Keep the crèche in Christmas, pope urges

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Stopping to gaze at and perhaps pray before a Nativity scene is one of the best ways to remember the real meaning of Christmas, Pope Francis said.

“In its genuine poverty,” the pope said, “the crèche helps us to rediscover the true richness of Christmas and to purify ourselves of so many aspects that pollute the Christmas landscape.”

Pope Francis met on Dec. 3 with the artisans who carved the 18-piece Nativity scene in St. Peter’s Square; the donors of the white pine Christmas tree; the residents of a psychiatric rehabilitation center who, along with a group of students and grandparents, created the ornaments; and with representatives of the government of Guatemala, which set up another Nativity scene in the Vatican audience hall.

“Simple and familiar, the Nativity scene recalls a Christmas that is different from the consumerist and commercial Christmas. It is something else,” Pope Francis told them during a midday gathering.

The group was scheduled to gather in St. Peter’s Square in the evening for the official unveiling of the Nativity scene and the lighting of the Christmas tree. But a major rainstorm with a forecast for more caused the Vatican to move the evening festivities indoors, although hundreds of people still were in the square for the lighting.

Meeting with the donors, Pope Francis encouraged everyone to find some quiet time to spend before a crèche at Christmas.

“Silence encourages contemplation of the child Jesus,” the pope said, and “helps us to become intimate with God, with the fragile simplicity of a tiny newborn baby, with the meekness of his being laid down.”

Parish uses Christmas light display to share the Gospel message

BRIGHT—As dusk turned into darkness on Nov. 25, the day after Thanksgiving known as “Black Friday,” colorful Christmas lights illuminated 19 acres on the campus of St. Teresa Benedicta Parish in Bright.

The more than 100,000 lights that made up the display weren’t there just to light up the night sky.

See LIGHTS, page 9

One of several Nativity sets is displayed in “Bright Lights,” a drive-through Christmas light display on the campus of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)
Archbishop Thompson issues decree regarding former church building

Citation staff report

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson has decreed that the former St. Rose of Lima church building in Knightstown be sold. In the terminology of the Church’s Code of Canon Law, this is referred to as “relegation to profane but not sordid use.”

This decision was made after Archbishop Thompson consulted with the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council in November. St. Rose of Lima Parish was merged with St. Anne Parish in New Castle in 2016.

As noted in the decree published in this week’s issue of The Criterion, the decision concerning the St. Rose of Lima property was spurred by the fact that the church building is in disrepair; inspection of the building by an outside engineering firm found significant deterioration and water damage; additional water filtration has caused additional damage to the interior plaster, paint and basement, and the merged parish of St. Anne has no use for the building.

Whereas, on 4 February 2016, by the decree of my predecessor, the Most Reverend Joseph T. Tobin, C.Ss.R., the former parish of the St. Rose of Lima (8144 US-40, Knightstown, IN 46148), was merged by extinctio into the parish of Saint Anne (112 N. 19th St., New Castle, IN 47362); and,

Whereas the recourse filed against the decree of extinctio was upheld by the competence dicastery; and,

Whereas the legal and equitable/assets and liabilities of the former parish of St. Rose of Lima were given over to the parish of Saint Anne by virtue of the extinctive union; and,

Whereas the pastor of the parish of Saint Anne discussed with the parishioners the possibility of the reduction to profane but not sordid use of the church building of St. Rose of Lima over the course of 2020-2022; and,

Whereas, on 8 November 2022, the pastor of the parish of Saint Anne, after consultation with both finance and pastoral council (consisting of parishioners of Saint Anne and former parishioners of St. Rose of Lima), permitted me to relegate the church building of the former parish of St. Rose of Lima to profane but not sordid use so that the proceeds of the sale of the church building might be used to fund the ministries of the parish of Saint Anne; and,

Whereas, on 23 November 2022, I consulted with the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council on the question of the relegation of the church building of Saint Rose of Lima to profane but not sordid use; and,

Whereas, on 2 December 2022, in the consideration of the question of reduction of the church building of Saint Rose of Lima, I examined the following facts concerning the state of the church building of Saint Rose of Lima:

1. This church building is not in good repair.
   - Inspection by an outside engineering firm in April of 2022 found significant deterioration and water damage to have occurred to the main structural system of the building.
   - Additional water infiltration has caused additional damage to the interior plaster, paint, and basement.
   - Based upon the report of the engineering firm, a general contractor estimated in April 2022 that the repairs needed to make the building safely to be occupied is $374,399.
   - The income for Saint Anne in the fiscal year of 2021/2022 was $300,891; the expenses were $264,447.
   - The merged parish of Saint Anne has no use for this building.
   - And, whereas the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council voted unanimously to recommend that the church building of Saint Rose of Lima be relegated to profane but not sordid use, and,
   - Whereas I have concluded that the economic hardship of repairing the building and its lack of uselessness to the parish of Saint Anne constitute a grave cause sufficient in law to support the relegation of the church building to profane but not sordid use; and,
   - The Most Reverend Charles C. Thompson, D.D., J.C.L., Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, having in mind my responsibility to best address the spiritual needs of the people of the parish of Saint Anne specifically and the needs of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis generally, hereby decree:

2. The parish of Saint Anne, in consultation with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and permission of the College of Consultants and Archdiocesan Finance Council, shall utilize the church building (not excluding disposition) in a manner that is in accord with Catholic faith and morals, and with the building’s dignity as a former place of Divine worship.
3. This decree is to be published to the pastor of the parish of Saint Anne.
4. The parishioners of the parish of Saint Anne are to be given notice of this decree upon its receipt by the pastor of the parish. Copies of this decree are to be made available for inspection at the office of the parish, and the parishioners shall be given notice as soon as is possible after its receipt by the pastor.
5. This decree is to be published in the Archdiocesan newspaper, The Criterion.
   - 6. This decree is to be posted to the website of the Archdiocese.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis on this 29th day of November, 2022.

Very Reverend Eric M. Johnson, VE
Very Reverend Charles C. Thompson, D.D., J.C.L.
Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

DECREED

TheCriterion  Friday, December 9, 2022

December 9 – 5:30 p.m.
Little Sisters of the Poor Christmas Celebration at The Willows, Indianapolis

December 10 – 10:30 a.m.
Mass and reception for 100th anniversary celebration of St. Roch Parish, Indianapolis, at St. Roch Parish

December 14 – 1:30 p.m.
Visit to Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School, Madison

December 15 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Task Group at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

December 15 – 11:30 a.m.
Employee Advenft Gathering at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

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We’ll be there waiting if you give us two weeks’ notice! Use the form below or at archindy.org/move

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The Critierion
WASHINGTON (CNS)—In a case examining the scope of free speech protected by the First Amendment, the Supreme Court on Dec. 5 ultimately seemed to favor a broad view of free speech. And in this case, the speech involved what a graphic designer created websites should not have to say.

Colorado designer Lorie Smith, who runs a web design company called 303 Creative, has said she should not be required to create wedding websites for same-sex couples based on her Christian beliefs about marriage. Colorado state law forbids businesses from discriminating based on sexual orientation. Smith contends her First Amendment right to free speech exempts her from the law.

But she lost her case in the lower court when the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the state has a compelling interest to protect its citizens “from the harms of discrimination.”

Kristen Waggoner, an Alliance Defending Freedom attorney representing Smith before the Supreme Court, specifically argued that companies whose work centers around expression have First Amendment protections from being compelled to say things that go against their personal beliefs.

If Smith’s case sounds familiar, that’s because it is very similar to a recent case involving a Colorado baker who refused to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple based on his religious beliefs. In 2018, the Supreme Court ruled that the baker’s refusal to make a wedding cake did not violate Colorado’s anti-discrimination law.

In its ruling, the court did not specifically deal with First Amendment protections allowing businesses to refuse clients’ requests based on the owners’ religious convictions. A ruling in favor of the web designer in this case could give broad leeway to business owners to deny customers or disabled couples.

