New features at Holy Trinity Park in New Albany honor ‘history, mission’

By Natalie Hoefer

NEW ALBANY—The stained-glass window stands in the area where it was installed in Holy Trinity Church in New Albany in 1890. It still radiates the sunlight, creating a kaleidoscope of green, red, orange and yellow. It still welcomes all who come, whether to repair or to sit in peaceful silence.

Yet the 132-year-old window hasn’t seen the light of day since 1975, when a devastating fire destroyed Holy Trinity Church.

The restored window was unveiled atop a metal, church doorframe-like structure—along with a nearby sculpture called “When I Was Hungry and Thirsty”—as the new entryway to Holy Trinity Heritage Park on Oct. 4.

“This entrance way is all we had hoped it would be,” said Mark Casper, agency director for St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities (SECC) in New Albany, during the unveiling ceremony. “We are excited to share this with all our community.”

The entryway and sculpture are the agency’s latest efforts in enhancing the former Holy Trinity Parish’s property, which it was gifted in 2011.

“A miracle”

Upon receiving the property and former parish rectory, the first line of business was restoring the 1850 rectory for use as SECC’s headquarters, Casper told The Criterion.

See STAINED GLASS, page 11A

Sunlight streams through a restored, 132-year-old stained-glass window that survived a devastating fire that destroyed the former Holy Trinity Church in New Albany. The window now welcomes visitors to Holy Trinity Heritage Park in New Albany. The structure and a new statue were blessed by Father Wilfred “Sonny” Day on Oct. 4. (Submitted photo courtesy of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany)

Nov. 12-13 is the annual United Catholic Appeal intention weekend in archdiocesan parishes

By Natalie Hoefer

The weekend of Nov. 12-13 is the archdiocesan annual United Catholic Appeal (UCA) intention weekend in parishes across the archdiocese.

The goal for this year’s appeal is $6.3 million. The money will be distributed to various ministries and organizations throughout central and southern Indiana, providing help that no single parish or deanery could independently offer.

The theme of this year’s appeal is “United in the Eucharist: Being united today helps bring others hope for tomorrow.”

“The Eucharist is at the very core of who we are and what we’re about as Church,” says Archbishop Charles C. Thompson in a UCA video.

“The word ‘eucharist’ derives from the Greek word to give thanks. If the Eucharist is the source and summit of who we are, the first thing we have to do as Catholics is have grateful hearts.”

One way to show gratitude, he notes, is by giving to the United Catholic Appeal, which supports ministries that go beyond the scope of individual parishes, including:

• Providing food, shelter and clothing to more than 7,000 veterans
• Serving hot meals to more than 48,000 hungry individuals
• Providing catechetical programs for 30,000 youths and adults last year.
• Supporting college campus ministry programs.

United Catholic Appeal

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Around the world, listening sessions for the Synod of Bishops gave many participants a sense of finally being listened to, but they also raised questions about how to promote greater inclusion in the Catholic Church while staying true to Church teaching.

Two of the issues raised most often in reports sent to the Vatican were the need to respect and value the contributions women make to the Church, and the need to face “the impact of a lack of trust and credibility resulting from the abuse crisis,” according to the working document for the synod’s continental stage.

Titled “Enlarge the Space of Your Tent”—the Lord’s command to the people of Israel in the Book of Isaiah—the document said, “This is how many reports envision the Church: an expansive, but not homogeneous dwelling, capable of sheltering all, but open, letting in and out, and moving toward embracing the Father and all of humanity.”

The document released on Oct. 27 is the result of a group reflection on the syntheses of synod discussions submitted by 112 of the world’s 114 bishops’ conferences, all 15 Eastern Churches, 17 of the 23 dicasteries of the Roman Curia, the men’s and women’s international unions of superiors general, dozens of Catholic associations and more than 1,000 individuals, it said.

The general secretariat of the synod chose an international group of laity, religious, priests and bishops to read the submissions, pray about them and then draft a document that would help participants in the next phase reflect on the faith, hopes and concerns witnessed in the reports. The document was approved by the cardinals and bishops belonging to the synod’s general council.

See SYNOD, page 2A

See UCA, page 10A

See STIMBO, page 14

Enlarge the tent: Synod document sees desire for greater inclusion
SYNOD

continued from page 1A

What emerged from the reports, it said, “is a profound re-appropriation of the common dignity of all the baptized. This is the authentic pillar of a synodal Church and the theological foundation of a unity which is capable of resisting the push toward homogenization. This enables us to continue to promote and make good use of the variety of charisms that the Spirit with unpredictable abundance pours out on the faithful.”

Those who most often feel unwelcome in the Church or undervalued, it said, include: women, young people, people with disabilities, the poor, those who are divorced and civilly remarried, single parents, those in polygamous marriages and members of the LGBTQ communities.

Responding to experiences of exclusion and discrimination shared by Catholics with disabilities, the document said that “in spite of its own teachings, the Church is in danger of imitating the way society and discrimination shared by Catholics continued from page 1A

SYNOD

and members of the LGBTQ communities.

divorced and civilly remarried, single people, and the theological foundation of a unity is the authentic pillar of a synodal Church.

It also noted that in several reports, including from the United States, some participants in the local listening sessions “lamented” Pope Francis’ decision to limitocardinal Mario Grech, center, secretary-general of the Synod of Bishops, speaks at a news conference at the Vatican on Oct. 27 to present the document for the continental phase of the Synod of Bishops on synodality. Also pictured are Msgr. Piero Coda, secretary-general of the International Theological Commission; Italian Jesuit Father Giacomo Costa, adviser to the secretary-general of the synod; Anna Rowlands, professor of Catholic social thought and practice at Durham University in the United Kingdom; and Matteo Bruni, director of the Holy See Press Office. (CNS photo/Junno Arocho Esteves)

The Criterion

Friday, November 4, 2022

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Reflecting the central place of the Eucharist in the life of the Church, it said most submissions included a call for greater participation by all Catholics in the liturgy, working to ensure that it is “concentrated on the celebrant,” involves more young people and women, including in preaching, and is more reflective of local cultures.

At the same time, the document also noted that in several reports, including from the United States, some participants in the local listening sessions “lamented” Pope Francis’ decision to limit the Latin Mass according to the rite used before the Second Vatican Council.

“The quality of homilies is almost unanimously reported as a problem,” it said. But the document also highlighted a common desire to find solutions to various forms of “sacramental deprivation” including for people in remote towns and villages without a priest, as well as for civilly remarried Catholics and those in polygamous marriages.

While the reports were not “against priests or the ministerial priesthood,” the document said, many of them cited “clericalism” as an obstacle to being a “synodal Church,” one where all the baptized share responsibility for the life of the community and for its mission of spreading the Gospel. “Clericalism is seen as a form of spiritual impoverishment, a deprivation of the true goods of ordained ministry, and a culture that isolates clergy and harms the laity,” it said.

Clericalism produces “rigidity, attachment to legalistic power and an exercise of authority that is power rather than service.”

In synod listening sessions around the world, participants noted that women are the majority of Catholics regularly attending the liturgy and staffing most paid and volunteer parish activities, yet it is mostly men who make the decisions in the Church.

“Many reports ask that the Church continue its discernment in relation to a range of specific questions: the active role of women in the governing structures of Church bodies, the possibility for women with adequate training to preach in parish settings, and a female diaconate,” the document said. “Much greater diversity of opinion was expressed on the subject of priestly ordination for women, which some reports call for, while others consider a closed issue.”

Between January and March, smaller groups of Church representatives are to meet on a continental or regional level. Organized by bishops’ conferences, the groups are to include bishops, priests, religious and laypeople to read the document, pray about it and discuss which issues raised in it are most important and urgent for Catholics in their region to address in order to increase participation, a sense of communion and a commitment to missionary outreach.

Eucharist.”

With the headline “United Catholic Appeal focuses on unity in the Eucharist,” Harriet Neill’s parish was misidentified in the article in the Oct. 21 issue of The Criterion with the headline “United Catholic Appeal focuses on unity in the Eucharist.” She is a member of St. Michael Parish in Carmelton.

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REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you believe you are a victim or someone you know is a victim of sexual 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 888-393-8910

2 Victim Assistance Coordinator, Archdiocese of Indianapolis

PO Box 1440, Indianapolis, IN 46202-1440

317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548

victimassistance@archindy.org

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Saints were revolutionaries who lived the beatitudes, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The saints were not “starched,” picture-perfect conformists, Pope Francis said; they were “counter-cultural and revolutionary.”

In the multitude of men and women honored on the feast of All Saints lived according to the Eight Beatitudes, which made them decidedly out of place in the world, Pope Francis said on Nov. 1 before repeating the Angelus prayer.

With thousands of people gathered in St. Peter’s Square, including runners who had participated in the 10k All Saints’ Day race, Pope Francis also encouraged people not to visit the burial sites of their loved ones the following day, the feast of All Souls, but to go to Mass and pray for them as well.

Talking about saints and the day’s Gospel reading of the beatitudes, Pope Francis focused particularly on “Blessed are the peacemakers.”

Everyone says they want peace, he said, but often what they mean is they want “to be left in peace, to have no problems, just tranquility.”

But, if one reads the beatitudes in the Gospel, he said, they will see that Jesus does not say, “Blessed are those who are at peace,” but blessed are “those who make peace, the constructors, the peacemakers.”

“Indeed, peace must be built, and like any construction it requires effort, collaboration, patience,” he said. And it requires acts of justice and mercy.

While many people today try to convince everyone that only power and force can guarantee peace, the teaching of Jesus and the example of the saints show “peace is not achieved by conquering or defeating someone, it is never violent, it is never armed.”

Thomas More Society files amicus brief supporting Indiana law banning most abortions

By Natalie Hoefer

The Thomas More Society, a not-for-profit, national public interest law firm, has submitted an amicus curiae (friend of the court) brief to the Indiana Supreme Court supporting the state in a suit filed on Aug. 30 by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on behalf of Planned Parenthood Northwest, Hawaii, Alaska, Indiana, Kentucky, Inc., et al.

The lawsuit claims that Indiana’s recently passed law protecting most unborn lives goes on to state that neither the “plaintiffs nor the circuit court pointed to anything in the language, history or interpretation of [article 1] that indicates that the liberty language of [the article] confers a right to abortion.”

Thomas More Society CEO and president, Leo Breen, vice president and senior counsel for life, family, religious liberty, and election integrity. … [The firm] fosters support for these causes by providing high quality pro bono legal services from not-for-profit, national law firm dedicated on to restoring respect in law whose lives will be lost as this is argued in the courts.”

According to its website, the Chicago-based Thomas More Society is a “not-for-profit, national law firm dedicated on to restoring respect in law for life, family, religious liberty, and election integrity. … [The firm] fosters support for these causes by providing high quality pro bono legal services from not-for-profit, national law firm dedicated on to restoring respect in law whose lives will be lost as this is argued in the courts.”

