‘Priority in Jesus Christ’

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

By Natalie Hoefer

Noelberto 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 Lex 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, 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.”

Stella and Elbert Wilson enjoy a dance at a reception in the Archbishop Edward I. O’Hare 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 Hoefer)

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.

“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.

“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. 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 Janos Ader, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Semjén for roughly 40 minutes “in a cordial atmosphere.”

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 fire fighters had come to Bishop Chatard to pay tribute 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 

See POPE, page 14

See MARRIAGE, page 14

See 9/11 MASS, page 3

See 9/11 MASS, page 3
Red Mass for legal professionals

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.

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. It is 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 was 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.

Dinner will follow in Assembly Hall at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, 46202-2367. 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 gunlvr.com/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 for 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 sjthomasmore@yahoo.com.

Respect Life Sunday Mass set for 1 p.m. on Oct. 3 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

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, on 1 p.m. on Oct. 3.

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

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

The Irish Indy 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, Irish Indy 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, Sine 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 Airs, The Indianapolis Ceili Band, The Richem/Trim 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 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.
at Catholic high schools for an important reason. “Some students today were not born in 2001,” said IFD battalion chief Howard Stahl, who helped organize this year’s Mass of Remembrance for 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 our home. This is our turf. We’re not leaving them. We’re on 35. This is our home. This is our turf. We’re not leaving them.”

“He was there in the countless first responders—firefighters, police officers, EMTs [emergency medical technicians]—and supported each other even unto death. “He was there in the many people who comforted and 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 are in. What really depend on Jesus for everything.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION, TO VOLUNTEER OR DONATE
WWW.CELEBRATELIFEDINNER.COM

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)

Celebrate Life Dinner
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2021
Marriott Downtown Indianapolis
Registration – 6:00 p.m.
Dinner and Awards – 6:45 p.m.
Gianna Jessen – 8:00 p.m.

Keynote Speaker
Gianna Jessen
Abothion Survivor

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

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

REGISTER ONLINE AT
WWW.CELEBRATELIFEDINNER.COM
FOR MORE INFORMATION, TO VOLUNTEER OR DONATE
visit: www.rtindy.org

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)
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 pincushion spines of the Missals, 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, catttchesis 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 literature, its studies, its retreats, its sports activities and its service programs—should provide students (also staff and faculty) 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 neighbors and the surrounding community because of its recognition that we cannot love God as we should unless we also love our neighbors. Social justice is just as much a constitutive element of the Gospel. That means it must also be a constitutive element of Catholic education. Social justice should be an integral part of our daily lives.

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 mission 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
Robert Belarmino, a saint for our time

Robert Belarmino, a saint for our time

Today, Sept. 17, is the Feast of St. Robert Belarmino, the patron saint of Bellarmine University, my alma mater in Louisville, Kentucky. Enthroned as pope in 1590, Saint Pius XI, declared Doctor of the Church in 1621, is a leading figure in the Catholic Church history. He was canonized a saint of the Catholic Church in 1621 and declared Doctor of the Church.

Cardinal Bellarmino, a saint in our time

Cardinal Bellarmino (1542-1621) was 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 of the Church in 1930 by Pope Pius XI, and one year later was declared a doctor of the Church. Cardinal Belarmino 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) Bellarmino’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. Galileo’s teaching seemed to contradict sacred Scripture as interpreted by the Fathers of the Church. Pope Paul V asked Cardinal Bellarmino 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 Bellarmino approached this difficult assignment. Rather than ridiculing a theory the Church disagreed with, or demonizing the man who argued in favor of it, Bellarmino 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, Bellarmino 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 Bellarmino’s death, when Galileo was brought before the Inquisition and charged with heresy, Bellarmino’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 announced his 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 were wrong. 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 Bellarmino 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, Bellarmino 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, Bellarmino found himself at odds with Pope Sixtus V, who disagreed with his position that the pope is not the temporal ruler of the world but that the pope should not derive his authority to rule from God but from the consent of the governing classes. Pope Sixtus V was unhappy with this teaching that he threatened to place the first volume of Bellarmino’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 amendments made.

