



The Criterion

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Faithful servant

William Bruns leaves a legacy of service to the archdiocese, page 2.

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Seminarian Isaac Siefker, at left, a member of St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington, chops wood on Nov. 12 on the grounds of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. He volunteers with Project Warm, an initiative in which seminarians and other volunteers collect, chop and deliver firewood for people in need in four counties around Saint Meinrad. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

Seminarians' wood-chopping work helps neighbors facing rural poverty keep warm

By Sean Gallagher

What does a seminarian do to prepare for priestly ministry? Pray. Check. Take theology classes. Check. Minister in parishes, hospitals, nursing homes and prisons. Check. Cut down trees and split wood.

Wait, what?

But that's exactly what happens at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad—in addition to all of the other activities mentioned.

For more than 40 years, seminarians at Saint Meinrad have volunteered in what is now called Project Warm, which

provides firewood to people in need in four southwestern Indiana counties.

They collect wood from donors in the area, split it up on the grounds of Saint Meinrad and then deliver it to people who need it to keep their homes warm.

In the process, the seminarians build up fraternity among themselves, gain experience in serving those in need while respecting their dignity and learn about the often-hidden challenge of rural poverty—all things that will serve them well when they begin service as priests in their home dioceses, including the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

See WARM, page 8

ICC is ready to add voice to issues and legislation during General Assembly

By Victoria Arthur

As lawmakers returned to the Statehouse in Indianapolis this week to begin a new legislative session, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) stood ready to speak on the key issues of the day, always standing in solidarity with the most vulnerable.



The 123rd Indiana General Assembly opened for business on Jan. 4 for a short, non-budget year session that is expected to wrap up by mid-March. State lawmakers will introduce and debate a flurry of bills on a wide range of topics. And as it has for the past 55 years, the ICC will weigh in on important legislation while engaging as many Catholics as possible in the process.

"The ICC is the public policy voice for the Catholic Church in the state of Indiana," said Angela Espada, the sixth and current executive director of the ICC. "Simply put, we advocate either for or against proposed legislation in line with the long and rich history of Catholic social teaching."



Angela Espada

Espada explained that promoting the common good and protecting the most vulnerable members of society form the basis for the Church's engagement in the public arena.

"If you look at the issues that politics hits on, much of it has to do with immigration, education, whether or not to have a social safety net and how far that net expands, and respect for life," Espada said. "All of these are issues that the Church has experience in and has either advocated for or against in some form since its beginning—certainly long before there were lobbyists and massive political agendas."

Protecting human life from conception to natural death remains the most pressing

See ICC, page 7

On New Year's Day, Pope Francis says a mature faith is realistic, but hope-filled

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As Catholics begin a new year contemplating the motherhood of Mary, they should be inspired not to let problems weaken their faith or prevent them from helping others grow, Pope Francis said.

"In her heart, in her prayer," he said, Mary "binds together the beautiful things and the unpleasant things," and learns to discern God's plan in them.

Pope Francis celebrated Mass on Jan. 1, the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and World Peace Day, in St. Peter's Basilica and then led the recitation of the *Angelus* prayer in St. Peter's Square with thousands of people, including dozens who held signs with the names of countries at war.

See POPE, page 8



Pope Francis burns incense as he celebrates Mass marking the feast of Mary, Mother of God, in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Jan. 1. (CNS photo/Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters)

JCC gathering



Indiana's bishops met with the Indiana Catholic Conference on Dec. 15, 2021, at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis. Pictured are, front row, from left: retired Gary Bishop Emeritus Dale J. Melczek; Indianapolis Archbishop Charles C. Thompson; Fort Wayne-South Bend Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades; and Gary Bishop Robert J. McClory. Standing behind them are Lafayette Bishop Timothy L. Doherty and Evansville Bishop Joseph M. Siegel. (Submitted photo)



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

January 9–22, 2022

January 9 – 9:30 a.m.
Mass at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, Indianapolis

January 11 – noon
Capital campaign lunch meeting at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, Indianapolis

January 12 – 12:30 p.m.
Lunch gathering with Archdiocese of Indianapolis priests, Indianapolis

January 13 – 8:15 p.m.
Virtual Judicatories meeting

January 13 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

January 16 – 10 a.m.
Mass for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, offered for deceased team members and volunteers of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Indianapolis at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

January 16 – 1 p.m.
Visit to confirmation class students of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, Indianapolis, at Holy Rosary Church

January 16 – 2:30 p.m.
Preaching during Mass in the Extraordinary Form at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, Indianapolis

January 19-22
Wedding in Beaver Creek, Colo.

William Bruns leaves a legacy of service to the archdiocese

By Natalie Hoefler

If there were a book on the life of William “Bill” Bruns II, it would have included a long list of contributions to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and been grammatically correct, filled with trivia and completed ahead of schedule.



William Bruns II

So say the friends and former co-workers of Bruns, 77, who died on Dec. 14, 2021.

One of his greatest legacies was serving as executive director of the archdiocesan Office of Communications from 1994-2006.

“I’ve spent my entire career in journalism and communications, and Bill was the best editor I ever worked with,” said Greg Otolowski, current archdiocesan executive director of communications who took on the role when Bruns retired in 2006.

Prior to working for the archdiocese, Bruns spent 26 years working for Eli Lilly and Company’s corporate communications office in Indianapolis. He spent his last nine years there as editor for the office.

“He brought his communications expertise from his time at Eli Lilly and used it to greatly advance the archdiocese’s communication efforts,” said Otolowski.

Bruns hired Otolowski as editor of *The Criterion* in 1999.

“We continued to work together right up to his death,” said Otolowski. “Until he went into the hospital, he continued to do monthly freelance editing for various archdiocesan writing projects,” including

editing the archdiocesan directory.

He lauded Bruns for his “work behind the scenes helping shape [the late] Archbishop Daniel [M.] Buechlein’s communications with the people of the archdiocese,” and called him “a driving force behind the messaging that made several stewardship campaigns in the archdiocese such a success.”

Suzanne Yakimchick also worked with Bruns at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis while she served as archdiocesan chancellor from 1991-2008.

She described him as “unique, funny as can be and very knowledgeable about a wide range of things. He was extremely talented in his writing and editing and respected for his high standard of work.”

Yakimchick recalled a tradition of his when the two had a difficult topic to discuss.

“He would always toss some pieces of chocolate on my desk first,” she said. “We’d eat the chocolate to start a conversation to make it seem better.”

She admired him for his “deep faith and the ability to write about that. And he was dedicated to not just practicing but spreading the faith.”

Part of spreading that faith involved Bruns writing two books on the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and another for Catholics recently welcomed into the full communion of the Church.

Before working as executive director of archdiocesan communications, he served as a member or director on more than 20 boards, committees and teams for the archdiocese, its agencies and his parish on topics ranging from Catholic education to catechesis to liturgy and more.

Bruns’ broad efforts for the archdiocese and beyond were enhanced by a well-rounded education. He graduated *cum laude* with a degree in English from Xavier

University in Cincinnati in 1966, earned his Master’s in Business Administration from Indiana University in 1967 and received a Master’s of Pastoral Theology through St. Mary-of-the-Woods College in 1987.

“He was deeply committed to the Church, and he was very well-read,” said retired Father James Farrell, a friend of Bruns for nearly 45 years. “His home library might be larger than the library of some small towns—and that’s after giving away many of his books.”

Otolowski agreed. “Because Bill was so well read, he was a great conversationalist,” he said. “There was nothing better than having a drink and dinner with Bill, especially if he made the meal. He loved a good cocktail and he enjoyed cooking for family and friends.”

Bruns’ online obituary mentions his “true passion for cooking—and enjoying—food [he was a natural born chef].” It also recalls his “loving and compassionate nature.”

“He was a great dad, very committed to his family,” said Father Farrell, a former pastor of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis where Bruns and his wife Sallie were members for many years.

“He was committed to liturgy, too. He wouldn’t hold back saying if he didn’t like the music that was played at Mass!”

The online obituary also notes Bruns as a “fanatic for being on time,” saying he “considered anyone who arrived on time late, and any late arrival as unacceptable.”

Yakimchick agreed with a laugh. “Good luck if you arrived late to a meeting and dared to ask to be caught up on what already happened!” she said.

She called Bruns “caring and funny.” “His humor and ability to tease and to accept teasing was a lot of fun,” said Yakimchick. “I visited him many times when he was sick [during his final years], and he always kept his sense of humor.”

Bruns’ talent, skill, faith and personality had an impact on the archdiocese, his family and friends.

“I couldn’t have asked for a better mentor when I came to the archdiocese, and he was an even better friend,” said Otolowski. “I will miss him tremendously.”

Bruns is survived by his wife Sallie and their three children: son, William R. Bruns III; daughter, Monica Marie Stone; daughter, Elizabeth Ann Bruns; and two grandchildren. He was laid to rest on Dec. 20 during a private Mass and burial.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations be made to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul or the Indianapolis Zoological Society. †

Pope: Religious persecution an ‘insane’ act

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—To discriminate against or persecute those who profess their faith is an intolerable act that threatens the fraternal bonds shared by humanity, Pope Francis said.

“How can we allow that in this society—which is so civilized—there are people who are persecuted simply because they publicly profess their

faith? Not only is it unacceptable; it’s inhuman, it’s insane,” the pope said.

In a video message released by the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network on Jan. 3, the pope offered his prayer intention for the month of January, which he dedicated to people who suffer from religious discrimination and persecution. †



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Family finds hope in Mary statue largely untouched by wildfire

LOUISVILLE, Colo. (CNS)— Amid the smoldering ashes of his family’s recently remodeled Louisville, Colo., home that was destroyed by a Dec. 30, 2021, wildfire, Tom Greany found hope in a symbol of his deep Catholic faith.

A statue of Mary that he and his wife Kat had placed outside their home was left unscathed except for the soot that covered its right side.

“Bricks appeared to have fallen all around her—some probably even hit her. But she didn’t even fall over,” Greany wrote in a reflection shared with Catholic News Service by a friend, who asked to remain unidentified. He wrote about what happened just hours after the blaze raced through the suburban communities of Louisville and Superior, about 20 miles northwest of Denver.

Greany wrote that the discovery of the statue is a reminder of how their faith provides protection and can “sustain us through everything.”

The Greanys were among hundreds of families who lost their homes in the wildfire driven by winds estimated to top 100 mph. In the Greanys’ Louisville neighborhood, 50 of 55 homes were destroyed. The other five were untouched.

Authorities said 991 structures, including businesses, were destroyed and another 127 damaged. Flames from what is called the Marshall Fire swept through more than 6,000 acres, devastating entire neighborhoods before snow helped extinguish the blazes. Residents said they fled with few possessions through dense smoke that turned the sky orange.

The Archdiocese of Denver reported on its website that two parishes—St. Louis in Louisville and Sacred Heart of Mary outside Boulder—were evacuated as flames advanced, but were undamaged. The fire nearly reached Sacred Heart, seemingly blocked by a roadway.

Both parishes as well as St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish in Boulder and Immaculate Conception

Parish in Lafayette, northeast of Louisville, were helping affected families.

Saying the ferociousness of the flames “shocked everyone,” Denver Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila quickly established an emergency fund on Dec. 31, seeding it with \$250,000. He asked that parishes throughout the archdiocese take a special collection at Masses on the weekend of Jan. 8-9. The Archdiocese of Denver’s Marshall Fire Recovery Assistance Fund is online at bit.ly/3HBjB2R (case sensitive).

“To those affected by these fires, know that Joseph and Mary had to flee with Jesus shortly after he was born. The Holy Family is close to you and knows the anguish and loss you are feeling,” the archbishop said in a statement posted on the archdiocesan website.

Archbishop Aquila also encouraged parishes and other agencies to help those who fled—with little more than the clothes they were wearing, computers and important documents—by hosting families, opening food pantries and offering other services.

Recovery was complicated by cold weather and the onset of snow following an unusually warm and dry fall and early winter in the area located near the Rocky Mountains.

The fire in the middle of the holiday season remains under investigation. Authorities have focused on a property south of Boulder where the fire is believed to have started, Boulder County Sheriff Joe Pelle told reporters on Jan. 2.

In the aftermath, the Greany family is counting on Mary to intercede for them as they seek to rebuild their lives.

“It stings to look at this—our home and all of its contents were lost,” Greany said in his reflection. “The Christmas giving we had celebrated with our sons [went] up in smoke along with everything else they and we owned. The entire neighborhood [was] gone in less than a day.



A statue of Mary is seen standing amid the rubble of a Louisville, Colo., home on Dec. 31, 2021. (CNS photo/courtesy Leslie Rowe)

“Awareness of the loss stings mightily,” he continued. “But we can only feel the loss as pain because of the extraordinary magnitude of the gifts we have been given in our lives. How richly blessed we are!”

