



The

Criterion

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Evangelization and Catechesis Supplement



Read how parishes are building community through sharing the faith, pages 9-13.

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'Priority in Jesus Christ'



Couples share stories, wisdom and faith at annual Wedding Anniversary Mass

By Natalie Hoefler

Norberto and Teresa were youth group leaders in Mexico when they met in 1963.

Stella was the car hop who served Elbert a cup of coffee in 1955.

World War II ended just a few years before Elvira and Les met on a blind date in college.

Three couples in different times and places, but all share two things in common: a strong commitment to each other and to God to help them reach 54, 65 and 70 years of marriage respectively.

Secondly, they, plus 97 other couples, came together at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Aug. 29 to celebrate their years of marriage at the archdiocese's 37th annual Wedding Anniversary Mass, hosted by the Office of Marriage and Family Life.

More than 50 of the 100 couples celebrated a milestone anniversary of 25, 50, 60, 65 or 70 years of marriage. That's 2,525 years of marriage—more than two and half millennia of love, commitment, challenges, victories, laughs, tears and joy—all rooted in Christ, as Archbishop Charles C. Thompson noted in his homily.

'Ultimate priority in Jesus Christ'

"We come here today as Christians, keeping before us what is priority," the archbishop told the congregation of about 350. "Whatever our vocation may be," he said, we must always maintain "that ultimate priority in Jesus Christ."

See MARRIAGE, page 14

Stella and Elbert Wilson enjoy a dance at a reception in the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis after the archdiocese's 37th annual Wedding Anniversary Mass on Aug. 29 across the street at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral. Married for 65 years, the Wilsons are members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Eucharist heals from idolatry of 'self,' pope says at Mass in Budapest

BUDAPEST, Hungary (CNS)— Spending time in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament can heal Christians from a self-absorbed religiosity that is ostentatious and triumphalist, Pope Francis said.

Presiding over the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress on Sept. 12, the pope urged people to make time for eucharistic adoration.



Pope Francis

"Let us allow Jesus, the living bread, to heal us of our self-absorption, open our hearts to self-giving, liberate us from our rigidity and self-concern, free us

from the paralyzing slavery of defending our image, and inspire us to follow him wherever he would lead us," he said.

After departing from Rome's Fiumicino Airport in the early morning, the pope told journalists aboard the flight to Hungary that the papal trip had "a bit of a farewell feeling" due to it being the last time that Bishop-designate Guido Marini would serve as papal master of ceremonies. The pope named the bishop-designate to lead the Diocese of Tortona, Italy.

Pope Francis also noted that it was the final papal flight aboard Alitalia, which will shutter operations in October after serving 75 years as Italy's national airline.

"So many farewells, but we continue the trips again, and this is something very important, because we will go to bring the word and a greeting to so many people," he said of the visit, which included three days in Slovakia after the short visit to Budapest.

Landing in Budapest, the pope was welcomed by Hungarian Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén. He then made his way to the Museum of Fine Arts near the site of the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress.

The Vatican said Pope Francis met privately with Hungarian President János Áder, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Semjén for roughly 40 minutes "in a cordial atmosphere."

See POPE, page 14

High school students encouraged to 'never forget' during 9/11 memorial Mass

By Sean Gallagher

Two large ladder trucks from the Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD) were parked in front of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis on the morning of Sept. 10.

A large American flag that flew from their ladders extended far above the entrance to the school. Dozens of IFD firefighters had come to Bishop Chatard to pay tribute in prayer to the first responders who gave their lives to help others after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

It was similar to many Masses celebrated in Indianapolis during the past 20 years around the date of Sept. 11. In recent years, the liturgies have been celebrated

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Father John McCaslin, pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis and a chaplain for the Indianapolis Fire Department, preaches a homily during a Sept. 10 Mass at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

(Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Judges process into SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 7, 2020, at the beginning of the annual Red Mass of the St. Thomas More Society of Central Indiana. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

Red Mass for legal professionals set for Oct. 5 at Indy cathedral

By Sean Gallagher

The St. Thomas More Society of Central Indiana's annual Red Mass will be celebrated at 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 5 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.

A dinner will follow in Assembly Hall at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center across the street from the cathedral.

Susan Brooks, the U.S. representative for Indiana's 5th congressional district from 2013-21, will be honored by the society during the evening with its Woman for All Seasons award. She will also be the keynote speaker during the dinner.

A Red Mass is a centuries-old tradition of those who work in law to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the legal term in the early fall. The liturgy is called a Red Mass because of the red vestments worn during it, red being symbolic of the Holy Spirit.

All are invited to take part in the Mass and dinner. Judges, attorneys, law students and others who work in the legal field are especially encouraged to attend. Cost for the dinner is \$35. Registration can be made at cutt.ly/RedMass.

Judge David Certo, who serves in the Marion County Superior Court, is president of the society.

"Lawyers know the law, but we all—especially judges—experience wisdom in the words of the prophet Micah, to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God," said Certo, quoting Micah 6:8. "The Red Mass is an opportunity for us to ask God's help in living as he requires and to help each other listen for his voice in our lives."

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson is the scheduled principal celebrant for the Red Mass. Trained in canon law, Archbishop Thompson appreciates gathering annually for worship with other

legal professionals.

"In the Red Mass, the Church prays for all those involved in the legal system that they may be guided by the wisdom and grace of the Holy Spirit in all their endeavors," he said. "It is important that we pray and express support for all those in the legal profession, a noble service to the dignity of the person and the common good of society."

The society is named after St. Thomas More, a 16th-century English lawyer and statesman, who died as a martyr when he refused to accept King Henry VIII as head of the Church in England.

The All Seasons award given by the society is a reference to a description of More by his good friend and renowned Renaissance scholar Desiderius Erasmus, which was used as the title of Robert Bolt's 1954 play about More and was the title of the 1966 Oscar-winning motion picture adaptation of the play.

Certo said Brooks is a worthy recipient of the award.

"Susan Brooks has focused relentlessly on serving other people in our community and our country," he said. "In Congress, she worked to improve the institution by finding common ground among people from many backgrounds and political ideologies."

"Susan demonstrated her commitment to ethical conduct in Indiana, and she helped make Washington a more principled, humane place for her colleagues and the people she served. Our profession needs examples like Susan to remind us that loving our neighbor requires both compassion and honesty about how we can achieve the results we want."

(For more information about the St. Thomas More Society of Central Indiana and about the Red Mass, send an email to Judge David Certo at stthomasmoreindy@gmail.com.) †

Rev. Steven Schaftlein, pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Franklin, appointed priest moderator of Holy Trinity Parish in Edinburgh, while remaining pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish.

(These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.) †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

September 17–26, 2021

<p>September 17-18 – 4:30 p.m. Wedding at St. Boniface Church in Louisville, Ky.</p> <p>September 19 – 5 p.m. Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Ambrose Parish, Seymour, at St. Ambrose Church</p> <p>September 20 – 5:45 p.m. Mass Celebrating Migration Week at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, Greenwood</p> <p>September 21 – 5 p.m. CST Archbishop's Annual Dinner at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Meinrad</p> <p>September 22 – 7 p.m. Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Rita Parish, Indianapolis; St. Joseph Parish, Shelbyville; and St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Shelby County, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p>	<p>September 23 – 3:30 p.m. Catholic Community Foundation Advisory Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>September 23 – 6 p.m. UCA Advance Mass, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, and program and dinner to follow, 7 p.m., at Assembly Hall, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>September 25 – 10:30 a.m. Installation of Acolytes for Permanent Deacon Candidates at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral</p> <p>September 25 – 4:30 p.m. Mass and Installation of Pastor at St. Michael Church, Charlestown</p> <p>September 26 – 2 p.m. CST Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Michael Parish, Cannelton; St. Paul Parish, Tell City; and Holy Cross Parish, St. Croix, at St. Paul Church, Tell City</p>
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Respect Life Sunday Mass set for 1 p.m. on Oct. 3 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

Criterion staff report

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson will celebrate the archdiocesan annual Respect Life Sunday Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 1 p.m. on Oct. 3.

During the liturgy, the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity will present the Archbishop O'Meara



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

Respect Life Award and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award.

All are invited to participate in this Mass that honors respect for all life from conception to natural death. †

Indy Irish Fest will take place on Sept. 24-25 at Garfield Park

The Indy Irish Fest will take place at Garfield Park, 2345 Pagoda Dr., in Indianapolis, on Sept. 24-25, with a majority of the activities centered around MacAllister Amphitheater.

As one of the largest cultural music festivals in the state, Indy Irish Fest is excited to host a variety of national talent this year, spanning a mix of genres. Highlights include The Fighting Jamesons, The Drowsy Lads, Sousa and Agee, The Ashley Davis Band, Colin Farrell and Dave Curley.

Storytellers, sheep herding exhibitions, exhibits and vendors will be present, as well as local groups such as The Irish Airts, The Indianapolis Ceili Band, The Richens/Timm

Academy of Irish Dance and Katherine Nagy.

The hours are 4:30-10:30 p.m. on Sept. 24, with free admission from 4:30-5:30 p.m. for those who bring five canned goods for the St. Vincent de Paul Indianapolis Food Pantry, and 11:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m. on Sept. 25. Tickets are \$10 for adults, and children ages 14 and younger are free.

A V.I.P. package is available for \$250. It includes a 10-foot by 10-foot tent for the day, plus tables, chairs and two admission tickets.

For tickets or more information, go to IndyIrishFest.com or call the Indy Irish Fest Information Line at 317-713-7117. †

Official Appointments

Effective Immediately

Rev. Francis Joseph Kalapurackal, pastor of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, appointed priest moderator of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, while remaining pastor of St. Pius X Parish.



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NEWS FROM YOU!

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E-mail us:
criterion@archindy.org

Staff:
Editor: Mike Krokos
Assistant Editor: John Shaughnessy
Reporter: Sean Gallagher
Reporter: Natalie Hoefer
Graphic Designer / Online Editor: Brandon A. Evans
Executive Assistant: Ann Lewis



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9/11 MASS

continued from page 1

at Catholic high schools for an important reason.

“The students today were not born in 2001,” said IFD battalion chief Howard Stahl, who helped organize this year’s Mass on behalf of the Emerald Society, a fraternal organization of Indianapolis firefighters. “To have the fire department connection along with the spiritual reflection, we hope to increase the awareness of the sacrifice from that day and make it more than just a day in history.”

Before the Mass started, Stahl spoke about the terrorist attacks of 9/11, reminding those gathered of its death toll, including the loss of 343 firefighters from the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) at the World Trade Center.

“Pure evil and pure hate were met that day with pure love and goodness,” he said.

Stahl recalled the story of FDNY Captain Patrick “Paddy” Brown, who led the 11 firefighters of Ladder 3 into the World Trade Center’s north tower soon after the attacks.

After the south tower collapsed, all firefighters in the north tower were commanded to evacuate.

Brown responded firmly by radio. “Negative. Ladder 3 refuses the order. We have too many injured people here. We’re not leaving them. We’re on 35. This is truck 3, and we’re still heading up.”

“That was his final transmission,” said Stahl. “Soon the north tower would collapse, and everyone remaining was lost. We pray today that Paddy Brown, his crew and all the souls kept heading up all the way to God’s arms. We remember them with a simple phrase, ‘Never forget.’”

‘Christ was there’

Father John McCaslin, pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis and an IFD chaplain, noted in his homily during the memorial Mass that Christianity began as an oral tradition where stories were passed from one generation to the next by word of mouth.

“Likewise, we need to pass down these stories [about 9/11],” Father McCaslin said. “It’s important that we remember.”

A vital part of the stories of 9/11 to remember the priest emphasized in his homily was the presence of Christ in the horror and heroism of that day.

“Even in the midst of the darkest moments, friends, Christ was there,” he said. “He was there in the many people in those buildings who comforted and supported each other even unto death.”

“He was there in the countless first responders—firefighters, police officers, EMTs [emergency medical technicians] and others—who went up the stairs and didn’t come back down. He was there

in the countless people, the hundreds of millions of people, who knelt down in prayer on that day in churches around the world.”

Speaking specifically to the students at the Mass, Father McCaslin encouraged them to strive to be today like the first responders who sacrificed themselves for others on 9/11.

“We need to respond and confront evil with love, generosity, selflessness—with prayer and faith,” he said. “I pray and hope that we never, ever experience something like 9/11 again. I do. I hope we all do. But if something horrible like that should happen, then we must confront it as apostles, bearing the light of Jesus.”

Father McCaslin told them of his confidence in them being able to follow the example of the first responders of 9/11.

“How can we be a light of hope, of healing in the midst of difficult times?” Father McCaslin asked. “How can we be a bearer of the Good News? This is our challenge. This is your challenge. You’re 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 [years old]. You’re filled with the Holy Spirit. You’ve been given the gifts of the Spirit to make a difference.

“As we remember those who are fallen, please, as disciples of Jesus, be like him on this day of remembrance of 20 years ago. Be committed, make a difference, transform the world and remember always. They were selfless. They served others. So can you. So can I.”

Bishop Chatard senior Arianna Chavis appreciated Father McCaslin’s message.

“We learn from what they did for us,” said Arianna of the first responders who died on 9/11. “We can continue to keep that inspiration so that we can reflect on what they did for us.”

She also was glad that so many IFD firefighters came to her school, “showing us how we can make a better effort to help each other.”

Honoring a Chatard graduate

The Sept. 10 Mass was also an occasion to pay tribute to Warren Smith, a 1990 Bishop Chatard graduate who went on to become an IFD firefighter.

He died in the line of duty in 2000 during a diving exercise. A plaque honoring Smith was given to school leaders after the Mass so that its students can remember the self-sacrifice of the school’s graduate.

Smith’s brother Marc Smith, a member of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, attended the Mass.

“Throughout the years, I’ve known how they felt about him,” said Smith of the way IFD firefighters have honored his brother. “It means a great deal. To me, he was my big brother. But to see how other people see what kind of person he was is

very fulfilling and uplifting.”

IFD battalion chief Dudley Taylor, who served with Warren Smith, spoke about his fallen comrade.

“Many may only remember the tragic day on which he lost his life,” said Taylor. “But we’re here today to remember and honor all the days of his life, especially those within Bishop Chatard High School.

The lessons he learned at Bishop Chatard served him far beyond the confines of his classroom.”

‘We were all members of the FDNY’

Although firefighters in Indianapolis were far away from the terrorist attacks in New York, Arlington, Va., and Shanksville, Pa., on Sept. 11, 2001, that day lives on in their hearts, said Stahl, a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, in an interview with *The Criterion*.

“On Sept. 11th, 2001, we were all members of the FDNY,” he said. “We felt a very real, very emotional connection with what our brothers and sisters were going through. The horrors, the suffering, the fear and dread. Each of us I am sure asked what would we do if we were thrown into that situation.

“The members of the FDNY responded and led the way, going into a living hell and honoring the traditions of the fire service. Despite the odds and having a full clear picture of the dangers ahead, they



An American flag hangs from two Indianapolis Fire Department ladder trucks on Sept. 10 in front of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

kept climbing and reassuring civilians that the fire department was there, and they would handle the situation. So many people made it out by just a firefighter’s presence. We truly should never forget that.”

He was also grateful to the leaders at Bishop Chatard and other Catholic high schools for welcoming firefighters for the annual 9/11 memorial Masses.

“Opening their doors to us, allowing the fire department to participate in their worship services, gives us a continued feeling of healing and peace,” Stahl said. “Our nation and certainly our first responders will never be the same after 9/11, but to be able to come together to remember the sacrifice and pray helps us put one boot in front of the other and face whatever tomorrow may bring.

“Seeing the smiling young faces, hearing their songs, worshiping, brings a calm to an otherwise chaotic world we firefighters inhabit.” †

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Gianna Jessen

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The Criterion

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Editorial



Students at Holy Name School in Beech Grove work on a school project. (Submitted photo)

Catholic schools serve and protect our children

One of the most difficult and long-lasting results of the COVID-19 pandemic may well be its effect on the education of our children. Thank God for our Catholic schools whose teachers and staff continue to go far above and beyond the call of duty to provide our children with outstanding educational experiences in safe environments designed to serve and protect children, their families and the entire school community.

Catholic schools are special for many different reasons, but I think the primary reason is something we too often take for granted, namely our schools' Catholic identity.

What constitutes a school's Catholic identity? It's not the externals—the crucifixes on the classroom walls, the pictures and statues of the saints, or the rice bowls used to collect money for the missions. These are important symbols that remind us of deeper truths, but they are not the essential things that make a school Catholic.

There are several different ways to describe Catholic identity, but three elements are fundamental. These are: evangelization, catechesis and social justice. Here is a brief description of each of these essential elements of Catholic identity:

—A Catholic school must witness to the person of Jesus Christ and to his message (evangelization). Catholic schools exist to proclaim the Gospel. Everything in the school—its curriculum, its liturgies and retreats, its sports activities and its service programs—should provide students (also staff and families) with opportunities to encounter the person of Jesus Christ, to become his disciples and to proclaim to the whole world our salvation in him. The most important element in a school's Catholic identity is its commitment to make Christ present to everyone who attends the school or who comes into contact with it.

—A Catholic school must teach the Catholic faith (catechesis). The mystery of God, as revealed to us by the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the primary content of a Catholic education. Everything else that is taught is an elaboration on the wonders of God's creation and the history of our salvation. All of the academic disciplines reveal in partial and preliminary ways the working of the Holy Spirit in our world from the beginning of time. The more we learn

about math and science, diverse languages and cultures, and the ups and downs of world history, the more we discover that the teachings of our Church, as contained in Scripture and in our Catholic tradition, represents the truth, the way things really are. Schools that teach the faith are vibrant learning environments that promote curiosity and an openness to new ways of living and learning.

