Bishops call attacks on U.S. Catholic sites ‘acts of hate’ that must stop

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Oct. 10 vandalism of Denver’s cathedral basilica that resulted in satanic and other “hateful graffiti” being scrawled on its doors and at least one statue brought to 100 the number of incidents of arson, vandalism and other destruction that have taken place at Catholic sites across the United States since May 2020.

That month the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Committee for Religious Liberty began tracking such incidents, according to an Oct. 14 press release.

“These incidents of vandalism have ranged from the tragic to the obscene, from the transparent to the inexplicable,” the chairman of the USCCB’s religious liberty and domestic policy committees said in a joint statement included in the release.

“There remains much we do not know about this phenomenon, but at a minimum, they underscore that our society is in sore need of God’s grace,” they said, calling on the nation’s elected officials “to step forward and condemn these attacks.”

“The motive was retribution for some past fault of ours, we must reconcile; where misunderstanding of our teachings has caused anger toward us, we must offer clarity; but this destruction must stop. This is not the way,” they said.

“We thank our law enforcement for help as well. These are not mere property crimes—this is the degradation of visible representations of our Catholic faith. These are acts of hate.”

Rosary makers and an author creatively share their love of the rosary

By Natalie Hoefer

NASHVILLE—A woman raised in a Catholic orphanage in Germany. A Benedictine sister who teaches middle school religion. A mother of five who found herself the sole source of financial support for her family. A priest with little time on his hands.

Their stories are quite different, but they each share one thing in common: a special love for the rosary. For three of them, that translates into making rosaries. For one, it took the form of writing a young adult fiction book. With the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary taking place each year on Oct. 7, October is known as the month of the rosary.

To honor this popular Catholic devotion, The Criterion interviewed these four individuals. Following are the stories of their love for the rosary and what led them to share that love in a creative way.

“I feel like this is my calling”

Not many would be thankful for being raised in an orphanage in Germany. But for Marie Nealy “it was the best part of growing up. The structure of the Church gave me inner peace and acceptance of the things God sometimes brings to you.”

“From the time I left the orphanage, the rosary has been part of my life and will always be. It is such a powerful prayer.”

Archbishop Thompson celebrates Mass to start synodal process in archdiocese

By Sean Gallagher

The Church in central and southern Indiana joined dioceses around the world on Oct. 17 in beginning its participation in the preparation for a 2023 meeting of the Synod of Bishops. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson celebrated a Mass that day in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis that began the archdiocese’s contribution to the synod meeting.

Unlike the usual practice of Sundays in Ordinary Time in the Church’s liturgical calendar in which green vestments are worn, Archbishop Thompson wore red vestments for the liturgy, noting at the start that they “remind us of how...”
SYNOD
continued from page 1

we call upon the Holy Spirit to guide and direct, to be with us through this process.”

The 2023 synod meeting at the Vatican and the preparation for it in the archdiocese and in dioceses around the world has as its theme, “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission.” Pope Francis called for this theme to help Catholics across the world—lay faithful, religious and clergy—to experience what it means to come together to discern with the help of the Holy Spirit how the Church is called to live out its mission in this time in history. In his homily during the Mass, Archbishop Thompson emphasized that humility is essential for the success of the faithful coming together in such a process.

“This is not a time of self-seeking privilege or weak-mindedness, but a time for opening our minds to the Spirit and our hearts to one another,” he said. “We must check our egos and personal agendas at the door while praying for courage, humility and generosity to permeate our hearts to one another,” he said. “We must be open to the Spirit and for opening our minds to the Spirit and our hearts to one another.”

President Joe Biden

In a recent interview with Catholic News Service, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, said he was helping the Holy See prepare for Biden’s first presidential visit to the Vatican, sometime during an Oct. 30-31 Rome summit of leading rich and developed nations.

“It would be an anomaly if he did not meet the pope while in Rome,” especially since Biden is the first Catholic to be U.S. president in 58 years, the nuncio said.

On Oct. 9, the pope met privately at the Vatican with U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who was in Rome to speak at a meeting of legislators from around the world in preparation for the U.N. climate summit.

Pelosi, who is Catholic, said in a statement that it was “a spiritual, personal and official honor” to have an audience with the pope.

Because Pelosi supports legalized abortion, her archbishop, Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco, asked “all Catholics and others of goodwill” to join a prayer and fasting campaign for Pelosi’s “conversion.”

In her keynote address to fellow legislators from around the world meeting in Rome on Oct. 8, Pelosi said world governments must take bold action in their own countries and when they meet for COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland, in November.

The pope, who addressed the Pre-COP26 Parliamentary Meeting the next day, spoke of the “important, and indeed, crucial” role of governments in slowing climate change and restoring a healthy environment.

After the G20 Leaders’ Summit in Rome, which ends on Oct. 31, Biden will travel to Glasgow, to take part in the pre-COP26 Leaders Summit at the start of the climate change gathering.

Pelosi, who initially planned to attend the COP26 summit, will not be attending. The Holy See delegation will be led by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state.

Laura Sheehan and her daughter Adelaide Ireland, a fourth grader, pray in prayer during an Oct. 17 Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis that began the archdiocese’s participation in the preparation for a 2023 meeting at the Vatican of the Synod of Bishops on synodality in the Church. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

WASHINGTON (CNS)—President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden will have an audience with Pope Francis on Oct. 29, the day before the G20 Leaders’ Summit starts in Rome, White House press secretary Jen Psaki announced on Oct. 14.

“They will discuss working together on efforts grounded in respect for fundamental human dignity, including ending the COVID-19 pandemic, tackling the climate crisis and caring for the poor,” she said in a statement.

Biden and Pope Francis previously met in 2016, when Biden was vice president, after they both spoke at a conference on adult stem-cell research at the Vatican.

In recent weeks, there has been speculation that the two leaders were likely to meet since Biden would be in Rome.

“Anytime that we can participate in something that the universal Church is doing is exciting,” said Sheehan. “But this papal visit also serves as project coordinator for social concerns for archdiocesan Catholic Charities.”

She was encouraged to hear Archbishop Thompson speak about how the synodal process can help the faithful of the Church to see how they can respond to the challenges facing society today with the hope of the Gospel.

“All of those things are things that we work on with a daily basis [in Catholic Charities],” Sheehan said. “It was nice to hear that addressed in his homily. The themes of communion, participation and mission were really cool, too, to have put at the front of our minds. To hear someone in authority in the Church talk about those aspects of the Church’s life was refreshing.”

The Criterion
October 24-31, 2021

President Biden and Pope Francis schedule meeting on Oct. 29

October 24 – 10:30 a.m.
Mass at St. Andrew the Apostle Church, Indianapolis, for the parish’s 75th anniversary followed by lunch at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish

October 26 – 10 a.m.
Fall Clergy and Parish Life Coordinator business meeting at St. Joseph Parish, Jennings County

October 26 – 2:15 p.m.
Council of Priests meeting at St. Joseph Parish, Jennings County

October 27 – 11 a.m.
Lunch with retired priests at St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis

October 27 – 5:15 p.m.
Blue Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

October 28 – 8:15 a.m.
Mass for the students of St. Joan of Arc School, Indianapolis, at St. Joan of Arc Church

October 28 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 29 – 6 p.m.
University Marian RISE Galas at JW Marriott, Indianapolis

October 31 – 2 p.m.
Communion for the youths of St. Mary Parish, Lanesville; St. Joseph Parish, Corydon; St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish; and St. John Paul II Parish, Sellersburg, at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church

PUBLIC SCHEDULE OF ARCHBISHOP CHARLES C. THOMPSON

October 21, 2021

President Joe Biden

The Known Spokesman for the Synod of Bishops indicated that on Oct. 29—President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden will have an audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican.

The synodal process will also be invited to take part in the synodal process.

Thompson invited his listeners to keep alive the idea of communion, participation and mission while working with on a daily basis. 