He said his family’s home was not burned to teach them a lesson, but it did give them the chance to experience God’s comfort through Mary’s intercession.

Greany is also convinced no one can take away his family’s faith and their trust that the Holy Family is “looking out for us.”

“They love us, and they care,” he wrote, adding: “They pray for us. And they pray for the world in these dark times we live in.” †

Plans for *Roe v. Wade* events in Indy on Jan. 23-24, in Terre Haute on Jan. 23

Criterion staff report

The archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity, in conjunction with the Diocese of Lafayette and Right to Life Indianapolis, has announced plans for the solemn *Roe v. Wade* observance events in Indianapolis on Jan. 23-24.

The events begin with a Vigil for Life at St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis, from 2-4 p.m. on Jan. 23, co-sponsored by the archdiocese and the Lafayette Diocese.

Local Catholic composer, singer and songwriter Francesca LaRosa will lead participants in praise and worship, and local Catholic Dr. Casey Delcoco will give a hope and healing witness on the Abortion Reversal Protocol. Eucharistic adoration and the sacrament of reconciliation will be available.

During the free event, donations will be accepted to benefit the ministries of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity and the Office of Marriage and Family Life of the Diocese of Lafayette.

Vigil registration, which is requested but not required, is available at indyhld.flocknote.com/signup/76535. For questions, contact Brie Anne Varick, coordinator of the Office of Human Life and Dignity, at 317-236-1543 or bvarick@archindy.org.

On Jan. 24, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson will serve as primary celebrant with Lafayette Bishop Timothy L. Doherty concelebrating during a special Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church at 10:30 a.m.

The Indiana March for Life and rally, both sponsored by Right to Life Indianapolis, will take place after the Mass. The march will begin at noon starting from West Georgia Street next to St. John the Evangelist Church. It will proceed to the Soldiers and Sailors Monument (Monument Circle) then to the south steps of the State Capitol Building at 200 W. Washington St.

There, a rally will take place featuring pro-life speakers.

For more information on the march and rally, contact Right to Life Indianapolis president Marc Tuttle at marc@rtlindy.org

or 317-582-1526. To register for the Indiana March for Life, go to indyhld.flocknote.com/signup/76537.

For those unable to attend the Indianapolis events, a Sanctity of Life Sunday event will take place in Terre Haute at the Vigo County Courthouse

at 3rd Street and Wabash Avenue from 2-3:30 p.m. on Jan. 23. Signs will be provided for this prayerful, solemn observance. Parking may be available behind the Vigo County Court House. For more information, call Tom McBroom 812-841-0060. †

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Editorial



Pope Francis wears a mask for protection from COVID-19 as he participates in an evening prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Dec. 31, 2021. The traditional service on New Year's Eve is to give thanks for the past year.
(CNS photo/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

Despite COVID, challenges, let faith be central to all you do in 2022

If you're a creature of habit, like many others, you have begun 2022 with new hopes and prayers of what the year ahead will bring. Many of us were undoubtedly eager to put 2021 into our rearview mirror.

Go back 12 months, and that same sentiment was evident for much of the population around the world, putting the final, uncertain days of 2020 dominated by the emergence of COVID-19 into the history books as we entered 2021.

Sadly, what we have learned during the past two years, among other things, is that with new variants of COVID come new challenges and even more deaths. Vaccines, boosters and ever-changing mandates have also become the norm in many parts of the world, including in the U.S.

What's frustrating for many of us as well is how various cities and municipalities have different guidelines for how to handle all the challenges that a pandemic brings. And those differences extend to places of employment and school districts, too.

Some workplaces are requiring its employees to be fully vaccinated. Schools in some parts of the U.S. have gone back to a virtual model, where students are at home on an iPad, trying to understand and learn the day's lessons, absent from a classroom where teachers and classmates are with them. In some cases, athletic events and public gatherings are being postponed or cancelled because the latest COVID variant has caused an outbreak.

We again wonder: Is this the new "normal"? Will we continue to be forced to adjust our way of living at the drop of a hat?

As was shared in a recent homily during the Christmas season, some in secular society continue to focus on honor, power, pleasure and wealth in their day-to-day lives despite the pandemic.

As Catholic Christians, one constant that we must embrace is our faith. We must continue to strive for the wisdom and grace to see things from God's perspective.

While many persevered through the past two years, we now also better

understand how faith must be central to all we say and do. And we must continue to be people of hope.

Christian hope grants those who suffer the assurance that God does not abandon his people in their time of need, Pope Francis said on Dec. 31, 2021.

"Problems do not vanish, difficulties and worries are not lacking, but we are not alone; the Father 'sent forth his Son' to redeem us from the slavery of sin and to restore our dignity as children," the pope said during an evening prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican to mark the end of 2021.

One way to live as Catholics in 2022 and beyond is to let prayer, Scripture and the sacraments become more integral to whom we are. We can use these opportunities to embrace our Lord even more.

Why not fine-tune your routine by attending Mass more than once a week or receiving the sacrament of reconciliation on a more consistent basis, possibly once a month? How about reflecting on Scripture in your daily routine? And making more prayer time central to your day?

We, as Catholics, are called to put our faith into action. We also understand we say "yes" to God by our actions.

As we begin another year, we must realize the challenges we will face are opportunities for growth.

If we examine our lives, we see God has used someone to lead us to Jesus. Despite ongoing challenges, are we going to lead people to Jesus in 2022 or away from him?

As you reflect at the end of each day, ask yourself: Do I know Jesus better today than I did yesterday? Did I lead someone to him or away from him?

As we read in Scripture: "Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb 13:8).

Let us pray we never forget that in our ongoing conversion.

And as the Lord's faithful servants, despite the ongoing COVID crisis and other challenges that await us, may we remember light always triumphs over darkness.

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/Daniel Conway

Remembering Bill Bruns

On Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021, William R. (Bill) Bruns II, a former editor of *The Criterion* and executive director of the Communications Secretariat for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, passed peacefully to the Lord following a long illness. He was 77 years old, and although he had been retired for many years, he remained active as an editor and an adviser to his many close friends in pastoral ministry.



Herr Bruns, as his friends liked to call him, was many things. He was a loving husband and father, a devout post-Vatican II Catholic who staunchly defended the Council against both ultra-liberal and ultra-conservative interpretations, a strict grammarian who fought an uphill battle against sloppy, imprecise writing, and he was a dear friend. He was occasionally grouchy, but always tender in his affections and merciful toward writers (like me) who sinned against the style guide approved for use in Catholic publications.

Although he would not like me to say this, I considered Bill Bruns to be a "saint next door" as Pope Francis defines this term. "Their lives may not always have been perfect," the pope says, "yet even amid their faults and failings they kept moving forward and proved pleasing to the Lord."

Yes, he could be gruff, even intolerant, when confronted with sloppiness, silliness or sentimentality, but no one served his archdiocese more faithfully and no one was more loyal to his friends than Herr Bruns.

In an interview in 2020 during the height of the pandemic, Pope Francis said, "I'm thinking at this time of the saints who live next door. They are heroes—doctors, volunteers, religious sisters, priests, shop workers—all performing their duty so that society can continue functioning." As far as I'm concerned, we should add "editors" to the pope's list of saints next door, and put Herr Bruns at the top of that list!

By the time the pandemic struck, causing churches to close and faithful churchgoers to worship virtually, Bill was among the most vulnerable at-risk people due to his age and health issues. As a result, he and his loving wife Sallie remained in strict

isolation, not leaving their home except to go to doctors' appointments.

A mutual friend and former colleague, Pamela Storms-Barrett, and I visited Bill and Sallie twice during this difficult time. The first time, I brought sandwiches and we ate them (maintaining a safe distance of 6 feet from each other) on folding chairs in the Bruns' family garage. The second time, after all were fully vaccinated, we were able to eat indoors. In spite of Bill's many health problems, he remained "sharp as a whip," deeply interested in the well-being of others, and keenly interested in all matters affecting the Church he loved.

No one who knew Bill well would say that he was a saint in the conventional sense of this term. Having worked on the team that prepared the case for the canonization of Simon William Gabriel Bruté de Rémur, a French missionary in the United States and the first bishop of the Diocese of Vincennes (which later became the Archdiocese of Indianapolis), Bill was keenly aware of the holiness and pastoral perfection required for official sainthood. But what Pope Francis urges us to keep in mind is that the call to holiness is universal. That means we are all invited to become everyday saints.

"Not everything a saint says is completely faithful to the Gospel; not everything he or she does is authentic or perfect," the pope says. "What we need to contemplate is the totality of their life, their entire journey of growth in holiness, the reflection of Jesus Christ that emerges when we grasp their overall meaning as a person."

The totality of life that Bill Bruns lived—as a husband and father, as a friend and co-worker, and as a missionary disciple of Jesus Christ—deserves contemplation and commendation. And, as Pope Francis says, "If we become aware of this miracle of the next-door saints, if we can follow their tracks, the miracle will end well, for the good of all."

The miracle of next-door saints is real. It was made manifest in the life of an ordinary man, William R. Bruns II, who lived an extraordinary life of love and service to his family, friends and his Church. We miss you, Herr Bruns. May you rest in peace.

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion's editorial committee.) †

Letters to the Editor

Reader: Column, stories on National Eucharistic Congress and Synod of Bishops are greatly appreciated

Thank you for featuring the column "Sexual atoms and molecules" by Father Tad Pacholczyk in the Dec. 3 issue of *The Criterion*. His essay offers clarity and understanding of the Church's teaching. It is a piece that should be sent to all teachers of religion in the archdiocese.

Also, thank you for the story concerning the excitement of the bishops in the U.S. about the eucharistic revival, which will culminate in a National

Eucharistic Congress hosted by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis on July 17-21, 2024. Will we also be reading about their excitement for the Synod of Bishops that will occur in October of 2023 as Pope Francis urges?

I hope so because I question how the two can be separated.

James Hellman
Terre Haute

Reader: Wearing masks, social distancing must be reinstated, including during Mass

The hospitalizations and serious cases of COVID in central Indiana are rapidly growing again as we face winter weather and the advancing delta and omicron variants.

Many hospitals are above capacity. In our archdiocese and parishes, we must respond quickly to protect the human lives we so value by helping to arrest the spread of the virus and its terrible effects.

Our parishes, where many people gather, must reinstate more stringent practices, including masking and social

distancing rules, as were in place during prior months.

Pope Francis has urged all people to get vaccinated as an act of love. That applies to other measures necessary to help protect ourselves and those around us by wearing a mask and social distancing in public gatherings, including while at Mass.

It is indeed an act of love.

Eric Boes
Indianapolis



Christ the Cornerstone

Sacrament of baptism brings us new life in Christ

This Sunday, we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord. In the Gospel reading for Sunday's Mass, we are told that a great miracle occurred after Jesus was baptized by John. According to St. Luke:

"I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ... After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased'" (Lk 3:16, 21-22).

The miracle is that God appears to us in one of the few recorded manifestations of the Holy Trinity in sacred Scripture.

At Jesus' baptism, God reveals himself as the loving Father, as the beloved Son, and as the Holy Spirit (in the form of a dove) who is both our Comforter and a Blazing Fire. Jesus did not need to be baptized. He was sinless and, so, did not need the cleansing baptism of repentance that John administered.

What Jesus received when he

submitted to this ritual baptism was his father's blessing and the power of the Holy Spirit. From this moment on, when Jesus speaks and acts, when he heals or teaches or admonishes his followers, he acts in complete conformity with his Father and the Holy Spirit.

The sacrament of baptism is the reoccurrence of this miracle in the life of every Christian who dies to self in order to be reborn in Christ. The Trinity is present every time the sacrament of baptism is received because every baptism is a new creation, a dying to sin and death, and a rebirth in the Spirit. Every sacramental baptism is an action performed by the Holy Trinity because each time a person is reborn in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, God the Father is "well pleased" and he rejoices with the Son and the Holy Spirit in gratitude for this new life.

The first reading from the prophet Isaiah speaks of the Messiah, but it is also addressed to the people of Israel:

*"Thus says the Lord:
Here is my servant whom I uphold,
my chosen one with whom I am pleased,
upon whom I have put my spirit;*

*he shall bring forth justice to the nations,
not crying out, not shouting,
not making his voice heard in the street.
A bruised reed he shall not break,
and a smoldering wick he shall not quench,
until he establishes justice on the Earth;*

the coastlands will wait for his teaching.

I, the Lord, have called you for the victory of justice,

*I have grasped you by the hand;
I formed you, and set you*

*as a covenant of the people,
a light for the nations,
to open the eyes of the blind,
to bring out prisoners from confinement,*

and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness" (Is 42:1-4,6-7).