—Finally, in order to be truly Catholic, a school must teach its students and all members of the school community to reach out to others and accept responsibility for the well-being of all God's creation (social justice). Catholic schools exist for both the good of their students and of the communities they serve. A school that is truly Catholic serves its neighborhood and community because of its recognition that we cannot love God as we should unless we also love our neighbor. Social justice is a constitutive element of the Gospel. That means it must also be a constitutive element of the curriculum and the daily life of every Catholic school.

A school is Catholic when it recognizes that it is called to accomplish these three fundamental objectives: to introduce students to the person of Jesus Christ, to help them understand the world through the wisdom of our Catholic teaching, and to challenge them to serve the needs of others as Jesus did. A school that accomplishes these objectives serves not only its students but also every member of the school community and all the people—near and far—who are touched by its mission.

Catholic schools have served the Catholic community in central and southern Indiana for many years now—long before COVID-19 threatened the physical, mental and spiritual health of our children. Thanks to the tradition of Catholic education in our archdiocese, our schools remain vibrant communities of faith, learning and service. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to our school leaders, our teachers and staff for their unwavering dedication to the unique ministry that they carry out so faithfully.

May Jesus Christ, who is the primary teacher in every Catholic home and in every Catholic school, continue to bless our parents, families and school communities. That in all things God may be glorified!

—Daniel Conway

Reflection/John Shaughnessy

The poignant story of the life and faith of an Afghan-American who is Catholic

As we sit across the table from each other in the coffee shop, the young man admits that he is torn.



He believes the Holy Spirit wants him to share his deeply personal story of growing up in the Muslim faith—the faith that his parents, both immigrants from Afghanistan, still embrace with zeal—and then finding his own zeal in the Catholic faith as a young adult.

At the same time, he is sensitive to the heartache his choice has caused in his family, and for that reason and others, he's unsure whether he wants his name mentioned for this story.

Amid that personal conflict, he begins the story of his life and his journey of faith—a story whose pertinence and poignancy could stand alone in any time, but also has an added depth as thousands of refugees from Afghanistan are beginning to resettle all across America, including Indiana.

He notes that his parents were once refugees themselves, years after the Russians invaded Afghanistan in 1979. They fled to Pakistan and came to the United States in 1989, drawn by the hope of a peaceful and prosperous life that has led immigrants to America for centuries.

He was born here in the United States, "close to the one-year anniversary of my parents moving here," he said.

The oldest of their three children, he watched his parents closely growing up, and there were two qualities about them that always stood out to him and shaped him.

"The first is ambition," he said. "There's a certain level of hunger you see in an immigrants' eyes when they come to a new country. You feel you almost owe it to them to be that successful child, because everything they did was for me, for their children.

"Also, just having a zeal for their faith. They were very observant of their Muslim faith."

As a child, he was also observant of the Indiana community where he grew up.

"There were a few Afghan families in the area, and they were welcoming. We grew close to them. But I can't think of a single time an American, Christian family came into our house or where my entire family was invited into their house for something. Now that I think

of it, it was kind of heartbreaking. But we were invited by other immigrants—Asian and Hispanic families—into their houses."

Still, he worked hard to make friends on his own as a child and felt welcomed by children from all backgrounds. Then came the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. As it did for most Americans, life changed dramatically for the then-fifth-grade boy.

"When 9/11 happened, I lost a lot of friends that I had made. I was looked at as an outcast, an enemy. If you were Afghan and a Muslim, you had a difficult time. That lasted all through grade school. In high school, kids still had a lot of animosity, but high school was enough of a melting pot that I could have my own friend group. My community was Arab friends, Hispanic friends, not many Caucasian, Christian friends.

"After a while, we were able to cut through the noise and understand that even if a person hails from a place or a country that did my family wrong, they deserve love. They still deserve affection."

His late years in high school and his early years of college were also a time of rebelling and searching.

"I wanted to party, to do whatever was pleasing to me," he recalled. "I hit a pretty bad low, the lowest I had gotten in my life. I turned to God to get me out of that low. I tried living my life as a Muslim, reading the Quran, praying five times a day."

Still, as much as he tried, as much as it pained him, he couldn't find the peace and the joy that his parents and his siblings found in the Muslim faith. He started asking questions of people from other faith backgrounds. That search led him to a fraternity brother in college who was Catholic.

"He did not indulge in a lot of fraternity life, if you will," he said. "I thought he would be a good person to talk to. He did what any good Catholic would do. He said, 'Why don't you come to a Bible study first?' I trusted and said yes. I went, and the first topic was Jesus asking the question, 'Who do you say I am?'"

"Everybody in the Bible study gave their answers. There was a consensus that he's the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. I was the contrarian. He was a holy man, not the son of God, a prophet at best."

His fraternity brother was patient with him, he recalled. His friend encouraged

See REFLECTION, page 19

Letters to the Editor

Newspaper's placement of vaccine stories does not serve its readership

I was disappointed to see the headline "Bioethicists discuss moral dilemma of seeking vaccine exemptions" on the front page above the fold in the Aug. 27 issue of *The Criterion*.

First, the headline misrepresents the article, which presents overwhelming evidence from many Catholic ethicists that it is a moral good, not a moral dilemma, for Catholics to receive the vaccine for the common good.

In addition, the article "Vaccination is an act of love, pope says in ad campaign" is placed on an inside page (page 2), as if it is less important than this purported dilemma.

I ask that in the future you consider the good you can do by helping encourage your readership to follow Pope Francis' encouragement and take the vaccine.

Beth Franzosa
Indianapolis

Coverage of 20th anniversary of 9/11 beautiful, deeply inspiring, reader says

Your special section on the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 tragedy was beautiful and deeply inspiring.

I was not keen to relive memories of that day and time, but once I started reading the articles, I could not stop.

The accounts of people's faith during that time touched me to the core. Thank you to all who contributed.

Pat Long
Zionsville



Christ the Cornerstone

Robert Bellarmine, a saint for our time

Today, Sept. 17, is the Feast of St. Robert Bellarmine, the patron saint of Bellarmine University, my alma mater in Louisville, Ky. A Jesuit scholar and Cardinal, Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621) became a leading figure in the Counter-Reformation, the effort to defend the Church against the charges leveled against it by the Protestant reformers. He was canonized a saint in 1930 by Pope Pius XI, and one year later was declared a doctor of the Church.

Robert Bellarmine is a saint for our time because of his ability to argue forcefully, but respectfully, with those who disagreed with the teaching and practice of the Catholic Church. Two striking examples can be given among many that might be chosen. These are: 1) Bellarmine's role in the Church's case against Galileo; and 2) his position on the pope's authority as a temporal ruler.

Most people are familiar with the Catholic Church's dispute with the Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei, who taught the Copernican theory that the Earth is not stationary but revolves around the sun. At the time, this teaching seemed to contradict sacred Scripture as interpreted by the Fathers of the Church. Pope Paul V asked Cardinal Bellarmine to inform Galileo that a forthcoming

decree of the Congregation of the Index would condemn the Copernican doctrine of the mobility of the Earth and the immobility of the sun. Galileo was ordered to abandon this teaching.

What is significant is the way Cardinal Bellarmine approached this difficult assignment. Rather than ridiculing a theory the Church disagreed with, or demonizing the man who argued in favor of it, Bellarmine calmly and thoughtfully presented the Church's position. When rumors began to spread claiming that Galileo had been mistreated and forced to abandon his teaching, Bellarmine wrote out a certificate denying the rumors, stating that Galileo had merely been notified of the decree and informed that, as a consequence of it, the Copernican doctrine could not be "defended or held."

Twelve years after Bellarmine's death, when Galileo was brought before the Inquisition and charged with heresy, Bellarmine's certificate was used as evidence in his defense.

Many years later, Pope St. John Paul II commissioned a study by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences which declared that Galileo was correct in his teaching. On Oct. 31, 1992, Pope John Paul II expressed regret for how the Galileo affair was handled, and

officially conceded that the Earth was not stationary, but revolves around the sun. The Holy Father said the theologians who condemned Galileo did not recognize the formal distinction between the Bible and its interpretation. Therefore, he said, "This led them unduly to transpose into the realm of the doctrine of the faith, a question which in fact pertained to scientific investigation."

While he was teaching in Rome, Robert Bellarmine wrote a major compilation in three volumes of the controversies of the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation. This work, known as the *Disputationes* and published in 1596, is distinguished by the calm, fair way that he went about analyzing the differences between Catholic and Protestant teaching. Once again, Bellarmine refused to mistreat those who disagreed with the Catholic position. He stated the Church's views with clarity and conviction without demeaning his opponents or rejecting their arguments out of hand.

As a consequence of his explanation of the Catholic understanding of papal authority, Bellarmine found himself at odds with Pope Sixtus V, who disagreed with his statement that the pope is not the temporal ruler of the

whole world and that temporal rulers do not derive their authority to rule from God but from the consent of the governed. Pope Sixtus was so unhappy with this teaching that he threatened to place the first volume of Bellarmine's *Disputationes* on the Index, a list of publications determined to be heretical.

The point here is that disagreements—even very serious ones—can be handled with dignity and respect. And when one side or the other is proved wrong, if the arguments have been conducted civilly, apologies can be offered and amends made.

St. Robert Bellarmine is a saint for our time because we often seem to be overwhelmed by controversies and because far too often our disagreements are uncivil, ugly and offensive. As Christians, we need civility and compassion in our dealings with people we disagree with, and the deeper the divisions among us are, the more important it is to establish common ground.

Let's ask St. Robert to intercede for us and to help us learn to disagree without being disagreeable. Let's also pray that we will be open to points of view that challenge our previously held ideas while, at the same time, being forthright in stating our own firmly held beliefs. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Roberto Belarmino, un santo para nuestros tiempos

Hoy, 17 de septiembre, es la fiesta de san Roberto Belarmino, patrono de la Universidad Belarmino, mi alma mater en Louisville, Kentucky. Erudito jesuita y cardenal, Roberto Belarmino (1542-1621) se convirtió en una figura destacada de la Contrarreforma, el esfuerzo por defender a la Iglesia de las acusaciones formuladas contra ella por los reformistas protestantes. Fue canonizado como santo en 1930 por el papa Pío XI, y un año después fue declarado doctor de la Iglesia.

Roberto Belarmino es un santo de nuestro tiempo por su capacidad para argumentar con fuerza, pero con respeto, con quienes no estaban de acuerdo con la enseñanza y la práctica de la Iglesia católica. Entre los muchos ejemplos de su labor, podemos citar dos que resultan especialmente notables, a saber: 1) el papel de Belarmino en el caso de la Iglesia contra Galileo; y 2) su posición sobre la autoridad del Papa como gobernante temporal.

La mayoría de la gente está familiarizada con la disputa de la Iglesia Católica contra el astrónomo italiano Galileo Galilei, que enseñó la teoría copernicana de que la Tierra no es inmóvil sino que gira alrededor del sol. En su momento, esta enseñanza parecía contradecir la Sagrada Escritura tal y como la interpretaban los Padres de la Iglesia. El papa Pablo V pidió al cardenal Belarmino que informara a

Galileo de que un próximo decreto de la Sagrada Congregación del Índice condenaría la doctrina copernicana de la movilidad de la Tierra y la inmovilidad del Sol. Se ordenó a Galileo que abandonara esta enseñanza.

Lo que es significativo es la forma en que el cardenal Belarmino abordó esta difícil tarea. En vez de ridiculizar una teoría con la que la Iglesia no estaba de acuerdo, o de demonizar al hombre que la defendía, Belarmino presentó con calma y reflexión la postura de la Iglesia. Cuando empezaron a correr rumores que afirmaban que Galileo había sido maltratado y obligado a abandonar sus enseñanzas, Belarmino redactó un certificado desmintiendo los rumores, afirmando que simplemente se le había notificado del decreto e informado de que, como consecuencia de este, la doctrina copernicana no podía ser "defendida ni sostenida."

Doce años después de la muerte de Belarmino, cuando Galileo fue llevado ante la Inquisición y acusado de herejía, el certificado de Belarmino fue utilizado como prueba en su defensa.

Muchos años después, el papa san Juan Pablo II encargó un estudio a la Academia Pontificia de las Ciencias que declaró que Galileo tenía razón en sus enseñanzas. En 31 de octubre de 1992, el papa Juan Pablo II lamentó el modo en que se trató el caso de Galileo

y admitió oficialmente que la Tierra no era inmóvil, sino que giraba alrededor del sol. El Santo Padre dijo que los teólogos que condenaron a Galileo no reconocieron la distinción formal entre la Biblia y su interpretación. Por lo tanto, dijo, "esto los llevó indebidamente a trasladar al ámbito de la doctrina de la fe, una cuestión que de hecho pertenecía a la investigación científica."

Mientras enseñaba en Roma, Roberto Belarmino escribió una importante recopilación en tres volúmenes de las controversias de la Reforma protestante y la Contrarreforma católica. Esta obra, conocida como *Disputationes* y publicada en 1596, se distingue por la forma ecuánime y justa en que analizó las diferencias entre la enseñanza católica y la protestante. Una vez más, Belarmino se negó a maltratar a quienes no estaban de acuerdo con la posición católica. Expuso los puntos de vista de la Iglesia con claridad y convicción, sin rebajar a sus oponentes ni rechazar sus argumentos sin más.

Como consecuencia de su explicación de la noción católica de la autoridad papal, Belarmino se encontró en desavenencia con el papa Sixto V, quien no estaba de acuerdo con su declaración de que el Papa no es el gobernante temporal de todo el mundo y que los gobernantes temporales no derivan su autoridad para gobernar de

Dios sino del consentimiento de los gobernados. El Papa Sixto estaba tan descontento con esta enseñanza que amenazó con colocar el primer volumen de las *Disputationes* en el Index, una lista de publicaciones consideradas heréticas.

La cuestión es que los desacuerdos, incluso los más graves, pueden tratarse con dignidad y respeto. Y cuando se demuestre que una u otra parte está equivocada, si las discusiones se han llevado a cabo de forma civilizada, se pueden ofrecer disculpas y hacer enmiendas.

San Roberto Belarmino es un santo para nuestro tiempo porque a menudo parecemos estar abrumados por las controversias y porque con demasiada frecuencia nuestros desacuerdos son incívicos, feos y ofensivos. Como cristianos, necesitamos civismo y compasión en nuestro trato con las personas con las que no estamos de acuerdo, y cuanto más profundas son las divisiones entre nosotros, más importante es establecer un terreno común.

Pidamos a san Roberto que interceda por nosotros y nos ayude a aprender a discrepar sin ser desagradables. Recemos también para que estemos abiertos a los puntos de vista que cuestionan nuestras ideas previas y, al mismo tiempo, seamos francos a la hora de exponer nuestras propias y firmes creencias. †

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 17-Oct. 30

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **"Holy Faces: Traditional Icons of Our Lord, His Mother and the Saints"** iconography exhibit, free. Information and library hours: 812-357-6401, 800-987-7311 or saintmeinrad.edu/library/library-hours.

September 20

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 South Meridian St., Greenwood. **World Day of Migrants and Refugees Mass**, 5:45 p.m., offered in English and Spanish, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, celebrant. Information: 317-236-1404 or tchamblee@archindy.org.

September 20, 27

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 22

Virtual Dialogue on Intercultural Competency, via Zoom, sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, "The Importance of Africentric Catholic Catechesis, Part II," 10 a.m., Kathleen Dorsey Bellow, director of the Institute for

Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University in New Orleans, speaking, freewill offering. Registration: cutt.ly/VDIC. Information: Pearllette Springer, pspringer@archindy.org or 317-236-1474.

Group Lectio via Zoom, 7 p.m. Sundays, Benedictine Sister Jill Marie Reuber, facilitator, second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, sponsored by Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Information: vocation@thedorm.org.

Virtual Prayer Service for National Migration Week, sponsored by archdiocesan Office of Catholic Charities - Social Concerns, noon, free. Registration: cutt.ly/Migration. Information: Information: 317-236-1404 or tchamblee@archindy.org.

September 23

Roncalli High School, 3300 Prague Rd., Indianapolis. **Circle of Faith Annual Distinction Dinner**, 5:30 p.m., register by Sept. 16, free but donations accepted. Information and registration: giving.roncalli.org or 317-787-8277, ext. 239.

September 23, 30

St. Michael Parish, 519 Jefferson Blvd., Greenfield. **The Parables of Jesus Bible Study**, Thursdays, 1-2:30 p.m.,

offered by Guadalupe Bible college graduates, bring Bible, online option available, free. Information and registration: ljdarlene@gmail.com.

September 24-25

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, 5901 Olive Branch Rd., Greenwood. **Fall Festival**, Fri. 5-10 p.m., Sat. noon-10 p.m., Monte Carlo, 50/50, beer and wine tent, children's games and activities, silent auction, corn hole tournament, fire truck pull contest, food tent with pulled pork, burgers, hot dogs, pizza, Fri. fish fry, Sat. fried chicken, cake wheel, quilt raffle, free admission. Information: 317-515-7269.

Garfield Park McCallister Amphitheater area, 2432 Conservatory Dr., Indianapolis. **Indy Irish Fest**, Fri. 4:30 p.m.-10:30 p.m., free admission 4:30-5:30 p.m. with five canned goods per person, Sat. 11:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m., \$10 adults, children free, musicians, vendors, featured bands The Irish Ais, The Indianapolis Ceili Band, The Richens/Timm Academy of Irish Dance, V.I.P. special \$250 includes 10' x 10' tent for the day, table, chairs and two admission tickets. Information and tickets: IndyIrishFest.com or 317-713-7117.

