Act of kindness leads young couple to love and a mission to bring college students to God

The love story of Chelsea and Seth Monholand began with a simple act of kindness in high school.

"I admired how kind Seth was," recalls Chelsea, who is now 30, the same age as Seth. "He held open the door for our entire health class, even on cold days."

Seth chimes in, "High school freshman health class—what a romantic place! I'll bet you can guess the unit that came up right after we started dating. At the time, we were just two kids who had fun together—that God had much bigger plans for."

Now, they are a young married couple of nearly nine years with two small children, and the plan that God has for them is helping to bring college students at DePauw University in Greencastle to a deeper relationship with God through the Catholic faith.

That plan seems a natural for Chelsea, who realized in the eighth grade that "a life centered around Jesus is what I wanted for myself" after her "first real encounter" with Christ during eucharistic Act of kindness leads young couple to love and a mission to bring college students to God

"The joy of Christ’s resurrection is needed now more than ever in a time when war in Ukraine and other parts of the world makes the hope for peace seem like an illusion, Pope Francis said before giving his Easter blessing."

"Like the disciples who were at first doubtful of Jesus rising from the dead, "our eyes, too, are incredulous on this Easter of war," the pope said as he prepared on April 17 to give his Easter blessing "urbi et orbi" ("to the city and the world")."

"We have seen all too much blood, all too much violence. Our hearts, too, have been filled with fear and anguish, as so many of our brothers and sisters have had to lock themselves away in order to be safe from bombing," he said.

Nevertheless, Christ’s victory over death "is not an illusion," and the world needs "the crucified and risen Lord so that we can believe in the victory of love, and hope for reconciliation."

Earlier in the day, the Vatican said an estimated 55,000 pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square in the first outdoor Easter Mass since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020. A vast floral arrangement adorned the steps leading to the basilica, highlighting the festive atmosphere.

According to Vatican News, the display of flowers, imported from the Netherlands, featured more than 40,000 individual flowers, plants and trees, including tulips, daffodils, and birch trees that accented the joyful celebration of Christ’s resurrection.

Pope Francis did not deliver a homily during the Mass; instead, a hushed silence filled the packed square for several minutes of quiet, prayerful reflection.

As Mass progressed, tens of thousands more began lining the streets outside the...
prayed for peace in Ukraine and for its people who have been “sorely tried” by the “cruel and senseless war into which it was dragged,” and he urged world leaders to listen to the “people’s plea for peace.”

“May there be an end to the flexing of muscles while people are suffering,” the pope said. “Let us not let us get used to war! Let us all commit ourselves to imploring peace, from our balconies and in our streets!”

The pope also prayed for the countless Ukrainian refugees forced to flee the horrors of war, especially children who were left orphaned.

“As we look at them, we cannot help but hear their cry of pain, along with that of all those other children who suffer throughout our world: those dying of hunger or lack of medical care, those who are victims of abuse and violence, and those denied the right to be born,” he prayed.

Pope Francis also prayed that the war in Ukraine may make the world more aware of the suffering caused by war in other parts of the world, especially in the Middle East, which has been “racked by years of conflict and division.”

“The pope prayed for peace in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, as well as the Holy Land. ‘May Israelis, Palestinians and all who dwell in the holy city, together with the pilgrims, experience the beauty of peace, dwell in fraternity and enjoy free access to the holy places in mutual respect for the rights of each,’ he said.

He also called for peace in Myanmar, Afghanistan, Libya and Yemen, a country he said that “suffers from a conflict forgotten by all, with continuous victims.”

The pope prayed that Jesus would bring peace to the African continent “so that the exploitation it suffers and the hemorrhaging caused by terrorist attacks— particularly in the Sahel region—may cease, and that it may find concrete support in the fraternity of the peoples.”

He also prayed that Ethiopia may continue on the path of reconciliation and dialogue and for an end to violence in Congo. The pope also expressed solidarity for the people of South Africa who have suffered due to devastating floods in the eastern part of the country.

Turning his attention toward Latin America, Pope Francis prayed for its people “who have seen their social conditions worsen in these difficult times of pandemic, exacerbated as well by instances of crime, violence, corruption and drug trafficking.”

He also prayed for the Indigenous people of Canada, whom he met earlier in the week, saying, “the Church’s role in running residential schools, where many children suffered abuse.”

“Let us ask the risen Lord to accompany the journey of reconciliation that the Catholic Church in Canada is making with the Indigenous peoples. May the spirit of the risen Christ heal the wounds of the past and dispose hearts to seek truth and fraternity,” he said.

Standing up from his seat before delivering his blessing, Pope Francis said that while the world suffers the consequences of war, the resurrected Christ who conquered death “exhorts us not to surrender to evil and violence.”

“May we be won over by the peace of Christ! Peace is possible; peace is a duty; peace is everyone’s primary responsibility!” the pope said.
VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A Ukrainian Marine commander pleaded with Pope Francis to do everything to save the city of Mariupol, which is close to being captured by Russian forces.

“I am turning to you for help because the hour has come when prayers are not enough,” Maj. Serhiy Volyna, commander of the 36th Separate Marine Brigade, wrote in a letter published April 18 by the Ukrainian online newspaper Pravda.

The commander’s letter to the pope was also posted on Twitter by Andriy Yurash, Ukraine’s ambassador to the Holy See.

In his letter, Volyna said he had not read about the pope’s appeals to the world on Ukraine’s behalf because he had “been fighting for more than 50 days, completely surrounded, and all I have time for is a fierce battle for every meter of this city that is surrounded by the enemy.”

“I am a warrior. I am an officer who too, an oath of allegiance to his country. And I am ready to fight to the end. [I do so] despite the overwhelming force of the enemy, despite the inhuman conditions on the battlefield, the constant artillery and rocket fire, the lack of water, food and medicine,” he wrote.

He also wrote that while he is sure Pope Francis has seen it in his life, “I am sure that you have never seen the things that are happening to Mariupol, because this is what hell on Earth looks like.”

“Have little time to describe the current of time that drags everything with it: to pass on to that which does not pass,” is, the promise and truth Jesus Christ, the source of salvation, said in his homily during the April 15 service in St. Peter’s Basilica. “Today, some believe there is no truth or certainty, others believe “there is too much injustice, too much suffering in the world to believe in God,” the cardinal said. But think “how much more absurd and hopeless the evil that surrounds us becomes without faith in a final triumph of truth and good,” he said.

The Vatican also released a transcript of an interview televised on a religious program aired earlier in the day on Rai1, the Italian television station.

In the interview, Pope Francis said he understands why governments buy weapons, but “I do not justify them.” That nations have to defend themselves stems from Cain, who killed his brother. “If there were a pattern of peace, this (need for defense) would not be necessary.”

“But we live with this diabolic pattern of killing one another out of the desire for power, the desire for security, the desire for many things. But I think of the hidden wars, those no one sees, that are far away from us,” he said.

People speak about peace, he said, and the United Nations has done everything possible, but they have not succeeded. I go back to Calvary. There, Jesus did everything. With mercy, with goodness, he tried to convince the leaders, but no war, war, war against him!”

He said he prays every morning to St. Michael the Archangel “so that it might help me conquer the devil.” He said, “I am afraid of him, this is why I have to defend myself so much. The devil was the one who did all that maneuvering so that Jesus would end up like he did, on the cross. The powers of darkness over Jesus: ‘This is your hour,’ the powers of darkness.”

Ukrainian Marine to pope: Mariupol is ‘what hell on Earth looks like’

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—More than 10,000 people gathered outside Rome’s Colosseum prayed with Pope Francis for peace for the world, while an Ukrainian and a Russian woman held a cross together during the nighttime Way of the Cross on April 15.

The pope had asked families to write the series of prayers and reflections for the 14 stations based on their actual experiences carrying difficult “crosses” in life, such as the loss of a family member, infertility, illnesses, disabilities and migration, but who also seek hope in their faith.

The 13th station—Jesus dies on the cross—had reenacted the very day of death, loss and war with a reflection written by a Ukrainian and a Russian family.

That meditation, which was published a few days before the event, said that they see “the whole truth” of how families ask, “Where are you, Lord? ... We want our life back as before. ... What wrong did we do? ... Why did you break up our families like this?”