Christians believe these words of prophecy have been fulfilled in Christ, but we also read them in light of the baptismal responsibilities that each of us have accepted as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ.

Each baptized Christian is called to "establish justice on Earth," and to "open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and

from the dungeon, those who live in darkness." We are called to "be Christ" for others—with humility, tenderness and mercy.

The new birth we baptized Christians have received is what St. Paul calls "the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Ti 3:5). We are given this gift "not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy" (Ti 3:5). We are to be the instruments of God's "kindness and generous love ... so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life" (Ti 3:4, 7).

As we begin a new year of grace, let's be conscious of the great gift—and the serious responsibility—that the sacrament of baptism has bestowed on us. Let's pray that we will have the courage to be peacemakers, healers and joyful witnesses to the saving power of God—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—who has blessed us with new life in Christ. May we always be faithful to our baptismal promises.

May we love God and our neighbor as beloved sons and daughters of our heavenly Father. May we journey together in synod following in the footsteps of Jesus and guided by the Holy Spirit.

A blessed New Year to all! †



Cristo, la piedra angular

El sacramento del bautismo nos trae una nueva vida en Cristo

En la lectura del Evangelio de la misa de este domingo, en la que celebramos el Bautismo del Señor, se nos dice que ocurrió un gran milagro después de que Juan bautizara a Jesús. Según san Lucas:

"Yo los bautizo a ustedes con agua—les respondió Juan a todos—. Pero está por llegar uno más poderoso que yo, a quien ni siquiera merezco desatarle la correa de sus sandalias. Él los bautizará con el Espíritu Santo y con fuego. Un día en que todos acudían a Juan para que los bautizara, Jesús fue bautizado también. Y mientras oraba, se abrió el cielo, y el Espíritu Santo bajó sobre él en forma de paloma. Entonces se oyó una voz del cielo que decía: 'Tú eres mi Hijo amado; estoy muy complacido contigo'" (Lc 3:16, 21-22).

El milagro es que Dios se nos aparece en una de las pocas manifestaciones de la Santísima Trinidad plasmadas en la Sagrada Escritura.

En el bautismo de Jesús, Dios se revela como el Padre amoroso, como el Hijo amado y como el Espíritu Santo (en forma de paloma) que es a la vez nuestro consuelo y un fuego abrasador. Jesús no necesitaba el bautismo ya que estaba libre de pecado y, por lo tanto, no precisaba de la limpieza de arrepentimiento que le administró Juan.

Lo que Jesús recibió cuando se sometió a este bautismo ritual fue la bendición de su padre y el poder del Espíritu Santo. A partir de ese momento, cuando Jesús hablaba y actuaba, cuando curaba, enseñaba o amonestaba a sus seguidores, lo hacía en plena conformidad con su Padre y el Espíritu Santo.

El sacramento del bautismo es la repetición de este milagro en la vida de cada cristiano que se entrega para renacer en Cristo. La Trinidad está presente cada vez que se recibe el sacramento del bautismo porque cada bautismo es una nueva creación, es morir al pecado y a la vida finita, y renacer en el Espíritu. Cada bautismo sacramental es una acción realizada por la Santísima Trinidad porque cada vez que una persona renace en Cristo por el poder del Espíritu Santo, Dios Padre se "complace" y se alegra con el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo en agradecimiento por esta nueva vida.

La primera lectura del profeta Isaías habla del Mesías, pero también se dirige al pueblo de Israel:

*"Así dice el Señor:
Este es mi siervo, a quien sostengo,
mi escogido, en quien me deleito;
sobre él he puesto mi Espíritu,
y llevará justicia a las naciones.*

*No clamará, ni gritará,
ni alzará su voz por las calles.
No acabará de romper la caña quebrada,*

ni apagará la mecha que apenas arde.

*Con fidelidad hará justicia;
no vacilará ni se desanimará
hasta implantar la justicia en la tierra.*

*Las costas lejanas esperan su ley.
Yo, el Señor, te he llamado en justicia;
te he tomado de la mano.*

*Yo te formé, yo te constituí
como pacto para el pueblo,
como luz para las naciones,
para abrir los ojos de los ciegos,
para librar de la cárcel a los presos,
y del calabozo a los que habitan en tinieblas"* (Is 42:1-4, 6-7).

Los cristianos creemos que estas palabras de la profecía se han cumplido en Cristo, pero también las leemos a la luz de las responsabilidades bautismales que cada uno de nosotros ha aceptado como discípulos misioneros de Jesucristo.

Cada cristiano bautizado está llamado a "implantar la justicia en la tierra," y a "abrir los ojos de los ciegos, [a] abrir los ojos de los ciegos, [a] librar de la cárcel a los presos, y del calabozo a los que habitan en tinieblas." Estamos llamados a "ser

Cristo" para los demás, con humildad, ternura y misericordia.

El nuevo nacimiento que hemos recibido los cristianos bautizados es lo que san Pablo llama "el lavamiento de la regeneración y de la renovación por el Espíritu Santo" (Ti 3:5). Se nos ha concedido este don "no por nuestras propias obras de justicia, sino por su misericordia" (Ti 3:5). Hemos de ser instrumentos de "la bondad y el amor de Dios nuestro Salvador [...] para que, justificados por su gracia, llegáramos a ser herederos que abrigan la esperanza de recibir la vida eterna" (Ti 3:4, 7).

Al comenzar un nuevo año de gracia, seamos conscientes del gran don (y de la enorme responsabilidad) que nos ha otorgado el sacramento del bautismo. Recemos para que tengamos el valor de ser pacificadores, sanadores y testigos alegres del poder salvador de Dios, Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo, que nos ha bendecido con una nueva vida en Cristo. Que seamos siempre fieles a nuestras promesas bautismales; que amemos a Dios y al prójimo como hijos amados de nuestro Padre celestial y que caminemos juntos en el sínodo siguiendo las huellas de Jesús y guiados por el Espíritu Santo.

¡Un bendecido Año Nuevo para todos! †

Events Calendar

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

January 11, Feb. 8, March 8

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available at cutt.ly/Taize. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

January 12, 26, Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23

Group Lectio via Zoom, 7 p.m., second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, Benedictine Sister Jill Marie Reuber, facilitator, sponsored

by Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Information: vocation@thedome.org.

January 15, Feb. 19

St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Helpers of God's Most Precious Infants Prayer Vigil for Life**, 8:30 a.m. Mass, then prayer partners will carpool to Clinic for Women at 3607 W. 16th St. for vigil. Information: eric@romancatholicgentleman.com.

January 17, Feb. 21

Sr. Thea Bowman Black Catholic Women Monthly

Prayer Gathering, via Zoom, third Monday of each month, sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, 7 p.m. Join meeting: cutt.ly/SrTheaPrayer, meeting ID: 810 3567 0684 or dial-in at 301-715-8592. Information: Pearllette Springer, pspringer@archindy.org or 317-236-1474.

January 19, Feb. 16

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

January 20, Feb. 17

St. Joseph Church, 1401

S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

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

January 21

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic**

Business Exchange, former Congresswoman Susan Brooks presenting, rosary at 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Jan. 18. Information and registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

January 23

Vigo County Courthouse, 33 S. 3rd St., Terre Haute. **Sanctity of Human Life Sunday solemn observance**, 2-3:30 p.m., signs provided, parking behind courthouse. Information: Tom McBroom, 812-841-0060.

January 30

St. Matthew the Apostle School, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Open House for Prospective Families**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Information: 317-251-3997 or dsmock@saintmatt.org.

February 12, March 12

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteering Opportunity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., ages 12-18, assist with retired Providence Sisters. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or spsmw.org/events. †

Retreats and Programs

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

January 21, Feb. 18

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$70 with spiritual direction. Information and registration: 812-934-6437, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

January 24-28

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 100 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Winter Chant Workshop**, for directors of liturgical music, Benedictine Brother John Glasenapp presenting, \$750 single, \$835 double, \$200 commuter. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

January 24, 31, February 7, 14, 21, 28

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **"Brother Bob's Bible Study,"** Mondays 10:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m., led by Andrew Hennessy, free. Information and registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/bible-study or 812-923-8817.

January 27

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove.

Cave to Mountaintop: Benedict's Vision for a Spiritual Life, "Living Benedict's Vision in the 21st Century," 7-8:30 p.m., virtual program via Zoom. Benedictine Sister Antoinette Purcelle presenting, fourth of four independent sessions, \$25, check-in begins 30 minutes prior to each event. Registration: cutt.ly/mountaintop22. Information: benedictinn@benedictinn.org, 317-788-7581.

January 28, Feb. 25

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Painting with Padre**, 6-9 p.m., last Friday of each month, led by Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen, includes painting supplies and snack, bring beverage, \$40. Information and registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/painting-with-the-padre or 812-923-8817.

January 7

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Keeping a Spiritual Journal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., includes lunch, \$75. Information and registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/spiritual-journal or 812-923-8817.

January 9

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40, includes a private room for the day and lunch; spiritual direction is available for an additional \$30, must be scheduled in advance. Information and registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

February 11-13

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 100 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Beyond the Fantastic!**, for married couples, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

February 12

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Pilgrimage: Charity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., walking hike pilgrimage lead by Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen, bring water bottle and lunch, rain or shine, \$25. Information and registration: mountsaintfrancis.org.

pilgrimage or 812-923-8817.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$35 per day, includes room, continental breakfast, lunch and use of the common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional \$28 per person, dinner additional \$9. Registration: cutt.ly/fatimaretreats, 317-545-7681 or jburger@archindy.org.

February 19

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **St. Hildegard of Bingen**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., \$25, Franciscan Sister Ola Wittekind presenting. Information and registration: 812-934-6437, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

February 26

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony

Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Women's Retreat: "Watch One Hour with Me,"** 9 a.m.-5 p.m., \$50 includes meals, additional \$100 for optional overnight stay. Information and registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/womens-retreat or 812-923-8817.

March 1-3

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 100 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Freedom Through Forgiveness**, Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, \$300 single, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

March 2

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. The Cross: **The Heart of the Lenten Journey**, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Benedictine Sister Betty Drewes presenting, \$65 includes lunch. Information

and registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

March 8

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Coffee and Conversation**, 8-11:30 a.m., first of five individual sessions (March 15, 22, 29, April 5) based on Ann Voskamp's book *One Thousand Gifts*, Patty Moore presenting, \$25 per session or \$100 for the series, journals provided. Information and registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

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

St. Simon the Apostle singles ministry to offer pitch-in and game night on Jan. 25

Singles Hoping 4 Involved Partnership (SHIP) will hold an Italian pitch-in and game night in the St. Elizabeth Room in the Parish Life Center at St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8155 Oaklandon Road, in Indianapolis, at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 25. SHIP, a ministry of St. Simon the

Apostle Parish, is for singles from 45-60ish, regardless of parish or denomination, who are hoping for an involved partnerSHIP, friendSHIP, companionSHIP or relationSHIP. For more information, e-mail martinlow8@cs.com or call 317-826-6000. †

Reflection day on spiritual resolutions will take place at Fatima on Jan. 21

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, will offer "Spiritual Resolutions: Re-energize Your Faith in 2022" from 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. on Jan. 21.

We make New Year's resolutions each year. Do we consider spiritual resolutions as well? How can we re-energize our faith in 2022? Make this the year you breathe new life into your faith.

This day of reflection with Deacon Rick Wagner will focus first on the bigger questions: Am I intentional in

my faith life? Do I have a servant's heart? Do I share my faith with others? What does it mean to have an "active" prayer life?

The retreat will also address goal-setting: What types of things can I do or participate in that will enhance my efforts to grow in my faith and become the best version of myself?

The day will include continental breakfast, three sessions, Mass and lunch. For registration or more information, contact Jennifer Burger at 317-545-7681 or jburger@archindy.org. †

Wedding Anniversaries

DON AND KAY NOVAK



Don and Kay (Combs) Novak, members of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Dec. 30, 2021.

The couple was married in St. Joseph Church in Stringtown, Ill., on Dec. 30, 1961.

They have four children: Sherri Williams, Lisa, Jason and the late Donnie Novak.

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

PATRICK AND LINDA DICKERSON



Patrick and Linda (Fox) Dickerson, members of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 7.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in North Vernon on Jan. 7, 1972.

They have one child: Alexander Dickerson.

The couple also has three grandchildren. †

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

Colts player helps kick off 'Thank a Coach' plan to aid CYO

By John Shaughnessy

Now in his ninth year as a professional football player with the Indianapolis Colts, Jack Doyle recently took time to praise the coach who first developed his love for the sport—and the approach he has always strived to bring to each game.

Looking back to his early days of playing in the archdiocese's Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) for Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, Doyle wrote this tribute: "Coach Joe Cathcart was my first football coach. He instilled in me a great love for this game I have been blessed to play for 24 years.