September 25

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens

St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk**, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in front of church. Information: faithful.citizens2016@gmail.com.

St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8155 Oakland Rd., Indianapolis. **Getting to Know Our Spiritual Mother—A Marian Retreat**, 9:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m., includes Mass, guest speakers, lunch, dramatic presentation, \$15, register by Sept. 20. Information and registration: 317-826-6000, ext. 159, or brutski@saintsimon.org.

September 25-26

St. Mary Rushville Parish, 512 N. Perkins St., Rushville. **Bruté Weekend**, all weekend Masses, Father Daniel Bedel, spiritual director of Bishop Bruté College Seminary, will celebrate Mass and share how

the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501 or esanders@archindy.org.

St. Gabriel Parish, 232 W. 9th St., Connersville. **Fall Festival**, Sat. 3-11 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-4p.m., German food, fried chicken, axe throwing, adult and kids' games, euchre and cornhole tournaments, raffles, live music, free admission. Information: 765-825-7951.

September 26

Virtual Indy Festival of Faiths, 2-4 p.m., sponsored by the Center for Interfaith Cooperation, includes "booth" for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, free, www.indycic.org/festival-of-faiths.

St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus.

Ecumenical Prayer Service for Migrants and Refugees, 5:30 p.m., Father Chris Wadelton, presider. Information: 317-236-1404 or tchamblee@archindy.org.

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 28

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. **Green Mass**, 6 p.m., Father Rick Ginther, celebrant. Information: Benedictine Sister Sheila Fitzpatrick, 317-788-7581, ext. 2. †

Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/retreats.

September 17-Nov. 13

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Photo Exhibit: "Through the Seasons at Mount St. Francis,"** Mon., Wed., Sat., 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Fri. 4-7 p.m. Information and registration: cutt.lu/PhotoExhibit or 812-923-8817.

October 1-3

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 100 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Unpacking the Vocation of Marriage through Scripture and Married Saints**, for married couples, Josh and Angie Greulich presenting, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats. Providence Spirituality and

Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Come and See Retreat**, 7 p.m. Fri.-1 p.m. Sun., for women ages 18-42 discerning religious life, food and housing provided. Information and registration: ComeandSee.SistersofProvidence.org or 361-500-9505. †

Saint Meinrad Archabbey to offer Healing Anger Through Forgiveness retreat on Sept. 28-30

A retreat called Healing Anger Through Forgiveness will be offered at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 100 Hill Dr., in St. Meinrad, on Sept. 28-30. Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding will lead the retreat. Room check-in begins at 2 p.m. on Sept. 28, with vespers at 5 p.m., dinner at 5:30 p.m. and the opening session at 6:30 p.m. Mass is available each day at 7:30 a.m. The retreat ends with lunch on Sept. 30.

Anger is an unavoidable human feeling, and we often have good reasons to be angry. But anger can also be an obstacle to living a fuller life. This retreat aims to examine Jesus' teaching on anger and forgiveness.

The cost, which is \$255 for a single-occupancy room or \$425 for two people sharing a room, includes materials and six meals. To register, call 800-581-6905 or go to saintmeinrad.org/retreats. †

Right to Life of Indianapolis annual Celebrate Life Dinner is set for Sept. 28

The Right to Life of Indianapolis Celebrate Life Dinner will take place at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown, 350 W. Maryland St., in Indianapolis, at 6 p.m. on Sept. 28. This year's speaker

is abortion survivor Gianna Jessen. The cost is \$75 per person, or tables of 10 for \$750. To register or for more information, go to www.rtlindy.org or call 317-582-1526. †

Wedding Anniversaries

CARL AND LUCILLE LENTZ



CARL AND LUCILLE (SCHUBERT) LENTZ, members of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Sept. 23.

The couple was married in St. Susanna Church in Plainfield on Sept. 23, 1961.

They have seven children: Diane Andretti, Suzanne Barnes, Kathryn Conway, Sharon Helms, Barbara Sharp, Patricia Summers and Anthony Lentz.

The couple also has 12 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. †

ROBERT AND JUDY SLOMKA



ROBERT AND JUDY (LIPPE) SLOMKA, members of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Sept. 16.

The couple was married in St. Barbara Church in Brookfield, Ill., on Sept. 16, 1961.

They have four children: Laurel Buechner, Judith Lynn Menker, Elizabeth and Robert Slomka.

The couple also has 12 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. †

RICHARD AND THERESA SNYDER



RICHARD AND THERESA (NAVILLE) SNYDER, members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Sept. 10.

The couple was married in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in New Albany on Sept. 10, 1966.

They have three children: Sandy Foley, Annette Kron and Kathy Striegel.

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

EDMOND AND NANCY RUSSELL



EDMOND AND NANCY (KIDWELL) RUSSELL, members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on May 8.

The couple was married in Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove on May 8, 1971.

They have three children: Nancy Curd, Kathy Ramsay and Pic Russell.

The couple also has 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. †

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events/submission, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Ann Lewis, or by fax at 317-236-1593.

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.

Immigrant strives to live the pope's hope for humanity

By John Shaughnessy

Listening to his story of growing up in Africa, coming to the United States for college, and building a life and a family in Indiana, there's a feeling that Andrew LaRouche tries to live the hope that Pope Francis has for the world.

In promoting the World Day of Migrants and Refugees on Sept. 26, the pope shared this vision, "We are all in the same boat and called to work together so that there will be no more walls that separate us, no longer *others*, but only a single *we*, encompassing all of humanity."

At 52, LaRouche has experienced the reality of the pope's vision. The member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood has also witnessed the challenges to that vision.

Growing up in the African country of Malawi, LaRouche saw firsthand how people from different nations and cultures could come together in harmony.

His Caucasian father had left his home in Canada to help start the first Catholic high school in Malawi, the country where he would fall in love and marry a native of Malawi who would become LaRouche's mom.

Beyond his family, LaRouche also experienced the unity of humanity by attending schools in Malawi where he became friends with youths from around the world.

"I was very fortunate to have this unique experience of going to a school with people around the world," he says. "And having a Canadian dad and a Malawian mom gave me a unique perspective of the world, too. My dad loved being in Malawi. He taught for 48 years before he passed away."

There was also the challenging reality of life that he witnessed growing up, and that continues today.

"For the average Malawi family, life is tough," LaRouche says. "Most are

only making a few dollars a day. Both my parents were teachers. They did fine. Some Malawians are so poor they can't afford a pair of shoes."

LaRouche's worldview has also given him an insightful perspective on life in the United States since he arrived in this country 33 years ago as a college student and an immigrant.

"Here, 99.9% of my experiences have been positive. I think Americans are welcoming people in general. Today, it seems bad," he says about the political and social divisiveness in the country. "But that doesn't really show the big picture. America is a great place to live."

LaRouche arrived in the United States in 1989, attending a small college in Kansas where he pursued a degree in chemistry and eventually earned a scholarship for his prowess as a runner in track and cross country.

"The college was in a small town of about 30,000 people," he says. "I did feel lonely on holidays, but people were very friendly there. They would invite me to their homes for Thanksgiving. I met some good friends there."

He also met his wife, a Kansas native, at the college.

"I was a teaching assistant. She was one of my students," he says. "People make fun of me for that one."

He shares that memory with a laugh. He also shares the gratitude he has for the way his wife's family welcomed him and embraced him.

He and his wife of 23 years, Nina, moved to the Indianapolis area in 1999. Since then, they have become the parents of three children. Dominic and Brianna are twins and seniors at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. Noah is an eighth-grade student at Our Lady of the Greenwood School.

"We've been happy," LaRouche says about his children's Catholic education. "They've done well academically. They've made good friends."

The Catholic faith he grew up with has also remained a constant in his life and the life of their family.

As he drives to his work as a chemist at a company in Columbus, he listens to a podcast that features the daily Mass readings. During his daily 45-minute runs, he recites the Our Father and Hail Mary. The family also prays before every meal and participates in Mass every Sunday.

"We fail sometimes, but we try to make our faith central to everything we do," he says.

Sharing his blessings with others has also been an integral part of living his faith.

"As an immigrant, I have thought about how to give back to this country I now call home," he says. "I have helped at [the] St. Vincent de Paul Society. We have volunteered as a family at the Lord's Pantry at Anna's House [a community service center in Indianapolis that was created to serve people in need]."

"Some of the most satisfying things for me are hiring students from the local college by my employment to work in my lab and then see them



The LaRouche family poses for a photo with Brianna, left, and Nina in the front while Noah, left, Dominic and Andrew are behind them. (Submitted photo)

moving on to well-paying and rewarding careers."

For LaRouche, it's all part of living out a vision of humanity embraced by his parents, the friends he made in school from different countries, his wife's family when they welcomed him with open arms, and the friends that he, his wife and his children have made in their lives in Indiana.

"I came to this country and got a great education and met my American wife," he says with joy. "I am very grateful for my life in Indy. Looking back, I would not have guessed I would be this fortunate." †

Migration Week calls people to care for the vulnerable

By John Shaughnessy

The archdiocese will mark National Migration Week on Sept. 20-26, participating in the "opportunity for the Church to reflect on the circumstances confronting migrants, including immigrants, refugees, children, and victims and survivors of human trafficking."

"Migration Week is great reminder for us all to take the time to learn about each other," says Theresa Chamblee, director of social concerns of the archdiocese's Catholic Charities.

"To be able to express concern for different vulnerable people who are on the move around the world or in our country. To pray for them and the challenges they face. To see our migrant neighbors not as a statistic, but as people who laugh, cry, have dreams and desire security. Migration Week is a reminder that we are all made in the image and likeness of God."

At the same time, Catholic Charities in the archdiocese provides assistance to migrants, immigrants and refugees year-round.

"Our Catholic Charities Indianapolis Refugee

and Immigrant Services provides advocacy, family reunification, job assistance and help in setting up a household for refugees resettling in the Indianapolis area," Chamblee notes. "We also provide legal advice and representation to immigrants and their families."

Another Catholic Charities program strives to develop relationships between parishes and immigrants—Catholic Accompaniment and Reflective Experience (CARE).

"The CARE program helps to remind us all what it means to welcome, encounter and accompany our immigrant neighbors who may need a helping hand, some guidance or just a smile that says they matter," Chamblee says.

For parishes, families and individuals seeking ideas to become involved in Migration Week, Chamblee recommends checking the 2021 Archindy Migration Week Toolkit at www.archindy.org/socialconcerns/migrants.

To volunteer or learn more about Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigrant Services, contact Beth Carney at ecarney@archindy.org or 317-236-1592.

For more information about the CARE program, contact Simona Reising at sreising@archindy.org or 317-236-1457. †

Mass, prayer services mark National Migration Week on Sept. 20-26

Three events in the archdiocese will mark the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) National Migration Week on Sept. 20-26.

The first is a bilingual Mass celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood, at 5:45 p.m. on Sept. 20.

Next is a virtual prayer service hosted by the archdiocese's Catholic Charities-Social Concerns ministry from noon-12:45 p.m. on Sept. 22. To register to join this free service, go to cutt.ly/Migration (case sensitive).

To close the week, an ecumenical prayer service for migrants will be held at St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., in Columbus, at 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 26. The service will be led by Father Christopher Wadelton, pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish.

All are invited to join in each of these events. For more information on the USCCB's National Migration Week, go to cutt.ly/MigrationWeek (case sensitive). †

40 Days for Life fall campaign set for Sept. 22-Oct. 31 in Bloomington, Indianapolis

Criterion staff report

40 Days for Life is a campaign of prayer, fasting and peaceful activism held in the spring and fall with the purpose of turning hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life, and bringing an end to abortion.

The fall campaign runs from Sept. 22-Oct. 31. Two locations in the archdiocese are participating: Bloomington and Indianapolis.

Bloomington: The campaign will take place in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility at 421 S. College Ave. Parking is available at the meters along the street at \$1 per hour. Do not park in the Planned Parenthood parking lot.

To sign up, go to www.40daysforlife.com/en/bloomington.

For more information, contact Deacon Russell Woodard at 812-526-9460 or e-mail deaconrussw@gmail.com.

Indianapolis: The campaign will take place in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility at 8590 Georgetown Road. Parking is available along Georgetown Road; do not park in the Women's Care Center parking lot or at the industrial complex across from the Planned Parenthood facility.

The Indianapolis campaign will have an opening rally sponsored by Great Lakes Gabriel Project at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., in Indianapolis, from 2-3:30 p.m. on Sept. 19 with guest speaker Eric Slaughter.

The Knights of Columbus will hold a 12-hour overnight vigil in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility starting at 7 p.m. on Oct. 1. All are welcome to join.

A closing rally will take place in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility from 2-3 p.m. with Indianapolis Right to Life president Marc Tuttle speaking.

The campaign has been extended to 24 hours. For

those who cannot go to the vigil site during normal vigil hours, or for anyone who wants to take additional hours, they may sign up to pray at home from 7 p.m.-7 a.m. on Monday through Saturday and until noon on Sunday. This option is not a replacement for praying at the vigil site, but is intended to be an option for seniors, those who are sick, those who don't drive and those who are concerned about being exposed to others.

To sign up for on-site or extended slots, go to www.40daysforlife.com/en/indianapolis. For additional information on the Indianapolis area 40 Days for Life campaign, contact Tim O'Donnell at 317-372-0040 or e-mail tidipsumaspare@me.com.

Other fall campaigns taking place near the archdiocese include Evansville, Louisville and Kentucky.

To find other 40 Days for Life campaigns outside of the archdiocese, go to www.40daysforlife.com and select "Locations." †

Holocaust must not be forgotten, pope tells Slovak Jews

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia (CNS)—The violence of the Holocaust and the atrocities committed against the Jewish people are tantamount to blasphemy, Pope Francis said.

“The divine name, the Lord himself, is blasphemed whenever the unique and distinctive dignity of the human person, created in his image, is violated,” the pope said on Sept. 13 at a meeting with members of Slovakia’s Jewish community.

The meeting took place in Rybné námestie Square, site of a memorial tribute to the 105,000 Slovak Jews who were killed in the Holocaust.

The memorial includes a black wall with an etching of the Neolog synagogue that once stood in the square before it was destroyed by communist authorities in 1969 to make way for a bridge.

A bronze abstract sculpture topped with the Star of David with the word “Remember,” inscribed in Hebrew and Slovak, stands at the center of the square.

Daniel Feldmar, a 19-year-old member of the Jewish community in Bratislava, told Catholic News Service (CNS) he saw Pope Francis’ visit not only as an acknowledgment of “the tragedies of the Holocaust, but also to acknowledge that the Jewish presence in Bratislava and in Slovakia is still strong.”

“I am so happy that a person who is considered to be holy in the Christian religion decided to come and walk through the parts where this synagogue once used to be,” he said.

Feldmar said that although the Jewish community is small, it is still strong. Nevertheless, anti-Semitism is still alive in Slovakia, due in part to “a lack of communication.”

“People usually don’t know or have never met a Jew so, of course, they will be prone to those prejudices, and they will be happy to find a scapegoat,” Feldmar told CNS.

“However, that is one of the reasons why I am happy that the pope came here today to meet with us. This dialogue will break the barriers between the Catholic Church and Judaism,” he said.

During the meeting, Pope Francis heard several testimonies, including from Holocaust survivor Tomáš Lang, who recalled the anti-Jewish persecution in his country and the death of his parents.

He also noted that one of the few to openly speak out against anti-Semitism in Slovakia was the late Archbishop Giuseppe Burzio, who served as *chargé d’affaires* at the apostolic nunciature.

Archbishop Burzio, Lang said, “tirelessly sought to end the anti-Semitism of the deadly regime of that time. No Slovak politician at the time opposed that regime.”

In his address, Pope Francis recognized the importance of the synagogue that once stood alongside the Cathedral of St. Martin.

The presence of both spiritual edifices, he said, was “an expression of the peaceful coexistence of the two communities, an unusual and evocative symbol, and a striking sign of unity in the name of the God of our fathers.”

The pope remembered the victims of the Holocaust and said it was “the worst form of blasphemy” that violated the second Commandment, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.”

“Here, in this place, the name of God was dishonored, for the worst form of blasphemy is to exploit it for our



Pope Francis and Richard Duda, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Slovakia, light candles during a meeting with the Jewish community in Rybné námestie Square in Bratislava, Slovakia, on Sept. 13. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

own purposes, refusing to respect and love others.”

Noting the word “Remember” etched on the memorial, Pope Francis said that the memory of the horrors of the Holocaust “must not give way to forgetfulness,” indifference and “forms of manipulation that would exploit religion in the service of power or else reduce it to irrelevance.”

“I repeat: let us unite in condemning all violence and every form of anti-Semitism, and in working to ensure that God’s image, present in the humanity he created, will never be profaned,” the pope said. †

Bishops launch initiative to address polarization in American society

CLEVELAND (CNS)—Polarization across society has prompted the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to launch an initiative that looks to bring people together to serve the common good.

Called “Civilize It: A Better Kind of Politics,” the initiative is designed to “move forward the kind of conversations that we need to be having to overcome

our divisions,” said Jill Rauh, director of education and outreach in the USCCB’s Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development, which is coordinating the effort.

The USCCB introduced the initiative on Sept. 7.

