Book of Maccabees that Judas Maccabaeus “made atonement for the dead” (2 Mc 12:46) that they might be freed from sin, which suggests a Jewish practice of offering prayers to cleanse the souls of the departed.

And yes, it has always been the common practice of believers who are still living to offer prayers and sacrifices for the departed.

As for the exact nature of what that purification after death may be, we just don’t know. It could be instantaneous. And regarding your speculation as to what percentage will wind up in purgatory, we’ve never been told, but speaking personally, spiritual and moral perfection seems a long way away, so my own guess is that a lot of us will need some remediation.

Do Catholic priests forget what they are told in confession? (Location withheld)

Yes, we do. Part of that is due, I’d guess, to the grace of God. But another reason might be the repetitive nature of most confessions. I always try to remind myself, when I enter the confessional, to stay alert and to remember that my role is to put the penitent in touch with God.

Rather than have confession become simply a repetition of regular faults, and that is fine. I often try to engage penitents also with regard to their spiritual life by asking them, for example, “Do you try to pray each day?” Normally, within a few minutes of leaving the confessional, I have forgotten nearly all of the sins people have confessed.

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

Daily Readings

Monday, August 30
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Psalm 90:1-2, 3-5, 11-13
Luke 4:16-30

Tuesday, August 31
1 Thessalonians 5:1-4, 9-11
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14
Luke 4:31-37

Wednesday, September 1
Colossians 1:18-19
Psalm 52:10-11
Luke 4:38-44

Thursday, September 2
Colossians 1:9-14
Psalm 90:2-6

Friday, September 3
St. Gregory the Great, doctor of the Church
Colossians 1:15-20
Psalm 100:1-5

Saturday, September 4
Colossians 1:21-23
Psalm 54:3-4, 6, 8

Sunday, September 5
Twentieth-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 35:4-7a
Psalm 146:7-10
James 2:1-5
Mark 7:31-37

Question Corner/ Fr. Kenneth Doyle

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I’m confused about the Catholic teaching on purgatory, as we never really covered it in our Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program. I understand it to be a “stopover” of sorts, for a soul’s purification on its way to heaven. But I’ve also been told different things as to the nature of this purification—anything from a final confession, to a burning off of sins, to a witnessing of harm the person may have caused while still alive and of which they may have not previously been aware.

I’ve also been told that a person’s purgatory time can start in the here and now, while still alive, and even that some of the suffering in this life may be to help others already in purgatory. Finally, I’ve been told that almost everyone will likely go to purgatory. Can you comment? (Indiana)

The Catholic Church has always believed in the existence of purgatory. That belief is defined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which says: “All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven” (#1030). It is also reflected in the words of Jesus himself, who says in the Gospel of St. Matthew that certain sins “will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come” (Mt 12:32), which suggests that some purging of the soul may need to occur after death.

There are indications from the earliest centuries of the Church that this belief was common among Christians. For example, St. Monica, in the fourth century, asked her son St. Augustine before she died to continue to remember her soul in Masses. Even before the advent of Christianity, we read in the Second Book of Maccabees that Judas Maccabaeus “made atonement for the dead” (2 Mc 12:46) that they might be freed from sin, which suggests a Jewish practice of offering prayers to cleanse the souls of the departed.

And yes, it has always been the common practice of believers who are still living to offer prayers and sacrifices for the departed.

As for the exact nature of what that purification after death may be, we just don’t know. It could be instantaneous. And regarding your speculation as to what percentage will wind up in purgatory, we’ve never been told, but speaking personally, spiritual and moral perfection seems a long way away, so my own guess is that a lot of us will need some remediation.

Do Catholic priests forget what they are told in confession? (Location withheld)

Yes, we do. Part of that is due, I’d guess, to the grace of God. But another reason might be the repetitive nature of most confessions. I always try to remind myself, when I enter the confessional, to stay alert and to remember that my role is to put the penitent in touch with God.