For example, Archbishop Thompson suggested various questions that might guide Catholics’ participation in the synodal process.

How do we continue the mission of healing wounds and warming hearts today? he asked. “What barriers need to be removed in order to enhance communion and participation while honoring the mission entrusted to us as Church by Jesus Christ himself?”

Before us is a great challenge, great opportunity. A daunting task, but grace-filled, if we are Christ-centered. In the end, it is all about glorifying the Holy Trinity—God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—for the sake of our salvation, not merely as individuals, but as people of God.

Laura Sheehan, a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, was glad to take part in the Mass with her 6-year-old daughter Adelaide.

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Laura Sheehan and her daughter Adelaide Ireland, a fourth grader, pray in prayer during an Oct. 17 Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis that began the archdiocese’s participation in the preparation for a 2023 meeting at the Vatican of the Synod of Bishops on synodality in the Church. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)
Pope shares survivor's letter pleading for clergy to face truth of abuse

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—An adult survivor of abuse by a priest appealed to the world’s seminarians to become good priests and to make sure the “bitter truth” always prevails, not silence about scandals and their cover-up.

“You do not sweep things under the carpet, because then they start to sink, putrefy, and the rug itself will rot away.... Let us realize that if we hide these facts, when we keep our mouths shut, we hide the filth and we thus become a collaborator,” said the survivor in a letter sent to Pope Francis and addressed to all seminarians.

To live in the truth is to follow the example of Jesus Christ, who never closed his eyes to sin or the sinner, but who “loved the truth with love — [who] indicated the sin and the sinner with bitter love,” the letter said.

The letter, written in Italian, had been sent to Pope Francis, who then requested it be made public with the author’s identity withheld, according to the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, which republished the text of the letter on its website on Oct. 18.

The commission’s president, U.S. Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley, said, “During this time of renewal and pastoral conversion in which the Church is facing the scandal and wounds of sexual abuse inflicted everywhere upon so many children of God, our Holy Father received from a survivor a courageous testimony offered to all seminarians.”

By sharing this testimony publicly, “Pope Francis wants to welcome the voices of all wounded people and to show all priests who proclaim the Gospel the path that leads to authentic service of God to the benefit of all vulnerable people,” the cardinal wrote in an introduction to the letter.

The woman writing the letter explained how she was harmed for years as a girl by a priest, leaving her with many serious mental health issues including dissociative identity disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, insomnia, nightmares and a pervasive sense of fear — of others, of making mistakes, of being touched.

“I am afraid of priests, of being near them,” she wrote, and she can no longer go to Mass because this “sacred space” that used to be her second home now only triggers pain and fear.

She said she is trying to “survive, to feel joy, but in reality, it is an incredibly difficult battle.”

She told the pope she was writing because she wanted that “bitter truth prevail.”

“I am here also in the name of other victims — of children who have been deeply harmed, whose childhood, purity and respect have been stolen — who were betrayed and whose boundless trust was taken advantage of — of children whose hearts beat, who breathe, who live... but they have been killed once, twice, many times. ... Their souls have been turned into tiny bloody pieces,” she wrote.

Adults who experienced “this hypocrisy” as children can never be rid of it; they can try to forget or forgive, “but the scars remain in their souls and never disappear,” she said.

This abuse also harms the Church, and “the Church is my mother and it hurts so much when she is wounded, when she is soiled,” the letter said.

“I want to ask you to protect the Church, the body of Christ,” she wrote in her appeal to seminarians.

The Church “is full of wounds and scars. Please do not let those wounds become deeper and new ones occur,” she wrote, reminding the seminarians that they have been called by God to be his instruments and to serve him through others.

“You have a great responsibility! A responsibility that is not a burden, but a gift” that should be handled “with humility and love!” she wrote.

The survivor appealed to seminarians to not try to hide or be silent about scandal, saying, “If we want to live the truth, we cannot close our eyes.”

“Please, realize you have received an enormous gift” of being “an incarnation of Christ in the world,” she wrote. “People, and especially children, don’t see [just] a person in you, but [they see] Christ, Jesus, in whom they trust all the same without limits.”

“It is something enormous and strong, but also very fragile and vulnerable. Please be a good priest,” she wrote. 

What is that one thing in your life that brings you closer to God?

“Maybe it happens for you while enjoying a special moment with your child. Or working in your garden. Or helping someone in need. Or sitting in silence during eucharistic adoration. Or while teaching, painting, running, playing music or taking a walk through nature.

Many of us have our special moments and situations when we feel closest to God, when we feel his presence more keenly, more deeply. For you, what is that one thing in your life that brings you closer to God—and why? What is your favorite moment in your life when you knew God was there for you?”

The Criterion is inviting you to share your answers, thoughts and stories concerning these questions.

Send your submissions to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and phone number where you can be reached.

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FROM HEALTH HAZARD, TO RUBBLE, TO OPEN DOORS Holy Angels Church reflects a community that stood strong through a time of adversity
Pope reminds pharmacists—and us—we must value life

We believe it was providential that Pope Francis recently had a strong message concerning life for pharmacists. And it is a message we all need to take to heart—not only during Respect Life Month, but each day.

During an audience at the Vatican on Oct. 14 with about 150 health care professionals attending a national congress sponsored by an Italian association of pharmacists working in hospitals or for the government health service, the pope told them they have a right to conscientious objection, just as they have a right to denounce unjust harm inflicted on innocent and defenseless life.

“It is a very delicate subject, which at the same time requires great competence and great righteousness. In particular, I had the opportunity to return to abortion recently,” he said. “You know that I am very clear on this: it is a murder, and it is not permissible to become accomplices. Having said that, our duty is closeness, our positive duty: to stay close to situations, especially women, so that we do not colden our skin to the abortion solution, because in reality it is not the solution.”

The Holy Father’s words were similar to his answer to a question during his in-flight press conference returning from Bratislava, Slovakia, on Sept. 15.

“Abortion is more than an issue. Abortion is murder. Abortion, without hinting: whoever performs an abortion kills… It’s a human life, period. This human life must be respected. This principle is so clear,” he told reporters on the plane.

The wounds left by abortion, Pope Francis told the medical professionals on Oct. 14, affect people for years. “Then life, after 10, 20, 30 years, passes you the bill. And you have to stay in a confessional to understand the very hard price of this,” he said, referring to the very high emotional and psychological toll involved.

The Holy Father earlier in his talk to pharmacists said there seems to be a trend in society in thinking that getting rid of conscientious objection would be a good idea.

However, he said, conscientious objection is an ethical principle for every health care professional, “and this is never negotiable; it is the ultimate responsibility” of each individual as in “the denunciation of injustices committed that harm innocent and defenseless life.”

“It’s a very sensitive issue that requires both great competence and great integrity at the same time,” he added.

With many in today’s society embracing a throwaway culture, the pope told the pharmacists they must not buy into that mentality and be vigilant as they minister to others, including the elderly.

“God our Father has given the task of guarding the Earth not to money, but to us: to men and women. We have this task!” Instead, men and women are sacrificed to the idols of profit and consumption: it is the “throwaway culture,” he said. “Even in the elderly: give half the medicines and thus life is shortened… It is a waste, yes. This observation, originally referred to the environment, is even more valid for the health of the human being.”

Pope Francis’ words speak a truth we face in trying to live out the Gospel values we are taught as followers of Christ, namely, that we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, and that we must value and protect all human life from conception to natural death.

If we are truly to be Christ’s disciples, we cannot let those in this world who are eager to silence us win this battle.

May we each have the courage to let Christ’s light shine through us in today’s turbulent world, especially in areas that are enveloped in darkness.

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest

Responding pastorally to people who have different needs

You might have experienced this: loud, repetitve vocalization, or perhaps even a shreek, unexpected, repetitive movements, just to name a few examples.

It can certainly be startling, especially when it happens in settings such as Mass when certain responses, gestures and movements are expected, and maybe you have wondered how to respond.

