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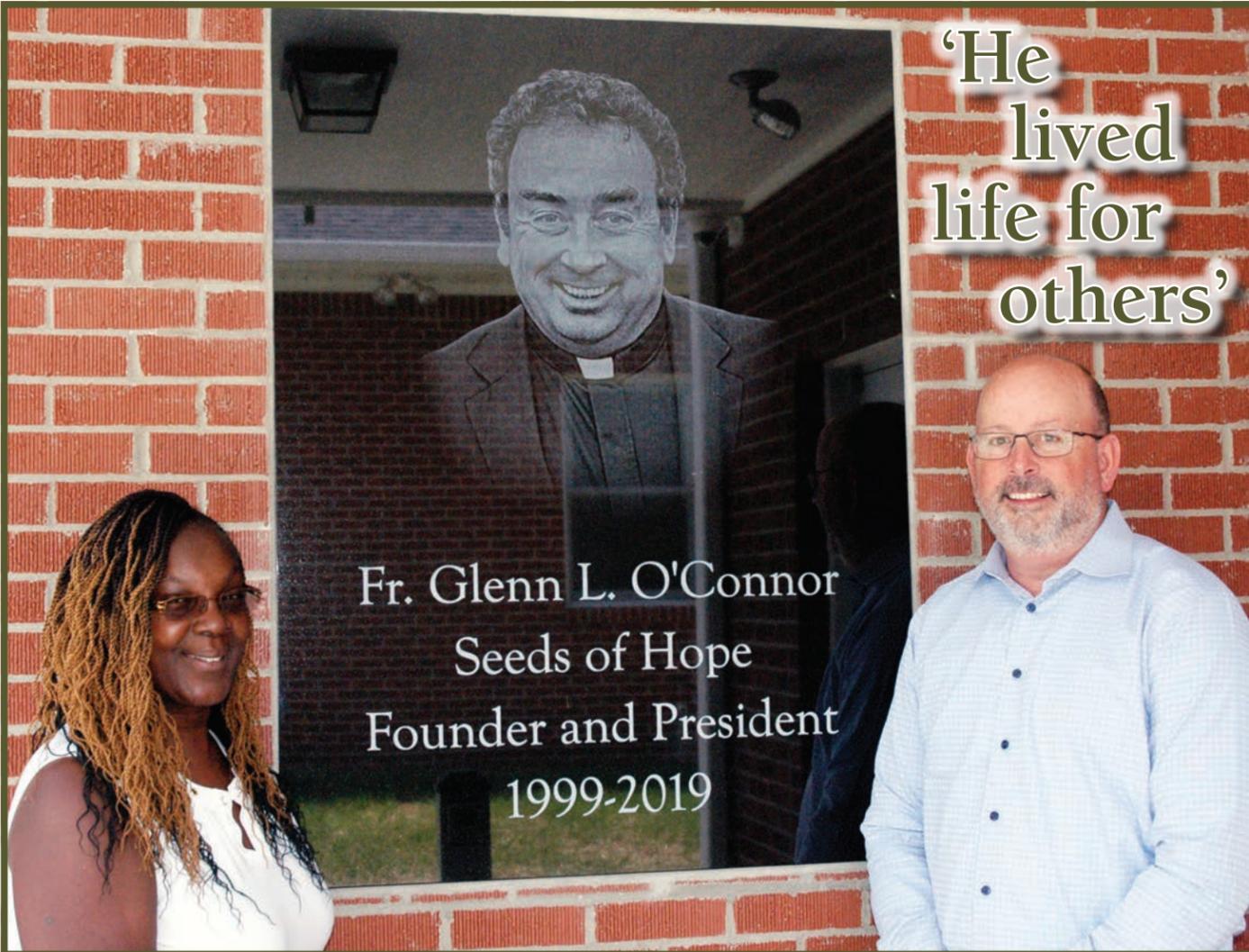
Our Works of Charity

Refugee Resettlement Program is a blessing to newcomers, page 12.

CriterionOnline.com

September 10, 2021

Vol. LXI, No. 48 75¢



At Angelus, pope prays for Ida victims, Afghan refugees

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis offered prayers to the victims and families affected by Hurricane Ida, which devastated the southern and northeastern United States.

Pope Francis also offered prayers for countless refugees fleeing Afghanistan in the wake of the Taliban's Aug. 15 takeover of Kabul and expressed his hope that "many countries will welcome and protect those seeking a new life."

"I assure my prayers for the people of the United States of America who have been hit by a strong hurricane in recent days," the pope told

pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square on Sept. 5 during his Sunday *Angelus* address.

The Category 4 hurricane made landfall on Sept. 1, carrying 150-mph winds in Louisiana and knocking out power, water and cellphone service.

The remnants of Hurricane Ida later struck the northeastern United States, causing an estimated 41 deaths and flooding roads in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Connecticut.

"May the Lord receive the souls of the deceased and sustain those suffering from this calamity," the pope said.

Speaking about Afghanistan, Pope Francis said he is praying "for the internally displaced persons and that they may receive assistance and the necessary protection," he said. "May young Afghans receive education, an essential good for human development. And may all Afghans, whether at home, in transit, or in host countries, live with dignity, in peace and fraternity with their neighbors."

Before praying the *Angelus*, the pope reflected on the Sunday Gospel reading from St. Mark, in which Jesus healed a deaf man with a speech impediment.

The pope reflected on the way in which the man was healed, noting that while Jesus was asked to lay his hand on him, he "put his finger into the man's ears and

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Pope Francis

The smiling image of the late Father Glenn O'Connor greets people near the entrance of the new Seeds of Hope residence center on the grounds of St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis. The archdiocesan priest started the Seeds of Hope program in 1999 to help women overcome their struggles with drugs and alcohol. Standing near the tribute to Father O'Connor are Marvetta Grimes, the executive director of Seeds of Hope, and Sean O'Connor, one of the priest's seven siblings. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Outpouring of love fulfills priest's dream to give struggling women hope and a home

By John Shaughnessy

Cassie Stewart never met the late Father Glenn O'Connor, but she believes that his dream not only changed her life, it has saved her.

Before his death in 2019 at the age of 66, Father O'Connor spent his 39 years as a priest using his deep faith, his Irish joy and his love for the underdog to try to bring people closer to God and their potential.

And nowhere is that purpose more evident than in Seeds of Hope, the faith-based recovery program that he founded

on the grounds of St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis in 1999—a program designed to help women who are addicted to drugs and alcohol overcome their addictions, reunite with their families and start their lives anew.

At 29, Stewart is one of the more than 800 women who have benefitted from the Seeds of Hope dream that Father O'Connor had for them.

"I did time in prison, got out and relapsed. Got sent back to jail," she recalls. "God did for me what I couldn't do for myself. He got me into treatment. That's why I'm

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Supreme Court rules against blocking Texas' new 6-week abortion ban

WASHINGTON (CNS) —In a late-night decision on Sept. 1, the Supreme Court ruled against blocking a Texas law banning abortions at six weeks of pregnancy.

The 5-4 vote, issued with a one-paragraph unsigned opinion, said the challengers to the Texas law—which went into effect on Sept. 1—did not adequately address the "complex and novel antecedent procedural questions" in this case.

"This order is not based on any conclusion about the constitutionality of Texas' law, and in no way limits other procedurally proper challenges to the Texas law, including in Texas state courts," the opinion said, leaving open the possibility that the state's abortion providers could challenge it in other ways.

The Texas abortion providers had come to the

See SCOTUS, page 8



The U.S. Supreme Court is seen in Washington on June 24. The court took no action on Sept. 1 to block a Texas bill prohibiting most abortions after six weeks of pregnancy. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

Annual Festival of Faiths to take place online, interactive on Sept. 26

By Sean Gallagher

The Center for Interfaith Cooperation in Indianapolis will host its ninth annual Festival of Faiths from 2-4 p.m. on Sept. 26. The theme of this year's festival is "Sharing Gifts of Faith: Compassion, Resilience and Hope."

Because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the festival will be held online this year on the virtual meeting platform Hopin. Those interested in taking part in the festival can register at no cost at www.indycic.org/festival-of-faiths. Freewill donations to the center can also be made there.



Fr. Rick Ginther

Representatives of faith traditions from around the world that have settled in the Indianapolis metropolitan area and formed communities will have virtual booths in the festival's online exhibit hall. Some will include video recordings from faith communities. Others will be interactive in which visitors can have conversations with people from various faith traditions.

There will also be a virtual main stage that will feature an opening ceremony in which representatives from different faith traditions will offer a message to all taking part in the festival.

The main stage will also include spoken-word performances and music from various faith traditions, including the 65th Street Klezmerim of the Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation and music representing the Turkish Muslim tradition.

A schedule on the offerings on the main stage will be made available on the center's website and by e-mail to registrants about a week before the festival.

Finally, the online festival will include various interactive sessions, including one for youths.

"There will be several youths from

different faith backgrounds having a discussion about faith, particularly in a time of COVID," said Charlie Wiles, executive director of the Center for Interfaith Cooperation. "They'll be discussing how COVID has impacted their faith tradition, rituals and practices."

A video recording of all that takes place at this year's festival will be available to registrants for 72 hours after it is completed.

Wiles noted that the goal of all of the center's activities, including the Festival of Faiths, is to increase "religious literacy and empathy for people from different faith backgrounds" and "to encourage more conversation about faith and community."

Father Rick Ginther, director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs, has taken part in the festival in the past and is looking forward to representing the Church during this year's online event.

"The festival has helped me in my work through making connections with other religions, to encounter a small part of their enthusiasm, longings and values," said Father Ginther, who is also pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. "I have experienced human goodness in the people of other religions. Most of all, I have witnessed a clear longing of the varied people wishing to live in peace with their neighbors."

Father Ginther encouraged Catholics in central and southern Indiana to take part in this year's festival.

"The event is only two hours long," he said. "Take at least some of that two hours to explore one other religion with which you are not familiar. If the booth of that religion offers direct interaction, ask a basic question about their religion or religious practice. What is your most important religious day or festival of the year? How do you celebrate it?"

"If there is a Catholic Christian celebration of a similar focus, share how a Catholic would celebrate it and what it means to them." †

Priests must also learn to listen "not in a rushed way" and see the best way to help those who seek their counsel, the pope said.

"Starting a dialogue often happens not through words but silence, by not insisting, by patiently beginning anew to listen to others, hearing about their struggles and what they carry inside," he said. "The healing of the heart begins with listening."

Pope Francis said it was also important to listen to Jesus as well and repeated his call for Christians to carry a copy of the Gospels in their pocket and to open their ears and their hearts to God.

"We are Christians, but sometimes with the thousands of words we hear every day, we do not find a moment to let a few words of the Gospel resound in us," the pope said. "Jesus is the Word: If we do not stop to listen to him, he moves on." †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

September 9–21, 2021

September 9-12

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) National Advisory Council meeting in Baltimore, Md.

September 13 – 10:30 a.m.

USCCB CCLV Committee meeting in Washington, D.C.

September 14 – 10:30 a.m.

Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

September 15 – 10 a.m.

Department Heads meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

September 16 – 9:45 a.m.

Mass for students of Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis, at Bishop Chatard High School

September 16 – 3 p.m.

Archdiocesan Finance Council meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

September 17-18 – 4:30 p.m.

Wedding at St. Boniface Church in Louisville, Ky.

September 19 – 5 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Ambrose Parish, Seymour, at St. Ambrose Church

September 20 – 5:45 p.m.

Mass Celebrating Migration Week at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, Greenwood

September 21 – 5 p.m. CST

Archbishop's Annual Dinner at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Meinrad

Chicago priest prepares to join doctrinal congregation at the Vatican

CHICAGO (CNS)—Father Andrew Liaugminas of the Archdiocese of Chicago has been appointed to serve as an official for the doctrinal section of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF).

The 37-year-old priest will serve with the congregation for five years and will support the congregation's work promoting the Church's teachings on faith and morals.

The oldest of the Roman Curia's nine congregations, the CDF was founded in 1542 by Pope Paul III to promote and safeguard the Church's teachings throughout the world.

Today, the CDF is responsible for fostering a greater understanding of the faith, aiding bishops in their role as teachers of the faith and answering difficult questions that arise on faith and morals.

Rome is a familiar place to Father Liaugminas, who earned a doctorate in sacred theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in 2017. He was nominated for the university's Bellarmine Award in 2018.

Father Liaugminas was ordained to the priesthood in 2010 and served as associate pastor of Mary, Seat of Wisdom Parish in Park Ridge, Ill., from 2010 to 2013.

For the past four years, he has served as chaplain and director of Calvert House, the Catholic chaplaincy at the University of Chicago, and taught theology to seminarians at Mundelein Seminary.

The appointment to the CDF was unexpected, Father Liaugminas said.

"It came as a surprise to me," he told *Chicago Catholic*, archdiocesan newspaper. "After praying over this, I saw that it was the Lord's will. There was a real sense of the Holy Spirit being in this

call to service.

"While the roles of university chaplain and seminary professor are different in several ways, in both roles I was serving the encounter with Jesus Christ and helping people understand the beauty of our faith," he said.

As a pastor to students on a secular campus, he was able to draw on his studies in Rome to help them answer the deep questions of faith they were asking.

"In an academic setting where students and professors are used to asking critical questions and seeking answers through engaging conversations, a Catholic chaplaincy serves to engage the questions people are asking and to help them discover the beauty and truth of our faith," he said.

The CDF is staffed by priests from around the world. Father Liaugminas, who has some fluency in six languages, will have responsibilities covering the English-speaking world.

For Catholics who may not be familiar with the role of the CDF, the Chicago priest said it helps to think of it as having the responsibility and mission of assisting those in the Church who have the sacred duty of passing on the faith.

The work trusts in the intercession of the Holy Spirit, who Jesus promised would lead the faithful into the whole truth at all times, he said.

"The congregation has a special responsibility to serve the Holy Father and the universal Church in helping to clarify questions of the faith and settle questions that arise," he explained. "In all matters concerning faith and morals, the congregation offers a vital and indispensable service to help Catholics navigate important topics in the light of Christ." †

POPE

continued from page 1

touched his tongue with saliva."

The person's condition, the pope explained, had "a particularly symbolic value," especially in touching the man's ears first.

"We all have ears, but very often we are not able to hear. Why is this?" he asked. "Brothers and sisters, there is an interior deafness that we can ask Jesus to touch and heal today. It is interior deafness, which is worse than physical deafness, because it is the deafness of the heart."

Christians, he continued, run the risk of not stopping to listen to others, especially "children, young people, the elderly, the many who do not really need words and sermons, but to be heard."



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Main office: 317-236-1570
Advertising: 317-236-1585
Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570
Circulation: 317-236-1585
Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1585

Price: \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

Postmaster:

Send address changes to *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January. Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2021 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

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The Criterion

(ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.

1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
317-236-1570
800-382-9836 ext. 1570
criterion@archindy.org

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
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Catholic Charities agencies rely on virtual outreach in Ida relief

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (CNS)—With several Northeast states now joining major metropolitan regions in the Gulf Coast as Hurricane Ida-related disaster areas, Catholic Charities agencies are using virtual deployment systems refined during the coronavirus pandemic to maximize their outreach to those in need.

Prolonged power outages or record flooding are making quick disaster response access to the greater New Orleans and New York City areas an impossibility following the remnants of Hurricane Ida as it marched north after making landfall on Aug. 29 in Louisiana.

Right now, disaster response teams are turning to digital workaround solutions using staff members well outside the disaster zones.

“COVID set the stage for being able to do virtual deployment: instead of a physical person on the ground, staff can assist by doing phone calls, setting up shared documents on the Internet, and taking an administrative burden off the local staff,” said Kathleen Oldaker, senior director of disaster strategy for Catholic Charities USA.

As it did during Hurricane Katrina, Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, La., is expected to serve as the central supporting role in recovery efforts in hard-hit New Orleans and Houma-Thibodaux.

“But we are also looking at possible virtual actions: a [staff] person in California or Indiana—if there is a way of doing things with our network that might require some bandwidth—can help the agencies on the ground can focus on their outreach,” Oldaker told Catholic News Service (CNS) on Sept. 2.

Hurricane Ida’s remnants delivered a deadly surprise punch in the Northeast, causing more than 50 deaths and flooding roads and cities after slogging across New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Connecticut. The post-tropical cyclone reportedly dropped more than three inches of rain in an hour in New York.

Catholic Charities staff have learned that text messages can be a more reliable form of communications wherever cellphone signals are knocked out, which includes a large area of southeastern Louisiana.

In addition, e-mail communications for one disaster area can be managed through a related diocesan office of Catholic Charities. The e-mail for Houma-Thibodaux’s Catholic Charities office, for example, was being intercepted this week by Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Lafayette, La., Oldaker said.