Rather than have confession become simply a repetition of regular faults, and that is fine. I often try to engage penitents also with regard to their spiritual life by asking them, for example, “Do you try to pray each day?” Normally, within a few minutes of leaving the confessional, I have forgotten nearly all of the sins people have confessed.

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

My Journey to God

Incarnation

By Quannah Jeffries

Heart of hearts beatless beating
Ageless aging
Power emptied manifestly omnipotent
Unchanged changing without change
Glory veiled, pierced unveiled
Rising Sun darkening, illuminating night
In darkness I lay and unseeing I remain
But warm is the darkness enlightened by Pure Light, Fiery Love
Embodied not consuming

(Quannah Jeffries is a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: A sign in Latin at the site of the Incarnation in Nazareth reads, “The Word became flesh here.”) (Was photo by Natalie Hofer)
Faith leaders raise concerns over online censorship of religious speech

SAN FRANCISCO (CNS)— YouTube’s blocking of a theologian’s talk allegedly ‘liberating tolerance’ is not only displacing the moral convictions that once were a part of our common culture, but lately has less force,” they said. “The more we feed it, the deeper and wider it takes root. This is because, they continued, “the logic of the solution is being censored online. So are the voices of the Church is needed now not only to challenge us, but to provide the truth of the Gospel.”

“In a recent essay in The Criterion, Aug. 11. In his Op-Ed, they explained that twice on Aug. 7 a live broadcast by the Rev. Carl Trueman, a theologian teaching about Christianity in a Wall Street Journal op-ed they wrote. “Today’s sexual politics function as a kind of fundamentalism, one that presents a deep problem to a diverse and democratic society....”

“Social media enables the new fundamentalism to be enforced by the mysterious rules of big tech’s quasi-monopoly,” wrote Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone and Jim Daly. “For good reason,” they continued. “We sense that the First Amendment guarantee of religious liberty is being dismantled, and with it the profound contributions that religion makes to American unity and self-government.”

“The First Amendment speaks life,” said the archbishop and Daly who said that after the YouTube incidents, Rev. Trueman “is understandably worried that religious speech is being censored online. So are many other religious believers.”

“On public sidewalks, the First Amendment still protectively free speech. In the public sphere of the Internet, power displaces liberty and conscience,” said the op-ed by the archbishop and Daly. “On public sidewalks, the First Amendment still protectively free speech. In the public sphere of the Internet, power displaces liberty and conscience,” said the op-ed by the archbishop and Daly. Adherents to the new fundamentalism of sexual politics “seek to impose their own rigid certitude,” rather than reason and faith working together. “And for good reason,” they continued. “We sense that the First Amendment guarantee of religious liberty is being dismantled, and with it the profound contributions that religion makes to American unity and self-government.”

In an essay for Deseret News by writer Cassandra Hedelius echoed the concerns raised by Archbishop Cordileone and Daly. “It’s chilling,” she wrote, “to think that Internet media giants might be sidelining, or even silencing, voices of the Church.”

“Religious liberty should be important to everyone,” they said. “It checks government’s tendency to overreach, and it helps form citizens in the virtues necessary for democracy to work. “As writers, we speak from two different branches of the Christian tradition,” they continued. “Yet as Christians we share an obligation to hear those who dare to speak the truth with love. St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans reminds us to respect and obey civil authority, and to be leaven for goodness and beauty in the world. The American experiment was founded on, and built upon, the freedom of religious believers to speak, teach, preach, practice, serve and work in peace—not only in private, but in the public sphere—for the truth about God and humanity that ennobles their lives and all lives,” said the archbishop and Daly.

“Many people today believe that intolerance in the service of a new and allegedly ‘liberating tolerance’ is not only unacceptable, but praiseworthy,” they said. “Killing freedom in the name of freedom is the Orwellian proposition at work.”