“We know that you love us, Lord, but we do not feel this love, and this drives us to desperation,” the prewritten meditation said, ending with an appeal that God “teach us to be reconcilers, workers, brothers and sisters, and to rebuild what bombs tried to destroy.”

That meditation was changed after some controversy when the meditations were published.

Archbishop Svatoslav Shevchuk, major archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, asked Pope Francis to scrapped plans to have a Ukrainian woman and a Russian woman carry the cross together during the pope’s Way of the Cross service, saying on April 12 that he thought the idea “unnecessary, ambiguous and such that it does not take into account the context of Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine.”

However, the cross was still held by a Ukrainian and a Russian. The two women met and became friends while studying nursing and working at a Rome medical university campus. They had told Vatican News on April 11 that such friendships were common and many families are made up of the two nationalities, living in both or either country.

The war “is a tragedy that hits both people. I am certain that neither the Ukrainian people nor the Russian people want war. Everyone wants a normal life,” said Iryna, who is from Ukraine.

Ukrainian nurse Iryna and Russian nursing student Albina, who are friends, hold a cross at the 13th station as Pope Francis leads the Way of the Cross outside the Colosseum in Rome on April 15. (CNS/Andrew Medichini)

The Way of the Cross, presided over by Pope Francis, returned to Rome’s Colosseum after two years of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pope offered a final prayer at the end of the service, saying, “Take us by the hand, like a father, lest we stray from you. Turn our rebellious hearts to your own heart, so that we may learn to pursue plans of peace.”

Inspirational adversaries to shake hands, and taste mutual forgiveness. Disarm the hand of brother against brother, so that where there is hatred, concord may flourish. Grant that we never act as enemies of the cross of Christ, so that we may share in the glory of his resurrection,” he said.

Earlier in the day, the pope presided over the Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion, which commemorates Christ’s passion and death on the cross.

The pope began the rite after a silent procession down the central nave, where he stood in silent prayer before the main altar. Customarily, he would have knelt to lie prostrate on the floor in prayer, a sign of adoration and penance, however, he has been having ongoing difficulty with his knee.

During the veneration of the cross, after the homily, the pope wore a red chasuble and prayed in silence before kissing the cross and then holding it aloft for veneration. Because of safety measures in place to limit the spread of the disease that causes COVID-19, the cross was then placed before the main altar for veneration from the pews, without people processing before the cross to genuflect and kiss Christ’s feet.

Following tradition, the homily was delivered by Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the papal household.

The papal preacher said Jesus invites us to repent and to turn swords into plowshares and missiles into factories and homes.

“This year, we celebrate Easter not to the joyful sound of bells, but with the noise in the ears of bombs and explosions not far from here,” Cardinal Cantalamessa said during the liturgy.

“... There is only one way to escape the current of time that drags everything with it: to pass on to that which does not pass,” he said.

Pope Francis has seen a lot in his life, among the things that are happening to Mariupol, which is close to being captured by Russian forces.

They had told Vatican News that such friendships were common and many families are made up of the two nationalities, living in both or either country.

“The war is a tragedy that hits both people. I am certain that neither the Ukrainian people nor the Russian people want war. Everyone wants a normal life,” said Iryna, who is from Ukraine.

Andrii Yurash, the Ukrainian online newspaper wrote in a letter of Mariupol, which is close to being captured by Russian forces.

The commander’s letter to the pope was also posted on Twitter by Andriy Yurash, Ukraine’s ambassador to the Holy See.

In his letter, Volyna said he had not read about the pope’s appeals to the world on Ukraine’s behalf because he had “been fighting for more than 50 days, completely surrounded, and all I have time for is a fierce battle for every meter of this city that is surrounded by the enemy.”

“I am a warrior. I am an officer who too, an oath of allegiance to his country.

And I am ready to fight to the end. [I do so] despite the overwhelming force of the enemy, despite the inhuman conditions on the battlefield, the constant artillery and rocket fire, the lack of water, food and medicine,” he wrote.

He also wrote that while he is sure Pope Francis has seen it in his life, “I am sure that you have never seen the things that are happening to Mariupol, because this is what hell on Earth looks like.”

“I have little time to describe all the horrors I see here every day. Women with children and babies are living in bunkers at the factory, they are hungry and cold. Every day they are living in the sights of enemy aircraft. The wounded die every day because there is no medicine, no enemy aircraft. The wounded die every day because there is no medicine,” he wrote.

Volyna urged Pope Francis to aid the people of Mariupol and to bring the world’s attention to the atrocities committed by Russian forces.

“Bring the truth to the world, evacuate people and save their lives from the hands of Satan, who wants to burn all living things,” he wrote.

We were made to share HOPE.

There’s no greater hope than that which we find in the Eucharist.

Help us nourish others with the word of life and the bread from heaven.

United Catholic Appeal
Reflection/John Shaughnessy
A question about marriage, and the perfect answer

Being a male, I have long held the belief that a guy should run away as quickly as possible when his wife is reading “a quiz for married couples” and she says, “We should avoid doing this together. It will be fun.” So it may seem completely out of character for me to ask anyone who is married or contemplating getting married to consider the following one-question quiz about marriage:

Which of these quotes about marriage connects best with you?

1. “A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person.”—Mignon McLaughlin
2. “I love being married. It’s so great to find that one special person you want to annoy for the rest of your life.”—Rita Rudner
3. “True love stands by each other’s side on the good days and stands closer on bad days.”—Unknown
4. “A good marriage is a combination of generosity.”—Diane Sawyer
5. “A perfect marriage is just two imperfect people who refuse to give up on each other.”—Unknown

After thinking about these quotes, consider one more thought on marriage—a belief that has been embraced by countless people, including a young couple named Seth and Chelsea Monholdan and an older couple named Jim and Jeanne Huser.

Both couples, who live in the archdiocese, believe that God should be at the center of their individual lives, and he should also be at the center of their marriage. Seth and Chelsea, who have been married nearly nine years and have two children, are featured in a front-page story of the April 8 issue of The Criterion. Then there’s the story of the Husers, who will celebrate their 73rd wedding anniversary on April 14. The heart of their love story is shared by Marilyn Haywood, the ninth of ten children.

I wanted to thank you for the article on page 16 in the April 8 issue of The Criterion (“Priest recalls saying Mass in Ukrainian church reopened after 45 years.”) The story about Msgr. William Bilinsky of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and his ability to say Mass in a Church in Mykolaiv, Ukraine, that had been closed for 45 years made me realize how we may take our religious freedom for granted, and how we are so blessed to have the Mass, holy Eucharist, and our Church buildings always there for us to enter and partake.

Shona Dureestock
Shelbyville

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “bring the light of Christ to inmates.” Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Send letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect. The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit them as necessary.

Letters to the Editor

Story sheds light on gifts of religious freedom, Mass and the Eucharist

I was sent a note with the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content. Unsolicited letters are edited in accordance with the guidelines found above. In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be given priority over infrequent writers in order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers. In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be given priority over infrequent writers in order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers. In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be given priority over infrequent writers in order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers.

Shelbyville

Letters to the Editor:

Shelbyville

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Shelbyville
El milagro de la misericordia es siempre disponible a ustedes.

“Reciben el Espíritu Santo. A quienes les perdonen sus pecados, les serán perdonados; a quienes no se los perdonen, no les serán perdonados” (Jn 20:23).

Esta semana celebramos el más grande de todos los relatos milagrosos que jamás se haya contado. Dios encarnado sufrió y murió por nosotros; superó los horrores de la muerte y abrió de golpe las puertas del infierno. Con su resurrección de entre los muertos Cristo nos aseguró que a nadie que se arrepienta y busque el perdón de sus cartas, de su Evangelio y del Libro del Apocalipsis (Ap 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19), que contiene la misteriosa visión entrustada a St. John the Apostle when he was an old man imprisoned on the island of Patmos. John tells us that he was “caught up in spirit on the Lord’s day” (Ap 1:10) and in this state of ecstasy he heard behind him “a voice as loud as a trumpet” (Rv 1:19), which said: “Write on a scroll what you see” (Rv 20:23).