Each year, staff members at Catholic Charities complete a training program called the “Applied Institute for Disaster Excellence,” a decade-old preparedness platform that can prepare a staff person with disaster experience in Maine, for example, to deploy to Louisiana.

But Hurricane Ida left infrastructures so badly damaged in places like Louisiana that teams will have to wait for electricity and water to come back online.

“What we are really seeing in this response is the neighboring agencies offering support from Lake Charles, Lafayette, Baton Rouge, and Biloxi, Mississippi—they have had staff go and help Houma with assessments and seeing where they could do distribution sites,” Oldaker said.

In the South, Houma may have experienced some of the greatest wind damage following Ida, whereas New Orleans is mostly suffering from a damaged power infrastructure. Catholic Charities staff in New Orleans have been focused on checking in on residents living in senior care homes and other residential facilities there.

“The Catholic Charities agency in Houma is trying to get on their feet a bit in a place where you walk outside and the house next door is either destroyed or damaged,” Oldaker said. “We have a Houma-Charities staff member who lost a home down to the concrete slab there.”

In the Northeast, Catholic Charities workers spent Sept. 2 contacting agencies in the Mid-Atlantic states and New York and New Jersey especially, which took some of the heaviest flash flooding.

The rapid accumulation of rainfall from Ida’s remnants turned city streets into rivers, flooded basement-level residences and shut down subway services in New York.

“Right now, the agencies are not in assessment mode; we have heard of a flooded agency in one of our buildings



First responders in Mamaroneck, N.Y., pull local residents in a boat on Sept. 2 as they rescue people trapped by floodwaters after the remnants of tropical storm Ida. (CNS photo/Mike Segar, Reuters)

in New York City; in the next day or two we will get a handle on the level of response,” Oldaker said.

Calls also went out to agency chapters in Pennsylvania, and parts of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

Across the system, Catholic Charities agencies have been inundated with calls from Ida evacuees who mostly fled the Gulf Coast region to areas across the country.

“We even had a call from Paterson, N.J. They reported a few evacuees there and they were wondering what they could do to help,” Oldaker said of the Catholic Charities affiliate there.

“In Houston, Texas, alone, we got some 10,000 phone calls or requests from evacuees, with people lining up outside their doors even before they opened.

“People are sleeping in the car, finding hotels are not available, or the hotel bills are getting expensive for those who cannot go home for a few weeks. Those costs get pretty expensive pretty fast,” she added.

When asked what may be different about the emergency response in 2021 over past years, Oldaker said the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic adds an additional

burden to the crisis response and distribution work.

“Ten years ago, I would not have been ordering masks and gloves and personal protective gear—it wasn’t something we thought about, and in Louisiana it is something they are thinking about in terms of spacing evacuees and people having to wear masks in such high heat.

“How do you balance response with safety? That is a new normal as we move forward with disaster work,” Oldaker said.

September, she said, is national disaster preparedness month, and getting people prepared is a good thing “because you never know when what might look like just rain could be a big event. When a river washes out it is shocking how fast you can have water coming into your home.”

Patricia Cole, vice president of communications Catholic Charities USA, noted that contributions are critical right now and that 100% of the donation proceeds will be directed to the disaster areas following Ida.

(To donate to those affected by Ida, go to www.catholiccharitiesusa.org.) †

McCarrick pleads not guilty; two more lawsuits filed against him

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Former Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick pleaded not guilty on Sept. 3 in a Massachusetts court, where he is facing three counts of sexually assaulting a teenager in the 1970s.

Local news reporters posted video on Twitter of the 91-year-old McCarrick, wearing a face mask and slowly heading toward Dedham District Court with the aid of a walker as protesters shouted, “Go to hell, McCarrick,” and “How many lives, how many children?”

He was not taken under custody but was ordered to post \$5,000 bail and have no contact with the alleged victim or children. The former high-ranking, globe-trotting Church official also was ordered not to leave the country and surrendered his passport.

His next court appearance is on Oct. 28. The day before the arraignment, a former employee and a former priest of the Archdiocese of Newark filed lawsuits alleging unpermitted sexual contact by McCarrick for incidents in 1991.

The Massachusetts case is the first time, however, that McCarrick has faced criminal charges for assault of a minor, which is alleged to first have taken place at a wedding reception in 1974 and continued through the years in different states. Massachusetts allows for a pause of the statute of limitations in criminal cases “when [the] defendant is not usually and publicly resident,” says the website Findlaw.com.

“This is to prevent criminals from avoiding the consequences of their crimes by simply running, hiding and waiting out the authorities,” it explains. Because McCarrick, who didn’t live in Massachusetts, left the state, it put in place

the “pause” needed for authorities to file charges against him for incidents that allegedly took place almost 50 years ago.

The state prosecutor, addressing the judge hearing the case, said McCarrick had immersed himself into the fabric of the victim’s family, using his status as a priest to access and prey on the boy.

“He specifically used the act of confession to get the victim away from his parents and from his siblings and then would sexually assault the victim during that time frame,” the prosecutor said.

Others have publicly accused McCarrick of abusing them as children, too, but charges weren’t pursued in many cases as the statute of limitations in those localities had run out. However, many of them said they or their families and sometimes priests, through the years, reported the suspected abuse to high-ranking Church officials who did nothing.

In 2018, however, the Archdiocese of New York found an allegation that McCarrick had abused a 16-year-old altar server in New York in 1971 “credible and substantiated” and turned the case over to the Vatican.

McCarrick was dismissed by the Vatican from the clerical state in 2019 following an investigation of accusations that he had abused multiple children early on in his career of more than 60 years as a cleric, and that he also had abused seminarians as a bishop in New Jersey.

In November 2020, the Vatican issued a report attempting to understand, why, if Church officials knew of the abundant allegations against him, they allowed the abuse to continue, and why the Church elevated him to a cardinal. †

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Gianna Jessen
ABORTION SURVIVOR



Gianna Jessen has overcome unspeakable challenges but her grit, determination, and joy has resonated around the world. She is living the impossible as she was intended to be one of the 1.2 million abortions that happen each year. Instead, she survived and was provided the gift of cerebral palsy, as she calls it as “it allows me to

really depend on Jesus for everything”. For a voice that was never intended to speak, she has testified before the Australian Parliament, British House of Commons and US Congress. A life that was never meant to be has been used to inspire—even save-others.

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The Criterion

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Editorial



The Texas State Capitol building is pictured in Austin on Sept. 3. In a late-night decision on Sept. 1, the Supreme Court ruled against blocking a Texas law banning abortions at six weeks of pregnancy. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

A victory for pro-lifers

For almost 50 years, American women have had the legal right to kill their own unborn children. That began in 1973 when the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion.

Now it appears that things may be changing as more and more states are putting restrictions on when women can have abortions. The Supreme Court, with a 5-4 ruling on Sept. 1, declined to overturn a Texas law that bans abortion after the baby's heart is beating, or about at six weeks of pregnancy. Naturally, the pro-abortion forces are livid about that.

Pro-life people are jubilant because they believe that the court's decision could lead to a future decision to reverse *Roe v. Wade*. That would not make all abortions illegal, but it would allow states to pass more restrictive laws, which some have already started to do.

The move toward the court's decision has been going on for several years, including during the presidential campaign of 2016 between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. You probably remember how difficult it was for pro-life people to vote, especially because of Trump's views when it came to immigration policy—recall that he wanted to forbid immigrants from certain countries—and Clinton's uncompromising support of abortion rights.

But then Trump promised to appoint pro-life justices and judges, and that was enough for many in the pro-life movement. Call many of those people "one-issue voters" if you want, but they believed that no other issue could be as important as ending abortion.

Trump won the election and had the opportunity to nominate three justices to the Supreme Court—Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett—plus 44 circuit court judges. Those three Supreme Court justices all voted to allow the Texas law to stand; they were joined by justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito.

The court's decision on the Texas law, therefore, is a great victory for the pro-life movement, just as the *Roe v. Wade* decision was a great victory for the pro-abortion movement nearly half a century ago.

Whether or not the Supreme Court

will next reverse *Roe v. Wade*, it seems clear that the abortion battles are now going to be in the states. So yes, unfortunately, whether or not abortion is legal or illegal is now a political matter and it will depend on which party controls a state's legislature.

What the pro-life movement should be doing, though, and has been trying to do all along, is convincing people that abortion is immoral. It is, whether pro-abortion proponents admit it or not, exactly what the first sentence in this editorial says it is: the killing of women's own unborn children.

Biologists have always taught that a new human being is created when a man's sperm penetrates a woman's ovum. It is not part of the woman's body, as so many signs say it is; it is a separate human person that should be protected, not destroyed.

Many women have come to realize that fact when they have a sonogram, many often out of curiosity about the sex of the baby. It's impossible to know how many women have changed their minds about having an abortion after seeing the images of their children in this way, but we believe that the number is high.

However, for many women, the issue isn't whether or not it's a baby, or when it becomes another human being, but simply the mother's right to choose whether or not to have the baby. For the past 50 years, they have been taught that it's the mother's right to choose. The baby's right to life has been denied.

Such a thing should be abhorrent, and we believe that members of the youngest generations are coming to realize that. There is evidence that young people tend to be pro-life. But that's difficult in a society in which the "right" to abortion has been taken for granted for so long.

What will happen here in Indiana, which is recognized by many as a pro-life state? The legislature has passed some laws that restrict abortion practices, but not to the extent that the Texas law has. Our legislators won't do anything more this calendar year, but if abortion is on their agenda next year, you can expect a battle with the pro-abortion forces.

—John F. Fink

Reflection/Sean Gallagher

Father Mychal Judge's last homily continues to inspire 20 years later

The date for this issue of *The Criterion* is Sept. 10, 2021. Twenty years ago on that day, Franciscan Father Mychal Judge preached his last homily.



A chaplain for the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) since 1992, Father Mychal celebrated a Mass on Sept. 10, 2001, on the occasion of the dedication of a new

firehouse in the city.

In his homily during the Mass, Father Mychal reflected on the sacred nature of the work of the firefighters to whom he ministered.

"Good days. And bad days. Up days. Down days. Sad days. Happy days. But never a boring day on this job."

"You do what God has called you to do. You show up. You put one foot in front of another. You get on the rig and you go out and you do the job. Which is a mystery. And a surprise."

"You have no idea what you get on that rig, No matter how big the call. No matter how small. You have no idea what God is calling you to."

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Father Mychal didn't hesitate to go to the World Trade Center after terrorists flew two airliners into its twin 110-story towers. He knew God called him to be at the side of the hundreds of FDNY firefighters who rushed to ground zero while thousands fled in the opposite direction.

The danger Father Mychal faced in going there didn't ultimately matter to him. Following God's call, ministering to the firefighters, did.

He ended up dying there at ground zero, along with 343 FDNY firefighters, all giving their lives while trying to help others and not giving a second thought about it. When Father Mychal's body was discovered soon after his death, five ash-covered firefighters and civilians placed it in a chair and took it to a nearby Catholic church, laying it before the altar and

covering it with a sheet.

The stories of self-sacrifice from 9/11 inspire just as much, if not more, than the stories of evil from that day horrify.

They inspire because they lead us to awe in learning of just how much ordinary people can give of themselves in extraordinary situations. They lead us perhaps to ponder, "How would I have responded in the same situation?"

May it please God that none of us will ever be faced with such evil as gripped so many ordinary people on 9/11.

But each of us is called to self-sacrifice of some kind every day of our lives. It's at the heart of our who we are as Catholics. We're disciples of Christ who are called to follow in his footsteps. "Whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me," Jesus said (Mt 10:38).

So, what Father Mychal said to firefighters in his final homily applies just as much to all of us in our lives as spouses, parents, children, workers, parishioners, neighbors, friends and even strangers.

Seen from God's perspective, none of our days are boring. He calls us in the little ins and outs of each day to do his will.

With the help of his grace, we can follow his call. We can show up and put one foot in front of another.

When we awake each morning, we don't know what God has in store for us. We might have big calls, small ones or a combination of the two. But, no matter what, God calls us in each moment to give of ourselves and, by doing so, to allow his life and love to fill our hearts all the more.

The phrase "Never forget" has become closely connected to 9/11. Let's as Catholics never forget the many stories of self-sacrifice of that day 20 years ago. May they continue to inspire us to answer God's call to give of ourselves in similar Christ-like love to others in our daily lives.

(Sean Gallagher is a reporter of The Criterion.) †

Letters to the Editor

Reader: Where COVID vaccines are concerned, someone must take a stand for aborted babies

I was frustrated when I read *The Criterion* that I received today (Aug. 27 issue). Your article made me feel like I am a bad person for not getting the COVID vaccine ("Bioethicists discuss moral dilemma of seeking vaccine exemptions").

Doesn't anyone have a heart for the aborted babies that have been used for these scientists' research? I am aware of the conditions under which they say this vaccine was developed, but don't people realize that this type of research is ongoing and that countless

little humans are being used in ongoing research, and it is only going to continue as long as good people say nothing?

I don't like it when I hear the phrase "in science is our hope." My hope is in the Lord. I don't want to spread the COVID virus to anyone, but this is my one feeble attempt to take a stand for all the aborted babies. Will no one in our Catholic Church stand with me?

Pat Cleeter
Aurora

A call to vocations: We need to promote marriage and having children

We frequently hear calls for vocations for the religious life, but we must also remember the importance of the most common vocation: married life. God's original directive to man was to be fruitful and multiply.

Our country's birth rate has fallen below the rate needed to maintain our population. The proportion of U.S. citizens between the ages of 25

and 50 who have never married is a record high 35%. The U.S. fertility rate has dropped to 1.8 children per woman, substantially below the rate of 2.1 children per woman needed just to maintain our current population.

In simple terms: two children per couple would only maintain the population if every woman had kids

See LETTER, page 10



Christ the Cornerstone

Discipleship requires self-sacrificing love

“Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the Gospel will save it” (Mk 8:34-35).

The Gospel reading for the Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mk 8:27-35) teaches us about the nature of Christian discipleship. If we wish to follow Jesus, we must be willing to set aside our personal interests, including our comfort and security, and “take up our cross,” the cruel instrument of capital punishment that was the cause of Jesus’ death.

Pope Francis reminds us frequently that we cannot be passive or indifferent—remaining on our “comfortable couches.” In his *Angelus* message on Aug. 30, 2020, Pope Francis said, “The life of Christians is always a struggle. The Bible says that the life of the believer is a militancy: fighting against the bad spirit, fighting against evil. If we want to be [Jesus’] disciples, we are called to imitate him, expending our life unreservedly out of love of God and neighbor.”

In Sunday’s Gospel, Jesus asks his

disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” (Mk 8:27) They repeat what they have heard people speculate: Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others one of the prophets. “But who do you say that I am?” Jesus asks. Peter said to him in reply, “You are the Christ” (Mk 8:29).

Peter’s bold affirmation of Jesus’ identity as the Anointed One, the long-awaited Messiah, does not prevent him from protesting against Jesus’ prophecy that “the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days” (Mk 8:31).

On the contrary, as Pope Francis observes, “At the prospect that Jesus may fail and die on the cross, Peter himself resists and says to him: ‘God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you!’” (Mk 8:32) The pope describes the conflict Peter finds himself in. “He believes in Jesus; he wants to follow him, but he does not accept that the Lord’s glory will pass through the Passion.”

If we are honest, we must admit that most of us find ourselves in a similar dilemma. We believe in Jesus and we want to follow him, but we

balk at what Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Lutheran theologian who was hanged by the Nazis in 1945, called “the cost of discipleship.”

Like St. Peter in Sunday’s Gospel reading, we would prefer not to associate the joy of Christian faith with the sacrifices, including martyrdom, that are required of Christ’s followers.

St. Mark tells us that Jesus’ response to Peter was immediate and uncompromising. At this he turned around and, looking at his disciples, rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do” (Mk 8:33). God’s ways are not our ways, and the cost of discipleship is clear: “Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the Gospel will save it” (Mk 8:35).

Pope Francis has described the two attitudes the Christian disciple is called to have: to renounce oneself, meaning to convert, and to take up one’s cross. Both require humility and the willingness to abandon our self-interest. “It is not just a matter of bearing the daily tribulations with patience,” the pope says, “but of bearing with faith and responsibility that part of the

effort and that part of suffering that the struggle against evil entails.”

The second reading for this Sunday from the Letter of St. James (Jas 2:14-18) gives a clear idea of some of the practical implications of “the cost of discipleship.” St. James asks:

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,’ but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (Jas 2:14-17).

Following Jesus demands that we first “take up our cross.” This means that we must be willing to practice what we preach. It also means we must be ready to sacrifice our own interests for the good of others.