St. Robert Bellarmino 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.

Robert Belarmino, a 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. En 1590, el papa Pío XI lo canonizó y lo declaró Doctor de la Iglesia. El 1 de enero de 1992, el papa Juan Pablo II lamentó el juicio que declaró que Galileo tenía razón en la movilidad de la Tierra y la inmovilidad del Sol. Lo que es significativo es la manera en que el cardenal Belarmino afrontó esta difícil tarea. En vez de ridiculizar una teoría con la que la Iglesia no estaba de acuerdo, o de denunciar al hombre que la defendía, Belarmino presentó su argumentación con calma y reflexión sobre 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, 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 Juan Pablo II expresó su lamentación por este caso, en particular por la carta al papa Sixtus 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 del poder del Sol. El papa Sixto no estaba de acuerdo con este juicio, ni siquiera que estaba alrededor del sol. El Santo Padre dijo que los teólogos que condenaban a Galileo no reconocieron la distinción formal entre la Biblia y su interpretación. Por lo tanto, dijo, “esto no es indebidamente a la relación entre la doctrina de la fe, una cuestión que de hecho pertainía 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 distinguió por el calmo, justo modo 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 Sixtus 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 del Sol. La cuestión es que los desacuerdos, incluso los más graves, pueden tratarse con dignidad y respeto. Cuando se demuestra 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 nos muestra que a pesar de nuestras divisiones, podemos aprender a vivir juntos en armonía y a ayudarnos a crecer en nuestra fe. San Roberto Belarmino es un modelo para nosotros, enseñándonos a ser dignos de nuestra fe y a ser capaces de vivir en paz y armonía en medio de nuestras diferencias.
Events Calendar

September 17-Oct. 30
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery, 500 Hill Dr., Saint 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 sanctuarie@archindy.org; library@library-hours.

September 20
Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. World Day of Migrants and Refugees Mass, 5:30 p.m., offered in English and Spanish, Archdiocesan Black Catholic Committee, St. Therese Room, Greenwood. Call 317-236-1640 or tchamblee@archindy.org.

September 20, 27, 28, 29
St. Thereses Church of the Little Flower Parish Center, St. Theresa Room, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. SoulCore Rosary Workout Center, St. Therese Room, Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 5901 Olive Branch Rd., Indianapolis. Call 317-236-1640 or tchamblee@archindy.org.

September 22

September 25-26
St. Mary Parish, 512 N. Perkins St., Richmond, Brute Weekend, all weekend Masses, Father Daniel Bedel, spiritual director of Bishop Brude College Seminary, will celebrate Mass and share the seminary forms its future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501 or esanders@archindy.org.

September 25-26
Virtual Indy Festival of Faiths—Two events, 2-4 p.m., sponsored by the Center for Interfaith Cooperation, includes “booth” for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, free, www.indycatholic.org/festival-of-faiths. St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus.

September 26
Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception Prayer Service for Missionaries and Refugees, 5:30 p.m., Father Chris Wadeton, presider. Information: 317-236-1640 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. Information: jreuber61@yahoo.com; Information: vocation@theodorn.org.

September 28
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. Green Mass, 6 p.m., Father Rick Ginner, celebrant. Information: Benedictine Sister Sheila Fitzpatrick, 317-788-7581, ext. 2. †

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. and the opening session at 5:30 p.m. Mass is available each day at 7:30 a.m. and the retreat ends with lunch on Sept. 30.

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 Angela Gerleve presenting, $425 double. Registration: umatre@umatre.org or 812-923-8817.

October 1-3
Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Come and See Retreat, 7 p.m.-1 p.m., Sun., for women ages 18-40 discerning religious life, food and housing provided. Information and registration: Conferences, lieschen@providence.org or 361-500-5905.

October 7
Richmond, 1306 27th St., Columbus. The Criterion Friday, September 17, 2021

Carla and Lucille Lentz

Robert and Judy (Lippe) Slomka, members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Sept. 16.