Each week we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ as we recall His triumph over death. This Easter miracle was the supreme example of the power of the risen Jesus, as He appeared to His disciples and commanded them to go forth and proclaim the Good News of salvation to all the nations. He charged them to be witnesses of His love and mercy, to share the Good News of the forgiveness and salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which is available to us who believe.

Los que queremos seguir a Jesús como miembros de su Iglesia debemos ser ángeles de la misericordia; debemos aprender a dejar de lado el resentimiento y el deseo de venganza. No debemos ser personas que miran con desprecio a personas o grupos que consideramos indignos. Únicamente al reconocer humildemente nuestra propia indignidad, y confiar en la gracia de Dios para que haga por nosotros lo que somos incapaces de lograr nosotros mismos, podemos realizar las obras de misericordia espirituales y corporales que Cristo nos pide que hagamos en nombre.

Somos los beneficiarios de la Divina Misericordia. A menudo los elegidos de Dios son aquellos que se arrepienten de sus pecados, reciben perdón y se convierten en instrumentos de la misericordia de Dios.

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES T. THOMPSON

Siempre disponemos del milagro del perdón.

“Por medio de los apóstoles ocurrían muchas señales y prodigios entre el pueblo […] Era tal la multitud de hombres y mujeres que hasta sacaban a los enfermos a las plazas y los ponían en camillas para que, al pasar Pedro, por lo menos su sombra cayera sobre alguno de ellos. También de los pueblos vecinos a Jerusalén acudían multitudes que llevaban personas enfermas y aterrorizadas por espiritus malignos, y todas eran sanadas” (He 5:12-15).

Aquí se producen varios milagros. Los Apóstoles, que eran tan tímidos e inseguros que huyeron de la escena de la crucifixión del Señor, ahora pueden curar a los enfermos y ahuyentar a los “espíritus malignos” en el nombre de Jesús. Y Pedro, que negó conocer a Jesús pero luego se arrepintió y fue perdonado, tan solo tiene que proyectar su sombra sobre los enfermos para lograr una sanación milagrosa. Seguramente son indicaciones de que la resurrección del Señor de entre los muertos lo ha cambiado todo para quienes creen en él.

La segunda lección del Domingo de la Divina Misericordia procede del Libro del Apocalipsis (Ap 1:9-11a, 12-13), que contiene la misteriosa visión confiada al apóstol san Juan cuando era un anciano encarcelado en la isla de Patmos. Juan nos dice que “en el día del Señor vino sobre mí el Espíritu” (Ap 1:10) y en ese estado de exaltación oyó detrás de él “una voz fuerte, como de trompeta” (Ap 1:10) que decía: “Escribe en un libro lo que veas” (Ap 1:11). Juan vio al propio Señor: “Al verlo, salí a sus pies como muerto; pero él, poniendo su mano derecha sobre mí, me dijo: ‘No tengas miedo. Yo soy el Príncipe y el Último, y el que vive. Estuve muerto, pero ahora vivo por los siglos de los siglos, y tengo las llaves de la muerte y del infierno. Escribe, pues, lo que has visto, lo que sucede ahora y lo que sucederá después’” (Ap 1:17-19).

Sabemos que Juan cumplió fielmente la orden del Señor. A través de sus cartas, de su Evangelio y del Libro del Apocalipsis, se nos han dado relatos de testimonios oculares de los milagros que Dios realizó a través de su Hijo unigénito, y de los asombrosos signos y prodigios realizados por aquellos a quienes se les encomendó completar la misión de Cristo en la Tierra.

De hecho, a nosotros, que somos pecadores, se nos da el poder de perdonar a los demás precisamente para que podamos ser testigos de la curación y la misericordia de Dios en nuestro mundo.

En el Evangelio del domingo (Jn 20:19-31), Jesús nos dice explicitamente: “A quienes les perdonen sus pecados, les serán perdonados; a quienes no se los perdonen, no les serán perdonados” (Jn 20:23).

We who seek to follow Jesus as brothers and sisters of the Church must be angels of mercy. We must learn to set aside the desire for revenge and seek forgiveness for ourselves, and for others whom we consider to be unworthy.

Only by humbly acknowledging our own unworthiness, and by relying on the grace of God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves, can we perform the spiritual and corporal works of mercy that Christ asks us to do in his name.

St. John tells us that Jesus “did many other signs” (Jn 20:30) while he lived among us. We who seek to be faithful Christians (disciples who believe in Jesus even when we have not seen him with our own eyes) believe that Christ continues to work miracles of healing and hope through us.

We are the beneficiaries of the Divine Mercy. We have been forgiven and redeemed. Our challenge on this Divine Mercy Sunday is to open our hearts to the grace of Jesus and to forgive others as we have been forgiven, so that we may have life in Jesus’ name.

†

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Bloomington Catholic Charities benefit luncheon on May 18 will focus on mindfulness, register by May 4

Catholic Charities Bloomington (CCB) will host its annual benefit luncheon at Ivy Tech Community College, Bloomington Shoppes Hall, 200 Daniels Way, in Bloomington, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 18. Doors will open at 11:30 a.m. and the program will begin at noon.

The event will focus on “Exercising Mindfulness,” which will include demonstrations on how to exercise mindfulness in your daily life, as well as information from CCB, an organization whose work appearance by CCB’s therapy dog.

Catholic Charities Bloomington features mental health professionals situated in offices throughout Bloomington. They offer a comprehensive, integrated continuum of quality care for children and adults struggling with a range of life issues, including anxiety, depression, family conflicts, grief, loss, life adjustments, relationship issues, stress and attachment issues. Approaches include psychotherapy, family and couples therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, and play therapy.

This annual luncheon helps support services and programming in CCB. Admission is free, and there will be an opportunity to pledge support for CCB through a historically significant work by the Franciscan Crown (the Seven Joys of Mary) outside on the grounds of the Guesthouse.

The cost is $50, which includes a hot lunch.

To find out more or to register, visit cutt.ly/villagesindyreg, call 812-923-8817 ext. 201, or email womenscarecenter.org.
El rostro de la misericordia

El Papa Francisco pide a la Reina del Cielo que restablezca la paz

“Todo guerra deja al mundo peor que como lo había encontrado. La guerra es un fracaso de la política y de la humanidad, una claudicación vergonzosa, una derrota frente a las fuerzas del mal” (Papa Francisco, “Fratelli Tutti”, #261).

El viernes 25 de marzo, la solemnidad de la Anunciación del Señor, obispos, sacerdotes y laicos de todo el mundo se unieron al Papa Francisco para rezar la siguiente oración: “Por eso, Madre de Dios y nuestra, nosotros solamente encomendamos y consagrarnos a tu Corazón inmaculado nuestras personas, la Iglesia y la humanidad entera, de manera especial Rusia y Ucrania.”

Este acto de consagración fue un momento solemne de oración en respuesta a lo que el Papa llama “la locura de la guerra”. Pero también fue un alegato apasionado contra la violencia y la crueldad que la humanidad ha infligido a sí misma y al mundo que habitamos (“nuestra casa común”) desde los primeros días de la historia humana.

Desde el comienzo de la invasión rusa en Ucrania, el Papa Francisco se ha pronunciado con vehemencia, no solo contra esta guerra, sino también contra las guerras en Siria, Etiopía y otras regiones del mundo. Muchos de nosotros hemos escuchado su mensaje conmovido, pero también con tristeza, al oír su voz de denuncia y de paz.

La vergüenza que sentimos por el egoísmo y la indiferencia ante las necesidades de los demás nos impulsa a clamar por el perdón y a dirigirnos a María, Madre de Dios y nuestra madre. Por eso el Papa Francisco nos invita a rezar con él: “En la misericordia del pecado, en nuestro cansancio y fragilidades, en el misterio de la iniquidad del mal y de la guerra, tú, Madre Santa, nos recuerdas que Dios no nos abandona, sino que contínua mirándonos con amor, deseando de perdonarnos y levantarnos de nuevo.”

María Inmaculada es nuestro refugio en los momentos difíciles, como las pandemias, las catástrofes naturales, las turbulencias económicas y políticas y la locura de la guerra. Ella es la Reina de la Paz que intercede por todos sus hijos, recordándonos que solo podemos encontrar la paz verdadera y duradera en la persona de María Santísima, madre de Dios.