The effort draws heavily from the teachings of Pope Francis, particularly his call in the third encyclical of his papacy,

“*Fratelli Tutti*: On Fraternity and Social Friendship.”

“We are in a situation where both in society and the Church we are experiencing a lot of division and polarization,” Rauh told Catholic News Service (CNS). “In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis specifically is calling Catholics and all people of goodwill to build a better kind of politics, one at the service of the common good.”

The Civilize It initiative is meant not just for political leaders, but for all people, Rauh added.

A special webpage for the initiative, CivilizeIt.org, has links to a tool kit with resources to help parishes, small groups and individuals address polarization of any kind.

“Pope Francis is very clear in ‘*Fratelli Tutti*,’ and the bishops have been clear in ‘Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship’ that we are called to engage in the public sphere and to do so year-round, to be working together and to try to identify ways to work for the common good,” Rauh said.

“Forming Consciences” is the bishops’ quadrennial document on election participation.

Other USCCB offices also are promoting the initiative, Rauh said. In addition, leaders in at least 45 dioceses are planning to incorporate the initiative in diocesan programs, and more are expected to also take part.

Tool kit resources range from a Prayer for Civility that draws from the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi to a reflection titled “Loving our Neighbor through Dialogue.” Other materials include a study guide and parish bulletin inserts.

Website visitors are invited to sign a pledge saying they will rely on “charity, clarity and creativity” to promote understanding and dialogue over division.

Signers pledge to affirm each person’s dignity, even when they disagree with someone and respectfully listen to others “to understand experiences different from my own.” †



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Evangelization & Catechesis Supplement

Jesus: The foremost authority on evangelization

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few” Jesus tells us in the ninth chapter of Matthew’s Gospel (Mt 9:37). Throughout his ministry, Jesus made many statements that are still quite relevant to the world today. This is one of those statements.



Sam Rasp

Not only has Sunday Mass attendance dropped during the last 10 years, but many people have not returned to Sunday Mass since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jesus knew that this would be something that his Church would struggle with throughout its 2,000-year history. He tells us, just as he told his Apostles that day, that there are way more people that need to hear the truth of the kingdom of heaven than there are people to present them with it.

As people continue to leave the Church, there are more and more people who are living outside the truth of the Catholic faith. Jesus, in his goodness and his love, did not leave us without an answer to this issue. At the very end of his public ministry, Jesus left his Apostles, and us, with the most authoritative statement ever made. Jesus tells us that:

“All authority in heaven and Earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Mt 28:18-20).

Jesus tells us, with “all authority in heaven and Earth,” to go and make disciples of all nations. He is inviting all of us to be the laborers that he needs to gather his harvest. Not only is he asking us to go and gather his harvest, but he is also asking us to help make these people into fellow laborers.

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.” Some might say, “How am I supposed to do that?” or even, “That’s not for me. Jesus isn’t talking to me.”

Pope Francis disagrees. He says in his apostolic exhortation, “The Joy of the Gospel”: “All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization” (#120).

All of us are called to evangelize.

The pope goes on to tell us that “we no longer say that we are “disciples” and “missionaries,” but rather that we are always “missionary disciples.”

To answer the how, Pope Francis tells us, “Indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God’s saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus” (#120).

All human beings have a longing for God written on their heart. Every person longs for a love that only God can give. We are all called to be “missionary disciples” to share that love with every single person we meet. Every baptized person has that love to share.

The question is, are we willing to share the love that Christ has given us?

(Sam Rasp is coordinator of evangelization and discipleship for the archdiocese’s Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization. For resources that help create a culture of evangelization in your parish, contact Sam: srasp@archindy.org.) †

Parish, campus ministry leaders experience Eucharist as the source and summit of the faith

By Sean Gallagher

The Eucharist is at the heart of the Catholic faith. It’s a reality that was highlighted at the Second Vatican Council when the bishops there taught that the Eucharist is the “source and summit of the Christian life” (“*Lumen Gentium*” #11).

This central sacramental teaching of the Church has great personal meaning for Father Jerry Byrd, pastor of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, and St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes, both in Jennings County.

“If it wasn’t for the Eucharist, I wouldn’t be here,” he said.

That conviction is firmly founded on an experience he had in 1997 when Father Byrd was a 16-year-old Baptist attending his first Mass. It was at St. John the Baptist Church in Harrison, Ohio, and he was there with a friend who was preparing to be received into the Church.

“I sat far away from the altar,” Father Byrd recalled. “We were up in the balcony in the back row. I can close my eyes and picture every bit of it like I was there right now.”

“The priest said the words of consecration and elevated the host. There was no doubt for a second that that was the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus.”

That encounter that Father Byrd had with Christ in the Eucharist at 16 led him to be received into the full communion of the Church a year later. He eventually discerned a call to the priesthood and was ordained a priest for the archdiocese in 2012.



Father Jerry Byrd, second from right, leads Benediction during a eucharistic procession on June 3 at St. Joseph Parish in Jennings County, which he serves as pastor. Assisting him are Father Jeffrey Dufresne, left, and Father James Brockmeier. (Submitted photo)

“To me, the Eucharist is everything,” Father Byrd said. “I think that’s what the council fathers were getting to in reminding us that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith.”

Other parish and campus ministry leaders in central and southern Indiana share this great love and draw to the Eucharist and seek to share it with those whom they serve.

‘I don’t know why God is so good to me’

Renee Jackson grew up in St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County. As a student in its school, the seeds of her love of the Eucharist were planted when she attended Mass daily with her fellow students.

See EUCHARIST, page 12

Alpha Catholic Context is ‘great way to invite people back into the Church,’ build parish culture

By Natalie Hoefler

St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg is building a new church physically—and spiritually.

“Our new church will be dedicated [on] Dec. 19,” said Marlene Stammerman, the parish’s director of discipleship. She said pastor Father Thomas Clegg commented that “we’re building a new church, and if all we do is build a new church building, we’re missing an opportunity.”

To fulfill that vision, she said, “We’re building a new church building, and we’re building a new church with people who really pass on their faith and become disciples who are missionaries and go out and serve and evangelize.”

This changing of parish culture is being accomplished through a catechetical tool called Alpha.

“Alpha provides a place to come and explore and ask questions regardless of where someone is on their faith journey—questions about life, faith and obviously about a relationship with Christ and what that might look like,” said Stammerman.

Participants in Alpha meet once a week for 11 weeks. Stammerman describes each meeting as having three components.

“We start with a shared meal,” she said. “Part of the philosophy around sharing a meal is it’s a way to build relationships and have conversations.”

Next comes a 25-minute video—or a witness talk, depending on the preference and resources of the parish.

The gathering closes with small-group discussions.

St. John Paul II Parish uses the Catholic context of Alpha, which started as a Protestant tool but created an additional version several years ago to embrace Catholic teaching.

“We like [catechetical] programs ... that speak of Catholic teaching as true, good, beautiful and helpful,



Sarah Vaughn, left, smiles with her table leader Katie Krueer during an Alpha Catholic Context session in the gym of the St. Joseph campus of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg. (Submitted photo)

because God loves us and wants us to be happy,” said Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis. “We like resources that are clear about the relationship between sacred tradition, sacred Scripture and the magisterium. These all have a role to play in ensuring that it’s Jesus we’re encountering and not someone else.”

“When Alpha Catholic Context is led by a parish leader well-formed in the faith, it can provide new growth in helping a parish embrace the fullness of the faith.”

After offering several sessions of Alpha since 2019, Stammerman sees it as “very much a Catholic program. It focuses on sharing the Gospel message—that’s what we as Catholics are called to do.”

See ALPHA, page 10

Evangelization and catechesis “resonate” in archdiocese’s pastoral plan

By Natalie Hoefer

When Ken Ogorek, director of the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, looked over the archdiocese’s proposed pastoral plan in March of 2020, he noticed something.

“Of the plan’s numerous action steps for the five main goals, 44 fell under the offices of Evangelization and Catechesis—more than any other archdiocesan office,” he observed.

As executive director of the Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization, Father Patrick Beidelman sees the presence of evangelization and catechesis throughout the pastoral plan as “a sign of its quality, that it’s based on the great commission of Christ—to go out to all nations and share the Good News. Flowing from that commission, evangelization and catechesis are a natural outflow of the call to carry on that mission.

“Because so many action steps are related to evangelization and catechesis, the pastoral plan resonates with the Gospel of Christ.”

Sam Rasp, the new archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship, attributed the role of evangelization and catechesis in the plan to their importance “to every aspect of the life of the Church—they’re not just two offices or the people who hold those positions in parishes.”

Ogorek, too, noted that, while evangelization and catechesis are “specific ministries that require focused leadership in their own right, they are related to multiple ministries as well.”

One staff member in the Office of Catechesis had a front-row view to the making of the pastoral plan and the role evangelization and catechesis play in its goals.

“I was on the pastoral planning team on behalf of the disability ministry and the catechesis office,” said Erin Jeffries, coordinator of ministry to persons with special needs. “There was a variety of people and backgrounds on the team—priests, schools, offices here [at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center]. It was really a cross-section of the whole archdiocese.”

The process began in September 2018 with the team reading Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation, “The Joy of the Gospel.”

“That was foundational to our mission statement and goals,” said Jeffries.

“We also reviewed information from the Connected in the Spirit process and pastoral needs assessments from the

deaneries to get a sense of the needs people expressed. People on the team also brought their own needs to the table.

“Evangelization and catechesis really rose to the surface as the needs were discussed. So many of the concerns and needs had to do with parish life, with the decrease in nuns and priests. It was a need seen and very clearly expressed.”

So while action steps in those two areas obviously appeared under the pastoral plan’s goal area of Evangelization and Catechesis, they also appeared in the goals of Prayer and Worship, Stewardship, Family and Community, and Clergy Life and Ministry.

For instance, under the goal area of Family and Community is an objective to “cultivate communities that are centered on invitation and evangelization for people in all phases of life.”

To help carry out this objective, the Office of Catechesis and the Office of Marriage and Family life have an action step to “design and execute a campaign to encourage openness to new life.”

Another example is the goal area of Prayer and Worship, which includes an objective to “cultivate a sense of belonging for all God’s people through liturgical experiences that honor our growing cultural and ethnic diversity.”

Attached to that objective is an action step for the Office of Evangelization and the Office of Communications to “design and execute a campaign to increase Mass attendance percentages.”

Rather than feeling overwhelmed by the number of action steps, the staff members of the offices of Evangelization and Catechesis felt “a spirit of excitement,” said Jeffries.

“It was like, ‘Let’s go! Let’s do this!’” she recalled. “It’s been exciting to see our work confirmed, that our work is important, and that people are asking for it as an expressed need.

“It also enforced for us the number of areas in parish life that catechesis and evangelization touch, how many areas we find our name attached to.

“We really love what we do and want to help parishes with evangelization and catechesis, and we’re hopeful [the pastoral plan] will strengthen a lot of areas of parish life.”

Father Beidelman shares Jeffries’ enthusiasm.

“It’s exciting to see in the pastoral plan action steps and initiatives that might light a fire in the hearts of the faithful to share the Good News and to bring Christ’s healing and strength in a time when it’s so desperately needed.” †

Proclaiming the Gospel of Joy: Living Christ's Mission

Pastoral Letter and Plan

ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

ALPHA

continued from page 9

St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield has also used Alpha Catholic Context for almost 10 sessions since 2018.

“It’s kerygmatic—it’s the basics of Christianity,” said Jeff McQueen, Alpha director at St. Susanna.

Among the weekly themes he listed are such topics as “Who is Jesus?” “Why Did Jesus Die?” “Why and How Should I Read the Bible?” and “Why and How Should I Tell Others About Jesus?”

“Alpha is for everyone from the unchurched to the Catholic not going to Mass to the Catholic in the pew,” McQueen explained.

“I went through a conveyor belt of sacraments,” he admitted. “I was told I had to go to confession, I went to church every day in school, was in fourth grade when I was confirmed. I got married in the Catholic Church.

“But sometimes you don’t get a chance to build a relationship with Jesus. You know *about* him, but you don’t *know* him. People who go through Alpha tell me they feel like they know Jesus.”

Stammerman agrees with the value of Alpha for all, from the unchurched to the active Catholic.

“I’ve been involved in Catholic ministry for 30 years, and I still grew spiritually from Alpha,” she said.

“I would say the people who have gone through it and come back [to serve] on the [Alpha] team, there’s

an energy. The Holy Spirit is alive in the parish—there’s an excitement.”

One component that Stammerman said separates Alpha from other catechetical programs is its formation of leaders.

“When you complete Alpha, you’re invited to come back to serve on the team for the next session. You get to work on a couple of teams, but then you have to move on. We’re always incorporating different teams. So Alpha cultivates more people with different talents and gifts.”

At St. Susanna, said McQueen, “What we really try to do is go from Alpha to connect participants with groups or ministries in the parish, and then they become disciples and go out and make their own disciples.”

Alpha Catholic Context is one of several catechetical programs used at parishes in central and southern Indiana, including Discipleship Quads, small group Bible studies and faith sharing groups, Christ Life and Evangelical Catholic.

“We’ll work with each of the 126 parishes in the archdiocese to see that they have the right fit” when choosing a catechetical program, said Sam Rasp, archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship.

Stammerman has already found a way to incorporate the youths of St. John Paul II Parish utilizing Alpha Catholic Context for those preparing for confirmation.

“I’ve been a small group leader for confirmation the last four years,” she said. “This group [using Alpha] shares their faith so differently. Deeper, richer, relevant, meaningful. It’s been a good piece to see.”

Stammerman envisions “lots of ideas for Alpha down the road,” she said. “We definitely want to reach out to the community of Sellersburg. We’re developing a plan to start to go out and invite non-parishioners.

“You can run Alpha in prisons, nursing homes, we could start a group at IU [Indiana University] Southeast. You can have ‘date night’ Alpha—dinner, a movie and time to chat.

“Looking further down the road, we can tie Alpha with the confirmation piece as parents and youth do Alpha together. It can be a shared process where they’re given a tool to talk about it on the ride home. There’s a lot of potential for who we can reach in the future.”

McQueen enthusiastically called Alpha Catholic Context “an excellent tool or an experience for evangelization.

“I think we as Catholics are kind of scared of that word, and I think this is an easy entry into evangelizing, which we’re all called to do. Alpha is a great way to invite people back into the Church.”

(For more information on catechetical tools and what is best for your parish, contact Sam Rasp at 317-236-1466 or srasp@archindy.org.) †

(Editor's note: While teaching and helping others to embrace a deeper appreciation of their Catholic faith, catechists throughout the archdiocese have found their own relationship with God has deepened through the experience. Here are several stories of that transformation.)

'Twice blessed': Couple's love and faith grow in ministry together

By John Shaughnessy

The story of Paul and Jan Johnson is an uplifting one, touched by the love they have for each other, the surprising way they grew in their closeness to God, and their mutual desire to share their faith with others.

The couple met while Paul was serving in the U.S. Army and married a short time later. For Paul, a self-described "cradle Catholic," it was his second marriage, his first one ending in divorce. The early years of his marriage to Jan were also a time in his life when he continued to be away from the Church.

"My wife was non-Catholic but very spiritual," Paul recalls. "After about 13 years of marriage, she told me that she wanted to attend RCIA [Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults classes] and maybe become Catholic. I sort of surprised her by telling her that I would go with her and maybe see how I could re-enter the Church."

They went together to RCIA classes at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis, an experience that transformed them individually and as a couple.

"She was confirmed, and I made the necessary steps for annulment of my first marriage," Paul says. "After completing RCIA, Father Rick Ginther [then an associate pastor at Little Flower] asked us to be a part of the RCIA team. We were quite honored and humbled to serve.

"Neither of us realized that we would be involved with this wonderful ministry for more than 10 years. We probably learned more about our faith from the inquirers than we could from books. It was a joy to be with these people at a very important time of their lives."

Moving to the west side of Indianapolis, they became members of St. Christopher Parish. They also began to serve as extraordinary ministers of holy Communion at the Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana.

"We conducted a Communion service a couple of times a week," Paul says. "We met people with a lot to share—and received many blessings from this ministry. Of course, this ministry came to an abrupt end with the onset of COVID. We hope someday to resume this ministry."

The Johnsons say they have been "twice blessed" by their work with the RCIA classes and the Communion services. There are also the blessings from their marriage in the Catholic faith.

"We have been married 50 years and in 1988, after receiving my annulment, we were remarried in the Church in a nice ceremony that really began the strengthening of our marriage," Paul says.

"God has been really good to us." †



Jan and Paul Johnson found a deeper connection to each other in helping bring people closer to God. (Submitted photo)

'My heart actually did a dance when I thought about serving the Lord'

By John Shaughnessy

Cathy Andrews wanted to find a new purpose when she retired. She also found a way of life that she considers a treasure.

"When I retired from government service in 2000, I promised the Lord that I would dedicate this time in my life to serving him and my family in whatever way I felt he was calling me," Andrews recalls. "During this initial time of retirement and through his copious graces, my personal relationship with Jesus grew, as did my prayer life, sacramental life and spiritual life."

Still, she wanted to do more to bring others closer to Christ, so five years into her retirement she became the faith formation director for St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford.

"My heart actually did a dance when I thought about serving the Lord in that way," she says. "My 16 years of Catholic school education from first grade through four years of college was finally going to be used as a foundation in my new position as a faith educator. Little did I realize the way my own faith was going to be deepened through that position."

In her new role, she taught the faith to children in different grades of religious education classes while also helping prepare them to receive the sacraments. She also volunteered to help adults learn more about the Catholic faith by leading Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) classes.