Let’s pray for the grace to recognize Jesus as the Christ, our Lord and Redeemer. Let’s also pray for the willingness to abandon our own self-interest in order to follow Jesus in doing good works for the sake of others. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

El discipulado exige un amor abnegado

“Si alguien quiere ser mi discípulo, que se niegue a sí mismo, lleve su cruz y me siga. Porque el que quiera salvar su vida la perderá; pero el que pierda su vida por mi causa y por el evangelio la salvará” (Mc 8:34-35).

La lectura del Evangelio del vigésimo cuarto domingo del tiempo ordinario (Mc 8,27-35) nos enseña sobre la naturaleza del discipulado cristiano. Si queremos seguir a Jesús, debemos estar dispuestos a dejar de lado nuestros intereses personales, incluyendo nuestra comodidad y seguridad, y “llevar nuestra cruz,” el cruel instrumento de la pena capital que fue la causa de la muerte de Jesús.

El Papa Francisco nos recuerda con frecuencia que no podemos ser pasivos o indiferentes, ni permanecer en “la comodidad del sillón.” En su mensaje *del Ángelus* del 30 de agosto de 2020, el Papa Francisco dijo: “La vida de los cristianos es siempre una lucha. La Biblia dice que la vida del creyente es una milicia: luchar contra el espíritu malo, luchar contra el Mal. Si queremos ser discípulos [de Jesús], estamos llamados a imitarlo, gastando sin reservas nuestra vida por amor de Dios y del prójimo.”

En el Evangelio del domingo, Jesús pregunta a sus discípulos:

“¿Quién dice la gente que soy yo?” (Mc 8:27) Repiten lo que han oído especular a otros: Unos dicen que es Juan el Bautista, otros que Elías, y otros que es uno de los profetas. “Y ustedes, ¿quién dicen que soy yo?” Les pregunta Jesús. Pedro le respondió: “Tú eres el Cristo” (Mc 8:29).

La audaz afirmación de Pedro con respecto a la identidad de Jesús como el Ungido, el Mesías largamente esperado, no le impide protestar contra la profecía de Jesús de que “el Hijo del hombre tiene que sufrir muchas cosas y ser rechazado por los ancianos, por los jefes de los sacerdotes y por los maestros de la ley. Es necesario que lo maten y que a los tres días resucite” (Mc 8:31).

Por el contrario, como observa el Papa Francisco, “Frente a la perspectiva de que Jesús pueda fracasar y morir en la cruz, el mismo Pedro se rebela y le dice: ‘Dios no lo quiera, Señor; no te ocurrirá eso’” (Mc 8:32). El Papa describe el conflicto en el que se encuentra Pedro. “Cree en Jesús—Pedro es así—, tiene fe, cree en Jesús, cree; le quiere seguir, pero no acepta que su gloria pase a través de la pasión.”

Para ser sinceros, debemos admitir que la mayoría de nosotros nos encontramos en un dilema similar. Creemos en Jesús y queremos

seguirlo, pero nos resistimos a lo que Dietrich Bonhoeffer, el teólogo luterano que fue ahorcado por los nazis en 1945, llamó “el costo del discipulado.”

Como san Pedro en la lectura del Evangelio del domingo, preferiríamos no asociar la alegría de la fe cristiana con los sacrificios, incluido el martirio, que se exigen a los seguidores de Cristo.

San Marcos nos dice que la respuesta de Jesús a Pedro fue inmediata e inflexible. Al oír esto, se dio la vuelta y, mirando a sus discípulos, reprendió a Pedro y le dijo: “¡Aléjate de mí, Satanás! Tú no piensas en las cosas de Dios, sino en las de los hombres” (Mc 8:33). Los caminos de Dios no son nuestros caminos, y el costo del discipulado es claro: “El que quiera salvar su vida la perderá; pero el que pierda su vida por mi causa y por el evangelio la salvará” (Mc 8:35).

El Papa Francisco ha descrito las dos actitudes a las que está llamado el discípulo cristiano: a renunciar a sí mismo, es decir, convertirse, y tomar la cruz. Ambas requieren humildad y la voluntad de abandonar nuestro propio interés. “No se trata solo de soportar con paciencia las tribulaciones cotidianas—dice el Papa—sino de llevar con fe y responsabilidad esa parte de cansancio, esa parte de

sufrimiento que la lucha contra el mal conlleva.”

La segunda lectura de este domingo de la Carta de Santiago (Stg 2:14-18) da una idea clara de algunas de las implicaciones prácticas del “costo del discipulado.” Pregunta Santiago:

“Hermanos míos, ¿de qué le sirve a uno alegar que tiene fe, si no tiene obras? ¿Acaso podrá salvarlo esa fe? Supongamos que un hermano o una hermana no tiene con qué vestirse y carece del alimento diario, y uno de ustedes le dice: ‘Que le vaya bien; abríguese y coma hasta saciarse,’ pero no le da lo necesario para el cuerpo. ¿De qué servirá eso? Así también la fe por sí sola, si no tiene obras, está muerta” (Stg 2:14-17).

Seguir a Jesús exige que primero “llevemos nuestra cruz,” lo que significa que debemos estar dispuestos a practicar lo que predicamos. También significa que debemos estar dispuestos a sacrificar nuestros propios intereses por el bien de los demás.

Pidamos la gracia de reconocer a Jesús como el Cristo, nuestro Señor y Redentor. Recemos también por la voluntad de abandonar nuestro propio interés para seguir a Jesús en la realización de buenas obras por el bien de los demás. †

Events Calendar

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

September 12

St. Mary Parish, 512 N. Perkins St., Rushville. **Fall Festival**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., fried chicken dinners, raffles, kids' activities, home-cooking, crafts, free admission. Information: 765-932-2588 or dspaeth@stmaryrush.org.

September 12, 19

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

September 12-14

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 5692 Central Avenue, Indianapolis. **Parish Mission: "Welcome Home,"** 7 p.m., Father Joseph Donnelly facilitator, free. Information: 317-257-2266 or ueble@ihmindy.org.

September 13, 20

St. Therese of the Child Jesus (Little Flower) Parish Center, St. Therese Room, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **SoulCore Rosary Workout**, 6:30-7:15 p.m., prayer and exercise, free. Information: 317-727-1167, joane632003@yahoo.com or soulcore.com.

September 14

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **"The Spirit**

Breathes" monthly Taizé Prayer Service, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available at cutt.ly/Taize. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, 1752 Scheller Ln., New Albany. **Pandemic Mass of Consolation**, 5:30 p.m., masks required, social distancing available. Information: 812-945-2374 or tyost@olphna.org.

September 15

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

September 16

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

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

September 17

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Pro-Life Film Series: Divided Hearts of America**, 6 p.m., catered pizza

dinner, space limited to 100 attendees, required registration opens Aug. 1. Information and registration: cutt.ly/dividedhearts.

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Dr. Daniel Elsener, president of Marian University, presenting "A Marian Miracle - Building a Great University in a Great American City," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Sept. 14. Information and registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

September 17-18

St. Malachy Parish, 9833 E. County Road 750 N., Brownsburg. **Country Fair and Hog Roast**, 3-11 p.m., live entertainment, carnival rides, homemade food, youth games, adult beverage tent, raffle and casino, free admission. Information: 317-852-3195 or jkiefer@stmalachy.org.

September 17-19

Knights of Columbus Annual Indiana Biking for Babies Ride, proceeds help fund ultrasound machines for women's care centers, 175-mile ride from state line to state line, or the leg from Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis to St. Michael Parish in Greenfield. Rider Information and registration:

ranewport@gmail.com. Sponsor a rider or donate: www.kofc437.com.

September 18

St. Bridget of Ireland Parish, 404 E. Vine St., Liberty. **Oktoberfest**, 4-10 p.m.; Mass 4 p.m.; German food served 4-7 p.m. at \$10 adult, \$5 child; beer/wine garden, poker, raffle, 50/50 drawing, country store, snack shack, kids' games. Information: scwessler@frontier.com, 765-580-2435.

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **The Monarch Festival at MountFest**, noon- 8 p.m., live music, arts, music and food, artist applications being accepted. Information: cutt.ly/mountfest or 812-923-8817.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church,

5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. **Indiana Biking for Babies Midpoint Rally/ Prayer Service**, 1:30 p.m., rally in support of riders participating in the Knights of Columbus' Biking for Babies event, speakers, light refreshments. Information: life@indianakofc.org. Sponsor a rider or donate: www.kofc437.com.

September 19

St. Louis Parish, 13 St. Louis Place, Batesville. **Parish Festival**, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., fried chicken dinners, games, free admission. Information: 812-934-3204.

St. Michael Parish, 101 St. Michael Dr., Charlestown. **SeptemberFest**, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., fried chicken dinner with sides and desserts, cash raffle, quilt raffle, silent auction, games of chance, free admission.

Information: 812-256-3200 or stmichaelsecretary@northclarkcountycatholic.org.

Elks Country Club, 2100 US 27, Richmond. **Cardinal Classic Golf Outing**, benefiting Seton Catholic Athletics, noon lunch, shotgun start at 1 p.m., \$60 per person includes lunch, golf cart, green fees and giveaways, register by Sept. 15. Information: 765-962-5010 or emurray@setoncatholics.org.

September 20

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 South Meridian St., Greenwood. **World Day of Migrants and Refugees Mass**, 5:30 p.m., offered in English and Spanish, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, celebrant. Information: 317-236-1404 or tchamblee@archindy.org. †

Sept. 28 Green Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Indy to mark Season of Creation

To celebrate the Season of Creation—recognized each year between Sept. 1-Oct. 4—the archdiocesan Creation Care Commission is celebrating a Green Mass at 6 p.m. on Sept. 28 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis.

Father Rick Ginther, the parish's

pastor, will be the principal celebrant.

The public is invited to attend the liturgy.

The Creation Care Commission aims to help Catholics across central and southern Indiana live out the Pope Francis' call to care more deeply about our intertwined relationships with God, people and Earth. †

Icon exhibit will take place in Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library through Oct. 30

"Holy Faces: Traditional Icons of Our Lord, His Mother and the Saints," an exhibit of icons, will be on display in the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery, 200 Hill Dr., in St. Meinrad, through Oct. 30.

The gallery will exhibit works by Connecticut artist Marek Czarniecki and Benedictine Sister Jeana Visel of Ferdinand, Ind. There will be an opening reception on Sept. 12 at 3 p.m. Central Time.

Developed, practiced and preserved primarily by the Eastern Rite, icons carry a patrimony of both theology and art. Unlike naturalistic portraits that seek to create the likeness of an individual at a particular time in his life, icons convey essential dogmatic and biographical information that embody the saint depicted.

The practice of making icons—which are referred to as being "written" instead of "painted"—is often learned as an apprentice. Czarniecki studied under Russian Orthodox iconographer Ksenia Pokrovsky. Czarniecki uses natural materials to make the icons. Linen is glued to a wood panel and primed with a marble-based gesso. It is then painted with egg tempera mixed with natural earth



and mineral pigments. The halos and backgrounds are gilded with 22-karat gold.

He has received a variety of awards for his work, including two artist fellowships from the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. His icons can be found in churches across the country.

Sister Jeana apprenticed in icon writing with Czarniecki and has been writing icons since 2006. Icons have been a major part of her academic work and were the subject of her master's thesis and her doctoral treatise.

For library hours, call 812-357-6401 or 800-987-7311 or visit the Archabbey Library's website: www.saintmeinrad.edu/library/library-hours.

The exhibit is free and open to the public. Those wishing to view the exhibit may want to arrive at least 30 minutes before closing time. †

Wedding Anniversaries

CRAIG AND SUSAN ALLEN



CRAIG AND SUSAN (O'NEIL) ALLEN, members of St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 12.

The couple was married in St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis on Aug. 12, 1961.

They have two children: Holly Barton and Paige Grodecki.

The couple also has two grandchildren.

They received a papal blessing in honor of the event. †

DONALD AND D. MARILYN KENNEDY



DONALD AND D. MARILYN (DOYLE) KENNEDY, members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Sept. 2.

The couple was married in St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on Sept. 2, 1961.

They have two children: Dawn Hobbs and Keith Kennedy.

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

RONALD AND JOANN NEVITT



RONALD AND JOANN (CARSON) NEVITT, members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Sept. 16.

The couple was married in St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on Sept. 16, 1961.

They have five children: Christine Crowe, Susan Gallagher, Jeffery, Joseph and Steven Nevitt.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. †

DUANE AND THERESA MEYER



DUANE AND THERESA (OLIVER) MEYER, members of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 21.

The couple was married in Holy Angels Church in Trenton, N. J., on Aug. 21, 1971.

They have four children: Jennifer Morris, Melissa, Christopher and Father Jonathan Meyer.

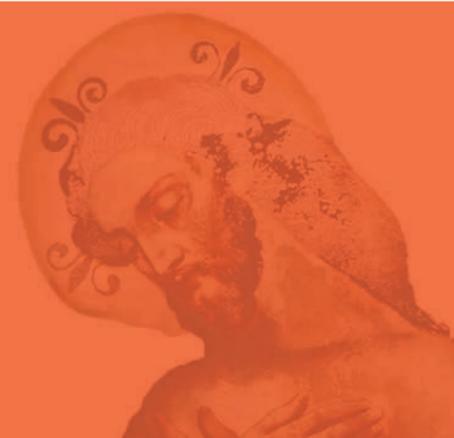
The couple also has two grandchildren. †

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



The Face of Mercy

By Daniel Conway



‘Tenderness’ and ‘closeness’ are at heart of caring for sick, elderly

Pope Francis had good reason to think about the importance of quality health care this past summer. He underwent colon surgery and spent several weeks in recovery—first at Rome’s Gemelli Hospital and afterward in his apartments at the Vatican.

On July 11, the Holy Father led the *Angelus* from a balcony of Gemelli Hospital. In his remarks, the pope said:

I would like to express my appreciation and my encouragement to the doctors and all the health care workers and staff of this and other hospitals. They work so hard! And let us pray for all the sick. Here there are some friends, sick children. ... Why do children suffer? Why children suffer is a question that touches the heart. Accompany them with prayer and pray for all those who are sick, especially those in the most difficult conditions: may no one be left behind, may everyone receive the anointing of listening, closeness, tenderness and care. Let us ask this through the intercession of Mary, our Mother, Health of the Sick.

“Tenderness” and “closeness”

are words that Pope Francis uses frequently to describe God’s love for us, and to encourage us to care for one another. He believes strongly that we have a solemn obligation to share the tender, merciful love of Christ with everyone, but especially with children, the sick, the elderly and all who are vulnerable.

For those who are missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, health care is not about science and technology—as important as these are for diagnosing and treating serious health problems. True healing is about love. It’s about caring for one another and giving comfort and hope to those who are ill. Health care workers must be skilled professionals, but they should also be human beings who care deeply about the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health of their patients.

In his *Angelus* remarks, Pope Francis said:

In these days of being hospitalized, I have experienced once again how important good health care is, accessible to all, as it is in Italy and other countries. Free health care, that assures

good service, accessible to everyone. This precious benefit must not be lost. It needs to be kept! And for this everyone needs to be committed, because it helps everyone and requires everyone’s contribution.

Universal access to health care is a matter of justice, as well as charity. The fact that quality medical care is costly does not mean that it should be available only to those who can afford it. The pope believes that caring for the sick is not a matter of economics. It is a vocation, he says, “to offer service, and service is always freely given.”

In his homily for the first World Day of Prayer for Grandparents and the Elderly on July 25, Pope Francis continued to reflect on the virtues of closeness and tenderness. “Older people are not leftovers to be discarded,” the pope said. On the contrary, “they continue to be precious nourishment for families, young people and communities.”

“Let us ask ourselves,” the pope said, “Have I visited my grandparents, my elderly relatives, the older people in my neighborhood? Have I listened to

them? Have I spent time with them?” All of us have an obligation to care for the senior members of our families and communities. But this should not be seen as a burden. Rather, it is an opportunity to allow older people to inspire and encourage us with their life stories and their struggles over the years.

“I worry when I see a society full of people in constant motion,” the Holy Father said, “too caught up in their own affairs to have time for a glance, a greeting of a hug.” Closeness and tenderness are a two-way street. We need to give them away in order to get them back.

In a social media message on the World Day of Prayer for Grandparents and the Elderly, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin wrote: *A blessed Grandparents Day to all the women and men who share the tender love of God with the world’s children. Let’s pray especially for our Spiritual Grandfather, Pope Francis, as he continues to recover from surgery earlier this month.*

(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”)

“Jesús de Nazaret con su palabra, con sus gestos y con toda su persona revela la misericordia de Dios.”