“En este tiempo de crisis, interruptions for the future and for hope, let us pray, “At this dark hour, help us and grant us your comfort. Say to us once more: Am I not here, who am your Mother?” Mahatma Gandhi is able to unite the hearts of our hearts and of our times. In her, we place a loving child’s trust—confident that, especially in moments of trial, she will not be deaf to our cries for help and will come to our aid.

Mary knew the bitter agony of her Son’s crucifixion. She experienced the profound anguish and disappointment of the world’s rejection of Jesus, and she watches with sorrow as we repeat the foolish mistakes of past generations, continuing to rely on military solutions to problems that can only be resolved by peaceful, nonviolent means.

With Pope Francis, we must fall to our knees and pray. Holy Mary, Queen of Peace, through your intercession, may God’s mercy be poured out on the Earth and the gentle rhythm of peace return to mark our days. Amen.

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.) †

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

–Papa Francisco, “Misericordiae Vultus” (“The Face of Mercy”)

“Jesus de Nazaret con su palabra, con sus gestos y con toda su persona revela la misericordia de Dios.”

–Papa Francisco, “Misericordiae Vultus” (“El rostro de la misericordia”)
adoration at a youth retreat. But for Seth, it was one of the last calls he could have imagined for himself as a freshman in high school, a time when he was skeptical about the existence of God. Yet, as a simple act of kindness led him on the path to marrying Chelsea, a simple invitation started him on a journey to the belief that God exists and, even more, that he needs to have God at the center of his life.

An invitation and a proposal

“In high school, all of my friends were Catholic,” Seth recalls. “They would always invite me to youth group and Mass. And I would repeatedly say no—until one time I finally didn’t. I said yes for the first time in September, as part of a youth group, they brought us adoration, and I knew that Jesus was there, and my life had to look different because he was real.”

With Chelsea as his sponsor, he began Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) classes, eventually entering into Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults college freshmen.

“Moving away from friends and family was at the heart of it all, and in his heart. That connection with Chelsea and his faith led to two major choices in Seth’s life in 2010 when they were both college freshmen.

With Chelsea as his sponsor, he began Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) classes, eventually entering into the full communion of the Church at Easter of 2011. In 2010, he also proposed to Chelsea, offering her a ring filled with 21 small diamonds and a special symbolism connected to the number of diamonds.

“Twenty-one is the result of multiplying three times seven: three for the Trinity and seven for the number of days’ creation.

“Our marriage is a new creation—something that brings forth new life, first for us, and then the hope that we want to be parents,” Seth says. They were married in 2013. Since then, they have given life to Cecilia, who is 3 1/2, and Theodore, who is 1.

For the past five years, they have been working together to bring new life of faith to students at DePaul. Seth serves as the campus’ team leader for FOCUS, a Fellowship of Catholic University Students—a national organization that invites college students into a relationship with Christ and the Catholic Church. Chelsea works in an unofficial yet strongly supportive way.

“Teaming with them, sometimes see amazing breakthroughs,” Seth says. “DePaul calls the “fun story” of the transformation of a DePaul student named Phil.

“The need is so real”

“It’s actually one of my favorite stories,” Seth says. During his freshman year, Seth joined FOCUS missioner at DePaul with me for three years. During Brandon’s freshman year, Seth approached Phil and asked him if he had a relationship with. That intrigued him.

“As much as that story makes him smile, Seth also appreciates the quieter successes—when he’s a part of a student in line for confession, or when students come to pray at the holy hour that the FOCUS team organizes every weekday from 4 to 5 p.m., or when “someone who you know is Catholic returns to Sunday Mass after a while.”

Such successes help to keep him feeling blessed, especially as he faces the constant challenges of faith, and the need of having “so-o-o many things on their plate, and they are always rushing around.”

“My favorite retreats are the ones where I get to witness the students make a free gift of themselves to God,” Seth says, “who raises his own funds to support his ministry and his family.

“The need is so real. Getting to serve out on the front lines in that work, knowing about their relationship with God helps me to see there are a lot of people who do not know who they were made for. Regardless of whether or not someone is a cradle Catholic or completely unchurched, people want to know who they are and why they are here on Earth.”

“Jesus gives us our answer through his bride, the Catholic Church. I get to go out and invite them back into the full communion with God.”

At the same time, he and Chelsea share the joy of raising that family in this college community. Basing their plans for their kids in this mission setting has, “opened a lot of doors for us,” Chelsea says.

“Having the kids around both in team life and with the students has been so beautiful. I think there is a lot of benefit for the students to see the students family life together. So does Father John Hollowell. He serves as the Catholic chaplain at DePaul University Parish,帕金斯区 Correctional Facility where Chelsea worked as a nurse before the birth of Theodore.

“They are great witnesses to the students,” says Father Hollowell, who is also the pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Grenada and Anglican Parish in Brazil. “They’re at Mass every day, and they bring their kids with them. It’s good for the students to see them, living out their marriage with children.”

An opportunity to rely on God—and each other

As this year’s college seniors prepare to graduate and enter a new stage in their lives, Chelsea and Seth can identify with them. Five years ago, they left their families in Connecticut and came to Indiana to continue the path that they believe God has for them. Like all college graduates, it wasn’t easy, but it has turned out to be filled with blessings.

“Moving away from friends and family was really tough at first,” Chelsea recalls. “But what an opportunity it has been for us to rely on God and also on each other. I think being away from that known comfort has allowed us to really build our family here and raise our kids in the values we want. Our marriage has gotten stronger because good communication skills have become so much more crucial, and we have grown so much in that.”

Seth adds, “I’ve seen God work in me internally, throughout marriage—in how beautiful it is to make a ‘til-death covenant with someone. It takes effort and care and putting the other first, and it models the selfless love of God to me. I’m not nearly that selfless yet, but I know God is working on it.”

“As we head toward their ninth anniversary on July 13, Chelsea and Seth are committed to seeing their relationship continue to grow. They have the same goal for their bond with Jesus.

“Right now, I’m trying to find and hear Christ in the little tasks I do for my family every day,” Chelsea says. “For Lent, I gave up scrolling my phone and using social media for two weeks in my room to sleep. I’ve used the time to listen to the Lord in silence.”

“So in this point, I think that Jesus wants me to recognize my sonship more and more. I feel the tendency to want to take care of everything myself, but I’m rocking my son to sleep. I’ve used the time to listen to the Lord in silence.”

Seth also has a continuing hope for other young adults. Actually, it’s his hope for people of all ages.

“The people in front of you are a great gift. Catholic or otherwise, practicing or lapsing. Seek to understand them, because they are made in the image and likeness of God.”

Grace of priesthood is given for service, not priests’ glory, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In the life of every Christian, but especially of priests, God’s love and forgiveness are the greatest rewards, and any attempt to seek one’s own glory and comfort has been working together to bring a new life to St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on April 13.

Father John Hollowell and members of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) missionary team at DePaul University in Grenada share a moment of levity on the first day of classes for the 2021-2022 school year. John Hollowell, a second-year FOCUS missionary, Father John Hollowell, Seth Montoulieu, FOCUS director at DePaul, and Grace Stier, a first-year missionary. (Submitted photo)
Janet Andriole didn’t expect that the dedication ceremony in honor of her late husband Rich would touch her so deeply.

Yet she soon became overwhelmed with emotion on March 16 when she saw the huge, permanent sign that now honors him at the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) headquarters in Indianapolis.

The sign is behind one of the basketball goals in the CYO Gym, and the heart of the sign captures Rich’s impact on the world with the mantra that the longtime basketball coach and literature teacher at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis wanted his players to live by: “Be prepared. Be coachable. Be a great teammate.”

The sign also shares the length of his life, 50 years of trying to make every moment count.

“It’s overwhelming and so humbling,” Janet said. “When you lose someone, you hope their legacy lives on. I think he was trying to be an example for young men—and the young women he taught in the classroom—to use their God-given talents, to stay committed to what they’re doing, and to be there for others. His players will tell you he used basketball to teach life lessons. To see that logo on the gym was quite impactful in my heart.”