She soon discovered that all her experiences of teaching led to her own lessons in learning.

"The innocent, forthright and heartfelt responses and questions of the children often led me to delve deeper



Cathy Andrews helps prepare children for their first Communion at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford. (Submitted photo)

into my soul to gain a greater appreciation of what I believed and why I believed what I did.

"The questions that were posed by those in RCIA had a depth and at times an incredulity that pushed me to a greater understanding of the *whys* of Church teachings and how they fit into everyday living."

Andrews has savored every question and challenge because of the understanding and joy it has added to her own faith journey.

"My increased understanding of the sacrifice of the Mass and the theology of the sacraments that I gained in this catechetical preparation resulted in a further desire to enhance my relationship with Jesus, to be an authentic witness of the Catholic faith, and to ultimately deepen this treasure that the Lord planted in my heart—my Catholic faith.

"What St. Matthew wrote certainly rang true for me: *'For where your treasure is, that is where your heart shall be'* (Mt 6:21). †

Teacher takes a shared path to help a new generation 'find the love and glory of God'

By John Shaughnessy

As she tries to lead young people closer to God, 26-year-old Alicia Popson has experienced a deep satisfaction in her life.

Her satisfaction comes from a blend of "giving back" and "paying it forward"—all at the same time, and all with the added blessing of knowing that she is helping to guide the young generation of the Church while also showing her appreciation for the teachers who helped to deepen her own relationship with God.

"Teaching is a passion that requires a special kind of heart," Popson says. "I don't say this of myself, but of those who have taught me about faith, love and family. Through their own trials and tribulations, they said yes to a call from God to serve the young Church. These catechists weren't necessarily qualified teachers according to the state, but they were qualified by God to share his word, what it means, and the ways we share that with others—with me. That is truly a special and underappreciated yes."

Popson has paid that gift forward through the years in a number of ways, ranging from being a faith formation catechist in college to her current roles as the coordinator of religious education at St. Mary Parish in Navilleton and as an instructional assistant at St. Mary-of-the Knobs School in Floyd County.

"Some times are harder than others to say yes to these kinds of roles, but I have never once regretted a time that I have taken them on," Popson says.

Her approach to teaching the faith in her classes is making it a shared journey.

"I make it a point to tell students that I don't have all the answers, and that we are exploring God's love together. I truly learn just as much—if not more—about my faith and my relationship with God than the kids in my class because they really make me think.



Alicia Popson enjoys a moment of joy with sixth-grade students Graham Sillings, left, Adilene Torres and Noah Geswein at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County as she helps them prepare for a play. (Submitted photo)

"It's one of the most amazing things to be having a discussion where a student asks a question that I don't know the answer to. Because then I get to say, 'I don't have a good answer for that at this moment. Let's see if we can find the answer together or find someone more knowledgeable to share with us.' They are almost more excited and willing to participate because I make it clear that I am still learning too, and I always will be."

One of the most important lessons she has learned is that when you give back and pay it forward, you get so much more in return.

"I learn more about my faith, how I should live, and how to help the next generation of the Church be prepared for their own call to help a new generation find the love and glory of God." †

EUCHARIST

continued from page 9

She still tries to attend Mass daily as director of religious education at St. Nicholas and at St. Anthony Parish in nearby Morris.

Receiving Communion at those daily Masses is not routine for her.

“I recall that [Christ] has given his life for me and nourishes me,” Jackson said. “It’s a very personal experience for me.

“I don’t know why God is so good to me. I don’t know why he allows me to experience what I experience in the Eucharist.”

That deep love for Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is something that she sees in the children that she prepares for their first Communion when they get to their big day.

“It’s just awesome,” Jackson said. “They’re so excited. They’re anticipating it. I wish we could all be like that every single time. It’s precious.”

The presence of a perpetual adoration chapel at St. Nicholas since 2004 has helped Jackson keep the Eucharist at the center of her life of faith.

“My parents had the very first hour that it was open, on Ash Wednesday of 2004,” she said. “It’s reassuring when I walk past there to my office to know someone’s in there praying, worshipping and spending time with the Lord.”

For a while, her office was turned into a kind of adoration chapel. When churches were closed in the spring of 2020 at the start of the coronavirus pandemic,

Father Shaun Whittington, St. Nicholas’ pastor, placed a tabernacle by a window in Jackson’s office facing a parish parking lot.

“People would stay in their cars and adore,” she said.

While the Eucharist has been the summit of the life of St. Nicholas Parish for a long time, Jackson also sees it as a great source of the ministry of the relatively small faith community of 447 households.

“For the size of our parish, we have a huge amount of ministries,” she said. “I think it comes from the life that they’ve gained from the Eucharist. That’s the source.”

‘One-on-one time with our Lord’

Jared Wuerzburger has a similar personal connection to the Eucharist as the source and summit of his faith—a connection he tries to nurture in the students of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College where he serves as campus minister and an associate professor of information technology.

That connection was deepened for him during the first few months of the coronavirus pandemic in the spring of 2020 when he was serving as the director of religious education at St. Patrick and St. Margaret Mary parishes, both in Terre Haute.

The parishes’ pastor at the time, Father Daniel Bedel, would livestream Mass daily since churches were closed and the public celebration of the sacraments was suspended.

Wuerzburger, who also oversaw technology for the parishes, was present at the Masses to operate a camera and make sure the livestream worked.

“It’s easy for everyone to go through the motions at Mass,” he said. “But when it’s just you and the priest there, you have to be the congregation. You are the people of God. You have to step up to the plate, respond with the responses. There’s no taking a back seat.

“The encounter with Christ was deeply personal. It was literally one-on-one.”

That experience also led him to examine his faith and the role the Eucharist played in it.

“It challenged me,” Wuerzburger recalled. “My ministry can only be effective if Christ is the source of my life. I can’t think of a more holistic way of doing that than through the Eucharist.”

Now he has the joy of leading college students to a similar one-on-one encounter with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

Many of them travel from their college campus west of Terre Haute to St. Patrick’s perpetual adoration chapel.

A monthly night of Mass, adoration, praise and worship and Benediction is starting this fall on campus.

“The students are drawn to the Eucharist,” Wuerzburger said. “They see it as one-on-one time with our Lord and Savior. They don’t see it as abstract. They see it as a personal invitation, a personal communion in every sense of the word.”

This relationship of prayer with Christ that the students are entering into in the summit of the Christian life flows forth from that source in their daily life, according to Wuerzburger.

“The people that I see that are most confident in their God-given gifts and in the mission that Christ is setting out for them in their lives are the people who are spending time in prayer and in adoration of our Blessed Lord,” he said.

‘Eternal implications’

Dominican Father Patrick Hyde and the young adults and other Dominican priests who minister at St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington know this from their daily experience.

These people start their day Monday through Friday with a holy hour. Two Masses are celebrated daily in addition to more on Saturday evenings and Sundays. And there are other times of eucharistic adoration at St. Paul each week.

“We want to make sure that that our ministry radiates from the love that we get from Christ that is especially present in the Blessed Sacrament,”

said Father Patrick, pastor of St. Paul. “We want to make sure that there’s ample opportunity every day for people to encounter Jesus in the Eucharist, either in adoration or in the holy sacrifice of the Mass.”

Father Patrick noted that the Mass by itself “isn’t always a great evangelizing tool” for many college students who are either away from the Catholic faith or have little faith at all. That’s because the rituals that make up the Mass might be foreign to them.

But what Christ is doing through the Eucharist is something that answers the deep desires of all these young adults.

“God in the Eucharist is not only the answer to all of your problems, but he literally wants to give himself and be wholly united to you,” Father Patrick said. “And his way of doing that is so humble that you can receive him and be raised up.”

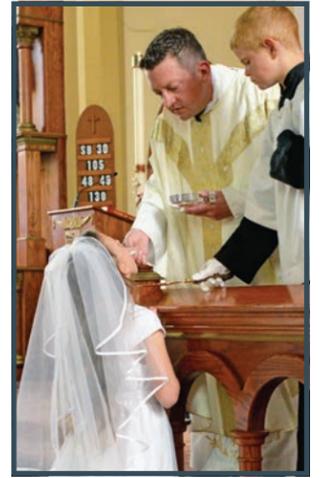
Father Patrick has found that this reality is attractive to the young adults he meets at Indiana University.

“When we can get people to really understand the fullness of the Eucharist and that the Church possesses the ability to make Jesus present in the Eucharist, that opens them up to the fullness of the Church,” he said. “They’re attracted to the Eucharist. They understand that value.”

Father Patrick has also seen how the Christian life flows from the source found in the Eucharist through young adults when they encounter Christ there.

“Any time we put the Eucharist at the center of our lives, all of a sudden everything I do has eternal implications, because it affects my participation in the Eucharist,” he said. “All of a sudden, that poor person by the side of the street who’s asking for food is no longer an inconvenience but is Jesus.”

“I’ve encountered Jesus [in the Eucharist] and now I can see him in every aspect of the world, not just the ones that are comfortable or convenient for me, that fit into my pre-conceived ideologies and notions.” †



Mary Yunger receives her first Communion on May 2 from Father Shaun Whittington at St. Nicholas Church in Ripley County. Assisting Father Whittington, St. Nicholas’ pastor, is altar server Lucas Ludwig. (Submitted photo)

Teaching the faith leads to forgiveness, peace and a deeper love as a parent

By John Shaughnessy

Gayle Schrank recalls the moment as a defining one in her life and her faith, a moment when God seemed to be challenging her.

“During one particular year, God nudged me to come closer to him on a more personal, more honest level,” Schrank recalls. “I was asked to teach first reconciliation, and I had not gone to reconciliation for some time.

“If I was going to teach this class, I knew I had to practice what I was teaching, so I went to reconciliation. I experienced a newness of forgiveness from God that I did not know was missing.

From teaching about reconciliation, I was able to discover a deeper love and newfound peace.”

Schrank always tried to bring children to that same deeper love of God in her 15 years as a teacher of the faith at St. Mary Parish in Navilleton in southern Indiana. Her efforts as a catechist also had an impact on her faith and her role as a mother.

“I grew up in a Catholic home and attended Catholic schools throughout my elementary and high school years. Yet, I believe it was by teaching the faith that my own faith deepened,” she says. “I discovered the heart of God and learned so much about God through the hearts of those I was teaching. God was instructing me through the children I was instructing.

“In my early years as a catechist, I had three young children of my own. I recall feeling very grateful. God was preparing me. He knew I was going to need help as a parent. Our lives are in a way our classroom, and God was equipping me. He was helping me know him better, so I could live my life and my faith more intentionally at home.”

Those connections have continued to deepen in her present position as the pastoral associate of St. Mary Parish.

“Through my years as a catechist, and now through my work as pastoral associate, I am continually inspired,” she says. “I have seen so many people give so much of themselves, and I have a better understanding how each of us is a part of the body of Christ, and how each part is equally important.

“I am so thankful for the opportunity to teach about our Catholic faith. Through helping others on their faith journey, I have become increasingly aware of how God continually offers himself to me—through his Word, through the sacraments and through each person I get to walk with. Teaching the faith has been a blessing in my life.” †



Gayle Schrank

Faith leader shares the love of sports to help parents deepen their appreciation of a child’s baptism

By John Shaughnessy

Tom Yost considers it as one of the great privileges and passions of his life.

For most of his 39 years in ministry, Yost has led a class for parents whose first child is being baptized in the Catholic faith.

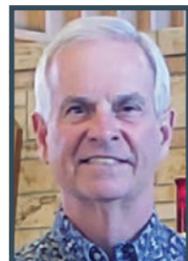
While trying to lead others to a better understanding of one of the foundations of their faith, he has continued to have his own faith deepened.

“I have never lost my passion or enthusiasm of sharing what the sacrament of baptism means to me and could mean for them and their child or children,” says Yost, the pastoral associate of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany.

As part of his efforts, Yost constantly searches for connections of the sacrament to other parts of life. One of his favorite ones involves the world of sports.

“My vision—and question—is this: Is it possible that a baptized Christian can have the same kind of relationship and enthusiasm for Jesus Christ and the Church that the biggest fan has with his/her sport and team?”

In his conversations with parents, Yost tells them that baptism has two purposes—salvation and initiation. Most people understand salvation and God’s offer of it in the sacrament, but many parents struggle with the concept of initiation, Yost says. That’s where he introduces the connection to sports.



Tom Yost

“I describe initiation in this way: Initiation is *identifying* with something or someone. It is *belonging* to something or someone. And it is *becoming* like something or someone. For the baptized Christian, the *something* is the Church and the *someone* is Jesus Christ. I believe sports offer one of the best examples of how people are initiated in our culture, and I illustrate this in my baptism class.

“Most people are *invested* fans of a sport and a sports team. If not, they usually know someone who is. An *invested—initiated—fan* is one who *identifies* with their team. They know the history, the players and the coaches. They follow their team through all kinds of media in and out of season.”

Even more, Yost stresses in his classes, “an *invested fan* is one who *belongs* to their team.”

“They will never give up on or change their team. An *invested fan becomes* like their team. They wear team apparel and watch or attend all the games. They introduce family and friends to their team, hoping they will join in their love and excitement.”

Yost experiences that love, excitement and investment in his faith.

“Hosting these baptism classes through the years has deepened my own appreciation of the potential and power of initiation in my faith life. I have come to realize all the Bible studies in the world will not likely deepen my faith if I am not invested in or have a relationship with the word of God.

“Christian initiation has taught me that my attachment to God is infinitely more joyful than my attachment to my beloved Boston Red Sox major league baseball team.” †

Revival in U.S. meant to renew Catholics' devotion to the Eucharist

By Sean Gallagher

While the Eucharist has always been at the heart of the life of the Church, that heart has undergone some trauma in the Church in the U.S. in recent years.

Sunday Mass attendance has declined. Polling data suggests a drop off in the number of Catholics who believe that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist. And there was the closing of churches and the public suspension of the celebration of the sacraments, including the Mass, during the first part of the coronavirus pandemic in the spring of 2020.

These and other reasons are why the bishops in the U.S. launched earlier this year what they describe as a three-year "National Eucharistic Revival" that will begin on the feast of the Body and Blood of the Lord (*Corpus Christi*) in 2022.

The initiative, which will involve events at the local, regional and national levels, is called "Eucharistic Revival: My Flesh for the Life of the World."

The U.S. bishops' evangelization and catechesis committee is overseeing the revival. Its chairman, Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens, an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in Minnesota, recently spoke with *The Criterion* about the initiative aimed at renewing the Eucharist as the heart of the Church in the U.S.

He likened the revival to international eucharistic congresses that have been held usually every four years since 1881 to revive devotion to the Eucharist in Catholics around the world.

"This means that the pope and the Church believe a eucharistic congress or revival can affect a person, group, parish, diocese, country and yes, even the world in profound way," Bishop Cozzens said. "If we truly knew who waits for us, who searches for us, we would visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament frequently, attend Mass as often as we could—relishing every moment with him."

The following is an edited version of the interview with Bishop Cozzens.

Q. How do you see the upcoming eucharistic revival in the U.S. as a way to enliven the faithful's understanding of and devotion to the Eucharist?

A. "As more people are invited into a deeper dialogue about Jesus in the Eucharist, our hope is that more people choose to remain with him.

"With the support of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, dioceses and parishes will be invited to have eucharistic processions, and choose a team to form and train parish

revival leaders. There will be many opportunities to guide small groups, movements, parishes, dioceses and the nation to encounter Jesus in the Eucharist.

"But we don't have to wait for *Corpus Christi* 2022 to begin. Any priest or parish leader can begin cultivating opportunities to deepen the awareness of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist today.

"Ultimately, the desire is for the movement to reach the most basic unit: the family and every individual person. As each of us, from greatest to least, reflect on the Real Presence, it will foster a ripple effect. A catechist can invite someone to encounter our Lord; a family member can lead someone to encounter Jesus. Even a very small child can bring her parents back to the Eucharist. It an opportunity for all of us; let us not miss it."

Q. Are there trends in our culture and society that make this an opportune time to have this eucharistic revival? How might it help Catholics in the U.S. to be better equipped to renew their own faith and share the Gospel with others in this particular cultural climate?

A. "The 2019 Pew Study was a call to mission for the bishops of the United States. [It showed that a majority of Catholics in the U.S. didn't believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.]

"It led to some soul searching and a desire to respond. My predecessor chairing the Catechesis and Evangelization Committee, Bishop Robert [E.] Barron, looked for ways to deepen the dialogue with all, practicing and non-practicing. Then came the pandemic and churches were closed and communities in general stopped meeting in person.

"Parish communities were very fractured and fragmented. This led to many people hearing about making a spiritual communion for the first time. Absence makes the heart grow fonder. Yet, for many this was a consolation, not a replacement of receiving the Eucharist at Mass.

"When churches reopened, some people started coming back, and now we are ready and eager to engage the people who come to Mass daily, weekly or perhaps who still participate virtually to come to a deeper awareness of what the Church teaches about Communion. It is not an 'it' in holy Communion. It is a real person: Jesus Christ.

"One of the great goals and desires of the National Eucharistic Revival is to commission 100,000 Eucharistic



Auxiliary Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in Minnesota carries the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance during a eucharistic procession on June 19. Bishop Cozzens is leading the planning of a national eucharistic revival for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. (CNS photo/Dave Hrbacek, *The Catholic Spirit*)

Missionaries at a national event in 2024. These men and women will be sent forth to continue the movement in parishes, the Church and society at large. They will help those who are currently attending Mass frequently to deepen their faith, as well as reach those on the margins who are far from Christ. We also want to hold a special place for the family in all of this."