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

They have four children: Diane Andretti, Suzanne Barbara, Kathryn Conwy, Sharon Helms, Barbara Sharp, Patricia Summers and Anthony Lentz.

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

Richard and Theresa Snyder

Edmond and Nancy (Kidwell) Russell, members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on May 5.

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

They have four children: Nancy Carol, Kathy Ramsay and Pic Russell.

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

Edmond and Nancy (Kidwell) Russell

Robert and Judy (Lippe) Slomka, members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Sept. 16.

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

They have four children: Diane Andretti, Suzanne Barbara, Kathryn Conwy, Sharon Helms, Barbara Sharp, Patricia Summers and Anthony Lentz.

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

Robert and Judy (Lippe) Slomka

Richard and Theresa Snyder


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 Streigel.

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

CARL AND LUCILLE LENTZ

Robert and Judy (Lippe) Slomka

Edmond and Nancy (Kidwell) Russell

Richard and Theresa (Naville) Snyder

CARL AND LUCILLE (SCHURBERT) LENTZ

Robert and Judy (Lippe) Slomka, members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help 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 Barbara, Kathy Conwy, Sharon Helms, Barbara Sharp, Patricia Summers and Anthony Lentz.

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

Robert and Judy (Lippe) Slomka

Richard and Theresa (Naville) Snyder

Edmond and Nancy (Kidwell) Russell

Richard and Theresa (Naville) Snyder, members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on May 5.

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

They have four children: Nancy Carol, Kathy Ramsay and Pic Russell.

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

Edmond and Nancy (Kidwell) Russell

Edmond and Nancy (Kidwell) Russell, members of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on May 5.

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

They have four children: Nancy Carol, Kathy Ramsay and Pic Russell.

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

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to www.indycatholic.org 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, one gets the feeling that Andrew LaRouche tried to live the hope that Pope Francis has for the world. In a World Day of Migrants and Refugees on Sept. 26, the pope shared this vision, “We are all in this together. We are all creatures formed to work together so that there will be no more walls that separate us, no longer others, but always we, encompassing all of humanity.”

At 52, LaRouche has experienced the reality of the vision. He is a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood has also witnessed the challenge 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 opportunity of going to a school with people around the world,” he says. “And having a Canadian dad and a Malawian mom, you get 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 a trauma that shaped his life.

“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 insights that will be valued in the United States since he arrived in this country 33 years ago as a college student and immigant.

“Here, 99.9% of my experiences have been positive. I think Americans are becoming more realistic in general. Today, it seems bad,” he says about the political and social divisiveness in the country. “But it doesn’t solely 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 perspective 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 memory of the way his wife’s family welcomed him and embraced him.

He has lived here for 23 years. Nina, moved to the Indianapolis area in 1999. Since then, they have become the parents of three children. Evangelina 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 family’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 his family. As he drives to work as a chemist at a company in Indianapolis, he listens to a podcast that features the daily Mass readings.

During his daily 45-minute run, 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 helping students from the local college by my employment to work in my lab and then see them 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.”

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, Sept. 20-26. The first is a bilingual Mass celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood, at 5:45 p.m. on Sept. 20.

Next is a virtual service prayer hosted by the archdiocesan Office of 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 Catholic Church, 135 S. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 26. The service will be led by Father Christopher Wedelton, 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/Migration/Week (case sensitive).

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 consider our brothers and sisters as a unified perspective of the world,” 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—case sensitive.

“Our Catholic Charities Indianapolis Refugee and Immigrant Services provides advocacy, family reunification, job assistance and help in setting up a household for new arrivals 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).

“CARE addresses how to take the time to learn about each other,” says Chamblee. For parishes, families and individuals seeking ideas to become involved in Migration Week, Chamblee recommends checking the 2021 Archdiocese Migration Week Toolkit at www.archindy.org/socialconcerns/migrants.

To volunteer or learn more about Catholic Charities Refugees and Immigrant Services, contact Beth Carney at bcarney@archindy.org or 317-236-1457.

To volunteer or learn more about the CARE program, contact Simon Molina at smolina@archindy.org or 317-236-1457.