"He taught me the two most important things about football—have fun and be tough. [They are] two things I carry with me today and hope to share with my kids as they begin sports. He is a CYO legend and always will be."

Doyle shared his tribute to the late Joe Cathcart as part of a new initiative by the archdiocese's CYO to honor Catholic coaches—from the grade school through the collegiate levels—who have made a tremendous difference in people's lives.

The "Thank a Coach" program is also a fundraising effort by the CYO to help raise funds for the organization



Bruce Scifres

which has been hit hard financially by the pandemic, according to its executive director, Bruce Scifres.

"Our hope is that a lot of coaches receive many words of thanks for making a difference in the lives of young people," Scifres says. "The fact that this might help us raise some much-needed revenue is just icing on the cake. Raising these funds is crucial to us being able to provide quality youth programs around the archdiocese."

Through the "Thank a Coach" program, a person can make a donation to CYO—starting at \$20—and write a message of thanks to their favorite coach that will be shared on the organization's website.

Doyle and others who played for Cathcart made a combined contribution of more than \$25,000 to CYO in honor of their coach who died in 2018 at the age of 56. The tribute touched the Cathcart family.

"I think it's a great program," says David Cathcart, one of his three children. "It's great to see all the quotes from all the people he coached. It would put a smile on his face, and he would have been humbled by the overall recognition. He'd be proud of the boys he once coached and the men they've become."

Cathcart coached teams at the third- and fourth-grade level from 1996 to 2017, mostly at Holy Spirit Parish and also at St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

"He loved the game of football, he loved giving back and he loved teaching kids," David says. "And all that came through in how he coached the game."

Scifres hopes that other parishes across the archdiocese will be motivated to make similar contributions "to recognize beloved coaches from their side of town." At the same time, he appreciates all donations.

A former CYO athlete made a \$100 donation in honor of the late Phil Wilhelm, adding this tribute to the man who coached at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis: "Phil was my eighth-grade football coach. He was a great coach and friend for all his life. He did so much for me, Our Lady of Lourdes, and the CYO."

A married couple saluted Karen Parker of Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) Parish in Indianapolis with a \$25 donation and this message: "Thank you for founding and leading the chess team at IHM. Your selfless dedication and leadership resulted in two championships in four years of CYO chess! You inspired many students to learn the game, always play smart and exhibit good sportsmanship."

Scifres has also joined in the tributes to coaches, making one to Bill Sylvester Sr., who coached him in football at Butler University in Indianapolis from 1975 to 1978.

"He's a devout Catholic," Scifres says about Sylvester. "And he was everything I think a coach should be. He was demanding. He expected us to work hard. He also cared about us. And he prayed with us before every game. He inspired us to make the most of our God-given gifts. He wanted us to make our parents proud and make God proud."

Similar to the influence Sylvester had on him, Scifres had a reputation for impacting the lives of his players beyond the field during his long tenure as the head football coach of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis from 1990 to 2016.

"I believe that other than a young person's parents, a youth coach has the opportunity to influence and impact



Family members of the late Joe Cathcart are all smiles as they pose with the plaque honoring the late beloved Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) football coach. Cathcart's daughter Kelly, left, his mother Joyce and his son David received the plaque from Bruce Scifres, executive director of the archdiocese's CYO.

(Submitted photo)

young lives in a very powerful way," he says. "Countless life lessons can be learned through athletics—work ethic, loyalty, teamwork, fortitude, a sense of honor, a cause bigger than themselves. There are very few things that teach those life lessons like athletics—especially when there's a coach who has the goal of instilling those life lessons.

"One of my all-time favorite sayings is, 'A good coach will improve a player's game. A great coach will improve a player's life.'"

(To learn more about the "Thank a Coach" program and to make a donation and a tribute to a favorite coach, visit the CYO's website, www.cyoarchindy.org.) †

ICC

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of the Church's priorities—and, therefore, the ICC's. Abortion is at the forefront of the national debate again, as the Supreme Court has recently considered pro-life legislation in Texas and Mississippi that has been challenged by abortion advocates.

Indiana Speaker of the House Todd Huston (R-Fishers) stated during his recent Organization Day speech for the state legislature that Indiana is following developments at the Supreme Court.

"In Indiana, we have a strong history of standing up for the rights of the unborn, and we'll continue to build on our pro-life efforts this session," Huston said.

Throughout its history, the ICC has supported pro-life initiatives brought before the General Assembly, Espada said. That includes standing up for the unborn while opposing the death penalty and assisted suicide. Pro-life efforts can take a variety of forms, she emphasized, pointing to recent efforts by the legislature to increase accommodations for pregnant women in the workplace—from longer and more frequent breaks to temporary transfers to less strenuous or hazardous environments.

"The legislation that passed last year did not go far enough, and we'd like to see something better this year for expectant moms," Espada said.

With COVID cases once again on the rise, efforts to stem the pandemic are likely to dominate conversations at the Statehouse during the 2022 session, according to Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC.

"We anticipate lots of discussion around COVID response, especially concerning vaccines and exemptions," Mingus said. Espada added that the ICC will be particularly interested in the debate as it concerns religious freedom and liberty.

With inflation rising sharply nationwide, Espada and Mingus expressed hope that a long-overdue update of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

(TANF) program would finally pass the state legislature. TANF is a federal government program that provides grants to the states for distribution to families in dire economic circumstances. Because of outdated state guidelines, the \$288 maximum monthly cash payment for a family of three in deep poverty has not been adjusted for inflation since 1988.

Much to the dismay of the ICC and other advocates for the poor, proposed legislation to update TANF has been passed over during recent legislative sessions.

"Even though TANF money flows to the states from the federal government and is readily available, Indiana has not offered an increase in monthly payments for the neediest of the needy in more than three decades," Espada said. "With COVID continuing to devastate our economy and inflation on the rise, we need these changes more urgently than ever."

She and Mingus call on the Catholic faithful for their prayers during the 2022 legislative session—as well as their active engagement. They encourage everyone to visit the ICC website, www.indianacc.org, which offers access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive action alerts on important legislation and ways to contact their elected representatives.

"This is the best way for everyone to stay engaged with us throughout the legislative session and all year long," said Mingus, who was instrumental in recently revamping the ICC website and introducing the weekly podcast that he and Espada host during the General Assembly. "If anyone has family members, friends and fellow parishioners who aren't aware of the ICC, we ask that they encourage them to sign up for I-CAN and stay up to date through our podcast and other resources.

"We need everyone's help to spread the word that we exist, and ultimately to support our work on behalf of the Church."

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

Marriage ANNOUNCEMENTS

Be a part of our Spring Marriage Edition

February 25 issue of *The Criterion*

Couples who are planning to be married between Feb. 25 and July 8 in a marriage that is recognized as a valid sacramental or valid natural marriage, or couples who were wed between June 30, 2021, and Feb. 11, 2022, in such a recognized marriage and did not have their engagement announcement in *The Criterion* are invited to submit the information for the upcoming Feb. 25 Spring Marriage Edition.

Announcements can be submitted using the form below, or online at www.archindy.org/engagements.

E-mailed photos

Photos should be saved in jpg format and be at least 500 kb. Color photos are preferred. We recommend sending a photo where the couple's faces are close to each other. Please send the photo as an attachment to the e-mail: alewis@archindy.org. Subject line: Spring Marriage (Last name). In the e-mail, please include the information in the form located below.

If it is not possible to e-mail a photo, a photo can be mailed with the bottom form. Please no photocopy photos. To have the photo returned, please include a return addressed envelope with a postage stamp on it.

Deadline

All announcements and photos must be received by 10 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 11. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date.)

— Use this form to furnish information —

Clip and mail to: BRIDES, *The Criterion*, ATTN: Ann Lewis, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
Deadline with photos: Friday, Feb. 11 at 10 a.m.

Please print or type:

Name of Bride (first, middle, last)		Daytime Phone	
Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code
Name of Bride's Parents (first, last)			
City		State	
Name of Bridegroom (first, middle, last)			
Name of Bridegroom's Parents (first, last)			
City		State	
Wedding Date	Church	City	State
<input type="checkbox"/> Photo Enclosed	Signature of person furnishing information		Relationship
<input type="checkbox"/> Return photo			Daytime Phone
<input type="checkbox"/> No Picture			

WARM

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"It's good pastoral formation," said seminarian Isaac Siefker, a member of St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington. "I would say that I get almost as much out of this volunteer work as I do out of my assigned ministry. I've enjoyed the work. I love the manual labor. Even more than that, I love going to people's houses when we deliver wood."

Seminarian Tyler Huber, a member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County in his fifth year of priestly formation at Saint Meinrad, has volunteered with Project Warm since coming to the seminary and previously served as one of its student managers.

As he approaches being ordained a transitional deacon, Huber recognizes how much Project Warm has helped him serve the deeper needs of the clients of the program.

"Yes, they're struggling with poverty," he said. "They're needing resources, and we're helping them in that way. But so many of them can just use someone to be present to them. That's one of my favorite pieces to it."

The 'brotherhood of the wood lot crew'

Over the course of an academic year, typically more than half the seminarians at Saint Meinrad volunteer for Project Warm in various ways.

Volunteers are divided into three groups. One group collects wood from donors in the area by chopping down trees or cutting up those that have fallen and taking the wood back to Saint Meinrad.

There, other volunteers chop the wood by hand, usually with wood mauls rather hydraulic splitters, for several hours a few days each month. The wood is then stacked and left to dry for about a year.

A third group delivers wood to clients within 48 hours of a request being made.

All seminarians receive training for their work and follow safety protocols.

This work is second nature for Eli Yandow, a seminarian for the Diocese of Burlington, Vt., enrolled at Saint Meinrad. He grew up on a dairy farm just south of the Canadian border where his family heats their home entirely by wood.

"It felt like being at home out chopping wood," said Yandow, the project's general manager this year.

In overseeing all the work of the project, Yandow, in his fourth year of formation at Saint Meinrad, can see how it benefits the seminarians. He especially notices it in what he calls the "brotherhood of the wood lot crew."

"Nothing brings guys together like sweating next to each other," Yandow said. "We know that we're body and soul. Sometimes, we almost get too caught up on just the soul."

Siefker, in his first year of formation at Saint Meinrad, latched onto this lesson early.

"It's just a strong bonding time, working and sweating together," he said. "It's an important part of human formation for us. It's not just book knowledge. It's about building character and growing as a person. Manual labor is an important part of that."

In addition to spending time splitting wood, the seminarians also get together for fellowship during a monthly bonfire. They also are intentional about turning their work into prayer.

"We pray before we start the chops," Huber said. "If we have chops in the evening, we'll prayer Evening Prayer together as a group, or Daytime Prayer if we have chops in the morning. We're constantly calling to mind the families that we're serving."

'Zeal to serve'

Teresa Shephard and her 6-year-old daughter are one of those families served by Project Warm. They live in rural Perry County and heat their home partly with firewood.



Teresa Shephard

While Shephard appreciates the wood provided by Project Warm, she also values the witness of Christian charity given by the seminarians.

"They're wonderful people," Shephard said. "It's like visiting with your neighbors. They're good home folk. They work hard packing in the wood. They're good kids, willing to help out, with good manners, good workers. You don't get that anymore."

She also sees how Project Warm helps seminarians prepare for ministry to people like her.

"It shows these guys what life's really like," Shephard said. "They have to know what it's like, what people are really going through in order to help them. If they're not out there getting their hands dirty themselves, if they're not putting themselves in our place, how are they going to help people?"

Benedictine Father Anthony Vinson, pastor of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad and St. Boniface Parish in Fulda, has led Project Warm since 2004.



Fr. Anthony Vinson, O.S.B.

He praises the "zeal to serve" that he sees in the seminarians who volunteer in the project.

"Many of them want to get dirty and have taken to heart what Pope Francis said, that they should 'smell like their sheep,'" said Father Anthony. "That is huge."

At the same time, he noted that it can take time and experience for seminarians to know the sometimes-fine nuances of serving people living in poverty in rural areas.