The ceremony on March 16 was to dedicate, in Rich’s honor, all the efforts to restore and protect the CYO gym’s wooden floor—and the details of how that time revealed a great deal about how he affected people’s lives and why so many people and companies wanted to come together to honor him.

The condition of the CYO gym floor had increasingly become a serious concern through its more than 60 years of use. In recent years, flooding, humidity and draining issues occasionally led to moisture gathering underneath the floor, causing different areas to pop up, making it unsafe to play sports there.

“One time, one section raised 7 or 8 inches above the floor,” said Berne Price, the archdiocese’s CYO girls’ athletics director.

In October of 2020, Price knew that, in order to save the floor, one of the major improvements had to be installing a heating and cooling system in the gym that would eliminate moisture from forming under the floor.

Her research also led her to learn that Johnson-Melloh Inc. “was very active in contributing to the Catholic community,” so on a whim she e-mailed Indianapolis company’s president, Nick Melloh, asking him if his business would consider helping CYO.

At the same time, Rich Andriole—a 1988 graduate of Cathedral High School with Melloh—was in the last days of his life. And that reality was setting in for Melloh.

“About five years ago, Rich and I reconnected a casual friendship,” Melloh recalled recently. “As our friendship started to deepen and meaningful conversations were taking place, our faiths were deepening. And then, on Sept. 25, 2020, I was informed that Rich was in the hospital. I sent him a text message. I still have the text I received from him that night. ‘Need prayers, Love ya Nick.’”

When Rich died of cancer on Nov. 3, 2020, Melloh reflected on how thankful he was for being able to reconnect with his friend. And he soon learned how Rich had touched the lives of so many others.

“Conversations with former players, parents, fellow coaches, friends and co-workers showed me that I was far from the only one Rich reached out to when they were hurting,” Melloh said. “He did this often, and the loyalty from those he touched was incredible because, like what I had experienced, the conversations were real and from a place in a man’s heart that could only come from a seed planted by God.”

Melloh committed his company to help CYO with everything that needed to be done to preserve the gym floor, the idea started to grow to honor Rich by dedicating that effort to him.

“Being able to recognize Rich at CYO seemed very appropriate,” Melloh said. “Rich devoted most of his career coaching and teaching so many young men that were part of the CYO programs.”

Johnson-Melloh wasn’t the only Indianapolis company with strong Catholic connections that was part of making sure the gym would be a safe place for games and matches for years to come. And it seems appropriate that since Rich coached a team sport that involves nine players on a field at a time, that nine companies donated their work to this effort.

Besides Johnson-Melloh, the others were Poynter, Electric Plus, F.A. Wilhelm Construction, Dotlich Crane Service, Superstar Roofing Services, Langendorf Supply Company, A Taste of Indiana and IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers), Local 481.

“Once we got it started, all these companies came together. It’s just amazing,” Price said. “The dream has now become a reality for CYO. I’m still in awe of it.”

So is Janet Andriole.

“This is something Rich would be so onboard with—how these companies came together for the CYO and for all the thousands and thousands of kids who have played and competed there, whether it be for sports, chess tournaments or science fairs,” said Janet, the principal of St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis.

For her, the gym project dovetails perfectly with the Rich Andriole Memorial Golf Outing in Indianapolis—his idea in the last days of his life.

“A close-up view of the sign honoring Rich Andriole shows his initials, the number ‘17’ he wore as a baseball coach, and the three-pronged mantra that he wanted his players at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis to live by. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)“

“A close-up view of the sign honoring Rich Andriole shows his initials, the number ‘17’ he wore as a baseball coach, and the three-pronged mantra that he wanted his players at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis to live by. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

“The deadline for nominations is May 10. †
CHRISM
continued from page 1

But on April 12 this year—Tuesday of Holy Week—priests, deacons, religious and hundreds of lay Catholics from across central and southern Indiana gathered with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson in the cathedral for the annual Mass in which priests renew their ordination promises and oils for the celebration of sacraments and the dedication of churches and altars are blessed.

"You sound wonderful," said Archbishop Thompson in remarks at the start of the liturgy after the congregation sung the opening hymn. "You look even better. What a wonderful joy it is to come together to celebrate this chrism Mass."

It was the first chrism Mass for Stephen Aye, a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. He moved to Indianapolis from Myanmar about 10 years ago and attended the Mass with several other Burmese Catholics from the parish.

"I'm excited," said Aye, who received the blessed oils for St. Mark at the Mass. "I'm so happy that I'm here. This is our first time to visit the cathedral. I'm so happy, so glad. This is special for us to be here. We thank God for that."

It was also the first chrism Mass for Deb Greiwe, a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg and a teacher in its school, who likewise received blessed oils for her faith community.

She spoke about the importance of the oils for the people who would be received into the full communion of the Church a few days later at the Easter Vigil at St. Mary. Oils blessed at the Mass would be used in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation.

"It’s a blessing to be able to be part of their journey, even if in a small way and if they don’t necessarily see me doing it," Greiwe said. "But it helps them in their journey. That’s what we’re here for."

Ian Knapp had taken part in previous chrism Masses and was glad to return, this time to receive oils for her faith community, St. Agnes Parish in Nashville.

"It just really touches your heart," she said. "And it prepares you for Holy Week. It all leads up to Christ’s resurrection. Everything flows to the resurrection. It blesses me."

Greiwe, Aye, Knapp and so many others at the chrism Mass were putting their faith into action by coming together for worship and helping others in their journey to the Church.

Archbishop Thompson reflected in his homily on the connection between faith and action.

"We live and pray as we believe," he said. "Thus, we proclaim the living and transforming Word of God in both word and deed. We bless the sacred oils to be used to proclaim the living and transforming Word of God in both word and deed. We bless the sacred oils to be used to proclaim the living and transforming Word of God in both word and deed. We bless the sacred oils to be used to proclaim the living and transforming Word of God in both word and deed. We bless the sacred oils to be used to proclaim the living and transforming Word of God in both word and deed. We bless the sacred oils to be used to proclaim the living and transforming Word of God in both word and deed.

"It was meaningful for me to see my pastor and priests that I know to-affirming every year that choice that they made," said Deacon Clawson, a member of Annunciation Parish in Brazil. "That commitment is reinforced and rejuvenated. I look forward to being a part of that. Next year, I’ll do the same thing."

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and priests serving central and southern Indiana extend their hands in prayer while blessing chrism oil on April 12 during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Assisting Archbishop Thompson are transitional Deacon Matthew Perronie, left, and seminarian Samuel Hansen. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

Kaitlyn Blandford, director of religious education at St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, receives blessed oils for her faith community from transitional Deacon Michael Clawson.
The right to land is a means to lead humanity to God

By Anna Rowlands

Pope Francis is a man with an unusual ability to communicate Catholic social teaching to both the world and the Church. Often labeled “the Church’s best kept secret,” under Pope Francis it has become a much talked about topic—and sometimes in surprising places.

Off-the-cuff briefings to journalists on board flights, addresses, interviews and sermons at the Vatican, three major teaching documents and a pandemic book have been his core vehicles for an almost breathless volume of social teaching. That teaching has broken through—as with the breathless volume of social teaching. That approach to land—seeing it already as gift—is also to discover God in all things” (#233).

In its simplest form, Pope Francis says that the social message of his pontificate is that we need to learn how to gaze at the world with the eyes of faith: “We are called to recognize ourselves as brothers and sisters, fruit of a common Creator, living in a common home.

In “Laudato Si’” he offered a teaching on the theology of that common home and identified the threats to it. In “Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship,” he talked about a new humanism: “We live together in that common home. The two documents bookend each other.

However, a series of addresses delivered to grassroots social or popular movements starting in 2014 have emerged as key moments in Pope Francis’ social teaching. Catchily, Pope Francis called for basic and universal human rights to land, labor and lodging (in Spanish the three T’s: “tierra, trabajo, techo”). These rights, Pope Francis called “sacred rights”—divinely founded.

In response to this language, secular journalists often say, “This sounds like the pope is a communist.” But such a response ignores, and fails to be literate in, the Catholic social tradition that stands behind the pope’s catchy phrasing.