A majority of the justices seemed willing to carve out narrow exemptions to discrimination laws. Justice Clarence Thomas emphasized that this case was distinct from other public accommodations cases because of the speech aspect, pointing out: “This is not a hotel, this is not a restaurant, this is not a riverboat or a train.” Similarly, Justice Brett Kavanaugh asked about how one would determine even within the wedding industry what types of services count as speech.

In response, Waggoner told the court she wouldn’t be in front of them today representing a caterer, for example, but she would likely represent a custom wedding cake designer, bringing the previous court case to mind.

The USCCB’s brief said there is a “pressing need for individual rights and the Becket Fund. Twenty-two states support Smith in friend of the court briefs. They say that they have public accommodation laws on the books, but their laws exempt those businessespeople who make their living creating custom art. Twenty-two states support Colorado and have similar laws in place protecting people from discrimination, which is also backed by the Justice Department.

A decision in the case is expected in late June.†

POPE continued from page 1

with the tender affection of the swaddling clothes that envelop him.

“If we really want to celebrate Christmas,” he said, “let us rediscover through the crib the surprise and amazement of littleness, the littleness of God, who makes himself small, who is not born in the splendor of appearances, but in the poverty of a stable.”

To truly encounter Jesus, the pope said, people must meet him in the manger, leaving their own vanity and pretense behind.

“Prayer is the best way to say thank you before this gift of free love, to say thank you to Jesus who desires to enter our homes and our hearts,” he said. “Yes, God loves us so much that he shares our humanity and our lives.

“In the worst moments,” the pope continued, “he is there, because he is the Emmanuel, the God with us, the light that illuminates the darkness and the tender presence that accompanies us on our journey.”

The lights on the Christmas tree, he said, are a reminder that Jesus came “to lighten our darkness, our existence often enclosed in the shadow of sin, fear, pain.”

But, the pope said, the tree also should make people think about the importance of roots.

“Like a tree,” he said, “only a person who is rooted in good soil remains firm, grows, matures, resists the winds that shake him and becomes a point of reference for those who look upon him.”

The Christmas tree, Pope Francis said, is a reminder of the need to remain rooted in Christ.†
Let’s ask Blessed Mary to help us prepare for her Son’s coming again

The Blessed Virgin Mary plays a significant role in the Advent Scripture readings. Mary is introduced to us in the New Testament as a strong woman of faith who remains true to her word in spite of great sorrow. She always points the way to her Son, Jesus, the Word Incarnate, who we believe will come again—in the great feast of Christmas and at the end of time.

On Dec. 8, we celebrated the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We Catholics believe that Mary was born free from sin. Unlike the rest of us, Mary was pure and sinless. She was not dragged down morally or spiritually by the tendency to make choices that were harmful to herself or others. As a result, Mary was free to say “yes” to God’s invitation to become the Mother of God Incarnate. Mary’s positive assimilation to God made her the model for the Church formed by sharing the faith with all of us. With the help of God’s grace, we can follow her example and become holy women and men who seek only to do the will of God our Father.

Under the title of the Immaculate Conception, Mary is called the “Queen of the United States.” Especially today, we need to implore her intercession to heal the wounds of division and the deep-seated fear and distrust experienced by so many of our fellow citizens. Mary’s compassion, her charity for the poor and vulnerable, and her unique position as the source of salvation for migrants and refugees make her an advocate that we sorely need in these troubled times.

Today—Dec. 9—the Church invites us to honor St. Juan Diego Cauahuiltzin, a native Mexican who on this day 491 years ago was privileged to encounter Mary, the mother of God, speaking his language and clothed in the dress of his own people. St. Juan Diego was a simple, God-fearing man. In spite of his astonishment at the appearance of the mysterious beautiful lady, he did what she asked and presented to the local bishop her request that a chapel be built on Tepeyac Hill just outside of Mexico City. The bishop didn’t believe his story and requested a sign as proof. Mary provided Juan Diego with several miraculous signs—including her image embedded in his tilma (cloak) and an abundance of out-of-season roses.

We will celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in three days on Dec. 12, and because Mary is the patroness of all the Americas, we will be joined by our sisters and brothers throughout North, Central and South America in praising God for the gift of this amazing woman, the mother of God and our mother.

When Pope St. John Paul II visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, he expressed the profound hope that the diverse peoples and cultures of the Americas could find unity, solidarity and a shared peace through our Blessed Mother’s intercession.

Mary’s words to Juan Diego ring out more than ever today: “Do not be afraid. Am I not he who is with you, your mother?” Mary’s presence casts out fear because she gives powerful witness to the saving grace of her Son, Jesus. The Church celebrates and encourages us by reminding us of her words at the wedding banquet in Cana “Do whatever he tells you” (Jn 2:5). If we can do this, all will be well.

Tomorrow—Dec. 10—the Church provides us with the memorial of Our Lady of Loreto. This particular title of Mary refers to the house in which she was born, raised, and in which the angel Gabriel visited her in the Annunciation. Tradition holds that angels miraculously transported the house from Palestine to Loreto, Italy, in the 13th century. However, it is now generally believed that this legend came from the fact that a patron family with the name “Angelo” either had the house moved or had stones for a replica house imported from the Holy Land.

No matter which of her many titles is used, Mary is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promise that a virgin will conceive and bear a son, and that his name will be Emmanuel, which means “God is with us” (Mt 1:23). Mary is also a pre-eminent figure in the New Testament as the Mother of Jesus Christ and the model for the Church formed by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit.

This Advent, let’s ask the Mother of God to help us prepare for her Son’s coming again. And let’s follow her example, saying “yes” to God’s Word.

—James Conway

Reflection

Lighting the way to a gift of hope

Advent is a time for waiting on the Messiah, Adventus in Latin means “coming.” So, I pray, “Christ is coming; Christ, Christ is coming for me!” Pray it from the rooftops. Oh, how lovely!

Christians are preparing for a coming, an arrival, that we can never truly be ready for. However, he takes us from wherever we are.

We light a purple candle, called the Prophet’s candle, on the first Sunday of Advent. “Think of Joseph and Mary’s donkey as it travelled with them to Bethlehem. So trusting. Think of the purity, devotion and courage of Joseph and Mary. They were carrying the most beautiful and breathtaking gift on Earth with them. Against all dangers and obstacles, they travelled. They carried it for the Father. They carried it for you and me.”

The first purple candle of Advent represents “hope.”

The second Sunday of Advent, the purple candle, Bethlehem, is lit. This candle represents great faith and love. In our Christian walk, we have reached Bethlehem with the donkey and Joseph and Mary. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday. In Latin, “gaudete.”

Be Our Guest

Richard Doerflinger

The contested legacy of Vatican II

This October was the 60th anniversary of the first session of the Second Vatican Council, a landmark event of the Catholic Church. Yet the council’s legacy remains a matter of confusion and controversy today.

Divisions over this legacy began as soon as it ended in 1965. Some theologians emphasized the idea of “aggiornamento,” updating the Church’s connections with the modern world, and founded a journal called Concilium to elaborate on this theme.

Others emphasized the theme of “ressourcement,” a “return to the sources” in Scripture and the early Church to “return to the sources” in Scripture and the early Church to revise Catholic’s evangelizing mission, and they founded the journal Communio.

Interestingly, both groups included experts who had advised bishops preparing the council documents. St. John XXIII made his wishes clear in his address at the beginning of the council: “The Church must preserve and defend the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine” handed down through the centuries, by promoting it “more effectively” to the modern world.

Updating the Church’s way of expressing itself was intended to promote the whole of that human “in whom you have put your beauties all together in one loving heart.” Christians, do you feel that longing? Do you realize that Jesus came for you? So, a rose candle is lit, “rejoice!”

To help societies devastated by two world wars and all the ideological conflicts, where many had come to doubt the purpose and meaning of human life, the Church would affirm its own central commitments, showing modern men and women that this purpose and meaning are found in Jesus Christ.

The council’s documents reflected that intention, modifying the Church’s tone with the latter urging a “hermeneutic of continuity” between the council and centuries of Catholic tradition.

Now the question is whether some professing other religions or none were treated less as hopelessly immersed in error than members of other sects. Social arrangements guaranteeing religious freedom for all were accepted, recognizing that faith is free from outside coercion to be authentic.