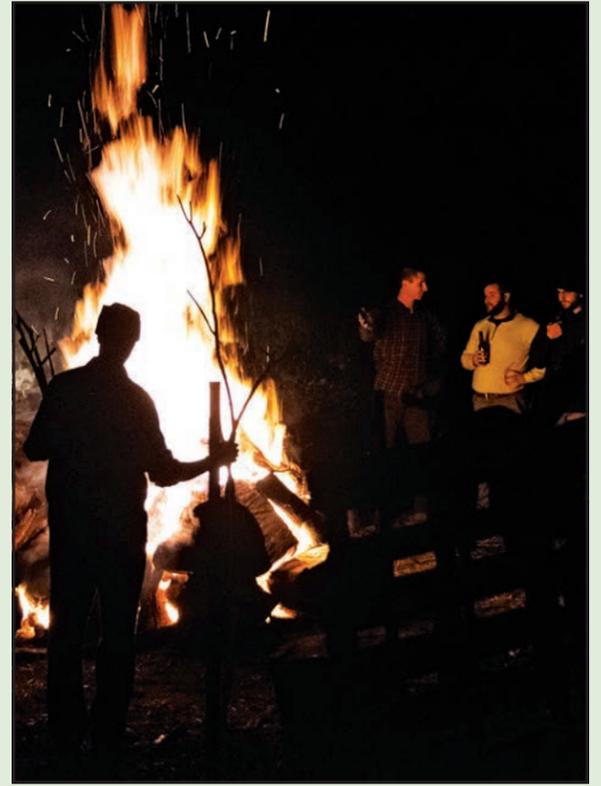
Father Anthony recalled a seminarian who was frustrated at the father of a family who returned home after hunting, carrying a gun and a bag, while seminarians were working hard unloading and stacking firewood.

The Benedictine priest who has ministered in rural Spencer County for 12 years knew that men like the one the seminarian saw often hunt to provide food for their families.

"I looked at him and said, 'Did you ask what was in the bag? ... That was their dinner,'" Father Anthony said. "I said, 'Next time that you're out there, get to know them.'"

Huber has enjoyed getting to know the families served by Project Warm through the years, and is happy to see how the initiative is beginning to open doors for those in need to receive help in other ways.

"The more you go to the same houses, the more you can build relationships up and the more you might be able to ask if they need something else," he said. "There are carpenters in the parishes that are more than willing to help. That's starting to be a piece of the puzzle this year."



Seminarians enjoy each other's company during a Nov. 12 bonfire at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. The fellowship they build up in volunteering for Project Warm contributes to their priestly formation.

(Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

'A certain level of pride'

In forging friendships with the families served by Project Warm, the seminarians are coming face-to-face with the challenges of rural poverty.

An important lesson for the seminarians in offering help to people in need living in the hills of southwestern Indiana is for them to do it while being conscious of the dignity of those they help.

"In rural areas, people like to be self-sufficient," said Father Anthony. "There's a certain level of pride there. It's important for us to be invited into their story without pointing out their flaws."

Living in poverty herself, Shephard knows well the careful approach that is needed in reaching out to help them and appreciates how the seminarians of Project Warm keep this in mind.

"We're so used to doing things for ourselves that it's hard to ask for help. We're country," Shephard said. "We do things for ourselves or we do without. It's nice to have someone that we can privately go to for help that won't get broadcasted all over town. It's not like that [with the seminarians]."

Yandow appreciates the pride of the people the project serves. But he values even more the real physical need that is fulfilled by the seminarians.

"We dump a load of wood, and we know that that person is going to have heat," he said. "If it gets really cold, they could die [otherwise]."

Yandow and his fellow seminarians see the connection between serving people's physical needs with those of their souls.

"We know that, God willing, we'll bring the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ to people in the Mass and in the confessional bring them his mercy," Yandow said. "But we also need to be able, in every aspect of our life, to be the presence of Jesus Christ." †

POPE

continued from page 1

In his homily at the Mass, Pope Francis pleaded for an end to violence against women.

"Enough," he said. "To hurt a woman is to insult God, who from a woman took on our humanity."

And, in his *Angelus* address, Pope Francis insisted peace is a gift from God that requires human action.

"We can truly build peace only if we have peace in our hearts, only if we receive it from the prince of peace," he said. "But peace is also our commitment: it asks us to take the first step, it demands concrete actions. It is built by being attentive to the least, by promoting justice, with the courage to forgive, thus extinguishing the fire of hatred."

Peace also requires "a positive outlook as well, one that always sees, in the Church as well as in society, not the evil that divides us, but the good that unites us," the pope said. "Getting depressed or complaining is useless. We need to roll up our sleeves to build peace."

Pope Francis said he could not look at Mary holding the baby Jesus in her arms without thinking of "young mothers and their children fleeing wars and famine or waiting in refugee camps. And there are many of them.

"Contemplating Mary who lays Jesus in the manger, making him available to everyone, let's remember that the world can change, and everyone's life can improve only if we make ourselves available to others, without expecting them to begin," he said. "If we become artisans of fraternity, we will be able to mend the threads of a world torn apart by war and violence."

In his homily earlier at the Mass, Pope Francis asked people to consider what it must have been like for Mary, who had been told by the angel that her son would be great, to give birth in an animals' stall and to lay her baby in a manger instead of a cradle.

"His poverty is good news for everyone, especially the marginalized, the rejected and those who do not count in the eyes of the world," the pope said. "For that is how God comes: not on a fast track and lacking even a cradle! That is what is beautiful about seeing him there, laid in a manger."

But for Mary, a mother, it must have been painful to see her son in such poverty, the pope said.

Pope Francis contrasted the amazement and enthusiasm of the shepherds with the quiet, pensive reaction of Mary.

"The shepherds tell everyone about what they had seen," he said. "The story told by the shepherds, and their own amazement, remind us of the beginnings of faith, when everything seems easy and straightforward.

"Mary's pensiveness, on the other hand, is the expression of a mature, adult faith," he said. Hers is "not a newborn faith, but a faith that now gives birth, for spiritual fruitfulness is born of trials and testing."

Mary "gives God to the world" in a dark stable in Bethlehem, he said. "Others, before the scandal of the manger, might feel deeply troubled. She does not: she keeps those things, pondering them in her heart."

And through faith, he said, "in her mother's heart, Mary comes to realize that the glory of the Most High appears in humility; she welcomes the plan of salvation whereby God must lie in a

manger. She sees the divine child frail and shivering, and she accepts the wondrous divine interplay between grandeur and littleness."

Mary, like most mothers, knew how "to hold together the various threads of life," the glorious and the worrisome, the pope said. "We need such people, capable of weaving the threads of communion in place of the barbed wire of conflict and division."

Departing from his prepared text, Pope Francis said the Church itself is "mother and woman," and while women could and should have greater positions in the Church, they are "secondary" to the role all Catholic women have of giving life, including figuratively, and in combining "dreams and aspirations with concrete reality, without drifting into abstraction and sterile pragmatism.

"At the beginning of the New Year," he said, "let us place ourselves under the protection of this woman, the mother of God, who is also our mother. May she help us to keep and ponder all things, unafraid of trials and with the joyful certainty that the Lord is faithful and can transform every cross into a resurrection." †

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Even the Holy Family felt stress, pope says during *Angelus*

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The COVID-19 pandemic has been tough on families, but with extra patience and faith, bonds can grow stronger, Pope Francis wrote in a letter released on the feast of the Holy Family.

“Marriage, as a vocation, calls you to steer a tiny boat—wave-tossed yet sturdy, thanks to the reality of the sacrament—across a sometimes stormy sea,” he told couples in the letter published on Dec. 26, 2021.

Like the disciples who were foundering on the Sea of Galilee, couples must keep their eyes fixed on Jesus, he said. “Only in this way, will you find peace, overcome conflicts and discover solutions to many of your problems. Those problems, of course, will not disappear, but you will be able to see them from a different perspective.”

Reciting the midday *Angelus* prayer with visitors in St. Peter’s Square on Dec. 26, Pope Francis said he had written the letter as a “Christmas gift” to married couples during the celebration of the “*Amoris Laetitia* Family” Year, a year dedicated to re-reading his 2016 exhortation on marriage and family life.

In his *Angelus* talk, the pope commented on the day’s Gospel reading about a 12-year-old Jesus staying behind in Jerusalem and making Mary and Joseph frantic.

“In the Gospel, we see that even in the Holy Family things did not all go well: There were unexpected problems, anxiety, suffering. The Holy Family of holy cards does not exist,” he said.

When Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the temple and ask him why he worried them so, he tells them, “Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” (Lk 2:49)

Mary and Joseph do not understand, the pope said. “They need time to learn to know their son. That’s the way it is with us as well: Each day, a family needs to learn how to listen to each other to understand each other, to walk together, to face conflicts and difficulties.”

In his letter to families, like in “*Amoris Laetitia*,” Pope Francis paid tribute to the strength and tenacity of couples as they face real difficulties together on the journey of life.

Like Abraham, called by God to set out to an unknown land, he wrote, with



Pope Francis greets a family during a meeting with the poor at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, Italy, on Nov. 12, 2021. During his Dec. 26 *Angelus*, the pope said as a “Christmas gift” he had written a letter to families. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

the pandemic “we, too, have experienced uncertainty, loneliness, the loss of loved ones; we, too, have been forced to leave behind our certainties, our ‘comfort zones,’ our familiar ways of doing things and our ambitions, and to work for the welfare of our families and that of society as a whole, which also depends on us and our actions.”

The pandemic lockdowns, quarantines and periods of isolation “meant that there was more time to be together, and this proved a unique opportunity for strengthening communication within families,” the pope said. But that also demanded patience.

“It is not easy to be together all day long, when everyone has to work, study, recreate and rest in the same house,” he said.

When nerves are frazzled, the pope said, try to put the needs of others first and re-read the hymn to love from 1 Corinthians 13 “so that it can inspire your decisions and your actions” and “the time you spend together, far from being

a penance, will be become a refuge amid the storms.”

Pope Francis also told married couples, “Don’t be ashamed to kneel together before Jesus in the Eucharist, in order to find a few moments of peace and to look at each other with tenderness and goodness.”

And, for couples whose problems were exacerbated by the pandemic and led to a breakup, Pope Francis said, “I would like them, too, to sense my closeness and my affection.”

But he urged them to be civil to one another, especially in front of their children so that the pain of seeing their parents separate is not made worse by seeing them constantly fighting.

“Children are always a gift,” the pope wrote. “They are thirsty for love, gratitude, esteem and trust.”

Parents must pass on to their children “the joy of realizing that they are God’s children, children of a Father who has always loved them tenderly and who takes

them by the hand each new day,” he said. “As they come to know this, your children will grow in faith and trust in God.”

Addressing engaged couples, Pope Francis said he knows the pandemic has been especially hard for those trying to plan a future together.

“In your journey toward marriage,” he told them, “always trust in God’s providence, however limited your means, since at times, difficulties can bring out resources we did not even think we had. Do not hesitate to rely on your families and friends, on the ecclesial community, on your parish, to help you prepare for marriage and family life by learning from those who have already advanced along the path on which you are now setting out.”

The 85-year-old pope also expressed his affection to grandparents, especially those who are feeling isolated or alone. He urged families to make greater efforts to be with them or at least be in touch with them. †

Pope prays Christmas will bring yearning for peace and dialogue

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Before giving his Christmas blessing to the city of Rome and to the world, Pope Francis drew attention to the many places around the globe and within human hearts in need of Jesus, the prince of peace.

“In the cold of the night, he stretches out his tiny arms toward us: He is in need of everything, yet he comes to give us everything,” the pope told people gathered in a rain-washed St. Peter’s Square.

“On this festive day, let us implore him to stir up in the hearts of everyone a yearning for reconciliation and fraternity,” Pope Francis said on Dec. 25, 2021 before giving his blessing “*urbi et orbi*” (“to the city and the world”).



Pope Francis delivers Christmas blessing “*urbi et orbi*” (“to the city and the world”) from the central balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on Dec. 25, 2021. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Cardinal Renato Martino, 89, the protodeacon of the College of Cardinals, announced that the solemn blessing included a plenary indulgence for the people in the square, everyone watching on television, listening by radio or following on their computers.

Jesus came into the world “like a whisper, like the murmur of a gentle breeze, to fill with wonder the heart of every man and woman who is open to this mystery,” the pope said in his Christmas message.

“The Word became flesh in order to dialogue with us,” he insisted. “God does not desire to carry on a monologue, but a dialogue. For God himself—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is dialogue, an eternal and infinite communion of love and life.”

But all too often in too many places, dialogue is precisely what is missing, he said, as he offered specific prayers for people struggling to survive amid war or the threat of war, violence, oppression or crushing poverty in Syria, the Holy Land, Yemen, South Sudan, Ukraine, Myanmar and Ethiopia.

The impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on health care and the economy, but also on the way individuals live and interact, was part of the pope’s prayer as well.

With the pandemic, the pope said, “our capacity for social relationships is sorely tried; there is a growing tendency to withdraw, to do it all by ourselves, to stop making an effort to encounter others and do things together.

“On the international level too, there is the risk of avoiding dialogue, the risk that this complex crisis will lead to taking shortcuts rather than setting out on the longer paths of dialogue,” he said. “Yet only those paths can lead to the resolution of conflicts and to lasting benefits for all.”

Pope Francis said he knows people get weary watching or reading the news, but attention is needed or “we risk not hearing the cry of pain and distress of so many of our brothers and sisters.”