Behavior is communication

What you have experienced could be resulting from an “invisible disability,” for example mental illness, sensory processing disorder and autism.

These are called “invisible” because they do not necessarily manifest themselves in a person’s appearance, but which nonetheless can have a profound effect on a person’s reactions to stimuli (sights, smells, touch, crowds), behavior and ability to communicate effectively. It is not our job to diagnose, but simply to be aware that something else may be going on and to respond with patience, pastoral love and perhaps some creativity.

Work with the person, their family and/or support system

As you approach an individual or family, there may be some self-consciousness or embarrassment, so start by emphasizing first how glad you are that this person is at your parish and your desire to serve that person and family so that they can successfully and comfortably participate in parish life. Then, working with the individual and their family and other supportive folks, form a plan, consisting of two or three ideas to try. It might take some trial and error, but a plan might include things such as:

• Identifying triggers (lights, loud sounds, smells, crowds) and finding ways to avoid those things (strategic seating; quieter or lesser-attended Masses).

• Identifying a support person to attend Mass with this person, who could for example guide them to step outside or take a brief walk if disruptive behavior occurs.

• Provide or encourage the person to bring sensory items, including noise canceling headphones, sunglasses, or small fidget items.

• Sometimes having a responsibility/role for the person to determine what he or she might be interested in doing.

• Perhaps this person would benefit from some individual explanation and modeling of what to do at particular moments of church, outside of a liturgical time.

• Does the individual typically utilize a service or therapy dog? Service animals are allowed anywhere the individual is. And as much as possible, work with the person to allow them the support of therapy or emotional support animals.

Some final thoughts

You may need to suggest to the person and their family and other support folks, that the person come for a shorter period of time—even if it is just five minutes at first, and slowly build up the time he or she is present.

That being said: If the behavior puts the person at risk of harming themselves or engaging in inaptinent physical contact with those nearby, a creative solution involving physical placement and/or consulting with professionals trained in this area might be the best solution.

It is important to realize that the behavior won’t always change because sometimes it is outside the person’s control, but our approach and attitude toward it and the person can always be patient and pastorally loving.

(Erin Jeffries is coordinator of ministry to persons with special needs for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and can be reached at gaffe@archindy.org or 317-236-2368. To learn more about resources in this area, check out www.archindy.org/specialneeds or www.archindy.org/deal/.)

Letter to the Editor

Donnelly is not an appropriate nomination as ambassador to Vatican, Criterion reader says


Unfortunately, the article perpetuates a myth that he was pro-life. As of the 2018 election cycle, he voted for 80% of the National Abortion Rights Action League-supported legislation. At the same time, he voted for only 40% of National Right to Life-supported legislation, as cited at justfacts.votesmart.org.

For more on Donnelly, visit candidby Donnelly] Such an inappropriate nomination and disrespect to the Vatican was overlooked by including the article in your paper.

Michael T. Schafer

Indianapolis

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of free, fair and expressed opinion among the People of God” (Comunicato e Progreso, 116).

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

The editors reserve the right to select the letters chosen to be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary. Letters must be signed, but for serious reasons names may be withheld.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
Forty-three years ago today, on Oct. 22, 1978, Karol Józef Wojtyła was inaugurated as Pope John Paul II, the first non-Italian pope since the 16th century. In his 27 years as the successor of St. Peter, "the Polish pope" visited 129 countries, wrote 14 papal encyclicals and scores of other official documents, implemented the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and was responsible for many global initiatives such as World Youth Day, the Great Jubilee of 2000 and the development and publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Many people refer to him as "St. John Paul the Great," which is not an official Church designation, but which is a popular recognition of the enormity of his accomplishments and the effect that his spiritual leadership had—especially on young people. The Polish pope, who experienced firsthand both the horrors of Nazi Germany and the oppression of the Soviet Union, is credited with experiencing the overthrow of the Soviet Union, is credited with experiencing the abolition of communism in his native Poland and, ultimately, throughout Europe.

"One of St. John Paul’s significant accomplishments was his consistent witness to the love of God revealed most powerfully in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Many examples could be given, but the pope’s response to his attempted assassination by a Turkish gunman on the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima in 1981 is especially remarkable. Crediting his survival to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Pope John Paul II said: "I could not forget that the event in St. Peter’s Square took place on the day and at the hour when the first appearance of the Mother of Christ to the poor little peasants has been remembered for over 60 years at Fatima, Portugal! For everything that happened to me on that very day, I felt that extraordinary maternal protection and care, which turned out to be stronger than the deadly bullet.""

In December 1983, he visited his would-be assassin in prison. John Paul II and Mehmet Ali Ağca spoke privately for about 20 minutes. Afterward, the pope said, "What we talked about will have to remain a secret between him and me. I spoke to him as a brother whom I have pardoned and who has my complete trust." Pardoning his enemy is another example of a spiritual leader like John Paul II, but referring to him as "a brother" who has "my complete trust" is extraordinary no matter how you look at it. It is a Christ-like demonstration of love and mercy, and it gives witness to the unity and solidarity of all humanity in spite of our differences and the sins we commit against each other.

One of St. John Paul’s significant accomplishments was in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue. Throughout his long papacy, the Holy Father reached out to other Christian denominations, to members of the Jewish community, to Muslims and to the leaders of other world religions. He firmly believed that we are all God’s children and that what unites us is much more important than what divides us.

"I spoke to him as a brother whom I have pardoned and who has my complete trust."

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"I spoke to him as a brother whom I have pardoned and who has my complete trust."

El papado de San Juan Pablo II fue un testigo del amor

El testimonio de amor del Papa San Juan Pablo II e interreligioso. Durante su largo papado, el Santo Padre acercó a otras confesiones cristianas, a los miembros de la comunidad judía, a los musulmanes y a los líderes de otras religiones del mundo. Creía firmemente que todos somos hijos de Dios y que lo que nos une es mucho más importante que lo que nos divide.

El testimonio de amor del Papa San Juan Pablo II se expresó con fuerza en su larga enfermedad y en su muerte. Cuando fue elegido Papa por primera vez, ya había sido diagnosticado con el cáncer, hacía más de 25 años en el cargo, dos intentos de asesinato y varios encuentros con el cáncer hicieron mella en la salud física del Papa. En 2003, dos años antes de su muerte, el Vaticano confirmó que el Santo Padre padecía una forma de la enfermedad de Parkinson. A pesar de los efectos debilitantes de esta enfermedad, el Papa continuó con su ministerio, incluyó sus viajes, dando testimonio del papel que los ancianos y los enfermos pueden desempeñar en la Iglesia y en la sociedad.

"Lo que hablamos quedará en la memoria de todos, y lo hemos vivido como un hermano.

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Incluso después de su muerte, el 2 de abril de 2005, el Papa San Juan Pablo II continuó su testimonio del amor y la misericordia de Dios. Seis días más tarde, su liturgia funeraria batió el récord mundial de asistencia con la presencia de cuatro reyes, cinco reinas, al menos 70 presidentes y primeros ministros, y más de 14 líderes de otras religiones. En la muerte, como en la vida, Juan Pablo II el Grande fue reconocido como uno de los testigos más excepcionales de Cristo.

Se calcula que unos 4 millones de dolientes—muchos con pancartas y al grito de Santo subito! (¡santo ya!)—se congregaron en la Ciudad del Vaticano y sus alrededores. Sus deseos se cumplieron apenas nueve días después. El mundo, unido por la esperanza y el esperanza, creía en la resurrección del gran santo que nos une es mucho más importante que lo que nos divide.

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El testimonio de amor del Papa San Juan Pablo II se expresó con fuerza en su larga enfermedad y en su muerte. Cuando fue elegido Papa por primera vez, ya había sido diagnosticado con el cáncer, hacía más de 25 años en el cargo, dos intentos de asesinato y varios encuentros con el cáncer hicieron mella en la salud física del Papa. En 2003, dos años antes de su muerte, el Vaticano confirmó que el Santo Padre padecía una forma de la enfermedad de Parkinson. A pesar de los efectos debilitantes de esta enfermedad, el Papa continuó con su ministerio, incluyó sus viajes, dando testimonio del papel que los ancianos y los enfermos pueden desempeñar en la Iglesia y en la sociedad.