The documents emphasized a “universal call to holiness,” urging the laity to go out and transform the world once they are fed on the word of God and Christ’s presence in the Eucharist.

This was the “letter” of the council’s texts. Some Catholics, feeling constrained by the council’s “aggiornamento” prior to 1965, wanted to go much further, invoking the “spirit of Vatican II” to foster radical change in liturgy, doctrine and morality.

In 1977, for example, a committee of the Catholic Theological Society of America issued the book Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought, replacing long-standing Christian moral norms with the amorphous standard that sexual activity should promote “creative growth toward integration.”

During this period, thousands of priests and religious abandoned their vows. In short, the Church found that in opening your windows to the modern world to be heard more clearly, you also needed to recognize what toxic influences may fly back in.

So, I pray, “Christ is coming, Christ is coming, an arrival, a birth!” Church. Yes, do more for your Church. Yes, do more for Jesus, the love of your life! In the end, every Christian must decide their “gift” for Christ. It must come from your own heart!

(Viola Maria Miller is a member of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville.)
During Advent, we rejoice with Mary, our mother in faith

During el Adviento, nos alegramos con María, nuestra madre en la fe

Hoy, viernes 9 de diciembre, se conmemora a San Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, el indígena mexicano que tuvo el privilegio de encontrarse con María, la madre de Dios y nuestra madre, hablando su lengua y vestido con el traje de su propio pueblo, los Chichimecas.

María envió a Juan Diego al obispo local con la petición de que construyera una capilla en el cerro del Tepeyac, en las afueras de la actual Ciudad de México. Después de que la imagen milagrosa Asunción al cielo—nos deleite y nos invita a alegrarnos por la vuelta de la Asunción de su Hijo. Ella mantiene este espíritu alegre durante su infancia, su público ministerio, su pasión, muerte y resurrección, y a lo largo de su existencia en la vida de la Iglesia después de Pentecostés.

Incluso cuando se ve obligada a estar al pie de la Cruz, la Madre de los Dolores abrumada por el dolor, nunca pierde la esperanza. Nunca pierde la alegría que ha poseído su corazón desde que el arcángel Gabriel la salió por primera vez con palabras de regocijo: “Dios te salve María, llena eres de gracia, el Señor es contigo. ¡Bendita tú entre las mujeres y bendito fruto de tu vientre, Jesús!” (Lc 1:28).

La Santísima Virgen María es el reflejo vivo de esta profecía. Ella es fuerte y no tiene miedo, y toda su vida—desde su Inmaculada Concepción hasta su igualmente milagrosa Asunción al cielo—nos enseña a alegrarnos por la vuelta de su Hijo Jesús. En la primera lectura del tercer domingo de Adviento (Is 35:1-6a, 10), el profeta Isaías proclama: “Todo el que se tuerza a su costa será alentado y estará seguro de contarse entre los que esperan. ¡Dios está con ellos!” (Is 41:13).

El profeta Isaías habla de la esperanza que tenemos en la llegada de Jesús. Nos invita a alegrarnos por su venida, que nos hace fuertes y seguros en el camino hacia la unión de la humanidad. Como lo hizo en el pasado, hoy también se nos invita a alegrarnos por el Espíritu que nos habla y nos guía en nuestra vida diaria.

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December 22  
S. Joe Church, 1401 S. Mckee Ave., Indianapolis.  
27th Third Thursday Adoration, interceding for women experiences crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.  
Information: 317-244-9002.

December 23  
S. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3334 56th St., Indianapolis.  
Simbang Gabi Advent Mass Novena, 5:30 p.m., sponsored by Archdiocesan Philippine Ministry, day eight of nine-day Mass novena, mass reception to follow.  
Information: mariasolito@yahoo.com.

Events Calendar

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

December 9-13  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Winter Chastity Formation and Conducting Channel.  
Benedictine Brother John Glessner presenting, $750 single, $835 double, commuter $250.  
Registration: cmcsweeney@archindy.org.

January 11  
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5535 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.  
Day of Silence, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., sponsored by Archdiocesan Philippine Ministry, day six of nine-day Mass novena, potluck reception to follow.  
Information: mariasolito@yahoo.com.

January 14, April 1  
Indiana University Spirituality and Conference Center, 4100 North 10th Street, Indianapolis.  
Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to cutt.ly/anniversaries or call 317-236-1585.

January 22  
Saint Benedict Retreat House, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis.  
Simbang Gabi Advent Mass Novena, 5:15 p.m., sponsored by Archdiocesan Philippine Ministry, day five of nine-day Mass novena, mass reception to follow.  
Information: mariasolito@yahoo.com.

February 17  
Saint Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mckee Ave., Indianapolis.  
Simbang Gabi Advent Mass Novena, 5 p.m., sponsored by Archdiocesan Philippine Ministry, day seven of nine-day Mass novena, mass reception to follow.  
Information: mariasolito@yahoo.com.

February 26-28  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Freedom Through Forgiveness.  
Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, $300 single, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

March 19-21  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Celebrating the Paschal Mystery.  
Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, Holy Week retreat, $425 double.  
Information: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

April 5-9  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Celebrating the Paschal Mystery.  
Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, Holy Week retreat, $425 double.  
Information: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

April 17-21  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
The Sermon on the Mount: Matthew’s 6:30-33 p.m., sponsored by Providence Sister Paula Damiano presenting.  
$25 includes materials and refreshments provided.  
Information: registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@archindy.org.

April 23-26  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Hope for Married Life and Couples.  
Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

May 19-21  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Contemplative Benedictine’s Christ: God’s Call to Holiness.  
Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, $300 single, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 28-March 2  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Preparation Weekend.  
Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, $25 includes materials and refreshments provided.  
Registration: information: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

March 17-19  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Celebrating One Another As Christ.  
Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, $300 single, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

March 24-26  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Worship Gathering.  
Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, $25 includes materials and refreshments provided.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

April 28-30  
One Lady of Fatima Retreat Center, 5535 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.  
Tobit Marriage Preparation Weekend, 7 p.m.-Friday 11 a.m.  
Sponsored for engaged couples only, including materials, meals, snacks, presentations and separate overnight accommodations, $298 per couple.  
Registration: cutt.ly/TOB1T223r or 317-545-7681.  
Information on program: www.archindy.org/events.  
Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to cutt.ly/Submitevents, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Ann Lewis, or by fax at 317-236-1593.

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

Events Calendar

October 25-27  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Celebrating the Paschal Mystery.  
Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, Holy Week retreat, $425 double.  
Information: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

March 14  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Freedom Through Forgiveness.  
Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, $300 single, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

March 11  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Spring Synergy.  
Benedictine Abbey Father Andre Werner presenting, $300 single, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

March 12  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Spring Synergy.  
Benedictine Abbey Father Andre Werner presenting, $300 single, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

March 3-4  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Worship Gathering.  
Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, $25 includes materials and refreshments provided.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 15-16  
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 3355 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.  
Day of Silence, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., sponsored by Archdiocesan Philippine Ministry, day five of nine-day Mass novena, potluck reception to follow.  
Information: mariasolito@yahoo.com.

February 10-12  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Welcoming In-Saws.  
Valentine retreat for married couples, Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 6-10  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Ministry of and for Women.  
Benedictine Sister Mary Virginia Bosco presenting, $275 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 10  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Ministry of and for Women.  
Benedictine Sister Mary Virginia Bosco presenting, $275 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 3-4  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Freedom Through Forgiveness.  
Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, $300 single, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 24-26  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Worship Gathering.  
Benedictine Father Noel Mueller presenting, $25 includes materials and refreshments provided.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 17-19  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Freedom Through Forgiveness.  
Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, $300 single, $425 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 10-12  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Ministry of and for Women.  
Benedictine Sister Mary Virginia Bosco presenting, $275 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 6-10  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Ministry of and for Women.  
Benedictine Sister Mary Virginia Bosco presenting, $275 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

February 10-12  
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Ministry of and for Women.  
Benedictine Sister Mary Virginia Bosco presenting, $275 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

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Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
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Benedictine Sister Mary Virginia Bosco presenting, $275 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.