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Pope encourages people to rediscover importance of Sunday liturgy

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis encouraged new courses of action for parishes to help people understand the importance of Sunday Mass and parish activities, a move that has had repercussions on the meaning of Sunday for most people and how people experience community and the family, he said.

Cardinal Parolin wrote, “the Holy Father hopes that the National Liturgical Week, by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state. The meeting, held on Aug. 23-26 in the Italian city of Cremona, brought together pastoral workers, religious and priests to discuss ways to encourage the faithful to attend the Sunday liturgy and participate in other liturgical celebrations, rites and the sacraments.

In the written message, the cardinal said the pandemic and its restrictions, which had prevented the faithful from gathering like before, undermined the importance of the liturgy in Christian life. But, what happened during the pandemic and the difficulty in resuming liturgical activities has been combined with what was already observed at Sunday assemblies on the Italian peninsula, an alarming indication of the advanced stage of an epochal change.”

It had been noticed, even long before the pandemic, there has been a shift in how we understand “time” and “space,” which has had repercussions on the meaning of Sunday for most people and how people experience community and the family, he said.

For this reason, he wrote, the Sunday liturgy, which should be “the true summit” of all parish activities and the source of energy for missionary life, is “off-balanced,” terms of which age groups normally attend, and in terms of the “difficulty in finding a harmonious integration in parish life.”

Cardinal Parolin wrote, “the Holy Father hopes that the National Liturgical Week, which this year is focused on innovation and moments of celebration … may identify and suggest some liturgical pastoral care guidelines to offer parishes, so that Sunday, the eucharistic assembly, ministries and the rites may emerge from the experience which they seem inexorably to be falling, and regain their centrality in the faith and spirituality of believers.”

Investing with Faith

Will in place offers piece of mind and control of decisions

While August turns our thoughts to back-to-school time, the waning days of summer and our anticipation of hopefully cooler weather, few probably equate it with writing a will. Nevertheless, August is designated as “National Make a Will Month,” and like the aforementioned, it focuses us on times of transition in our life.

A last will and testament is a legal document representing your final wishes of what happens to your estate when you pass away. Although it allows you to control these decisions and offers you and your family peace of mind, almost two-thirds of Americans do not have a will.

My husband Mark and I married in 1993. A couple years later, we visited an attorney and drafted a simple, what is referred to as a “sweetheart” will. We did so at the urging of our parents, and I am grateful for that counsel so early in our marriage.

In 2005, my husband battled colon cancer. Thankfully he survived, but his situation became dire at one point. Thinking back to that time, I appreciated how we had already had a will in place should the unthinkable occur. However, we realized that we have not updated the will after the birth of our children.

Mark’s near-death experience reminded us that we needed to once again visit an attorney to add legal guardians for our then-4- and 8-year-old children. These life transitions called for a regular review of our will. We also realized that by that time, we had updated our will.

In addition to naming our children as beneficiaries of our estate, we understood that accumulated assets would allow us to consider charitable giving upon our passing.

Mark and I have a scholarship fund we established at our former parish in memory of our son, who passed away at 3 months of age. We updated our will to reflect a gift of impact to that scholarship fund upon our deaths—one that reflects our holistic values and our commitment to Catholic education, and a lasting memorial to our beloved son.

Your last will and testament should be a lasting reflection of who you are and what you value. When you die without a will, you leave these important decisions and opportunities to a local court. Not having a will in place makes it more difficult for your family to carry out your wishes and settle your estate. Probate can be a long and expensive process.

Stating your intent through a will saves time, money and stress for your loved ones. Making or updating your will today allows you to name the executor of your choice. It enables you to decide who receives assets from your assets and property. You can designate legal guardians to care for your minor children. Having a will in place enables you to care for your loved ones and lowers the potential for family disputes.