—Papa Francisco, “*Misericordiae Vultus*” (“El rostro de la misericordia”)

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

La ‘ternura’ y la ‘cercanía’ es la esencia del cuidado de enfermos y ancianos

El Papa Francisco tuvo buenas razones para reflexionar sobre la importancia de la atención médica de calidad este pasado verano: se sometió a una operación del colon y pasó varias semanas en recuperación, primero en el Hospital Gemelli de Roma y después en su apartamento en el Vaticano.

El 11 de julio el Santo Padre dirigió el *Ángelus* desde un balcón del Hospital Gemelli. En su prédica, el Papa dijo:

Quiero expresar mi aprecio y mi aliento a los médicos, a los sanitarios y a todo el personal de este hospital y de otros hospitales. ¡Cuánto trabajan! Y recemos por todos los enfermos. Aquí hay algunos pequeños amigos enfermos. ... ¿por qué sufren los niños? Por qué sufren los niños es una pregunta que toca el corazón. Acompañarlos con la oración y rezar por todos los enfermos, especialmente por los que se encuentran en las condiciones más difíciles: que no se deje a nadie solo, que todos reciban la unción de la escucha, de la cercanía, de la ternura y del cuidado. Lo pedimos por intercesión de María, nuestra Madre, Salud de los Enfermos.

“Ternura” y “cercanía” son palabras que el Papa Francisco utiliza con frecuencia para describir el amor de

Dios por nosotros, y para animarnos a cuidarnos unos a otros. Cree firmemente que tenemos la solemne obligación de compartir el amor tierno y misericordioso de Cristo con todos, pero especialmente con los niños, los enfermos, los ancianos y todos los que son vulnerables.

Para quienes son discípulos misioneros de Jesucristo, la atención médica no tiene que ver con la ciencia y la tecnología, por muy importantes que sean para diagnosticar y tratar problemas de salud graves. Para ellos, la verdadera sanación tiene que ver con el amor. Se trata de cuidarse unos a otros y dar consuelo y esperanza a los enfermos. Los trabajadores de la salud deben ser profesionales cualificados, pero también deben ser seres humanos que se preocupan profundamente por la salud mental, física, emocional y espiritual de sus pacientes.

En su prédica del *Ángelus*, el papa Francisco expresó:

En estos días de hospitalización, he experimentado una vez más lo importante que es un buen servicio sanitario, accesible a todos, como el que hay en Italia y en otros países. Un servicio sanitario gratuito que garantice un buen servicio accesible para todos.

No debemos perder este bien tan precioso. ¡Tenemos que mantenerlo! Y para ello debemos esforzarnos todos, porque sirve a todos y requiere la contribución de todos.

El acceso universal a la atención médica es una cuestión de justicia, además de caridad. El hecho de que la atención médica de calidad sea costosa no significa que deba estar únicamente a disposición de quienes puedan pagarla. El Papa cree que el cuidado de los enfermos no es una cuestión económica, sino una vocación, según afirma, “es hacer un servicio, y el servicio es siempre gratuito.”

En su homilía de la primera Jornada mundial de oración por los abuelos y los mayores, el 25 de julio, el Papa Francisco siguió reflexionando sobre las virtudes de la cercanía y la ternura. “Los abuelos y los mayores no son sobras de la vida, desechos que se deben tirar,” expresa el Santo Padre. Por el contrario, son “valiosos pedazos de pan que han quedado sobre la mesa de nuestra vida, que pueden todavía nutrirnos con una fragancia que hemos perdido».

“Preguntemonos—señaló el Papa—“¿He visitado a los abuelos? ¿a los mayores de la familia o de mi barrio? ¿Los he escuchado? ¿Les he

dedicado un poco de tiempo?” Todos tenemos la obligación de cuidar a los integrantes mayores de nuestras familias y comunidades. Pero esto no debe verse como una carga sino como una oportunidad para que las personas mayores nos inspiren y animen con sus historias de vida y sus luchas a lo largo de los años.

“Sufro cuando veo una sociedad que corre—asevera el Sumo Pontífice—atareada, indiferente, afanada en tantas cosas e incapaz de detenerse para dirigir una mirada, un saludo, una caricia.” La cercanía y la ternura son calles de dos sentidos. Tenemos que darlas para recibir las.

En un mensaje en las redes sociales con motivo de la Jornada mundial de oración por los abuelos y los mayores, el cardenal Joseph W. Tobin escribió: *Un bendecido Día de los Abuelos para todas las mujeres y hombres que comparten el tierno amor de Dios con los niños del mundo. Recemos especialmente por nuestro Abuelo Espiritual, el Papa Francisco, mientras sigue recuperándose de la operación a la que fue sometido a principios de este mes.*

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.) †

HOPE

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here. Now, every dream I've ever had is coming true right now. I'm sober. I have a relationship with God. I work in recovery. I have a very good relationship with my family. I'm saving up to buy a house.

"It brings tears to my eyes."

As she shares her story, Stewart is sitting in a place that is one of Father O'Connor's last dreams—a dream that has become a reality through a monumental outpouring of love for the priest.

'This is what he wanted for them'

The fulfillment of that dream is a new, two-story, red-brick building that just opened in July—a stunning addition to Seeds of Hope that Father O'Connor longed to create before he died of cancer.

For its first 20 years, Seeds of Hope had provided a transitional residence center for the women in the program, but the priest wanted to have what he called a "three-quarter house"—a place where the women could live for another 18 months after they completed the program and before they immersed themselves in society.

Before this new facility, the women were scared of going back into the world and relapsing, says Marvetta Grimes, the longtime executive director of Seeds of Hope who is also a successful graduate of the program.

Grimes remembers how Father O'Connor would listen as the women shared how they wanted to stay clean of drugs—but that once they graduated from the program, they would return to the places where they had lived before, where drugs were still readily available.

"He saw their tears and how scared they were," she says. "This is what he wanted for them. He just ran out of time."

After his death, others raced forward to honor his life and his vision, including his siblings. A week after the funeral of Father O'Connor—the oldest of eight children—his brother Sean asked to join the Seeds of Hope board. When he did, he proposed what became a turning point—giving up the plan of trying to get a federal grant for the project and "just raising the money ourselves."

Yet even Sean was stunned by what happened eight months later at the annual Seeds of Hope fundraiser. In a usual year, the fundraiser nets \$50,000. In 2019, it raised \$800,000, plus in-kind contributions of material and labor from contractors and sub-contractors to

build the three-quarter house and also to completely furnish the 22 apartments within it for the women.

"It was emotional," Sean recalls. "People opened their hearts and wallets. Glenn was there in spirit."

An unusual twist and a lasting tribute

The fundraiser involved a twist: When someone or some group donated at least \$20,000 for one of the apartments, that donation was recognized with a sign near the door of the apartment. The same was true for a donation of at least \$50,000 to fund one of the two family rooms in the building.

While it's likely that many of those large donations would have been made without the incentive of the sponsor signs, the signs do capture the variety of people and organizations who wanted to help make Father O'Connor's dream come true. Among them are the Indianapolis Colts, Father O'Connor's siblings and his fellow priests of the archdiocese.

Another contribution honored Father O'Connor's longtime commitment as a pit crew member for IndyCar racing teams at the Indianapolis 500. That one came from the Benevolent Fund of Motor Sports, an organization that offers financial support to members of the IndyCar racing community and their families when their lives have been impacted by death, injury or illness.

Grimes was especially touched by one donation—in honor of Jim McCaughna, a member of the Indianapolis chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, an Irish heritage organization that embraced Father O'Connor as much as he embraced it.

"Jim passed away, so his wife bought a room in honor of him," Grimes says.

Sean believes his brother would also appreciate one other aspect of the new three-quarter house.

"We got this done without any debt," Sean says. "That's what he would really be fired up about."

Still, there is one part of the building that Father O'Connor would hate, according to both his brother and Grimes.

'Father and the Church had enough faith in us'

That's the sign outside the facility that proclaims its name—"The Father Glenn O'Connor Home."

"He wouldn't like that, but he dreamed this," Sean says. "It's not his mojo, but it's ours."

As he talks, Sean sits inside the



Cassie Stewart, left, and Marvetta Grimes relax in the kitchen of one of the apartments of The Father Glenn O'Connor Home, the new Seeds of Hope residence center named in honor of the late archdiocesan priest who started the Seeds of Hope program to help women overcome their struggles with drugs and alcohol. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

facility, at a table near a wall that offers a collage of small photos that include Father O'Connor water-skiing, working as a pit crew member and shaking hands with the late St. Pope John Paul II.

In most of those photos, the priest is flashing his trademark smile, the one that embraced his joy in life and the one that also embraced his joy of mischief.

That smile is also captured in the larger-than-life image of him near the entrance of the three-quarter house. Again, Sean and Grimes believe it's a tribute that Father O'Connor would have resisted, but they have their memories and their stories of him, and he'll just have to forgive them and so many others who want to make sure he is remembered for the way he approached his life and his faith.

"After he died, we had 'Live Like Father Glenn' bracelets and T-shirts made," Sean says. "One of his nieces was walking in downtown Indianapolis with a 'Live Like Father Glenn' T-shirt, and a homeless guy saw the shirt and said, 'I love that guy.' I don't know what he did for him, but..."

Grimes quickly chimes in, "He would give them a couple dollars. He would get them something to eat. He would talk to them about recovery. He was just there to help."

She's on a roll now, turning her thoughts to the way his compassion focused on the women who came to Seeds of Hope.

"I believe that Father Glenn and the Church had more faith in them than the women coming here," she says. "The women didn't have faith in anything. Father and the Church had enough faith in us to recover and live life until we had our own faith. And he moved mountains to do it."

Sean nods and adds, "He was the most Christ-like person I've ever encountered, and I'm not just saying that because he's my brother. At Christmas, we couldn't give him anything nice because he would turn around and give it away. One of his parishes gave him a new car, and he gave it away."

"It's 'What Would Jesus Do?' That's how he lived. This place is a continuation of that. He lived life for others."

Cassie Stewart now knows that she's part of his legacy.

As one of the first residents in The Father Glenn O'Connor Home, Stewart believes it's the transition she needs—giving her a combination of structure and freedom—before she reaches toward her goal of having her own home.

As she carves out a new life for herself, she's ever grateful to the priest she never met and to the God who is always with her.

"This is what I dreamed of when I was in a jail cell. Doing something on my own. Making a life of my own," she says. "God is with me. God is shining down on me." †

SCOTUS

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Supreme Court with an emergency appeal to stop the law, but the court initially did not respond.

The Texas Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the state's Catholic bishops, said the Supreme Court's action marked the first time since *Roe v. Wade* that the nation's high court "has allowed a pro-life law to remain while litigation proceeds in lower courts."

President Joe Biden criticized the Supreme Court's action and said in a Sept. 2 statement that his administration will look to launch a "whole-of-government effort to respond to this decision" and look at "what steps the federal government can take to ensure that women in Texas have access to safe and legal abortions as protected by *Roe*."

Similarly, Attorney General Merrick Garland issued a statement, which said the Justice Department was deeply concerned about the Texas abortion law and would be "evaluating all options to protect the constitutional rights of women, including access to an abortion."

In the Supreme Court's decision, Chief Justice John Roberts joined Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Stephen Breyer in dissenting votes and each of them wrote separate statements expressing their disagreement with the majority.

A key part of the law that the dissenting justices took issue with is its emphasis on private citizens bringing civil lawsuits in state court against anyone involved in an abortion, other than the patient, but including someone who drives the patient to a clinic. As further incentive, the state law says anyone who successfully sues another person could be entitled to \$10,000.

Sotomayor said the majority opinion in this case was "stunning." She said that when the court examined a

"flagrantly unconstitutional law engineered to prohibit women from exercising their constitutional rights and evade judicial scrutiny, a majority of Justices have opted to bury their heads in the sand."

Kagan similarly called the Texas law "patently unconstitutional," for its emphasis on encouraging "private parties to carry out unconstitutional restrictions on the state's behalf."

Roberts said the "statutory scheme" involving citizens' enforcement of the law "is not only unusual, but unprecedented."

"The legislature has imposed a prohibition on abortions after roughly six weeks, and then essentially delegated enforcement of that prohibition to the populace at large. The desired consequence appears to be to insulate the state from responsibility for implementing and enforcing the regulatory regime."

He also noted that the case is not shut, saying that although the court denied the emergency relief sought by the applicants, its order is "emphatic in making clear that it cannot be understood as sustaining the constitutionality of the law at issue."

In a statement just after the court's decision, Nancy Northup, president and CEO of the Center for Reproductive Rights, which represents abortion providers challenging the Texas law, said these challengers would keep fighting.

"We are devastated that the Supreme Court has refused to block a law that blatantly violates *Roe v. Wade*," she added.

Kristan Hawkins, the president of Students for Life of America, said in a statement that her group was "celebrating this decision for what it is, baby steps in the right direction toward the obvious conclusion that *Roe* is fatally flawed and must go."

The law, signed by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott in May, became effective at midnight central time on Sept. 1. It is one of the strictest abortion measures in

the country, banning abortions in the state after a fetal heartbeat is detectable. The law has an exception for medical emergencies but not for rape or incest.

"We celebrate every life saved by this legislation. Opponents of the law argue the term 'heartbeat' is misleading. They call it 'embryonic cardiac activity' or worse, 'electrically induced flickering of embryonic tissue.' These attempts to dehumanize the unborn are disturbing," the Texas bishops said in a Sept. 3 statement.

The night before the law took effect, court watchers on both sides of the issue kept vigil at the Supreme Court waiting for an order that never came. Abortion providers in the state had argued that the law would prevent about 85% of abortions in the state and will likely cause many clinics to close.

Currently, at least 12 other states have legislation banning abortions early in pregnancy, but these bans have been blocked by courts.

"Hopefully, this law will begin saving the lives of tens of thousands of Texas babies, and we look forward to the day that babies' lives will be spared across America," said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life.

She also applauded the efforts of the Texas Right to Life and "pro-life Texans who have been devoted to providing a voice for the voiceless. We praise all of our state affiliates who have diligently and tirelessly worked with state legislators to protect unborn babies by passing laws that protect children whose hearts have begun to beat," she said in a Sept. 1 statement.

Two months after the law was signed, abortion providers challenged it in court, saying it violated patients' constitutional right to end a pregnancy before viability, when a fetus is said to be able to survive on its own.

The Supreme Court has consistently ruled that states cannot restrict abortion before the 24-week mark. This fall, the court will take up a Mississippi abortion ban after 15 weeks of pregnancy. †

Sisters of Providence celebrate significant jubilees

Criterion staff report

In 2021, 22 members of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods celebrated significant milestones in the congregation.

80-year jubilarian

Sister Agnes Eugene Cordak is a native of Chicago. She entered the congregation on Sept. 14, 1941, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1950. Sister Agnes Eugene earned a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods and master's degrees in education and history, both from Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

Sister Agnes Eugene served in the archdiocese as a teacher at the former St. Mary School in Richmond (now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School), and the former St. Ann School, the former Gibault Home for Boys and the former Bishop Schulte High School, all in Terre Haute.

At the motherhouse, she served as sacristan and treasurer for Providence Hall, in residential services, as manager/buyer, as coordinator of transportation, on the gift store staff, in the resource center and as a volunteer.

Sister Agnes Eugene also ministered in the Diocese of Gary, Ind., and in Illinois and Washington, D.C.

She currently ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

75-year jubilarians

Sister Adele (formerly Sister Joseph Therese) Beacham was born in Toronto, Canada. She entered the congregation on July 22, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1954.

Sister Adele earned a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College. In addition, she earned a master's degree in reading from Cardinal Stritch University in Glendale, Wis., and a master's degree in theological studies from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

She served in the archdiocese as a teacher at the former St. Anthony School in Indianapolis; as a principal at Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis; as a religious educator, parish minister and pastoral associate at St. Anne Parish in New Castle; as director of religious education at Sacred Heart Parish in Terre Haute; and in the ministry of care at Rockville Women's Prison.

At the motherhouse, Sister Adele served as director of development, a volunteer, on the wellness ministry staff, for the ministry of care and as a tutor.

She also served in the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and in Illinois.

Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Joanne (formerly Sister Timothy) Cullins is a native of New Albany. She entered the congregation on Jan. 9, 1946, from the former Holy Trinity Parish in New Albany and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1953.

She has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in addition to a master's degree in education from Indiana State University.

Sister Joanne served in the archdiocese as a teacher at the former St. Paul School in Sellersburg (now St. John Paul II School), the former St. Benedict School in Terre Haute and Holy Family School in New Albany; as a receptionist and social services designee at the former Providence Retirement Home in New Albany; as director of adult education and receptionist at Providence Self Sufficiency Program in New Albany; and as director of adult education for Providence Place in Georgetown.

She also ministered in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and the Diocese of Gary, Ind., and in Illinois and Maryland.

Sister Joanne currently serves in the ministry of care in the New Albany area.