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Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., Saint Meinrad.  
Ministry of and for Women.  
Benedictine Sister Mary Virginia Bosco presenting, $275 double.  
Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retr起.
12 female members of the Sisters of Providence celebrate jubilees

75-YEAR JUBILARIANS

Sister Joyce Brophy is a native of Joliet, Ill. She entered the congregation on July 22, 1947, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1955. Sister Joyce earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods and a master’s degree in education at Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

Sister Joyce served in the archdiocese at the motherhouse as mistress of postulants from 1965-68, mistress of novices from 1968-70, and assistant vice president for development from 1980-82, as provincial for the Sacred Heart Province from 1984-91 and as a volunteer in West Terre Haute and at the motherhouse from 1999-2019.

Sister Joyce also ministered in California and Illinois. She currently ministers in prayer at the motherhouse.

Sister Margaret Heese was born in Robstown, Texas. She entered the congregation on June 17, 1947, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1955.

Sister Margaret earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in art education at Arizona State University in Tempe, Ariz. She served in the archdiocese as a teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas School from 1958-60 and at the motherhouse on the staff of the archives from 2001-02.

Sister Margaret also ministered in Arizona, California, Illinois, Oklahoma and Texas. Currently, she ministures in the Providence Hall Sewing Room at the motherhouse.

Sister Lucille Nolan is a native of Galesburg, Ill. She entered the congregation on July 22, 1947, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1955.

Sister Lucille earned a bachelor’s degree in music education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in music education at the University of Illinois in Champaign, Ill.

She served in the archdiocese as a sister teacher at the former St. Bridget School in Indianapolis in 1950, at the former St. Ann School in Terre Haute from 1955-56 and at Holy Cross Central Catholic School in Indianapolis, both in Indianapolis, from 1968-69.

Sister Lucille also ministered in Illinois, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Texas. She currently ministers to the homebound in St. Mary-of-the-Woods and West Terre Haute.

70-YEAR JUBILARIANS

Sister Rose Virginia Eichman is a native of Fort Wayne, Ind. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1952, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1959.


Sister Rose Virginia also ministered in California, Illinois and Texas. She currently ministers as a volunteer at Providence Health Care at the motherhouse.

Sister Patricia Geis is a native of Chicago. She entered the congregation on July 21, 1952, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1960.

Sister Patricia earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in elementary education at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill.

In the archdiocese, she served at the former Annunciation School in Brazil from 1958-64. She also ministered in Illinois and North Dakota. Sister Patricia currently ministers in prayer at the motherhouse.

Sister Marilyn Herber is a native of Jasper, Ind. She entered the congregation on Feb. 2, 1952, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1959.

Sister Marilyn earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master’s degree in secondary education at Indiana University in Bloomington and a master’s degree in pastoral theology at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

In the archdiocese, she served in Terre Haute at the former Sacred Heart School from 1955-58, at St. Patrick School from 1958-59 and at the former Archbishop Schulte High School from 1966-67, and in Indianapolis at Holy Spirit Parish from 1973-74, St. Mark the Evangelist Parish from 1980-94, as parish life coordinator of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish from 1994-2004 and as a volunteer at Miracle Place and Abbie Hunt Bryson Home from 2006-20. At the motherhouse, she served in residential services from 2020-21.

Sister Marilyn also ministered in the Diocese of Lafayette, Ind., and in Illinois. Currently, she ministers in prayer at the motherhouse.

Sister Mary Ann McCauley is a native of Terre Haute. She entered the congregation on July 22, 1952, and professed perpetual vows on Jan. 23, 1960.

She earned bachelor’s degrees in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and in nursing at St. Louis University in St. Louis, and a master’s degree in education at Indiana State University.

Sister Mary Ann served in the archdiocese at St. Malachy School in Brownsburg from 1963-65, and in health care at Union Hospital in Terre Haute from 1977-78, in the Community Health network in Indianapolis from 1980-2004 and Holistic Health Service in Indianapolis and Clinton from 2004-11.

At the motherhouse, she ministered on the infirmary staff from 1973-74 and 1975-76, as a nurse in Health Care from 1978-80 and as an outpatient nurse at Providence Hall from 2002-15, and as a volunteer in Illinois and North Carolina. Currently, she ministers as a volunteer in the Clinical Care Office at the motherhouse.

Sister Marie Esther Sivertsen is a native of Minnetonka, Minn. She entered the congregation on Sept. 15, 1962, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1970.

Sister Marie Esther earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education at Indiana State University.

In the archdiocese, Sister Marilyn served at St. Simon the Apostle School in Indianapolis from 1980-83. She also ministered in Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Taiwan and Washington, D.C. Sister Marilyn is currently between ministries.

Sister Martha Joseph Wessel is a native of Ferdinand, Ind. She entered the congregation on Sept. 17, 1962, and professed perpetual vows on Aug. 15, 1970.

Sister Martha Joseph earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in education at Indiana State University.

She ministered in the archdiocese at the former St. Anne School in New Castle from 1968-74 and 1977-82, at Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis from 1974-77 and at All Saints School (now St. Bartholomew School) in Columbus from 1982-84.

Sister Martha Joseph served at the motherhouse as administrator of Owens Hall from 1993-96 and 2004-16. She also served in the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., and in Kentucky.

Sister Martha Joseph currently ministers as coordinator of transportation in residential services at the motherhouse.

Sister Therese Whitsett is a native of La Crosse, Wis. She entered the congregation on Sept. 17, 1962, and professed perpetual vows on Feb. 10, 1974.

Sister Therese earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master’s degree in communication arts at Webster University in Webster Groves, Mo.


She currently ministers as a food pantry volunteer and nursing home visitor in Indianapolis.

25-YEAR JUBILARIAN


Sister Evelyn earned a bachelor’s degree in communication arts at St. Paul University in Manila, the Philippines, a bachelor’s degree in law at the University of Manila and a licentiate in canon law from St. Paul University in Ottawa, Canada.

She has ministered in various positions in parish ministry and in the canon law tribunal of the Diocese of Gary, Ind., and will soon begin parish ministry in Chicago.
“He’s a big force of prayer for the students”

Elizabeth White, the team director for FOCUS on the IU campus, also cites Father Justus’ joy when discussing his presence at the parish. She also talks about his reverence when he celebrates Mass.

“He’s a very holy man who brings a lot of joy to everyone,” says Maria Reecer, an IU sophomore who works part time in the parish office.

“His love for the Eucharist and the Lord is so apparent,” she notes. “And he always makes it a point to pray for us missionaries, which is an incredible gift.”

Father Justus also possesses the gift of remembering everyone he meets, White says, and an unwavering commitment to praying for those people every day.

“He’s a big force of prayer for the students,” she says. “And just the way he remembers is very intentional about each student he interacts with, and it’s something I very much admire and that has definitely rubbed off.”

Father Justus’ missionary work in Nigeria also inspires White and her FOCUS colleagues. He spoke to the group about his experiences, and they left the meeting eager to continue their outreach.

“I remember us leaving the class feeling very invigorated, thinking, ‘If this man can go into dangerous territory and spread Jesus, then we can go onto a college campus and share about Jesus,’” White says.

“In both Bloomington and Nigeria, Father Justus views missionary work from a similar perspective. ‘The missionary progress depends on God’s grace, on the gift Jesus gave us in the holy Eucharist, as the example of faith in action. This is a great gift, but you’re going to suffer for it,’ referring to the strong Muslim presence in that area of Nigeria. And that suffering continues for many Christians there today.”

During his nearly 20 years in the Sokoto diocese, Father Justus worked in Northern Nigeria, viewing his primary mission as evangelization. The Dominicans were building parishes with mostly people from the south and trying to introduce the indigenous people in the north to the Catholic faith.

“In the north, no one had ever preached about Jesus,” he says. “It’s wonderful to preach to people who never heard the Good News.”

“That is Jesus, the body of Christ!”