In addition to “the continuing tensions between Israelis and Palestinians that drag on without a resolution, with ever more serious social and political consequences,” he said, people should not forget Bethlehem, “the place of Jesus’ birth, which is experiencing hardship also from the economic repercussions of the pandemic, preventing pilgrims from visiting the Holy Land and adversely affecting the life of the people.”

And, the pope said, “let us listen to the cry of children arising from Yemen, where an enormous tragedy, overlooked by everyone, has silently gone on for years, causing deaths every day.”

In a troubled world, he said, Christmas celebrates hope. “Today, ‘the love that moves the sun and the other stars,’ as Dante says, became flesh. He came in human form, he shared in our plight, and he broke down the wall of our indifference.”

In the form of a prayer to the newborn Lord, Pope Francis pleaded not only for peace between nations at war, but for all the suffering people in the city and the world and for the suffering Earth itself.

“Eternal Word become flesh,” he prayed, “make us attentive to our common home, which is suffering from the carelessness with which we so often treat it. Inspire political leaders to reach effective agreements, so that future generations can live in an environment respectful of life.”

He prayed for women who have been victims of domestic violence, “which has increased in this time of pandemic,” for the consolation of elderly people who are alone and for the serenity and unity of families.

He prayed for the sick, those who care for them and for a greater effort to make COVID-19 vaccines available to all.

He prayed for prisoners of war and political prisoners, and for migrants, refugees and displaced people.

“O Christ, born for our sake,” Pope Francis prayed, “teach us to walk beside you on the paths of peace.” †

Faith *Alive!*

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Amid trials, seek to build God's kingdom in the new year

By Sr. Josephine Garrett, C.S.F.N.

New Year's celebrations can be a mixed experience.

On the one hand, the holidays have brought us opportunities to be renewed in our relationships with family and friends. On the other hand, secular media can present this sort of "new year, new you" approach that may not really jive with our actual experiences.

We can feel this pressure for Jan. 1 to be a miraculous reset. All the struggles and sufferings of the previous year automatically at midnight lose their impact in our lives.

As we head into 2022, I wonder if this pressure is even more profound. Many of us carry large individual and communal burdens into the new year.

How do we remain open to God's desire to make all things new and the inherent invitation in a new year to begin anew, and also be realistic about the fact that at the stroke of midnight our struggles will not automatically diminish?

I believe the answer is by looking to the struggles, sufferings and heavy burdens that we are carrying with us over the finish line of 2021 and finding in them God's invitation.

Some of us are entering 2022 as COVID-19 long-haulers. Some of us are entering 2022 with more pronounced mental health struggles than before. Some of us need to be renewed in our physical health as our bodies manifest the stresses of the past two years.

Some of us carry the painful burdens connected to being Black or brown, American and Catholic, pains that have only increased during the past two years. Some of us, after the pandemic, have reprioritized family life.

Some of us have become disillusioned with the outward trappings of our lives of faith. This grace-filled disillusionment has allowed us to set our sights back on the primacy of the present moment and context in which we find ourselves as the stuff of our sanctification and



People pray during Mass on New Year's Day at Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral in Los Angeles on Jan. 1, 2011. Many people will begin the new year with many trials related to the year just completed. Even in the midst of those hardships, the kingdom of God can be built up with the help of his grace.

(CNS photo/Victor Aleman, Vida Nuevo)

having the authority to bring about God's justice, love and peace.

Some of us have reached new horizons in our prayer and relationship with God, yet some of us have strayed from prayer and into a life of subtle pride and self-sufficiency, which is the fruit of a life lacking prayer.

Is there a thematic invitation to not only begin anew, but also to strive for the newness that is the promise of the kingdom contained in all that we will carry with us into the new year?

I believe there is. We sometimes struggle with the two-world stance that is required of a Catholic. Catholics must stand with a foot in the temporal world and with a foot in eternity.

We cannot place both our feet in whatever matter has garnered our attention during the past two years; be it the pandemic, cries for justice, political strife, family dynamics or whatever it has been for you. We will do ourselves a grave injustice.

If we are to begin anew this year, we must take a proper stance in all that we are facing as individuals and as a community of God's children.

One foot in the world, which is full of brokenness, and one in eternity, which is the source of constant conversion and renewal, even as we struggle. This renewal is always about bringing about the family of God.

For example, what did the pandemic prove to us? That we are painfully interconnected. As Pope Benedict XVI once said, "No one sins alone. No one is saved alone."

Likewise, cries for social justice during the past two years have been filled with the same message.

Black or brown skin, and the ethnicities and heritages that are paired with that skin, does not lessen the right of the individual to be a full heir of the kingdom of God and to proclaim to the Church, as Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman once said, "I bring myself, my Black self, all that I am, all that I have, all that I hope to become."

In humility, I would add that because this is my family; this Church is as much my family as the next person's. We could take many other matters we will carry across the line from 2021 to 2022, and upon reflection, find at their root a matter of the family of God.

Whatever it is you are called to be renewed in during the year to come—physically, mentally or spiritually—let it be for and about encounter. To aid you in increasing your capacity to show up in the family of God, bringing your whole self as a gift to the family of God, come what may; in the midst of struggles and also joys.

We know that it is only through a sincere gift of ourselves that we will know ourselves, and it is only in this dimension of gift, as Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron once called it, that the family of God, which we long for, will be built up and realized.

The way we begin anew is to, in all things, in all our resolutions, keep our eyes fixed on the glory of the coming of the Lord and the building up of God's family in Christ.



Father Rony Fabien delivers the homily during Mass on the feast of Mary, Mother of God, at St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, N.Y., on Jan. 1, 2021. If we are to begin anew this year, we must take a proper stance in all that we are facing as individuals and as a community of God's children. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

(Sister Josephine Garrett is a member of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth and ministers as a licensed counselor.) †

Amid the Fray/Greg Erlandson

What if every parish was a pro-life safe haven?

My track record as a predictor of Supreme Court abortion decisions took a hit years ago when I wrote an editorial predicting that *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* would overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Thanks to Justice Anthony Kennedy, I was quite obviously wrong.



So I'll be cautious about predicting the result of the Mississippi abortion case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health*,

whose arguments were just heard by the Supreme Court. It sure looks like change is coming, however. Just what kind of change is something else entirely.

Despite the efforts of pro-lifers who have been resisting the legalization of abortion nationwide for more than 50 years, the forthcoming court decision will not mean the end of abortion, but a new chapter in the struggle.

Anything short of the court's complete rejection of the Mississippi abortion law banning abortions in virtually all cases after 15 weeks will mean that the battle returns to the states.

There will be 50 battlefields, and the abortion divide will continue in our nation for the foreseeable future, trench warfare in virtually every state house in virtually every state.

While abortion's more vocal supporters

and opponents will continue to yell at each other as they did outside the Supreme Court while the jurists weighed the merits of the Mississippi case, there is much more going on in pro-life circles that is worthy of attention.

Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kan., who recently stepped down as head of the U.S. bishops' pro-life committee, has been working for three years on a program known as Walking with Moms in Need. In a speech to his brother bishops in November, he described the program as "a parish-based, yet nationwide, initiative to better serve pregnant and parenting mothers facing difficulties."

The program's vision, he said, "is that a pregnant or parenting mother in need can turn to any local Catholic parish and be connected with the life-affirming assistance and accompaniment that she needs."

It is an ambitious vision, one that would reflect Pope Francis' idea of accompaniment, walking with mothers in need of assistance and support. The genius of the program is that it could bring together the pro-life and social justice wings of the Church, which surely should be united in helping any struggling mother and mother-to-be.

The archbishop cited statistics showing that women seeking abortions are primarily "poor, young and unmarried." Too often, abortion is not a desired outcome, but one forced on women by

circumstances and a lack of options.

In Texas, a pro-life mom named Tere Haring sees this reality every day. She runs a pro-life outreach called the Allied Women's Center, and she is helping one mom at a time with diapers and rental assistance. "Diapers save a lot more babies than ultrasounds," Haring told *The Washington Post*.

"I always said abortion is the lack of an option," Haring said. "They feel like they have nowhere to go, that there's nobody for them. It's about the help. It's about being there for them."

Archbishop Naumann's vision is that Catholics—you and me in our parishes—will be there for the moms in need. The parish would connect them with resources, with mentors, with helping agencies.

This kind of assistance, the archbishop said, "directly confronts the false, yet popular, narrative that the Catholic Church merely condemns abortion," but doesn't help the women.

Whatever the court decides in the spring, the needs of the poor, the pregnant and the abandoned will remain. Walking with Moms in Need is the kind of grassroots program that could change lives: both those of the moms and of the parishioners who help them.

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

Faith at Home/

Laura Kelly Fanucci

A new approach to a sacrament

When I made my first confession, I clutched an index card with sweaty palms. On one side, I'd copied the act of contrition, dutifully memorized—but what if I tripped up in the heat of the moment? On the reverse was a detailed list of my sins, anxiously scribbled lest I miss one.

Even at 10 years old, I was convinced God would judge me harshly if I forgot.

My strongest memory of the sacrament is that sweaty index card.

Fast-forward 30 years. My middle child is now 7 years old and ready for the sacrament of reconciliation. I watch him skip down the hallway to meet with our pastor, and I wait for him to return—which he does with a giant grin.

No anxiety, no fear, no sweaty palms. He hugs me around the neck and whispers, "That was great."

What made the difference? The Good Shepherd.

This child is the first of my kids to experience the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. This Montessori-based method of faith formation invites the youngest children (starting at ages 3-6) to fall in love with Jesus as the Good Shepherd through carefully prepared materials from Scripture and liturgy that offer them the deepest truths of our faith.

I have been using the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd with our younger children at home for the past several years—an oasis of peace and prayer during the pandemic. As I helped my son prepare for the sacrament of reconciliation, I watched with amazement at how different his experience was from my own traditional preparation in Catholic school.

He understood by instinct that reconciliation was rooted in God's love and care, so his first encounter with confession was free from anxiety or fear.

Sofia Cavalletti, co-founder of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, noted that when formal religious education does not start until age 7 or later, the child is at a developmental plane of moral formation that focuses on distinguishing right from wrong.

While the sacrament of reconciliation makes perfect sense for this traditional "age of reason," the dominant image of God that can imprint at this age is the divine judge—exactly why many children become fixated on a stern, even scornful, image of God.

The beauty of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is that the method first introduces the youngest child to the love of the Good Shepherd who cares for each sheep, goes off in search of the lost, and tends his flock with care, even giving them the rules they need to stay safe and follow in his way.

To watch a child realize that he is one of God's sheep, to see his eyes light up when he realizes that the Good Shepherd calls him by name, and to witness his growing trust in God who promises to provide for him always—all of this has been transformative for my parenting and my own faith.

I have come to know the Good Shepherd as an adult, delighting in my own discovery of how many names Scripture offers us for God. Whenever a new year dawns, I try to pray about what images of God might guide me through the coming months.

For information on the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, please contact our catechetical office at catechesis@archindy.org.

(Laura Kelly Fanucci is a writer, speaker, and author of several books. Her work can be found at laurakellyfanucci.com.) †

It's All Good/Patti Lamb

Climb life's mountains with God as your constant companion



Recently we traveled to Sedona, Ariz.—a place we've never visited—to enjoy a change of scenery and time outside in warmer temperatures. Sedona is known for its numerous hiking trails with breathtaking views. We looked forward to a brief respite from our regular routine, and I came away with a realization that I hope you'll find meaningful as we embark on a new year.

On our first hiking day, my husband and I woke up early so that we could check out a particular trail that was highly

recommended to hike at sunrise. The kids had just finished a challenging semester at school, so we let them sleep in while we conducted our own trail investigation to ensure our family hit the best spots during the vacation.

After watching an exquisite sunrise, my husband guided me to the trail head, and we began hiking. It was just above freezing, but the views of the red rock were mesmerizing, and I commented repeatedly how beautiful it was there. He did have to play "tow truck" a few times, when I couldn't quite pull myself up to the next level of rock.

I excitedly talked with him about hiking "Cathedral Rock"

See LAMB, page 15

Window Seat Wisdom/Katie Prejean McGrady

Make resolutions more specific, immediate and tangible

I think New Year's resolutions are silly. Under the guise of "get healthy" and "better yourself" we establish arbitrary (and often unrealistic) goals to eat less, move around more, spend less time on our phone, etc.



One year, I resolved to use a paper planner to keep track of my to-do lists and meetings. I gave up the practice within two weeks because it just wasn't a useful habit for me. But even though I knew I needed to quit on my resolution, I was frustrated by my giving it up.

Left with just one other resolution for the year: Go to bed by 9 p.m. That one lasted just a couple weeks beyond the first.