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

Indianapolis: The campaign will take place in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility at 421 S. College Ave. A portable shrine will be available along the street at $1 per hour. Do not park in the Planned Parenthood parking lot.

To sign up, go to 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 have an opening rally sponsored by Great Lakes Catholic Project at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 S. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, from 2:30-3 p.m. on Sept. 19 with guest speaker Eric Slaughter.

The Catholic Diocese of Indianapolis 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. 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 idipsumsapere@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.”
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 we need to be having to overcome our divisions,” said Jill Rauh, director of 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 Tanti: 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 Tanti, 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, CivilizedIt.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 Tanti, 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,” the initiative states.

HOLOCULT 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 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 as a sign of unity in the name of the God of our fathers.”

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

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship is the USCCB’s 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.”
Parish, campus ministry leaders experience Evangelist as the source and summit of the faith

By Sean Gallagher

The Evangelist 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 Evangelist 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 Evangelist, 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, that 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.”

He encountered Father Byrd had with Christ in the Evangelist 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 Evangelist is everything,” Father Byrd said.

“I think that’s what the council fathers were getting to in reminding us that the Evangelist is the source and summit of our faith.

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

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

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

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

By Natalie Hoefer

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 to 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 that we’re there with a friend who was preparing to be received into the Church.

“"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.”

The gathering closes with small-group discussions. St. John Paul II Parish uses the Catholic context of Alpha, which is created 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, 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.

“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.”

(Submitted photo)
Evangelization and catechesis “resonate” in archdiocese’s pastoral plan

When Ken Ogorek, director of the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, 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, on behalf of the disability ministry and evangelization and catechesis in the plan 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.”

Patrick Beidelman sees the presence of evangelization and catechesis in the archdiocese to see that they have the right fit” when choosing a catechetical program, said Sam Rasp, associate 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, you could start a group at IU [Indiana University] Southeast. You can have ‘date night’ Alpha—a 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 rasp@archindy.org.)
Cathy Andrews helped prepare children for their first Communion at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford. (Submitted photo)

By John Shaughnessy

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

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 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 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 why 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, there 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 Navilston and as an instructional assistant at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County.

“Sometimes it is harder than others to stay 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 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.”

The Criterion Friday, September 17, 2021 ~ Page 11

‘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. They vowed to love one another, to lead their lives to “God’s way” and to try to make others feel the love and glory of God.

And they have done it.

The couple met when Paul was 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 see how 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 annullal of my first marriage,” Paul says. “After completing RCIA, Father Rick Gunther [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 Indianapolis.

“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.”

By John Shaughnessy

Jan and Paul Johnson found a deeper connection to each other in helping bring people closer to God. (Submitted photo)
**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. The 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. They’re so excited. They’re anticipating it. I wish we could all be like that every single time. It’s precious.”

Two Masses are celebrated daily in addition to more Masses on Saturday evenings and Sundays. And there are other times of eucharistic adoration at St. Paul each week.

“We want to make sure that everyone radiates from the Church 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 has also seen how 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. “It’s that 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 also is the one who can 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 he raised up.”

Father Patrick finds that 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,” Father Patrick said, “They see it as a personal invitation, a personal communion in the Lord,” he said.

“I’ve encountered Jesus [in the Eucharist] and now I see it as a personal invitation, a personal communion in the Lord,” he said. “And his way of doing that is so humble that you can receive him and he raised up.”

Father Patrick finds that 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,” Father Patrick said, “They see it as a personal invitation, a personal communion in the Lord,” he said.

“I’ve encountered Jesus [in the Eucharist] and now I see it as a personal invitation, a personal communion in the Lord,” he said. “And his way of doing that is so humble that you can receive him and he raised up.”

Father Patrick finds that 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,” Father Patrick said, “They see it as a personal invitation, a personal communion in the Lord,” he said. “And his way of doing that is so humble that you can receive him and he raised up.”

Father Patrick finds that reality is attractive to the young adults he meets at Indiana University.
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 a profound way, Bishop Cozzens said. “If we truly knew who waits for us, who seeks for us, we would visit the Sacred 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.”