In 1980, Father Justus moved to the south and ministered in the Ibadan archdiocese. His 37 years there included mission work in Ibadan, Lagos and Agbor-Obi. He served in various leadership roles during that time with the Dominican order and also as a pastor. During visits to villages, he took note of how important native catechists were to introducing and passing on the faith.

“They were really our right hand. They knew the language, and they knew English, and they would often interpret for us. There are many dialects in Nigeria,” he says. “There are maybe 20 languages, but each one of them had different dialects, almost up to 200 if you counted them all.”

One story revealed how a catechist’s work offered an example of faith in action.

“We were getting converts, and we told our people, ‘The tabernacle, that is Jesus, the body of Christ. He’s in there,’” Father Justus recalls. “So, they would tell their friends.

“One time, a young man—not a catechumen yet—he asked me in the Hausa language … ‘Is God in that box? [the tabernacle]?’

“I said, ‘Yes, that’s the tabernacle. Yes, he is.’ That was kind of an incredible way to see how they were sharing the faith, and the way he put the question.”

Promoting priestly and religious vocations was also an important part of Father Justus’ mission. Reflecting on trying to plant seeds for vocations, Father Justus admits, “It was slow going at first.”

Years later, more men are answering the call.

“There were nine [Dominicans] ordained priests this year, and eight deacons—all native Nigerians.”

This is a great gift, but you’re going to suffer for it

His Dominican order, whose charism is preaching for the salvation of souls—had been invited to minister in the west African country in 1951. They were given two apostolates: a parish in Lagos and the prefecture of Sokoto in northern Nigeria, which was to be developed into a diocese.

“Our job [in Sokoto] was to build the diocese up to hand it over to the diocesan priests,” he says.

The Dominicans did their best to learn Hausa, which was the main language. They also tried to build bridges with the Muslims, who controlled much of the region.

“The way the Dominicans they could minister in the region if they built a hospital, which the order did. Dominican sisters from Kansas operated it and two other clinics.

“Lay missionaries who were nurses helped the sisters run these places,” Father Justus notes. “It was a very Dominican thing—with the priests and the Dominican sisters and the lay missionary nurses. The work went well.”

As missionary disciples, the Dominicans were charged with spreading the Gospel and introducing the Nigerian people to Jesus Christ.

How did we find them? … They were different from the Muslims because they drank beer,” he says with a laugh. “That was one way to meet them.

“We saw it was important to [minister] to them. Most of the Christians were coming from the south. … So, we succeeded in that area a bit.”

When he baptized children, the priest told their families, “This is a great gift, but you’re going to suffer for it,’ referring to the strong Muslim presence in that area of Nigeria. And that suffering continues for many Christians there today.”

“Once we would knock down [while praying the Stations] … there was this leper ahead of me, and when he knelt down, there was his leg, all eaten up from leprosy. I felt sorry for him, but then it struck me, this guy was kneeling and rising faster than all of us. … It then struck me: there is a guy, a leper, and he is just thrilled to be saying the Stations of the Cross. He just saw what Jesus did [as we reflected on the stations]…. We don’t like to suffer, and here is this guy doing this.”

“Just seeing his leprosy and seeing his spirit” really moved Father Justus.

Now, Father Justus’ spirit has an impact on the people he meets at IU.

“He’s just so focused on the Lord!”

Like the college students, Dominican Father Patrick Hyde, pastor of St. Paul Catholic Center, is inspired by Father Justus.

“His joy, his love of the priesthood, his love of praying the Gospel, of just bringing Jesus to people, that’s inspirational,” Father Patrick says. “And you pair that with the fact that he was [a missionary for] 57 years in Nigeria, so he’s walking the walk, and talking the talk. There’s such a beautiful integrity to his life. He’s just so focused on the Lord.”

When discussing Father Justus and his priestly ministry, the pastor also cites a motto that St. Thomas Aquinas gave to the Dominican order: “to give to others what’s been contemplated.”

“He just exudes that,” says Father Patrick. “In his life, in his prayer, he’s talking to Jesus, he’s listening to Jesus, and in his ministry he just desires to share that with people.”

“He’s just someone who loves Jesus and wants to share that with you and just engage in your life.”

Even in his ministry at IU, Father Justus keeps the people of Nigeria close to his heart. “I received so much from the Catholics in Nigeria and from those who were accepting the Catholic faith.”

But with sadness, he also cites “the serious sufferings of the Catholics and other Christians in some parts of northern Nigeria.”

“Many have died, not only from Boko Haram fanatics, but many have died at the hands of some Fulani cattle herdsmen,” the priest said. “Government protection is needed for the Catholics. There is a great need to stop these persecutions. The faith of the Catholic people is strong, but they need our prayers.”
The purpose of the “Bright Lights” display is to let the light of Christ shine in the souls of the people who view it. “So many people follow secular Christmas, and Christmas lights are secular Christmas,” said Father Jonathan Meyer. “People who don’t believe in Jesus will spend thousands of dollars decorating their yards with lights. So, my whole thing was, ‘Hey, I would like to somehow reach out to those people.’”

Father Meyer is pastor in solidum with Father Daniel Mahan of St. Teresa and the other three parishes in Dearborn County—All Saints, St. Lawrence in Lawrenceburg and St. Mary in Aurora. Bright Lights is free and open to the public from 6-10 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights through Jan. 6.

In what could be described as drive-through catechesis, signs next to the various features of the display explain how ordinary holiday images are rooted in the Catholic faith. Lighted images of an angel and Mary have a sign that explains the Annunciation. Signs by figures of candles tell viewers that they are a reminder that the Chosen Child is the light of the world.

Next to several Nativity scenes are signs with short prayers.

“If we can just help people say those words, I don’t know what God will unlock in their hearts,” said Father Meyer.

In addition to the signs, people driving through the campus can tune to two low-power FM radio stations to hear Christmas music and explanations of the display. The culmination of the light show is a large, synchronized display at the back of the campus, with tens of thousands of lights blinking in time with music that viewers hear through their car radio.

St. Teresa parishioner Fred Gutfried came by soon after the display was opened on Nov. 25 to see what he and dozens of Dearborn County Catholics had helped assemble on the campus.

“It feels great,” he said. “I think it will be a destination for people to come here. They can check out the parish and check out Bright. We hope people will come and enjoy it. It can draw attention to the Catholic faith.”

Other volunteers staff the display when it’s open to the public. They meet people as they drive onto the campus and give them flyers that provide more information about the display and the parish. More than 1,600 people visited Bright Lights on its first two weekends.

“It’s a beautiful display of lights,” said All Saints parishioner Alex Hombach, a volunteer at the display on its opening night. “The intention behind it is way different than most people putting up lights. Hopefully, it will help people encounter Christ, especially if they haven’t already. I hope people enjoy it. I’m glad to be a part of it.”

One of the first people to visit the light show was Merita Glaub, a member of St. Anthony Parish in Morris, who said that the display’s Catholic themes “made me feel at home.”

A Baptist friend who came to Bright with Glaub also said the Christian aspects of the display were welcoming. “I was very impressed with it,” said Sharon Norman, a member of Dearborn Baptist Church in Manchester, Ind. “The amount of work and time to do this was phenomenal. I love the way everything was done. Christ was brought in.”

Most of the features in the display were donated by Dearborn County Catholics. The only major costs were wiring on the campus for the lights组图，第二届Shopee 11.11大促销手册和安装 wiring on the campus for the light show.

Funds for these purchases came from a grant from the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation. It is one of four archdiocesan endowment funds from which grants are awarded to semi-annually parishes across central and southern Indiana.

Jolinda Moore, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Stewardship and Development, said the proposal from St. Teresa Parish for a grant to help fund Bright Lights was an “extremely creative and unique way to use monies from the endowment.”

“At the end of the day,” Moore added, “it is about seeing people grow in their faith and find ways to share the joy of Jesus Christ that resides in each of our hearts.”

Father Meyer noted that Bright Lights was the last of four events held around Thanksgiving by the four parishes of Dearborn County to reach out to the broader community. Two running and walking events raised funds for community food pantries. St. Mary Parish in Aurora held its inaugural “Pre-Turkey 5K” on Nov. 23, the day before Thanksgiving, drawing 225 participants.