Q. What hopes do you have about how the eucharistic revival will affect Catholics and the Church as a whole in the U.S. once it has come to its completion in 2024?

A. "My hope is that we are able to cultivate a movement that goes far beyond these three initial years, prompting a new springtime in the Church, which Pope St. John Paul II referred to so prophetically.

"The way this mission will become a movement is by focusing in a way very much resonant with the pontificate of Pope St. John Paul II, as well as with our Holy Father, Pope Francis—by focusing on each person, meeting him where he is at, helping him take the next best step toward Jesus in the Eucharist.

"For some, this will be a rediscovery of what she learned 40 years ago at her first holy Communion, for others it will be an epiphany moment: the Eucharist is really Jesus!

"John chapter 6 has both human and divine examples of how Jesus engages his believers on this topic. Eucharistic miracles show how Jesus has engaged the world for the last 1,100 years.

"If someone has never googled or studied the eucharistic miracle of Lanciano, Italy, that is a must. Your heart and mind need this information. The beautiful thing about Lanciano and many of the other eucharistic miracles is that there is scientific evidence to support what our faith reveals to us.

"Faith and reason always lead us to the good, the true and the beautiful. In all religions and faith backgrounds, the deity is able to feed their believers. Jesus is the only one who not only feeds his followers but becomes food for them, that I know.

"We are commissioning a study by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate to get current data on what Catholics believe about the Eucharist today, and the plan is to commission another study at the conclusion of the three years to have some measurable data.

"But ultimately, this is not a program we are promoting, it is a movement we are cultivating. We hope to see the fruits of the movement for years to come. We are also engaging marketing experts to help us determine the best way to share this incredible news: God leaves his throne in heaven



Auxiliary Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in Minnesota celebrates a Mass on May 8 at the Cathedral of St. Paul in St. Paul, Minn. As chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis, he is overseeing a national eucharistic revival to begin in 2022. (CNS photo/Dave Hrbacek, *The Catholic Spirit*)

to take his place in a host and wait for you and I to give him a place, hopefully a throne, in our hearts."

Q. What response have you seen thus far to the announcement about the eucharistic revival? How can Catholics assist in making it a success?

A. "There is so much excitement and energy about this initiative. Every day, we get calls or messages from people who want to be a part of this.

"I encourage your readers to consider how they can participate in this revival. For some, it is through offering a holy hour for the initiative and interceding. For others, it is speaking to their pastor or bishop about how they can help.

"Some parts of this initiative will be new, but others are a call to enter into the mysteries of our salvation in a renewed, deeper way. How can we prepare to attend Mass and recognize our Lord in the host? It would be great if in every Catholic parish, school or entity, there is a person who makes it part of their role to bring this good news to their communities:

"Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist, body and blood, soul and divinity. We need you; Jesus needs you. The Lord transformed the world with the Apostles. If all faithful Catholics give their heart to this initiative, the potential is incredible.

"Will you become a eucharistic missionary not to the world or diocese, but to your family, neighborhood or parish?" †



Father Aaron Jenkins, pastor of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, distributes Communion to Anne Bauer during a Jan. 30 dedication Mass at the Indianapolis East Deanery church. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

MARRIAGE

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By keeping such a priority in mind, Archbishop Thompson called the married couples witnesses “not only to your families, but to your neighbors, indeed to the world, which doesn’t put a whole lot in one’s word in commitment today.”

He noted that, along with declaring 2021 the Year of St. Joseph, Pope Francis also named it the Year of the Family in honor of the five-year anniversary of his apostolic exhortation “*Amoris Laetitia*” (“The Joy of Love”).

“The family, the community of communities, is the place where a person first learns about love, respect, understanding, forgiveness and mercy,” the archbishop said. “It is in the family, if priorities are in line with Christian faith, that we develop the perspective of encountering Christ in others.

“The foundation of the family of course, as we celebrate today, is marriage. More than anything else, though no relationship is perfect—as Pope Francis points out very clearly in his apostolic exhortation—it is the bond of marriage that shapes and molds any given family.

“Thus, we honor those celebrating special milestones of wedding anniversaries today, realizing that the full impact of your marriage covenant will never be fully comprehended in this life—the Christian witness of your marriage to one another, to your families, to the world. We pause today to give you thanks, and to give thanks to God for the gift of your witness.”

Christ made it his priority to seek to do the will of the Father, the archbishop noted. With that in mind, it is the duty of each Christian and each couple “to encounter the very person of Jesus Christ in one another in our daily lives, in our homes, in our families, in our relationships, most especially in the Eucharist.



Teresa and Norberto Aguayo, members of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis, share warm smiles at a reception after the Wedding Anniversary Mass. The couple has been married for 54 years.

“May we indeed be ever bold witnesses of Gospel joy in both worship and service, in our vocations, and most especially in our families.”

‘God helped us in our highs and lows’

As translated by their granddaughter, Ava Aguayo Martinez, Norberto and Teresa Aguayo were both leaders of their respective youth groups—his for young men and hers for young women—when the couple met in 1963 near Jalisco in Mexico. He was 18, she was 14.

“I thought he was nice, but I didn’t think we were going to get married,” Ava translated for Teresa.

Norberto and Teresa, members of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis, both came from strong Catholic families. So when talk of marriage came up, Teresa made a seven-Sunday devotion to St. Joseph that she marry the right man.

The couple married in 1967 and have remained strong in their faith together, along with their four children and 13 grandchildren.

Ava translated as Norberto shared about the strength of God in their marriage. He attributes the fact in part to his “constantly seeking to do the will of God and keeping the Holy Spirit in his heart.”

As for Teresa, Ava relayed her belief that “if God wasn’t in our marriage, we wouldn’t be together, because God helped us in our highs and lows.”

Through Ava, the couple offered advice to young married couples.

“For marriage to work, spouses have to offer themselves to each other and really give it their all to make it work,” said Norberto.

Teresa nodded and added, “And you have to pray, have God in your relationship and feed off the Eucharist.”

‘Ask God’s blessing every day’

When Elvira “Vita” met Les Richards on a blind date in college in the mid-to-late 1940s, “I didn’t give it much thought,” she said. “It was just a date.”

Les, however, found Vita to be “an attractive young lady. I wasn’t in the mood for marriage at that point,” he said. But then the relationship “grew, and it grew, and it grew.”

The couple dated several years before marrying in 1951. She was 24 and he was 25. At “94 and three-quarters” and “almost 95,” Vita and Les, members of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, have four children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

When looking back on their 70 years of marriage, Les admitted there were “times briefly when I didn’t like my wife, and I’m sure there were times when she didn’t like me. But we had an agreement sanctioned by the Holy Spirit, and we’re not going to break that contract.”

Vita pulled out her cell phone and brought up a photo of a wall plaque that



Couples married for 50 years stand and receive applause from the congregation gathered to celebrate the archdiocese’s 37th annual Wedding Anniversary Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Aug. 29. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

read, “Marriage is just two imperfect people who refuse to give up on each other.”

“That’s it,” she said. “That explains marriage perfectly, don’t you think?”

Both Vita and Les attribute their 70 years of marriage to faith and prayer.

“You have to pray and ask God’s blessing every day,” said Vita.

Les agreed, adding that “marriage can’t exist without faith.”

Ironically, faith is something he didn’t have when he met Vita.

“I didn’t have any religion,” he said.

“As a matter of fact, I wasn’t sure if Jesus was a person or a myth. That’s the best thing that ever happened to me was meeting my wife, and she introduced me to the Catholic Church. Best thing that ever happened.”

Vita smiled at her husband.

“I never imagined being married 70 years,” she said. “And all I can say is we’ve been blessed.”

‘Two key things’

Elbert and Stella Wilson, who both grew up on farms in southern Indiana, met by chance.

“I was a car hop for just two weeks—it’s not something I normally would have been doing,” Stella recalled.

During that short period, Elbert happened to drive in. Stella had heard that he was a nice young man.

With a twinkle in his eye, Elbert playfully said he thought Stella was “sort of cute.” By the end of the evening, he had set a date with her.

“But he got so excited he forgot to pay for his coffee! Sixty-five years later, I’m reminding him he owes me with interest,” Stella teased.

That chance meeting was in 1955, when she was 16 and he was 20. The two married a year later. They now have two children, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

At the time they wed, Stella was a

member of a Protestant Christian faith, and Elbert was a Baptist. About 60 years later, both became Catholic.

Through a mutual ecumenical ministry in Madison, Stella came to know the late Father Patrick Harpenau.

“I went through some health problems, and he was always there, even though I wasn’t Catholic,” Stella recalled. “I told my husband then, ‘I think I’m supposed to be Catholic.’ That thought was there, but it didn’t resurface right away.”

As the years progressed, Catholicism kept resurfacing for the Wilsons—they became godparents to a Catholic child and their musically-inclined son sang at the local Catholic church.

“Then we moved up here [to Indianapolis] and met some other wonderful Catholics,” said Elbert. “We found a lot of things in the Catholic Church that we found we really believed.”

The couple was received into full communion of the Church in 2015 and are members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

The couple of 65 years had wisdom to share with young couples.

“Make sure that you share the same value system, definitely, and if at all possible, the same faith,” said Stella.

“One thing else we were in agreement on was a commitment to each other and our marriage. There are rough times, but there are so many good times. And God is there through it all.”

Elbert also spoke of perseverance and faith.

“You have to have commitment to each other and to God,” he advised. “Those are the two key things. There’s hard times and good times, but you’ve got to weather it with God’s help and each other.”

(For more information on the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, go to cutt.ly/MarriageAndFamilyLife.) †

POPE

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“Among the various topics discussed were the role of the Church in the country, the commitment to the protection of the environment, the protection and promotion of the family,” the Vatican said.

In a statement on his Facebook page, Orbán, who views migration as a threat to Europe’s Christian identity, said, “I asked Pope Francis not to let Christian Hungary perish.”

Pope Francis, arriving in his popemobile, was greeted warmly by thousands who lined the street leading toward the Mass site in Heroes’ Square.

In the homily, Pope Francis reflected on the Sunday Gospel reading, in which Jesus asks his disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” (Mk 8:29)

Jesus, he said, addresses the same question to Christians today and requires a response that is “more than a quick answer straight out the catechism.”

The first step in responding to Jesus’ question, he explained, is to proclaim Jesus as Lord. However, the pope recalled that Jesus told his disciples to “tell no one about him.”

“There was a very good reason: to call Jesus the Christ the Messiah is correct, but incomplete. There is always the risk of proclaiming a false messianism, one of human origins, not from God,” he said.

Nevertheless, to proclaim Christ means also proclaiming his death on the cross, and the Eucharist serves as a reminder of God “as bread broken, as love crucified and bestowed.”

Like Peter, who was scandalized at Christ’s announcement of the suffering he must endure, Christians can also “be blinded by that way of thinking.”

“We, too, can take the Lord ‘aside,’ shove him into a corner of our heart and continue to think of ourselves as religious and respectable, going our own way without letting ourselves be affected by Jesus’ way of thinking,” the pope said.

Lastly, Christians must learn to “walk behind Jesus,” because Christianity is not “a race toward success” but to find true freedom in “not needing to be the center of everything.”

In doing so, Pope Francis said Christians can learn to follow in the footsteps of Christ, “who came to serve and not be served.”

The Eucharist impels us to this encounter, to the realization that we are one body, to the willingness to let ourselves be broken for others,” the pope said.

Prior to celebrating the closing Mass, Pope Francis met in private with the country’s bishops. He then met with Hungary’s Ecumenical Council of Churches, along with several Jewish communities. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople was among those at the Mass and the meeting with religious leaders.

Noting the recent celebration of Rosh Hashanah and

the Sept. 15-16 observance of Yom Kippur, Pope Francis offered best wishes and expressed his appreciation for the Jewish communities’ efforts “to break down the walls that separated” Jews and Christians in the past.

Just as God “transformed the desert into a highway to the Promised Land, so he wishes to bring us out of the barren deserts of bitterness and indifference, to that land of fellowship for which we long,” the pope said.

Drawing a parallel on the famed Széchenyi Chain Bridge, which links the eastern and western sides of Budapest, the pope noted that the bridge “does not fuse those two parts together, but rather holds them together.”

“That is how it should be with us, too. Whenever we were tempted to absorb the other, we were tearing down instead of building up. Or when we tried to ghettoize others instead of including them,” the pope said.

“How often has this happened throughout history,” he added. “We must be vigilant and pray that it never happens again.”

Lamenting “the threat of anti-Semitism still lurking in Europe and elsewhere,” Pope Francis said the best way to defuse hatred is “to work together positively and to promote fraternity.

“The bridge has yet another lesson to teach us,” he said. “It is supported by great chains made up of many rings. We are those rings, and each of us is essential to the chain. We can no longer live apart, without making an effort to know one another, prey to suspicion and conflict.” †

Faith *Alive!*

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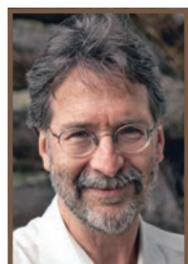
Writer Brian Doyle pondered God in the beauty of birds

By Shemaiah Gonzalez

One surprising note of the past year is how many of us got into bird-watching. I remember old sitcoms from my childhood where a bird-watcher was its very own special type of nerd. They wore khaki shorts, knee socks, a Park Ranger hat pulled all too low over their head and, of course, the ever-present pair of binoculars. Now as an adult, in the time of COVID, I want that outfit.

This year, many became bird-watchers from our windows, on those long walks we found ourselves on more frequently and when we learned we really didn't have anything better to do than to sit and stare at a body of water.

Brian Doyle, the beloved and award-winning Catholic writer who died in



Brian Doyle

2017, was ahead of his time. He loved "birding," as the cool kids say. In each bird, he saw the marvels of God's creation and sometimes God's sense of humor.

Doyle was born in New York City in 1956 into an Irish Catholic storytelling family of eight children, a mother who was a teacher and a journalist father. Doyle earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana in 1978 and worked at *U.S. Catholic* and *Boston College Magazine* before moving to Oregon.

Doyle and his wife, Mary Miller Doyle, had three children, who "emerged from [his] wife one after another like a circus act" and in whom they delighted.

In 1991, Doyle was named the editor of *Portland* magazine, where he led the helm while writing six collections of poetry, 13 essay collections and seven novels.

Doyle wrote about his family, his wife, his children, strangers, Girl Scouts, toothbrushes, hot showers and anything else that came within a mile radius of himself. He saw God in all of these ordinary, everyday objects. God's mercy, love and kindness surged through all these living and non-living things—but especially birds.

In one of his most famous essays, "Joyas Voladoras," Doyle ponders the glory of a hummingbird; those "flying jewels" whose heart is the "size of a pencil eraser" and beats 10 times a second. Did you know hummingbirds visit 1,000 flowers a day? Doyle did.

He researched every facet of beared helmetcrests and red-tailed comets and purple-crowned fairies. He knew that they could fly backward, dive at 60 miles an hour and could fly more than 500 miles without stopping.

But it is that tiny, little pencil eraser heart that Doyle kept coming back to, as if to look closer is to find the very breath of God, a God who cares for a bird with a heart the size of a pencil eraser.

This heart drives the most "ferocious metabolisms." It is a "race-car heart" that eats oxygen at an "eye-popping rate." Doyle writes of a hummingbird's "mad search for food, the insane idea of flight. The price of their ambition is a life closer to death; they suffer more heart attacks and aneurysms and ruptures than any other living creature."

In this heart, we see our own echoed. "So much held in a heart in a lifetime," Doyle writes; when we are older, we know

"that all hearts finally are bruised and scarred, scored and torn, repaired by time and will, patched by force of character, yet fragile and rickety forevermore."

But it wasn't just hummingbirds that caught his attention; herons did too. In fact, Doyle writes about herons so often, I'd dare to say they might have been his favorite bird. In the fantastic *A Book of Uncommon Prayer*, a collection of 100 prayers of the "miracle and muddle of the ordinary," Doyle writes about the heron:

"The way they are long, and thin, and still, and elegant, and shaggy, and awkward, and not at all awkward, and lean, and gangly, and knobby-kneed, and bluegraybrown all at once, and slow and dinosauric in the air but liquid-quick with their bladed beaks."

All at once, I both realize that he has perfectly described a heron and that I haven't looked as closely at a heron as Doyle did. And Doyle sees our God in this creature: "Yes, somehow. In all of this is the Breath, the Imagination, the voice that said 'I am who am' from the fiery bush, long ago."

Reading Doyle's reflections on birds fills you with absolute gratitude to be alive, to be able to witness such beauty and glory. "I have come to think that the birds are shards of faith themselves in mysterious ways. You could spend a whole life contemplating birds and never come to the end of the amazing things they do," he writes.

And then, you realize, all that bird-watching we've been doing has been prayer.

(Shemaiah Gonzalez is a freelance writer. Her website is www.shemaiahgonzalez.com.) †



A great blue heron is reflected on quiet water amid marsh grasses at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge on Maryland's Eastern Shore. In *A Book of Uncommon Prayer*, Brian Doyle writes of the heron: "The way they are long, and thin, and still, and elegant, and shaggy, and awkward, and not at all awkward, and lean, and gangly, and knobby-kneed, and bluegraybrown all at once, and slow and dinosauric in the air but liquid-quick with their bladed beaks." (CNS photo/Tom Lorsche) †



A hummingbird is seen getting nectar from a flower on Sept. 28, 2019, in a garden on the grounds of St. Anthony of Padua Friary in Butler, N.J. In one of his most famous essays, "Joyas Voladoras," Brian Doyle ponders the glory of a hummingbird; those "flying jewels" whose heart is the "size of a pencil eraser" and beats 10 times a second. (CNS photo/Octavio Duran)

Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Erin Jeffries

Catechists' ingenuity helps heal wounds of isolation

This weekend, we celebrate Catechetical Sunday. The theme this year is "Say the Word and my Soul Shall be Healed,"



which we proclaim at every Mass and calls our attention to Jesus as the divine healer, particularly in the Eucharist. Heaven knows this past year has brought into intense focus our need for healing in so many ways.

