



The

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Motherly embrace

Pope Francis consecrates Ukraine, Russia to Mary, page 16.

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Pope calls for end to senseless war in Ukraine

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis renewed his call for an end to the war in Ukraine and strongly denounced the conflict as a barbaric act used by those in power at the cost of innocent lives.



Pope Francis

“We need to reject war, a place of death where fathers and mothers bury their children, where men kill their brothers and sisters without even having seen them, where the powerful decide and the poor die,” the pope told pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square on March 27 for his Sunday *Angelus* address.

The consequences of war, he added, especially the displacement of children, “not only devastate the present, but future of society as well.

“I read that from the beginning of the aggression in Ukraine, one of every two children has been displaced from their country. This means destroying the future, causing dramatic trauma in the smallest and most innocent among us. This is the bestiality of war—a barbarous and sacrilegious act,” the pope said.

According to UNICEF, Russia’s war against Ukraine—now entering its second month—has displaced an estimated 4.3 million children, which is more than half of Ukraine’s estimated 7.5 million children.

“The war has caused one of the fastest large-scale displacements of children since World War II,” said Catherine Russell, UNICEF executive director, in a statement on March 24. “This is a grim milestone that could have lasting consequences for generations to come.”

Warning of the “danger of self-destruction,” the pope said that war “should not be something that is inevitable” and that humanity “should not accustom ourselves to war.”

He also urged political leaders to dedicate their efforts to not only ending the war in Ukraine, but “to abolish war, to erase it from human history before it erases human history.

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Paul Hnin of St. Barnabas Parish invites the congregation to respond to a petition during a Mass for peace in Myanmar celebrated at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on March 20. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, to the right of Hnin, served as principal celebrant. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Archbishop Thompson shares his concern for refugees during Mass for peace in Myanmar

By Natalie Hoefler

Since Feb. 24, the world has turned its eyes to the war in Ukraine. The devastation and loss of life there are nothing short of tragic, and the number of refugees and displaced persons has soared.

But just 13 months prior, the world was focused on another country, Myanmar (formerly Burma), where a sudden military coup on Feb. 1, 2021, led to protests, bloodshed, loss of freedom and the fleeing of many citizens to the country’s jungles or beyond.

The ongoing crisis there remains an open wound for

members of the archdiocese’s three Burmese Catholic refugee communities.

“Most of our family members from Kayan are displaced persons now,” said Rita Lwin, wiping a tear from her cheek. She, like many of her fellow Burmese parishioners at St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, is from Myanmar’s Kayan State.

The same situation is true for Dominic Ahua, also of St. Pius X Parish. Shadows of concern cross his face as he mentions his parents, siblings and relatives still in Myanmar. “They have run away from the war zone,” he said.

See MYANMAR, page 8

Pastor’s love of distance running draws him closer to God and his parishioners

(Editor’s note: This is the second in a series of stories about priests in the archdiocese who use their love of physical activity to connect with their community in the hope of drawing people closer to God.)

By John Shaughnessy

The unusual challenge involving Father Robert Sims would happen soon, but in this moment the pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis was leading a prayer for all the people lined up to run a race.

As he looked toward the runners and walkers who had gathered for the race—the kickoff event to the parish festival—Father Sims

See PRIEST, page 9



The smile of Father Robert Sims, pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, reflects the joy he has known through the years from running. (Submitted photo)



Pope Francis goes to confession during a Lenten penance service in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on March 25. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Confession is more about God's forgiveness than our sins, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The sacrament of reconciliation “is not so much about our sins” as it is about God’s forgiveness, Pope Francis said.

“Think about it: If our sins were at the heart of the sacrament, almost everything would depend on us, on our repentance, our efforts, our resolve,” but it is about God’s power, mercy and grace, the pope said on March 25 during a Lenten penance service in St. Peter’s Basilica.

The service, with individual confessions, preceded the pope’s formal act of consecrating the world, particularly Russia and Ukraine, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Pope Francis went to one of the confessionals in the basilica and, remaining standing because of knee trouble, confessed his sins before joining more than 100 other priests in hearing confessions.

The Vatican penance service was canceled in 2020 and 2021 because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Pope Francis began the service praying that God would “open our eyes, that we may see the evil we have committed, and touch our hearts, that we may be converted to you.”

The prayer booklet given to people

participating in the service contained a 25-point “examination of conscience” designed to prepare them for confession and absolution by looking at their faith and prayer lives, the way they treat family members and others, whether they go to Mass every Sunday and holy day of obligation, how they practice charity, follow the Church’s moral teachings and how they use the time and talents God has given them.

Holding the service on the feast of the Annunciation, the Gospel read at the service was the story of the angel appearing to Mary and telling her she would become the mother of Jesus.

Mary, he said, is told to rejoice, because God is with her.

“Dear brother, dear sister, today you can hear those words addressed to you,” Pope Francis told people in the congregation. “You can make them your own each time you approach God’s forgiveness, for there the Lord tells you, ‘I am with you.’”

“All too often,” he said, “we think that confession is about going to God with dejected looks. Yet it is not so much that we go to the Lord, but that he comes to us, to fill us with his grace, to fill us with his joy.”

Pope Francis also had a word for priests about how they should be ministers

El Instituto Pastoral Intercultural de la Arquidiócesis organizará un evento para los graduados el 27 de abril

El Instituto Pastoral Intercultural de la Arquidiócesis celebrará su primer Encuentro de Liderazgo Pastoral para Graduados en la Casa de Retiros Nuestra Señora de Fátima, ubicada en 5353 E. 56th St., en Indianápolis, el 27 de abril, de 7 a 10 p.m.

El evento se llevará a cabo en español e incluirá charlas sobre la Iglesia en el mundo actual y la función

que desempeñan los líderes pastorales. Se incluirá la cena.

El costo es de \$40, y el espacio es limitado.

Si tiene preguntas o desea inscribirse, envíe un correo electrónico a hernandez@archindy.org o a felix_javier2708@yahoo.com, o llame al 317-597-3751 o al 317-361-3381. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

April 1–10, 2022

<p>April 1 – 6:15 p.m. Mass at Women’s Care Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>April 1 – 7 p.m. 40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil outside Planned Parenthood abortion center, Indianapolis</p> <p>April 2 – 8 a.m. Deacon Convocation at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis</p> <p>April 3 – 2 p.m. Confirmation for youths of St. Paul Catholic Center and St. Charles Borromeo parishes, Bloomington, at St. Paul Catholic Center</p> <p>April 3 – 6 p.m. Confirmation for youths of St. Agnes Parish, Nashville; St. Martin of Tours Parish, Martinsville; St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Bedford; and St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Spencer, at St. Agnes Church</p> <p>April 5 – 10:30 a.m. Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>April 6 – 9:30 a.m. St. Mary’s Child Center visit, Indianapolis</p> <p>April 6 – 11:30 a.m. Indianapolis Eucharistic Revival</p>	<p>Planning Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>April 6 – 7 p.m. Confirmation for youths of St. Roch and St. Thomas Aquinas parishes, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p>April 7 – 10 a.m. Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>April 7 – 7 p.m. Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral</p> <p>April 8 – 2 p.m. Virtual Eucharistic Revival Diocesan Working Group meeting</p> <p>April 9 – 11 a.m. Confirmation for youths of St. Mary Parish, Greensburg; St. Maurice Parish, Napoleon, and St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Decatur County, at St. Mary Church</p> <p>April 9 – 3 p.m. Confirmation for youths of Holy Family Parish, Oldenburg, at Holy Family Church</p> <p>April 10 – 10 a.m. Palm Sunday Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral</p>
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of God’s forgiveness. “Offer to those who approach you the joy of this proclamation: ‘Rejoice, the Lord is with you.’ Set aside rigidity, obstacles and harshness; may you be doors wide open to mercy!”

If a priest is not prepared “to act in the person of the good shepherd, who takes his sheep into his arms and cradles them,”

the pope said, it is better that he not hear confessions.

And, to those who find it hard to accept the forgiveness of a sin in their past or are upset by their inability to mend their ways, Pope Francis said: “Do not be afraid. God knows your weaknesses and is greater than your mistakes.” †

Archdiocese’s Intercultural Pastoral Institute will host event for grads on April 27

The Archdiocese’s Intercultural Pastoral Institute will hold its first Pastoral Leadership Encounter for Graduates at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, from 7-10 p.m. on April 27.

The event, which will be conducted in Spanish, will include talks on the Church

in the world today and the role of the pastoral leader. Dinner is included.

The cost is \$40, and space is limited. For questions or to register, send an e-mail to chernandez@archindy.org or felix_javier2708@yahoo.com, or call 317-597-3751 or 317-361-3381. †

Chrism Mass to be celebrated at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral on April 12

The archdiocese’s annual Chrism Mass will be celebrated at 2 p.m. on April 12, Tuesday of Holy Week, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

The Mass is open to the public, and

all are welcome to attend. Doors open at 1 p.m.

Ordinarily celebrated yearly during Holy Week, the chrism Mass features priests renewing their ordination

promises and the blessing of oils used for the celebration of several sacraments and the dedication of altars and churches. The oils are distributed to representatives from each parish taking

part in the liturgy, who take them back to their faith communities across central and southern Indiana.

The liturgy will be livestreamed at www.archindy.org/streaming. †



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Father Francis Bryan served for more than 30 years at Marian University

By Sean Gallagher

Father Francis Bryan, a retired archdiocesan priest, died on March 23 at Franciscan St. Francis Hospital in Indianapolis. He was 85.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 31 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant. Father Robert Robeson, pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove and administrator of Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis, was the homilist.

Burial followed in the priests' circle at Calvary Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Throughout much of his priestly life and ministry, Father Bryan served as a professor and chaplain at Marian University in Indianapolis.

Shortly after his ordination in 1962, Father Bryan was assigned as assistant pastor of the former St. James the Greater Parish in Indianapolis. The parish was the faith home of now-retired Father James Bonke, who was an archdiocesan seminarian at the time Father Bryan was assigned associate pastor.

Father Bonke described how Father Bryan's example gave him a good model of priestly ministry.

"He taught me to learn as best I could, but also to be human and develop friendships and relationships with people in the parish," Father Bonke said. "He respected

everyone. He was quite intelligent, but he never made you feel less because of that."

Andrew Hohman, an assistant professor of theology and philosophy at Marian, served alongside Father Bryan there for two decades.

He saw the same quality in the priest that Father Bonke observed at St. James.

"His office was right outside of the chapel," said Hohman. "Many students would drop in and ask questions. Many students came to see him. He was a friend of the staff, the hourly workers and troubled students."

At the same time, Hohman said, Father Bryan took seriously his academic duties at Marian.

"He was a very popular teacher, very successful," Hohman said. "He was very concerned that students would understand the faith, but also that they would be willing to explore it and ask questions. He was not afraid of questions."

It was Father Bryan's openness to questions about the faith and his desire to explore it more deeply that led to him being known for his preaching.

"He gave wonderful, well-prepared homilies," said Father Bonke. "They were homilies that you wanted to listen to and pay attention to because they were so meaningful."

Francis Edward Bryan was born on Oct. 9, 1936, to the late Frank and Agnes (Christensen) Bryan in Indianapolis, where he grew up as a member of the former Assumption Parish.

After graduating from his parish's grade school, Father Bryan became an archdiocesan seminarian and received priestly formation at the former Saint Meinrad

High School and College, both in St. Meinrad.

His last four years of priestly formation took place at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.

Archbishop Paul C. Schulte ordained Father Bryan a priest on May 6, 1962, at the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad.

His first pastoral assignment was as assistant pastor of the former St. James the Greater Parish. He was also an instructor from 1962-63 at the former Archbishop Chartrand High School in Indianapolis.

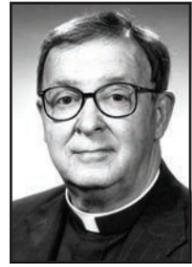
Starting in 1963, Father Bryan began ministry as a part-time instructor at the former Latin School of Indianapolis, which served as the archdiocese's high school seminary at the time.

Beginning in 1968, Father Bryan became a full-time instructor at the Latin School, with residence at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis.

He served as an associate pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove from 1969-74. During that period, he also continued as an instructor at the Latin School from 1969-72. Then, he ministered as archdiocesan assistant superintendent of education in charge of religious education from 1972-74.

Beginning in 1974, Father Bryan began 34 years of ministry at Marian University in Indianapolis. He served as a full-time instructor and later assistant professor of theology from 1974-2006. He also ministered as Marian's chaplain from 1977-2008, at which time he retired from active ministry.

Father Bryan is survived by his sisters Elizabeth Bryan of Madison and Therese Staton of Beech Grove. †



Fr. Francis Bryan

Conventual Franciscan Father Pius Poff served as pastor of Navilleton parish

By Sean Gallagher

Conventual Franciscan Father Pius Poff died on March 16 at Mount Saint Francis. A member of his order's Province of Our Lady of Consolation, which is based at

Mount Saint Francis, he served as pastor of St. Mary Parish in Navilleton from 2009 until his death. He was 87.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 24 at the chapel at Mount Saint Francis. Burial followed in the friars' cemetery.

Father Pius grew up as a member of the former St. Joseph Parish in Sellersburg, which was merged in 2014 with the former St. Paul Parish in Sellersburg to form St. John Paul II Parish. It is about 10 miles from where he served at St. Mary Parish.

But he didn't return to minister in the area near his home until he was 74, well past the time when priests often retire from parish administration.

Terry Boaz, who assisted Father Pius in his ministry at St. Mary as the parish's volunteer sacristan, was impressed by the priest's dedication to the people of the parish.

"He didn't hesitate to help in any way that he could help," said Boaz. "He'd bend over backwards to be there for the people in the parish. He had an unwavering devotion to the people in the parish."

Father Pius showed that dedication in a very personal way, Boaz explained.