To begin to sow peace, Pope Francis asked people to look at themselves and ask, “In the places where we live, study and work, do we bring tension, words that hurt, gossip that poisons, controversy that divides? Or do we open the path to peace. Do we forgive those who have offended us, care for those who are at the margins, redress some injustice by helping those who have less? This is building peace.”

At the end of his midday talk, the pope asked for prayers for his trip on Nov. 3-6 to Bahrain so that his meetings with local Christians and with Muslim leaders would promote, “in the name of God, the cause of fraternity and peace, which our times so desperately and urgently need.”

And “please,” he said, “don’t forget martyred Ukraine; let us pray for peace, we pray that in Ukraine there would be peace.” †
As 40 Days for Life campaign ends, prayers still needed to convert hearts

The fall 40 Days for Life campaign ends on Nov. 6. Although final statistics will not be available before The Criterion goes to press this week, we believe the campaign has borne fruit.

As of late September, we know of at least 228 unborn children who have been saved from abortion worldwide. There are no doubt countless others whose mothers chose life. We thank God for answering our prayers!

A campaign of prayer, fasting and peaceful activism, a nationwide 40 Days for Life has been held in the spring and fall since 2007 with the purpose of turning hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life and bringing an end to abortion.

In the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, people have kept vigil and planned Parenthood abortion centers in Indianapolis and Bloomington, praying to change minds and hearts.

Some believe the U.S. Supreme Court's June decision to overturn Roe v. Wade—which legalizes abortion in the early stages of pregnancy—was the end of the line for the fight in establishing a culture of life across America.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Indiana’s new law to give legal protection to nearly all unborn children went into effect on Sept. 15, only to be blocked a week later by a preliminary injunction in a Monroe County court. Judge Kelsey Hanlon, a special judge serving in the court, issued the injunction, temporarily reinstating access to abortion in Indiana up to 22 weeks gestation as allowed by state law prior to Sept. 15.

A few weeks later, the Indiana Supreme Court denied a request from Attorney General Todd Rokita to allow the law to take effect pending a court ruling. The state Supreme Court did agree to Rokita’s request to take the case and scheduled oral arguments for January.

The injunction tragically means in the next few months that thousands of unborn children will never be able to live the life God had planned for them.

In response to the judge’s Sept. 22 order, Indianapolis Right to Life CEO Mike Krokos said that the “blockade of Indiana’s new law means over 161 unborn children will continue to lose their lives to abortion every week this injunction stays in effect.”

The fight to protect the unborn still extends beyond Indiana. In its June ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court acknowledged that the states, and not the federal government, hold the proper legislative authority to regulate abortion. But not all people believe that is the case.

Recently, President Joe Biden, who is Catholic, stated that his top legislative priority after the midterm elections will be to codify a national right to abortion.

During an Oct. 18 speech hosted by the Democratic National Committee, Biden promised that if more Democratic senators are elected and his party keeps the House in the upcoming midterm elections, the first legislation he would send would preserve abortion rights protections.

He also said he would aim to sign the bill into law close to Jan. 22, 2023—the 50th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision.

“The President is gravely wrong to continue to seek every possible avenue to facilitate abortion, instead of using his power to increase support and care to mothers in challenging situations,” said Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities. “This single-minded extremism must end, and we implore President Biden to recognize the humanity in preborn children and the genuine life-giving care needed by women in this country.”

“As pastors who deal daily with the tragic impacts of abortion, we know that abortion is a violent act which ends the life of preborn children and wounds untold numbers of women. The Catholic Church wishes to continue in its work with our government and leaders to protect the right to life of every human being and to ensure that pregnant and parenting mothers are fully supported in the care of their children before and after birth.”

As Catholics, we are called to uphold the dignity of all human life from conception to natural death. And the evil of abortion is an affront to that tenet of our faith.

We must continue our mission of stormeding the hearts of the people who pray to end this tragic occurrence, asking God to help us bring light to so many places that are still enveloped in darkness.

—Mike Krokos

Making Sense Out of Bioethics/Trad Pacholczyk
Seeking the spiritual side of dementia

The possibility of suffering from dementia later in life is a worrisome and unpleasant prospect for many. Most people know they would like to remain in possession of their mental faculties until the end.

The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.©www.fathertad.com

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“…My father needs my help yesterday, but he often can’t remember yesterday at all. … My father needs to live the life God had planned for them. … In the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, people have kept vigil and planned Parenthood abortion centers in Indianapolis and Bloomington, praying to change minds and hearts. … Some believe the U.S. Supreme Court’s June decision to overturn Roe v. Wade—which legalizes abortion in the early stages of pregnancy—was the end of the line for the fight in establishing a culture of life across America. …”

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

The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.

“The fight to protect the unborn still extends beyond Indiana. In its June ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court acknowledged that the states, and not the federal government, hold the proper legislative authority to regulate abortion. But not all people believe that is the case. Recently, President Joe Biden, who is Catholic, stated that his top legislative priority after the midterm elections will be to codify a national right to abortion.”

“When times, the person suffering from dementia can become so frustrated they are aggressive toward those around them. There is need for a great deal of patience and spiritual support in these situations. …”

“The leading symptoms of dementia are, frankly, terrifying: loss of memory, of language, and of reasoning ability,” he said. “We all feel at least a slight anxiety about dementia because these dreaded symptoms seem to assault our very identities, to dissolve the autobiographical narratives that constitute the very story of our lives.”

“As the symptoms and complications of dementia unfold, the challenges we face from disease can unexpectedly become an invitation from God. Although dementia can contribute to spiritual growth, it almost always involves a great deal of suffering for all concerned, and the challenges should not be underestimated.”

“…the person suffering from dementia can become so frustrated they are aggressive toward those around them. There is need for a great deal of patience and spiritual support in these situations. …”

“As pastors who deal daily with the tragic impacts of abortion, we know that abortion is a violent act which ends the life of preborn children and wounds untold numbers of women. The Catholic Church wishes to continue in its work with our government and leaders to protect the right to life of every human being and to ensure that pregnant and parenting mothers are fully supported in the care of their children before and after birth.”

“At times, the person suffering from dementia can become so frustrated they are aggressive toward those around them. There is need for a great deal of patience and spiritual support in these situations.”
Forming future priests 'on fire with God's love

"The goal of priestly formation is to form men who are in the likeness of Jesus Christ for service in the Church and the world," says Father Eric Augenstein, director of seminarians for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The publication date for this column is Friday, Nov. 4, the memorial of St. Charles Borromeo.

"As the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan in the 16th century, Charles Borromeo's reforms touched many areas of the Church's life, including the education and formation of future priests. Because of his zeal for priestly formation, St. Charles is today considered the patron saint of seminarians, and many dioceses throughout the world have seminaries named for this holy man. St. Charles knew that the health and vitality of every local Church depends on the holiness and the success of the pastoral ministry of her priests. That's why every diocesan bishop is charged with a ministry of her priests. That's why formation, St. Charles is today considered the Church's life, including the education and formation of future priests.

Taking on the formation of priests is a serious task. We have to remember is that authentic formation happens in four areas: human, spiritual, pastoral and intellectual. To neglect any one of these dimensions of priestly formation would be to put newly ordained priests at a serious disadvantage in their ministry to God's people.

As in the days of St. Charles Borromeo, the pope and the Holy See are concerned about priestly formation around the world, as they should be. We bishops have to make sure that we're doing good, solid work of priestly formation for the sake of the Church, for the well-being of all involved, for good preaching, the proper celebration of the sacraments, for pastoral care, for proper administration, for every aspect of the Church's life and ministry.

The basic mission of seminaries across the United States is to form men to be effective priestly parish priests. These seminaries, including our own Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis and Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, follow documents of the Second Vatican Council in carrying out this mission. The Church regularly evaluates norms for priestly formation so that those who are ordained are in the best position to share the Gospel in diverse parish communities.

Starting this fall, seminarians across the U.S., including Bishop Bruté and Saint Meinrad Seminary, have begun implementing a new revised Program of Priestly Formation developed by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops with guidance from the Vatican.

The four dimensions of priestly formation (human, spiritual, pastoral and intellectual) remain solidly in place, but what the revised Program of Priestly Formation emphasizes is the two principles of gradualism and integration that must be respected when preparing men for ministry as priests today.

The first principle, gradualism, is the concept that seminary formation happens gradually over a period of time, and that we have to be humble and patient. The second principle has to do with the integration of the four dimensions of priestly formation. Our Church needs priests who are mature human beings, deeply spiritual men who are good shepherds (pastors) and who understand and can communicate effectively what the Church teaches about Jesus Christ and his Church.

Above all, we want priests who have had a personal encounter with our Lord, and who are “on fire” with God's love. This normally happens gradually, and it requires that intellectual knowledge be integrated into life, and that we have a deep and a deep human life and concern for the people a priest is called to serve.

As archbishop, I take my responsibility for priestly formation quite seriously, and I am deeply grateful for the solid formation our priests receive at Bishop Bruté, Saint Meinrad and the other schools where we occasionally send seminarians.

When Charles Borromeo served as an archbishop, he was concerned that the most important way for him to educate his future priests was by his personal example. If his seminarians were to be formed to lead holy lives of priestly service and pastoral care, St. Charles believed that he had to be the first to give a good example and renew their apostolic spirit.

I pray that my brother bishops and I will lead the same spirit and set a good example for our seminarians, priests and all the people we are called to serve in the likeness of Jesus Christ.
November 8
Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Taizé Prayer at the Woods, 7:30 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, deserts. Virtual ticket available at can at burn/taize. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@cutt.ly/taize. Information: votacion@thedomine.

November 9
Get A Life via Zoom, 7 p.m. and second Wednesday of each month, Benedictine virtual tea available with Renewer, facilitator, sponsored by Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Xavier, and Evansville. Information: votacion@thedomine.

November 9-10
St. Simon the Apostle School, 8155 Oakland Rd. Indianapolis. School Open House. Fri. 6-8 p.m., Sat. 9-11 a.m. register 3-year-old preschool through seventh grade, event registration requested. Information: registration. 317-826-6000, ext. 175, or school@cutt.ly/simon.

November 10
St. Jude Parish, 101 N. Ferguson, Henryville, 7-8 p.m., silent and 9-11 p.m. St. Francis Xavier Parish, 11 a.m., register 3-year-old preschool through seventh grade. Information: www.stjudeplacetrein.com.

Retreats and Programs

November 18-20
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr. St. Meinrad, Lafayette. Praying with the Bible, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke, presenting, $300 single, $425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

November 19
Saint Mount Francis Convent Ferndale, 810 Saint Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. With Grateful Hearts: A Retreat on Gratitude, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., $50 includes lunch and materials, $75 overnight option with lodging and light breakfast, register by Nov. 7. Information: registration. mountedfrancis@stjubilant.org or 812-923-8817.