Q. Will you become a eucharistic missionary for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops? A. “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 to take his place in a bosom 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? 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.”

Q. What is the best way to share this news? 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 years ago at her first holy Communion, for others it will be an epiphany moment: the Eucharist is really Jesus.”

Q. What do you believe is the best way to share this news? 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.

Q. What is the best way to share this news? 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 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 the 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 deed 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.”

Evangelization & Catechesis Supplement

By keeping such a priority in mind, Archbishop Thompson called the married couples “not only to your families, but to your neighbors, indeed to the world,” which then put a whole new meaning to the phrase “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 the Apostolic Exhortation “Amoris Laetitia” (“The Joy of Love”).

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

“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 your gifts, and for you.”

Christ made it his priority to seek to do the will of the Father, the archbishop noted. With that in mind, we honor each of you 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.”

“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 grandchildren, Ava Aguayo Martinez, Norberto and Teresa members of the St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis, both came from strong Catholic families. So when talk of marriage came up, Teresa was a bit taken aback. She said “I wasn’t aware of the commitment to the Church in the country, the commitment to the Eucharist.”

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

“Jesus was a person or a myth. That’s the value system, definitely, and if at all possible, the same faith,” said Stella.

“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.”

“A couple have to offer advice to young married couples. “For marriage to work, spouses have to take time to pray together each other and really give it all their make it work,” said Norberto.

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

“Ask God’s blessing every day”

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

Ava translated as Norberto shared about the couple’s healthy living and advice to young married couples.

“People who on their 70 years of marriage, Les admitted there were “times briefly when I didn’t like my work, and I’m there and respectable.”

“We, too, can take the Lord ‘aside,’ shove him into a sort of cute.” By the end of the evening, she had set a date with her brother and sister in law. “We got so excited he forgot to pay for his coffee!” Sixty-five years later, I’m reminding him he owes me $2,” Stella recalled.

“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.

“As forLes, he agreed, adding that “marriage can’t exist without faith.”

“Jesus was a person or a myth. That’s the 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.

“Vita added.”

“For marriage to exist, you have to be together. And God, in the end, will be together with you.”

(Norberto and Teresa 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 64 years.

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

MarriageAndFamilyLife.

(For more information on the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, go to ctny Money)
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 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 to death; they suffer more heart attacks and when we learned we really didn’t have anything better to do than to sit and stare at a body of water.

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 bearded 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 scared, 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 middle 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 bluetraybrown all at once, and slow and dinosauric in the air but liquid-quick with their bladed beaks.

At all 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)
Indifference is culpri 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 would become single.

Gallup reported earlier this year that church attendance by Americans has hit a historic low, falling to the first time below 50%. More disturbing is the growing number of young people who identify as “nones,” those without any religious affiliation. Right up there with childless by choice, or as some say, childless by design.

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 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 being the face of God in every creature. One cannot do this job well without an intimate relationship with their Creator, which is the theme of this series. 

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

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 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 being the face of God in every creature. One cannot do this job well without an intimate relationship with their Creator, which is the theme of this series.
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 worshiping 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, this test of inspiration does not, in the last analysis, rest on knowing precisely who wrote this work of Scripture. The scholars are unable to say definitively its author. As four persons with the name Nazareth, the Son of God. Nevertheless, all the details apply. Jesus was not without enemies. He was personally disliked. His Gospel was scorned. Still, Jesus triumphed. Moreover, the book describes scorned. Still, Jesus triumphed. Nevertheless, all the details apply. Jesus was not without enemies. He was personally disliked. His Gospel was scorned. 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. Humankind and shortsightedness also-encompassed them. They accepted that the kingdom would come, as Jesus taught, but they wanted to rank high when the kingdom’s glory arrived.