This article begins a series of three articles in which these ideas will be explored, beginning in this one with land. One of the least well-understood principles of Catholic social teaching lies behind Pope Francis’ call to see access to land as a sacred right. This is what Catholic tradition calls the universal destination of goods. The created goods of the world are destined to meet the needs, and are for the enjoyment, of all.

St. John Paul II noted that this principle is the “first principle of the whole ethical and social order,” and all forms of ownership and distribution need to be thought in terms of this principle. The right to private property, including ownership of land, is relative to and answerable to this principle.

This teaching has biblical foundations in our reading of the Book of Genesis, the Psalms and the Gospels. As Psalm 24 has it: “The Earth is the Lord’s and all it holds, the world and those who dwell in it” (Ps 24:1).

Addressing popular movements, Pope Francis’ focus was upon unjust distribution of land, especially for indigenous peoples and those who still depend on subsistence living. Access to the land is not just about meeting basic needs, but also about how cultures and ways of life are preserved.

Commenting on this in “Laudato Si’,” Pope Francis writes: “The land of the southern poor is rich and mostly unpolluted, yet access to ownership of goods and resources for meeting vital needs is inhibited by a system of commercial relations and ownership which is structurally perverse” (#52).

In “Laudato Si’,” a much wider significance is also given to teaching on land, especially in the context of ecological change and degradation. Pope Francis quotes Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople: “For human beings to degrade the integrity of the Earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the Earth of its natural forests, or destroying its wetlands; for human beings to contaminate the Earth’s waters, its land, its air and its life—these are sins. . . . A sin against ourselves and a sin against God” (#85).

A sacred right to land implies an environment of land, sea and air preserved and protected from human harm.

Finally, what is crucial to grasp is that for Pope Francis and the wider Catholic social teaching tradition, land is not just functional, an instrument for meeting basic human needs. For Pope Francis, it is part of how we are drawn to God; it is mystical.

He writes in “Laudato Si’”: “The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail. . . . The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things” (#233).

Changing the way we gaze at the land—seeing it already as gift—is a crucial first step in rethinking a possessive, instrumental relationship to it and moving toward a logic of communion, in which the goods of the Earth are truly shared to meet common needs (the needs we all have for sustenance), as beauty and as part of how we apprehend the truth.

(Anna Rowlands is St. Hilda Professor of Catholic Social Thought and Practice at Durham University in the United Kingdom. She is author of the book, Towards a Politics of Communion: Catholic Social Teaching in Dark Times. Follow her on Twitter @Annarowlands1.)
Easter season offers hope

Like life itself, Lent starts out nice and slow. And suddenly, Easter is upon us.

There may have been a Lenten midway point, or maybe as Holy Week began, we realized that Lent has sped by. We asked ourselves: Did I do enough? How do I feel, maybe we should have done more? There’s always more.

As my deacon friend replied when we discussed how much money they should donate: “Give more.” That’s the standard we humans set for ourselves and sometimes that causes negative self-talk or disappointment.

So, perhaps we should look instead at what we’ve learned, and most importantly, what God has done in us. As John’s Gospel reminds us, God loved us first. Like the process of giving this Lenten season was welcoming and unconditionally loving. God—and Easter—always offers hope.

The Easter season invites us into 50 days of celebration. Not because, on that early morning when a group of women discovered an empty tomb, millions around the world were perfect and Earth’s problems disappeared. But rather, because on that morning, hope was born anew into a broken world.

This year, I noticed many retreats and websites offered hope as a Lenten theme. Not because everything was rosy, but perhaps because right now everything seems bleak. We need hope more than ever.

The invasion and the suffering of Ukraine began almost as Lent did. It shadowed us as we prayed, abstained and “gave up” as an offering. God moved forward, pushing the pandemic from the headlines. But it didn’t keep away this news: we were reminded of how much gas there was to stave off the worst effects of climate change. Worldwide, the impact is greatest on the least fortunate and those who experienced climate migration at a time when millions around the world are on the move, seeking refuge at doors often closed to them.

We ask: Where are our leaders on climate change? Why are we worrying about gas prices when so many threaten with energy? It’s not that asking a child to sit still through the Mass is misguided. They’ll eventually need the stamina to make it to the final blessing.

So, perhaps we should look instead at what we’ve learned, and most importantly, what God has done in us. As John’s Gospel reminds us, God loved us first. Like the process of giving this Lenten season was welcoming and unconditionally loving. God—and Easter—always offers hope.

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We ask: Where are our leaders on climate change? Why are we worrying about gas prices when so many threaten with energy? It’s not that asking a child to sit still through the Mass is misguided. They’ll eventually need the stamina to make it to the final blessing.
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, April 24, 2022

- Acts of the Apostles 5:12-16
- Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19
- John 20:19-31

Last week, with great joy and hope, the Church celebrated Easter. This week, the Church begins to tell us what the resurrection of the Lord means to us here and now. It is about God’s loving mercy. This weekend’s first reading comes from the Acts of the Apostles. Important to understanding Christianity, and the Church itself, is in realizing that Acts continues St. Luke’s Gospel. This fact is not that apparent since for centuries biblical translators have inserted St. John’s Gospel between St. Luke’s Gospel and Acts, blurring the connection between them.

The link shows that the redemption secured by Jesus did not end with the Lord’s ascension, nor did the Lord’s miracles, nor preaching. Vital importance is the fact that all these realities associated with Jesus were continued by the Apostles in the context of the infant Church.

Thus, this weekend’s reading describes a time not very long after the Lord’s ascension. His Apostles, led by Peter, continued the Lord’s summons of redemption.

His mercy acted through them. It lived through them. This weekend’s reading tells of the sick and the weak being brought to Peter, who healed them, just as Jesus had healed the lame and the mute.

The Book of Revelation provides the second reading. It shows us the ongoing place of divine mercy in life. First, God inspired John to write this Scripture, that future generations, such as our own, might know God. Divine revelation in itself is an act of God’s mercy.

Second, John wrote some time after Jesus’ ascension. He wrote his Disciples in Jerusalem, where Jesus died and rose, but on Patmos, an island in the Aegean Sea, now part of Greece, where John had passed. The site was distant from the Holy Land. God’s mercy is confined by no borders, distances or time.

The message is that God reveals himself to anyone, wherever, whenever. God always reaches to us. St. John’s Gospel provides the last reading. It is a familiar resurrection narrative, the story of the reluctance of the Apostles Thomas to accept that Jesus truly had risen to life after having been crucified, and then of the great faith of Thomas.

This weekend’s reading is the second reading. It shows us the power of the Apostles that most divine of powers, the power to judge as is sin and to forgive it. Sin is a divine power, since sin afflicts God, and so only God can forgive sin. Jesus forgave, being the Son of God. He shared this authority with the Apostles.

They were men who formed the earliest leadership of the Church and bequeathed their God-given authority to the leaders of the Church that came after them for all the generations to come.

Reflection

Two points in the readings support the theme of divine mercy.

The first is the infinite love of the Lord, seen in the readings.

The second point is that God’s call, spoken in every time, is coming to us through the Apostles. They were so much more than the Lord’s companions and students. They represented the Lord, receiving his divine authority.

They bore this authority after the ascension.

Majestic among all these powers was their ability to forgive sins, an ability expressly conferred upon them by Jesus, as the Gospel indicates.

God consolled. No one is alone. Granted, in human terms we are limited, no matter impressive “progress” may be. But Jesus comes to us with strength, knowledge and life. He lives! His mercy lives, as freshly now as ever.

We only must turn to God honestly and humbly.

The waters of baptism flow down through the ages to welcome all Christians to life. The Spirit of God transforms our spirits to form a river of love. When water and Spirit are joined in our hearts, a fountain of love explodes.

To water creation with goodness and kindness, the grace of God passed on, to bring our world comfort and peace and soothe our weary souls.

Father, into your hands, we commend our lives.

When you are troubled and see no end to life’s sorrow and pain, when your hope and trust seem no more than a dream, turn to God. That means to us the Lord’s loving mercy.

In every time, God always reaches to us. He lives! His mercy lives, as freshly now as ever.