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October 22-24
Theater at the Fort, 902 Ave. Lawrence, BardFest presents Macbeth by William Shakespeare, 7:30 p.m. (2:30 p.m. on Oct. 24), youth production performed by award-winning Agape Theater Company. Recommended for ages 12 and older. $20.50- $25.63. Information, tickets: 317-750-7309, msross1@archindy.org or 317-407-6881.

November 5-6
St. Agnes Parish, 1008 McLary Rd., Nashville, Christmas Bazaar, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., gifts, baked goods, decorated Christmas tree and gift basket silent auction. Admission. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@archindy.org. †

November 6
St. John Paul II Parish, St. Paul Chapel, 216 Schellers Ave., Sellersburg. First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Mass, 9:45 a.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, from 7-9 p.m., admission. Information: 651-5870, newwomen@christmascenter.org. †

December 1
St. John Paul II Parish, St. Paul Chapel, 216 Schellers Ave., Sellersburg. First Saturday Marian Devotion. 8 a.m., novena, meditation, prayer, 8:30 a.m. Mass with confessions prior. Information: 812-246-3522.

December 1

December 9
St. Agnes Parish, 519 Jefferson Blvd., Greenwood. James and Marjorie Boll, members of St. Bartholomew Parish in Brownsburg, will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary. Information: 765-432-6379 or secretswt@net. †

November 7
All Saints Parish, St. Peter the Baptist Campus, 25743 State Route 1, Guilford. Fall Chicken Dinner, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. (or when sold out), carry out only, adult $5, children's $3, mega Split-the-Pot. Information: 317-576-4102, emulwise@emulwise.com. †

Divorce and Beyond Support Group sessions set for Nov. 8-Dec. 13 in Beech Grove
Divorce and Beyond Support Group, a ministry of the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, will be offered at the Benedict Inn and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove, from 7-9 p.m. on six consecutive Mondays from Nov. 8-Dec. 13.

The support group explores the stress, anger, blame and guilt of divorce with the goal of leading participants toward forgiveness and growth.

Register for Widowship Advocacy training in Indianapolis by Nov. 9
A Widowship Advocacy training for Life sessions will be held in Indianapolis from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on Nov. 13 (the location will be disclosed upon registration). Do you feel a calling to be a witness to the sanctity of the life of an unborn baby? Would you like to learn more about how you can participate in this beautiful lifersaving ministry? If so, this training is for you.

No special skills are needed—just a humble desire to reach out in love to those experiencing an unplanned pregnancy and a willingness to volunteer as a sidewalk advocate or pray out loud at Planned Parenthood facilities in the local area.

Please register with a $5, non-refundable registration fee, and registration: 317-348-2121 or 317-407-6881. For more information, contact Gabriela Ross, coordinator of the Office of Marriage and Family Life, at 317-840-9922 or gabi@archindy.org.

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to cutt.ly/anniversaries or call 317-236-1585.
The headline in a Washington Post article dated Sept. 22 reads: “Pope jokes he is ‘still alive’ despite some bishops wishing him dead.” And the subhead continues: “It is the work of the devil”, the pontiff said of opposition from conservatives within the Church.

How are we supposed to understand the pope’s words? Is he joking? Or does he really believe that his enemies are plotting against him and wish he were dead? And how seriously should we understand his statement that criticism of those who speak ill of him on a regular basis such as “a large Catholic television network” that “constantly gossips” about him. Although the pope didn’t identify the media organization by name, most journalists immediately assumed he was referring to the Eternal Word Network (EWTN). According to an article in America magazine published on Sept. 21: “EWTN and its associated publications, the Catholic News Agency, and the National Catholic Register were one of two outlets that published the former nuncio to the United States and Dopol提高了Francisco’s THEOLOGY Archivists Carlo Maria Viganò’s explosive 2018 “testimony” calling on the pope to resign. Raymond Arroyo, host of EWTN’s “The World Over,” has interviewed many of Pope Francis’ most fervent critics, including Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, Trump advisor Steve Bannon and Cardinal Raymond Burke. “I personally deserve attacks and insults because I am a sinner,” the pope said, “but the Church does not deserve these.”

On the same occasion that the Holy Father joked about people wishing him dead, he said, “I have also said this to some of them.”

Is Pope Francis so thin skinned that he reacts to criticism as personal attacks prompted by the Evil One? Or is he merely exaggerating for effect? Nearly all of the commentary criticizing that is part of the EWTN network, the National Catholic Register, argues that, in effect, the pope’s statements should not be taken literally. Father Raymond J. de Sousa, writing in the Register on Sept. 23, the same day the Washington Post article appeared, says: “Caution is in order. The Holy Father’s words have to be read very closely, as he chooses them very carefully, as one might expect of a well-trained Jesuit.”

When the Vatican’s Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, was asked by reporters about the Holy Father’s statement that, following his colon surgery this summer “many people in the Vatican were preparing for a conclave in anticipation of the pope’s death,” he seemed to dismiss these concerns. It was not clear to me that he was not aware of any discussions or meetings along these lines. As a result, some outraged commentators suggested that the cardinal had actually contradicted Pope Francis by not conducting an investigation into an unproven plot against the Holy Father’s life.

Let’s take Pope Francis seriously, but let’s avoid falling into the trap of taking everything he says literally. (Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee.)

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El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

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

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

Jesus of Nazareth con su palabra, con sus gestos y con toda su persona revela la misericordia de Dios.

–Papa Francisco, “Misericordiae Vultus” (“El rostro de la misericordia”)
The baptized Catholic carried her love for the rosary with her to Morgan County, where she married in 1974 after marrying her husband James Michael Nealy. She was not yet 24 years old that June 67, and a mother of three, learned how to make rosaries. In a chance German accent, she said that her desire to learn how to make rosaries had "always been growing in me."

"One day I decided, 'I'm going to do this,'" she said. "I bought her a rosary, it's been very peaceful when I make them. It's like a one-on-one conversation with God and the Holy Spirit when I make them."

"Some days, I don't make any. Some days, I make seven or eight and I'm thankful for my time with the Lord."

Sister Nicolette makes the rosaries in her bedroom because her husband, who has stage four lymphocytic cancer, sleeps in a specially angled recliner in the living room. Sometimes she helps him by bending pins that make up the chain links of a rosary, she said. "Why is it endless? That will forever sound endlessly, so when there's something in my life that I said strength, I make rosaries."

Unfortunately, she didn't have time to make rosaries a year ago about this time. Nicely spent 10 days in the hospital due to complications from COVID-19. And the timing couldn't have been worse—she was preparing her rosary workshop at the Benedict Inn and Conference Center in Beach Grove. She taught him how to make a rosary.

"I feel sometimes that by creating my rosaries, I give a little bit of myself to someone. I give back what God has given me in the pleasure of making [rosaries]."

A ministry within a ministry

Father Timothy DeCrane’s journey to rosary-making started during his pastoral internship as a seminarian in 2014 at St. Bartholomew Parish in Indianapolis. "I’ve always been curious about making rosaries and enjoyed the beauty of them," said Father DeCrane, now parochial vicar at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood. "I had the golden opportunity to learn from someone at St. Bartholomew who had time to teach the craft."

The parishioner took the then-seminarian to Hobby Lobby. He picked out the beads he wanted to use, then taught him how to make a rosary.

"Now he makes them whenever I get the chance. ‘It’s a hobby for me as a priest,’ he said. ‘About 90% of my ministry, I don’t get to see the rosaries. So, it’s nice to make a rosary to give to those ideas you want to give them the rosaries. It’s a stress reliever and something I can see come to completion.