In a furious fit, I resolved to never make resolutions again, at least not new year ones. Because, it was obvious I was waiting to make necessary changes in my life—and build good, healthy, holy habits—until the first of a new year.

Rather than doing what I knew needed to be done when I realized it needed to be done, I'd procrastinate the new habit: "Oh, after the new year I'll do that," and just set the habit or task on a never-ending to-do list labeled "Someday," knowing good and well "someday" was never really coming.

We do this with far more than just healthy eating or closet organization or bedtime routines. We set resolutions for our spiritual life on a "someday" list all too often.

"Someday, I'll start going to daily Mass."

"Someday, I'll pray Liturgy of the Hours."

"Someday, I'll invite Father over to dinner."

"Someday, I'll volunteer to lector on Sunday."

"Someday, I'll make that silent retreat."

"Someday, I'll pray the rosary every night before bed."

They sit there on that "someday" list—these hopes and habits with no real direction, and therefore no real resolve. Even though we know they are noble, worthy, good practices, they simply become these platitudes with no path to living them out.

These "someday" resolutions, promised at the start of a new year because it's what everyone else is doing, are not realistic behaviors we can put into practice and thus develop holy habits. They're these generalized promises made to no one, least of all ourselves.

So perhaps our mindset to these generalized resolutions for the new year that we'll forget in a matter of weeks can be made more specific, more purposeful, more immediate and, most of all, more tangible.

Perhaps we name in a very intentional way what it is we hope to achieve, and then make the resolution a practice we can reasonably begin to do in our lives.

"I hope to grow closer to the Lord" means I resolve to attend a weekday Mass at least one day a week.

"I hope to learn more about sacred Scripture" means I resolve to pray evening prayer from the Liturgy of the

Hours at least two nights a week.

"I hope to become more comfortable in my parish community" means I resolve to invite Father over to dinner at some point before Lent begins.

"I hope to serve my Church" means I resolve to finally call the parish secretary and ask about volunteering to become a lector.

The Lord doesn't ask us to "do" things for him at the beginning of a new year simply because every diet blog and health care website and each gym in town is screaming at you to "make big changes" and "resolve to do better."

The Lord invites us to hope and dream about how close we are to him and resolve to make the changes we need to make to grow closer to him whenever we need to, and not just wait for the beginning of the new year or "someday."

Every time we go to confession, we make a resolution when we pray our act of contrition. We "firmly resolve with the help of thy grace" to change how we live, to avoid sin as best we can, to grow closer to Jesus.

Perhaps this is the year we firmly resolve to hope in new ways, and live and act in new ways, so we can see the fulfillment of those hopes, to ultimately be resolute in our resolve to someday grow closer to the Lord.

(Katie Prejean McGrady is an award-winning author and host of *The Katie McGrady Show on Sirius XM's The Catholic Channel*. She lives in Louisiana with her husband and daughters.) †

Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, January 9, 2022

- Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7
- Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38
- Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

The Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord is very important to the Church's mission of bringing us to Christ. It reveals both the identity of the Lord and begins the Gospel's revelation of the Lord's work of salvation.



Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist. The three synoptic Gospels of Matthew,

Mark and Luke report this event. St. Luke's account is read on the feast this year.

St. John's Gospel alludes to John the Baptist's baptisms in the Jordan and his describing Jesus as the lamb of God.

The first reading is one of the four suffering servant songs of Isaiah. Who was this suffering servant? The future Messiah? One of the prophets? The author? Was it a collective reference to the people of Israel? No one knows for certain, but Christian liturgies through the centuries have seen Jesus in the suffering servant songs.

So, these quite poetic passages are prominent in the liturgies of Lent and especially of Good Friday.

Certainly, reference to Christ is the message for this feast. In this Scripture, God reveals that a faithful and pure servant will come. He will endure outrage. Many will turn against him. Yet he will be steadfast.

Supplying the second reading is the Acts of the Apostles. After Easter, almost every liturgy contains a reading from the Acts of the Apostles, but this source rarely furnishes readings at Mass in any other time. So, the appearance of Acts on this weekend is unusual.

The reading is important. St. Peter's identity is revealed. He spoke for all the Apostles and was chief among them. He reached out to gentiles by teaching Cornelius, a Roman officer, a foreigner, and pagan. Peter proclaimed Jesus, declaring that the saving ministry of Jesus began with his baptism. Peter's message

clearly was the continuation of the Lord's message.

St. Luke's Gospel provides the last reading. Luke's revelation of the baptism highlights the Lord's divine identity and mission of salvation. In Luke, God announces that Jesus is the Son of God, sent by him to redeem humanity. Jesus fulfilled the plan of God.

Certain images are important. In a distant echo of the creation accounts in Genesis, the reading shows that life comes from the water. Jesus emerged from the water to begin the mission of redemption. The faithful must repent. It prefigures Christian baptism.

Another crucial image is that of the sky. God spoke from the sky, a sign of divinity in the Old Testament.

Reflection

In Advent, the Church called us to renewed holiness and grace. The Church joyfully led us to Christmas, the celebration of the Lord's birth. If we responded in Advent, Christmas was much more than a commemoration. It was a personal event in which faithful hearts and souls truly received Christ and were vivified, healed and freed from the burden of sin and the inevitability of death.

In the great revelation of the Epiphany celebrated last week, the Church continued to tell us about Jesus, the son of Mary and therefore human, but also the Son of God, as the Magi realized.

Now, on this feast, the Church instructs us further about Jesus. He is the instrument of God's love for us. Doomed by our sins, we find another chance in Jesus. He is the Savior who reconciles us with God. He identifies with us.

Union with Jesus is critical, if we wish to be saved. He is God. God forgives us and restores us to eternal life if we accept the Lord.

Practically speaking, Jesus comes to us through Peter and the Apostles, the Lord's special students, sent to bring salvation to all the world. They still are present in and through the Church. †

Daily Readings

Monday, January 10

1 Samuel 1:1-8
Psalm 116:12-19
Mark 1:14-20

Tuesday, January 11

1 Samuel 1:9-20
(Response) 1 Samuel 2:1, 4-8
Mark 1:21-28

Wednesday, January 12

1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19-20
Psalm 40:2, 5, 7-10
Mark 1:29-39

Thursday, January 13

St. Hilary, bishop and doctor of the Church
1 Samuel 4:1-11
Psalm 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25
Mark 1:40-45

Friday, January 14

1 Samuel 8:4-7, 10-22a
Psalm 89:16-19
Mark 2:1-12

Saturday, January 15

1 Samuel 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a
Psalm 21:2-7
Mark 2:13-17

Sunday, January 16

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 96:1-3, 7-10
1 Corinthians 12:4-11
John 2:1-11

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

No gesture is mandated in praying the Our Father during Mass

Q What is the proper prayer position for the laity when praying the Our Father at Mass? (Virginia)



A The directions on this from the website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops are remarkably concise. It says: "No position is prescribed in the *Roman Missal* for an assembly gesture during the Lord's Prayer."

The celebrating priest, on the other hand, is instructed that he should maintain the "orans" position, with his hands outstretched to the side in prayer.

I have always found a certain inconsistency in this: At certain other times in the Mass, the priest is praying on behalf of the congregation—especially during the eucharistic prayer. But with the Our Father, the priest is praying along with the faithful, saying the same words as the rest of the congregation.

In some parishes, congregations tend to hold one another's hands during the Lord's Prayer, although there is no

direction in the rubrics to do so. That gesture does show the unity of the congregation, but it can also create some uncertainty.

Some people don't feel comfortable holding hands—especially during the current COVID-19 crisis—and they shouldn't feel compelled to do so.

My approach on this is to let congregations do what they want, so long as they don't force the issue. Perhaps some day the rubrics will be more specific, but for now I think it best for people to do whatever they sense is appropriate.

Q For a person who has not been to church or to confession for several years but receives the sacrament of the anointing of the sick before she dies, would that take away mortal sins? (Iowa)

A I would say that it depends. If the dying person is no longer able to confess, the sacrament of the anointing of the sick would take away mortal sin—provided the person has the sorrow for sin that would be required for the worthy reception of the sacrament of penance ("imperfect contrition," or sorrow for sin

for a lesser motive than pure love of God—for example, because of the fear of divine punishment.)

This sacrament is meant to give the sick person the courage and sense of peace to deal with serious illness; but also, as the website of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis says: "A sick person's sins are forgiven if he or she was not able to go to confession prior to the celebration of the sacrament of the anointing of the sick."

Of course, if the sick person is conscious and alert, the ministering priest should always first offer the opportunity of going to confession.

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

My Journey to God

Morning Silence

By M. Lynell Chamberlain

The silence overwhelms me,
Immerses me in a way,
And so I stop and listen
To what the world has to say.

Speaking without words,
Sharing without sound,
That God isn't far away,
He's always around.

All I need to see him
Is to open my eyes and see.
All I need to hear him
Is to sit here quietly.

(M. Lynell Chamberlain is a member of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg. Photo: A woman in Los Angeles hikes above the early morning fog on May 9, 2020.) (CNS photo/Lucy Nicholson, Reuters)

Rest in peace

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

ABRAHAM, Katalin M., 86, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Dec. 6. Mother of George, Norbert, Jr., and Robert Abraham. Grandmother of two.

ARMSTRONG, Bruce A., 64, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Dec. 1. Husband of Susan Armstrong. Father of Nicholas and Ryan Armstrong. Son of Joan Armstrong. Brother of Nancy Mesler.

BERNZOTT, Ann, 85, St. Gabriel, Connerville, Dec. 6. Mother of Pam Copeland, Becky Fischesser, Dr. Cheri Schiano, Beth Schnelle, Chris and Dr. Jay Bernzott. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of 10.

BOEHMER, Robert, 90, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 25. Father of Theresa Fairchild, Anne Hunneman, Sarah, Christopher, Eric, John and Mark Boehmer. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of seven.

BRAWNER, Patrick N., 51, Prince of Peace, Madison, Dec. 4. Father of Kayla Baker and Brady Brawner. Son of Paul Jo and Janet Brawner. Brother of Kathy Phillips, Karen Sinderson, Greg, Tim and Tony Brawner.

BRUNS, JoeAnn, 85, St. Michael, Brookville, Dec. 11. Wife of Lester Bruns. Mother of Denise Busony, Debbie Moore, Diane Pennington, Donna and Doug Bruns. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 11.

CARNAGHI, Angelo, 95, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 15. Father of Jan, Jill, Mark and Mike Carnaghi. Brother of Katie McClaren. Grandfather of four.

CHASE, James R., 77, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Dec. 13. Father of Michelle Schoettle. Brother of William Chase. Grandfather of four.

COOPER, Jerry T., 74, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Father of Darlene Hawk, Amy Kendall, Stacy O'Gara and Keith Cooper. Stepson of Donald Keith. Brother of Brenda Turk. Grandfather of eight. Step-grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of three. Step-great-grandfather of eight.

DONOVAN, Patrick M., 72, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 28. Husband of Molly Donovan. Father of Brian, Dan and Kevin Donovan. Brother of Kathleen, Dennis, Jimmy and Timothy. Grandfather of three.

ERNST, Sandra L., 76, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Mother of Brenda and Steve Ernst. Sister of Jim Allen. Grandmother of six.

FRYE, Bernard, 80, St. Joseph University Parish, Terre Haute, Dec. 6. Husband of Myrthel Frye. Father of Jessica Brady, Gretchen Gallion, Cheryl Garrett, Aimee Jacobs, Theresa Kane, Heidi Leonard, Elizabeth Meny and Lester Frye. Brother of Edna Helms. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of five.

GREULICH, Leroy J., 89, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Dec. 3. Husband of Bettye Greulich. Father of Susanna Board, Cynthia, Gregg and Randy Greulich. Brother of Omer Greulich. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of nine.

GROTE, Guenter A., 80, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, Dec. 6. Husband of Ursula Grote. Father of Cornelia Berkemeier, Annette, Edmund and Guenter Grote, Jr. Brother of Siegfried Grote. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of eight.

HASSFURTHER, Charlotte A., 76, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Dec. 5. Wife of Thomas Hassfurter. Mother of Melissa Braunecker. Sister of Tammy Lillipop, Karen, Rojean, Clyde, Gerald, Leon, Lynn and Stewart Brenner. Grandmother of one.

KING, Jane A. (Bixler), 86, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Dec. 6. Wife of Richard King. Mother of Teresa Axthelm, Mary Ginder and Peter Bixler. Stepmother of Pamela Kirkham, Linda Nolting, Jeffrey, Phillip, Robert and Rodnick King. Grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother of several.

LEISING, Paul A., 83, St. Mary, Rushville, Dec. 2. Husband of JoAnn Leising. Father of Angela Buckley, Tammy Jackman and Doug Leising. Brother of Norma Miller, Arnold, Harold, Mark, Marvin and Raymond Leising. Grandfather of six.