Questions for Discussion

1. What do you think about God’s loving mercy?
2. Have you ever been comforted by the mercy of God?

Recently, I read in the Gospel of St. Matthew where Jesus said, “Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so will the man of Be in the heart of the Earth three days and three nights” (Mt 12:40). But I believe the Christ died on Good Friday afternoon and rose on Easter Sunday morning, which is only two days.

Can you please explain the discrepancy, or am I misapplying the Gospel passage?

A very common belief of Christians since the earliest centuries has been that Jesus died and was buried on Good Friday afternoon and rose from the dead before dawn on Easter Sunday morning. The Gospel Mark confirms that Jesus was crucified on “the day before the Sabbath” (Mk 15:42), and St. John’s Gospel says that “on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb” (Jn 20:1).

In a forced attempt to match up with the passage to which you refer, occasional commentators have theorized that Jesus must have put it down to a Wednesday. But the main body of scriptural scholarship rejects that thesis as unnecessary.

The accepted explanation of the text you quote is that ancient Jews counted a day of a day as a whole day. For example, Genesis states that Joseph held his brothers in prison for three days, but in the very next verse we are told that he released them “on the third day” (Gen 42:17).

So, “three days and three nights” in Matthew need not literally mean 72 hours, but is an idiomatic expression that can refer to parts of three days. More than a dozen passages in the New Testament agree with Matthew, which says Jesus will be raised “on the third day” (Mt 17:23)—which, by Jewish reckoning, could have been as little as 26 hours (one whole day), 27 hours, half an hour the day before and an hour the day after.

The consensus of Christian scholars is that Jesus was in the tomb for about 36 hours—from late afternoon on Friday until pre-dawn on Sunday.

Jesús may have been dead in the tomb for about 36 hours

(Editor’s note: This column by Father Doyle was originally published in 2014.)

A parish had a change in pastors which led to him arriving. I had been attending daily Mass for 18 years. Now I go on Sunday only because I just need God to help me accept him, but so far I have been unable to do so. Some of the difficulties I have include him starting Mass late, having a long dialogue homily at daily Masses. Do you have any advice that would help me in this situation? (Arkansas)

I am sorry that your dissatisfaction has deprived you of the benefit—both spiritual and emotional—that you once gained every morning. More often than not, the arrival of a new pastor requires an adjustment on the part of parishioners, particularly those who have been most loyal.

From what you have told me, your situation seems to involve more than just the customary period of “getting used to.” First, unless the priest in question recognizes his responsibilities just before daily Mass, to start several minutes late on a regular basis is inconsiderate.

In most parishes, the congregation at weekday Mass includes not only retirees but also people who are on their own to work or have family obligations. For the same reason, to extend that weekday Mass by several minutes with a “dialogue homily” is usually neither practical nor popular.

The easiest suggestion is for you to find another Catholic church nearby and, on weekdays mornings, go there instead. Your parishioners, though it is true that you live in a fairly rural area where that would be difficult—or else you would already have done that.

The most up-front thing to do would be to ask your new pastor for a few minutes of his time and explain to him your concerns. Be diplomatic, of course. Tell him how much you miss going to weekday Mass by several minutes with a “dialogue homily.” Do you have any advice that would help me in this situation? (Arkansas)

In a forced attempt to match up with the passage to which you refer, occasional commentators have theorized that Jesus must have put it down to a Wednesday. But the main body of scriptural scholarship rejects that thesis as unnecessary.

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Dominican Sister Kathleen Conlin served as a chaplain at St. Vincent Hospital

Dominican Sister Kathleen Conlin, a member of the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters, based in Sinsinawa, Wis., died on March 29. Husband of Michael P. Alerding, 73.

Saints of the Day

Sister Kathleen was born on Nov. 24, 1932, in Columbus, Wis. She entered the novitiate of the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters in 1952, professed temporary vows on Aug. 5, 1953, and perpetual vows on Aug. 5, 1959. Sister Kathleen entered a bachelor's degree in education in 1959 at Edgewood College in Madison, Wis., and a certificate in theology in 1964 at Dominican University in River Forest, Ill. In her 68 years as a member of her religious community, Sister Kathleen ministered in Catholic education for more than 50 years and in pastoral ministry for 21 years. In the archdiocese, she served as a chaplain at St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis from 1980-81. Sister Kathleen is survived by two sisters, Mary Ries and Stephanie Krenzien, and a brother, Bernard Alerding.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Melbourne, KY 41059. †

Providence Sister Donna Marie Fu served as an educator in Indiana, China and Taiwan

Providence Sister Donna Marie Fu, a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, died on March 27 in New Taipei City in Taiwan. She was 89.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 18 at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Los Angeles. Stepfather of Shelby and Dustin Hubbinks, Susan Lute, Courtney McGuirk, Jenny Scherfler and Andy Fagan. Brother of Ann Frich, Peggy Horion, Mary Schaffner, Joseph and Cheryl Alerding.


KRITZMAN, Marjorie H. (Jockish), 88, St. Roch, Indianapolis, April 1. Mother of Anne of Atom, Alan, Elaine, Erik, Jerry, Patrick and Tom Kritzman. Grandmother and great-grandmother of several.


MOUTOUX, Andrew, 86, St. Ambrose, Seymour, April 4. Father of Catherine Ehrman, Christine Miller, Andrew III and Mike Moutoux. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of six.

NARIAS, David, 73, St. John the Baptist, Indianapolis, April 1. Brother of Kevin, Nathan and Alisha Bedillion, Jeri Rost, Brian, Dennis, John, Mark, Michael and William Nair. Uncle of several.

PAULIN, Maurice C., 82, St. Paul, Tell City, April 9. Husband of Wanda Paulin.


Scott, Father of Aisha, McGowan and Walter Scott.

Brother of Constance Palmer. Brother of five.

SHARIE, JoeAnn, 90, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Feb. 9. Sister of Diane Connamo, Cindy Cowdrey, Lisa and Mark Shary. Sister of Lois Minkle. Grandmother of seven. †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

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

Divine Providence Sister Mary Karen Bahlmann was principal at Jeffersonville school

Divine Providence Sister Mary Karen Bahlmann, a member of the Congregation of Divine Providence, based in Melbourne, Ky., died on March 29 at Holy Family House in Melbourne. She was 81.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 26 at the Immaculate Conception Chapel in Melbourne. Burial followed in the sisters’ cemetery.

Sister Mary Karen was born in 1940 in Buffalo, N.Y. She entered the novitiate of the Congregation of Divine Providence in 1959, professed temporary vows in 1960 and final vows in 1965.

Sister Mary Karen earned a bachelor’s degree in 1973 from Thomas More College in Crestview Hills, Ky., and two master’s degrees in 1979 and 1987 from the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio.

In her 61 years as a member of her religious community, Sister Mary Karen ministered in Catholic education for more than 50 years in Kentucky, Indiana and Maryland. In the archdiocese, she served as principal of Most Sacred Heart Jesus School in Jeffersonville from 1978-88.

Sister Mary Karen is survived by a brother, Jerry Bahlmann of New Albany, Ohio.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Congregation of Divine Providence, 5300 Sister Anne Drive, Melbourne, KY 41059. †

Franciscan Sister Dolores Mary Meyer served in Catholic schools, parishes

Franciscan Sister Dolores Mary Meyer, formerly Sister Joseph Mary, a member of the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis, died on April 4 at Reid Health Hospital in Richmond. She was 88.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 8 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Sister Dolores was born on Feb. 7, 1934, in St. Louis. She joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 8, 1951, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1957.

Sister Dolores earned a bachelor’s degree in education at Marian University in Indianapolis and certifications at Harris-Stowe State University, Washington University and Marillac College, all in St. Louis, and Montana State University in Bozeman, Mont.

During 70 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Dolores ministered in Catholic education for 27 years in Indiana, Missouri and Montana. She later served in parochial ministry for 30 years in the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., Missouri and Montana, eventually retiring at the motherhouse in 2010.

In the archdiocese, Sister Dolores served at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School from 1953-55, St. Mark the Evangelist School from 1955-56 and at the former St. Mary Academy from 1959-61. She also served at St. Michael School in Brookville from 1956-57, the former Sacred Heart School in Clinton from 1958-59 and the former Catholic Central School in New Albany from 1978-80.