‘I’m also very creative, so it’s a way for me to release creatively. It’s my time to reflect.

Father DeCrane wears one of his rosary creations on his wrist at all times so he "can pray at all times."

The feel of it comforts me, it keeps me grounded," he said. "It’s a simple thing, but looking down and seeing the cross, it’s like a reminder that it’s not just me floating on an island by myself."

Father DeCrane also learned to make corded rosaries that are knots in place of beads. He shared how Father Todd Goshorn, pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, broke his rosary.

"He made him a corded one that he couldn’t break," said Father DeCrane. "But someone said they liked it, so Father Todd gave it to him. So, I made more for Father Todd, and he said, ‘Good. Now I have more to give away!"

Father DeCrane likes giving a rosary to those who are grieving a loved one, or a volunteer who went above and beyond.

"It’s a concrete act of Christ being present in the moment," he said. "It’s a visual reminder for me and I hope, for others of God’s love for them."

"I feel it’s a way of linking, a path of my ministry. It’s a blessing, a ministry within a ministry."

Praying the rosary calms my soul

Benedictine Sister Nicolette Etienne recalled her consecration in October that year, she recalled driving home from St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. "I suddenly knew I was supposed to write a Catholic adult fiction book. I laughed! I said, ‘God if this is what you want me to write, you have to give me an idea.’"

Within a few weeks of making her first Marian consecration in October that year, she recalled driving in the midst of the迷团们 of Bloomington, where she was then minister at St. Malachi Parish, "when I literally received a download [from God] of the first chapter of her book, A Single Bead."

That November, Engelman participated in National Write a Novel Month. "I’d finish each day with the allotted number of words you were supposed to write and have no idea what would happen next, and would wake up the next day with the next chapter," she said. "I wrote the first 50,000 words in November, finished in December, and submitted it to Pauline Books and Media."

By October 2015, they extended her a contract to publish the novel.

"I take no credit whatsoever for the book," said Engelman. "I knew it wasn’t my book, and I could take no credit. But hope is that, from a Single Bead, people will learn and understand the power of prayer, or begin to see that," she said. "That young people will pray the rosary, and they will begin to experience the power of the rosary in their own life."

"Interestingly," she said, her first scheduled television appearance to promote the book had to be canceled—her husband had a debilitating heart attack that day. He was left unable to work. Engelman found herself the sole source of financial support for their five young children. "I said, ‘OK, Mother Mary, I can do nothing to promote this [book].’ I put it in your hands and trust that you will put it in whatever hands need to read it and they will be impacted as they need to be," Engelman recalled thinking.

Now, on years after the book was published, it remains among the top 10 books for its category on Amazon. She said it has been translated into Portuguese, and rights have been purchased to translate it into Korean. A Single Bead

"With confidence, Engelman said, ‘I do love the rosary, and I have complete and absolute trust in the power of this prayer.’"
In a July 2020 joint statement, Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore and Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami, then acting chairman of the religious liberty committee, decried the growing number of incidents of Church vandalism.

“Whether those who committed these acts were troubled individuals crying out for help or agents of hate seeking to intimidate, the attacks are signs of a society in need of healing,” the two archbishops said.

“In those incidents where human actions are clear, the motives still are not. As we strain to understand the destruction of these holy symbols of selfless love and devotion, we pray for any who have caused it, and we remain vigilant against more of it,” they said.

“Our nation finds itself in an extraordinary hour of cultural conflict,” they added. “The path forward must be through the commission of understanding practiced and taught by Jesus and his Holy Mother. Let us contemplate, rather than destroy, images of these examples of God’s love. Following the example of Our Lord, we respond to conflict with understanding and to hatred with love.”

These incidents have ranged from a man crashing his vehicle through the doors of a Catholic church in the Diocese of Orlando, Fla., and setting fire, to a St. Junipero Serra statue outside Mission San Rafael in San Rafael, Calif., in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, being desecrated with red paint and toppled, leaving just the saint’s feet in place.

In response to such attacks, the Committee for Religious Liberty launched the “Beauty Heals” project featuring videos from various dioceses discussing the significance of sacred art. At least 10 videos are available on YouTube; a link to the play list of all the videos can be found at bit.ly/3peNu8y.

In a June 1, 2021, letter to the respective chairs and ranking members of the Appropriation Committee in the House and Senate, the USCCB’s Committee for Religious Liberty joined with several other faith groups calling for more funding for appropriations for the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Nonprofit Security Grant Program in fiscal year 2022.

The text of the letter can be found at bit.ly/3n6Rz6t.

As organizations representing Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Catholic, Episcopal, Evangelical, Lutheran, Protestant, Seventh-day Adventist and other Christian and communities of faith across the United States, we believe that all people ought to be free from fear when gathering for religious worship and service, they wrote, urging more funds for the FEMA grant program.

The grants provide funds for “target hardening and other physical security enhancements and activities” for, as the letter stated, “at-risk nonprofits from urban settings to suburban neighborhoods and rural communities, including houses of worship, religious schools, community centers and other charities.”

“There is a critical need and urgency for these grants,” the faith groups said. “Our sacred spaces have been desecrated, and our faithful murdered.”

In a 20-year period starting in mid-1999, there were shootings at an estimated 19 houses of worship resulting in fatalities.

Debate, vote on proposed eucharistic document will top bishops’ agenda

WASHINGTON (CNS)—When the U.S. bishops gather for their fall assembly in Baltimore on Nov. 15-18, it will be the first in-person meeting of the full body of bishops since November 2019.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the bishops’ June 2020 spring meeting, and their November 2020 fall assembly and June 2021 spring meeting were both held in a virtual format.

Topping the meeting’s agenda will be debate and votes on a proposed document on the Eucharist, “The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church,” and on a eucharistic revival initiative.

During their spring meeting this past June, 75% of the U.S. bishops approved the drafting of a document, addressed to all Catholic faithful, on eucharistic coherence.

Part of the impetus for the bishops’ work on this document is a eucharistic revival to increase Catholics’ understanding and awareness of the Eucharist was a Pew Research Center study in the fall of 2019 that showed just 32% of Catholics “have what we might call a proper understanding of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist.”

The eucharistic revival would launch on the feast of Corpus Christi in June 2022. The three-year effort will include events on the diocesan level such as eucharistic processions around the country, along with adoration and prayer.

In 2023, the emphasis will be on parishes with resources available at the parish level to increase Catholics’ understanding of what the Eucharist really means. This would culminate in a National Eucharistic Congress in the summer of 2024.

The Baltimore assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) will begin with an address by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

The bishops also will hear from Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the USCCB.

The agenda also includes a report to the bishops from the National Advisory Council, a group created by the USCCB that is comprised of religious and laypeople primarily for consultation on action items and information reports presented to the bishops’ ad hoc committee.

Other action items on the agenda requiring debate and a vote will be an update of the “Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines;” a proposal to add St. Teresa of Calcutta to the “Proper Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States” as an optional memorial on Sept. 5; a resolution on diocesan financial reporting; new English and Spanish versions of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults; a translation of “Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside Mass” to English and Spanish; and the USCCB’s 2022 budget.

During the assembly, the bishops also will vote on a proposal requiring the USCCB to establish a “Pro-life Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States” as an optional memorial on Sept. 5; a resolution on diocesan financial reporting; new English and Spanish versions of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults; a translation of “Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside Mass” to English and Spanish; and the USCCB’s 2022 budget.

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During the assembly, the bishops also will vote for a treasurer-elect for the USCCB, as well as chairmen-elect of five standing committees: Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, Divine Worship, Domestic Justice and Human Development; Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth; and Migration.

The bishops will serve for one year as “elects” before beginning their three-year terms in their respective posts at the conclusion of the 2022 fall general assembly. There will be voting for board members for Catholic Relief Services, the U.S. bishops’ overseas relief and development agency, and the election of a new third general secretary.

Father Michael J.K. Fuller, who was an associate general secretary, is currently interim general secretary. Archbishop Cordileone appointed him to the post in July when Msgr. Jeffrey D. Burrill resigned.