"He kept a list of the birth dates and anniversaries of everyone in the parish," he said. "His off day was Monday. When someone had a birthday or an anniversary, he'd call them on that day. And on Tuesdays, he'd call the people he missed on Monday, in addition to the Tuesday people."

Father Wilfred "Sonny" Day, administrator of St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight, which neighbors St. Mary Parish in Navilleton, knew Father Pius throughout his ministry in the New Albany Deanery.

The personal connections he made with his parishioners extended to the other priests in the deanery, Father Day said.

"He always volunteered to help communal penance services in Advent and Lent," Father Day said. "He wanted to be a part of that. He related to all the guys. ... He fit right in and was one of us."

"He was always upbeat and always seemed happy. He didn't spend a lot of time worrying about things. He just kept moving."

Conventual Franciscan Father John Elmer, who preceded Father Pius as St. Mary's pastor, spoke of his friend's dedication to priestly ministry.

"He always told me that he was going to die with his boots on while serving God's people," Father John said. "He was very committed to serving the Lord and his children, whoever they might be."

Father John also noted how helping the poor was a priority for Father Pius, who helped start the Franciscan Kitchen in Louisville, Ky., which now serves hundreds of meals daily to people in need.

"He had a passion to minister to those on the margins of society, those who were down and out," Father John said.

Robert Joseph Poff was born to Julius and Catherine (Batliner) Poff on Nov. 6, 1934, in St. Joseph, Ind. After graduating from the eighth grade at the former St. Joseph School in Sellersburg, he enrolled at the minor seminary at Mount Saint Francis.

He became a novice in the Conventual Franciscans' Province of Our Lady of Consolation in 1952, at which time he received the religious name Pius.

Father Pius professed simple vows on July 12, 1953, and solemn vows on July 14, 1957. He received additional priestly formation at the former Assumption Seminary in Chaska, Minn., and was ordained a priest on Feb. 19, 1961,

at St. Paul Cathedral in St. Paul, Minn.

During the course of his more than 60 years of priestly life and ministry, Father Pius served in parishes in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio and Wisconsin. This included time in the 1990s when he ministered as the rector of his province's Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey, Ohio.

In the archdiocese, Father Pius served as pastor of St. Mary Parish in Navilleton

from 2009 until his death.

He is survived by his sisters Barbara Poff of Sellersburg, Mary Ann Reed of New Albany and Kathy Wesson of Charlestown; and brothers Dennis Poff of Sellersburg and James Poff of New Albany.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Province of Our Lady of Consolation, Office of Mission Advancement, 103 St. Francis Blvd., Mount St. Francis, Indiana 47146. †



Fr. Pius Poff, O.F.M. Conv.

Polish archbishop updates pope on aid to Ukraine refugees

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Polish Archbishop Stanislaw Gadecki of Poznan told Pope Francis that the Catholic Church in Poland is continuing its efforts to assist the countless refugees from Ukraine fleeing Russia's destructive war in the country.

Archbishop Gadecki, president of the Polish bishops' conference, met with the pope on March 28 and informed him of

the "activities that the Church in Poland undertook immediately after the outbreak of war."

As of March 28, of the nearly 4 million people who fled Ukraine since Russia invaded the country over a month ago, more than 2.2 million Ukrainian refugees have crossed over to neighboring Poland, the U.N. Refugee Agency reported. †

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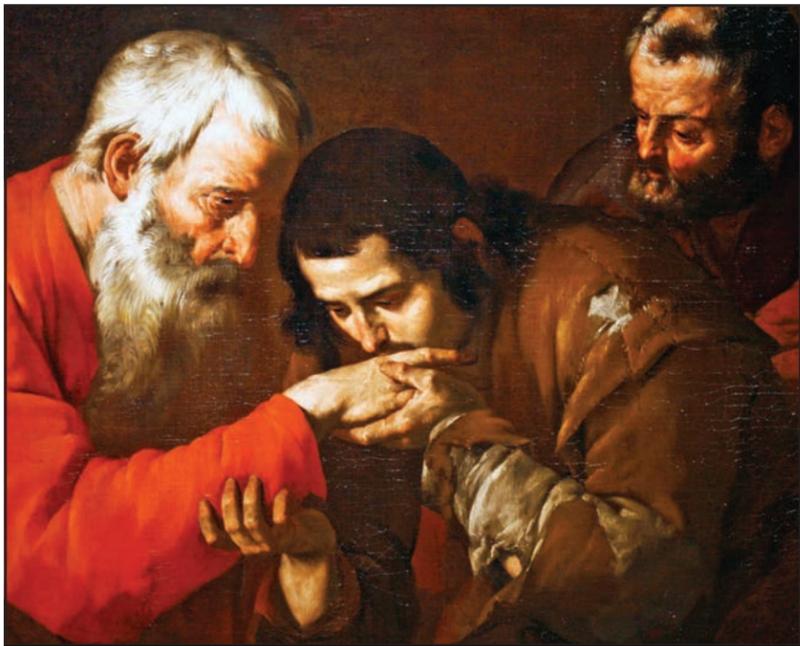


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Editorial



A painting titled "The Return of the Prodigal Son," by an unknown artist, is pictured at the Museum of Biblical Art in New York. A recent Sunday Gospel of the prodigal son gives us a model of self-giving through the example of the forgiving father. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

Parable reminds us to be people of mercy and forgiveness

Are you a forgiving person?

When it comes to family, friends, co-workers or others who have wronged you, are you able to get past the hurt and pain?

Do you seek forgiveness when you hurt others? When you sin against the Father?

If we're honest, most of the time it isn't easy to work through any of these situations.

But the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:1-3, 11-32), which was the Gospel reading last weekend, reminds us that we are children of an all-forgiving God who welcomes us home when we return to him after going astray.

Pope Francis said as much on March 27, sharing with us that God always forgives and joyously welcomes back everyone who returns to him, even after a life of mistakes and sin.

"God does not know how to forgive without celebrating! And the father celebrates because of the joy he has because his son has returned," the pope said before reciting the *Angelus* prayer with visitors gathered in St. Peter's Square.

Reflecting on the prodigal son, we read the younger son returns home after having squandered all his possessions. The words he speaks, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son" (Lk 15:21), demonstrate a humility that is a challenge for many in today's me-first society.

But just as powerful is the compassion his father shows for a child who certainly disappointed him by his selfish actions, spending his inheritance on a life of sin. Yet, the father welcomes him home: "Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found" (Lk 15:23-24).

The parable offers a beautiful example of mercy.

If we look back on our lives, the prodigal son could have been any of us at a time when sin entered our life. It may have been a time when we hurt

our parents, spouse, children or other loved ones—even our Creator—by cruel words or hurtful actions.

Did we take the time to reflect on our actions and see they were wrong? Did we seek forgiveness?

When it comes to our Creator and our sinfulness, "We are that son, and it is moving to think about how much the Father always loves us and waits for us," Pope Francis said.

As Bishop Robert E. Barron shared in his Lenten reflection of this Gospel, "We are the children of God; we have been given life, being, everything by him; we exist through him at every moment. What is represented here so vividly is the moment of sin, which means rupture or division."

The parable can also serve as a reminder that the sacrament of reconciliation is always available to us, especially during the Lenten season, when the opportunities for confession abound. Look on page 15 of this week's issue of *The Criterion* to see our full list.

We believe Lent is an opportune time to work on fractured relationships. Our faith teaches us to "look for those who are far away," have an open heart, truly listen and never make them feel uncomfortable, the pope added.

The father "celebrates because of the joy he has because his son has returned," and, like the father, "we need to rejoice," too, when someone repents, no matter how serious their mistakes may have been, the Holy Father noted.

We, too, have made mistakes. We have sinned against others. In turn, some have done wrong and sinned against us.

But our faith reminds us, as we read in one of the greatest parables ever told, that we are children of an all-loving God, who always welcomes us home when we are truly repentant of our sins.

As disciples of Jesus, may we be people of mercy who open our minds and hearts to forgive others, remembering that God forgives us.

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/John Shaughnessy

In search of wisdom: a touch of humor, an outpouring of love

Wisdom sometimes comes with a touch of humor, like this piece of advice about women and men:

"Studies show that women who put on a few extra pounds live longer than the men who point it out to them."

Wisdom can also come with an unexpected measure of common sense, such as when a college football player was once asked, "If you had to be stranded on an island with just one person, who would you choose?"

The young man thought about his different possibilities before sharing his surprising and insightful answer, "Someone who could build a boat."

And wisdom can be shared with a succinct, straightforward message, such as the two-word piece of advice that doctors, fitness experts and other health proponents constantly give to all of us who love to binge-watch television shows or who take in every second of every game in the men's and women's college basketball tournaments or who just sit too much in our jobs and our lives.

Their advice? "Keep moving."

As we head into the last part of Lent and toward Holy Week, there is also wisdom in adding another two words to the recommendation of "Keep moving."

"Keep moving toward Jesus."

As I write stories for *The Criterion*, I'm especially drawn to sharing the ones that are about people from all walks of life who continue to keep moving toward Jesus, no matter the circumstance of their lives, no matter the pain and heartbreak

they have faced in life.

Jesus came face to face with such people as he carried his cross to Calvary.

Veronica came willingly out of the crowd to wipe his face with a cloth, giving him the same compassion that he shared with so many in his earthly life.

So did the women of Jerusalem who wept for him when he crossed their path.

Simon of Cyrene reluctantly helped carry his cross and then became transformed by the suffering Jesus endured and the courage Christ showed after each time he fell.

The good thief turned his head from his own cross—and turned away from the life he had led—to acknowledge the innocence of Jesus, the hope of Jesus.

Joseph of Arimathea stepped from the hidden shadows of his support for Christ to ask for permission from Pilate to bury Jesus.

They all kept *moving* toward Jesus. They all kept *seeing* him, looking past the scourges of his battered, bloodied body and his sweaty, dirty, spit-upon face to *see* the heart and the essence of Christ—just as he had always looked into the heart and the essence of everyone he met, no matter their circumstances.

And as they kept moving toward Jesus, he kept moving to Calvary, to his heartbreaking death on the cross—fulfilling, through the sacrifice of his life, the two commandments that he said should always guide people's lives:

Love God, love your neighbor.

It's the defining wisdom of Jesus, the life-giving example he set for us, and the surest path to keep moving toward him.

(John Shaughnessy is assistant editor of *The Criterion*.) †

Be Our Guest/Bishop W. Shawn McKnight

For Catholics in U.S. mission territory, appeal strengthens Church at home

One of many lessons I've learned as a bishop is that miracles do happen. And, as I praise God for his work in the

Diocese of Jefferson City, Mo., I also need to thank parishioners nationwide who participate in the Holy Spirit's transformation of lives by giving to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

The appeal, which many dioceses across the country will take up in their parishes on April 23-24, supports Catholic ministry in dioceses where population density or economic challenges make it difficult to sustain faith formation and social outreach ministries. In 2021, the collection distributed nearly \$9.3 million in grants for projects ranging from marriage preparation to seminary education to retreats for military veterans.

Through the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, parishioners "strengthen the Church at home," sharing their blessings with fellow Catholics who lack the resources in their region. The renewal that I've seen as a result inspired me to accept the chairmanship of the USCCB Subcommittee on the Catholic Home Missions. I want every Catholic to know the great good that is done through their gifts. Their generosity makes visible and tangible the love, hope and healing that Jesus brings through the Church that he founded.

One of our mission dioceses, the Diocese of Gallup, N.M., embodies Pope Francis' vision of "a Church that is poor

and for the poor." Its 52 parishes and 22 missions serve a territory the size of Illinois, much of it uninhabitable desert or mountains. People live hardscrabble lives, often hours away from stores, doctors—and church. Consequently, in one remote parish, few young people were coming to religious education.

With help from the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, that parish's pastor recruited a team of loving and energetic sisters to run a three-week faith formation camp for the youths. Those young people experienced such joy in their faith that many of them brought their parents back to church.

Gallup is just one of more than 75 dioceses, eparchies and mission prelatures in the United States and its territories that regularly experience such miracles through the assistance offered by the Catholic Home Missions Appeal. The parishioners are often people of great faith who just need resources to share that faith with others.

My brother in Christ, Bishop Nicholas Samra of the Melkite Eparchy of Newton in Massachusetts, travels constantly among his 54 parishes and missions, which are spread among New England, the South and Southern California. Many have experienced dramatic growth from refugees fleeing civil war in Syria. Through gifts to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, Bishop Nicholas is able to provide much-needed pastoral and social care to traumatized Catholics who arrived with little but the clothes on their backs.

Many mission dioceses serve populations that are unknown to most people, but are close to the heart of God.

See GUEST, page 10



Christ the Cornerstone

Follow Jesus' example of mercy and justice

Many of us were taught as children that “people in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones.” That is, essentially, what Jesus tells the scribes and Pharisees in Sunday’s Gospel reading: “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her” (Jn 8:7).

We have all heard this story many times, so the situation is familiar to us. A woman has been caught in an adulterous relationship, and the religious leaders of Jesus’ time want to punish her strictly. In an effort to trap Jesus into betraying the mosaic law, they challenge him saying, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” (Jn 8:4-5) What Jesus says in response is also familiar to us, namely that we who are sinners cannot afford to judge others lest that same retributive justice be applied to us.

The first reading for the Fifth Sunday of Lent (Is 43:16-21) recalls the mighty deeds that God has done throughout the Old Testament, but it also challenges us to disregard the past and focus on the future. As

the prophet says, “Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; see, I am doing something new!” (Is 43:18-19).

What is new, of course, is Jesus. Through the mystery of the Incarnation, all God’s creation has been reborn, and all that the law and the prophets foretold has been fulfilled and “made new.” As one powerful example of this complete transformation, justice is now informed by mercy. We no longer punish by taking “an eye for an eye” or by stoning people. In fact, Jesus turns these old attitudes inside out:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on [your] right cheek, turn the other one to him as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand him your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles” (Mt 5:38-41).