All Saints’ “Gobble Wobble 5K” took place in St. Leon on Thanksgiving Day, attracting 1,200 runners and walkers. And members of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrence served 300 hot meals on Thanksgiving to people in need.

Father Meyer was proud that the faith communities help lead “served thousands of people that aren’t their own parishioners” in so short a time.

“Being engaged and involved in the local community is pretty important,” said Father Meyer. As he looked at the acres of lights at St. Teresa, Father Meyer said that Bright Lights and the other events held in Dearborn County around Thanksgiving were a way for the parishes to share the Gospel with the surrounding community.

“This is a way to reach,” said Father Meyer. “It’s a way to be with people. I like to refer to it as non-threatening evangelization. We’re trying to just allow things to speak, allow beauty to speak, allow truth to speak.”

After the second weekend for Bright Lights, Father Meyer was happy that this approach to evangelization, which he knew to be effective in the past, was proving so once again.

“It is really amazing,” he said. “We are having great conversations and contact points with so many people from so many different walks life. I never thought it would get this big so fast.”

(For more information about Bright Lights, visit brightlightsindiana.com.)
By Natalie Hoefer

FULDA—St. Boniface, the patron saint of Germany, is buried in the German town of Fulda. So, when a parish was founded to serve German Catholic immigrants in the southern Indiana town of Fulda in 1847, it just made sense to name it St. Boniface.

Now in its 175th year, the Tell City Deenary parish is still serving the spiritual needs of its German-speaking parishioners. But the parish’s impact reaches far beyond its boundaries with the faith community’s outreach ministry, visitors coming to see its church—which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places— and genealogical researchers using its online database of those buried in its cemetery.

‘Happy to share our treasures here’

Benedictine Father Anthony Vinson, pastor, says the parish has “a very generous group of people.”

Locally, the parish helps provide volunteers, funds and Caribbean Charities Tell City and Martin’s Cloak food pantry and clothing store in nearby Sullivan. Pat and Heinz Vinz also gather items for backpacks to be given to children placed in foster care through Perry and Spencer Counties’ Department of Social Services. The backpacks are filled with school supplies and toys.

“The organization was so impressed by our efficiency they sent organizers to come see how we did it,” he recalls.

The backpacks were presented to the school while maintaining a strong hold to the parish’s history.

“The current church was completed in 1865,” Father Anthony says. “The features inside are a real testament to our German heritage and craftsmanship.”

Oaken interior arches, walnut Stations of the Cross made in Germany, pews from 1896, stunning stained-glass windows, richly-colored walls and paintings are all recently restored and refurbished. It’s the church that’s now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

“Because of that [status], people come from all over to see the church,” says Father Anthony. “It’s open dawn to dusk and we have people every day stop by.”

Next to the church is the parish’s cemetery, with many markers written in German.

“We’re unique in having a detailed, online database of those buried in the cemetery,” Father Anthony notes. “It’s got photos of the front and back tombstones and translated it’s in German. It even includes other information like maiden name and nickname if we know it.”

Father Anthony lauds the parish for its Benedictine hospitality.

“We’re always happy to welcome people, whether it’s welcoming them home because they have roots here or because of tourism. Our parishioners are always happy to share our treasures here.”

For Mass times, the cemetery directory or to download a church tour call 812-357-5533 or go to stboniface.church.

Take your time: There’s lots to do near St. Boniface

The list of places to visit in Fulda and the surrounding areas starts with St. Boniface Church itself. Stay before or after Mass to take in the historic building’s beauty.

“The largest commercial destination near the parish is Holiday World and Splashin’ Safari—just 5 miles from the church (www.holidayworld.com). But several other nearby sites make for a uniquely Catholic weekend excursion, including overnight stay at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House in St. Meinrad (saintmeinrad.org or 800-356-7272) or Meinrad Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., in the Evangeline Diocese (thedomp.com or 812-343-411)

Less than 10 minutes south of St. Boniface, take a tour of Saint Meinrad Archabbey on the historic St. Joseph Church, a soaring German heritage and craftsmanship.”

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About 15 minutes north of St. Boniface in Ferdinand, tour the Sisters of St. Benedict’s stunning Monastery Immaculate Conception (thedomp.com). The town’s annual, two-day Christkindlmarkt in November—boasting hundreds of booths at six sites with free shuttle service to each—is a festive time to visit the area.

Just 20 minutes north of Ferdinand in Jasper, Ind. (Evangelic Diocese), visit historic St. Joseph’s Church, a soaring and stunning German-built structure completed in 1880. Behind it is a rare gem—a peaceful groto made primarily of geodes with an interesting story behind its origin (www.geodegroto.com).

And be sure to dine at Schnitzelbank Restaurant for authentic German fare (www.schnitzelbank.com).

(Mass Excursions is a feature highlighting an archdiocesan parish and local attractions, encouraging a trip to the area that includes Mass with the members of the featured parish.)
Pope: Advent is a time to let hope triumph over unhealthy fears

By David Gibson

Advent is a “continuous call to hope,” says Pope Francis. It seems, then, that a key aim of this pre-Christmas season is to focus attention on hope’s immense importance for everyone. But why? Is hope a problem? Sure, it can be. Human hopes frequently get dashed, driven underground. Sustaining hope can mean surviving big disappointments and surrounding temptations to give up when our finest plans encounter confounding obstacles. Sometimes hope’s challenge is to start over, to pursue again (in new ways?) a goal whose pursuit only recently drained our energies.

Starting over can be hard. Are we tired? Do any embers of the hope that originally motivated us still glow? It seems important here to say something about what hope means. Along with faith and charity, hope is accorded a central place in Christian life. Yet, when the topic of hope arises, it often remains undefined.

Not for Pope Francis, however. He wants to make its meaning concrete. In doing so he shows that he takes seriously the best of our dreams in life.

“Hope speaks to us of a thirst, an aspiration, a longing for a life of fulfillment, a desire to achieve great things, things that fill our heart and lift our spirit to lofty realities,” he wrote in his 2020 encyclical, “Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship” (#55).

Hope can “open us up to grand ideals that make life more beautiful and worthwhile,” he added (#55). It makes sense to zero-in on the much-needed virtue of hope during Advent. Don’t the coming days of Christmas, so focused on Jesus’ birth, announce a new birth of hope in our world?

Christmas affirms emphatically that God is not distant. Instead, God is near and involved with our actual lives. This point should not be overlooked when considering the relevance of hope in Advent, Pope Francis suggests.

It is not idle chatter when he speaks of hope. He understands what wounds hope. People need “courage” when they are “under duress or suffering,” he remarked on the first Sunday of Advent in 2020. Advent is a reminder to them that “God is not distant” and “does not abandon” people.

Pope Francis made those remarks after the coronavirus pandemic took hold in the world. The pandemic posed threats to hope by generating “worry, fear and discouragement.” There was for many a risk of “falling into pessimism,” he commented.

He understands that powerful forces can darken people’s lives, wreaking havoc with the hope they need. One such force is fear.

Would it surprise you to hear that Pope Francis has spoken repeatedly of fear’s negative influence? He seems concerned that fear can gain too much control over people’s thinking and actions.

Fear has a way of paralyzing people, he suggested in his 2019 apostolic exhortation “Christus Vivit” (“Christ Lives”), directed above all to young people.

“Keep following your hopes and dreams,” the pope urged. He added that it is important to “avoid the paralysis of the living dead,” whereby a fear of making “mistakes” leads to forgetting that if mistakes are made “you can always get up and start over, for no one has the right to rob you of hope” (#142).

Catholics hear about fear in the first reading at Mass on the Third Sunday of Advent this year: “Say to the fearful of heart: Be strong, do not fear!” (Is 35:4).

Rich images follow suggesting the fuller life that flows from the promises of God: “Then the eyes of the blind shall see, and the ears of the deaf be opened; then the lame shall leap like a stag, and the mute tongue sing for joy” (Is 35:5-6).

Naturally, not all fear is negative. Healthy fear steers us away from clear sources of harm. From the youngest age, children learn not to stick their fingers into a flame for fear of the pain and damage fire can cause.