Also scheduled to take place will be a consultation of the bishops on the sainthood causes of Charlene Marie Richard and Auguste Robert “Nonno” Pelagie.

Both have the title of “Servant of God” and were from the Diocese of Baton Rouge, La., where Bishop J. Douglas Deshotel has officially opened their sainthood causes.

Charlene, a young Cajun girl who died of leukemia in 1959 at age 12, is regarded by many in south Louisiana and beyond as a saint, saying her intercession has resulted in miracles in their lives. She is known as “The little Cajun saint.”

Pelagie was born in France and from the time he was almost 2 years old, he lived in Amaudnart, La. He died on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 6, 1977. He is known for his devotion to the Serra statue in his residence and to praying the Holy Rosary.

The “Journeying Together” process of intercultural dialogue and encounter “focused on the Church’s ministry with youth and young adults that fosters understanding and trust within and across cultural families toward a more welcoming and just community of faith.”

The application and implementation of the “Pastoral Framework for Marriage and Family Life Ministry in the United States: Called to Joy of Love,” at their June assembly, the U.S. bishops approved a draft document that provides a pastoral framework meant to strengthen marriage and family ministry in parishes and dioceses.

The “Walking with Moms in Need” initiative of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities that asks every diocese and parish to help mothers experiencing a difficult pregnancy find services and resources or provide these when they see gaps in such services.

Public sessions of general assembly discussions and votes will be livestreamed at www.usccb.org/meetings. News updates, vote totals, text of addressed, and presentations and other materials will be posted to this page.

Those wishing to follow the meeting on social media can use the hashtag #USCCB21 and follow it on Twitter, @USCCB, as well as on Facebook, www.facebook.com/ USCCB, and Instagram. https://instagram.com/usccb
Teens can grow in faith through strong relationships with parents

By Maria C. Morrow

I’m in an online group of Catholic moms of teenagers. Based on the posts in that group, it’s clear that many of us struggle with how best to parent our teens.

From dealing with them dating, to driving, to going off to college, it’s an exciting and nerve-wracking time! One other issue looms large and can be a big source of worry: Many of us are especially concerned about passing on our Catholic faith.

Hopefully, by the time they are teens, our kids have seen how much we love Jesus and value being part of the Catholic Church. They should know both the joy of the faith and the sacrifices of taking up the cross to follow Jesus.

Our witness to the faith will continue to have a great impact on our children in their teen years, even if we may not be able to perceive the difference it is making.

As they become adults, we pray that they will remember their parents making sacrifices to get to Sunday Mass, to make time for prayer, to seek out the sacrament of penance and to help those in need.

However, we may not be able to reach our children through direct teaching as we once did. Forming them in the faith as young children might have felt easier or more natural, whereas now it can seem to be an act of imposing our wills on theirs at a time where they are desiring a degree of independence from us.

For this reason, perhaps the most important task is to maintain a good relationship with our teens, so that they feel valued and their opinions respected, knowing our unconditional love.

When we are able to maintain a relationship where our teens are confident of our love and comfortable spending time with us, we will have openings for talking about being Catholic. We might even find ourselves impressed with their enthusiasm, faith and desire to do good in the world.

Teens, like younger children, continue to ask questions, and yet now they are more capable of understanding certain arguments.

We may find ourselves confronted with a direct question, such as, “Why do Catholics believe X?” Or they may even make statements that offend us, such as “I think it’s so stupid that the Church does X.”

These are our opportunities for continuing to share the faith with our kids, and we should be grateful that they are thinking about these topics, even when it seems to challenge Catholic beliefs or practices.

It may happen that we don’t have an answer to a challenging question, or we lack the ready response to an angry assertion. It may not be ideal, but it is perfectly OK to admit to your teens that you want to do some more research and continue the conversation later.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is a great resource where we can find answers, and there are many other books to help us learn more about Church teachings. Our willingness to admit we don’t know everything and want to learn more about the views of our faith can itself be a powerful witness.

Being Catholic isn’t about being perfect or knowing everything, but it is important to recognize where we can continue to grow in our knowledge and practice of the faith.

This is also true when it comes to making mistakes. It’s helpful to remember that our teens are works in progress and they will make mistakes, just as we did as teens and still do as adults.

Occasionally parents see their teens heading down scary paths where they must intervene. But there are other times when we are simply disappointed in their behavior or surprised by their attitudes because they fall short of what we expected or wanted for them.

If we think back to our teenage years, no doubt we will realize that we weren’t perfect as teens either!

We want our teens to grow in independence, and that means they have to learn from their mistakes. Within reason, we have to let them make mistakes.

What we don’t want is for our children to give up or give in to a downward spiral where they feel their lives have become unredeemable.

Here we can see the importance of maintaining a close relationship where our children are confident in our unconditional love and the knowledge that they are always enough for us.

Even in their mistakes, they remain our beloved children and God’s beloved children.

And amazingly, God’s grace can always meet us where we are at that moment. Both we and our teens need to remember this so that we don’t despair during times of difficulty.

The sacrament of penance provides a great opportunity for that sporting spirit of being willing to admit fault, seek forgiveness and try again. If we can help provide opportunities for confession, and frequent it ourselves, we can help our kids to stay positive and optimistic even when they know they have made a mistake.

As our teens become young adults, we want them to remember our love and God’s love for them, making those relationships feel affirming.

We can embrace their curiosity and intellectual ability for understanding the faith with our willingness to have difficult conversations. Our faith can help them and us to see more broadly how mistakes can become opportunities to grow closer to God.

(Maria C. Morrow holds a doctorate in theology and is the author of A Busy Parent’s Guide to a Meaningful Lent and Sin in the Sixties: Catholics and Confession, 1955-1975. She is the mother of seven children and resides in New Jersey.)
Program assists former inmates in re-entering society

After 24 years of incarceration, I was released in January. Having entered the society as an adult, it was not a foreign place. Prior to my release, I made a decision that I would take my life in a profound and unexpected way. I joined the 32nd degree Freemasonry. It was called The Last Mile (TLM). TLM is a program that offers technology and business training to incarcerated people in order to give them the tools necessary to re-enter society.

I spent a year learning how to be a full-stack web developer using cutting-edge technologies like Node.js, Express, React and MongoDB. Equally amazing, I learned this without access to the Internet. As I turned out, I had a knack for programming and quickly rose to the top of my class. The technical training, TLM supports its students with a variety of soft skills like elevator pitches and resume creation. Students learn best practices when working in a professional environment and learn how to interact with each other and TLM staff in a positive and productive manner. This prepared me for entry into a professional workplace, giving me the confidence to succeed.

My favorite aspect is the community and relationships formed through the program. TLM actively encourages mutual support and respect among its classes, working hard to rebrand the image of the "convict" or "inmate" by consistently using humanizing language. Program participants are called students, learners or people, rather than the former derogatory labels. It may seem small, but this distinction is important. It develops humanity, letting them know they have value.

After I graduated, I became a teacher's assistant. I spent my time helping students develop the material and developed tutorials to assist them with their learning.

Because of the program, the telephone was temporarily shut down. During this time, I wrote tutorials by hand, sitting at my bunk without a computer. I also began a study group, because I cared deeply for my program and wanted others to succeed.

Because of my belief in the mission, my skill at programming, and my desire to work hard and contribute to the community, I made myself extremely visible. When I filed to have the last two years of my sentence modified to home detention, I received out to TLM and inquired about employment. Although not standard, my unique circumstances allowed TLM to find a way to offer me a job. I was more than encouraged by the outcome, and I believe having that piece in place helped secure the modification.

It has been 6 months that have passed, I have been promoted to a remote instructor. I now teach our students remotely across 20 classroom in five different states. I get to make a difference in the lives of others and be an inspiration to them as well.