We are told to “go the extra mile” out of love for God and for our neighbor. We are challenged to let go of any resentments caused by sins

that have been committed against us, and we are instructed to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.

In Sunday’s second reading from St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians (Phil 3:8-14) this new way of thinking is affirmed. As Paul says, “Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God’s upward calling, in Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:13-14).

What will the scribes and Pharisees gain by stoning a woman in fulfillment of the mosaic law? Satisfaction? Righteousness? A sense of moral superiority? Also, what about the man who was her partner in the act of adultery? While the accusers focus on condemning the woman, there is no mention of the man’s guilt.

Jesus sees through their hypocrisy. He writes things in the sand that capture their attention and cause them to gradually walk away. Then he says these incredibly powerful words of love and mercy: “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She replied, “No one, sir.” Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go,

and from now on do not sin any more” (Jn 8:10-11).

Jesus does *not* say, “You’ve done nothing wrong.” He explicitly tells her to change her ways. But the way he treats this particular sinner, and, we can assume, her partner, is the same way he treats all of us sinners. He respects us, loves us, and invites us to repent and sin no more.

When it comes to selfishness and sin, all of us live in glass houses. None of us has any business throwing stones at anyone else regardless of the seriousness of their sins. This does not mean we should tolerate injustice or ignore the evil things that are done to others. We are challenged to speak out against all forms of abuse—especially to the most vulnerable members of our society—and to work for justice and peace in our homes, our neighborhoods, and our world. But we are challenged to do this Jesus’ way—with humility, compassion and self-sacrificing love.

As we continue our Lenten journey, let’s pray for the courage and the wisdom to follow Jesus’ example, and to be both merciful and just. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Sigamos el ejemplo de misericordia y justicia de Jesús

A muchos nos enseñaron de pequeños la frase “el que tiene techo de vidrio no le tira piedras al vecino.” Eso es, esencialmente, lo que Jesús les dice a los escribas y fariseos en la lectura del Evangelio del domingo: “Aquel de ustedes que esté sin pecado, que tire la primera piedra” (Jn 8:7).

Todos hemos escuchado esta historia muchas veces, por lo que la situación nos resulta conocida. Una mujer ha sido sorprendida en una relación adúltera, y los líderes religiosos de la época de Jesús quieren castigarla con severidad. En un esfuerzo por embaucar a Jesús para que traicione la ley de Moisés, lo desafían diciendo: “Maestro, a esta mujer se le ha sorprendido en el acto mismo de adulterio. En la ley Moisés nos ordenó apedrear a tales mujeres. ¿Tú qué dices?” (Jn 8: 4-5) Lo que Jesús dice en respuesta también nos resulta conocido, a saber, que nosotros, que somos pecadores, no podemos permitirnos juzgar a los demás, no sea que se nos aplique esa misma justicia retributiva.

La primera lectura del quinto domingo de Cuaresma (Is 43:16-21) recuerda las hazañas que Dios ha realizado a lo largo del Antiguo Testamento, pero también nos

desafía a dejar de lado el pasado y centrarnos en el futuro. Como dice el profeta: “Olviden las cosas de antaño; ya no vivan en el pasado. ¡Voy a hacer algo nuevo!” (Is 43:18-19).

Lo nuevo, por supuesto, es Jesús. A través del misterio de la Encarnación, toda la creación de Dios ha renacido, y todo lo que la ley y los profetas predijeron se ha cumplido y “se ha hecho nuevo.” Como un poderoso ejemplo de esta completa transformación, la justicia se guía ahora por la misericordia. Ya no se castiga con el “ojo por ojo” ni con la lapidación. De hecho, Jesús le da la vuelta a estas viejas actitudes:

“Ustedes han oído que se dijo: ‘Ojo por ojo y diente por diente.’ Pero yo les digo: No resistan al que les haga mal. Si alguien te da una bofetada en la mejilla derecha, vuélvele también la otra. Si alguien te pone pleito para quitarte la camisa, déjale también la capa. Si alguien te obliga a llevarle la carga un kilómetro, llévasela dos” (Mt 5:38-41).

Se nos dice que hagamos un esfuerzo adicional por amor a Dios y al prójimo. Se nos desafía a dejar de lado todo resentimiento que ocasionen los pecados que se han cometido contra nosotros, y se

nos instruye a amar a nuestros enemigos y a rezar por los que nos persiguen.

En la segunda lectura del domingo, extraída de la Carta de san Pablo a los Filipenses (Fil 3:8-14), se afirma esta nueva forma de pensar. Como dice Pablo: “Una cosa hago: olvidando lo que queda atrás y esforzándome por alcanzar lo que está delante, sigo avanzando hacia la meta para ganar el premio que Dios ofrece mediante su llamamiento celestial en Cristo Jesús” (Fil 3:13-14).

¿Qué ganarán los escribas y los fariseos al apedrear a una mujer en cumplimiento de la ley de Moisés? ¿Satisfacción? ¿Justicia? ¿Un sentido de superioridad moral? Además, ¿qué pasa con el hombre que fue su compañero en el acto de adulterio? Mientras los acusadores se centran en condenar a la mujer, no se menciona la culpabilidad del hombre.

Jesús ve más allá de esta hipocresía; escribe cosas en la arena que captan la atención de aquellos y esto ocasiona que se alejen poco a poco. Luego pronuncia estas palabras increíblemente poderosas de amor y misericordia: —“Mujer, ¿dónde están? ¿Ya nadie te condena?” —“Nadie, Señor.” —Tampoco yo te condeno.

Ahora vete, y no vuelvas a pecar” (Jn 8:10-11).

Jesús *no* dice “No has hecho nada malo”; le dice explícitamente que cambie su forma de actuar. Pero la forma en que trata a esta pecadora en particular, y, podemos inferir que a su pareja también, es la misma forma en que nos trata a todos los pecadores: nos respeta, nos ama y nos invita a arrepentirnos y no pecar más.

Cuando se trata del egoísmo y el pecado, todos tenemos techo de vidrio. Ninguno de nosotros tiene por qué tirar piedras a los demás, independientemente de la gravedad de sus pecados. Esto no significa que debamos tolerar la injusticia o ignorar las cosas malas que se hacen a los demás. Tenemos el reto de denunciar toda forma de abuso (especialmente a los miembros más vulnerables de nuestra sociedad) y de trabajar por la justicia y la paz en nuestros hogares, nuestros vecindarios y nuestro mundo. Pero se nos desafía a hacerlo a la manera de Jesús: con humildad, compasión y amor abnegado.

Mientras continuamos nuestro viaje cuaresmal, recemos para tener el valor y la sabiduría de seguir el ejemplo de Jesús, y ser misericordiosos y justos a la vez. †

Events Calendar

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

April 6

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

April 8

St. John Paul II Parish, St. Joseph Campus, 2605 St. Joe Rd. West, Sellersburg. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., dine in or drive-through, fried or baked fish, fried shrimp, baked potato, French fries, coleslaw, mac and cheese or baked beans, fish sandwich \$7, sandwich and fries \$9, dinners \$12. Information: 812-246-2512.

All Saints Parish St. Martin Campus, 8044 Yorkridge Rd., Guilford. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., includes hand-breaded cod, French fries, green beans, mac and cheese, coleslaw, applesauce, cheese pizza, drink, dessert, \$12 adult, \$6 children. Information: 812-576-4302 or emilyalig.asp@gmail.com.

St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave.,

Indianapolis. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m., dinners include choice from eight entrées, two sides, soda, white or wheat bread and dessert, \$11.50-\$14.75, entrée only \$10.25-\$13, side orders à la cart \$.70-\$4, mask required, walk-in or order in advance, to-your-car delivery available. Advance orders must be received by 9 a.m. Friday: call 317-536-1047 or 317-632-9349, ext. 111; fax 317-426-5004; or e-mail stريتاسecretary71@yahoo.com.

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Lenten Friday Devotions**, adoration noon-6 p.m., rosary 6 p.m., Mass 6:30 p.m., Stations of the Cross 7 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508 or mrivelli@sjoa.org.

Elizabeth Ann Seton High School, 233 S. 5th St., Richmond. **Spring Pops Concert**, 6:30-7:15 p.m., featuring student musicians grades 7-12, doors open 6 p.m., bake sale, freewill donation. Information: 765-965-6956 or skitchin@seton Catholics.org.

April 9

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Avenue, Beech

Grove. **Called to Love: Lenten Morning of Reflection for Women**, 9 a.m.-noon, sponsored by archdiocesan Catholic Charities-Social Concerns ministry, free, register by April 8. Information and registration: 317-236-1401, tchamblee@archindy.org or cutt.ly/CtL2022.

April 12

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.

April 13

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.

April 15

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Way of the Cross**, noon. Information:

317-784-4439 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Way of the Cross**, noon. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

Planned Parenthood, 8590 Georgetown Rd., Indianapolis. **Stations of the Cross, Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet for Victims of Abortion**, noon-1 p.m. Information: info@40daysforlife.com or 317-372-0040.

April 15-24

Prince of Peace Parish, Divine Mercy Grotto, 305 W. State St., Madison. **Divine Mercy Novena**, 3 p.m. each day except 5 p.m. on Good Friday, in case of inclement weather novena will be in St. Patrick Chapel. Information: 812-265-4166 or parishoffice@popeace.org.

April 16

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. 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.

Oldenburg Academy, 1 Twister Circle, Oldenburg, Indiana. **Oldenburg Academy Alumni Easter Egg Hunt**, 10 a.m.-noon, arrive by 9:45 a.m., rain or shine, three age groups, 0-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-10 years, bring basket, park at Feldhaus, meet at Academic Building, free. Information: 812-933-0737 or alumni@oldenburgacademy.org.

April 18

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.

April 20

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

April 21

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.

April 22

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Catholic Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Pro-Life Series "Balloon Day Massacre: Childlessness on Purpose,"** doors open 6 p.m., 6:30-9:30 p.m. lecture by Tim O'Donnell followed by panel discussion, freewill offering. Information: 317-407-6881 or smdye1@gmail.com.

April 22-23

Our Lady of Grace Monastery, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Our Lady of Grace Academy All Class Reunion**, for classes 1960-1979, **Fri.:** wine and cheese social 7-9 p.m.; **Sat.:** service project 9-11 a.m., Mass 4:30 p.m., dinner 6:30 p.m.; \$79. Information and registration: olgalumns.com, 317-787-3287 or olgmonastery@benedictine.com. †

Eagles soar to compete in world championship



Sixth-grader Nyla Lamberg-Thurman, left, and seventh-graders Kristin Julius, Melissa De La Rosa and Nikki Henry, all students at St. Monica School in Indianapolis, earned enough points in robotics competitions this season to take their robot to the VEX Robotics World Championship in Dallas, Texas, on May 8-10. The St. Monica Eagles team is one of 800 teams that will compete in the world championship at the middle school level. (Submitted photo)

Retreats and Programs

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

April 15

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; must be scheduled in advance. Information and registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

April 25-29

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Priest Retreat—Great Stories from the Gospel of Luke: Challenges for Preaching and Spiritual Growth**, Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell presenting, \$465 single. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

April 30

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Creativity Is a Form of Prayer: Card Making**, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$45 includes lunch and materials. Information and registration: 812-934-6437, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

May 4

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Contemplative Prayer**, in person or via Zoom, sponsored by Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 2-3:30 p.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind presenting, freewill donation. Information and registration: 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgosf.com, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

May 6-8

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **The Ghent Altarpiece**, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting, \$300 single, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

May 7

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

mountsaintfrancis.org/pilgrimage or 812-923-8817.

May 12

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Peace and Nature Garden Walk**, 7-8:30 p.m., Benedictine Sister Angela Jarboe presenting, freewill contribution. Registration: www.benedictinn.org/programs. Information: benedictinn@benedictinn.org, 317-788-7581.

May 14

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **A Day with Mary**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$50 includes lunch. Information and registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/day-with-mary or 812-923-8817.

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Food for the Vegetarian Soul**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., \$50 includes lunch. Information and registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/food-for-the-vegetarian-soul or 812-923-8817. †

Bloomington retreat center will offer free Divine Mercy Morning of Reflection on April 23

A Divine Mercy Morning of Reflection will be held at the Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center's Sacred Heart Chapel, 8220 W. State Rd. 48, in Bloomington, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on April 23.

The event will include talks led by a member of the Franciscan Friar of the Immaculata from 9-11 a.m., adoration

and confession from 11-11:30 a.m., praying of the Divine Mercy chaplet from 11:30-11:45 a.m., Benediction at 11:45 a.m. and Mass at noon.

There is no charge for this morning of reflection.

For more information or to register, call 812-825-4642 ext. 1. †

Catholic in Recovery comes to St. Simon as way to help 12-step healing

By Natalie Hoefler

By the grace of God—and an abundance of humility, honesty and trust—Mark was in recovery from the disease of addiction.

He was in a 12-step program, and it was helping, no doubt. In the terminology of the steps, Mark had come to believe that a “Power greater than” himself could help him.

But something was missing.

“Being a practicing Catholic, I found the term of ‘higher power’ less than appropriate,” said Mark. While some members in the program struggled with the concept of God or with God himself, he knew God was the only “higher power.”

“I did my own research on faith-based 12-step programs,” said Mark, a member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, who for anonymity will be referred to by his first name only. “Catholic in Recovery was one of the first programs I gravitated toward.”

The program “blends Catholic spirituality and sacraments with the 12-step recovery process,” with the majority of meetings open to those dealing with any kind of addiction, said founder Scott Weeman in a talk he gave on March 13 at St. Simon the Apostle Parish.