November 21
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. A Come Let Us Adore Him! Advent Dinner and Concert, 6-8 p.m., buffet dinner, dessert by Francesco Lazzara, prayer, adoration, $50. Information: registration. fatimatrust.org/concerts/event. 317-545-7681 or lcomo@archindy.org.

November 22
Parish of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 200 Hill Dr., Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, 1005 W. Main St., Danville. Christmas Razaar, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., 2 local vendors and artisans, gift baskets, handmade craft items, fall and Christmas decor, baked goods, street vendors, raffle, Mrs. Claus, lunch available, free admission. Information: 317-745-4284 or debchubach@1026767@gmail.com.

Sacred Heart Gym, 558 S.aker St., St. Clair County. Spaghetti Dinner, 4-7 p.m. fundraiser for John Volk/ Knox Ranum Memorial Scholarship, hosted by Knights of Columbus Council 9441, St. Joseph Parish, 11441 Hague Road, in Fishers, IN. Information: 317-407-6681 or smylie19@gmail.com.

November 13
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, 15495 Oak Ridge Rd., Carmel, In. (LaFayette Diocese). To Sanitize the World, 7 a.m. and Catholic theologian George Weigel presented information. Q&H@holy-francis.org.

November 14
St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 5555 Oakland Rd., Indianapolis. Nothing Can Separate Us from the Love of God, 7 p.m., Dominican Sister Mary Michael Faxon presenting, free. Information: 317-686-6000, ext. 159 or bunktmi@smimission.org.

November 15
The Atrium, 3143 W. Thompson Rd., Indianapolis. Gabriel Project: First Post-Roe Fundraising Dinner, 6:30 p.m., national speaker, Pan Steter. Information: registration. 20220606@gmail.com or 317-213-4278.

November 16

November 17
Holy Cross Parish, 12239 State Road 62, St. Croix. Holy Cross Raffle, 9 a.m., 1st prize $25,000, 2nd-place $1,000, 3rd-place $1,825, per ticket only $55 tickets available. Information: 317-843-5143.

St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mackey 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: 317-244-0002.

November 18
St. Louis de Montfort to host free Thanksgiving Day dinner on Nov. 24
A free dine-in or take-out Thanksgiving dinner with turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, vegetables, rolls and dessert will be offered by John W. Hall at St. Louis de Montfort Parish, 11441 Hague Road, in Fishers, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese), from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Nov. 24. All are welcome. For more information, call 317-317-4256.

Saint Charles Cemetery, 1375 E. 44th St., Indianapolis. Advent Days of Silence, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $40 per day, includes room, continental breakfast, lunch and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional $30 per night, dinner additional $10 per meal. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events. 317-545-7681 or lcomo@archindy.org.

December 3

December 5
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 6017 S. Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Emmanuel—God is With Us Advent Evening Reflection, 6-9 p.m., Benedict Inn Spiritual Direction Internship director Rev. Hansbery presenting, $45 includes dinner. Information, registration. benedictinumission.org/programs. 317-788-7581 or benedictinumission.org.

December 6
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 6017 S. Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Personal Day of Retreat, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $40 per private room for the day and spiritual direction available for additional $30, must be scheduled in advance. Information: benedictinumission.org/programs.

December 7
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr. St. Meinrad, Soul Imagining Our Inner life, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. CT, Benedictine Sisters of St. Vincent presenting, $55 includes talk and lunch. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

December 16-18

January 9-13

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

A few years ago, I had the joy of going on a pilgrimage to Fatima, Portugal, for the 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady there. I felt an immediate and strong kinship with St. Francisco de Jesus Marto, one of three the little children who saw Our Lady back in 1917. He was the one who Mary said would only make it to heaven “after many rosaries!”

While Francisco and Jacinta, his sister, died at a young age, Lúcia dos Santos, the oldest of the three visionaries and cousin to the others, lived until 2005. Lucia became a religious sister, and she tells in her book Fatima, In Lucia’s Own Words about a beautiful moment when Francisco ran up to her before one of the apparitions and said, “I came, because—I don’t know why.”

Isn’t that true for all of us who have followed a call of God? There’s a necessary mystery about our callings, our vocations. We walk where God is leading simply because we are drawn there, and then we get there and pause from time to time, thinking, “I’m here, because—I don’t know why!”

Except, of course, we do know why: God’s grace! When it comes to vocations, all is grace and mercy. None of us deserves a vocation, none of us is smart enough to know our vocation and none of us is strong enough to fulfill the demands of our vocation. It is all God’s grace and mercy, from start to finish.

A true disciple of Jesus echoes Francisco’s words often: “I’m here, because—I don’t know why!”

I’ll always remember watching a great documentary on the priesthood called The Catholic Priest Today years ago before finally entering the seminary. I would recommend the whole world watch it. I’ve probably seen it a thousand times!

In the documentary, Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith of Colombo, Sri Lanka, says something very wise: “You can never explain your vocation, especially your priestly vocation. It always is a mystery. Something happens inside you.”

That is most certainly the case. This Vocations Awareness Supplement profiles men and women from across our archdiocese who have encountered this mystery and have responded with love and generosity. I hope you enjoy their stories and are encouraged to pray for them and thank them.

Our seminarians and priests, our deacons, our religious sisters and brothers know this well: We can’t explain the life we’ve been called to live. It is the most wonderful thing! We can’t always even explain how we got here. All we know is we have been drawn by God’s love, grace and mercy. By God’s grace, something happened inside us. By God’s grace, we took the next steps. By God’s grace, we are here.

If you are reading this and are wondering if God might be calling you to serve him in the priesthood, diaconate or religious life, embrace the mystery of your calling! The archdiocesan Vocations Office is here for you! You may never know for a fact why you’re feeling as you are, why God has picked you or what you might do next. But no worries! Just embrace the mystery, take one step at a time, hold onto Mary’s hand, and you’ll be walking in the divine will!

All vocations are imbued with God’s mysterious grace and mercy.

By Father Michael Keucher

†
By Sean Gallagher

In the beginning years of the Church in central and southern Indiana, priests from France and later Germany came here to minister to immigrants from those two countries who settled in this section of the U.S. frontier.

Two archdiocesan seminarians are continuing that tradition today in a new way.

Thousands of Burmese Catholics from Myanmar in southeast Asia, many of them refugees from persecution there, began settling in Indianapolis about 15 years ago.

Among the first of those refugees were the families of seminarians Timothy Khuishing and Khaing Thu. Khuishing came with his family to Indianapolis when he was 11 in 2010. Thu was 1 when he arrived a year later.

The challenges of two young boys adjusting to life in a different culture dominated by a language different from their own was eased by the faith of their fellow Burmese Catholics from their own was eased by the faith of their fellow Burmese Catholics in St. Meinrad and later at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

“...for the people of Myanmar through Facebook. He recalled the early days after the coup when there was so much uncertainty.

“For me, it was very stressful not to know where my aunts and uncles were,” he said. “Connections through phones and Facebook was the only way that we were updated on the situation.

“I was constantly texting my friends and family. So were my parents. I tried to do as much as I could to help through prayer and fundraising.”

Praying psalms several times a day in the Liturgy of the Hours has helped Thu. Many of the psalms speak of the suffering of the Israelis some 3,000 years ago. Thu sees in them a prayerful reflection of his own suffering and that of his people.

“I read a particular stanza and wonder if it is talking about me,” he said. “I am able to relate to a lot of the psalms. I know God is taking to me a lot through that. I know that God is with me through my worries and sufferings.”

The challenges that Khuishing and Thu experienced in first moving to Indianapolis as children and more recently in their concerns about the suffering in Myanmar are preparing them to minister as priests to people caught in their own misery.

“There’s definitely a connection between my experience and the way that I’ll do ministry to people,” Thu said. “Most ministry is done from your own personal experience. That’s the best way to do ministry, because you can understand what other people are going through. You can use your experiences in a way to help them.”

“God put me through that experience for a reason,” Khuishing said. “I’m almost certain that the priesthood is the vocation in which God wants me to give back to others. I’ll use my experiences to help others in various situations. I’m grateful if it’s through the priesthood that God wants me to serve, then I’m grateful for that.”

(For information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.)

Vocations Awareness Supplement highlights the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life

This issue of The Criterion features our annual supplement that highlights vocations in the Church to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life.

It is ordinarily published during the U.S. bishops’ annual Vocations Awareness Week, which this year is on Nov. 6-12.

From the beginning, the Church has recognized that marriage is also a vocation, a pathway to holiness, to which God calls people. The Criterion publishes two marriage supplements annually, usually in February and July.

In addition, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has three offices which promote vocations. For information on the Office of Marriage and Family Life, visit archindy.org/marriageandfamily. For information on the diaconate, go to archindy.org/deacon. For information on the priesthood and consecrated life, visit archindy.org/vocations.
Bonds across the generations connect sisters in friendship and love of God

By John Shaughnessy

BEECH GROVE—Just back from an enjoyable football weekend at the University of Notre Dame, 74-year-old Benedictine Sister Mary Luke Jones and 42-year-old Sister Susan Reuber joke and smile as they lead a visitor on a walk through the grounds of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. Their smiles and laughs continue on this grey and blustery autumn afternoon when the visitor asks the sisters to stop for a photo that will appear in The Criterion, and Sister Mary Luke playfully says after a few standard shots, “Should we hug?” As the two friends do, their faces radiate joy.

Their closeness also reflects one of the main qualities that defines the Our Lady of Grace community, say the sisters who live there—the tight bonds that connect the sisters across generations, leading to close friendships and an even deeper relationship with God.

“You’re in the midst of like-minded women who are all dedicated to the honor and glory of God,” Sister Mary Luke says. “We pray together three times a day and are accountable to each other and rely upon each other, and we also have the benefit of the wisdom and the expertise of each other. What’s there not to like?”

She is just warming up on a belief that she always carries in her heart. “The atmosphere around here is one of caring and concern,” Sister Mary Luke continues. “We have a 38-year-old and a 39-year-old and everything in between. We have rural and urban, we have only children and oldest children and youngest children and everything in between. So, you got all kinds of personalities. But we accept each other. That’s not to say that sometimes we may blurt out a word or a look or an eye roll. That’s not to say that. But we accept each other. And we’re accountable to each other and we’re here for each other.”

As one of the youngest members of the community, Sister Susan adds, “When I think about the older sisters, the first aspect that comes to mind is their devotion to the community and their love for Christ in their devotion to the Benedictine Way of life, our way of life.”

“Sister Harriet says. “It’s not just being interested in the same things that I like on the Internet,” Sister Mary Luke says. “Susan has just latched onto this development thing from the get-go. It’s so easy for me to hand over the reins to this office because I know it’s in good hands.”

Sister Harriet Woehler has the same faith and confidence in Sister Marie Therese Racine—and a similarly close friendship.

“She knows my heart,” Sister Harriet says. “Now 95, Sister Harriet smiles as she looks back across the years to when she entered Our Lady of Grace Monastery in 2000.