Sister Mary Mark Dede is a native of Terre Haute. She entered the congregation on Jan. 13, 1946, from the former St. Ann Parish in Terre Haute and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1953.

Sister Mary Mark has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in education from Indiana State University.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany; in Terre Haute at the former St. Margaret Mary and Sacred Heart schools and St. Patrick School; and as teacher and principal at the former St. Leonard of Port Maurice School in West Terre Haute.

At the motherhouse, Sister Mary Mark worked in the Development Office.

She also served in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and in California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts and North Carolina.

Sister Mary Mark currently ministers as a volunteer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Mary Lois Hennel is a native of Evansville, Ind. She entered the congregation on July 21, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1954.

She has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College as well as a master's degree in education from Indiana State University.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Lois served as a teacher at the former St. Anne School in New Castle, the former St. Andrew the Apostle School in Indianapolis and the former St. Joseph School in Indianapolis.

At the motherhouse, she served in operations, on the central business office staff and in residential services.

Sister Mary Lois also served in the Diocese of Evansville and in California, Illinois, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

She currently serves at the motherhouse in residential services and as a volunteer.

Sister Lois Ann Stoiber is a native of Joliet, Ill. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1946, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1953.

She has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in education from Illinois State University.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at St. Jude School in Indianapolis.

Sister Lois Ann also served in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, and in Illinois.

Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

70-year jubilarians

Sister Noralee (formerly Sister Joseph Edward) Keefe is a native of Chicago. She entered the congregation on Jan. 9, 1951, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1958.

She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and also has a master's degree in education administration from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

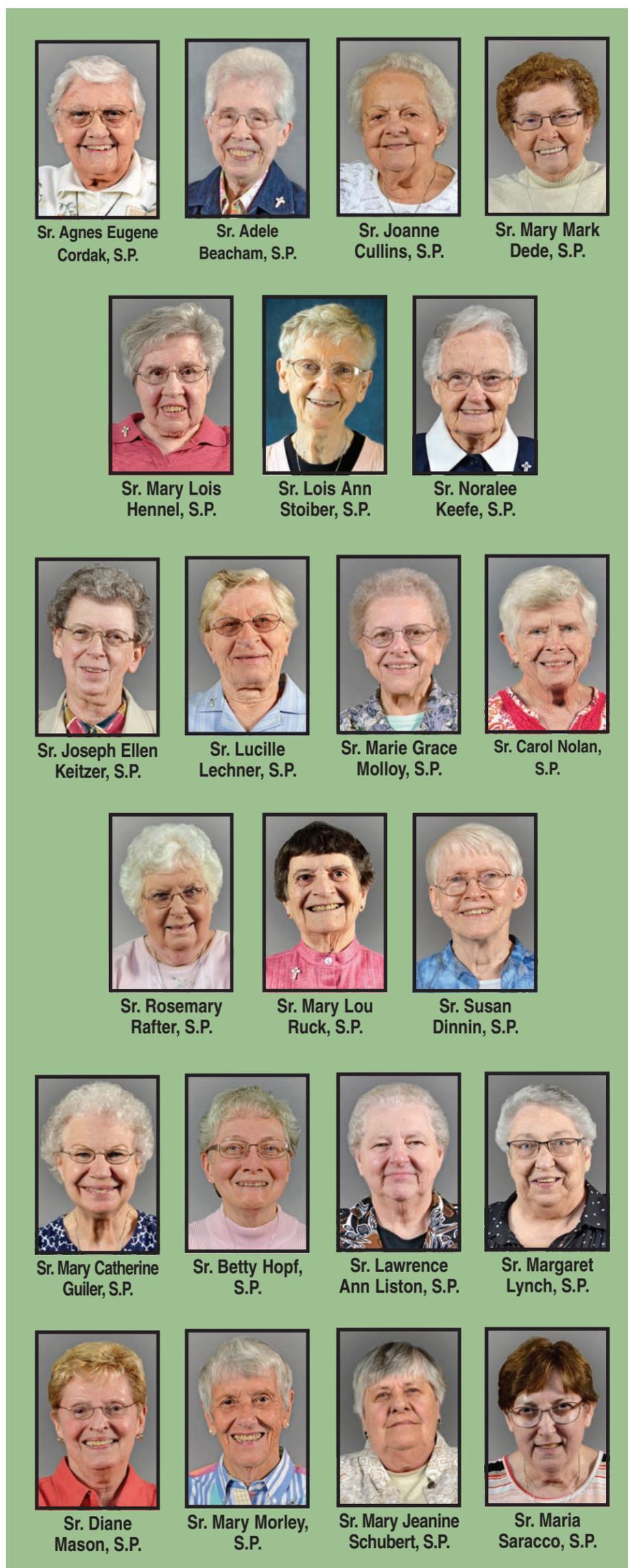
In the archdiocese, Sister Noralee served as a teacher at Holy Family School in New Albany and the former St. Ann School in Indianapolis.

She also served in California, Illinois and North Carolina.

Currently, she ministers in residential services and as treasurer for Providence Hall at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Joseph Ellen Keitzer is a native of Hammond, Ind. She entered the congregation on May 26, 1951, from All Saints Parish in Hammond. She professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1959.

She has a bachelor's degree in music from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College



and a master's degree in music education from Ball State University in Muncie, Ind.

In the archdiocese, Sister Joseph Ellen served in Indianapolis as a teacher at Immaculate Heart of Mary School and at the former St. Andrew the Apostle School, and at the former St. Margaret Mary School in Terre Haute.

She also served in Illinois, New Hampshire and Texas.

Sister Joseph Ellen currently serves in pastoral ministry of presence for the Northwest Austin African American Community in Chicago.

Sister Lucille (formerly Sister Mary Louise) Lechner is a native of Jasper, Ind. She entered the congregation on

Jan. 9, 1951, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1957.

She has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in education from Indiana University.

In the archdiocese, Sister Lucille served as a teacher at St. Charles Borromeo School in Bloomington; in Indianapolis at St. Matthew the Apostle, St. Jude and the former All Saints and St. Bridget schools, and in the learning center of St. Joan of Arc School; in Richmond at the former St. Mary School (now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School).

SISTERS

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She also ministered at the St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove, at the former Holy Trinity Adult Day Care and at Home Health Care Services in Indianapolis, and at Providence Retirement Home in New Albany.

At the motherhouse, she served as assistant to the co-director of Residential Services at Providence Hall.

Sister Lucille also served in the dioceses of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Gary and Lafayette, as well as in Illinois and Oklahoma.

Currently, she ministers in residential services and as the assistant to the administrator of Providence Hall at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Marie Grace Molloy is a native of Indianapolis. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1951, from St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1958.

She has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College as well as a master's degree in education from Indiana State University.

Sister Marie Grace served in the archdiocese as a teacher in Indianapolis at Immaculate Heart of Mary, Nativity, St. Jude and St. Philip Neri schools and the former St. Joseph School. She also served as a tutor in Indianapolis.

At the motherhouse, she served as activities coordinator and coordinator of St. John Academy and St. Agnes Academy alumnae.

Sister Marie Grace also served in the dioceses of Evansville, Fort Wayne-South Bend and Gary, and also in Illinois.

Currently, she ministers in the Archives Department at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods and as the coordinator of the St. John Academy Alumnae.

Sister Carol (formerly Sister Mary Sheila) Nolan is a native of Galesburg, Ill. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1951, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1958.

She has a bachelor's degree in music from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College to a master's degree in music from Illinois State University. Sister Carol also has a master's degree in German from Portland State University in Portland, Ore.

In the archdiocese, Sister Carol taught at the former St. Andrew the Apostle School in Indianapolis and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

She also served in California and Illinois, and in Austria and Taiwan.

Currently, she ministers at the motherhouse in outreach and residential services at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Rosemary (formerly Sister Rose Clare) Rafter is a native of Bloomington, Ill. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1951, from St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1958.

She has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master's degree in education from Indiana State University and a master's degree in counseling psychology from George Williams College of Aurora University in Aurora, Ill.

Sister Rosemary served in the archdiocese as a teacher at St. Luke the Evangelist School and the former St. Ann School, both in Indianapolis.

At the motherhouse, she served on the corporate renewal team and a provincial of Sacred Heart Province.

Sister Rosemary also served in the Indiana dioceses of Evansville and Fort Wayne-South Bend, and in Illinois and New Hampshire.

Currently, she ministers as a volunteer at St. Thomas Hospice in Hinsdale, Ill.

Sister Mary Lou (formerly Sister Mary Lucian) Ruck is a native of Evanston, Ill. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1951, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1958.

She has a bachelor's degree in English from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master's degree in English from Indiana State University and a master's degree in religious studies from Spalding University in Louisville, Ky.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Lou served as a teacher in Indianapolis at St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Monica and the former St. Bridget schools, and at the former St. Margaret Mary School in Terre Haute. She also served as an adult education teacher at Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries in New Albany.

At the motherhouse, she served as a wellness assistant.

Sister Mary Lou also served in the Indiana dioceses of Evansville and Lafayette, and in Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio and Oklahoma.

She currently serves at the motherhouse as a volunteer and in healing ministry.

60-year jubilarians

Sister Susan (formerly Sister Mary de Sales) Dinnin is a native of Indianapolis. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, from St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1969.

She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in elementary education from Indiana University.

In the archdiocese, Sister Susan served as a teacher in Indianapolis at St. Simon the Apostle and St. Thomas Aquinas schools, and at the former St. Leonard of Port Maurice School in West Terre Haute. She also served as a teacher and principal at the former St. Paul School in Sellersburg (now St. John Paul II School). In Indianapolis, she also served as activities coordinator, site manager and program director for A Caring Place Adult Day Services.

She also served in the Diocese of Evansville and in Michigan.

Sister Susan currently serves in the ministry of care and as the coordinator for the St. Agnes Alumnae Association in the Indianapolis area.

Sister Mary Catherine (formerly Sister Martha Patrick) Guiler is a native of Washington, D.C. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1969.

She earned a bachelor's degree in English from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master's degree in English from Indiana State University and a master's degree in pastoral studies from Washington Theological Union in Washington, D.C.

Sister Mary Catherine served in the Diocese of Evansville and in Maryland, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C.

Currently, she ministers as a substitute teacher for the Academy of the Holy Cross in Kensington, Md.

Sister Betty (formerly Sister Barbara Francis) Hopf is a native of Jasper, Ind. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on May 24, 1970.

Sister Betty has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master's degree in elementary education from Indiana University and a master's degree in pastoral theology from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at St. Patrick School in Terre Haute, as a teacher and co-principal at Holy Angels School in Indianapolis, and as a pastoral associate at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

At the motherhouse, she served as coordinator of wellness services and as ministry of care coordinator.

Sister Betty also served in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Currently, she ministers as a chaplain at the Hux Cancer Center in Terre Haute.

Sister Lawrence Ann Liston is a native of Terre Haute. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, from the former St. Ann Parish in Terre Haute, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1969.

Sister Lawrence Ann earned a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in education from Indiana State University.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at the former St. Paul School in Sellersburg (now St. John Paul II School) and the former All Saints School in Indianapolis, and as a principal at the former St. Paul School in Sellersburg and St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis. Sister Lawrence Ann served at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis as director of schools, director of educational administration, and associate executive director of Catholic education. She also served in numerous administrative roles at Robin Run Village and Hoosier Village in Indianapolis and at Wabash Valley Health Center in Terre Haute.

At the motherhouse, Sister Lawrence Ann served as

interim General Secretary and assistant coordinator of pastoral ministry for health care services.

She also served in Illinois.

Currently, Sister Lawrence Ann ministers in residential services at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Margaret (formerly Sister James Patrick) Lynch is a native of Chicago. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 16, 1969.

Sister Margaret earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master's degree in religious education from Loyola University and a master's of pastoral studies from Loyola University.

In the archdiocese, she served as a teacher at the former St. Agnes Academy and the former Ladywood-St. Agnes Academy, and at Father Thomas Sccecina Memorial High School, all in Indianapolis; as archdiocesan high school religious coordinator; as teacher and dean of girls at the former Schulte High School in Terre Haute; as pastoral associate and director of religious education at Sacred Heart Parish in Terre Haute; as adult education teacher for Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries in New Albany; and as parish life coordinator at the former St. Leonard of Port Maurice Parish in West Terre Haute and at St. Mary-of-the-Woods parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

At the motherhouse, Sister Margaret served in the ministry of care and as a volunteer.

She also served in the dioceses of Evansville and Lafayette, and in Illinois and Kentucky.

Currently, she ministers in prayer at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Diane (formerly Sister Ann Vianney) Mason is a native of Joliet, Ill. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on April 17, 1971.

She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and master's degrees in education and education supervision/administration, both from Indiana State University.

Sister Diane served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, chaplain, spiritual director, and associate director and director of Providence Associates, all in Illinois.

Currently, she serves in the ministry of care and as a volunteer at St. Michael Parish in Orland Park, Ill.

Sister Mary (formerly Sister David Mary) Morley is a native of Indianapolis. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, from St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1969.

She has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in guidance counseling from Indiana University.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary served as a teacher at the former St. Mary-of-the-Woods Village School in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and at St. Luke the Evangelist School in Indianapolis.

She has also served in the Diocese of Lafayette, and in numerous teaching, educational and ministerial positions in Ohio.

Currently, she ministers as a volunteer GED tutor for the East End Adult Learning Center in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Sister Maria (formerly Sister Maria Immaculata) Saracco is a native of Chicago. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on May 10, 1970.

She has a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in reading from Northern Illinois University.

Sister Maria has served as a teacher at numerous schools in Illinois.

Currently, she ministers as a volunteer and in residential services at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Sister Mary Jeanine Schubert** is a native of Chicago. She entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 1961, and professed perpetual vows on May 23, 1970.

She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in early childhood education from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Jeanine served as a teacher at the former St. Andrew the Apostle School and the former St. Agnes Academy, both in Indianapolis.

She has also served as a teacher and in various roles in Illinois.

Currently, she ministers as a volunteer in the Chicago area.†

LETTER

continued from page 4

and never died before having kids, and since that is not true, then a minimum each couple should have is three children. With a decreasing population, there is a decreasing pool to recruit from for the religious lives.

In short, our priests should

be asking couples to have "one more child" and to then consider encouraging the child to become a priest or nun.

The vocation of marriage is under attack in our progressive culture. First, we had the lie of the population bomb—that we would run out of food and that, overall, humans are bad for the Earth. To save ourselves and the planet, responsible people were

encouraged not to have kids. Humans, both male and female, are made in the image of God and therefore are good, not bad.

Next, we had the lies that we should sacrifice our children to have better lives (abortion) and that sex should not be restricted to marriage but be freely available. Now we have the lie that gender does not matter. These are the same Canaanite

abominations God warned the Jews about as they entered the promised land, and the ones the Jewish kingdoms gradually succumbed to.

And, of course, we know where that departure from God's path led.

We need to promote marriage and having children!

Frank Price
Indianapolis

Faith *Alive!*

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Author's high-praised writings are imbued with her Catholic faith

By Effie Caldarola

By the time you reach page 4 of Alice McDermott's stunning book, *The Ninth Hour*, a man is speaking the words of the "Hail Mary" as he dies.

Is Alice McDermott a Catholic writer? Her faith background permeates her work. And no one who grew up Catholic, especially those of "a certain age" who lived through the ecclesial changes of the second half of the 20th century, can fail to be moved by her stories.

And yet, like all great writers, her themes are universal. Lost love, lasting love, the confusion and sorrows of childhood, the fragility of people, the coming to terms with sexuality, the inevitability and surprise of death—McDermott weaves common stories in an uncommon way.

Born into an Irish Catholic home in Brooklyn in 1953, McDermott wrote even as a child. She told an interviewer in the journal *Image* that, in her first creative writing course, the professor told her, "I got bad news for you, kid. You're a writer, and you're never going to shake it."

That was good news for the millions of readers of her eight novels.

McDermott's list of achievements is long. Three of her novels were finalists for the Pulitzer Prize. *Charming Billy* won the National Book Award for fiction in 1998. Her novels routinely make the "Best fiction of ..." lists for whatever year they're published.

In *The Ninth Hour*, which begins against the dreary background of immigrant tenements in Brooklyn in the early part of the 20th century, we meet a character that might just live with the reader forever. Sister St. Saviour is a member of a nursing order that works the poverty-ridden streets, visiting the ill, caring for the homebound and meeting the needs of the neighborhood.

Sister St. Saviour, however, is nearing the end of her vitality and usefulness. Consigned to a day of begging for alms at the local Woolworth's, on her way home she encounters a fire, a tragedy and a commitment. Despite her swollen ankles and her desperate need to empty her bladder, she responds to the young widow she encounters.