He was there to launch the parish’s Catholic in Recovery (CIR) in-person general recovery group, the first in Indiana.

During his talk, Weeman shared why he created the organization, what sets it apart from secular 12-step groups, and his hope for CIR “to share the good news that God can bring about healing and recovery, even in the most hopeless of cases.”

‘Clear to me we could be doing more’

Weeman didn’t develop Catholic in Recovery on a whim. It was created out of his own need as he worked through the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

“I realized that as I was working through the 12 steps of addiction recovery, that in many ways I was going through the same kind of spiritual recovery, too, that in giving my life over to God I was really leaning into my baptism,” he said.

“Then confessing to God, myself and others the nature of my wrongs, I realized that was a lot like the sacrament of reconciliation.”

Some of the 12 steps are done on a daily basis, he noted, “like taking a personal inventory and staying connected to God through prayer and meditation. That seemed a lot like the Eucharist, the daily bread that we’re receiving.

“In confirmation, we’re asked to make disciples of all nations. The 12th step of addiction recovery is that, having had a spiritual awakening, we share the good news with others, much like the Church does today.”

As Weeman continued in his recovery, he also noticed there were “a lot of people turning to the Church for help and healing, and in a lot of ways the Church was delegating people to other 12-step programs—which saved my life and continues to save my life and should be part of the process.

“But it was clear to me that we could be doing more. ... Shouldn’t we be accompanying these people?”

“It struck me that there needed to be somewhere where people can lean into their Catholic faith while supplementing their recovery.”

Weeman created that place with the founding of CIR in 2017 in the Diocese of San Diego as a tool to enhance recovery for Catholics in 12-step programs.

‘Sacraments as they apply to recovery’

The non-profit organization “seeks to serve those suffering from addictions and unhealthy attachments,” according to its website.

In CIR, “people show up about their addiction or their loved one’s addiction, but they do so through the lens of the faith, sharing about how the sacraments, or dedication to the rosary, or the wisdom from the saints, how these faith practices are very instrumental in their recovery,” Weeman explained. “Those are things that would be out of balance with a regular 12-step meeting.”

He noted that CIR has spread to 15 states, and that nearly 50 meetings are offered virtually and in person.

General meetings, like the one at St. Simon, welcome those with—or those affected by someone with—any form of addiction or attachment. Other meetings are addiction- and/or gender-specific, geared toward family and friends or focused on adult children of dysfunctional homes.

Catholic in Recovery meetings follow the same flow as normal 12-step programs, Mark explained. The difference is in “the sacraments as they apply to recovery, and at the beginning of every meeting we review the Scripture for the upcoming Sunday Mass and tie those to our 12-step journey.

“And we don’t hide our reliance upon God and Christ as our higher power.”

‘Called by God to give it a try’

Mark sought to establish the meeting at St. Simon in part because, while he appreciated CIR’s virtual sessions, he was tired of driving to Ohio for the closest in-person option.

“I find personal engagement to be a lot more meaningful,” he said. “So I either had the choice of moving or starting a group.”

To establish the meeting, Mark approached Father Doug Marcotte, pastor of St. Simon Parish, and explained the nature of CIR.

“I decided to support having Catholic in Recovery at St. Simon because the folks interested in leading this new ministry seem to be called by God to give it a try,” said Father Marcotte.

“In looking into Catholic in Recovery, I discovered that they have a record of success and a willingness to help new chapters get themselves up and running.

“As a priest, I am very impressed with the wedding of the 12 steps with the seven sacraments. So many have found sobriety with the 12 steps, and it is a blessing to be able to offer a program that helps folks find even more support in their Catholic faith.”

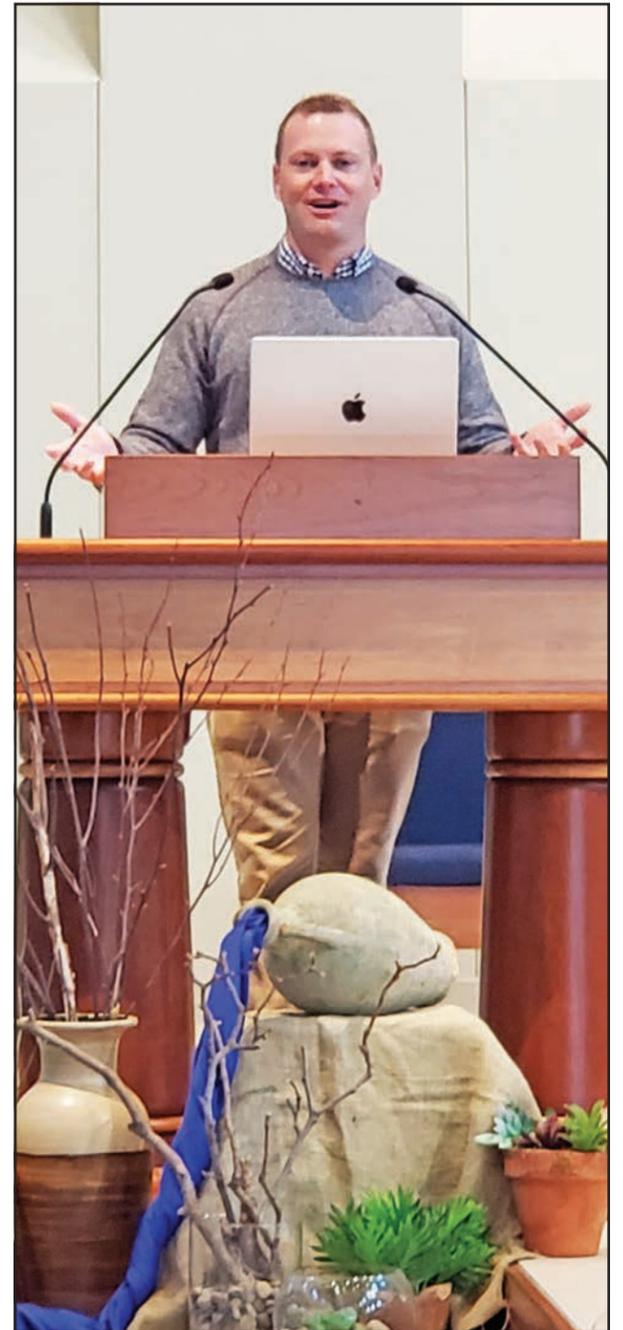
Starting a chapter was not difficult, said Mark.

“Once I knew I had the support of the parish, I began coordinating start-up details with Scott,” he said.

There were considerations that had to be addressed, such as “how to maintain privacy and how to gently offer opportunities to parishioners who need it,” Mark noted.

“But the hardest thing was just opening the door for the first time and hoping someone showed up, which thank God they did.”

Mark credits Catholic in Recovery with helping him on his path to healing.



Scott Weeman, founder of Catholic in Recovery, speaks at St. Simon the Apostle Church in Indianapolis on March 13. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

“I’m going on close to a year of sobriety,” he said. “I’m connected to the 12 steps through God.

“Catholic in Recovery makes for a very tangible source of strength to deal with my addiction and my recovery.”

(The Catholic in Recovery general recovery group at St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8155 Oaklandon Road, in Indianapolis, meets on Mondays at 7 p.m. in the Youth Center on the southeast corner of the parish’s campus. For more information on that meeting or on Catholic in Recovery, including in-person and virtual meetings, literature and how to start a group, go to catholicinrecovery.com.) †

Bishop asks for intercession of St. Romero in countries at war

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington asked students from The Catholic University of America at a bilingual Mass on March 23 for the feast of St. Oscar Romero to pray for the Salvadoran saint’s intercession in countries at war.

St. Romero was martyred on March 24, 1980, while celebrating Mass in a chapel at a hospital for cancer patients in San Salvador. The day before he was shot to death, he had pleaded with soldiers to stop the violence, particularly against civilians, as war brewed in the Central American country.

“I want to make a special appeal to soldiers, national guardsmen, and policemen: Each of you is one of us. The peasants you kill are your own brothers and sisters. When you hear a man telling you to kill, remember God’s words, ‘Thou shalt not kill’” (Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17), St. Romero said in his next to last homily.

“No soldier is obliged to obey a law contrary to the law of God,” he continued. “In the name of God, in the name of

our tormented people, I beseech you, I implore you; in the name of God, I command you to stop the repression.”

A day after saying those words, he would become one of more than 70,000 civilians killed during 12 years of war.

Though the circumstances were different, his prophetic words had a message that is apt for the world right now as Russians attack Ukrainians, Bishop Dorsonville said: Do not kill.

“What would Oscar Romero say if he were alive today?” Bishop Dorsonville asked.

He wouldn’t change his words much, he said, because he followed and championed the Gospel message that goes against the kind of killing taking place on Ukrainian soil, Bishop Dorsonville said.

“That’s why the saint was not popular,” he added. “It would be simple to say let’s pray, but prayer is only important if there’s an action to follow.”

And St. Romero’s actions were to love and to speak up for the vulnerable, even if it meant risking his life, Bishop Dorsonville said. †

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MYANMAR

continued from page 1

“I work here [in Indianapolis] so I can support them. The situation is not good for them.”

Lwin and Ahua were two of nearly 500 Catholic Burmese refugees and sympathetic members of the archdiocese who worshipped at a special Mass at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on March 20. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson served as the principal celebrant.

As the Mass began, he declared its specific intention: “We gather here to pray for peace in Myanmar and for the consolation of the Burmese people.”

‘The ultimate goal: our salvation’

The sanctuary was filled with colors and patterns of the traditional dress of the various Burmese tribes present. Most belong to three tribes, each based at various Indianapolis parishes, primarily the Hakha Chin of St. Barnabas, the Zomi Chin of St. Mark the Evangelist and the Kayen of St. Pius X.

“There is much uncertainty in our lives, in our world, particularly in places like Myanmar these days,” Archbishop Thompson said in his homily, which was delivered first by him in English, then in the national Burmese language by Father Eustace Thang, parochial vicar of St. Barnabas.

But the liturgical season of Lent draws attention from the uncertainty back to the higher call of surrendering “our lives more fully to live the divine plan for our salvation,” the archbishop said.

“The spiritual practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving enable us to remain rooted in faith and hope, trusting in divine grace, divine providence, amid the uncertainties of life, both now and in the future.

“Wherever we may be at any given moment—whether here in Indiana, Myanmar or some other place in the world—the Lord is ever present and ever faithful in leading us to the ultimate goal and destination: our salvation.”

Archbishop Thompson closed his homily with words of consolation: “Despite whatever uncertainties that might lie between this moment and Easter, as well as beyond, Jesus Christ’s victory is already assured.”

‘For me, it’s tragedy’

Uncertainties continue to unravel in Myanmar.

“Security is deteriorating rapidly across the country as fighting and armed conflict intensifies with no sign of abating,” said United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees Matthew Saltmarsh in a Feb. 11 article on [news.un.org](https://www.un.org/news.un.org).



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson speaks with a family of Catholic Burmese refugees at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis after a Mass he concelebrated there on May 20 for peace in Myanmar.

According to a January 17 report on reliefweb.net, roughly 19,000 refugees have fled Myanmar since February 2021.

A March 19 report on the same site estimates 519,500 people have been displaced in Burma since the beginning of the coup—up 48,000 from the month prior—and that roughly 1,600 have been killed.

Those statistics are more than numbers for Lwin—they are known faces and beloved family members.

“For me, it’s tragedy,” she said, a single tear tracing her cheek. “Within six months, I lost four family members from war, bombing and COVID. I am so sad, but other families have the same situation, the same thing.”

The situation in Myanmar “is really terrible,” said Lwin, who serves as coordinator of Burmese ministry at St. Pius X Parish. “We don’t know how to describe the situation over there. That’s why we are here [at the Mass] because we can only pray.”

Monica Cing agreed. “We came here to pray for our family left in Burma,” said the 13-year-old student at St. Mark School

whose family is of the Zomi Chin tribe. “The country has been really bad these days because of the government.”

Several non-refugees worshipped at the Mass, including St. Barnabas parishioner Laura Sheehan.

“A lot of my students were born in Myanmar or have parents that were born in Myanmar,” said the teacher of St. Barnabas’ first-grade Sunday school class. “I came to show solidarity with them.”

So did the priests who serve in the three parishes with Burmese faith communities: Father Thang and Father Guy Roberts of St. Barnabas, Father Tim Wyciskalla of St. Mark and Father Francis Kalapurackal of St. Pius X.

Father Kalapurackal empathizes with the Burmese refugees. The priest, a refugee himself of an insurgency war in India, served as pastor of a missionary parish in India near the Myanmar border.

“My heart goes out to them,” he said. “I have an idea what they’re going through.”

Even before the coup, life was not easy in Myanmar, he said.

“I’ve been there many times. It’s a very poor country,” said Father Kalapurackal. “People live hand-to-mouth, really.

“And now they have no freedom there. The people are suffering so much. They come here with nothing and no one to turn to.”

But that does not deter their faith, he said.

“They’re a wonderful, faith-filled, God-loving, caring people.”

‘We keep you in our prayers’

That faith rang out in jubilant song and radiant smiles at the Mass.

The three Burmese communities each speak a



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson poses in St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis with a gift given to him on behalf of the city’s Burmese Catholic communities by Rose Awi, left, of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

different language. But many refugees also know the national language of Myanmar, making it possible for them to worship as a whole three times a year, said Lwin.

But having Mass with Archbishop Thompson—that was special.

“Especially I want to see [the] archbishop,” said Kam Tung, smiling broadly. Tung is a Zomi Chin and member of St. Mark. “I wanted to see him and have Mass with all of our Burmese community.”

It was worshipping with that large community that filled the heart of Thomas Chan with joy.

“It’s amazing to be here,” said Chan, a member of the Karen tribe and of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “I really miss my country. Even though the Mass is not all Burmese language, I feel like I’m in my old country. There is nothing like to have Mass in your own language.”