“I had her in formation—overseeing, protecting, teaching the Benedictine way of life, our way of life,” Sister Harriet recalls as she looks at Sister Marie seated nearby inside the monastery. “For some, formation bonded into connecting with them. She loved music and that was me, too. Music is so bonding, and we had that. And the spirituality.”

Sister Marie’s eyes light up as she recalls Sister Harriet’s influence.

“I was under her direction for my first two years here,” says Sister Marie, who is now 62. “Even before music was involved, it was really the passion she had for monastic life—the joy she had, teaching us, encouraging us on our journey and also listening to our stories. She allowed me to share who I was and accepted me with the love of Christ. So, that was the bond for sure. She knows my heart. It’s the vulnerability you have can with someone that you trust over the years, and that continues.”

Their bond has also strengthened through the years as they have helped each other grow in their relationship with Christ.

“We share books, she finds things of interest that I like on the Internet,” Sister Harriet says. “It’s not just being friends. It’s sharing the Benedictine way of life. It’s just the love of the way of Jesus.”

Sister Marie notes, “We encourage each other on the journey. We help each other grow. There’s a term we have in the Rule [of St. Benedict] about radical self-honesty. I can be radically self-honest with Sister Harriet. That really helps me be true to my vocation, to my relationship with Christ, to where I might quite not be on the straight path. To be able to talk things over with her on some things helps me. She’s a spiritual guide for me, and that’s how we started.”

There’s also been a transition in their relationship as Sister Harriet has gotten older—a transition that Sister Marie compares to the change in a relationship between a parent and a child as a parent reaches a certain age. As Sister Harriet has always been there for her, Sister Marie strives to be even more present for Sister Harriet.

“A wonderful way of life”

“Intergenerational living helps us to see the long span of life, the different stages,” Sister Marie says. “It helps me to learn to love—who needs to be cared for right now. It’s just companionship on the journey, but it has a richness. We’re in with people who have different life experiences that can help give different perspectives. It just adds a great richness to our life together.

“And I have to say I have a great sense of gratitude to Sister Harriet and all her contemporaries for persevering in this life through very difficult times after Vatican II. Our community was sustained by them. So, they pass on to us that strength, the love and the passion for this way of life so we can continue it, in whatever way it’s going to be. It gives us courage. It gives me courage. But it’s really a deep sense of gratitude. It helps us keep going.”

Sister Harriet smiles again at Sister Marie as the elder sister says, “This is a wonderful way of life. And I would highly encourage it for anyone who feels God has called them.”

That sentiment is echoed by Sister Mary Luke.

“I don’t know why young women aren’t knocking down our doors. We have been given so many opportunities educationally. We have excellent health care. And we have the opportunity to be of service to others. Our primary work is our prayer. And we’re very conscientious about that. We have people asking us to pray for them, whether online or calling in. And family and friends call upon us to be there in prayer for them. It’s a privilege and an honor to do so.”

She takes a breath before adding, “This has been my life for 56 years. And it’s always been a wonderful life. It’s always been a pleasure to be a part of the community—and to do so I can to be a significant part of it.”

(For more information about Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, visit www.benedictine.com)

For years, Benedictine Sister Harriet Woehler, left, and Sister Marie Therese Racine have been constant supports in each other’s lives, bridging the generations through their mutual love of music, spirituality and God.
Joy-filled deacon strives to see the world through ‘the eyes of Christ’

By John Shaughnessy

Deacon Steve Tsuleff likes to wear Hawaiian shirts, revealing his often laid-back, lighthearted approach to life and his love of being by the ocean. “I love the calming sound of the waves, and I like to reflect on God’s beauty,” he says.

In his office where he works as a video editor for a television station, there’s a crucifix, a photo of Pope Francis and an icon of the Blessed Mother holding Jesus—reflecting the way he believes that his professional life and his faith life are interwoven. “I make no secret that I am a Christian, a Catholic and a deacon,” he says.

“Sometimes, it starts a conversation.”

And after his love of his family and his faith, the other true joy for Deacon Tsuleff is the passion he has for creating his faith, the other true joy for Deacon Tsuleff is the passion he has for creating

“Tsuleff’s favorite ministry is to the sick and the elderly.”

“These individuals remind me of my mom and dad, my grandparents, my aunts and uncles,” says the 60-year-old deacon. “When my mom and dad were at that stage, there were people who gave them comfort. That’s what I am hopefully doing.

“I am blessed to be able to bring Christ to them and share in the love they have for him. I also am able to develop friendships and trust, which allows them, as well as myself, to be honest about faith and where they feel they stand with God. We are able to pray, talk, laugh and even cry together.”

“God sometimes has different plans”

During his visits, Deacon Tsuleff hopes to leave people with a smile. He believes God was smiling when he taught him one of the great lessons he has learned as a deacon.

“When we as deacons go visit those who are sick and dying, we find that God sometimes has different plans for us when we arrive,” he says.

That leads him to share the story of his visits to a woman, suffering from Alzheimer’s disease, and her son.

“I’m not really sure if she knew who I was, but her son would always tell her who I was when I arrived. I would talk and pray with her and give her Communion. This was also a time that I could talk with her son. He was struggling with some aspects of his faith, but I sensed a need for Christ. Why else would he want me to bring Communion to his mother?

“I always asked him how he was doing, and it was always, ‘OK, I guess.’ I reassured him that struggling with your faith is not uncommon, and it takes time to get reacquainted with our Lord. As time passed, I could tell he was getting closer to the Lord and his spirits seemed better. I told him I was always here for him and his family.”

He has that same approach for his co-workers and the people he meets as a video editor for a television station in Cincinnati.

“I have a dear friend that I have worked with for about 25 years,” he says. “His wife got sick. He would come in and he would just talk, and I would listen. Even though he wasn’t Catholic, we were still able to share our love of Christ. He eventually left work to take care of her. The doctors did diagnose her with Parkinson’s. She’s now in hospice care. We still keep in touch and talk.”

“It’s all part of the Christ-centered approach that Deacon Tsuleff strives to bring to his life and to others, says Father Vincent Lampert, pastor of both St. Michael and St. Peter parishes.

“It’s been such a beautiful journey”

“One of the things he’s really good at is he really knows how to be present to people,” Father Lampert says. “After Mass on Sundays, he visits a lot of people who are sick or homebound. He takes them Communion, and he listens to them, to let them know they’re still connected and still vital to the parish. He’s also a man of deep prayer. I enjoy working with him. We both have a great sense of humor. We laugh a lot together.”

Joy has also marked his 36 years of marriage with his wife, Kara, who notes that their joyful connection has increased since he started the process of becoming a deacon.

“It began with his five years of formation,” Kara says. “He’s become a better man, a better Christian, a better Catholic. I’ve truly enjoyed watching him in this ministry—and seeing how much joy it brings him. It’s helped me grow in my faith as well. One of the things that’s beautiful about the archdiocese’s program is that the wives are invited to be part of the formation process. We formed a community that was wonderful. It’s just been such a beautiful journey.”

“It’s had an impact on their marriage, too. The couple met as students at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind. A cradle Catholic, Kara introduced him to the Catholic faith, and he was received into full communion of the Church after their marriage and the birth of the first of their two daughters.

“I was the spiritual leader in the family,” she says. “Since he became a deacon, I see him taking the lead more. That’s been great to see.”

They work together as sponsors for engaged couples, sharing meals, stories and advice.

Being a deacon has also given him the blessing of baptizing their granddaughter, Elise. It’s been such “a wonderful experience” for Deacon Tsuleff that he encourages other men to consider serving the archdiocese and the Church as a deacon.

“Christ will be there for you,” he says. “You’ll feel the love of Christ, and you’ll want to share that love with everybody. It’s a beautiful thing. You’ll be so blessed.” 

Deacon Steve Tsuleff shares the Eucharist with Jean Knuthaupt in a home visit with the member of St. Michael Parish in Brookville. (Submitted photo)

Deacon Steve Tsuleff and Father Vincent Lampert are known to share smiles and a sense of humor as they work together to bring members of St. Michael Parish in Brookville and St. Peter Parish in Franklin County closer to God. (Submitted photo)
By Jason Moon
Special to The Criterion


Sister Patty, who entered the congregation in 2003 at age 35, had known of the Sisters of Providence for practically her entire life. “The Sisters of Providence were a part of my story from before I was born,” she said. “They were my father’s teachers in grade school. My grandparents knew and helped the Sisters of Providence in New Castle with transportation and other needs. My teachers and principals at St. Simon the Apostle School in Indianapolis were Sisters of Providence.”

“We lived in the same neighborhood in Indianapolis [as some of the Sisters], so they were our friends as well. And Providence Sister Marilyn Baker brought me to the Woods for the first time and showed me courage when she moved to Taiwan for a new ministry.”

Sister Patty graduated from Cathedral High School in Indianapolis in 1986 and earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education in 1991 at Butler University in Indianapolis. She also has a master’s degree in library science from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Sister Patty had attended 10 discernment weekends with the Sisters of Providence before entering the congregation and said she never considered another community.

After ministering with the Sisters of Providence through the Providence Volunteer Ministry program, she entered the congregation on Sept. 18, 2003, from St. Mary of the Pines Parish in Shreveport, La., where she was living at the time.

“I was attracted to religious life because I felt that my spirituality, my relationship with Jesus, God’s presence in my life and my experiences in helping others were central to my life and were valued by the Sisters of Providence,” Sister Patty said. “I was excited to be with the sisters who shared these values, supported each other and had ministries that impacted those who struggled with daily hardships and injustice. “I felt that I would make more of a difference in ministering with other sisters, although I had little concept of how that would work and the transformation I would go through.”

Sister Patty professed first vows on July 1, 2007, and final vows on June 30, 2013. Her first ministry with the congregation was as the school librarian at the former St. Andrew-St. Rita Catholic Academy in Indianapolis. She began her current ministry as a children’s librarian for The Indianapolis Public Library system in 2007.

During her 19 years of religious life, Sister Patty admits she has faced some challenges and has even questioned whether she should continue. “These were challenges of my formation, my expectations and doubts, and others not understanding my choice of religious life,” Sister Patty observed. “But I want to stay in religious life to create change, to join with sisters to reach out to those who are hurting and know that I have gifts that are needed within the religious community as well.”

Despite these challenges, Sister Patty said she is happy for religious life has only grown during these 19 years. “My multicultural intercommunity experiences and the Giving Voice Conference for religious 20 to 50 years of age have shown me how much we will connect and minister with other religious congregations in the future,” Sister Patty said. “It is difficult at this time because we are losing so many older sisters who were active when I entered the community. But I believe that my relationship with Jesus, God’s presence in my life and my experiences in helping others to create peace and compassion in these times.”

Of her current ministry, Sister Patty said it is “very life-giving,” and she is delighted with all the ways she can use the gifts God has granted her. “I feel like I can make a difference in the lives of families and their children, those who are not skilled in technology and online applications in a world where everything requires the Internet,” Sister Patty said. “I also connect with the elderly who need someone to talk to, the mentally challenged who come into the library where they are welcome, and my co-workers who have struggles in their lives and could use some support.”