The wife of a man who has taken his own life has a burial plot in the Catholic cemetery. While people who committed suicide were not allowed to be buried in sacred ground back then, Sister St. Saviour conspires with the mortuary owner to bury him quickly as an accidental death. Her plans are thwarted when a newspaper quickly prints a story revealing the suicide.

"It would be a different Church if I were running it," Sister St. Saviour muses. Indeed, how many mid-century Catholics, and especially Catholics who saw the vibrancy of post-Vatican II religious sisters, haven't echoed her sentiments?

It's characters like these that animate all of McDermott's novels. They are ordinary people. But everyone has a story, and McDermott has the rare gift of reminding us that each ordinary life tells an extraordinary story.

Sister St. Saviour doesn't remain on the pages long. The widow Annie, her daughter, the nuns in the big old house bequeathed to the order by a rich man—they all have a story. The bonds between mother and daughter, the

search for love, the search for vocation, all are explored with sensitivity and passion.

And what Catholic could read *The Ninth Hour* without thinking, "Once I knew a nun just like Sister Lucy." Or Sister Illuminata. Or the priest in his vestibule ("chilly, despite the June weather, and as dim as winter"), on his way to a Holy Name meeting.

McDermott nails the Catholic milieu in which she writes. Dead on.

And she nails the changing Church and the ways people adapted to things that changed and things that remained eternal.

In her book *Someone*, we follow the life of Marie Commeford, a little girl born in Brooklyn. We see life on her street in its grittiness and in detail. There's the Syrian-Irish couple next door, and their clumsy daughter Pegeen. There's blind Bill Corrigan, who was gassed in the war, sitting outside on a kitchen chair his mother puts him in on nice days. We see Marie slip out in the evenings with her father, who craves a drink at the speak-easy in the alley as Marie waits under the streetlight.

McDermott's attention to detail is precise, yet many things are left subtly to our imagination. The alcoholism, the ambiguity of sexual identity in the days when gays were closeted, all these are laid gently upon the reader.

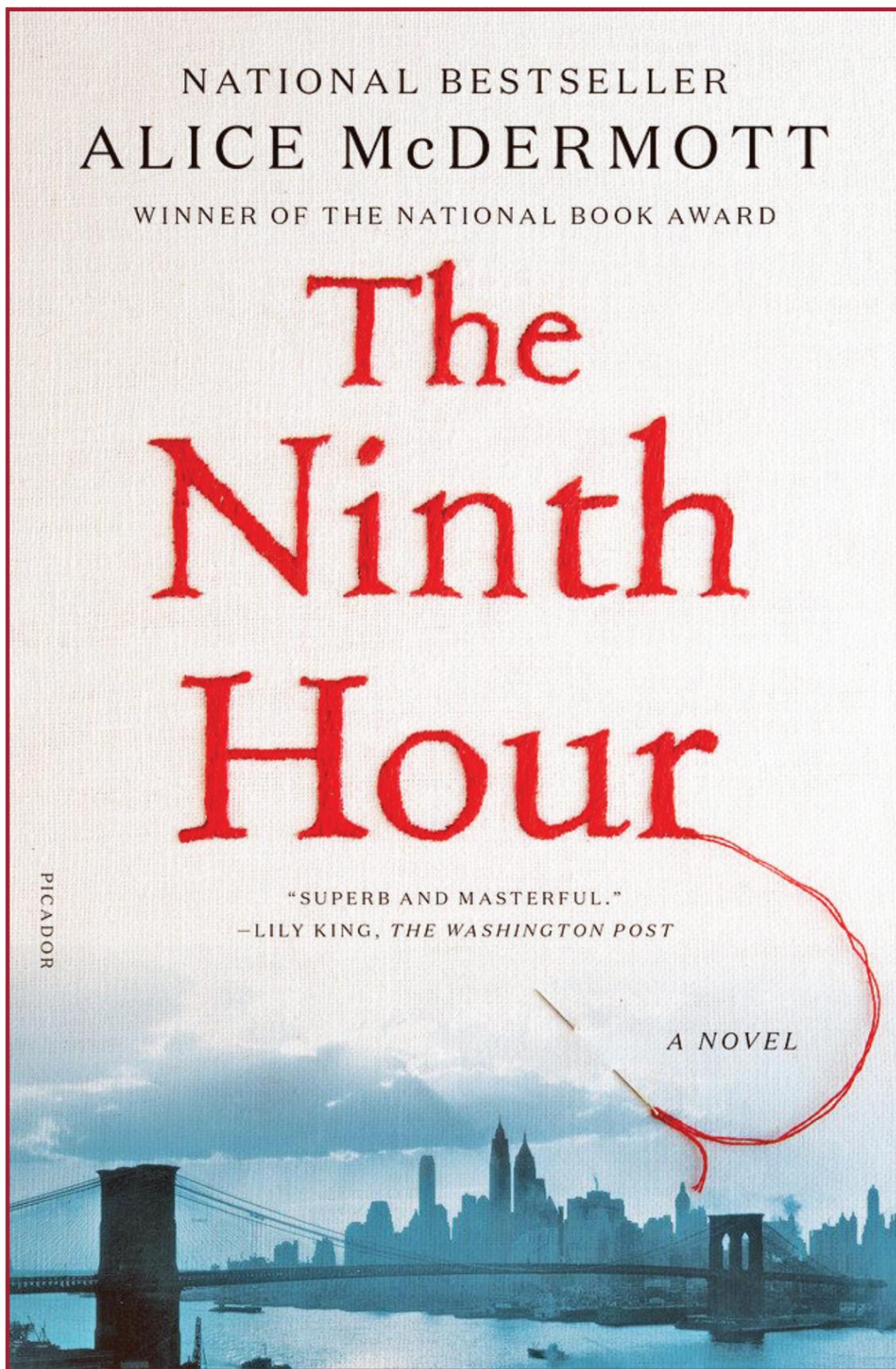
McDermott is very kind to her characters, and even the ones who mistreat Marie as she grows into womanhood, and eventually old age, are met with understanding. Their inner lives, their struggles, the goodness within, are revealed along with their failings.

In the interview with *Image*, McDermott is clear about her own love for the Church, a faith in which she raised her three children.

"I see the Church not as something that can evolve, but something that must evolve."

She echoes what many readers would say about being Catholic: "It's what you are."

(Effie Caldarola is a columnist for Catholic News Service and a freelance writer.) †



This is the book cover of *The Ninth Hour*, by Alice McDermott. In the novel, which begins against the dreary background of immigrant tenements in Brooklyn in the early part of the 20th century, we meet a character that might just live with the reader forever: Sister St. Saviour. (CNS photo/courtesy Farrar, Straus and Giroux)



Novelist Alice McDermott shares a story in 1998 with Nadia Qassam, left, Meredith Cahill and Katie Knapp—all first-graders from St. Bartholomew School in Bethesda, Md., where McDermott served as a volunteer librarian. In the same year, McDermott, whose Catholic faith is imbued in her writing, was the winner of the National Book Award. (CNS photo by Michael Hoyt, Catholic Standard)

Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

God never turns his back on us despite our behavior

Palm to the forehead in a pose commonly referred to today as a “face plant.” Head slanted down and slightly shaking back and forth in what can only be interpreted as disappointment. This is how I picture God as he takes in his vast creation in the midst of our man-made problems.



Our planet is experiencing immense changes in weather—from increased floods and fires to hurricanes and earthquakes, from intense heat waves to rising sea levels. Despite the politicization of climate change, we have all been experiencing irrefutable evidence of these changes. I imagine God surveying the vast expanse of his creation and seeing the damage done to our environment, to rivers and lakes, to our polar ice caps, the atmosphere, rain forest and ocean reefs, and thinking to himself, “I gave them seemingly unlimited resources and unparalleled beauty, and they have squandered this gift.”

Through his eyes, he must see war,

violence, crime, racism, poverty and unfathomable atrocities against humanity. I envision him weeping to see how humans treat one another. I envision him saying aloud, “I gave them one another that they might show compassion, work together and experience community, but they often turn their backs on each other.”

He must examine the state of COVID throughout the world and wonder at how we cannot seem to collaborate to make sure everyone is protected, much less eradicate the virus. I can only imagine that God is dismayed to see his children not willing to come together and make necessary sacrifices to ensure the health and safety of all. I can hear him saying, “I expected them to put others before their own rights, freedoms and selfish agendas.”

Anyone who is a parent, teacher, coach or guided a youth in their life knows the feeling of disappointment when a young person does not live up to expectations, or wastes the gifts and talents entrusted to them. Imagine that feeling on a global scale and among the more than 7 billion inhabitants of this planet. When I think of it from that perspective, I am astonished that God does not give up on us.

And yet, he does the exact opposite.

He continually lavishes us with his love—whether we deserve it or not. He offers us infinite chances to try again and make things right. He offers us charity, provides light and gives us hope—that we might rectify our mistakes and live as the people for which he has created us.

He inspires in us ingenuity that we might solve problems, generosity that we may support programs, projects and people, and empathy that we might better understand what it means to walk in another’s footsteps.

Despite the disappointing way we, as humanity, have conducted ourselves, he renews in us a passion to embrace an uncertain future with faith. And he leads us to trust that he holds the whole world in the palm of his hand. He alone will provide us what we need to change our fate, to truly care for one another, to persevere.

What is needed from us is belief in his providence, faith in his countenance and trust in his power to make all things right.

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

Refugee Resettlement Program is a blessing to newcomers

Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program has a rich history of serving primary refugees in our community since 1975. The Refugee Resettlement Program meets the regional needs of the refugees designated to resettle here, either through family reunification or as “free cases” assigned to our local community.



New refugees are at their most vulnerable as they enter the United States. Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program seeks to address the most fundamental needs of all new refugees such as access to housing, food, clothing, income, medical care, education and employment.

The U.S. has one of the safest refugee programs in the world, as each refugee is required to go through an extensive, multifaceted, vetting process, including a series of very rigorous interviews by the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Defense, the State Department and the National Counterterrorism Center. In addition, they go through a health check. All of this will occur before a refugee is ever finally selected to be admitted to the U.S.

Operating under the umbrella of the U.S. of Catholic Bishops Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) in collaboration with Department of State/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (DOS/PRM), our program carries out refugee services to address needs by providing direct case management and networking with the intention of building financial independence.

Financial self-sufficiency is achieved through acquiring safe and stable housing, asset building, financial literacy training, and basic employment soft skills training which assists refugees in gaining the ability to secure employment, a more sustainable and significant source of financial independence. We also provide English classes as well as cultural, transportation, shopping and budgeting orientations.

As a program, our greatest strength is our intensive client-centered case management. Goals established for refugees are intended to: address immediate social/educational needs, attain a stable environment, develop skills for employment, understand basic financial principles and promote seamless integration.

The process we utilize entails an intake and assessment, goal development, intervention, referrals, monitoring and reassessing throughout the service period and transitioning services seamlessly to other service providers at the end of a 90-day resettlement period. More than 90% of the refugees who we have resettled through Catholic Charities Indianapolis are self-sufficient within six months of arrival. That means they are working, paying their own bills and not receiving government cash assistance. This rapid success can be partially attributed to the committed efforts of Catholic Charities’ volunteers working with refugees.

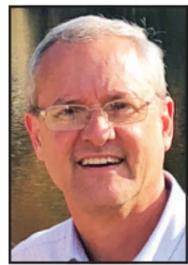
The Munsifs are such a family from Afghanistan who arrived in Indianapolis in September of 2020. Before their arrival, Catholic Charities’ staff were excited to prepare a furnished apartment for these parents and their three children and took extra measures to add everything this family would

See BETHURAM, page 15

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

Let’s God mercy guide us in building relationships with others

Did you ever wrestle with family or friends when you were young? Do you remember what you had to say when you were pinned to the floor before you could get up?



The word or phrase many of us shouted was “Uncle!” or “I give [up]!”

Fast forward to today: What word or phrase does the Church use to imply

that we have reached the realization of being metaphorically pinned and ready to surrender to our Creator’s will? We cry, “Lord have mercy!”

Scripture refers to God’s mercy repeatedly. In the Book of Psalms, we read, “May your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, Lord, mark our sins, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness and so you are revered” (Ps 130:2-4).

In Psalms, we also hear, “... gracious and merciful is the Lord” (Ps 111:4). In

another psalm, we read, “As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on the faithful” (Ps 103:13). Lastly, in the Book of Exodus, God says to Moses, “I who show favor to whom I will, I who grant mercy to whom I will” (Ex 33:19). What wonderful images for us!

Many of us who spend too much time beating ourselves up need to be reminded that our loving Father is full of mercy.

My wife and I were recently rear-ended in our car when I was attempting to make a right turn into a business. We were not injured, but the accident caused serious damage to our car.

The other driver accepted responsibility. She had recently moved to the area and admitted that she had momentarily looked down at her phone’s GPS to confirm her route. She thanked us for being so nice and understanding when interacting after the accident. I shared that I have appreciated mercy in the past when I was the one at fault.

How are you doing in interpersonal actions? Do you always show this level of

mercy to those who have injured or hurt you?

There is a very clear directive in the Lord’s Prayer for anyone looking for guidance on the issue of forgiveness: “... and forgive us as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Could it be that our own inability to be forgiving and merciful prevents us from truly believing that God could be generous in compassion? Are there specific relationships in your life that need attention in this area?

Schedule a time to sit quietly and let God show you those people who might benefit from your mercy. Then ask God for the wisdom and strength to know the proper place and time for specific acts of mercy. And let your mantra be, “Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy” as you move forward in building on those relationships.

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

Twenty Something/

Christina Capecchi

Life is just beginning: expansion at any age

I submitted two articles tonight, and moments after I hit send, I was struck by the parallel.



Sure, they both involved retired Catholics. But in my focus on the specifics of their work—the intricate toothpick sculptures of a Minnesota grandpa, the winsome travel guide written by a New Mexico

single—I’d nearly missed how their paths mirrored each other.

Both had discovered a roundabout way to fulfill their lifelong dreams.

Jerry Hackett always wanted to be an architect but opted for a practical path and worked as an accountant. He quietly provided for his six children. Then one day in retirement, the 70-something recalled a school project his child had done back in the ‘80s: toothpick assembly.

Soon Jerry was looking up the dimensions of the Eiffel Tower and squirting Elmer’s Glue-All. Now 81, he’s created dozens of toothpick sculptures—bridges, windmills, churches—and generated a good deal of press. He works in his porch while listening to polka music, and he creates each sculpture to scale. There is a great deal of measuring: 1 inch of toothpick represents 4 feet.

Turns out he became an architect after all—a toothpick architect.

“I’ll wake up at night thinking about how to do this part of the church, and I can’t go back to sleep,” said Jerry, a member of St. Mark Parish in Shakopee, Minn.

Marion Amberg, meanwhile, harbored starry-eyed ambitions of being a detective. She planned to study law enforcement. There was just one problem: She couldn’t stand the sight of blood.

Instead, she began writing for her local newspaper. The work entailed plenty of sleuthing. “Part of reporting is connecting the dots,” she said. “You see patterns.”

Her latest book, *Monuments, Marvels, and Miracles: A Traveler’s Guide to Catholic America*, delivers a national tour of religious sites based on meticulous research.

“Even if it’s on a church website, you can’t take it as Gospel truth,” said Marion, a member of the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Santa Fe. “I tried to verify every single fact.”

Lo and behold, this 60-something is now a detective—and no blood is involved!

“Your dreams may change as you get older, but they don’t end,” she said. “I feel like the 60s are just the beginning of my life.”

Immediately I thought of my late grandpa, who started writing an autobiography he’d titled *Life Begins At 70*.

At 73, he taught himself to play clarinet, putting numbered tape on keys to correspond with his fingering chart. Weeks later, he was playing the second movement of Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto.

Then I recalled an amusing story a Jesuit priest recently told me. Father Chris Collins was reading a program and saw his name listed as a jubilarian. He assumed it was a mistake. How could it possibly be 25 years of priesthood already?

“I can’t believe I’m almost 50,” he said, “because it feels like I’m just getting going.”

These Catholics demonstrate that our Creator is a God of surprises. We may

See CAPECCHI, page 15

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, September 12, 2021

- Isaiah 50:5-9a
- James 2:14-18
- Mark 8:27-35

The last and third section of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for Mass on this weekend in Ordinary Time.



This passage is one of several similar sections in this part of Isaiah called the Songs of the Suffering Servant. Poetic and expressive, they figure in the liturgies of Holy Week and Good Friday because Christians historically

have applied them to Christ, the Lamb of God.

Who was in the mind of the author of this part of Isaiah as these songs were written? The author? Another loyal and devoted follower of the covenant who faced many difficulties? The chosen people, the servant being a collective symbol for them?

The answer is unknown, but the picture is vivid. The servant is steadfast. Hardships and obstacles abound in the servant's path to fidelity, but God unfailingly provides strength and guidance.