To honor the languages of the different tribes present at the Mass, six representatives read petitions, each in their tribe’s native tongue.

The celebration ended with an outpouring of gratitude for Archbishop Thompson. He received a standing ovation, as well as the gift of a framed, embroidered image of two angels brought from Myanmar.

The archbishop thanked the whole community.

“You have so much to give to the Church,” he said.

“You are a blessing, you are a gift to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

“We are grateful to you for your wonderful witness. And we are grateful for the two wonderful seminarians you have given us.

“We keep you in our prayers, and the suffering of your loved ones.” †



Father Guy Roberts, pastor of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, distributes Communion during a Mass for peace in Myanmar at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on May 20. St. Barnabas is one of three Indianapolis parishes that serve as a faith home to Catholic Burmese refugees.

PRIEST

continued from page 1

saw school children, adult parishioners, neighbors, and moms and dads perched behind strollers, most of them with their heads bowed in silence.

For Father Bob, as he is best known in the parish, it was a moment to savor a community coming together in faith, a moment when it was “also good for us to come together and work on being healthy people.”

With the prayer finished, the fun and the unusual challenge began.

The race organizer had Father Sims move to 50 yards ahead of the starting line. At the same time, he instructed all the runners that the first one to pass their pastor during the race would earn a prize.

That challenge might have seemed easy to someone who didn’t know the 70-something-year-old priest. Someone who didn’t know that Father Sims has run numerous marathons, including the famed New York City Marathon; someone who didn’t know he completed a marathon at age 65 just to prove to himself “that I wasn’t old”; someone who still runs at least six miles many days at an average pace of about 8 1/2 to 9 minutes a mile; someone who still has a competitive spirit.

As the race started with a daunting hill straight ahead, Father Sims knew that more than a few people would eventually pass him, but he wasn’t going to make it easy for any of them. He also knew that there would be people along the race route who would be cheering for all the runners, and that many of the runners would be supporting each other.

“One of the nice things is that there’s this sense of running as a community of people, even though they run at different paces,” says Father Sims, who is 75. “And all along, there are people supporting you, giving you cups of water. It’s people being supportive of one another in a lot of ways. Runners are actually really good at supporting one another.”

Running toward God

So those are two of the three main reasons that have fueled Father Sims’ continuing desire to run through the years—the challenge of competition and the sense of community.

The third reason is the joy it gives him, a joy that includes time for contemplation and another way to draw deeper into his relationship with God

“This may be odd to say, but I like the quiet,” he says. “It’s time to be prayerful and reflective. To sometimes be alone with God, sometimes alone with myself. And sometimes when I run, I do homilies. I used to do a lot of marathons, which meant I had more time to work on my homilies. Now I don’t do marathons anymore, so my homilies are shorter,” he says with his usual hearty laugh.

“Also, I kind of like just getting sweaty. It’s an earthy thing to do. There’s also that sound mind and sound body

thing—that kind of integration of body, mind and spirit.”

That spirit has been moving him to run since he was a seminarian doing advanced studies at the Pontifical North American College in Rome. His dedication to running increased as a young priest when he was an instructor at the Latin School in Indianapolis, where he ran through Garfield Park. And his love of running flourished during his years as the pastor of St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington, where he ran often through Indiana University’s campus.

His time in Bloomington sparked one of his greatest dreams as a runner—to run in the famed Boston Marathon.

The story of that pursuit even made it into one of his tight, thought-provoking homilies.

‘All of us have some brokenness’

A gifted and engaging homilist, Father Sims knows the impact of a good story—and often a humorous one. And while a touch of humor frequently begins his homilies, he learned long ago in his 50 years as a priest that the foundation of a good homily isn’t humor but an emotion that’s even more universal, and close to the heart.

“One of the things they say is that if you want to be a good homilist, you need to remember that in every pew there’s at least one broken heart,” he says. “So, I try to think of whatever brokenness I have. All of us have some brokenness.”

His dream of running in the Boston Marathon turned into a time of heartbreak for him.

Unlike most marathons, runners must qualify for the Boston Marathon by achieving a certain time in another marathon.

“I worked really hard to qualify for the Boston Marathon when I did the New York Marathon. I ate the right things, ran the right number of miles to train,” he recalls. “Then I did one thing which was really stupid. I got a brand-new pair of shoes and wore them for the first time in the marathon.”

By the time he finished the New York Marathon, which ends in Central Park, his feet were bloodied and blistered from the chafing of the new shoes. His spirit was even more battered.



Father Robert Sims leads a prayer before a race that kicks off the parish festival at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis where he is the pastor. (Submitted photo)

“I didn’t qualify for the Boston Marathon,” he says. “And frankly, I felt sorry for myself.”

As he returned to Bloomington, that devastation stayed with him and gnawed at him—until he came across a newspaper story about another person who had participated in the New York Marathon.

“I read an article about a guy who had his legs blown off,” Father Sims recalls. “He was running on stumps. I remembered seeing him. I had passed him. It took him like two days to finish the marathon, which he did. It was a good lesson for me about feeling sorry for myself for not qualifying for Boston—the relativity of what it means to be successful.”

‘Spending time with God’

That story is a reminder of keeping things in perspective, just as the medals overflowing around a doorknob of his parish office are a reminder of the success he’s had in finishing marathons and half-marathons.

These days, success and perspective run together whenever Father Sims laces up his running shoes and heads out on a route that leads him from the parish office, into Broad Ripple and up the Monon Trail—and back again—for a good six miles or so.

Along the way, he encounters a lot of people from the parish and from his days at IU. He seldom stops to talk—except for “a little kid or someone I haven’t seen for a long, long time”—because he would be stopping all the time if he did. Instead, he smiles, waves and continues on, seeing his running as one more way that he tries to share his priesthood with the school, the parish and the larger community.

“I think we need to model lots of things,” he says about being a priest.

“We need to model being prayerful. We need to model working at learning. And we also need to model taking care of our bodies. I think we need to model that our bodies are temples of God and they’re something to be respected and valued.”

There are other defining reasons that Father Sims runs, including the benefits he gets from it.

“They’ve done lots of studies that people who get exercise are less inclined toward depression, and they are healthier not just physically but mentally,” he says. “And I like the solitude of running.”

“I have a very nice life, but I don’t have a lot of solitude. I try to make time for it but once the day gets going, I don’t have a lot of solitude. So that’s why I think I like running later in the afternoon after all the busyness of the day has accumulated. It’s the time to reflect on what’s going on and, in some ways, just release from the events of the day. It’s a great opportunity for that solitude.”

There’s also a spiritual impact for him, connecting running and his relationship with God. He refers to a thought associated with Henri Nouwen, a Catholic priest, theologian and writer who viewed prayer as “wasting time” with and for God.

“I do think in some ways somebody could say that running is wasting time,” Father Sims says. “And yet it isn’t a waste of time. It’s ultimately quieting. It’s a time to be prayerful.”

“One of the reasons I like running, I wouldn’t call it the monotony, but the constancy of it. Even when I was getting ready for marathons and I was running three hours, it was never monotonous. In some ways, it’s wasting time with God, but it’s really not wasting time. It’s spending time with God.” †

Canadian Indigenous give pope moccasins, ask him to walk with them

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Members of the Métis National Council gave Pope Francis a set of beaded moccasins and asked him to walk with them on the path of truth, justice and healing of Canada’s Indigenous communities and their relationship with the Catholic Church, said Cassidy Caron, president of the council.

The delegates from the Métis National Council and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami had separate meetings with the pope on March 28. The delegation from the Assembly of First Nations was scheduled to meet him on March 31.

The delegations’ trip to Rome, accompanied by six Canadian bishops, was designed to give them an opportunity to explain to Pope Francis how the communities live and struggle today, and how the Church and its institutions contributed to those struggles, especially by running residential schools where the Indigenous languages and cultural expressions were banned and where many students experienced abuse.

Before their meetings, leaders of all the groups said they want an apology from the pope for the Church’s role in running the schools. About 60% of the 139 schools across Canada were run by Catholic religious orders or dioceses. According to the government, which funded the schools, more than 150,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were forced to attend the schools between the 1870s and 1997.

The groups want Pope Francis to go to Canada and publicly apologize there for the Church’s treatment of Indigenous peoples and its collaboration with colonizers. The Vatican has said the pope is willing to make the trip.

The three groups were to meet again with the pope on April 1 to hear his response to what they had shared.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis also want “unfettered access” to the records of the Church-run schools, said Caron, president of the Métis organization.

She said three of the delegates, survivors of residential schools, shared their stories with the pope. They “did an incredible job of standing up and telling their truth. They were so brave and so courageous.”

“We invited Pope Francis and Catholics all around the world to join us, the Métis nation, on our pathway of truth, justice and healing, and we hope that in committing

to us, committing to real action, that the Church can finally begin its own pathway toward meaningful and lasting reconciliation,” Caron told reporters.

“The only words he spoke back to us in English ... were ‘truth, justice and healing,’ and I take that as a personal commitment,” she said. “So, he has personally committed to those three actions.” †

POPE

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“I renew my appeal. Enough. Stop it. Silence the weapons. Move seriously toward peace,” the pope said before leading pilgrims in praying the Hail Mary.

The day after the March 25 consecration of Russia and Ukraine

to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (see related article on page 16), Pope Francis met with Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the papal almoner, and blessed an ambulance he was donating to the Ukrainian city of Lviv which has seen an influx of refugees escaping violence from the eastern side of the country. Cardinal Krajewski left the Vatican on March 26 to drive the ambulance to Lviv. †

USCCB president, chairmen recommit Church to pro-life initiatives

WASHINGTON (CNS)—As the nation awaits the U.S. Supreme Court’s most significant abortion ruling in decades, the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the chairmen of eight committees joined together “in prayer and expectant hope that states will again be able to protect women and children from the injustice of abortion.”

“As we affirm the value of every human life, we welcome the possibility of saving countless unborn children as well as sparing women and families the pain of abortion,” they said in a statement released late on March 21.

All eyes are on the high court for its decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, which involves a Mississippi law that bans most abortions after 15 weeks.

If the court’s ruling overturns its 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion nationwide, it will leave abortion laws to the states. Already, lawmakers in several states are working to codify *Roe* in their laws; other states have passed bills similar to the Mississippi law.

In their statement, Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez, USCCB president, and the chairmen of committees reviewed the years of outreach by the

Church through various initiatives, parishes, agencies other entities to pregnant women in need and their children and families.

They recommitted the USCCB to these initiatives and urged Catholic dioceses, parishes, agencies and institutions to do the same.

“We proclaim a vision for our society that upholds the truth that every human life is sacred and inviolable—a society in which the legal protection of human life is accompanied by profound care for mothers and their children,” the bishops said.

Besides Archbishop Gomez, the bishops who signed the statement and their committees are: Bishop Thomas A. Daly of Spokane, Wash., Catholic education; Auxiliary Bishop Robert P. Reed of Boston, communications; Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minn., evangelization and catechesis; Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, domestic justice and human development; Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Ill., international justice and peace; Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco, laity, marriage, family life and youth; Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington, migration; and Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, pro-life activities.

The prelates said the Church will

recommit itself to its many pro-life efforts, including:

- Accompanying women and couples facing unexpected or difficult pregnancies and during their early years of parenthood, “offering them loving and compassionate care through initiatives such as Walking with Moms in Need and countless others.”

- “Walking with Moms in Need” is a nationwide initiative launched by the U.S. bishops “to engage every Catholic parish in providing a safety net to ensure that pregnant and parenting moms have the resources, love and support they need to nurture the lives of their children.”

- Ensuring “our parishes are places of welcome for women facing challenging pregnancies or who find it difficult to care for their children after birth, so that any mother needing assistance will receive life-affirming support and be connected to appropriate programs and resources where she can get help.”

- Helping Catholics “recognize the needs of pregnant and parenting moms in their communities, enabling parishioners to know these mothers, to listen to them, and to help them obtain the necessities of life for themselves and their children.”

- Being witnesses “of love and life by expanding and improving the extensive

network of comprehensive care, including pregnancy help centers, maternity homes, and Catholic health care and social service agencies.”

- Proclaiming “with a clear and united voice that our society can and must protect and care for both women and their children.”

- Redoubling “our advocacy for laws that ensure the right to life for unborn children and that no mother or family lacks the basic resources needed to care for their children, regardless of race, age, immigration status, or any other factor.”

- Continuing to support and advocate for public policies and programs directed toward “building up the common good and fostering integral human development, with a special concern for the needs of immigrants and low-income families.”

“We are deeply conscious that, after nearly half a century of legalized abortion, more than 65 million children have died from abortion and an untold number of women, men and families suffer in the aftermath,” the bishops said.

They also said the Church will expand diocesan “abortion healing ministries,” commonly known as Project Rachel Ministry, “so that women and men receive forgiveness, healing, and spiritual renewal through Christ’s infinite mercy.” †

GUEST

continued from page 4

Among them are the people of the Marshall Islands, whose five islands and 29 atolls in the South Pacific are scattered across an area larger than California. A half-dozen priests serve 5,000 Catholics, who comprise about 10% of the population.

Despite their poverty, these Catholics offer joyous witness to the Christian faith. Seafarers, who often spend months or years far from their families under grueling conditions, are of special concern. Thanks to your

donations, sailors and fishermen arriving in ports across these islands can turn to the Catholic Church for health care and counseling, as well as for the sacraments.

On the Blackfeet (Pikuni) Indian Reservation in the Diocese of Helena, Mont., children attending the De La Salle Blackfeet School receive a quality academic education that is integrated with both the Catholic faith and their Native culture. To keep the school affordable for impoverished families, most teachers are one- or two-year volunteers. Gifts to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal support the purchase of multimedia religious education materials for the De La Salle Blackfeet School in the Diocese of Helena to strengthen its evangelization activities.