But if there is much to fear in the world, Pope Francis thinks there also is much to be gained by venturing forward with courage. Notably, he encourages people to venture forward together with others.

He cautions that fear has a way of driving people inward, prompting them to think that what is best is to go it alone. But his encyclical on fraternity and social friendship stresses that “isolation and withdrawal into one’s own interests are never the way to restore hope and bring about renewal” (#30).

What is needed, instead, “is closeness.” The pope insisted: “Isolation, no; ‘Togetherness, yes’” (#30).

That encyclical focused in a particular way on the larger relationships of nations or racial and ethnic groups, for example. But what he said there reflects what he says elsewhere about relationships closer to home.

In the context of today’s advanced “means of human communication,” a challenge emerges to assure that “greater possibilities for encounter and solidarity for everyone,” the pope wrote in his 2013 apostolic exhortation “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”) (#87).

Taking this route, he added, “would be so good, so soothing, so liberating and hope-filled” (#87).

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.)
Christmas memories look to past, carry on through generations

My parents sang in our church choir, which meant they would both attend the midnight and 9 a.m. Christmas Masses. Therefore, our family’s time to open presents was early Christmas Eve. Immediately following Mass, we always had to make a trip to the bank for our annual deposit out of our store. From the time I could remember, Christmas, it was only my brother David and I who had to go with Dad every year. The beginning of youngest of six in a 17-year-age gap, the older kids came to Christmas after being nestled in Dad’s car saying I needed to use the restroom. I didn’t want to risk not receiving any gifts. A gap, the older kids got to stay home. Being the youngest of six in a 17-year-age

Christmas, it was only my brother David which meant they would attend both

Our Work of Charity/David Benthuram

It was a very simple toy by today’s standards, but I couldn’t have loved it more. And so, it was a hilarious sight. They had next to nothing, so at home any longer, St. Nick still finds his way to their new locations. And it’s just a tiny way for me to carry forward our family’s meaningful Christmas memories. (Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.)

Be childlike, “be still” and continually put your trust in the Lord

As a young adult, the idea that a child

The problem isn’t my desire to feel

The only way forward to peace and
to prayer converge

Pastoral Ministers/Nick Rivelli

I don’t like appearing weak before other kids—I simply don’t like being weak—period.

The fact of the matter is that I am incredibly, frustratingly dependent on the

I tend to heavily focus on that—

I have encountered this truth, that, “the

I have revealed them to the childlike” (Mt 11:25).

We can accept the peace and direction that comes from our
domestic church.

But Guido’s system endured.

But Guido’s dream of sharing music more readily never left him. Bishop Theobald of Arezzo visited the abbey, heard about Guido’s passion for music and

The music they had never heard it before!

The beautiful setting kindled Guido’s wonder: Why couldn’t music be written
to be memorized—there was no written

But Guido’s system endured.

From the beginning, there was music. It signaled the parade of life—comings and goings of the evenings. The chirping of birds. The clattering of
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drop. The croaking of frogs.
The Book of Isaiah is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. Isaiah was between a rock and a hard place, so to speak. He realized that unwise alliances and behavior that forgot God put the Hebrew kingdom of Judah at great risk. Isaiah was convinced that if the nation did not return to God in genuine obedience and piety, then the whirlwind eventually would sweep away life as he and his contemporaries knew it. His message met with dispute and outrage. It must have been frustrating, but despite the angry reaction to what he said on the part of many of people around him, Isaiah unflinchingly called the people to God. It was not as if God would bring a terrible punishment upon the kingdom. Rather, the people, by their impurity, would create a nightmare for themselves.

The Epistle of St. James supplies the second reading. This epistle rarely creates a nightmare for themselves. It is born in that space where people to God. The Lord knows our needs. He provides His strength along with grace. If you don’t find that in your own heart, it is there, at the start of certain prayers when the priest says, “Let us pray” (#23). I would say that perhaps 30 seconds is appropriate at each of these periods of silence needs to be, and certainly discretion is in order. The ordinary congregation at Sunday Mass is not required to do so, but it is the price to pay once a week to ensure that the Eucharist is the center of Catholic life. It is there that we celebrate the dying and rising of Jesus, that we celebrate our own hope of resurrection. And it is there, at the time of death, that family and friends gather to pray for the deceased and to commend that person to the mercy of God. Mary is the dawn, violet, as if the rays of dawn already are present. Her “Yes” gives us God’s promise. A First, to relieve your burden: You are not alone. The Mass is not an absolute requirement for the burial of a Catholic. If, for good reasons, you present plan, you may do so without guilt. And if you want to join this some further thought. The Eucharist is the center of Catholic life. It is there that we celebrate the dying and rising of Jesus, that we celebrate our own hope of resurrection. And it is there, at the time of death, that family and friends gather to pray for the deceased and to commend that person to the mercy of God. Maybe this is selfish, but when I die I want as many people as possible to gather to say for me the strongest prayer they know—and that prayer is the Mass. Q At our parish, so much of the Mass is sung that the Mass lasts more than an hour. Also, while it’s true for the readings, the lector walks all the way up front to the congregation, and that creates further delay. Then there is a minute of silent reflective time after the readings, which I find tedious. My husband and I (who are both of Social Security age) have no patience for such deliberate delay. Many parishioners have health concerns, but the pastor has dismissed our voice.

What can we do, short of joining another parish? (New Jersey) A Your question is a frequent one, the one being the feelings of many parishioners, especially older ones. Therefore, I think that it merits a longer-than-usual response.

While I understand your concern and trust that it flows from a deep Catholic faith, I must respectfully point out that your pastoral is being faithfully to the thinking of the Church. The “General Instruction of the Roman Missal” (GIRM), which sets forth the Church’s norms for celebrating the Eucharist, makes a strong plea for periods of quiet within the liturgy. In the Mass, the GIRM tells us, we are invited to silence at five particular times: in the beginning, at the penitential rite; at the start of certain prayers when the priest says, “Let us pray”; after each of the Scripture readings; and right after the Eucharistic prayer. The GIRM directs that, at the conclusion of each reading and of the homily, “all meditate briefly on what has been heard” (#23). I would say that perhaps 30 seconds is appropriate at each of those points, with an even shorter period after the priest’s “Let us pray” (so that all present can call to mind their own prayer intentions).

The periods of silence, then, need not add more than about three minutes to a for a God and for whom it seems a small price to pay once a week to ensure that the Eucharist receives the reflection it deserves. There is a proverb says, “The quieter you become, the more hear.” Incorporating even these short periods of silence invites members of the congregation to hear with both their hearts and ears.

Priests would be well-advised to follow a recommendation of the GIRM (#40) that states that there should be “due consideration for the culture of the people and abilities of each liturgical assembly.” The goal should be to encourage as many people as possible to attend Sunday Mass and to have them worship productively.

If you don’t find that in your own parish, it is entirely proper to seek another Catholic parish. Celebrating the liturgy should challenge you to learn and to grow. It should comfort you, too, and bring you peace.
WASHINGTON (CNS)—The head of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis spoke of horror and pain in a Nov. 30 statement; the Archdiocese of New Orleans spoke of the Archdiocese of New Orleans is beyond our archdiocese are listed on our website of the archdiocese after local authorities on Dec. 1 identified Prats as the second victim. She helped care for the priest. After the priest and Prats went missing on after the priest and Prats went missing on the events that have unfolded here in Covington is beyond shocking,” wrote Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond in the statement posted on the website of the archdiocese after local police confirmed that one of two burned bodies found on Nov. 28 is that of retired priest Father Otis Young, of St. Peter Parish in Covington, a suburb of New Orleans. “Let us continue to pray for the repose of the soul of Father Otis and for Ruth Prats who remains missing, and for both their families and all who are suffering,” the archbishop wrote. Authorities on Dec. 1 identified Prats as the second victim. She helped care for the priest. "Let us continue to pray for the repose of the soul of Father Otis and for Ruth Prats who remains missing, and for both their families and all who are suffering," the archbishop wrote. Authorities on Dec. 1 identified Prats as the second victim. She helped care for the priest. After the priest and Prats went missing on the events that have unfolded here in Covington is beyond shocking,” wrote Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond in the statement posted on the website of the archdiocese after local police confirmed that one of two burned bodies found on Nov. 28 is that of retired priest Father Otis Young, of St. Peter Parish in Covington, a suburb of New Orleans. “Let us continue to pray for the repose of the soul of Father Otis and for Ruth Prats who remains missing, and for both their families and all who are suffering,” the archbishop wrote. Authorities on Dec. 1 identified Prats as the second victim. She helped care for the priest.
On the day before this year's Class 3A state championship game on Nov. 26, head coach Rob Doyle added an extra touch to the usual pre-game dinner for the football team of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

He shared a video that showed players from the school’s previous state championship football teams encouraging the 2022 teammates, tailgating at the site as well as they tried to extend Bishop Chatard’s state record of 15 state championships in the sport.