Assured of God's help and resolute in faith, the servant is undaunted in obeying God.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church gives us a passage from the Epistle of St. James. This reading affirms the classic Catholic interpretation of revelation. God gives us the healing and empowering grace so that we can believe and bear witness.

God reveals to us the way to salvation and the purpose of life, but we must ratify our belief in our worthy Christian conduct. It is not a question simply of following rules and regulations. Rather, it is to conduct ourselves with the help of God's grace so that in everything we replicate Christ.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading.

In this story, Jesus and the Apostles have gone to the region of Caesarea Philippi. This region even today is visited by tourists and locals. At the origin of the Jordan River, it is picturesque and placid.

Such was the beautiful setting for this powerfully revelatory passage. Jesus questioned the Apostles. His identity was the issue. They responded by reporting

the various proposals people put forward as to the Lord's identity: "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, others one of the prophets" (Mk 8:28).

Then Jesus bluntly asked the Apostles about their thoughts as to the identity of the Master. Note that St. Peter spoke for the group, not out of turn. He was the leader among the disciples as ever since his successors have been the universal shepherds of the Church.

Also note Peter's firm answer: "You are the Messiah!" (Mk 8:29).

The Twelve heard from Jesus lessons not given to the rank and file. They were set apart. They were to be commissioned, so Jesus prepared them.

When Peter interjects his own, human thinking into the discussion, Jesus reprimands him.

Then Jesus tells the crowd that discipleship means carrying personal crosses, the willingness to sacrifice.

Reflection

Sacrifice has been the story of Christianity, giving anything to imitate the Lord. It can be hard, as the martyrs knew well.

The presidential election of 1928 was especially bitter. New York Gov. Alfred E. Smith, a devout Catholic, was the Democratic candidate. Not only he, but all Catholics were targeted and insulted, their patriotism and integrity questioned.

A prominent Republican arrived in Memphis to speak against Smith. He always attacked Smith's Catholicism.

At the train station, this politician was met by the most influential politician in town, a former mayor.

He welcomed the visitor and offered to show him the sights of Memphis. They drove immediately to Calvary Cemetery.

There the Memphis politician pointed out the graves of the many priests and nuns who died, serving the sick, in the yellow fever epidemic several decades before.

He said, "In Memphis, when we hear 'Catholic,' we think of these priests and nuns who sacrificed their lives for desperate people.

"You are a bigot. Get out of town." The visitor boarded the next train leaving Memphis.

The Memphis politician, an Episcopalian, knew Christian sacrifice when he saw it. †

Daily Readings

Monday, September 13

St. John Chrysostom, bishop and doctor of the Church
1 Timothy 2:1-8
Psalm 28:2, 7-9
Luke 7:1-10

Tuesday, September 14

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Numbers 21:4b-9
Psalm 78:1b-2, 34-38
Philippians 2:6-11
John 3:13-17

Wednesday, September 15

Our Lady of Sorrows
1 Timothy 3:14-16
Psalm 111:1-6
John 19:25-27
or Luke 2:33-35

Thursday, September 16

St. Cornelius, pope and martyr
St. Cyprian, bishop and martyr
1 Timothy 4:12-16
Psalm 111:7-10
Luke 7:36-50

Friday, September 17

St. Robert Bellarmine, bishop and doctor of the Church
1 Timothy 6:2c-12
Psalm 49:6-10, 17-20
Luke 8:1-3

Saturday, September 18

1 Timothy 6:13-16
Psalm 100:1b-5
Luke 8:4-15

Sunday, September 19

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Wisdom 2:12, 17-20
Psalm 54:3-4, 5-8
James 3:16-4:3
Mark 9:30-37

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Church does not allow for the commingling of cremated remains

Among my dying husband's wishes was the desire to save land for the living and therefore to be cremated and



interred at Willamette National Military Cemetery near Portland, Ore.

I, too, shall be cremated and interred at Willamette National, sharing my husband's niche. I would like my ashes to be mingled with

his. Does that violate Catholic teaching? (Oregon)

Catholic practice does not include commingling the ashes of spouses. This is based on the Church's belief that the body of a person is God's temple and therefore deserves individual honor and preservation.

However, here might be a solution: Catholic cemeteries customarily offer companion urns, with two separate chambers, so that the ashes of a married couple can be buried side-by-side in the same vessel.

And it strikes me that these receptacles would eventually disintegrate, leaving

what you desire—that, over time, the ashes would be mixed.

Can you please tell me the purpose of prayer? I understand prayers of thanksgiving and prayers of adoration, but I don't understand prayers of petition. I was always taught that God doesn't change.

So, what good does it do to pray that a family member returns to the Church or that a friend survives cancer, if God already knows what's going to happen and isn't going to change his mind? (Virginia)

Throughout the Scriptures, it is clear that we are invited to pray if we need something. One striking example comes in the Letter of St. James, where we are told:

"Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the Church, and they should pray over him and anoint [him] with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up" (Jas 5:14-15).

Another such reference is found in St. Mark's Gospel. Jesus had expelled an unclean spirit from a boy, and when his disciples asked him why they themselves had not been able to do this, he answered, "This kind can only come out through prayer" (Mk 9:29).

And in St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus assures us that "whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive" (Mt 21:22).

But your question still remains, "If God knows ahead of time what he's going to do, what's the point in our praying for it?"

The answer is that the effect of petitionary prayer is not opposed to God's unchangeable providence but included within it. That is to say, our prayers do not alter the divine plan but are factored into that plan itself.

God, in his wisdom, has made some things we desire contingent on our praying for them. He does this so that we may regularly turn our hearts to him and recognize our dependence. I should admit that the relationship between God's plan and our prayers is veiled in some mystery, and we will not understand it fully until we have met the Lord.

(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

Faith Purified

By Maria Harr

Scales on my eyes
A hardened heart
Without you Lord
Not set apart
From this world's lies
That I'm all alone

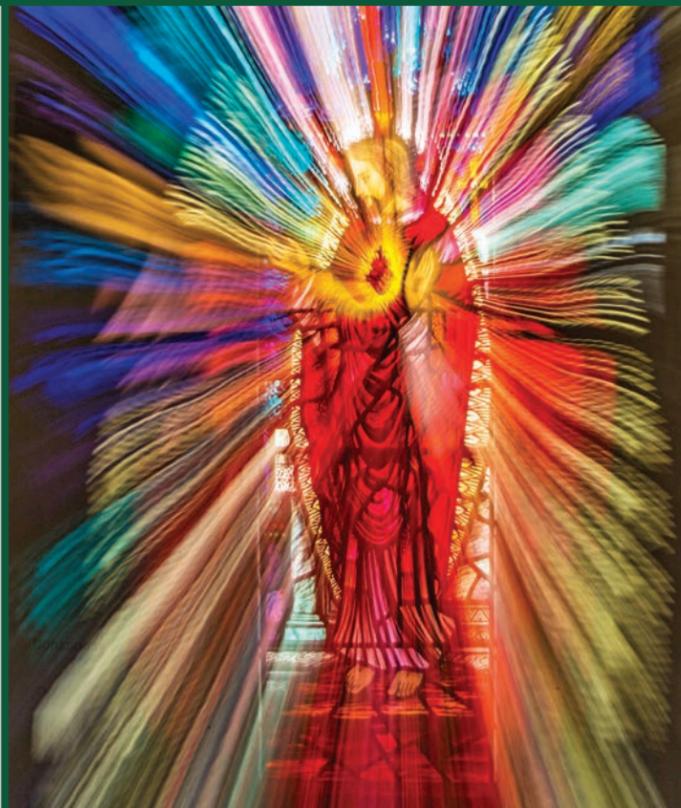
Purify me Lord.

As you chip away
Day by day
My heart softens
As You lovingly say,
"Turn your gaze to Me
My dear child"

Have courage.

You are never alone
Humbly lean in
To My Sacred Heart
Heaven on Earth
You're set apart
Created for greatness

There is work to be done.



(Maria Harr is a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: A sacred heart of Jesus stained-glass window is pictured at Mount Melleray Abbey in Waterford, Ireland.) (CNS photo/Cillian Kelly)

Rest in peace

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

BECK, Jr., Carl C., 81, Sacred Heart, Indianapolis, Aug. 11. Brother of Janice O'Brian, David and Steven Beck.

BLITZ, Raymond J., 80, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Aug. 29. Husband of Anita Blitz. Father of Shelly Mayse, Sherry Sullivan and Jeff Blitz. Grandfather of seven.

BURKHART, Russell L., 85, St. Mary, Greensburg, Aug. 22. Father of Marilles Mauer and Tony Burkhardt. Brother of Rita Dickman, Margie Eldridge, Thelma Griewe, Stella Vanderpohl, Dick and Paul Burkhardt. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of six.

CHRISTIANI, Anthony, 84, Prince of Peace, Madison, Aug. 27. Father of Jennifer Dadabbo, Felicia Lynam,

David, Matthew and Phillip Christiani. Brother of Paul Christiani. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of seven.

DEHNE, Mary Jeannette T., 86, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Aug. 26. Mother of Jennifer Whitaker and Chuck Dehne. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of two.

DICKERSON, Richard H., 81, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, March 21, 2020. Husband of Patricia Lucken. Father of Patty Allen, Melissa Belt, Renee Feggins, Cheryl Purvis, Irmgard Seiter and Gary Hamersly. Brother of Herbert Dickerson. Grandfather of 16. Great-grandfather of 19.

DINKEL, Robert J., 70, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Jan. 10. Father of Cameron and Todd Dinkel. Brother of Andrew, Anthony, Mark and Thomas Dinkel. Grandfather of five.

DORR, Richard J., 63, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, July 17. Husband of Margaret Dorr. Father of Adriana, Elizabeth, Benjamin and Samuel. Grandfather of two.

EICHHOLD, William A., 80, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, May 2. Husband of Connie Eichhold. Father of Maria Puccini, Joseph and Patrick Eichhold. Brother of Betty Thesing, George and Lou Eichhold.

EMMETT, Robert R., 93, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Aug. 28. Father of Maureen Hughes, Marcy Kamaka, Jamie Martin, Meg Masterson,

Mark, Michael, Patrick and Rob Emmett. Brother of Bette Vaughan. Grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather of several.

FITZIBBONS, Lorraine, 79, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Aug. 25. Mother of Kathryn Tackett and Richard Fitzibbons. Grandmother of two.

GEIS, Raymond B., 91, St. Mary, Greensburg, Aug. 24. Father of Nita McCreary, Jean Stacy, Yvonne, David and Gregory Geis. Brother of Marita Billman and Carl Geis. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of four.

HOEING, Carroll P., 80, St. Mary, Greensburg, Aug. 30. Husband of Dorothy Hoeing. Father of Karen Backlund, Teresa Nobbe, Brian and Keith Hoeing. Brother of Delores Bruns, Mariada Koors, Alfred, Jerome and Sheldon Hoeing. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of five.

HUSSION, Betty Jean, 94, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Aug. 20. Mother of Melissa Finley and Alan Hussion, Jr. Grandmother of two.

JEFFERS, Loretta C., 99, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Aug. 11. Mother of Susan Higgins, Patricia Walters and John Jeffers, Jr. Sister of Wesley Walton. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of five.

LECLERE, Gloria M., 93, St. Mark, Perry County, Aug. 23. Wife of Earl Leclere. Mother of Jane Leclere-Doyle, Patty Mills, Bob, David, and Dr. Joe Leclere. Sister of Paul Etienne. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 13.

Harvest time in Kazakhstan



Combines harvest barley in a field near the central Asian town of Bersuat, Kazakhstan, on Aug. 31. (CNS photo/Pavel Mikheyev, Reuters)

MAYER, Patricia N., 94, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Aug. 26. Mother of Kathy Delpha, Patty Ralston, Ann Marie, Margaret, Mary Lou, Paul and Richard Mayer. Grandmother of 18. Great-grandmother of 13.

MEIRING, Anthony, 81, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Aug. 25. Husband of Mary Meiring. Father of Roberta Bowman, Anthony Meiring, Jr., and Louis Williams. Brother of

Darlene Porter and Greg Meiring. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of 14.

RIES, John T., 77, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Indianapolis, Aug. 19. Father of Theresa Davis, Andrew and David Ries. Brother of Barbara Stumpf and Rosie Young. Grandfather of three.

SLOWEY, Frank J., 95, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Aug. 23. Husband of Grace Slowey. Father of Bill, David

and John Slowey. Grandfather of two.

TORRES, Oscar Rojas, 45, St. Anthony, Indianapolis, Aug. 26. Husband of Laura Hernandez Ayala. Father of Sarahi, Yareli, Bryan, Cesar and Cristian Rojas. Son of Simon Rojas and Zenaida Torres. Brother of Erika, Maricruz, Marisol, Sonia, Felix and Vianey Rojas, and Elias Chavez. Grandfather of three. †

Franciscan Sister Helen Eckstein served for 40 years at St. Michael School in Brookville

Franciscan Sister Helen Eckstein, formerly Sister Antonella, died on Aug. 30 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 81.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Sept. 3 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Helen was born on March 31, 1940, in Ripley County. As she grew up, she and her family were members for different periods of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris, the former St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg and St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County.

Sister Helen was a member of St. John when she joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Feb. 3, 1958. She professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1963. Sister Helen earned a bachelor's degree in education at Marian University in Indianapolis and a master's degree in education at Xavier University in Cincinnati.

During 63 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Helen ministered in Catholic education for 45 years in Indiana and Ohio before retiring to the motherhouse in 2005. In the archdiocese, she served at Holy Name of Jesus School in Beech Grove from 1960-63 and at St. Michael School in Brookville from 1965-2005. At the motherhouse, she ministered in the community's associate office from 2005-06 and in its development office from 2006-19.

Sister Helen is survived by a sister, Rosella Koehne of Batesville, and a brother, Anthony Eckstein of Cincinnati.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †

Providence Sister Mary Ryan served as an educator, librarian and archivist

Providence Sister Mary Ryan, a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, died on Aug. 23 at Mother Theodore Hall on the campus of her religious community's motherhouse. She was 73.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 31 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Mary was born on July 15, 1948, in Salem, Mass. She entered the Sisters of Providence on Aug. 16, 1989, and professed final vows on July 20, 1996.

Sister Mary earned a bachelor's degree at Salem State University in Salem, Mass., and a

master's degree in library science at Dominican University in River Forest, Ill.

During her 32 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Mary ministered for five years in Catholic schools in Illinois. She later served as a librarian in Massachusetts. In 2005, she returned to the motherhouse where she served as archivist until retiring due to poor health in 2015. In retirement, Sister Mary continued to volunteer at the motherhouse and at a public library in West Terre Haute.

She is survived by a brother, James Ryan of Danvers, Mass.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †

South Korean diocesan officials say remains of first Catholic martyrs are recovered

SEOUL, South Korea (CNS)—The mortal remains of the first three Korean Catholic martyrs have been recovered more than two centuries after their deaths, announced the Diocese of Jeonju.

Ucanews.com reported that following historical research and DNA tests, it has been confirmed that the remains are of Paul Yun Ji-chung and James Kwon Sang-yeon, both beheaded in 1791, and Yun's brother, Francis Yun Ji-heon, who was martyred in 1801. Bishop John Kim Son-tae of Jeonju made the announcement during a news conference on Sept. 1.

During his visit to South Korea in 2014, Pope Francis beatified the three along with 121 other martyrs persecuted and killed during the rule of the Joseon dynasty in Korea.

Bishop Kim said the remains were recovered in March in Wanju, on the outskirts of Jeonju, near the burial ground of family members of another beatified person that was being converted to a shrine.

"The discovery of the remains is a truly amazing and monumental event," the bishop said, according to Yonhap News Agency.

"This is because our Church, which has grown on the foundation of the bloodshed by martyrs, has finally found the remains of the people who began the history of martyrdom."

The diocese said the remains showed cuts made by a sharp object around the necks of Paul Yun Ji-chung and Kwon, and around the neck, upper arms and left femur of

Francis Yun Ji-heon.

Christianity came to Korea during the Japanese invasion in 1592, when some Koreans were baptized, probably by Christian Japanese soldiers, according to Church sources. It started as a lay movement. Korean Yi Seung-hun, who was baptized in China in 1784, began to baptize others that year.

As the faith began to spread, Catholics faced persecution and hardships from rulers who viewed the religion as a subversive influence. Korean rulers began to see Catholicism as a false religion that denied Confucian ethics and invited Western imperialism to the country, ucanews.com reported.

The persecution in the late 18th and 19th centuries saw thousands of Catholics murdered for refusing to renounce their faith. The largest persecution in 1866 produced some 8,000 martyrs.