Your generous donations to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal strengthen the Catholic faith among people in our country who have no means to support crucial ministries.

On April 23-24, please give generously to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal through the offertory collection at Mass or your parish’s e-offertory platform. #GiveCatholicTogether also accepts funds for the collection. To learn more about the appeal and those who benefit from it, visit www.usccb.org/committees/catholic-home-missions.

(Bishop W. Shawn McKnight of Jefferson City, Mo., is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Subcommittee on the Catholic Home Missions.) †

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Faith *Alive!*

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Pope John Paul II bestows a blessing on Vietnamese Cardinal Francois Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan during the consistory ceremony on Feb. 21, 2001, in St. Peter's Square. Cardinal Van Thuan, who died in 2002, was detained by the Vietnamese communist government in 1975 and spent 13 years in prison. He sought spiritual renewal in the ordinary events of daily life while in captivity. (CNS photo/Arturo Mari)

Vietnamese cardinal sought spiritual renewal in daily life

By David Gibson

“Loving others is a spiritual force” that draws people closer to God, Pope Francis wrote in 2013, his papacy’s first year. In this way, he said, “we learn something new about God.”

The pope affirmed in his apostolic exhortation “The Joy of the Gospel” that “when we live out a spirituality of drawing nearer to others and seeking their welfare, our hearts are opened wide to the Lord’s greatest and most beautiful gifts” (#272).

Those comments relate directly to the faith renewal that the Church’s Lenten season fosters. Not many tend to grow in faith alone. “Living or working alongside others is surely a path of spiritual growth,” the pope observed in his 2018 apostolic exhortation on holiness in our times, “Rejoice and Be Glad” (#141).

For great numbers of people, every time of year is an interpersonal time, time spent with family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, fellow believers. That may mean that faith renewal typically must proceed in an ordinary-life context that encompasses some confusion, a dose of chaos and frustrations of various other kinds.

Given faith’s interpersonal dimension, does it make sense in Lent to ask what it takes to renew and revitalize any defining commitment in life? I am thinking of commitments that tax our time and energies, yet hold the promise of drawing out the best in us.

Since faith renewal is no small matter, a little inspiration regarding ways to proceed couldn’t hurt. Many in our times have turned for such inspiration to Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan, a Vietnamese Church leader whose

faith commitment only deepened under the oppressions of a long imprisonment.

Several days after St. Paul VI named him coadjutor archbishop of Saigon (today Ho Chi Minh City) the city fell to the communist north. He then was arrested and imprisoned. His transfer to Saigon, he indicated, was considered part of a conspiracy involving the Vatican. He told of being in prison 13 years, nine of them in solitary confinement.

It is what he decided to make of his time in prison that captures the attention of so many. His words quietly challenge others to consider ways of doing in their own lives what he strove to do during his long prison years.

Cardinal Van Thuan determined that his “captivity would not be merely a time of resignation, but a turning point.” He would “live the present moment and fill it with love.”

His intention was to speak “one language” and wear “one uniform,” the language and uniform of love. He famously befriended some prison guards. “After all, they were my brothers,” he said.

Two guards clandestinely aided his fashioning of a small pectoral cross of wood and wire that the archbishop kept long after his 1988 release from prison, even after becoming president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in Rome. Though allowed to visit Rome in 1991, Vietnam would not allow his return home.

He became a cardinal in 2001. He died of cancer in 2002.

Pope Francis singled out Cardinal Van Thuan in “Christ Is Alive,” a 2019 apostolic exhortation. The pope noted how, despite the cardinal’s imprisonment, he was determined to “seize the occasions that present themselves every day” and to “accomplish ordinary actions in an extraordinary way” (#148).

Those are the precise words that so many find inspiring. What ordinary actions in anyone’s life can be accomplished in extraordinary ways?

One notable Lenten reality is that the best-laid plans for faith renewal so easily disappear into the fog created as time rushes by. Other pressing duties re-emerge, and soon Lent ends.

Fortunately, renewal is not reserved to Lent’s 40 days. Any day is a time for faith renewal.

Does faith’s interpersonal dimension suggest that its growth might be jump-started by eyes wide open and ears perked up to see others clearly and hear better what they may have been trying to tell us for a long time?

Sometimes, the challenges that arise for us seem mind-boggling, other times not so much. Pope Francis talked about this in “Rejoice and Be Glad,” saying:

“At times, life presents great challenges. Through them, the Lord calls us anew to a conversion” (#17). However, “other times we need only find a more perfect way of doing what we are already doing” (#17).

His comment about “what we are already doing” resembles Cardinal Van Thuan’s comment about accomplishing “ordinary actions in an extraordinary way.” What ordinary actions, what things that we already do can be done more perfectly or more extraordinarily?

I recall St. Teresa of Calcutta saying that when she had nothing to give to someone, she gave her smile. Is a smile an ordinary action that can become extraordinary?

Other ordinary gifts that could become extraordinary might include our patience, precious time, kindness or our way of speaking, with its potential to convey respect.

There is also the possible gift of noticing the goodness in someone else that, for whatever reasons, was lost from sight and mind too many weeks or months or years ago.

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.) †



A boy who fled Russia’s war in Ukraine enjoys a meal at the residence of Father Roman Karpowicz in Lubaczow, Poland, on March 21. The Polish priest hosts women with children who fled Russia’s war on Ukraine. Spiritual renewal can be found in ordinary daily events like family meals and chores. (CNS photo/Kacper Pempel, Reuters)

Pastoral Ministries/Brie Anne Varick

Let the Lord reform and transform your heart this Lent

During a recent Mass, the Holy Spirit led me to focus on a line from a reading from the book of Deuteronomy: "For what great nation is there that has gods so close to it, as the Lord our God is to us?" (Dt 4:7).



My heart was moved with gratitude for the real presence of God who comes to us in the Word. The living God reveals himself through Scripture and

is so close to us that we can hear his voice.

The Holy Spirit led me deeper, and I was filled with joy at the even greater gift that was right before me in Church as I was participating in Mass.

Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, is before me, truly present in the Eucharist. Our living God fully alive in the Word was made flesh and is dwelling among us at every Mass and in every tabernacle throughout the world! What an honor and a privilege it is to be Catholic.

Do we truly appreciate this gift that has been given to us? Do we live as though we are this "great nation"? Do we live as God's beloved chosen people who can call upon him or even go visit him at any parish?

I know I forget this truth: I am a beloved daughter of the king. I know that I struggle with feelings of unworthiness of such a wonderful love due to my own failures, sins and experiences. But the good news is that Jesus Christ came into our suffering and sinfulness to heal us, restore us, and transform us so that we could be in full communion with God the Father.

I wanted to share a reflection I recently

composed after my own prayerful reading of Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Sister Miriam James Heidland's Lenten journal "Restore."

I hope that you can take it to adoration or a chapel. Ask the Lord what he wants to reveal in you and what he wants to heal in you this season of Lent. If we can remove the barriers in our heart that are blocking our view of Jesus, then maybe we can receive the truth that "we are a great nation" privileged to sit in the presence of our God. The following is my reflection:

Quiet your heart. Place yourself in the presence of the Lord. The Lord wants to show you he sees you. He wants to be near you, to love you and to heal you.

Remember the Lord only invites. He does not force, manipulate or pry us open. He is patient, and he sits with us. He is gentle. Listen to his voice. His voice is strong and unwavering, yet gentle and kind.

Sitting in his presence, there is peace. There is no judgment or anger. He understands our hesitations and our fears. He knows our sins and our weaknesses. He also knows who we were created to be and the abundant life he wants to give us.

Jesus waits until we are ready. Jesus wants us to follow him into the deep and hidden places of our heart. Jesus will always go before us; he only asks us to follow. Jesus knows these places, but he will not go where he is not invited. He respects our "Yes" and our "No."

He gave us free will so we can choose him and invite him in. God is respectful and patient. He will wait. Let us invite him into the deep hidden places of our heart. What is Jesus inviting you to surrender? Ask him in the quiet of your heart and listen.

Maybe you already know what the Lord wants to heal, what the Lord wants to restore, and to transform. Is it an idol? Is it a habitual sin? Is it a desire that has yet to be fulfilled? Is it a relationship with a loved one? Maybe your relationship with God and the Church needs to be healed? Jesus understands, that's why he is here. Jesus came to heal us and to restore us, to give us life, and to give it abundantly. Jesus' mission is to fulfill the will of the Father. The will of the Father is to be united with God for eternity.

Some of us may not know what is blocking our journey toward God or why we close off parts of our hearts to Jesus. We have tried and tried, and yet we cannot seem to have a breakthrough. We are unable to move forward. Be at peace. Jesus knows what we need. Do not be afraid. Whatever Jesus reveals to us, he wants to heal and transform in us.

Take a moment to again ask quietly in your hearts: "Jesus, what are you inviting me to surrender to you?" "Jesus, what do you want to heal in me?" "Jesus, how do you see me?"

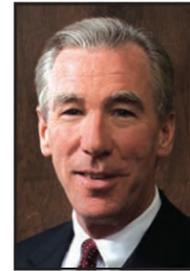
Listen to Jesus speak to you. Jesus speaks to each one of us uniquely. Sometimes it is with an image, sometimes it is with a word or Scripture, sometimes it is with a feeling. Take some time to see how the Lord wants to reveal his plan for you this Lent. What does he want to restore? What does he want to transform? What does he want to heal? Will you let him?

(Brie Anne Varick is director of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity. She can be reached at bvarick@archindy.org.) †

Intellect and Virtue/John Garvey

Come on in

When I was a boy, there was a revolution in Hungary against the communist government. The Soviet Union put it down brutally. Several hundred



thousand Hungarians fled the country, some for the United States.

My grandfather took in one family. They moved into the little white house where I was born and stayed for a year or two, until the dad found a job.

The children were a wonder to us. Their clothes were different. We had never heard a language other than English.

I've been thinking about this as I have watched the news about the invasion of Ukraine. The Russians have bombed civilian areas, and nearly 4 million people have fled the country. Sixty percent of them have gone to Poland, their neighbor to the west. Most are women and children. The men have stayed behind to fight.

The Polish government has provided an easy off-ramp. It is accepting refugees without a passport. It is drafting a bill to allow Ukrainians social benefits available to permanent residents. Arrivals at the border are taken by tour buses to reception centers where they can get food and beds, medical care and legal services.

The European Council (EU) has approved a Temporary Protection Directive that will allow Ukrainians to stay in EU member states for up to three years. During that time, they can work and get access to housing, medical services and education.

These are generous policies, to be sure. But what I have marveled at are the nightly reports of ordinary people taking refugees into their homes. *The New York Times* reports that more than 500,000 Poles have joined a Facebook group that coordinates support.

These families don't have a spare house like my grandfather did. *The Times* spoke with one couple who moved their 5-year-old daughter into their bedroom to make space for a mother and her 2-year-old son.

Imagine living in that household. Overnight, your food bill doubles. Guests need anything they have not crammed into a suitcase. They likely have little money. These are strangers. Poles and Ukrainians are Slavs, so there is a rough linguistic similarity, but they're not like Danes and Swedes. Any conversation is work.

To most Americans, this prospect seems strange and off-putting. As Father Henri Nouwen once observed, here "the assumption is that strangers are a potential danger and that it is up to them to disprove it." We protect our homes with dogs and double locks. We no longer pick up hitchhikers. We teach children to avoid the risk of "stranger danger." We post security guards in subways and airports.

Something about our culture has bred in us an unhealthy fear of strangers. I wonder whether our very prosperity is to blame. The rich can wall themselves off from people they don't know. Wealth lets them be selective in their relationships. They choose their friends and connect at work, on social media and by air travel. And if you're rich, you yourself have probably never had to depend on the kindness of strangers.

Whatever the explanation, our fear of strangers may cause us to lose sight of an essential Christian virtue. St. Benedict says, in Chapter 53 of his *Rule*, that "any guest who happens to arrive at the monastery should be received just as we would receive Christ himself, because he promised that on the last day he will say: 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me'" (Mt 25:35).

(John Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington. Follow him on Twitter @CatholicPres. Catholic University's website is www.cua.edu.) †

Window Seat Wisdom/Katie Prejean McGrady

Think you're 'failing' at Lent? Not if you're trying

I really wanted the Sonic drink.

It had been a very long day—with grocery runs and sniffly kids and two hours of live radio and attempting to keep a house moderately less filthy—and all I wanted was to drive into a spot at Sonic and order a large Coke with lime, easy ice.



It's my weakness, that drink. Occasionally I'll add cherry flavor, but generally, just the lime.

But it was the first Friday of Lent, and I gave up Sonic for Lent. So there I was sitting at the stoplight, fighting myself on whether or not I would turn left to Sonic or right to get home.

The honking pickup truck behind me snapped me from my momentary battle back to reality. "You cannot fail at Lent already" bounced through my mind.

Right I turned. To home I went. No Sonic Coke with lime in hand.

I wasn't happy about it. Who would be? But I did feel somewhat accomplished as we sat down to our first Lenten meatless meal of air fried fish sticks and popcorn shrimp, having stuck to the most basic of Lenten fasting by not going to spend \$2.50 on a large soft drink on the day that we're invited to even more intentionally fast.

But as my pride swelled thinking of this tiny Lenten fasting victory, I felt a small nudge in my heart.

"Was that enough of a fast? It's just a soda, after all. You could probably do more."

From "I'm doing good" to "You aren't doing enough" in less than an hour, I suddenly began beating myself up. I was being far too easy on myself, having sacrificed just one measly Sonic drink, rather than choosing something more intense, more sacrificial, more obviously penitential.

And so I went to bed that first Friday of Lent feeling like a failure, even though I'd honored one of my Lenten commitments. I'd convinced myself I was somehow displeasing to God and a disgrace to the Lenten season.