All of those things got me thinking about the catechists and catechetical leaders I interact with most, those involved in specialized programs with children and adults with disabilities, and how they face a very particular challenge and its wounds—that of isolation.

Isolation and its effects have been a reality for many of the friends we have met through these programs because of age and health factors (either their own or family members). Many have had to be particularly careful during the past year and a half.

Yet, this time has highlighted some beautiful things that fill me with wonder and gratitude. I have witnessed real relationships and community; I have witnessed true ministry of leadership and presence and, without a doubt, some amazing creativity!

These catechists have made phone calls, mailed cards and care packages, and even provided blank notecards and envelopes to encourage the group to keep in contact with each other. Tangible "touch points" like that have been especially important for our friends, who either don't have the inclination toward technology like Zoom, or don't have easy access to it. Of course, some love the technology, so there were groups that continued to meet virtually regularly.

One group of catechists quickly pivoted to putting together monthly themed boxes complete with short videos and other learning material. Other folks made home visits and brought meals. I have received encouraging notes from catechists, which has been a tremendous and humbling blessing.

I am reminded too, of another catechist who reached out to a group of friends to help them identify ways they could be involved and do things for their community from home. They ended up making and sending messages of encouragement to first responders and caregivers in nursing homes.

Of course, this past year has brought several sad losses. Those groups communicated and came together to mourn and support each other, either at the funeral itself or praying at a memorial service. There is one catechist who has been using his professional skills

as a counselor to meet with a program participant to provide support as he faces the serious illness of his mother.

This summer, we resumed offering opportunities for the larger community to gather at our Disabilities Awareness Mass which was held in June, and our summer retreat in August. I would be lying if I said there was no anxiety or second guessing about this. But here is what I saw: smiles. Hugs. Conversation. People greeting old friends and meeting new friends. The peace and joy were palpable. It was a peace that can only come from Christ.

It's not perfect: the technology wasn't working to livestream the Mass as we had hoped for folks who couldn't join us in person, and we missed some old friends. But the reality that I am starting to appreciate is that the relationship is truly one of family with all its beauty and messiness. And I can say this for sure, those who joined us by Zoom for several activities during the retreat weekend were greeted with the same enthusiasm and love as someone physically walking through the door.

(Erin Jeffries is coordinator of ministry to persons with special needs for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and can be reached at ejeffries@archindy.org or 317-236-1448. To learn more about resources in this area, check out www.archindy.org/specialneeds or www.archindy.org/deaf.) †

Twenty Something/

Christina Capecchi

The hidden power of play: how to be young at heart

Every fall the push to do more intensifies. Sharpen your pencil and dig in.

Produce more, study more, socialize more, exercise more, volunteer more. The calendar becomes the battlefield, its squares squeezed ever tighter. If summer is for vacation, fall is for achievement.



But we are forgetting something. The very thing we consider the

opposite of productivity—play—is, in fact, an accelerator of it. And more importantly, it is central in the Christian path to wellness.

I was reminded of this when I read about Reform, a Catholic wellness practice based in Islip, N.Y., with online programming. Their skilled team includes nutritionists, a priest and a doctor. And in their wisdom, they declared play one of the nine pillars of wellness, right alongside sleep, movement, community and faith.

No pillar is more important than the other, and each one enhances the other—movement helps with a good night's sleep, a good night's sleep allows for greater community involvement and so on.

Play is the most overlooked pillar, dismissed as a matter reserved for kids.

"But if we take life seriously all the time," the Reform team writes on its blog, "we miss what God calls us to be: childlike. As his children, we were all designed for play—no matter our age."

What a profound statement! As God's children, we are designed for play. At 7 or 70.

The blog post goes on to cite the many benefits of play: it encourages both movement and sleep, it nourishes our bodies, it stimulates personal growth and reduces stress.

A powerful spiritual benefit of play is the way it reconnects us with ourselves, the post notes. "It is easy to get bogged down by the worries and expectations of the world—and lose our true selves in the process. When we play, we remember that we are first and foremost beloved children of God. We are human beings, not human doings. Play helps us remember what truly makes our spirits come alive and the unique gifts God has given us."

Play keeps us young at heart, a fact my mom ably demonstrates at 65. She is not the grandma parked on the bench. She's the one who hula hoops. She goes down slides with her grandkids and encourages them to play in the rain, pulling out her own rain boots to jump in puddles.

She is inspired by her faith. Her mantra comes from St. Irenaeus: "The glory of God is man fully alive."

For my mom, play unlocks her creativity. "It takes me out my world," she said.

Indeed, play is the brain's favorite way of learning, and to ditch it at adulthood is to dramatically limit your intellectual growth.

My friend Stephanie enrolled in a Reform program to help process the death of her 18-month-old. Learning to embrace play has been a surprising step forward in her long journey with grief.

This summer, Steph played with her kids—running through the splash pad with them, baking, going on one-on-one dates. She also pledged to take up a hobby of her own. Creative engagement can be a playful outlet, so Steph decided to learn how to knit. She hopes the clacking needles soothe her heart.

As I write, a thunderstorm is rustling through, dimming the streets. It shifts me into a state of observing. I can step away from the to-do list. I don't have to outrun the clock. I can simply let autumn unfold. And if I find a good leaf pile, I will jump.

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

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

Many faith traditions are committed to care for creation

The Season of Creation, celebrated from Sept. 1-Oct. 4, has ecumenical roots.

A day of prayer for creation (Sept. 1) was begun in 1989 by Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople. In ecumenical solidarity, Pope Francis announced in August 2015 that Catholics would observe this day as well.

Both the patriarch and Pope Francis invited all Christians to pray for creation that day. Other Christians and faith traditions are concerned about creation as well.

The Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church are very committed to awareness of and action for sustainability.

Some Evangelicals are emphasizing the "need for Christian ecology," or creation care (A Rocha, Evangelical Initiative, and Evangelical Environmental Network).

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints references the Bible and their "Doctrine and Covenants" for a theological basis. It has implemented conservation practices at an increasing number of its meeting houses.

Major Lutheran synods emphasize the Bible's call for care of God's creation. Some emphasize sustainable living.

Stewardship of the environment is a major focus for many Presbyterians, including John Muir, the father of our national parks and the Sierra Club. Muir was a Scottish Calvinist.

Quakers have applied the concept of stewardship to both ethical economics and creation since their earliest days.

An independent environmental coalition of Southern Baptists believes in stewardship of God's creation. So does the United Methodist Church.

Concern for creation is foundational in many other religions.

Jainism applies the principle of *ahimsa* (non-violence/non-injury) to all life, large or small. One must not kill or harm any being. This is considered the highest religious duty. "All living

creatures must help each other." And so, even violent speech or thought is to be avoided.

Hinduism is very near to nature. God is to be seen in all the universe—air, water, fire, sun, moon, stars and the Earth. The Earth is worshipped as the spouse of God; all living things are considered to be children of God and Earth. The *Upanishad* says that "God entered into every object created." Maintaining this interrelationship, therefore, is a worship of God.

Hindus do penance when they kill plants and animals for food. This daily penance is called *visva deva*.

Islam teaches in the Quran that Allah, the creator of the world, has made humans the guardians of the planet, with a duty to care for it.

Judaism, with the Book of Genesis, chapters 1 and 2 as its foundation, likewise believes humans are to preserve and care for what God has created. God owns the Earth and all that fills it. Needless destruction against the property of God is forbidden.

Jews are called to preserve natural resources, even to generate new ones for future generations. This is based in biblical prohibitions against cutting down fruit-bearing trees (during a siege) and the sabbatical year of allowing the land to lay fallow.

While this is not an exhaustive illumination of Christian or other religions' care for creation, I hope that it clearly reveals a commonality among people of faith.

We live on a common planet. Our efforts to preserve, care for and nurture it belong to us all.

The values which we share across denominations and religions are many. Amid our differences in creed and belief, we can rejoice in our common cause for our planet, indeed, the future of all humanity.

(Father Rick Ginther is director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs. He is also the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.) †

Amid the Fray/Greg Erlandson

Indifference is culprit when our children leave the faith

Once upon a time, you may have prayed for your darling child to become a nun. Odds are you never prayed that she become a none.



Gallup reported earlier this year that church membership by Americans has hit a historic low, falling for the first time below 50%. More disturbing is the growing number of young people who identify as "nones,"

those without any religious affiliation.

Right now almost one out of every

three young people (those under the age of 40) claim no religious affiliation. These numbers hold true for Catholics as for non-Catholics.

What the statistics don't show is the pain felt by so many parents who watch their children drift away. Those who have raised kids in the faith, went to Mass every Sunday, sent their children to religious education programs or to Catholic schools, feel this pain most deeply.

"What did I do wrong?" we ask. "What should I have done differently?"

Catholics have always put great stock in the fact that the faith is inherited. One

is "born Catholic," or "a cradle Catholic." This is no longer true, as Sherry Weddell points out in her powerful book, *Forming Intentional Disciples*. God has no grandchildren, she says. These days, you don't inherit the faith like you do your eye color or your skin tone.

That parents worry about the faith lives of their children isn't something new. Such worry is as old as St. Monica praying for her son St. Augustine.

But talk with Catholic parents these days, and it feels more widespread than ever. On any Sunday, there are likely dozens of Monicas in your parish and

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, September 19, 2021

- Wisdom 2:12, 17-20
- James 3:16-4:3
- Mark 9:30-37

The Book of Wisdom furnishes the first reading for Mass this weekend. This book was written in an effort



to say that being faithful to God and worshipping the God of Israel represented not superstition but the greatest human wisdom.

To be convincing, the book obviously had to face the fact that evil exists in the

world, because humans turn away from God and succumb to evil.

In this reading, the book describes intrigue often involved in evildoing. Evil people conspire against the good. Evil people in the world especially detest anyone who devoutly obeys God. If nothing else, the devout challenge evildoers. The devout prove that holiness is possible.

Christians often see in this passage, and in others similar to it in the Old Testament, a look ahead to Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God.

From a theological point of view, and from the standpoint of a broader message in divine revelation, this passage and others like it prefigure the identity and mission of Jesus. When Wisdom was composed, however, centuries before Jesus, the incarnation had not yet occurred.

Nevertheless, all the details apply. Jesus was not without enemies. He was personally disliked. His Gospel was scorned. Still, Jesus triumphed.

For the second reading, the Church this weekend turns to the Epistle of St. James. This epistle never specifies the name of its author. As four persons with the name of James appear in the New Testament, and possibly others by this name existed in the circle around Jesus, biblical scholars are unable to say definitively who wrote this work of Scripture.

It is ultimately unimportant, though. The test of inspiration does not, in the last analysis, rest on knowing precisely the identity of the writer alone, but rather how the Church accepted the writing and

regarded it. The Church has taught from its early days to the present that James is a divinely inspired work.

The reading is clear and practical. It, too, refers to wisdom. True wisdom shares in and reflects divine knowledge. Therefore, true wisdom is good because God is innocent of all malice. It seeks to find truth. It seeks to respect others. It seeks what is right and just.

St. Mark's Gospel supplies the last reading. This reading has two points. First, inevitable in the personal mission of Jesus was a confrontation with evil. The ultimate and most powerful of earthly realities, namely death itself, came to Jesus. But Jesus overcame all human evil as well as death. He was the victor.

The Apostles, while being the Lord's special students, still were humans. Human ambition and shortsightedness also entrapped them. They accepted that the kingdom would come, as Jesus taught, but they wanted to rank high when the kingdom's glory arrived.

Jesus warned them that reward in the kingdom would not be automatic. It would not be thrust upon them. They would have to deserve the kingdom by resembling in every sense in their lives the life and sacrifice of the Master.

Reflection

For millennia, Christians have celebrated the Apostles. The names of important cities honor them: St. Paul, San Diego, and St. Petersburg, in this country, Sao Paulo in Brazil, and St. Petersburg in Russia.

It is fitting this weekend's lesson from Mark's Gospel reminds us that the Apostles were humans, and as humans, they did not know everything. Worse, they sinned on occasion. Peter is a perfect example of both faults. They needed Jesus.

Their human condition and need remind us of our own human limitation. We glory in our knowledge, but the best scientific minds among us cannot cure COVID once contracted.

Jesus is the one and only source of wisdom. He never fails. Follow Christ. Listen to the Lord. †

Daily Readings

Monday, September 20

St. Andrew Kim Tae-gön, priest, and St. Paul Chông Ha-sang, and companions, martyrs
Ezra 1:1-6
Psalm 126:1b-6
Luke 8:16-18

Psalm 149:1b-6a, 9b
Luke 9:7-9

Friday, September 24

Haggai 2:1-9
Psalm 43:1-4
Luke 9:18-22

Saturday, September 25

Zechariah 2:5-9, 14-15a
(Response) Jeremiah 31:10-12b, 13
Luke 9:43b-45

Sunday, September 26

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Numbers 11:25-29
Psalm 19:8, 10, 12-14
James 5:1-6
Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

Tuesday, September 21

St. Matthew, Apostle and evangelist
Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13
Psalm 19:2-5
Matthew 9:9-13

Wednesday, September 22

Ezra 9:5-9
(Response) Tobit 13:2-4, 7-8
Luke 9:1-6

Thursday, September 23

St. Pius of Pietrelcina, priest
Haggai 1:1-8

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Church continues to study possibility of ordaining women as deacons

Our current priest always looks exhausted. He is attempting to pastor three parishes that were merged into



one. Our parish has no deacons. With the shortage of priests and deacons, will the Church ever allow women to become deacons? (Indiana)

Currently being studied by the Church.

In April 2020, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis had created a new commission to study the question of a female diaconate in the Catholic Church. This followed the suggestion by the 2019 Synod of Bishops on the Amazon, which had recommended that women be considered for certain ministries in the Church, including the permanent diaconate.

An earlier study on the same topic had been commissioned by Pope Francis in August 2013, soon after his election as pontiff. At a 2016 meeting with the women's International Union of Superiors General, Pope Francis told the sisters that his understanding at that point was

that women described as deaconesses in the New Testament were not ordained, as permanent deacons are, but were commissioned to assist with baptism by immersion of other women.

In 2019, aboard a papal flight with journalists, Pope Francis told reporters that the first commission he had appointed to study the topic had not reached a unanimous conclusion. "What is fundamental is that there was no certainty that there was an ordination with the same form and the same aim as the ordination of men," the pope told reporters on that May 7, 2019, flight from Macedonia to Rome.

In 2002, the same topic had been studied by the International Theological Commission, an advisory body to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which had cast some doubt as to whether female deacons in the early Church had a liturgical or sacramental function.

So, the creation in 2020 of this new commission has given new hope to some that the ordination of women deacons could someday happen.

I have always seen on television the reverence shown to the pope, including people kissing his hand. I am wondering whether the pope ever kisses anyone else's hand. My understanding is that the Holy Father never does this. (Kansas)

The pope does, in fact, sometimes kiss people's hands. I can remember in 2014 a much-publicized visit of Pope Francis to Jerusalem.

At Yad Vashem, the memorial to the Holocaust, the pope laid a wreath of flowers and then kissed the hands of six Shoah survivors in a sign of humility and honor, as he heard their stories of loved ones killed by the Nazis during World War II.

More recently, in May 2021, following a general audience with the faithful at the Vatican, Pope Francis kissed the numbered tattoo of a survivor from the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz.

He leaned over 80-year-old Lidia Maksymowicz and kissed the tattooed "70072" on her elderly arm, then gave her a warm embrace then blessed her head. Maksymowicz, a Polish citizen who was deported to Auschwitz from her native Belarus at the age of 3, was among the children who were experimented upon by Josef Mengele, the Nazi physician known as "the Angel of Death."

(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

The Awe of His Presence

By Lauren Smith

Simply within this soul,
there You are,
existing presently.

Patiently within this soul,
there You are,
waiting thoughtfully.

Quietly within this soul,
there You are,
listening carefully.

Sincerely within this soul,
there You are,
inspiring fearlessly.

Calmly within this soul,
there You are,
resting deeply.

Faithfully within this soul,
there You are,
planning thoroughly.

Tenderly within this soul,
there You are,
loving preciously.

Imperfect is my being;
yet there You are,
presently perfect,
wondrously.

Gently within this soul,
there You are,
forgiving mercifully.

Kindly within this soul,
there You are,
moving spiritually.

(Lauren Smith is a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus [Little Flower] Parish in Indianapolis.)



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.

BAKER, Lowell E., 81, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Aug. 31. Husband of Bridget Baker. Father of Alice Alexander, Karen Quinlan, Tina Showecker, Briana West, Mary Jane, Rita, John and Lowell Baker, Jr. Brother of Constance Hughes, Jacqueline Mattingly, Martha Sparks, Doyle and Marion Baker. Grandfather of 29. Great-grandfather of 54.

BROADUS, Sr., Bernard R., 86, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Aug. 19. Husband of Emilia Broadus. Father of Maria Sellers, Carmela, Alan, Bernard, Jr. and Patrick Broadus. Brother of Ivan and Ronald Broadus. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of 17.