And finally, a will allows you to leave a legacy gift to a charitable organization for which you are passionate. Throughout your life transitions, having a will in place can offer you peace of mind. Our Catholic Community Foundation staff can provide valuable resources for your consideration in writing a will and help you plan a charitable gift to a Catholic parish, school, or other organization dear to your heart. Please contact us at ccf@archindy.org for more information. We are happy to walk this journey with you.

( Kimberly Pohovey is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese. Tax or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice. Always consult with your legal, tax or financial advisors before implementing any gift plan.)

Catholic Philanthropic Advisor

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Catholic Philanthropic Advisor at their office in downtown Indianapolis.

The Catholic Philanthropic Advisor is responsible for securing major and planned gifts to support ministries of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The individual will work closely with the Director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving and the Prospect Research Analyst to identify, cultivate, solicit and steward major gifts and planned gifts. The Catholic Philanthropic Advisor will assist Catholics to grow in their understanding of living their faith through stewardship – seeing all as a gift from God and responding in gratitude by providing a lasting memorial to one’s gifts with others. The Catholic Philanthropic Advisor will work closely with United Catholic Appeal donors and Legacy Society’s donors to advance giving throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The Catholic Philanthropic Advisor will participate in staff meetings and serve as a member of the Office of Stewardship and Development and Planned Gifts team, regularly attending various Office of Stewardship and Development and Catholic Community Foundation events.

Bachelor’s degree required. Advanced degree or certificate desired but not required. Three years of experience in field is preferred, including fundraising and/or estate or charitable planning.

To apply, send cover letter, resume and three references to kpohovey@archindy.org.

Employment

Huser Special Care

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40 of the Best Joys and Blessings of Catholic Schools during the Late Summer/Fall Season

By John Shaughnessy

As another school year gets underway, it brings the return of many of the joys and blessings connected with Catholic schools. In celebration of this time of year, The Criterion offers this list of “40 of the Best Joys and Blessings of Catholic Schools during the Late Summer/Fall Season.” (Feel free to add your own favorites.)

• Friday night high school football games under the lights.
• Kickball in all its glory, from girls putting ribbons in their hair before a game to the searing intensity of the way the game is played on the southside of Indianapolis.
• Living rosaries and other events to honor the Blessed Mother in October.
• School Masses celebrating the importance of Christ’s gift of the Eucharist.
• Teachers, principals and staff members who choose to work in Catholic schools, accepting less money than they could make elsewhere because they want to be in a setting where they can teach, share and live their faith with students.
• Grade school children learning about and dressing up as their favorite saint on All Saints Day.
• Retreats at Camp Rancho Framasa, the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) camp.
• Volunteers coaching teams, or coach, because they want to help give current and future students the life-defining experience they had.
• The number of men and women who return to their Catholic grade school or high school to teach or coach, because they want to help give current students the life-defining experience they had.
• A three-course meal at the concession stand—a hot dog, popcorn and candy bar.
• Saturday spectator sports extravaganzas, with September Saturdays offering a choice of soccer, and girls’ volleyball.
• Teachers who integrate lessons of faith into their lessons of English, history, social studies, science and math.
• Teachers who arrive early at school or stay late after school to help struggling students.
• High school religion teachers who strive to share the foundations and blessings of the Catholic faith with teenagers who live in a society and a culture often at odds with the teachings of Christ.
• A more comfortable wardrobe for parents of high school student-athletes as they realize that the clothes they most often wear now are T-shirts and hearing what’s fun, they share with their players as more important than their win-loss record.
• Hearing high school students speak glowingingly about a school that has shaped their lives and deepened their faith.
• Priests who show up at games to cheer for their parish teams.
• Volunteer coaches arranging their work schedules so they can get to their team’s CYO game on the other side of the city during rush hour.
• People waiting patiently in line at a concession stand as a small child at the front of the line tries to make the daunting decision of choosing popcorn or nachos, Skittles or M&Ms.
• Teachers who strive to share the foundations and blessings of the Catholic faith with teenagers who live in a society and a culture often at odds with the teachings of Christ.