The Sisters of Providence are a community of Catholic women religious who collaborate with others to create a more just and hope-filled world through prayer, education, service and advocacy. Learn more about becoming a Sister of Providence at BecomeSistersofProvidence.org or contact the congregation’s vocations director, Providence Sister Joni Luna, at 812-535-2954 or jluna@spsmw.org. †
The Eucharist stands at the heart of the lives of archdiocesan priests

By Sean Gallagher

The Second Vatican Council, which began its first session 60 years ago last month, taught that the Eucharist is the “source and summit” of the life of the Church. It is true for the Church as a whole, it is also true for its priests who, by grace of their ordination and the power of the Holy Spirit, make the Eucharist possible for the faithful day by day. 

The Eucharist is at the heart of the vocation to the priesthood. So, as the Church in the U.S. takes part in a three-year National Eucharistic Revival, The Criterion spoke with archdiocesan priests across central and southern Indiana about how the Eucharist is central to their priestly lives and ministry.

It’s from the center of my life

Father Juan Valdez, pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis, was a seminarian in 1991 for the Archdiocese of Guatemala, Mexico. He began ministry in the Church in central and southern Indiana in 2006 and became a priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in 2010. 

Father Valdez has experienced the variations of the way the Eucharist is celebrated and valued in Mexico and in the U.S.

He noted that in Mexico, “eucharistic adoration involves a lot of singing, praying and reciting of prayers,” whereas Catholic in the U.S. ordinarily pray in silence before the Blessed Sacrament.

Father Valdez, however, knows in his own life and ministry as a priest that there is value in both approaches.

“Everything is needed,” he said. “There is richness in the diversity. People pray in praying and singing, but you also need silence. You need to allow Jesus to touch you. You need to sit at the feet of the teacher and ask him, deep down, ‘where are you leading me to listen to him, to accompany him and to be with him?’

Through his decades of parish ministry, Father Valdez has found fulfillment in his vocation in bringing his parishioners closer to Christ in the Eucharist, especially in his own personal prayer with God.

“Doing that ministry brings joy, peace and satisfaction. Whether in Mexico or in the U.S., the Eucharist remains at the heart of Father Valdez’s life as a priest.

“Eucharist is the center of my life, in the essence of my being, and in the essence of my mission. It is the center of the life that I lead and of the life of my parishioners.”

Father Daniel Buechlein, the future shepherd of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, was a seminarian years later at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. On many occasions, Father Daniel Buechlein, the former sheepfold of the archdiocese, spend time before the Blessed Sacrament in prayer.

That special connection to the Eucharist increased his bonds with his parishioners, said Father Daniel Buechlein.

“Any priest has to be a people person. We are called to be people who listen and who love. We are called to be prayer leaders who pray. It’s the life we live, the life we celebrate, the life we want to be. It’s the life we want to lead.”

Holy Communion = ‘holy connection’

Father Anthony Hollowell, pastor of St. Paul Parish in Tell City and St. Mark Parish in Perry County, has found in his six years of priestly ministry that praying a daily holy hour before the Blessed Sacrament is key to his being continually drawn close to Christ.

“Every priest should be in front of the Blessed Sacrament each day for an hour of prayer. It is a good way to start the day. I learn to be ready early in the morning for what is about to happen.”

Father Hollowell also says the hour he spends each day by himself before the Blessed Sacrament as vital to drawing him closer to the parishioners he serves.

He describes this as a “location communion” of the same term used, of course, to describe the Eucharist.

“It’s a real tie, that communion that we share as shepherds and shepherd, pastor and parishes,” Father Hollowell said.

“I think it starts in the Eucharist and it culminates in our liturgical celebration. And even when we’re separate physically, that bond remains. It’s always there.”

“The holy hour is time with holy Communion. And when we’ve gathered together in the Sunday liturgy, I would say it’s almost holy communion. We’re all together. We’re all finding purpose in God.”

“Eucharist is the heart of Catholic life”

When Msgr. Joseph Schaad was a student at Holy Name of Jesus School in Beach Grove, a Franciscan sister serving there asked him.

“If we don’t have the Eucharist, we don’t have the Church,” he said. “The Church didn’t invent the Eucharist. It’s the treasure. It’s the heart. It’s the pearl of Catholic life.”

Eucharist is heart of the Church

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the life of the Church, then it should guide and strengthen Catholics toward the holy life of their faith’s journey: spending eternity with God in heaven.

Father George Plaster has aided Catholics in the last steps of that journey in his 25 years of ministry as a hospital chaplain.

There have been countless times when Father Plaster has found comfort in the Word and in his discretionary ministry in Indianapolis, first at Ascension St. Vincent Hospital, and in the past five years at St. Vincent Health.

He recalled giving Communion to a woman named Mary, who was a hospital nurse.

“She was anesthetized... received holy Communion and then, along with her family, prayed the communication for the dying patients,” Father Plaster recalled. “When we said the last invocation, she looked at us, took her last breath, and expired.

‘Mary would never have forgotten this’

Father Plaster recalled.

Her last moments were centered on Jesus and his presence, and the man who brought him to her.

But Father Plaster’s ministry has not been limited to the hospital.

He has served in a number of settings in his ministry, spending time with hospital patients and parishioners.

As Father Plaster shared, he has spoken to many people about their faith in the Eucharist.

“God and faithful Catholices have continually formed me into the priest I am today,” Father Plaster said. “Most people probably have no idea the impact they have in continually forming their priests.

Those who continue to believe in the holy Eucharist remain come away with more faith. Despite ongoing changes in the world, in their lives, and in the Church, and despite the challenges that the Church faces today, they have not been changed. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the heart of the Church and the heart of my life as a priest.”

For information on a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit vocationsindy.org.
When a priest of the Divine Word Missionaries visited the former St. Andrew School in Richmond, now a part of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in the east-central Indiana city, and graduated from its former elementary school, now a part of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School.

“I know that going to Catholic school had everything to do with hearing my call,” says Father Joe. “I was taught by Franciscan nuns, and they were very faithful in having vocations day every year. That’s when I learned about the Divine Word Missionaries.”

Around the age of 13 or 14, he learned that Xavier University in Cincinnati was a Jesuit school and told his dad he would like to learn about the Jesuits. “You take me to talk with a vocation director. He said, ‘You’re a young little now, but keep in touch.’”

“I didn’t imagine it would be nearly 40 years later,” says Father Joe. Rather than Xavier, Father Joe went to Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Mich., majoring in English with an emphasis in Shakespeare. His first job after graduation was with The Shakespeare Theatre at Folger in Washington, D.C.

From there he moved to New York to help develop and run the Playwrights Program at The Juilliard School. For 15 years, he tutored the talent of young actors and playwrights while simultaneously teaching dramatic writing at New York City’s Barnard College.

It was also while living in the Big Apple that Father Joe sold a show he co-wrote with Warner Bros. Television.

At one point, a friend introduced him to a son of Martin Sheen. The family owned a film production company on New York City’s Warner Bros. lot, and soon after Father Joe was off to Los Angeles to work as the creative director for their company.

Joe was off to Los Angeles to work as the Warner Bros. lot, and soon Father Joe was off to Los Angeles to work as the creative director for their company. When I found out the Jesuits are called the ‘come-and-see’ weekend retreats, they offer, including diocesan retreats. Nothing gives more information about an order’s charism and the type of people in an order than being with them for a day or two.

“The Holy Spirit can tell you a lot about the feelings you have. If you feel excited, consolidated, that can be very telling.”

Second is for those considering a call to the priesthood, diocesan or religious life to ask the thoughts of those who know them well.

“You can think [the decision] is all about you and God, but sometimes it’s the people around you who can guide you,” says Father Joe. “Ask your parents, your friends, relatives you’re close to: ‘Can you see me as a priest?’ It’s good to look for those affirmations from those who know you the best.

Always be mindful of those around you and what they see you being called. Father Joe’s final advice regarding vocations revolves around the role of the family.

“I know deep in my heart that I never would have found myself on the road to my vocation if not for my parents,” he says. “Everything I try to do reflects the love they showed me and my two brothers. They took me to church every week, sent us to a Catholic school. They prioritized developing in faith, even having dinner with all of us together, saying grace.”

“That sense of community, the need to be in communion, to sit and eat and listen to others—I wouldn’t have learned that any other way,” Father Joe says the role of the family in developing vocations extends beyond the four walls of the home.

“When I go to speak about vocations, there are usually a lot of grandparents,” he says. “I tell them, ‘Don’t underestimate your power as grandparents to say, ‘I think you’d be a good priest’—even if it takes nearly 40 years for the planted seed to grow.’”

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TERRE HAUTE—In 1947, a small group of Discalced Carmelite nuns from the then-Monastery of the Resurrection in Indianapolis founded a new monastic community on the southern outskirts of Terre Haute.

Their goal was simple: to live out faithfully each day a life of communal and personal contemplative prayer in the Carmelite tradition.

It’s a vocation that emerged in the Church about 1,000 years ago and underwent a significant reform about 500 years ago that was led by St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross.

On Oct. 8, 11 of the 13 members of the Discalced Carmelite Monastery of St. Joseph in Terre Haute fittingly celebrated the 75th anniversary of their community’s founding through prayer—a festive Mass in the monastery chapel. Two nuns did not take part because of illness. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant of the liturgy. Many friends and benefactors of the monastery also came to pray with the nuns.

In the Discalced Carmelite tradition, monastic communities are small by design, with no more than 21 members. They also don’t have ministries outside their monasteries, such as teaching in schools or serving in hospitals. Their vocation is to daily pray for the Church and the world within their cloistered community.

In his homily during the Mass, Archbishop Thompson praised the life of prayer in the Monastery of St. Joseph. “Through the witness of prayer, penances and contemplative life, barriers are being torn down,” he said.

“Today’s world—so polarized by radical individualism, ideologies, opposing agendas, preference for the subjective over objective truth and disregard for the sanctity of human life as well as creation itself—is in need of such witnesses.”

Archbishop Thompson praised the Discalced Carmelite nuns of Terre Haute, calling them “saintly women of God … who continue to listen to the voice of the Lord, call upon the Holy Spirit, draw out to the rest of the world.”

Sister Anne Brackman, who continues to serve as prioress, and Discalced Carmelite Mother Mary Joseph Nguyen, the monastery’s prioress, and Discalced Carmelite Sister Anne Brackman, who entered the community in 1959 and is one of its former prioresses, spoke of preparing for this anniversary, the Mass and mental prayer have remained our priority,” said Mother Mary Joseph. “Everything is centered around prayer and liturgy. That gives us the energy to go out and do the extra work and activity for the celebration.”