Sister Dolores is survived by a brother, Alvin Meyer of St. Louis.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47361-0010. †

Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. seven days before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed electronically. Please consult the online obituaries page to see if the obituary you wish to submit is already there before you write.

P.O. Box 14

A large statue of Christ is carried during a Holy Week procession in Malaga, Spain, on April 11. (CNS photo/Jon Nazca, Reuters)
Welcome Resurrection with trust and love, says Jerusalem archbishop

JERUSALEM (CNS)—The mystery of the Resurrection is difficult to understand or explain and can only be welcomed into one’s heart with trust and love, Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, said in his Easter homily at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

"Today in Jerusalem, as in any other part of the world, the mystery par excellence, the core of our faith—that is, the Resurrection—is placed before us, the core of our faith," he said during the first Easter Mass following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions imposed in 2020.

Holy Week, which this year coincided with the Muslim holiday of Ramadan and the start of the Jewish Passover, saw the beginning of a return of pilgrims to the Old City, though not to the pre-pandemic levels, which included more than 4.5 million visitors in 2019.

Archbishop Pizzaballa told those at the Easter Mass that, through his resurrection, Jesus saved believers from "oblivion, from slavery, from exile" as well as the last enemy of death, sin.

Looking around at the terrible conditions many people around the world are suffering, including in the Holy Land, Ukraine, Yemen and other countries in Asia and Africa, it is easy enough to find reasons to worry and feel overwhelmed by death, he acknowledged.

"The life that we celebrate here today is elsewhere despoiled and humiliated every day with cynicism and arrogance," he said.

People also have suffered during the pandemic and experienced personal losses of death, pain and loneliness, he said.

The information should be looked upon as a "generic symbol of peace and harmony," or be confused with recovery or a return to normalcy of life, he said, but rather seen as the "breaking of God’s life into ours" as a source of forgiveness, the answer to loneliness and "the fulfillment of God’s desire for unity and love for man." †
Christ the King Parish takes new approach to period of mystagogy

By Natalie Hoefer

Mystagogy. Quanah Jeffries knew it was the period of time after Easter for new Catholics as part of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). “I’ve been doing research on mystagogy,” she said. Jeffries. As the new director of faith formation and evangelization for Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, she wanted a better understanding of the term and how to best put it into practice.

The term mystagogy refers to “initiation into the mysteries,” “entry into the Church during the Easter Vigil, mystagogy, which means “initiation into the mysteries,” is “about entering into the full liturgical life of the Church and fully participating in the communal life of the Church,” he said. But this period of RCIA receives little emphasis, said Father Todd Riebe, pastor of Christ the King.

For many in our parishes, the period after being received into the Church during the Easter Vigil, mystagogy is almost an afterthought,” he said.

He and Jeffries had a vision for something more, something that would create for the new Catholics and the entire parish community “a time of deepening catechesis,” said Jeffries. Father Riebe agreed.

“As a community of disciples, we’re all lifelong learners,” he said. “So we wanted to open the mystagogy to all the parish community, so it would be adult formation for them.”

Their solution: an “Easter Speaker Series” throughout the month of May open to the parish’s new Catholics, existing members and the public in general.

“We’ll still have a dinner in the rectory just for the RCIA group,” said Jeffries. “We’ll talk about various ways of getting more involved in parish life. But then we’ll have a series of five talks that are more catechetically oriented.

Some will have a more eucharistic thrust, which I think is important for the period of mystagogy—the Eucharist is the center of our lives as Catholics,” For instance, Father Patrick Beidelman, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization, will offer a talk called “Putting Our Whole Heart into Our Celebration of the Holy Mass,” and Jeffries will speak on “The Eucharist: The Heart of Apologetics.” Other talks “will go deeper into other topics we touch on in RCIA,” he said.

One of those talks will take a look at Catholic social teaching, led by two members of the archdiocesan Catholic Charities-Sojourners Concerns ministry. Father Vincent Lampert, exercised for the archdiocese, will speak on “Exorcism: The Battle Against Satan and His Demons,” and the cantor for St. Athanasius the Great Byzantine Church in Indianapolis will offer a talk on the Eastern Catholic Churches.

“Those talks go another step, opening the horizon more to what’s in the Church and living the Catholic life,” said Jeffies. While the first goal of this series of talks to mystagogy is catechesis for all who attend, a second goal emerged.

“As we began putting the list of topics together and finding the speakers, we began thinking, ‘Wouldn’t this be a great way to introduce the new members to those newly received, into the wider community as they continue to journey with us?’” said Father Riebe.

To encourage “such a relationship building,” said Jeffries, the talks will be followed by a general “invitation to a local brewery or something to talk in a more comfortable, informal, social setting.”

He hopes the parish’s approach to mystagogy helps both new and existing Catholics “have a greater appreciation of their faith and helps them understand it better.”

“I also hope that it’s something that will help people to meet our RCIA participants and get people in the parish an opportunity to come together” in the lifelong process of initiation into the mysteries of the Church.

For (time, dates and speakers of “Easter Speaker Series, see the weekly calendar page 6.)”

Connersville Deanery parishes help buy 170 beds for families in need

By Natalie Hoefer

Since the beginning of Lent, members of three Connersville Deanery parishes have been buying up (or donating money to buy) twin bed kits like hotcakes: 170 kits to be exact.

And what a deal—a twin foam mattress, bed frame with drawers, sheets, a comforter and pillow, all for the bargain price of $140.

The price is great, but they feel even better knowing who will use the beds: local children in need, helped by the three parishes’ Tri-County Good Samaritans St. Vincent de Paul Society conference.

“We hoped to raise enough money for 40 beds,” said Tony Talbert, president of the conference comprised of members from St. Gabriel in Connersville, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Richmond and his own St. Bridget of Ireland in Brighton.

“Your generosity just blew me away.”

He did. And with permission from the parish pastors, members of the organization spoke at each Mass on a weekend before Lent, challenging parishioners to donate enough money to the organization spoke at each Mass on a weekend before Lent, challenging parishioners to donate enough money to purchase 40 of the $140 twin bed kits before Easter.

Lent was particularly for children and toddlers—are in great need by those referred to Tri-County Good Samaritans, said Dan Reicheley of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. He heads up the St. Vincent de Paul council’s furniture ministry.

“I would say one in every four to five referrals needs a bed,” he noted.

Berthrecht (pregnancy care center) would recommend clients to us who would need a bed for a toddler. Or child services would call saying a child needs a bed before they can move back in. We’ve provided beds for women pregnant and sleeping on the floor. And sometimes an adult only has room for a twin bed.

“We want as many people to experience that as possible. It brings you so much closer to God.”

Reicheley said Tri-County Good Samaritans is the last local charitable organization to offer beds. Even then, the mattresses were used.

“You can imagine the safety you have to provide,” he said. “But new mattresses are so expensive.”

Having the 170 Malouf twin bed kits “really changes the way we can provide beds,” said Reicheley.

“We want to offer a range of beds, with plans to offer double bed kits in the future.”

“It brings you so much closer to God!”

Based on comments with “folks at church, a lot of people just didn’t realize the need for beds for children,” Reicheley said.

One check was from the students of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School for $540.

“They did a school fundraiser,” he said. “They raised enough for almost four beds.”

Some donors included a message with their check. “There was one from Connersville who sent a note,” said Mackey. He read the message aloud, with the man stating that he “would like to buy a bed for a child,” but that he couldn’t afford $140, living on social security.

“But I want to chip in $20.”

There was also the grandmother who told Talbert in advance that her four grandchildren were donating the money they earned from selling their 4H livestock. One check was from the students of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School for $540.

“They did a school fundraiser,” he said. “They raised enough for almost four beds.”

Some donors included a message with their check. “They wrote a note saying the location of the church,” said Mackey. “Maybe it’s in a more private setting, lived on social security.

“But I want to chip in $20.”

“We don’t have a family would have that from hopelessly to having hope. That feeling is so incredible.

“We want as many people to experience that as possible. It brings you so much closer to God.”

(Donate to money to purchase beds, mail a check made out to St. Vincent de Paul with the word “Beds” in the memo line, and mail it to St. Vincent de Paul Society PO Box 73, Richmond, IN 47373-0073. All donations are tax deductible.)