LEWIS, Terry L., 62, Prince of Peace, Madison, Dec. 7. Husband of Karen Lewis. Father of Michelle Lewis. Brother of Debbie Miles, Vickie Wehner, Bill, Steve and Wayne Lewis.

LILLY, Ralph M., 68, Holy Family, New Albany, Dec. 5. Husband of Molly Lilly. Father of Andrea Cotton and Crista Steier. Son of Ralph and Juanita Lilly. Brother of Donnie and Mike Lilly. Grandfather of four.

LITTELMANN, Mary P., 75, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, Dec. 7. Wife of Ray Littelmann. Mother of Angela Meyer, Doug and Todd Littelmann. Sister of Linda Jones. Grandmother of eight.

LYNCH, Robert M., 83, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Dec. 1. Father of Jeannie Massing and Marty Lynch. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of seven.

NIEMAN, Robert I., 87, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Dec. 14. Father of Elizabeth Brookbank and Clifford Nieman. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of three.

PRESNAL, Maribeth (Maloo), 56, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Wife of Mike Presnal. Mother of Lucy, Andrew, Michael and Sam Presnal. Daughter of Shelby Chapdeliane. Sister of Mark Maloo.

SHIRLEY, Jerry F., 83, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Dec. 3. Father of Geri and Dale Shirley. Brother of Alvin and Rob Shirley. Grandfather of two.

SONDGERATH, Patrecia A., 91, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Mother of Mary Kirkman, Ruth Niezgodski, Rachel, Paul and Tyler Lockhart. Stepmother of Michelle Miller, Heidi Tapley, Thane and Todd Sondgerath. Sister of Alice Butts, Mary Knapp and Shirley Sondgerath. Grandmother of 28. Great-grandmother of eight.

SORG, James, 84, Most Precious Blood, New Middletown, Oct. 9. Husband of Delores Sorg. Father of Connie Davis, Brenda Englert, Kimberly Graves, Lisa Whyland, Tonya, Carl, Michael, Rick and Timothy Sorg. Brother of Jeanie Blackburn, Theresa Blevins, Mary Catherine Deppe, Winifred Goelz, Amy Rebello, Anthony, Charles, Joe and John Sorg. Grandfather of 21. Great-grandfather of 12.

TUGGLE, Robert, 83, St. Pius V, Troy, Dec. 12. Father of Bob and John Tuggle. Brother of Jack Tuggle. Grandfather of one. Great-grandfather of two.

WERNISING, James H., 72, Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Husband of Carol Wernsing. Father of Francheska Campbell, Erica Collins, Wendy Manubay, Patricia Marsella, Jennifer Palic and Scott Hogue. Brother of Ed Wernsing. Grandfather of 16.

WORLD, Laura, 75, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 23. Mother of Gail Books, Stacy Wessel, Brian Russell and Adam Worl.

Honoring the Magi



Young people dressed as the Magi walk in the central aisle of St. Peter's Basilica after attending Pope Francis' celebration of Mass on the feast of Mary, Mother of God, at the Vatican on Jan. 1. German, Italian and Swiss young people, called "sternsingers," carol and raise money for charity between Christmas and Epiphany each year. (CNS photo/Romano Siciliani, pool)

Sister of Eunice Shell, Clara Welch and Donna Wright. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of five.

ZAPP, Patricia, 94, Most Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, Dec. 5. Wife of Dale Zapp. Mother of David,

Douglas and Patrick Zapp. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of 16. †

Providence Sister Ann Stephen Stouffer served for 44 years in Catholic schools

Providence Sister Ann Stephen Stouffer, a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, died on Dec. 9 at Clinton Gardens in Clinton. She was 82.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 21 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Ann Stephen was born on Feb. 26, 1939, in Wabash, Ind. She entered the Sisters of Providence on Feb. 2, 1960, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1967.

Sister Ann Stephen earned a bachelor's degree at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree at Indiana University in Bloomington.

During her 62 years as a member of the

Sisters of Providence, Sister Ann Stephen ministered for 44 years in Catholic schools in Illinois, Indiana and California. After retiring from ministry in education, she returned to the motherhouse where she served as administrator of Providence Hall. In 2019, she dedicated herself entirely to prayer.

In the archdiocese, Sister Ann Stephen served at the former St. Mary-of-the-Woods School from 1963-64, at St. Malachy School in Brownsburg from 1969-75 and at the motherhouse from 2008-15.

She is survived by two brothers, John Stouffer of McCormick, S.C., and Stephen Stouffer of Indianapolis.

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

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

1 Ethics Point Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810

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

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

LAMB

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and “Devil’s Bridge,” other highly rated trails that were on our “to-do” list.

But then something happened: I realized how high up I was and saw a ridge that I’d have to navigate with no guard rail. My legs started shaking uncontrollably. They quivered so much that I had to kneel down. I was terrified—in a state of sheer panic. I had to close my eyes.

My husband gently ushered me back down to our car. I told him I just needed to lie down.

As we drove back to the hotel, I told him how sorry I was for wimping out and that I knew he was excited to hike the celebrated trails with glorious views. That’s when I noticed that we passed the hotel.

“Where are we going?” I asked.

“I read about a beginner’s trail for hiking that you might enjoy,” he said.

“It’s not nearly as steep, and I’ll help you all the way to the summit,” he added.

With my knees still shaking, he guided me up. We hiked *around* the mountain so that the ascent was not so steep. I stumbled a few times, but he stayed by my side, and we reached the top together.

Later, I learned that this mountain is named “Sugarloaf.” I liked the sound of that. Sugarloaf is more

my speed than “Devil’s Bridge.”

My knees were still shaking, but it was beautiful up there. After saying a morning prayer, I took a photo. It is to the right.

I was in awe of the hues of red and pink, along with the trees that dotted the landscape. It was peacefully quiet. Majestic, really.

I wasn’t brave enough to get a picture on the cliff—apparently the best photo opportunity spot—as others were lining up to do.

That day, I climbed my own mountain. (I realize experienced hikers might call it a “hill.”)

In the new year, my hope is to be present to the people and tasks God has placed on my trail. It’s time for me to stop dreaming of climbing others’ mountains and witnessing their pinnacle views.

Instead, I’m called to focus on God’s will for me and those he has entrusted to my care. When I intentionally



Columnist Patti Lamb shares a beautiful view from Sedona, Ariz., where she and her family hiked during a recent vacation. (Submitted photo by Patti Lamb)

pause to take it all in—I see the beauty on my path, trusting God as my constant companion.

(Patti Lamb, a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

With foreign donation license denied, Missionaries of Charity ration food

KOLKATA, India (CNS)—Since Christmas, the Missionaries of Charity have been strictly rationing the food and daily use items for their regular 600 beneficiaries at their motherhouse and Shishu Bhavan, a children’s orphanage. On Jan. 2, the breakfast of tea, bread and eggs was cut short by an hour.

“As long as you did it to one of these, my least brethren, you did it to me,” said Razia, a beneficiary of the Missionaries of Charity, as she waited for the nuns to give her the weekly provisions. She lives with her two sick children across the road from the motherhouse, and says she visits the tomb of St. Teresa and prays for the “difficult times to pass.”

Abdul Razzak, a 45-year-old beggar, stays put outside the motherhouse curled in his rags. He has been staying there since Christmas in hopes of getting his share of food and medicine. A few others like him sit along with him to receive their subsidy from the nuns. Since the pandemic began, they received their daily meal from the motherhouse, but now, “Sisters told us that we might not be able to collect the food any longer,” said the sick man.

The Indian Home Ministry has not approved the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) license of the Missionaries of Charity on the grounds of some “adverse reports.” However, the nuns do not express their disappointment with the central government’s action and continue the routine of prayers and service.

A spokeswoman for the order said the nuns are looking into the lack of FCRA approval and will appeal the ruling.

But the uncertainty hanging on the fate of foreign donations has started showing in the organization’s everyday operations.

Sister Dominic Mary, a member of the Missionaries of Charity from neighboring Orissa state, told Catholic News Service that, “The state government of Orissa has confirmed that their supplies will keep going in these difficult times. ... If other state governments also support us, maybe this phase will pass.”

Every Friday, Chotu, 5, Abdulla, 7, Sashi, 6, and Gulnaaz, 8, all living by the street with their mother, collect food from the Shishu Bhavan. Their father is blind and lives in a makeshift wooden trolley, begging on the streets. In the winter, their only hopes of survival have been the Missionaries of Charity. They were expecting to receive the woolen blankets that did not arrive after Christmas.

“We might not get it this winter,” said their mother, Rosy.

On Fridays and Sundays, the poor line up to get their share of essentials at the motherhouse. The nuns have told them now that it might get difficult for them in the coming days.

In India, about 6,000 nongovernmental organizations—some as prominent as Oxfam—lost their FCRA licenses on Jan. 1. When a FCRA license is canceled, the organization can appeal to the Home Ministry; with an appeal, the license

remains valid for 180 days. Permanent cancellation of the permit then follows.

John Dayal, human rights activist and author, said: “The FCRA curbs are just a way to restrict humanitarian organizations to work independently in India. It is

a kind of continued violence that’s played on the streets by goons and by the government through regulations and misinformation against Christians.”

Muslims have suffered similar discrimination. †

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Employment

Office Manager / Receptionist

Responsibilities include greeting guests on the phone and in person, assisting guests during their stay, procuring office supplies, payables and receivables, running the bookstore, supervising part-time office staff. Must have excellent organizational and communication skills, great attention to detail, very good computer skills, able to work a flexible schedule and a heart for the ministry and mission of Fatima Retreat House.

Housekeeping Supervisor

Responsible for maintaining the order and cleanliness of the Retreat House. Applicants must have the ability to lift and carry at least 20-30 pounds and push at least 50 pounds, and be available for a flexible schedule with an occasional evening or Sunday. Must be a self-starter, good communicator, able to work unsupervised and have a heart for the ministry and mission of Fatima Retreat House.

Benefits for both positions include employer/employee paid health insurance, HSA account contributions, life insurance, worker’s compensation insurance, paid holidays and vacation, 403B participation with employer match

Send cover letter, resume and list of references to:

Georgene Beiriger, Director, Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
gbeiriger@archindy.org or call (317) 545-7681, Ext. 105



A place to be...with God! 5353 East 56th Street Indianapolis, IN 46226 | (317) 545-7681

Employment

Youth Minister, St. Pius X Catholic Church

St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis is seeking a FULL TIME Coordinator of Youth Ministry to join our parish staff.

The Coordinator of Youth Ministry is responsible for a comprehensive youth ministry program for junior high and high school, grades 6 through 12. Based on the “Renewing the Vision” document, this ministry fosters both the personal and spiritual growth of the youth, and seeks to draw youth into awareness and participation in the life, mission and work of the faith community and the larger church.

Major responsibilities include the High School Confirmation program, and High School and Middle School Catechesis and programming, as well as collaborating with pastoral staff and various committees. The Youth Minister is to be a visible and active member of the St. Pius community, participating in parish and school activities and events, present and involved in liturgical celebrations, and actively involved and present in the school. Usual work hours will include nights and weekends.

Applicant must be a professed and practicing Catholic with a solid knowledge of the Traditions and teachings of the Church, have a Bachelor’s degree in pastoral ministry, religious education, theology or related field and have previous pastoral ministry experience in parish or campus setting.

Please email a cover letter, resume, and list of references to:

Kaitlyn Blandford at kblandford@spxparish.org.

Part Time Pastoral Associate, St. Pius X Catholic Church

St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis is seeking a PART TIME Pastoral Associate to join our parish staff.

The Pastoral Associate is a lay minister who collaborates with the Pastor and staff in the overall pastoral care of the parish. This position ministers to the sick and dying, nursing homes, coordinates bereavement for our parish, as well as other programs.

Major responsibilities include Pastoral Care and bringing the Eucharist to those sick in hospitals, nursing homes, and home bound, Senior Adult ministry, ministering to the bereaved, coordinating volunteers for outreach ministries, and coordinating the Christ Renews His Parish retreats for both men and women.

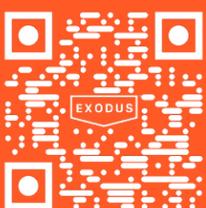
Applicant must have previous pastoral or related ministry experience, a basic, well-balanced foundation in Vatican II Catholic theology and spirituality and some understanding of human psychology and the grief process. It is preferred that the applicant have a Bachelor’s degree in Theology/Pastoral Studies or Pastoral Ministry/Religious Studies.

Please email a cover letter, resume, and list of references to:

Sharon Wagner at swagner@spxparish.org.

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- ▶ **Become a better man.**



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