As the senior member of the community, Sister Anne has seen a lot of changes in the life of the monastery through the 62 years since she arrived in Terre Haute. A new monastery and chapel were built. Land was added to the monastery campus. New members have joined it. Older ones have died.

She said none of those changes touches at the heart of the Discalced Carmelite vocation and how it affects the rest of the Church and the world.

“You can’t put that into words or pictures,” Sister Anne said. “It’s nothing tangible. Our life is intangible. Only God knows what is going on in the heart of every Carmelite, the love and the spiritual energy that is being generated in the soul of every Carmelite. It is only God who takes the effects of this and spreads them out to the rest of the world.”

The spiritual energy that flows from the Monastery of St. Joseph has remained the same through the decades, even if the nuns who have lived, prayed and died there come from countries around the world.

Today, its nuns are from Great Britain, the Philippines, South Korea, and the U.S.

This development of an intercultural community began in the early 2000s when Sister Anne was serving as prioress.

She said that the nuns there at the time approached this change with “serious discernment.”

“If the community hadn’t been prepared to accept people and engage in a deeper study of what it means to be an intercultural community, it could have ended in a disaster,” said Sister Anne.

But through their discernment, the community prepared itself to open its doors to women called to contemplative prayer from many cultures. It’s a process that continues today.

“A great part of it is listening to the stories of the different cultures,” Sister Anne said. “Listening is so important. If you think that you know everything and you know this person, you really don’t.”

The success of the internationalization of the community is seen in the fact that it is now led by Mother Mary Joseph, who was born in Vietnam and moved as a young adult with her family to the U.S. in the early 1990s.

She entered the monastery—which members of the order call a “Carmel”—in 2004 when she was in her early 30s.

“When something is right for you, you just feel happy and a deep joy,” she said. “When I entered the Carmel of Terre Haute, I just felt that I was at home. I felt like I had been planted in the right soil. The whole life seemed to me to be what God created me for.”

Mother Mary Joseph said the community’s anniversary is a moment for its members to look to the past in gratitude and to the future in hope.

“God has carried us on the wings of his divine love,” she said. “He will continue to carry us into the future. We don’t know what the future will look like. But we know who we believe in and who we have placed our hope in.”

“Our hope is that we’ll continued to live our Carmelite vocation passionately, faithfully and joyfully. That will be a witness to the world through the way that God wants to use us.”

(For more information about the Discalced Carmelites of St. Joseph in Terre Haute, visit heartawake.org.) †
ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
2022-2023 SEMINARIANS

VOCATIONAL SYNTHESIS STAGE
Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:19)

Deacon José Carlos Nori
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Marcellinus, Indianapolis

Deacon Jack Wright
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Bloomfield

Fr. Eric Augustin
Director of Seminarians
vocations@archindy.org / HearGodsCall.com
317.236.1400

Fr. Mike Keucher
Director of vocations

OFFICE OF VOCATIONS

CONFIGURATION STAGE
I am the Good Shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me (Jn. 10:14)

Tyler Huber
Pastoral Internship
St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Lafayette, Indiana

Anthony Armbuster
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Malachy, Brownburg

Sam Bosko
Sacred Heart Seminary
Holy Rosary, Indianapolis

Bobby Vogel
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Joseph, Jennings County

Thomas M. Day
Sacred Heart Seminary
Holy Rosary, Indianapolis

Liam Hosty
Mount St. Mary’s Seminary - Cincinnati
St. Stanislaus, Cincinnati

Aaron Noll
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Bertram, Columbus

Isaac Sieker
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis

Kristofer Carlitch
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Mary, Genoa-Vernon

Sam Hansen
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Peter, Indianapolis

Khailing Thu
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis

Lance Tony
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Daniel, Indianapolis

DISCIPLESHIP STAGE
As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love (Jn. 14:9)

Casey Deal
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington

James Huntz
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. Michael, Greenfield

Randy Schneider
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. Joseph, Dearborn County

Nathan Thompson
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. Ann, Jennings County

Emiliano Enriquez
De Aiva
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. Joseph, St. Joseph County

Alexander W. Lindberg
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. John the Apostle, Greenfield

Robert McKay
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. Mary, Crawfordsville

Noah Sherman
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. Mary, North Vernon

Matthew Maples
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. Ann, Jennings County

Aidan Smith
Brady Simón Brújo Seminary
St. John the Apostle, Bloomington

PROPADEUTIC STAGE
Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths (Mt. 3:1)

Aidan Hauersperger
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Joseph, Jennings County

Seth Hickey
Sacred Heart Seminary
Mt. St. Joseph, Danville

Chase LaCoursiere
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. John the Apostle, Bloomington

Ryan Moshak
Sacred Heart Seminary
St. Patrick, Terre Haute

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!
RELIGIOUS IN FORMATION
2022-2023

Sr. Maria Nguyen of the Holy Family, OCD
Sr. Anna Tam, SP
Sr. Emily Tekilete, SP
Sr. Teresa Kang, SP
Sr. Jessica Vitale, SP
Sr. Leslie Dao
Sr. Mary Lily among Thoma McCann, SSVM
Sr. Evelyn Lobos, SSDPS
Sr. M. Evangelina Rutherford, OSF
Sr. Mary Peter Maschio, OSF
Sr. Mary Amata Neville, OSF
Sr. Agnes Mary Craven, RSM
Sr. Stephanie Pahner
Sr. Maria Gemma Barnett, SOLT
Sr. Magdalene Maria Schäfer
Sister Mary Paul, FSGM
Sister Cleoyanne Dahman
Sr. Michael Hayes, OSB
Br. Dominick Jin, OP
Br. Leonard Eastick
Sisters of Providence
Sisters of the Third Order
Sisters of Charity
Sisters of St. Francis

Sr. Anna Tam, SP Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary of the Woods, Temporary professed
Sr. Emily Tekilete, SP Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary of the Woods, Temporary professed
Sr. Teresa Kang, SP Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary of the Woods, Temporary professed
Sr. Jessica Vitale, SP Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary of the Woods, Temporary professed
Sr. Leslie Dao Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary of the Woods, Novice
Sr. Mary Lily among Thoma McCann, SSVM Sisters of Saint Francis, The Virgin of Matare, All Saints, Dearborn County Temporary professed
Sr. Evelyn Lobos, SSDPS Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, St. Teresa, Indianapolis Temporary professed
Sr. M. Evangelina Rutherford, OSF Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, St. John the Evangelist, Indianapolis Temporary professed
Sr. Mary Peter Maschio, OSF Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, Indianapolis Temporary professed
Sr. Mary Amata Neville, OSF Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, Indianapolis Temporary professed
Sr. Agnes Mary Craven, RSM Religious Sisters of Mercy, St. John the Evangelist, Indianapolis Temporary professed
Sr. Stephanie Pahner Missionaries of Charity, St. Joseph, South Bend Temporary professed
Sr. Maria Gemma Barnett, SOLT Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity, St. Mary's, Greensburg, Bloomington Temporary professed
Sr. Magdalene Maria Schäfer Daughters of the Holy Mary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. John the Evangelist, Indianapolis Temporary professed
Sister Mary Paul, FSGM Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Spirit, Indianapolis Temporary professed
Sister Cleoyanne Dahman Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, Nashville, TN Postulant
Sr. Michael Hayes, OSB St. Meinrad Archabbey, St. Meinrad, IN Temporary professed
Br. Dominick Jin, OP Province of St. Albert the Great, St. Vincent De Paul, St. Louis Temporary professed
Br. Leonard Eastick Province of St. Albert the Great, St. Vincent De Paul, St. Louis Temporary professed
Benjamin Sasin, CSC Congregation of Holy Cross, United States Province of Pittsburgh and Erie, St. John the Evangelist, Indianapolis Temporary professed
Josh Amodeo Congregation of Holy Cross, United States Province of Detroit and Northwest, St. Francis and Clare, Greenwood College Seminary
Br. Alberic Hennaz, OCSO Abbey of Gethsemani, Our Lady of Greenwood, Greenwood Temporary professed
Taylor Fulkerson, SJ Society of Jesus Midwest Jesuits, St. Mary, LaGrangeville Temporary professed
Ben Jansen, SJ Society of Jesus Midwest Jesuits, St. Francis of Assisi, Greenwood Philosophy Studies
Sisters of St. Benedict
Bosch Crowe | benedictine.com
Sisters of Providence
St. Mary of the Woods | spermacw.org
Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration
Michiana | sfpa.org
Discalced Carmelites Nuns
Tori House | heartofmary.org

Order of St. Benedict
Saint Meinrad Archabbey | saintmeinrad.org

Order of Friars
Minister of the Poor
Little Sisters of the Poor
Maryknoll Missionaries
Order of Friars Minor
Carmelite Province of St. John the Baptist, Indianapolis

RECOMMENDED READINGS
2022 Vocations Awareness Supplement
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Marian University students strengthen relationships with Franciscan sisters

By Sara Geer

OLDENBURG—During the last few years, the COVID-19 pandemic changed how schools and universities operated, replacing face-to-face contact with digital technologies. At Marian University in Indianapolis, this shift in communication made it difficult for students, staff and other parts of the campus community to build new and maintain existing relationships with each other and beyond the campus.

With classes back operating normally, five Marian students living at the school’s Dorothy Day House, an intentional faith community, have chosen to rekindle those lost relationships as part of their “Communication for Intentional Communities” course for a minor in peace and justice studies.

The class—which this year consists of just the five women—meets every three weeks and focuses on living out Pope Francis’ teachings of showing “ecumenical hospitality” or “intentional hospitality.”

“The discussion is very much peer-led,” said Michelle Dickert, a junior studying social work. “We talk about what we want to get done, what we want our projects to be or how to reach the greater community. We formulated this community within ourselves. Now how can we spread that outward?”

The women decided to put what they’ve learned into action by sending out invitations to student groups on campus to join them for a meal and discussion.

“We want to be able to have a space where people can feel safe and acknowledged,” said Mariangel Morales-Aparicio, a Marian junior studying nursing. “So, this semester has been mostly inviting people over, having dinner and talking and sharing ideas together.”

The women are also able to extend invitations to organizations and groups off campus.

One relationship the women diligently have been trying to find ways to strengthen is with the Franciscan sisters in Oldenburg, the order that founded Marian University.

The sisters greatly appreciated the opportunity to build relationships again with students of Marian and excited to share about living in community and their passion for advocating for peace and justice—a Franciscan value the university was founded upon.

“It’s important for us to be involved in classes like this because we are all about social justice,” Franciscan Sister Kathleen Branham, the order’s vocations director, said. “I thought it was very important to not lose that at Marian University, and I wanted to see how we could be involved with the students in collaboration together. We wanted to be more involved. The sisters are welcome to attend the class to discuss a variety of topics—from living in a community to social justice issues.”

Franciscan Sister Noella Poinsette, director of the order’s Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, shared that she presented to the students about “advocating for tax justice, the homeless, immigrants, and the lower 80% of the population.”