Jesus wanted 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 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-gon, priest, and St. Paul Chong Ha-sang, and companions, martyrs

Ezra 1:1-6

Psalm 126:1b-6

Luke 8:16-18

**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

(Responsory) Tobit 13:2-4, 7-8

Luke 9:1-6

**Thursday, September 23**

St. Pius of Pietrelcina, priest

Haggai 1:1-8

**Questions and Answers**

**Church continues to study possibility of ordaining women as deacons**

Q Our current priest always looks exhausted. He is attempting to pastor three parishes that are 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)

A This issue is 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 in the Catholic Church. The ordination of women deacons? (Indiana)

To be convincing, the library had to face the fact that evil exists in the world, because humans turn away from God and succumb to evil.

My Journey to God

The Awe of His Presence

By Lauren Smith

Simply within this soul, there You are, existing presently. Patently 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, present, perfectly, 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.)

The Criterion Friday, September 17, 2021

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Church continues to study possibility of ordaining women as deacons

Q 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)

A 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 “701” on her elderly arm, then gave her a warm embrace then blessed her hand. 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 Columbus Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.†


Duerstock, Ruth E., 88. St. Mary, Greensburg, Sept. 3. Mother of Joan, 88, St. Mary, Greensburg, Duerstock, Ruth E.


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.


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


Schederler, Maria de Refugio, 84. St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Aug. 27. Wife of Dr. James Schiederler. Mother of Rita Hoffmann, Rita Lyden, Alicia Nagy, Maria O'Rourke, Alex, Edward and James Schiederler. Daughter of Beatriz Leon de Perez Roche, Alicia, Maria Eugenia, Rosalinda, Guillermo and Father Julio Leon Lomeli. Grandmother of 44. Great-grandmother of six.


The Criterion Friday, September 17, 2021
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? Oddly enough, it’s sitting on your bookshelf collecting dust.

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

“Catechists today are struggling to explain catechisization and catechetics efforts that already exist as well as a resource to those seeking answers to questions online,” said co-founder Edmundo Reyes.

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

“Robert E. Barron, the voice and face of 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.

“Each Real + True unit contains three videos—a proclamation video and the explanation video and a connection video—as well as a podcast that is geared toward formal and informal catechists.

The first stage is preparation, he said, by “getting the attention of the heart of someone who isn’t yet ready to hear the catechism.” The proclamation videos are meant to rouse “spiritual curiosity” and pre-p the person to have a “burning question on their heart” that connects to the section of the catechism the unit covers.

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])

Classified Directory

For Sale

Call 317-236-1585 TO ADVERTISE in The Criterion

ST. LOUIS DE MONFORT (Fishers, IN) is seeking a full-time pastoral, collaborative, and dynamic Coordinator of High School Youth Ministry. The coordinator reports to the Director of Evangelization, Family Life and Pastoral Ministries at the parish.

**Essential Skills:**
- Identify and implement programs to deepen the faith life of our high school youth.
- Plan Sacramental prep for Confirmation, experiences of adoration, retreats, etc.
- Build a strong team of catechists, advisory teams and parents.
- Maintain appropriate communication, record keeping and responsible budgeting.

**Qualifications:**
- Bachelor’s degree in the field of Catholic Theology or equivalent.
- Practicing Catholic in good standing.
- Strong organizational, verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to work effectively with students, employees and volunteers.
- Able to honor and maintain confidentiality.
- Possess respect for and ability to uphold Catholic Church teaching.
- Ability to pass and maintain Diocesan Child safety protocols.

Please direct inquiries and/or your cover letter, resume, and list of references by September 30, 2021 to Brian Freyberger - bfreyberger@isdmfishers.org
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.
• You teach life skills to help people stay out of poverty.
• You keep Indianapolis center-city schools open for families who cannot afford tuition but who wish for their children to receive a Catholic education.

OUR PRESENT AND FUTURE PRIESTS AND DEACONS
• 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.
• You offer retreats and sabbaticals for current priests.

PEOPLE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF LIFE WHO NEED TO KNOW AND FEEL THE PRESENCE AND LOVE OF JESUS
• 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.
• You sponsor faith-centered activities for youths.

United Catholic Appeal

United in the Eucharist

INTENTION WEEKEND: November 6-7

SCAN TO SEE IMPACTFUL VIDEO STORIES AND TO MAKE YOUR GIFT
www.archindy.org/UCA