This gives my life meaning and purpose in a way I cannot explain. I am part of community with a purpose in a way I cannot explain. I am part of a community that cares about its lives of others and be an inspiration to me and be saved. —Jesus.

Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

Signs in our lives signal battle between good and evil

I’m one of those people who believes in signs. I like to think God is speaking to me through books, music, radio ads, and even television. Sometimes I’m very intuitive to God’s voice. Other times, it seems I need a brick to the forehead for God to get my attention.

On a trip back from a recent Florida vacation, I experienced some not-so-subtle signs. Traveling through the deep South, I took a picture of a billboard along the highway. For every troubling billboard I would see on the left side of the highway, I immediately viewed an enigmatic sign on the opposite side.

"Addicted to drugs?" one read. Then immediately I see a sign that read, "Worried? Jesus offers security." The next few addressed alcohol, gambling and pornography addictions, with a sign immediately following it that said, "Look to me and be saved. —Jesus.

I saw a sign for an adult super store, followed by "What are you going? Heaven or hell?"

The atheists’ signs creep into the mix. They read, "98% of the world is living happily without God," and "Just skip church. It’s all fake news."

And the From Freedom Religion Foundation’s billboard encouraged, "Sleep in on Sundays." I chuckled at that one thinking, they obviously don’t know Catholics also enjoy daily church services.

But all these messages were countered with Christian-related signs. In "The Bible, God created the beautiful picture of a baby with the text, “There is evidence for God” offered hope.

There were signs whose intention appeared to be to frighten people into faith. I saw billboards such as, "Hell is"

Love’s Litmus/Natalie Hoefker

Acts of kindness offer hope in sorrow

I confess, I read love as a kind. It seems rather obvious, a fact that goes without saying. Yet, I must be reminded to say— and celebrated. In a world of more than purity and factionalism, couldn’t we all use a little more kindness? There was a time in my life where several acts of kindness showed up to prove in links to a chain of hope that helped see me to the other side of极大的— the miscarriage of a child at 10 weeks.

The first act came from a woman in my parish who, aside from us knowing each other’s names, was otherwise a stranger. Nevertheless, she approached me in the narthex of our church after Mass just four days after the miscarriage.

"I heard about your loss, and I am so, so sorry," she said, taking my hand and squeezing it with heartfelt sincerity.

She kindness came to pass the day to that, this tender message sends tears down my cheeks. And it came from someone I only barely knew, someone who loved enough to seek out another in pain and offer kind words of hope.

The tears just came—and I couldn’t stop them. I shook with silent sobs. Suddenly through my tears, I saw a hand— a hand—a husband—a father—a man—a woman—gave a thank you, and she responded with a look of sympathy and a pat on my shoulder.

Such a small gesture. Yet it reminded me that the world had kindness and love to offer when I was overwhelmed by sorrow.

The months passed, and with the flip of a calendar page, there was the baby’s due date—Oct. 1.

I coordinate the My Journey to God poetry section of The Criterion. Somehow it came to be that I shared with one of our poetry submitters about my miscarriage and that the baby’s due date was Oct. 1, the feast of St. John the Baptist.

Around that date, I received a surprise from the mail at work—a beautiful, small glass jar filled with a note from this poet saying she was praying for me.

Every year since, on the feast of St. Thérèse, I receive an e-mail from her— "Just letting you know that I am thinking of you today and praying for you." Her annual act of kindness warms my heart.

As with any death, there are the in sorrow that go without saying. But it does need kind. It seems rather obvious, a fact that in sorrow my life where several

There was a time in

"I thought this Christmas might be difficult for you," she said. “So I wanted to get you something special.”

It was a necklace with small symbols to get you something special.”

It was kind enough of her to take the of a calendar page, there was the baby’s due date—Oct. 1.

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The Book of Jeremiah provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. A few facts about Jeremiah are known from the book itself. He was from Anathoth, a village only a few miles from Jerusalem. He was the son of Hilkiah, a priest, and acted as a prophet for more than 40 years.

Being the son of a priest, in all likelihood Jeremiah was familiar with the traditions of the ancient Hebrews. He would have been particularly aware of the importance of the Exodus, the flight from Egypt and slavery, that molded the Hebrews into one distinctive race, and that resulted in their settlement in the Holy Land.

Hebrew belief was clear. They did not escape Egypt simply because they were lucky or clever. To the contrary, they escape Egypt simply because they were aware of the importance of the Exodus, the flight from Egypt and slavery, that molded the Hebrews into one distinctive race, and that resulted in their settlement in the Holy Land.

Jeremiah saw events in his own lifetime as threatening and awful, as had been the plight of his people centuries earlier in Egypt. He lived to see Babylonia and other imperialistic neighbors completely overtake the Hebrew homeland and coerce his people.

Jeremiah addressed these threats and the humiliation and destruction of being overtaken. He told his people to have faith that the merciful God of the Exodus again would rescue them. This weekend’s reading is a powerful acclamation of God’s power and goodness and his unfailing promise to protect and lead his people.

As is typical of this book, this reading is moving in its eloquence and feeling. For its second reading, the Church presents a selection from the Epistle to the Hebrews.

This New Testament Scripture is abundant in its references to ancient Jewish beliefs and customs. Its author is unknown, but obviously the author knew Judaism and Jewish life in the first century very well.

Supreme in Jewish cult, and in many other aspects of Jewish life in the first century, was the high priest, descending in office from Aaron, the brother of Moses. The high priest acted for the entire nation as he offered sacrifices in the temple. The Epistle to the Hebrews sees Jesus as the great high priest of the new era of salvation, the era of Christianity. Jesus acts for all humanity in sacrificing to God, bringing reconciliation and a new bonding after sin tore humanity away from God.

St. Mark’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is the story of Bartimaeus, a blind man who begged from strangers by the roadside in Jericho.

Bartimaeus begged simply to survive. At the time of Jesus, people with severe physical challenges, such as blindness, were reduced to begging unless their families assisted them. No social safety net protected them. They were on their own.

All bodily difficulties had a spiritual component for the ancient Jews. God willed nothing evil or heartless. Disease and incapacity were for them signs of evil and received for the altar another spectacular friends like to socialize.

My Journey to God

Friends are fabulous relationships are good with friends and God incredible friends are inspirational and interesting encouraging friends getting entertaining NICE friends never let me down dependable friends defend one another Q

know there are established procedures in canon law for churches that are sadly no longer used for Catholic worship. What happens to saints’ relics in the altar if the church is sold or torn down? (Indiana)

A

If the relics can be removed, it would be the responsibility of the local bishop to oversee their transfer to another place suitable for veneration.

Often, they are moved to a church being newly built or to an existing worship site. Interestingly, Catholic churches currently being opened are often in the past placed in the altar stone itself. The “General Instruction of the Roman Missal” says: “The practice of the deposition of relics of saints, even those not martyrs, under the altar to be dedicated is fittingly retained. However, care should be taken to ensure the authenticity of such relics” (#130).

Elaborating on that directive, the Ceremonial of Bishops says: “The tradition in the Roman liturgy of placing relics of martyrs or other saints beneath the altar should be preserved, if possible. But the following should be noted: …The greatest care must be taken to determine whether the relics in question are authentic; it is better for an altar to be dedicated without relics than to have relics of doubtful authenticity placed beneath it” (#866).

Authenticating relics in an altar stone that had been used in churches that are now closed can be difficult because, in many cases, documentation for relics were often in the past placed in the altar stone itself.

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

Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The Church recommends but does not require relics to be placed in altars.