She noted that she started visiting the Clay County U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Detention Center in west-central Indiana town of Brazil to build relationships with the inmates and immigrants housed there. The five women are joining her on her next visit.

“When some people are invisible or ignored or dismissed, we’re throwing them away,” Sister Noella said. “Pope Francis talks about the throwaway society, that we’re basically throwing away the gifts, the dignity of all these people who some label as different because of their religion or no religion or the color of their skin or their gender. It’s too easy to toss people aside and be about yourself. We are all sisters and brothers.”

The sisters have also shared with the women about living in “intentional community” and what that means for their order.

“The Dorothy Day House is an intentional community, and we are a community that could offer some insight on how we live together,” Franciscan Sister Susan Marie Pléxis, formation director, said. “We also can offer some translations into how, as they continue to live together, to discover the ins-and-outs and ups-and-downs of community.”

Sister Susan also mentioned the sisters are always welcome to receive and answer questions about community from the students, who are still learning how to live together and discover their greater purpose on campus. The conversations shared with the students gives the sisters much hope for the future.

“They are very passionate about accepting one another, growing together,” Sister Susan said. “It’s energizing for us to go and be with them.”

“They are passionate about making a difference in the world,” added Sister Noella, “erasing some of the inequities.”

Deeb Kitchen, an associate professor of sociology and director of the peace and justice studies minor at Marian, said the class not only opens the students’ minds about peace and justice issues, but helps them discover their own gifts and talents.

“Because they do have an engagement requirement, it allows them to really discover their gifts and talents and utilize them,” Kitchen said. “Because as they start realizing the capacities that they have individually, and as a community, you see people not only understand what they have but discover that there is so much more around them. You get to see them create things and take ownership of what they engage in, and as a teacher that is what we love to see.”

Kitchen added the Franciscan sisters add much to campus life and continuing to promote the Franciscan values the university is built upon. It benefits everyone involved, he noted.

“It’s the first time that the sisters have been involved in any kind of sustained, ongoing way” with the Peace and Justice Studies program, Kitchen said.

“In the past, Sister Noella used to come to class routinely and has always been such a huge supporter with everything that we did. So, there has been a relationship there, yet it’s certainly been much more intentional this year.”

(Sara Geer is a freelance writer and a member of St. Louis de Montfort Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. To learn more about the Sisters of St. Francis in Oldenburg, visit oldenburgfranciscans.org/)

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—Franciscan Sister Noella Poinsette
God’s call to the priesthood can be heard in ordinary daily life

By Father Brian Atienza

It was 20 years ago, on May 27, 2002, that I was given the profound privilege of receiving the sacrament of holy orders and began my life as a priest of the Diocese of Sacramento, Calif.

I have heard priests and bishops share their incredible and profound experiences of recognizing the vocation to the priesthood. I wish I could say the same.

My recognition of the call involved a long period of discernment and acceptance.

I grew up in Manila, Philippines, and both my parents worked. We did not have a lot, but our parents made sure that I, my two sisters and brother were never in need of basic necessities.

Our parents taught us values in life and encouraged us to do well in school. They may not have had materially much to pass on, but a good education was for them a worthy legacy to impart.

The faith practice in our household was not too different than anyone else’s family that I knew then. My family went to Mass on Sundays.

The notion of a vocation to the priesthood did not come to me until my sophomore year at the University of the Philippines Diliman.

I intended to obtain a degree in philosophy as my requisite undergraduate degree for law school. I had wanted to be a lawyer as far as I can remember.

I got involved with our local choir that sang for Mass in our area. It eventually led me be involved with the parish youth ministry.

One summer, a group of seminarians came to do ministry in our area. One of them jokingly told me that I would do well in the seminary. Nothing profound, but it was enough to initiate my discernment of becoming a priest. I had to forego my intention to become a lawyer.

I presented myself to the stringent seminary screening process, hoping that I would not be admitted. But I was.


I was not able to join them due to my age. Prior to my senior year, the Diocese of Sacramento started a program that looked for families who had sons who are in the seminary in the Philippines.

My mother asked me if I was interested. I inquired and was accepted. This allowed me to be united with my family sooner than the normal immigration process would have allowed.

It also made me give the vocation to the priesthood a second look. Before I was given the opportunity to come to Sacramento, I was in the process of convincing myself that I had given the vocation to the priesthood a try, and I thought I needed to move on to do other things.

By the time I was in my third year of formation in theology at St. Patrick Seminary in Menlo Park, Calif., I embraced the undeniable truth that the priesthood was the life for me, and I came to accept that God had made this evident in my everyday mundane experiences.

After ordination, I was appointed the parochial vicar at St. Joseph Parish in Elk Grove, Calif., where I served from 2002-03. I then ministered as parochial vicar at St. Philomene Parish in Sacramento from 2003-04. Our bishop then named me diocesan vocation director, a role I served from 2004-09. Later, I served as pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Auburn, Calif., from 2009-12, and as pastor at St. Joseph Church in Elk Grove from 2012-16.

I was then asked by our bishop to earn a degree in canon law, which I completed at The Catholic University of America’s School of Canon Law in 2019. I am currently working as one of the canon lawyers in our tribunal.

Many have often associated the realization of the vocation to priesthood or religious life with some incredible epiphany-like experience.

The reality for me was that it was a gradual confirmation of a vocation through the undeniable joy and peace I experienced in the formation process and being open to it.

I liken the years of formation to an extended period of engagement. The discernment was both on the candidate and those involved in formation. Though not free of its share of crises and challenges, the decision to move forward toward ordination was mutually agreed upon by all parties in formation.

The support from my parents, siblings and a few close friends sustained me throughout my time in formation and they continue to inspire me each day to humbly, with everything I have and hold, serve the people of God.

Today, I continue to experience the confirmation of the vocation to the priesthood in the most normal of daily tasks as a priest, from the daily routine of prayers, the celebration of Mass, immersion in the lives of the flock and to using a plunger for the church toilet.

Vocation was and is a gradual finding of the extraordinary invitation in the normal daily occurrences. God’s voice sounds clearer in the ordinary moments of daily life, a constant and consistent truth in the last 20 years for me.

(Ordered for the Diocese of Sacramento, Calif., in 2002, Father Brian Atienza currently serves his local Church as the defender of the bond in its marriage tribunal. Father Atienza was born and raised in the Philippines.)
Wise words in prayer for the love of God

“Lord, now let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled.”

This begins the Canticle of Simeon, the prayer the angel Gabriel said to the aged prophet in the Temple. Among other things, Luke 2:29-32 shows that “Simeon” means “he who hears” or “he who responds.” Put that way it is a beautiful and true name for the prophet who offered us the name of the child Jesus. But the real meaning of the name “Simeon” is its Greek form, Simchos, meaning “hymn of praise,” and the Church’s daily prayer through the Liturgy of the Hours returns to that theme with the Nunc Dimittis. That is the name “Devout Christians, Jews and Muslims have more children than their secular neighbors, as discussed in the book Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth? By Eric Kaufman. This is not only about a particular religion’s teaching on birth control. In an article in the online journal Public Discourse, author and attorney Alexandra Davis emphasizes the spiritual side of the problem. She writes that “the consequences of the dwindling birth rate are far greater than questions related to population figures.” Young adults often forgo family life to enhance their individual autonomy and their hopes of success and comfort. What they may miss out on, says Davis, are two things “central to human nature”: connection and meaning. Parenthood teaches us to give ourselves to helpless others who depend on us—and to realize how much we depend on others, especially near the beginning and end of our lives. And in ordering our lives around our own individual pleasures, we give up opportunities for a more meaningful life—one that survives and thrives through the suffering and disappointments that life can bring. Life in a family brings pleasures of its own, but it also brings an enrichment of the person that will never come from thinking of and relying on ourselves alone. People of faith know this. My life is not just about me. In loving God and others, I become more fully human. For both practical and more profound reasons, then, unhealthily that, to many public officials and others in our society, the phrase “reproductive health” means efforts to sterilize us and eliminate our nascent children.

As we discern the next steps on our journey of faith, we must realize they may not come without a struggle. Sometimes, there is clarity and a seeming resolution regarding a next step in living out our vocation. Are your deepest scars physical or emotional? And how do you access them when you reflect? What is the attitude toward wealth and his life that very poor all the way to the rich, from his own children and yet the way that led to your being hurt? If the wound is emotional, is the pain still easily accessible when you reflect? We learn that the challenges he faced, Jacob is blessed in his endeavors. Could there be a reward for us if we persist and wrestle through our challenges? The possible answer is that we are called to engage our struggles and to encounter God in the midst of them. (Richard Etiene has a degree in theology from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and resides in Newburgh, Ind.)

And yet, how often do we obsess about it? The wise man built bigger barns as a story of greed. Why? First of all, note how often Jesus rails against hypocrisy and greed. These are the social sins he cares deeply about. Jesus’ parable of the rich man is one of a society that offered “no safety net.” The rich grew richer without fair taxation, a story repeated today.

As you ‘wrestle’ with life’s challenges, allow God to lead you

I remember when people thought overpopulation would destroy us and told us we were all that had been done and undone in the day. Its roots help me to identify with the farming images of the Gospel. Jesus lived in a largely agrarian society.

Sowing, reaping: noticing winds along the roadside—this was Jesus’ world. He saw sheep grazing on hillsides, fishing boats plying the waters, full measures of grain being pressed into laps. We know the familiar smells of manure, and the fishy odor of a catch being unloaded. Jesus lived in an earthy, messy, tactile world. We are often more moved by the story of the man who was harvesting so much grain that he decided to tear down his barns and build bigger ones. If I imagine with the language of grain prices, it brings the perennial worries about hail and drought. And I certainly know people who have built bigger barns. We might call that success or business acumen, and sometimes it is.

But in the Luke 12 reading, Jesus seeks his story about the rich man who built bigger barns as a story of greed. Why? First of all, note how often Jesus rails against hypocrisy and greed. These are the social sins he cares deeply about. Jesus’ parable of the rich man is one of a society that offered “no safety net.” The rich grew richer without fair taxation, a story repeated today.

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UCA allows Catholics ‘to generously share what God has given us’

By Natalie Hoefer

As the three-year National Eucharistic Revival gets underway, the theme for this year’s United Catholic Appeal (UCA) is “United in the Eucharist.”

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson explained the connection between the Eucharist and the appeal during a Mass and dinner in Indianapolis on Oct. 27 for Miter Society members—those who give $1,500 or more to the annual appeal that supports ministries in central and southern Indiana that go beyond the scope of a parish, such as Catholic Charities, seminarian formation, supporting retired priests and more.

“It’s an effort from our baptismal call to holiness to mission that we carry out all the various ministries and services as Church, as the archdiocese throughout central and southern Indiana—39 counties, 126 parishes, 67 schools, three different Catholic health care facilities, two Catholic universities, two Catholic seminaries, and the list goes on and on,” said during his homily at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

“What we’re about with our time, our talent and our treasure to carry out these many services is not just our human merit, is not just our human endeavor, but all it has to be intimately rooted in the Eucharist.