But I wasn't a failure because my Lenten sacrifice was small. If anything, I was "failing" because I was beginning to think of Lent as a competition, with myself and others (though I hadn't told anyone else what I was doing for the season).

I had, only two full days in, turned Lent into this liturgical March Madness that needed to happen in precisely the right way, or I'd be kicked out of the bracket I'd made for myself.

We do this far too often—make Lent a competition. Or we sit in our sacrifices and compare ourselves to others. "They're praying the Stations of the Cross as a family. My kids barely sit still through grace before meals." And we assume we're losing Lent.

There's no way to lose Lent. I guess the only way to "lose" at it would be to ignore it completely.

But if there's effort at all—even if we think it's measly or small—we are acknowledging that these 40 days are set apart in our year, a time to focus on what we can give up and what we can do to more fully pay attention to the Lord's movement in our lives, and prepare for the greatest move he ever made: dying for our sins and defeating death with his resurrection.

If a few weeks into Lent you are thinking, "I'm not doing enough," then perhaps add in more. If you are grumbling and hating every second of your Lenten days, then perhaps pivot to find something more fruitful.

But above all else, remember you can't fail, not if you try even a little. Even if the trying just includes not buying a Sonic drink.

(Katie Prejean McGrady is an award-winning author and host of *The Katie McGrady Show* on Sirius XM's *The Catholic Channel*. She is a columnist for *Catholic News Service* and lives in Lake Charles, La., with her family.) †

For the Journey/Effie Caldarola

Listen to God, celebrate a Lord who brings life from darkness

The weather was nasty as I hunkered on a Saturday morning over my computer with a cup of cocoa.



Rain, wind and icy shards of snow battered the window in my attic office as if to remind me that spring remained elusive.

In Ukraine, near to all our hearts right now, the Russians

were advancing on Kyiv. Although this assault dominated the news, there was still room for more dire climate predictions.

Psychologists who had previously discussed how hurtful the years of COVID-19 isolation were are now called in to advise us on how to overcome our angst about Ukraine and its wider implications.

Somehow, the weather and the news conspired to be an appropriate backdrop to Lent.

We search for celebration, and our

faith provides it: Who didn't celebrate St. Patrick, Apostle to the Celts, on March 17? And March 12 was the 400th anniversary of the canonizations of St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, and his companion and great missionary, St. Francis Xavier.

Our Ignatian Year continues. This means from May 2021 until July 2022, we celebrate St. Ignatius, whose Spiritual Exercises continue to inspire millions.

See CALDAROLA, page 14

Fifth Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, April 3, 2022

- Isaiah 43:16-21
- Philippians 3:8-14
- John 8:1-11

The Book of Isaiah supplies the first reading for Mass this weekend in Lent. The reading is from the second part of Isaiah, written at a time that hardly was the best period in the history of God's people.



The people had survived being exiled after they, their parents or grandparents had experienced the

conquest of the Hebrew kingdoms by the Babylonians. Exile was punishment, bitter and bad in every respect.

By no means was all well when they returned to their homeland. It was not overflowing with milk and honey. To the contrary, it was lifeless and absent of yield. This condition easily prompted people to be cynical and to deny that God cared for them, even inviting doubts that God truly existed.

With great power and clarity, this section of Isaiah insisted that God will make all right. He is almighty. He will not forsake the people. He will cause rivers of life-giving water to flow into their hearts and minds.

For the second reading, the Church presents a passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. Christians of Philippi had this in common with Christians living in every other major city of the Roman Empire: they were a minority and their devotion to Christ required of them a lifestyle and way of thinking utterly opposite the culture. Furthermore, political hostility surrounded them.

So, Paul in this epistle, as in his other epistles, both encouraged and challenged these Christians. This passage is eloquent in its message, using the imagery of racing. Paul says that he had not yet finished the race, but he had his eyes on one sight alone, namely the finish line. When he crossed this line, in other words when he died an earthly death, he would win the race because he would enter life everlasting.

For its third reading this weekend, the Church gives us a selection from

St. John's Gospel, which is a literary gem. It tells its version of the life and teaching of Jesus with remarkable brilliance and appeal. Important to this appeal is the Gospel's clarity and pathos.

Certainly, such is the case in this reading. The danger before the woman, and the mercy of God in Christ, are very evident.

By way of explanation, the woman had been caught in the act of adultery. Jewish law and custom were very hard on adulterers, not to victimize women, but rather to secure the racial integrity of the people who were chosen to be God's special people. If an adulterous woman gave birth to a child, conceived outside her marriage, then fraud well might taint the family's line of descent, if true fatherhood was unknown, and the genuine identity of the offspring might not be guaranteed. Finally, the Commandment would be broken.

Opponents hoped to discredit Jesus. By showing mercy to the woman, they would have said that Jesus disregarded or minimized the commandments revealed to Moses, belittling ancient Jewish custom that adhered to the commandments.

Bypassing the trap, Jesus boldly came to the woman's rescue by forgiving her but upholding the sinfulness of adultery by admonishing her not to sin again.

Reflection

These readings appear as the cries of the Ukrainian people ring in our ears. Their suffering resulted from human decision-making, as does all rejection of God and of his law, with its inevitable product of death, guilt, grief and fear.

This story of the adulterous woman is a superb lesson for everyone. Jesus told the crowd ready to execute the woman that everyone can decide to ignore God, but that they must also reap the consequences. Yet another way is still available.

Two weeks of Lent remain, enough time for us to find this way to life and peace, the Lord's gifts, but gifts that we must choose to accept. †

and surrender everything to You, freely, sincerely, and selflessly.

May this life, Your life in me, overflow, with kindness, generosity, compassion, and love, to serve You and the Church, in more ways than one, diversely, authentically, and sacrificially.

O most Sacred and Precious, Heart of Jesus, touch this soul to be more like You, in His image, in His likeness, deeply and presently. Thy Will be done.

Amen.

My Journey to God

A Love Letter to the Lord from the Heart

By Lauren Smith

Simple such a moment is this. Embracing this moment with You, in pure simplicity, my soul grows in love with You, oh so deeply, quietly, and intuitively.

Quiet such a moment is this. Listening in this moment with You, in pure silence, my soul leaps for joy, oh so comfortably, gently, and freely.

Peace such a moment is this. Deepening this moment with You, in pure gentleness, my soul is in awe of You, oh so wondrously, presently, and sweetly.

Lord, I love You,

(Lauren Smith is a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.)

Daily Readings

Monday, April 4

St. Isidore, bishop and doctor of the Church
Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or Daniel 13:41c-62
Psalm 23:1-6
John 8:12-20

Tuesday, April 5

St. Vincent Ferrer, priest
Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 102:2-3, 16-21
John 8:21-30

Wednesday, April 6

Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95
(Response) Daniel 3:52-56
John 8:31-42

Thursday, April 7

St. John Baptist de la Salle, priest
Genesis 17:3-9
Psalm 105:4-9
John 8:51-59

Friday, April 8

Jeremiah 20:10-13
Psalm 18:2-7
John 10:31-42

Saturday, April 9

Ezekiel 37:21-28
(Response) Jeremiah 31:10-13
John 11:45-46

Sunday, April 10

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
Luke 19:28-40 (procession)
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Philippians 2:6-11
Luke 22:14-23:56 or Luke 23:1-49

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Using incense in liturgies can be adapted for the needs of the congregation

(Editor's note: This column by Father Kenneth Doyle was originally published in 2013. Publication of new columns by Father Doyle will resume in a few weeks.)



How often is a priest supposed to use incense at Mass—every Sunday or just at special times? Our priest uses a pungent form of

incense at each Sunday Mass.

A lot of people are allergic to the incense he uses. We have approached him about it, but he seems to ignore the fact that people start coughing and sneezing—and some even walk out of church. Then he tells us that it is a sin to leave early. (Indiana)

The use of incense has long held a place of honor in the history of religious worship.

Incense serves a two-fold purpose: The visual imagery of the rising smoke is symbolic of the prayers of the congregation being lifted toward the Lord; and the act of incensing pays honor to the object to which it is directed—to the just-consecrated bread and wine at their elevation, for example, or the remains of the deceased at a funeral Mass.

It also helps to create the ambience of heaven, for as we are told in the Book of Revelation: "Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a gold censer. He was given a great quantity of incense to offer, along with the prayers of all the holy ones, on the gold altar that was before the throne" (Rev 8:3).

Wide discretion is granted to the priest as to how frequently to use incense. Theoretically, it may be used at any Mass, although most parishes limit its use to Masses of particular solemnity, funerals, and eucharistic adoration and processions.

At Mass, according to the "General Instruction of the Roman Missal," in #276, incense may be used during the entrance procession, at the beginning of Mass, to incense the cross and the altar, at the procession and proclamation of the Gospel, at the offertory, to incense the offerings, the altar, priest and congregation, and at the elevation of the host and the chalice after the consecration.

The use of incense calls for a reasonable balance of the liturgical ideal with practicality. If it is bothersome

to a significant number within the congregation, perhaps an accommodation could be worked out. Different types of incense vary in the strengths of their aroma, and more moderate brands are available.

Perhaps certain seats could be reserved for those who find incense troublesome, away from the areas of the church where it is most frequently used.

You indicate that you have raised your concerns with your pastor directly to little avail. Might it be more effective if you were to try again through an intermediary, perhaps a sympathetic member of your parish's pastoral council?

I live in a senior housing complex, and it is difficult for some of us to go to Mass every Sunday. No one drives anymore. The church is too far away to walk there. There is no city bus, and taxis are very expensive. I am 85 years old, and my friend is 91. My question is whether we are still obligated to attend.

I do get to Mass on all the major feast days, and I watch the Mass on television at 6:30 every Sunday morning; a lay minister does a Communion service at our residence each Monday, with some prayers and the Sunday scriptural readings, and about 10 of us attend. We also had ashes distributed on Ash Wednesday. (Wisconsin)

Your question indicates a great desire to participate in the Mass, and I am edified by the effort you are making to do so.

The Sunday obligation is explained in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, as follows: "The faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason [for example, illness, the care of infants] or dispensed by their own pastor" (#2181).

It seems to me, from a distance, that your age and the difficulty of transportation would qualify as "serious reasons." But I think that you will feel better if you speak to your pastor and have him tell you that himself. It might also be that he knows of volunteer drivers in your parish who could bring you to Mass on days when you would like to go and feel that your health allows.

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

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.

ANSPAUGH, Carol, 79, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, March 14. Mother of Merri-Anne Sullivan, Joseph Anspaugh, Greg and Jeff Hiatt. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of six.

BANET, Aileen M., 92, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, March 20. Mother of Earlene Chambers, Mary Owen, Judith Weber, Jean and Earl Banet. Sister of Larry Banet. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of seven.

BANET, Patrick M., 76, Holy Family, New Albany, March 6. Husband of Nancy Banet. Father of Jessica Blake, Ashley Knable and Heather Quillet. Grandfather of six.

BOCKHOLD, Neil E., 64, St. Augustine, Leopold, March 15. Husband of Connie Bockhold. Father of Clint Bockhold. Brother of Michelle Peter, Kim Steen, Tonya Stillwell, Kevin and Tim Bockhold. Grandfather of two.

CAMARATA, Joseph N., 73, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 9. Husband of Ann Marie Camarata. Father of Victoria Poland, Susanne Russo and Edward Camarata. Brother of Deborah Balch, Susan Huber and William Camarata. Grandfather of four.

DAGON, Patricia J., 77, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, March 20. Mother of Matthew Dagon. Sister of Andrea Maynard and Ken Nichols. Grandmother of two.

DEMAO, Ronald E., 86, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, March 12. Husband of Vicki DeMao. Father of Joni Hiron, Charise, Elizabeth, Del and Ronald DeMao, Jr. Brother of Carol



Bella Nargis of Pensacola, Fla., performs a twirl beneath cherry blossoms at the Tidal Basin in Washington on March 21. (CNS photo/Kevin Lamarque, Reuters)

Snapp and Robert DeMao. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of nine.

DREHOBL, Beverly, 85, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Jan 16. Mother of Theresa Mason, Mike and Steve Drehoobl. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of five.

ESPICH, Patty R., 84, Christ the King, Indianapolis, March 15. Sister of Kay Deck and Eleanor Stewart. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

FON, Robert L., 91, Holy Trinity, Indianapolis, Dec. 15. Husband of Audrey Fon. Father of Alan and Brian Fon. Brother of Martha Conkle. Grandfather of one. (correction)

GESWEIN, Anna, 86, St. Mary, Lanesville, March 16. Wife of Maurice Geswein. Mother of Jane Berkeley and Diane Kost. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of three.

HODAPP, David, 74, St. Ambrose, Seymour, March 5. Husband of Ruth Coffman. Father of Mathew Kilgas and Jeremy Looker. Stepfather of Leroy and Shaun Coffman and Gilbert and

William Allen Henthorne. Brother of Donald, Mark and Mike Hodapp. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of eight.

KELLER, Jane, 79, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, March 14. Wife of Joe Keller. Mother of Stephanie Kolbe and Gracie Whitlock. Grandmother of seven.

KOCHER, Jessica N., 40, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, March 2. Wife of Michael Kocher. Mother of Carlie, Laney, Natalie and Kace Kocher. Daughter of Rick Laney and Patricia O'Brien. Sister of Matt Laney.

LUKEN, Kenneth, 87, St. Mary, Greensburg, March 22. Father of Peggy Williams and Tim Luken. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of three.

MACKELL, John C., 96, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, March 15. Father of Kathleen Taylor, Ann Wellington, Joseph, Paul and Thomas Mackell. Brother of Ed Mackell. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of 12.

MARTEN, Virginia A., 96, St. Luke the Evangelist,

Indianapolis, March 15. Mother of Virginia Hupfer, Amy McMahon, Alicia O'Connor, Sue Ann Rynard, Christopher, David, James, John, Jr., Timothy, Thomas and William Marten. Grandmother of 38. Great-grandmother of 46.