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Submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column. Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to “My Journey to God,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367 or e-mail to wheeler@archindy.org †

Daily Readings

Monday, October 25
Romans 8:12-17
Psalm 68:2, 4, 6-7b, 20-21
Luke 13:10-17

Tuesday, October 26
Romans 8:18-25
Psalm 126:1-6
Luke 13:19-21

Wednesday, October 27
Romans 8:26-30
Psalm 13:4-6

Thursday, October 28
St. Simon, Apostle
St. Jude, Apostle
Ephesians 2:19-22
Psalm 19:2-5
Luke 6:12-16

Friday, October 29
Romans 9:1-5
Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20
Luke 14:1-6

Saturday, October 30
Romans 11:1-2a, 11-12, 25-29
Psalm 94:12-13a, 14-15, 17-18
Luke 14:7, 11

Sunday, October 31
Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
Deuteronomy 6:2-6
Psalm 89:1-2, 4, 7-12
Hebrews 7:23-28
Mark 12:28-34

The Criterion Friday, October 22, 2021
Page 13
HONORING ST. MEINRAD

Franciscan Sister Myra Peine served for 29 years in Catholic education

Franciscan Sister Myra Peine died on Sept. 24 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 91.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Sept. 26 at the Motherhouse in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Sister Myra was born on Aug. 13, 1920, in Joliet, Ill. She grew up as a member of St. Michael Parish in the southeastern Indiana town. She joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 8, 1932, and professed final vows in Aug. 12, 1958. Sister Myra earned a bachelor’s degree in education at Marian University in Indianapolis.

Through a series of letters to his nephew, Woodrow, he counsels him on how to be an effective demon and bring more souls to the devil. The prevailing message I took away from the book is that the devil works on us in various ways. Knowing this, I have experienced more instances of counterattacks.

†

POHOVEY

POHOVEY continued from page 12

real,” and my personal favorite, “Go to church or the devil will get you.”

My journey was a veritable battle between good and evil, the message being that motorists were either on the road to heaven or a highway to hell.

I pondered more what God was trying to tell me. The message I saw on this trip were pretty blatant, but when I began to think about good and evil in everyday life, I realized the battle was much more subtle. Sin isn’t always what we would consider extreme; sometimes it is going into the smaller temptations in life—which often build into bigger transgressions.

HOFER

HOFER continued from page 12

specifically for women who lost a child in the womb.

words of hope, to put their shoulder or squeeze their hand, to offer a token of kindness. Love is kind, after all, and you never know what a difference your small act of kindness might make.

(Send your stories of people you know who live out hospitality, to pat their shoulder or squeeze their hand, to offer a token of kindness. Love is kind, after all, and you never know what a difference your small act of kindness might make.

(www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-9836, ext. 1486 Include your parish and a daytime phone number where you may be reached.)

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

By John Shaughnessy

The powerful emotions that people share are always close to Cindy Brown’s heart, even on another busy morning when she is directing efforts to coordinate volunteers, replenish the food pantry shelves and load up a van to deliver bags of food to senior citizens in need.

“We’ve had people come up to the counter with tears in their eyes,” says Brown, the director of the Boulevard Place St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry on the north side of Indianapolis. “They’re embarrassed that it has come to this for them.

“It reminds us of how emotional it is for people who find themselves in this predicament. By the time they leave, we’ve settled them down and made them realize it’s OK to come, that we’re here for them.”

For nearly 40 years, that desire to “be here” for people in need has been the driving force of this food pantry. It’s also been the driving force of the recent stunning physical transformation of the pantry building that was unveiled in early August—a transformation three years in the making.

The warehouse space has quadrupled, the walk-in freezer and cooler have doubled in size, the shopping area has significantly increased, and so has the area where people want their turn to select the food items they want, just like in a grocery store.

The waiting and shopping areas are also marked by what Brown calls a “bright, happy and welcoming” combination of colors that include lime green, persimmon and golden yellow.

“The clients beam about it,” says Brown, a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis. “You walk in and you just feel good.

“All the changes help create a quicker, more comfortable shopping experience. The changes also create a more joyful connection between the people who rely on the food pantry and the people who volunteer there—all leading to the one goal of the St. Vincent de Paul Society that hasn’t changed.

“St. Vincent de Paul wants to bring people closer to holiness,” Brown says. “As we interact with each other, we are brought closer. We get that closeness here.”

“They care about their neighbors”

The people who rely on the pantry—930 households a month—share that sentiment, too.

“You feel the genuine love,” notes a woman named Debra. “They treat everyone with respect and the utmost consideration.”

Another client named Philip says, “The volunteers are awesome. The workers put a smile on my face every time I walk through the door. Bless them all.”

The new, transformed pantry building is the latest stage of its evolution to serve people in need.

Started in 1982, the food pantry had been located for nearly 30 years in a small, below-street-level room at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. That pantry had limited freezer and refrigerator space and was only accessible by outdoor steps that became treacherous in rainy and wintry conditions.

In 2010, then-pastor Mark Varnau dreamed of a bigger, better and safer location with room for parking. A wait area where people come on Thursdays and Fridays.

The warehouse space has expanded, so has the commitment from the north side Catholic community of Indianapolis. Five parishes—St. Thomas, St. Joan of Arc, Christ the King, Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Luke the Evangelist—have collectively embraced the food pantry and its mission to serve people in need.

“All five parishes take a lot of ownership in the pantry,” Brown says. “There’s a lot of commitment, and the commitment has become solidified to not only donate funding but time, volunteers and food drives.

“It shows that they care. They care about the community. They care about their neighbors. It shows the unity among the Catholic churches. And it’s nice to meet people from the different parishes.”

As she talks, Brown sits in the waiting area where people come on Thursdays and Saturdays to select their own food items which includes meat and fresh produce.

In the waiting area filled with comfortable seats, there is also a wooden bench that is etched with the Bible verse of 1 John 3:18: “Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”

For nearly 40 years, this food pantry has lived those words. “I think we’re vital to those we serve,” Brown says. “We’re consistently here. They can count on us. They know they can rely on the pantry.”

(See story from June 2021 about the pantry’s move to the Boulevard Place building in Indianapolis)

As the director of the Boulevard Place St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, Cindy Brown is all smiles about the improvements that were part of the recent physical transformation of the pantry building—improvements that have created a quicker, more comfortable shopping experience for people in need.

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Recognizing miracle, pope clears way for beatification of John Paul I

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis has signed a decree recognizing a miracle attributed to the intercession of Pope John Paul I, clearing the way for his beatification.

The Italian pope served only 33 days as pope before he died in the papal apartments on Sept. 28, 1978, at the age of 65, shocking the world and a Church that had just mourned the death of St. Paul VI.

The Vatican announced Pope Francis’ decision along with a number of other sainthood decrees on Oct. 13.

In the sainthood cause of Pope John Paul I, the approved miracle involved a young woman in Buenos Aires, Argentina, who developed severe encephalitis and uncontrollable and life-threatening brain seizures, and eventually entered a vegetative state.

After doctors told the family members that her death was imminent, the local priest encouraged the family, nurses and others to pray to the late pope for his intercession, according to the website of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes. A panel of experts studying the cause determined there was no scientific explanation for her complete recovery in 2011 and that it could be attributed to the late pope’s intercession.

The Vatican did not immediately announce a date for the beatification ceremony.

Although his was one of the shortest papacies in history, Pope John Paul left a lasting impression on the Church that fondly remembers him as “the smiling pope.” His papal motto, “Humilitas” (“Humility”) not only emphasized a Christian virtue, but also reflected his down-to-earth personality and humble beginnings.

Born Albino Luciani in the small Italian mountain town of Canale D’Agordo on Oct. 17, 1912, the future pope and his two brothers and one sister lived in poverty and sometimes went to bed hungry.

Despite his weak health and poverty, his father encouraged him to enter the minor seminary. He did so but would return to his hometown in the summers and often was seen working in the fields in his black cassock.

He was ordained a priest in 1935 and was appointed bishop of Vittorio Veneto in December 1958 by St. John XXIII. More than 10 years later, he was named patriarch of Venice by St. Paul VI and was created a cardinal in 1973.

During his time as patriarch of Venice, then-Cardinal Luciani was known for his dedication to the poor and the disabled, once calling on priests in his diocese to sell gold and silver objects for a center for people with disabilities. Leading by example, he started the fund drive by putting $500 worth of gold jewelry up for auction.

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