In sharing the video, Doyle once again wanted to drive home a point about the legacy that has been established in the football program at Bishop Chatard—a legacy that, for Doyle, extends beyond the winning of state championships.

For Doyle, that legacy is summed up in one word, “Brotherhood.” He constantly stresses the theme, “You play for your brothers.” And while this year’s team has embraced that theme, the head coach wanted to add another layer to it.

“I wanted to give them a sense that the Brotherhood was there before them,” Doyle says. “Just to give them a better sense of the tradition that we’re carrying on and to have that connection with the past teams.

“The big point is that your high school football experience needs to be beyond wins and losses, that you’re going to do more in life when you bring others along with you. That’s the legacy we’re carrying into Lucas Oil Stadium.”

Coming out of Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis a day later, Bishop Chatard’s football team also carried on another state championship trophy. The team won the Class 3A title of the Indiana High School Athletic Association with a 34-14 win over the squad from Lawrenceburg High School.

As convincing as the final score seems, the victory didn’t come without that theme of Brotherhood being tested. At halftime, the Trojans trailed 14-10.

“The biggest shock to them was that Lawrenceburg was a little better than our kids thought they were,” Doyle says.

During halftime, Bishop Chatard’s coaches made adjustments in strategy. The players made their own adjustments, bringing to the surface once again the one quality that Doyle, says, defines this team—perseverance.

“arly nothing happened this season, they kept fighting,” Doyle says. “They showed multiple serious injuries during the season, but no matter who played, they all played well and kept fighting.”

The conversation shared with the team at halftime: “We’ve been here before. We’re going to keep grinding and wear them down.”

But, he said, if “every time I have to wash the dishes or clean the house, I have a strong urge to pray”—this happens in conscience—then the impulse is not all good.

“Go wash the dishes, then go pray,” he said, because “prayer is not an escape from one’s tasks.”

And, the pope said, “If I begin to pray and, like the Pharaoh in the parable, I tend to be self-satisfied and to disdain others, perhaps with a resentful and sour spirit, then we can see the signs that the evil spirit has used that as a key to enter into my heart and to transmit his feelings to me.”

In such cases, he said, “the consolation of prayer is false, and one simply is a ‘peacock before God,’ strutting his or her presumed holiness.

Then, Pope Francis said, one should ask, “Where does that thought take me? For example, it can happen that I work hard for a good and worthy task but this desire to stop praying. I find I am increasingly angry and aggressive, I feel that everything depends on me, to the point of losing confidence in God. Either evidently, there is the action of the evil spirit.”

The devil’s style is “devious, masked,” the pope said, and he usually starts with something important to the person and then twist it.

“Noticing what happens is important,” he said. “It is a sign that God’s grace is working in us, helping us to grow in freedom and awareness. We are not alone; the Holy Spirit is with us. Let’s see how things are going.”

Even a two-minute examination of conscience is helpful, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A daily examination of conscience is an important tool for recognizing where God is at work in a person’s life and where “the evil spirit” tries to lead one astray, Pope Francis said.

“There is no doubt that this solidifies your conscience,” which, he said, “is a sort of confirmation that we are doing what God wants of us, that we are on our path, that is, on the paths of life, joy and peace.”

Relying on the teaching of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, the pope explained that conscience comes from knowing that a thought or impulse is good as compared to one that is not. When something is wrong, it inclines one to do something good, it is motivated by love for God and others and leads to a sense of peace.

On the other hand, the pope explained, “the evil spirit” can sneak in and distract one from doing good or sow anger toward others or pride.

“When we talk about the ‘evil spirit,’ we’re not talking about the devil, you know,” the pope said. “The devil exists.”

Pope Francis used the example of the thought or urge to pray, accompanied by affection for the Lord and my neighbor, it invites gestures of generosity; of charity, it is a good beginning.

But, he said, if “every time I have to wash the dishes or clean the house, I have a strong urge to pray”—this happens in conscience—then the impulse is not all good.

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Special Care

St. Pius X Catholic Church Business Manager

St. Pius X in Indianapolis is seeking a full time Business Manager to manage the financial, physical and personnel resources of the parish in consultation with the Pastor and Parish Finance Committee. The Business Manager will be expected to oversee the parish office and all business operations including ensuring that parish assets are used efficiently and effectively toward the mission of the St. Pius X community. The Business Manager will be required to have professional experience, knowledge and skills in the following areas: accounting, human resources, facilities management, and supervision. This position will also be responsible for managing the tuition program, managing payroll, preparing the annual parish budget, assisting with developing short and long-range maintenance plans, overseeing major maintenance projects, and direct supervision of maintenance and parish staff.

Applicants are required to have at least five years of professional experience in the fields of finance, business or accounting. Candidates who have a degree in a related field are preferred, but a degree is not required.

Please submit cover letter, resume and at least three professional references, in confidence by December 9th to: Emily Brown ebrown@sprianj.org.

St. Pius X Catholic Church, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46240

The football team of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis celebrates its Class 3A state championship victory on Nov. 26 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis after defeating the team from Lawrenceburg High School 34-14. (Submitted photo)
Advent is opportunity to get off pedestal of superiority, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The season of Advent is a moment of grace to help believers stop being presumptuous and pretending to be self-sufficient, Pope Francis said.

There is only one way to begin a new life: “the way of humility—to be purified from the sense of superiority, from formalism and hypocrisy,” the pope said on Dec. 4, the second Sunday of Advent. People need to see themselves “as sinners, and to see Jesus as the Savior who comes for us, not for the others, for us, just as we are, with our poverty, misery and failings, above all with our need to be raised up, forgiven and saved,” he told visitors gathered in St. Peter’s Square for the recitation of the Angelus prayer.

The day’s Gospel reading described St. John the Baptist’s sharp rebuke of those who were known for their duplicity and presumption, and his urgent appeal to repent.

When St. John the Baptist says, “Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance” (Mt 3:8), the pope said, “This is a cry of love, like the cry of a father who sees his son ruining himself and says to him, ‘Don’t throw your life away!’”

If people presume they always are right, they will fail to welcome this loving invitation and miss an opportunity to begin a new life, he said.

It is important to welcome God with humility, he said.

“Each of us needs to confess our own sins, our own failings, our own hypocrisy,” the pope said. “It requires getting off the pedestal and being immersed in the water of repentance. “Advent is a moment of grace to take off our masks—every one of us has them—and line up with those who are humble, to be liberated from the presumption of the belief of being self-sufficient, to go to confess our sins, the hidden ones, and to welcome God’s pardon, to ask forgiveness from those whom we have offended,” he said.

“This is how to begin a new life,” he added.

Advent is an opportunity to get off the pedestal of superiority, pope says

Andrew Motyka, director of Archdiocesan and Cathedral Liturgical Music, conducts an orchestra and the archdiocesan schola cantorum Vox Sacra as they perform the Requiem by Maurice Duruflé during a special Mass for the Dead on Nov. 18 at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg. As part of the ensemble, St. Malachy organist and director of music Héctor Salcedo Becerra played a pipe organ recently installed in the church. An online replay of the livestreamed Mass can be seen at cutt.ly/malachyrequiem22.

(Photograph by Ann Margaret Lewis)