MAXWELL, Therese A., 86, St. Roch, Indianapolis, March 13. Sister of Mary Jane Biro, Paula Koch, John and Michael Maxwell.

MOORE, David, 59, St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis, March 6. Husband of Nancy Moore. Father of Anna Marie and Valerie Moore. Son of Darrel Moore. Brother of Mary Moore-Schick, Mona Mulvany and John Moore.

O'DROBINAK, Thomas J., 63, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, March 8. Husband of Joni O'Drobinak. Son of Chuck and Pat O'Drobinak. Brother of Nancy Links, Susan Wright and Chuck O'Drobinak III. Uncle and great-uncle of several.

PETERS, Gerry, 80, Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, March 18. Husband of Nancy Peters. Father of Sally Mulligan, Andrew and Daniel

Peters. Brother of Bob, Jack and Tom Peters. Grandfather of four.

PHENIS, Gen, 91, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, March 14. Mother of Jenelle Burris and Paul Phenis. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of four.

RICHMER, Wilbur, 92, St. Mary, Lanesville, March 13. Father of Angela Galvez, Nancy Spainhour, Cheryl Walther, Janice, David, Donald, John, Michael and Patrick Richmer. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of 10.

ROBINSON, Carolyn M., 89, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, March 15. Mother of Barbara Reed, Jeffrey and Michael Robinson. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of 11.

ROSE, Joan, 85, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, March 13. Mother of Kim Rose, Teresa Sisco and Desra Sorrel. Sister of Kay Jackson and John Toney. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of 40. Great-great-grandmother of eight.

SIMON, Craig, 40, St. Maurice, Napoleon,

March 8. Husband of Emily Simon. Father of Bailee, Duke and Maximus Simon. Son of Tony Simon and Debbie Wall. Brother of Dan Simon. Grandson of Helen Schwing.

TAGUE, Carol Ann, 84, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City, March 14. Mother of Dan, Jeff, Ken and Tony Tague. Sister of Janie Linderman and Marvin Spaulding. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of nine.

VANHOOSIER, Dorothy M., 86, St. Mark, Perry County, March 8. Mother of Alison Barber, Amy Hynes, Danny, Jeff and Steve VanHoosier. Sister of Sue Harris, Ruth Karney, Helen Jones, Kenneth Hammack and Perk Rothgerber. Grandmother and great-grandmother of several.

VOEGELE, George A., 84, St. Louis, Batesville, March 21. Husband of Louella Voegele. Father of Lori Giltz, Doug, Jeff and Scott Voegele. Brother of Jerel Voegele. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of 11. †

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:

- Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
- CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church
- 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners

For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry



CALDAROLA

continued from page 12

March 4-12 also marked the Novena of Grace. This is a preached novena observed in most Jesuit parishes throughout the world, celebrating St. Francis Xavier.

In my former parish on Creighton University's campus in Omaha, Neb., this year's novena was livestreamed, enabling me to participate. A variety of great preachers, both women and men, focused their attention on cannonball moments.

What's a cannonball moment? It's an event that changes the trajectory of our lives.

When Ignatius was a young soldier, he was devoted to chivalry and military achievement as a path to glory and a way into young ladies' hearts. But at the Battle of Pamplona, a cannonball shattered his leg and his plans.

The cannonball itself did not send Ignatius on his quest for God, one of our novena speakers said. It was what followed the cannonball that made all the difference. Ignatius found himself bedridden, bored, in pain. In a castle with no reading material save the Gospel and the lives of the saints, Ignatius found God.

Another speaker told of being suddenly fired from the job in which he had felt successful. All he could think

of after his boss blindsided him with that cannonball were the words from Psalm 16 that had captured his imagination at Mass that very day: You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence" (Ps 16:11).

Those words brought him a strange sense of peace, of rightness. It strikes me that cannonball moments demand this of us: that we pay attention, and grace follows.

During this Ignatian Year, it's helpful to recall our own cannonball moments. Here's one of mine.

Decades ago, I sent for a little booklet called *Invest Yourself*, which listed volunteer opportunities throughout the U.S. There, in small print, I saw the words "Jesuit Volunteer Corps" and felt a certainty I've seldom experienced. I paid attention, and my life's whole future, where I would live, whom I would love, were changed by those words.

A few weeks ago, few could have predicted Europe's cannonball moment. It reminds me again of those famous words of Gandalf from *The Lord of the Rings*: "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

That's our choice: to listen to God, to act with charity, to fill the silence not with worry but with God, and celebrate a Lord who brings life out of the darkest of tombs.

(Effie Caldarola writes for Catholic News Service.) †

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

Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

- April 1, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at All Saints Parish, St. Martin Campus, Dearborn County
- April 1, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2-6 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Morris
- April 1, 7-9 a.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
- April 5, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
- April 6, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
- April 7, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
- April 8, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora

Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Batesville Deanery are as follows:

- Wednesdays 5-6 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan
- Fridays 6-7 p.m. at St. Nicholas, Ripley County
- Saturdays 4-5 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan
- Before and after weekend Masses at St. Maurice, Napoleon
- Before weekend Masses at SS. Philomena and Cecelia, Oak Forest

Bloomington Deanery

- April 5, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Mitchell, and St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, at St. Vincent de Paul
- April 7, 6 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
- April 13, 6-9 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo, St. John the Apostle and St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington; St. Agnes, Nashville; and St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer, at St. Paul Catholic Center

Connersville Deanery

- April 5, 6 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Holy Family Campus, Richmond

Indianapolis South Deanery

- April 2, 8:30 a.m. at SS. Francis and

- Clare of Assisi, Greenwood
- April 5, 6:30 p.m. for St. Ann and St. Thomas More, Mooresville (Indianapolis West Deanery), at St. Ann
- April 7, 6:30 p.m. for Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, and Good Shepherd at Holy Name of Jesus

Indianapolis West Deanery

- April 5, 6:30 p.m. for St. Thomas More, Mooresville, and St. Ann (Indianapolis South Deanery) at St. Ann

Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the West Deanery are as follows:

- Tuesdays 6-7 p.m. at St. Monica
- Wednesdays after 9 a.m. Mass at St. Anthony; 6-7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville; and 6-7 p.m. at St. Monica
- Thursdays after 9 a.m. Mass at St. Anthony, and 6-7 p.m. at St. Monica
- Fridays after 9 a.m. Mass at St. Anthony; 3:30-4:30 p.m. at St. Christopher; and 5-7 p.m. at St. Monica
- Saturdays 3:30-4 p.m. at St. Anthony; 3:45-4:30 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville; 4-4:45 p.m. at St. Monica; and 4:30-5 p.m. at St. Christopher
- Sundays 8-8:30 a.m. at St. Anthony, and 1:45-2:45 p.m. at St. Monica

New Albany Deanery

- April 5, 6:30 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
- April 6, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
- April 7, 7 p.m. in English and Spanish at St. Mary, New Albany
- April 10, 1 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Seymour Deanery

- April 6, 4-6:30 p.m. at St. Patrick, Salem
- April 6, 6-8 p.m. at St. Ambrose, Seymour
- April 7, 7 p.m. at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
- April 7, 6-8 p.m. at American Martyrs, Scottsburg



Father Jiha Lim listens to a penitent's confession on March 7, 2021, at St. Aloysius Church in Great Neck, N.Y., during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the season of Lent, the sacrament of reconciliation receives special attention, as Catholics around the world seek the Lord's forgiveness in the lead-up to Easter. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Terre Haute Deanery

- April 8, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. for St. Patrick and St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute, at St. Margaret Mary

Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Terre Haute Deanery are as follows:

- Wednesdays 7-8 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute

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Employment

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Pope Francis consecrates Ukraine, Russia to Mary



Pope Francis consecrates the world, especially Ukraine and Russia, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary during a Lenten penance service in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on March 25. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As Russia's violent monthlong invasion continued to devastate Ukraine, Pope Francis laid the fates of both countries at the feet of Mary in the hopes that peace would finally reign.

"Mother of God and our mother, to your Immaculate Heart we solemnly entrust and consecrate ourselves, the Church and all humanity, especially Russia and Ukraine," the pope said on March 25, pronouncing the Act of Consecration after leading a Lenten penance service in St. Peter's Basilica.

Praying before a statue of Mary that was loaned by the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima at San Vittoriano on the

outskirts of Rome, the pope pleaded with Mary to "accept this act that we carry out with confidence and love. Grant that war may end, and peace spread throughout the world."

Sitting in front of the statue, which was placed before the steps of the main altar on a red platform and adorned with white roses, the pope proclaimed the act of consecration. During the prayer, the pope paused at several moments to gaze at the statue of Mary before continuing to recite the prayer.

"To you we consecrate the future of the whole human family, the needs and expectations of every people, the anxieties and hopes of the world," he prayed.

After the consecration, the pope, accompanied by a young boy and girl, placed a bouquet of white roses at the feet of the statue. He then remained for a few moments, with eyes closed and head bowed in silent prayer, before stepping away.

According to the Vatican, an estimated 3,500 people filled St. Peter's Basilica, while 2,000 people watched on video screens from St. Peter's Square. Police asked pilgrims who entered St. Peter's Basilica carrying or wearing Ukrainian flags to put them away, since the event was a prayer service.

Among those present at the liturgy were Andrii Yurash, Ukraine's ambassador to the Holy See. The consecration, he tweeted on March 25, is "another attempt [by the pope] to defend Ukraine from the devil's war," referring to Russia's attacks on the country.

Joe Donnelly, a former senator from Indiana who soon will present his credentials to the pope as the U.S. ambassador to the Holy See, also attended the service.

The Vatican announced on March 18 that Pope Francis also asked bishops around the world to join him in consecrating Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the papal almoner, led a similar act of consecration at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal.

Bishops from around the world had announced special services to coincide with the timing of the consecration in Rome, even in the early hours of the morning.

At the Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral-Basilica in Hagatña, Guam, Archbishop Michael Byrnes led the faithful in praying the rosary before reciting the Act of Consecration at 2 a.m. local time on March 26.

Archbishop Georg Gänswein, private secretary of retired Pope Benedict XVI, had told reporters that the former pope

would join in the consecration from his residence.

In a video released before the liturgy, Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of Kyiv-Halych, major archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, said he would join in the consecration "because today we need very much the victory of good."

The consecration, Archbishop Shevchuk said, "means that it is never possible to make a deal, to cooperate with this evil that emerges from Russia today.

"And that is why we must pray for its conversion, for the eradication of that evil, 'so that it,' as the Mother of God of Fatima said, 'might not destroy other states, might not cause yet another world war.' We, as Christians, have a duty to pray for our enemies," he said.

In Rome, the bells of St. Peter's Basilica rang out after Pope Francis concluded the Act of Consecration.

In his homily during the Lenten penance service, the pope acknowledged that the war in Ukraine, which "has overtaken so many people and caused suffering to all, has made each of us fearful and anxious."

While calls to "not be afraid" may soothe one's helplessness in the face of war, violence and uncertainty, the pope said that "human reassurance is not enough."

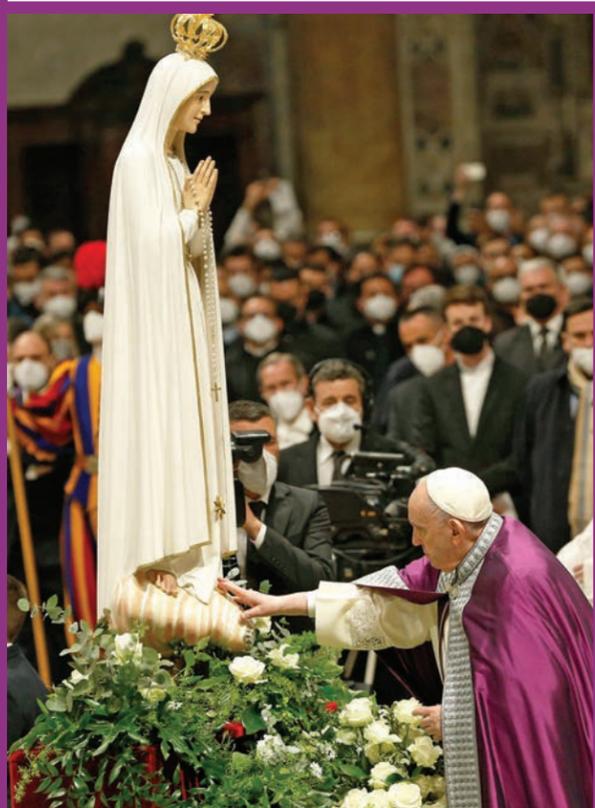
"We need the closeness of God and the certainty of his forgiveness, and once renewed by it, Christians can also turn to Mary and present their needs and the needs of the world," he said.

Pope Francis said the Act of Consecration was "no magic formula, but a spiritual act" of trust by "children who, amid the tribulation of this cruel and senseless war that threatens our world, turn to their mother, reposing all their fears and pain in her heart and abandoning themselves to her.

"It means placing in that pure and undefiled heart, where God is mirrored, the inestimable goods of fraternity and peace, all that we have and are, so that she, the mother whom the Lord has given us, may protect us and watch over us," the pope said.

In his prayer, Pope Francis specifically asked Mary to be with those suffering directly because of the war.

"May your maternal touch soothe those who suffer and flee from the rain of bombs," he prayed to Mary. "May your motherly embrace comfort those forced to leave their homes and their native land. May your sorrowful heart move us to compassion and inspire us to open our doors and to care for our brothers and sisters who are injured and cast aside." †



Pope Francis touches a Marian statue after consecrating the world, especially Ukraine and Russia, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary during a Lenten penance service in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on March 25. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)