DUERSTOCK, Ruth E., 88, St. Mary, Greensburg, Sept. 4. Mother of Joan, Carl, Deron, Keith, Mark, Randy and Wayne Duerstock. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of three.

EVANS, Dorothy A., 85, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Aug. 31. Mother of Terese Frausto and Tim Evans. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of five.

GERTH, James E., 87, St. Ambrose, Seymour, Aug. 28. Husband of Beverly Gerth. Father of Mary Rita Carlson, Beth Anne Schultz, Mike and Tony Gerth. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of seven.

GERTH, Leroy, 83, St. Mary, Lanesville, Sept. 5. Husband of Susan Gerth. Father of Anita Skinner and Scott Gerth. Brother of Phyllis Combs. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of one.

GETTELFINGER, Joseph F., 86, St. Bernard, Frenchtown, Aug. 28. Husband

of Helen Gettelfinger. Father of Mary Leshar, Jennifer O'Sullivan, Tricia, Brian, Frederick and Kevin Gettelfinger. Brother of Jean Batliner, Agnes Ernstberger, Mary Ruth Ernstberger, Joan Marguet, Anthony and Bishop Gerald A. Gettelfinger. Grandfather of 11.

HANSON, Joan M. (Jirschele), 92, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Aug. 28. Mother of Jerry, Joseph, Tim and Tom Hanson. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of two.

HAPPEL, Patricia Mae (Brandenburg), 77, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd

County, Sept. 5. Mother of Marie Butler, Brian, Donald, Joseph, Matthew and Michael Happel. Sister of Martha Brandenburg and Anna Cannon. Grandmother of 23. Great-grandmother of seven.

HARRIS, Catherine, 97, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Sept. 1. Mother of Kurt Harris.

LEAHY, J. Robert, 100, St. Ambrose, Seymour, Sept. 5. Husband of Mary Louise Leahy. Father of Patricia Beimesche, Kathryn Wayne, David, Michael and Thomas Leahy. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of 32.

LEON, Maricela, 69, St. Anthony, Indianapolis, Aug. 30. Mother of Maricela del Pilar Pena Leon, Milagros del Rosario Pena Leon, Carlos

Edgardo Leon and Juan Arturo Rubio Leon. Grandmother of nine.

REED, Jami E., 42, St. Mary, Rushville, Sept. 2. Wife of Jeremy Reed. Mother of Ian, Lance and Zakkary Reed. Daughter of Alan and Susie Odum. Sister of Heather Ballenger, Elisha Marcum, Christin Nicholls, Abbie Odum, and Becky Thompson.

RITZI, Gregory T., 70, All Saints Parish, Dearborn County, Aug. 30. Husband of Sandy Ritzi. Father of Ashley and Chris Ritzi. Brother of Karen Maushart and Mike Ritzi. Grandfather of four.

RUIZ, Jose J., 59, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Aug. 17. Husband of Maria del Carmen Severiano Ledesma. Father of Guadalupe, Eric and

Justino Ruiz Severiano. Son of Maria Guadalupe Moreno Jimenez and Arcadio Ruiz Sandoval. Brother of Hilda, Monica, Ermilio and Gilberto Ruiz Caballero and Monico, Elio and Gabino Ruiz Moreno. Grandfather of five.

SCHEIDLER, Maria de Refugio, 84, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Aug. 27. Wife of Dr. James Scheidler. Mother of Elsa Hoffman, Rita Lyden, Alicia Nagy, Maria O'Rourke, Alex, Edward and James Scheidler. Sister of Beatriz León de Pérez Rocha, Alicia, Maria Eugenia, Rosalinda, Guillermo and Father Julio León Lomelí. Grandmother of 44. Great-grandmother of six.

THOMAS, Joan (Seipp Knable), 86, St. Mary,

Navilleton, Sept. 3. Mother of Cheri Knable Bierman, Chris Knable Franz, Vicki, John, Rick Knable, Dennis, Joe, Jr. and Larry Thomas. Sister of Martha Mull. Grandmother of 21. Great-grandmother of 36. Great-great-grandmother of one.

VERKAMP, Mary Ann, 78, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, Aug. 28. Wife of Paul Brown. Mother of Sarah Klingler and Jeremy Brown. Sister of Carol Burger, Rachel Hurm, Ruth Wibbels, Dennis and Joe Verkamp. Grandmother of five.

YORK, Eleanor J., 87, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Aug. 20. Mother of Greg, Mark, Mike and Randy York. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 13. †

Hay bales in Texas



Bales of hay are pictured on a farm outside Austin, Texas, on Sept. 9. The first day of autumn is on Sept. 22. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

ERLANDSON

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mine praying that their teenage or adult children return to the faith, get married in the Church or have their grandchildren baptized. The unbaptized grandchild is a particularly deep wound.

There is a lot of anger and a lot of guilt swirling around this topic. The sociologist Christian Smith once warned lukewarm parents that "we'll get what we are." Lukewarm begets lukewarm, he was saying.

Yet what seems increasingly common are parents who love the faith, who feel it is an essential part of life, and who feel as if they've done something wrong when their kids wander away. What they are getting is not what they are.

If such disaffiliation from the faith of their fathers and mothers is nothing new for young people, the scale of the departure is. There are lots of explanations of why it is happening.

Weddell believes that a fundamental problem in the Church—including priests and parents—is a lack of personal relationship with the Lord.

We follow the rules, we do the right things, but we really don't know Jesus and we don't do a good job of talking about our relationship with Jesus. That somehow feels, well, Protestant.

For the same reason, it can be hard for some of us to communicate with our children, adult or otherwise, what Jesus means to us, who he is in our lives.

Yet I also think that for many young people, they simply don't have time to invest in faith.

They live in a world almost mad with distractions, and many of the messages buried in all those distractions is that religion is not something to be taken too seriously. It's worse than hostility. It's apathy.

Faith is something they'll get around to someday. Maybe when they have children. Maybe when they have cancer. It isn't essential now.

The real enemy of the faith in our age is indifference. Combating this enemy may be the biggest challenge facing our parishes, and our families, today.

(Greg Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholicnews.com.) †

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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- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
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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

Global initiative seeks to ‘unlock’ Catechism of the Catholic Church

WASHINGTON (CNS)—When is the last time you cracked open the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*? Odds are, it’s sitting on your bookshelf collecting dust.

A new global project, Real + True, seeks to “unlock” the catechism and modernize the way Church teaching is presented to a digital age.

The catechism “is not just a technical book,” said Real + True co-founder Edmund Mitchell, “but it’s written to really change our relationship with Christ.”

Launched on Sept. 7, the initiative includes videos, social media content and a podcast organized along the four pillars of the catechism. Each month a new unit will be released, with 12 units for each pillar, totaling 48 units.

Aimed at millennial and Generation Z audiences, the content is meant to supplement evangelization and catechesis efforts that already exist as well as be a resource to those seeking answers to questions online, said co-founder Edmundo Reyes.

The material is free and available on realtrue.org in English, Spanish, Portuguese and French.

Reyes said the inspiration for Real + True came six years ago in Portland, Ore., when he encountered BibleProject, a nonprofit organization with a library of resources to help people read and understand the Bible.

While the organization isn’t Catholic, he was impressed by their work, which he’d “never seen done in a church setting.” After learning about BibleProject’s creative process, he came back “with the hope of one day doing something similar with the Church.”

When Reyes returned home, something unexpected happened. He started watching BibleProject’s videos on his phone, and three of his children joined him.

“They kept saying, ‘let’s watch the next one, let’s watch the next one.’ And at the end my son said to me: ‘Dad, I feel I learned more about my faith from those videos than all my years of religious education,’” Reyes said.

“That moved me in two ways,” Reyes said. “One is a bit of sadness of like, ‘man, I’m letting my kid down here,’ but also a lot of hope that the message that we proclaim, the Gospel message, it’s truth and it’s beauty and it’s attractive in itself. We just need to be able to communicate that message in a way that is relevant to them, in a way that they can understand it.”

The Church is moving in the direction of an “evangelizing catechesis,” said Reyes, citing the

example of Pope Francis instituting the ministry of the catechist in May and the Vatican updating the *Directory for Catechesis* in June 2020. He sees Real + True as participating in that evangelizing catechesis.

Reyes quoted the catechism, which states: “Periods of renewal in the Church are also intense moments of catechesis” (#8). And with the 30th anniversary of the catechism next year, the time seemed ripe to launch the initiative.

Reyes described Real + True as a “passion project,” apart from his work as the director of communications in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Co-founder Emily Mentock explained that the project’s goal of “unlocking the catechism for the modern world” means bringing the “content of the text into more digital media channels to better reach the audience that we’re after”—people that are not against the Church but are curious and open to learning more about their faith.

Mentock, 29, said her own journey back to practicing Catholicism informed her work on Real + True. A pivotal step in her story was seeing a tweet quoting Bishop Robert E. Barron’s sermons podcast.

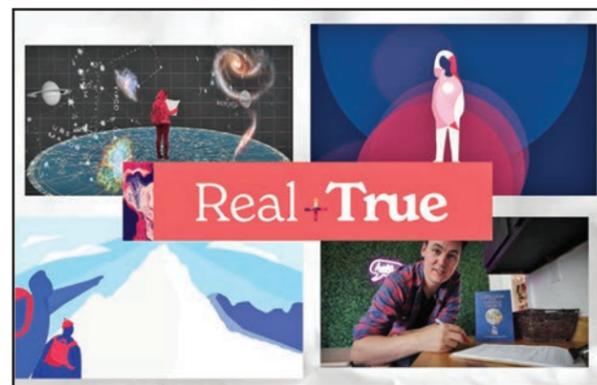
The tweet piqued her interest, so she started listening to the podcast and eventually “became compelled to go back to Mass and from there became compelled to actually read all the Gospels,” said Mentock, who works as associate director of digital strategy at the Archdiocese of Detroit.

That experience shaped “what I believe in and the ways we can use digital and social media channels as a tool to support that pathway back to Christ,” she said.

Each Real + True unit contains three videos—a proclamation video, an explanation video and a connection video—as well as a podcast that is geared toward formal and informal catechists.

Mitchell, 32, who worked in parish ministry for 10 years, said his training in a methodology of catechesis called, “the ecclesial method” by Msgr. Francis Kelly, influenced the approach to developing the structure and scripts of the videos.

The first stage is preparation, he said, by “getting the attention of the heart of someone who isn’t yet ready to hear the catechesis.” The proclamation videos are meant to rouse “spiritual curiosity” and prep the person to have a “burning question on their heart” that connects to the section of the catechism the unit covers.



This is an image for the global project “Real + True” which aims to “unlock” the catechism and modernize the way church teaching is presented to a digital age. Launched on Sept. 7, the initiative includes videos, social media content and a podcast organized along the four pillars of the catechism. (CNS photo/Real + True)

Then the explanation video goes deeper into the teaching and the connection video applies the material to everyday life. For creating the video topics, Mitchell said he was influenced by podcasts like “Radiolab” and “This American Life” that aren’t Christian but explore the phenomenology of the world.

Using the natural world as a vehicle for questions posed in the videos keeps the content relevant, especially for a global audience, since “the catechism is universal,” said Mitchell.

Funded by a grant from Our Sunday Visitor, the Real + True initiative is also seeking donations to translate content into more languages and produce videos at a faster pace.

“The work of evangelization online is significant and important, especially in a world so connected, which is what we saw in the pandemic,” said Reyes.

Isolation is one of the challenges the Church faces today, and the initiative organizers hope that by having “content that leads to Jesus,” young people can help “get connected spiritually,” then ideally continue a “journey of discipleship toward true community and communion,” he said.

(A video with more information about the Real + True project can be found at cutt.ly/RealTrue [case sensitive].) †

REFLECTION

continued from page 4

him to read the Bible first before making any more judgments and then ask his questions.

“He said, ‘Start with the Gospels because everything points back to Jesus. Get to know the person of Jesus.’ I started with the Gospel of Matthew and read the entire Gospel that first night. I cried quite a bit. I never read something so emotional as the Sermon on the Mount. I wanted to believe, but I was fearful of what it meant for me, my family and all my relationships in college that were with Muslims.

“It took about five months of going back and forth with God—that if he’s who he says he is to give me some rooted understanding to believe in him.”

That moment came for him on the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe in 2012 when another Catholic friend invited him to a Mass that was to be followed by a procession in honor of the Blessed Mother through the streets of the nearby neighborhood.

His first reaction to the procession was the last thing he wanted.

“At the time, I thought it was a rather pagan service,” he said.

Yet everything changed for him when the procession stopped, and people began making intercessory prayers aloud to the Blessed Mother.

“My friend said, ‘If you want to talk to Mary about everything you’re struggling with, she’ll listen.’ I approached Mary and asked her to give me comfort and peace and help me explain to my family that I accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

“In that prayer, I realized I had accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. For that reason, I’m thankful to her for showing me how to get out of my way and out of my pride. I felt this overwhelming sense of peace. I knew I’d have to live my life for Christ.”

He soon began taking Rite of Christian

Initiation of Adults classes and entered into full communion with the Church at Easter in 2013.

More than eight years have passed since that life-changing choice. He is now a husband and a father, and the heartache between him and his family continues to heal through the gift of the first child that was born to him and his wife—showing the power of a grandchild.

He even credits his zeal for his Catholic faith to the example that his parents set for him in embracing their Muslim faith.

He also appreciates that his longtime friends who are Muslim still welcome him as a friend.

Still, there are times when he wishes—more than anything—that two of the greatest influences of his life shared more common ground.

“Being Catholic and Afghan, it’s a lonely world,” he said. “Although we’re all united in the Eucharist and our faith, I still desire that connection from a cultural standpoint. If I could mesh those two worlds together, that would be like the second coming for me.”

He has a similar hope as Afghan refugees are beginning to resettle across America, including Indiana.

“We have to be a lot better with hospitality in America,” he said. “We almost have the responsibility as Catholic Christians to welcome them into our homes so they can have a firsthand account of how Christ has ordered us to live our lives. It’s only through our charity and our hospitality that we can break through the stigmas that people have.

“People often ask me, ‘How should I react to these refugees?’ I tell them, ‘Open your doors to them. Share a meal with them. Listen to their stories.’”

As we leave the coffee house on a sun-kissed September afternoon, he thanks me for listening to his story.

Once again, the gift is mine.

(John Shaughnessy is assistant editor of The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.) †

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- Practicing Catholic in good standing.
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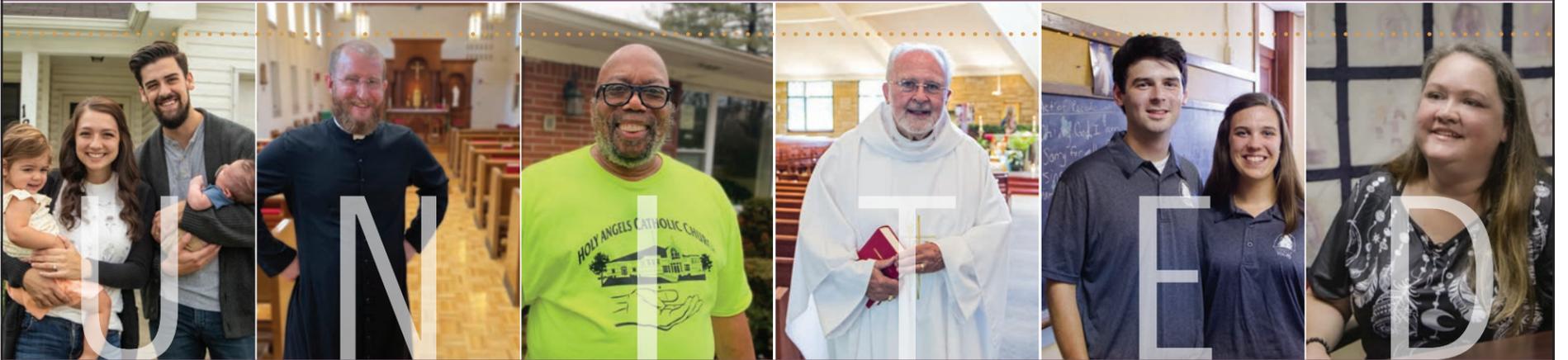
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Sean and Paige live a life of true discipleship. They are excited to be a part of the growing Catholic young adult community in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

From seminary to parish priest back to the seminary. Fr. Dan Bedel is excited to be the new Spiritual Director at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary.

Reggie is so proud to be a part of his community. The opening of the new Holy Angels Church is breathing new life into the west side of Indianapolis.

Fr. Clem Davis has been such a gift to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He continues to serve the Church in many roles even after his recent retirement.

Growing the young Church is critical to there being a future Church. Scott and Mara are part of the *Totus Tuus* program, teaching catechism to our youths.

Hard times brought Jennifer to the Bethany House in Terre Haute. Now as an employee of the shelter, she is helping others by sharing her story.

Who We Serve

THOSE WHO LACK THE BASIC NECESSITIES FOR LIFE

- You serve warm meals to those who are hungry.
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- You keep Indianapolis center-city schools open for families who cannot afford tuition but who wish for their children to receive a Catholic education.

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- You subsidize the high cost of education for our seminarians.
- You support the formation programs for future deacons.
- You care for the retired priests who served in our Archdiocese.
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- You keep Catholic student centers open on college campuses.
- You support teachers and students in 68 Catholic schools.
- You offer programs for young adults.
- You help young mothers choose life instead of abortion.
- You prepare catechists to teach the faith to our children.
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