“So, this beautiful theme of ‘United in the Eucharist’ is especially connected to this three-year eucharistic revival.”

The archbishop reminded the roughly 200 people present that, while giving our time, talent and treasure, we must be “Christ-centric.”

“Remember, we represent something greater than ourselves,” he said. “We are the body of Christ. We share the mission of Christ as privileged members of his body, of his Church. We have to be bold. We have to be courageous. Without the Eucharist, it’s difficult for us to do that.”

The nature of the world today makes it even more difficult to carry out our baptismal mission, the archbishop noted.

“But as Jesus said in today’s Gospel—‘I must continue on my way today, tomorrow and the following day’ [LK 13:33]—we cannot let the world deter us. Like Jesus, we must stay focused today, tomorrow and the next day.

“And that’s why our United Catholic Appeal is so important. It allows us to continue to bring the good news of God’s love, of Jesus’ saving grace, of his path of truth, to continue to transform not only lives but to transform our society, transform our world.”

During his talk at a dinner in the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis after the Mass, the archbishop offered statistics for the appeal, the theme for this year—“United in the Eucharist.”

“It used to be American priests went out to do work in third-world countries,” said. “Lately, I’ve noticed a lot of foreign priests coming to the U.S. making up for the lack of priests here.”

“So, this beautiful theme of ‘United in the Eucharist’ goes well with our time, our talent and our treasure to carry out these many services as Church, as the archdiocese throughout central and southern Indiana last year. (See related article on page 1.)

One of those ministries is supporting the formation of archdiocesan seminarians. It is a ministry close to the hearts of Fr. , pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis.

“It’s an effort from our baptismal call to holiness to mission of the archdiocese, bigger than even what we can do at the parish.”

When he retires, Father Hollowell will benefit from the support of the United Catholic Appeal in caring for retired archdiocesan priests. This cause is important to and , Baker of St. Bartholomew Parish in Tell City and St. Mark Parish in Perry County. He concelebrated the Mass along with six priests.

“As priests, it’s important for us to give as much as it is for the faithful,” he said. “And it’s a joy [to give] as a priest, to know you can contribute to the bigger mission of the archdiocese, bigger than even what we can do at the parish.”

As a sophomore at Culver Military Academy in Culver, Ind., noted the school is known for forming future leaders.

“I thought [coming tonight] would be a good experience and allow me to see what my parents are doing and what I could do in the future, he said.

While he is too young to have contributed to the appeal, has contributed his time to the appeal. While he is too young to have contributed to the appeal, has contributed his time to the appeal.

No matter what you contribute financially, you have our deepest thanks for everything you do to support the United Catholic Appeal and the many ministries and services that we carry out in this archdiocese,” said his closing remarks at the dinner.

“Our ongoing support of the United Catholic Appeal enables us to make a difference in the lives of tens of thousands of our brothers and sisters, our friends, and our neighbors throughout the archdiocese…”

“The Eucharist is not an object. It is a person, Jesus Christ. We need to respond to the Eucharist, to the person Jesus Christ, every day by going out to the world to gratefully share what God has given to us.”

(Craig and company)
STAINED GLASS
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That task was completed in 2013. Next, SECC began a project to turn the former parish church grounds next to the former rectory into a community park.

“We are thrilled to have many green spaces,” said Casper. “We envisioned a place where kids could run around or people could sit in a peaceful surrounding.”

Preparation for the project included a trip to Indianapolis to research the former parish and church at the archdiocesan archives.

“We were shocked to learn that some of the windows had survived and were stored just a few blocks away from the soon-to-be-park at St. Mary’s Parish in New Albany. Casper recalled. After the fire, Holy Trinity Parish was merged into St. Mary.

“When I finally saw them, they were terribly dirty,” he said. “They were still covered in soot from fire.”

Once assured that the surviving windows would be used to honor Holy Trinity Parish, the parish gifted them to SECC.

Casper consulted with Donna Baldacci, who with her husband Kirk Richmond owns the Stained Glass Gallery in New Albany.

“She knows everything about windows—where the glass came from, what each piece was worth,” he said. Baldacci was surprised by the find.

“I almost cried when I saw the windows,” she said. “The fact that any windows survived the heat of that fire is a miracle.”

She and her husband were so moved by the project, they offset most of the cost. The first phase of Holy Trinity Heritage Park was completed in 2017. It included some of the smaller restored windows that had once graced the church.

But the large window that had crowned one of the front-side entrances of the church required much more work.

“She said it would take about two years to restore it,” said Casper.

“A labor of love”

About 40% of the pieces did have to be replaced, said Baldacci. She identified the glass as having come from the Kokomo Opalescent Glass company, which was able to produce exact replicas of the type and color of glass used in the original window.

The window was taken apart. Each piece soaked in water for four weeks to loosen the soot and grime. Then the “jewel-toned colors and design came through,” said Baldacci, explaining that the three conjoined rings represent the Holy Trinity. “It was just stunning.”

The window was then reassembled and re-leaded, glazed for weatherproofing, then “laboriously, meticulously” cleaned again.

It was then sent to Louisville to be encased in a wooden frame with tempered glass for protection from the elements.

“It should be another 80 to 100 years before it will need to be restored again,” said Baldacci.

Once framed, the window was sent to Heck Metal Works, owned by members of St. Mary of the Knobs Parish in Floyd County.

“We wanted something that would make it look like you were walking into the church,” Casper explained.

Creating the 11-feet by 14-foot entryway frame for the window “was a labor of love,” said Tim Heck, owner of the metal works company. After “thinking and praying about it,” he decided to do the project as a donation to SECC.

“We’ve been fortunate over the years,” he said. “We’ve seen the good works that St. Elizabeth does, and we’ve benefited from their good works. This was a way to give back to an organization that has given so much to us and the community.”

Bare Metal Inc., in New Albany and Koetter Construction in Floyd County also contributed to the project.

“It seems it does take a village,” Casper noted at the unveiling. “We are blessed to be part of such a giving and caring community.”

“Passionately speaks to our mission”

The park’s new entryway structure honors Holy Trinity Church—the first Catholic church built in New Albany. But Casper also wanted a “signature piece of art” to honor the works and mission of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities.

“When we were discerning what that piece would be, we wanted something … that it would be interactive,” he explained. “And we wanted it out front so the community could see it and touch it.”

That vision was realized with the unveiling of the sculpture: “When I Was Hungry and Thirsty” on Oct. 4.

Made possible with the help of generous donors, the piece was created by Canadian sculptor Matthew P. Schmalz. According to his website, his work can be found in cathedrals and churches around the world, including in Rome and at the Vatican.

“People are tired of the church being一定要 poor to the front of [people’s minds] and reminds us that we are all called to do ‘for the least of my brothers,’” Casper said at the unveiling. “We feel blessed to have this piece that so passionately speaks to our mission.”

It took more than two years for the new entryway and sculpture projects to come to fruition. But Casper noted at the unveiling ceremony that “great art takes time, and patience is a virtue.”

He extended an invitation for all “to stop by and spend some in Holy Trinity Heritage Park. As the [hymn] says, ‘all are welcome in this place.’”

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Director of Marketing and Donor Relations
St. Paul Catholic Center, the Newman Center and parish at Indiana University, Bloomington, is hiring a Director of Marketing and Donor Relations. The position manages St. Paul’s communications and marketing, stewardship and donor relations, the Annual Fund, and development events. It actively cultivates, and solicits gifts from resident parishioners, alumni, parents of alumni, parents of former and current students, and current students through donor phone calls, in-person meetings, and appeals and assistance in events. The Director ensures consistent and effective branded marketing and communications on websites, in print communications, and advertising. The Director is the primary administrator of electronic giving and the parish database.

For a full position description, please contact Tom Recker, Director of Mission Advancement at 812/668-2249 or at trecker@hoosiercatholic.org.

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WASHINGTON (CNS)—Calling upon Congress for “radical solidarity” with mothers and babies—both born and unborn—four bishops advanced an ambitious legislative and policy agenda that prioritizes the well-being of families in a letter to lawmakers.

The measures proposed by the chairmen of four U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) committees detail a “vision for an authentically life-affirming society.”

Dated Oct. 26, the letter explained that following the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in June that reversed the court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion, there is an opportunity to “redouble efforts toward a culture of life that respects and supports the dignity of every person at every stage.”

Describing the court’s decision as “extraordinary,” the bishops said that the work to support families must be widened.

“We are praying and working for changes in hearts and minds, circumstances and policy, that will help everyone to treasure each and every fellow human being in a society oriented to supporting children and their parents,” the letter said.

“In other words, we hope for the day when abortion is unthinkable because society has successfully reckoned with the challenges of raising children in the modern world and has decided to make full flourishing of children and their families the highest goal, without anyone refusing to take time away from work to care for them. They also said affordable health care for moms and children is necessary and that workplace policies should respect pregnant and nursing mothers.

The bishops are calling for affordable and high quality day care, as well as funding for childhood hunger and homelessness and to toxic chemicals causing defects or cancer. They also said immigrant families need to be “treated in accord with their inviolable dignity.”

“All of these goals require the cooperation of all and the exclusion of none,” they added.

The letter said these goals cannot be achieved by individual efforts and will require collaborative work on the part of government leaders.

“The bishops urged members of Congress ‘to find bipartisan solutions and ensure that these and other similar legislative proposals are given high priority.”

“We hope with a particular concern that we all can agree on coming to the aid of pregnant and single parenting women in need, so that they will have the support, comfort and hope that they require to build their lives for the better and realize their aspirations,’” the bishops wrote.

(The full text of the bishops’ letter and legislative and policy recommendations is online at https://bit.ly/3znGpSh.)

Bishops urge Congress to be in ‘radical solidarity’ with mothers, children

People are seen near the U.S. Capitol in Washington on June 24. Earlier the same day, the Supreme Court overruled the landmark Roe v. Wade abortion decision that legalized abortion nationwide in 1973. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

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The letter was sent to all members of Congress by Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul S. Coakley, Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities; San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth; and Washington Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of the Committee on Migration.

Specifically, the bishops outlined 15 measures that they said they have long supported. They include passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and the PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act, extending the child tax credit, support for pregnancy resource centers, and ending marriage penalties in tax policy and social programs. Other provisions the bishops urged Congress to act upon relate to paid family leave, child care and prekindergarten programs, nutrition, education, maternal and child health, housing, domestic violence and family relationships, adoption support, environmental policies to ensure the health of women and children, and lifting limits on the eligibility of immigrant and mixed-status families in accessing government programs.

“There are serious cultural, social, economic and spiritual challenges that face women, families and children today,” the bishops wrote.

“They emphasized that children should not grow up in poverty and that parents should be able to take time away from work to care for them. They also said affordable health care for moms and children is necessary and that workplace policies should respect pregnant and nursing mothers.

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