Among the most famous martyrs was Andrew Kim Taegon, the first Korean-born Catholic priest and patron saint of clergy in Korea, who was beheaded in 1846 at the age of 25.

In 1984, during his visit to South Korea, Pope John Paul II canonized 103 martyrs, including St. Andrew Kim, and nine French missionaries who had been martyred in the 19th century.

The Korean Church is celebrating the 200th birth anniversary of St. Andrew Kim this year.

Church officials say South Korea has about 5.6 million Catholics—about 8% of the population—spread in three archdioceses, 14 dioceses and a military ordinariate. †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

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2 Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410

317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
carlahill@archindy.org

'Laudato Si' inspires young adults to faith-based action on climate change

CLEVELAND (CNS)—It was after reading Pope Francis' encyclical, "Laudato Si': on Care for Our Common Home," that Emily Burke began wondering what she, as a student at Jesuit-run Creighton University, could do to help protect the environment.

"I was really energized," Burke recalled after reading the teaching document. "That message informed my time at Creighton."

She became involved in a student-led campaign to convince university trustees to divest school resources from fossil fuel companies. The work, rooted in Church teaching, led school officials to announce on Dec. 31, 2020, that full divestment would occur within a decade.

Burke and other students had something to celebrate and realized their generation could make a difference.

After graduating from Creighton in May, Burke, 22, is ready to turn the pope's teaching into a career as she begins doctoral studies this fall in community and environmental sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

She is among a growing cadre of young adults who have been inspired by Pope Francis' calls to understand the integral connection between people and the Earth, care for creation and the harmful effects of climate change on all life.

Burke's role in the divestment movement led to an invitation to be a leader of the young adult track during the Catholic Climate Covenant's second biennial "Laudato Si' and the U.S. Catholic Church" conference in July. The conference saw more than 2,700 participants join a series of online programs to learn more about how to bring the encyclical's teaching on climate change into the U.S. Church.

"It excited a lot of people who were at the conference to realize that there's a mass of young people who are trying to move the needle on climate within the Catholic context," Burke said of the three-day online conference.

The interest and energy expressed by young adults is understandable, said Dan Misleh, executive director of the Catholic Climate Covenant. "Young people are concerned about the future," he told Catholic News Service (CNS).

The Catholic climate group is looking to tap that energy by encouraging young people to "challenge their own parish and diocesan

leaders to listen to them and their concerns and to take creation care as seriously as the science demands," Misleh said.

He also expressed hope that the work on environmental concerns can be an evangelizing tool directed at young adults by helping them understand they can "fix their future with their faith."

Annapatrice Johnson, 32, team leader for young adult empowerment for Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, coordinated the young adult track for the conference from her base in Seattle. She said young people have a "feeling of angst of the impending doom" and want to be involved in protecting the Earth for future generations.

Sessions during the conference were designed to give participants skills in organizing, tools for action and ways to determine where they can impact the Church's members to make creation care a priority, Johnson explained.

Participants came to realize they were not alone in their concerns, and that they have the ability to influence parish and diocesan leaders when it comes to climate advocacy that is rooted in Catholic social teaching and backed by the pope's own words.

"What can the Church do?" she asked. "Start changing the narrative. There's a lot of language that talks about us caring for creation, but we separate from it. We have to realize we are integrally connected. We're not different. We need to see ourselves as part of creation rather than apart from creation."

It's the words of Pope Francis that have influenced the work of Brenda Noriega-Flores in different venues from the diocesan level to individual lifestyle choices.

At World Youth Day 2019 in Panama, Noriega-Flores, led a contingent from the Diocese of San Bernardino, Calif., where she was a young adult ministry coordinator. She was invited with other young adults to attend a lunch with the pope where they discussed various issues, including climate change. She was struck by the pope's concern that the window to act to prevent climate catastrophe was limited.

"I realized there's no time to waste," she said. "He made me reflect about how I was living my own life."

In her ministries since, most recently working alongside Johnson with Maryknoll, Noriega-Flores has made *Laudato Si'* the primary focus of her work. She said she has shared its message



People rally at Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., on Feb. 20, 2020, calling for the Jesuit-run school to fully divest from fossil fuels. (CNS photo/courtesy Emily Burke)

with other young adults, including Latino farmworkers in California.

"For me, it implores me to live it myself and teach others," Noriega-Flores said.

Personally, that meant planning for her wedding on July 24, 2021, at Our Lady of Victory Church in Fresno, Calif., to be a simple celebration: traditional cotton clothing reflecting her and her husband's Mexican heritage, simple wedding bands made of recycled gold, and a reception at a restaurant with only the closest family and friends present.

"Some would ask, 'Isn't this too much?' I said, 'No, we want to live the Franciscan life,'" she explained. "This is the sacrament of marriage and let's get it out of the marketing."

Another conference participant, Colby Cox, 24, joined sessions from Germany, where he serves as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He said he was glad to know that other young people share his concerns about a warming planet.

Cox grew up as a member of the Southern Baptist convention and entered into the full Communion of the Catholic Church in college. While going through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, a deacon told him about the Catholic Climate Covenant's work on the environment, and he has been exploring Church teaching on the topic ever since.

His interest lies in the science of climate change. Cox told CNS he wants to use his interest in science to verify for himself the effects of global warming. "When you see [the effects] in every sphere of what you study," he said, "you ask, 'What's the root cause?'"

The consequences of climate change are readily apparent to Teresa Tsosie, director of religious education at St. Jude Parish in Tuba City, Ariz., where she serves the Navajo people. Her work around climate issues got the attention of Johnson, who invited her to join the conference as a track leader.

The farms and grazing land of the Navajo are experiencing prolonged drought, something that Tsosie, 34, said she does not recall from her childhood. She tells how her grandmother was a sheep herder, but that these days it is difficult for the Navajo people to keep animals. She cited a recent memo from Navajo leaders that called for ranchers to reduce the size of their herds because of a water shortage.

Such realities have spearheaded Tsosie to lead an effort to reduce waste at St. Jude by ending the use of single-use cups and containers. She also has made connections among Native Americans between traditional teaching on the necessity to respect Earth and the papal encyclical similar call.

"As a Native American, you're always taught from when you're small you have to take care of Mother Earth and she takes care of you, she returns it to you," Tsosie said.

As a Native American, she told CNS she also is motivated to act to protect the planet for her 11-year-old nephew. She's concerned because it has become rare for him to see snow, or even much rain, during northern Arizona winters.

"I wonder what the world will be like for him," she said. "We're trying to save the planet for the younger generation." †

BETHURAM

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need during their two-week quarantine. We ensured they had plenty of culturally appropriate food, cleaning supplies and masks. Once they arrived, we were able to assist them remotely in applying for SNAP benefits and Medicaid, as well as their Social Security card.

After the quarantine, we ensured that each family member completed an initial health screening and was linked with a primary care provider for immediate and ongoing health needs. The children were so excited when we brought them uniforms and schools supplies, enrolled them in school, and showed them how to get to school each day—while modeling social distancing! The parents were excited when we were able to set up the Internet and give them a Chromebook

to use for cultural orientation classes, English classes and engaging with friends and family.

Mr. Munsif used this Chromebook to enroll in truck driving school. He has now completed the program and is a full-time truck driver. His wife has completed an intensive cultural orientation class and is doing a great job taking care of the family as they adjust to life in the United States.

The Munsifs are amazed and thankful for these employment and educational opportunities, especially as they just arrived in a new country in the midst of a pandemic. This is a testament not only to the resilience of this family, but also to the strength of our Catholic community that welcomed them.

(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. You can contact him at dbethuram@archindy.org.) †

CAPECCHI

continued from page 12

resuscitate a long-lost dream—as an architect or detective, as a photographer or a florist. We can start in one direction and circle back. We might face a closed door and then discover: There is another way.

Our options do not narrow with the ticking clock. We may find a new passion—or a new version of an old one that doubles the joy. Talents coalesce and

converge in unpredictable ways. God is good.

He wants us to be happy and hopeful, to possess the "joyful optimism" named as a virtue in Salesian spirituality. And in pursuing our passions, we make a sacred offering. As St. Augustine wrote: "The desire of your heart is itself your prayer."

That prayer keeps pulsing—at 50, 60 and 70. It whispers: I'm just getting going.

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †

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Two members of the Sisters of Providence profess vows in Aug. 14 Mass

Criterion staff report

Two members of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods recently professed vows in the community in west central Indiana during an Aug. 14 Mass at the Church of the Immaculate Conception on the campus of the community's motherhouse.

Sister of Providence Joni Luna professed perpetual vows during the liturgy.

A native of San Antonio, Sister Joni, 52, entered the Sisters of Providence in 2012 and professed first vows in 2016.

She graduated from the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio with a bachelor's degree in kinesiology. She also has a master's degree in education administration from Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Prior to entering the community, Sister Joni worked in education for 26 years as a teacher, coach, athletic director and vice principal.

From 2015-2019, Sister Joni ministered as the vice principal, teacher, volleyball coach and athletic director at St. Patrick School in Terre Haute. She also began a ministry with teenagers at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in 2018 and currently ministers as the director of vocations for the Sisters of Providence.

Providence Sister Jessica Vitente

professed first vows during the Mass.

A native of Pomona, Calif., Sister Jessica, 37, who was born in Glendale, Calif., entered the community as a postulant on Sept. 10, 2018, and received the title of Sister on Aug. 3, 2019, when she entered the novitiate.



Sr. Jessica Vitente, S.P.

Sister Jessica graduated from Mount San Antonio College in Walnut, Calif., with an associate's degree in accounting and also has a bachelor's degree in human development from California State University in Long Beach, Calif.

Prior to joining the community, Sister Jessica worked more than seven years in business in Los Angeles and also volunteered for five years on the Young Adult Ministry core team for neighboring parishes.

She currently ministers as the Catholic Campus Minister for the Newman Center at the University of Evansville in Evansville, Ind.

(For more information about the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, visit www.spsmw.org.) †



Providence Sister Joni Luna kisses a Bible after professing perpetual vows as a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods during an Aug. 14 Mass at the community's Church of the Immaculate Conception. Holding the Bible is Providence Sister Lisa Stallings, general officer of the community. (Submitted photo by Amy Miranda)

Vaccine mandates open door for bishops to discern an appropriate action

CLEVELAND (CNS)—The rise in coronavirus vaccine mandates around the country, including at Catholic diocesan offices, hospitals and universities, has prompted a parallel increase in interest in a vaccine exemption template letter developed by the National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC).

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, the center's director of education, confirmed in an e-mail to Catholic News Service (CNS) on Aug. 24 that the bioethics think tank has seen a jump in interest in the letter as people look to explain to employers their choice, rooted in conscience, not to receive any of the vaccines developed in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Questions surrounding the three vaccines administered in the U.S.—Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson—from some within the Church revolve around whether already widely used cell lines developed decades ago from tissue of aborted fetuses are used in manufacturing or testing processes.

The NCBC has had the template letter on its website, www.ncbcenter.org, since July 2, when it posted a statement explaining that it “does not endorse mandated COVID-19 immunization with any of the three vaccines” that have received emergency use authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (The Pfizer vaccine has now received final FDA approval, as of Aug. 23.)

The bioethics center cited guidance from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which in December explained that individuals must decide to be vaccinated or not based on personal conscience and discernment.

The Vatican's doctrinal office said at the time that when alternative vaccines are not available, it is morally acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccines developed or tested using cell lines originating 50 years ago from aborted fetuses.

“It must therefore be considered that in such a case all vaccinations recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience with the certain knowledge that the use of such vaccines does not constitute formal cooperation with the abortion from which the cells used in production of the vaccines derive,” the statement said.

However, the congregation added, “the licit use of such vaccines does not and should not in any way imply that there is a moral endorsement of the use of cell lines proceeding from aborted fetuses.”

The doctrinal office also said those who refuse for reasons of conscience “must do their utmost to avoid, by other prophylactic means and appropriate behavior, becoming vehicles for the transmission of the infectious agent” to those who are the most vulnerable.

Father Pacholczyk wrote in an e-mail to CNS that the NCBC's July 2 stance remains unchanged even though vaccine mandates are being implemented in at least two

dioceses and several bishops have directed priests not to sign letters from parishioners seeking an exemption from vaccination.

He said the template does not require a priest's signature to “‘certify’ or ‘authenticate’” its contents. “Priests, in fact, cannot ‘certify the state of another's conscience, and really do not need to be asked to do so,’” he explained.

Since the NCBC posted its statement, dioceses have come down on both sides of the religious exemption question.

The Catholic bishops of Colorado, South Dakota and Wisconsin have issued statements supporting the conscience rights of individuals to seek a religious exemption from being vaccinated.

The Catholic Conference followed the NCBC's lead and has included a template letter for vaccine exemption on its website that can be downloaded.

The state's four bishops affirmed in early August that “the use of some COVID-19 vaccines is morally acceptable under certain circumstances,” but also said they objected to mandating that Coloradans get vaccinated against the coronavirus.

In South Dakota, Bishop Donald E. DeGrood of Sioux Falls and Bishop Peter M. Muhich of Rapid City, said in an Aug. 10 statement that people have a right to follow their conscience regarding the vaccines. “We must not be forced to act contrary to our conscience, i.e., to be compelled to do something we believe to be wrong,” they said.

The five bishops of Wisconsin echoed that stance on Aug. 20, but also said, “Pastors should not feel compelled to issue documentation recognizing this conscientious objection [to mandatory vaccination] and are not recommended to do so.”

Meanwhile, Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, and Bishop John E. Stowe of Lexington, Ky., in mid-August required diocesan employees to be vaccinated. In El Paso, the mandate extends to catechists, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist and others in ministry.

Bishop Seitz said the diocesan requirement stems from what he believes is the Church's “responsibility to keep others safe.”

“Those who work and perform ministries in a special way represent the Church. We need to lead by example,” he said, explained that Catholic Christians are responsible for acting “on behalf of the common good and not just for ourselves as individuals.”

Bishop Stowe described the challenges posed by the growing number of reported COVID-19 cases that are leading to more hospitalizations as “an urgent matter of public health and safety.”

“There is no religious exemption for Catholics to being vaccinated, and Pope Francis has repeatedly called this a moral obligation,” he said in a statement posted on Aug. 17 on the diocesan website.

“The health care system is now overwhelmed by a crisis caused primarily by those who refuse to protect themselves and others by getting vaccinated. This is unacceptable, and our diocese now joins those employers

who have already made this basic commitment to the common good a requirement,” he added.

Bishop Stowe told CNS on Aug. 25 that the requirement is in place for school employees and was extended to workers at the chancery on Sept. 1. “Pastors were informed that if they required a vaccination for other employees, they would have my support but the vaccine requirement for employees is not universal,” he said.

Pope Francis has joined other Church leaders in urging Catholics to be vaccinated.

“Being vaccinated with vaccines authorized by the competent authorities is an act of love,” the pope said in a three-minute public service announcement in Spanish with English, Spanish and Portuguese subtitles released on Aug. 18.

The video message was part of a global effort by the U.S.-based nonpartisan, nonprofit Ad Council and the COVID Collaborative's “It's Up To You” campaign to increase people's confidence in the vaccines by reminding them that such a medical intervention is safe, effective and saves people's lives.

Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes of Mexico; Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa, Honduras; Cardinal Cláudio Hummes, retired archbishop of São Paulo; Cardinal Gregorio Rosa Chávez, auxiliary bishop of San Salvador, El Salvador; and Archbishop Miguel Cabrejos Vidarte of Trujillo, Peru, also appear in the video.

Father Pacholczyk explained that he believes Pope Francis' involvement in the ad campaign “represents a decision to share a personal judgment, his best assessment of the situation surrounding the pandemic.”

“His judgment is a prudential judgment, a judgment based on the virtue of prudence, where he strives to understand the risks and benefits to the best of his ability, reading all the particulars of a situation, and deriving his best personal conclusion,” Father Pacholczyk wrote in his e-mail to CNS.

“Even though the pope counsels and encourages the reception of vaccines generally, and using broad language, the pope himself would not actually encourage such reception universally. ... His passing comments during an interview or his thoughts shared in a public service announcement can scarcely be invoked as imposing a universal moral obligation to be vaccinated,” the ethicist continued.

Throughout the United States, bishops and diocesan officials have urged priests to avoid giving religious exemptions to COVID-19 vaccines to parishioners.

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago in an Aug. 17 letter advised priests to “politely decline and explain” that signing such a letter “would mean that you would be endorsing something that is not in keeping with Catholic teaching.”

“Parishioners surely can determine their own actions, but it would be important to clarify that they cannot use the teaching of the Church to justify such decisions, which in their essences, are a rejection of the Church's authentic moral teaching regarding COVID vaccines,” the cardinal's letter said. †



Fr. Tadeusz Pacholczyk