Emotion marks archdiocese’s Legacy Gala celebrating two people of faith and love

By John Shaughnessy

The paths of Mary Jo Thomas-Day and the late Deacon Marc Kellams never crossed in life, but their journeys always led them in the same direction and toward the same shared goals.

They are connected by the way they have loved their families, the way they have lived their Catholic faith, and the way they have always seen the face of Christ when they looked at the person in front of them.

Thomas-Day and Deacon Kellams also became connected in another special way on the emotional evening of Feb. 10 when they were honored as the recipients of the archdiocese’s Legacy Award during the Legacy Gala at the JW Marriott in Indianapolis—an award that recognizes outstanding contributions to living the faith and sharing the faith in a way that has touched the lives of so many.

With nearly 1,000 people attending in its third year, the archdiocese’s Legacy Gala is a dual celebration. It’s a fundraising celebration of the gifts that the archdiocese shares with many people across central and southern Indiana—through its 67 Catholic schools, its extensive outreach of Catholic Charities agencies, and its formation of seminarians at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, young men destined to become the next generation of priests.

The Legacy Gala also celebrates the contributions that Catholics make to these efforts.

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Miami archbishop offers housing to exiled Nicaraguan priests and seminarians

(OSV News)—Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski spoke to the Florida Catholic on Feb. 11 about the arrival in Miami of some of the political prisoners released by the Nicaraguan government and flown to the U.S. on Feb. 9.

“Most of the people expelled were politicians or candidates for public office that [President Daniel] Ortega locked up before the elections,” the archbishop said, but among them were “four or five priests, a couple of seminarians, a deacon and an organist.” Although they would be taken in at first by Nicaraguan families, Archbishop Wenski said he offered the priests and seminarians longer term housing at St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami.

“I’m offering them the hospitality of the seminary as well as the opportunity to get acclimated, acculturated and see what the next steps would be after that,” he said. At the seminary, they could take “intensive English classes” while finalizing their immigration paperwork. Although the expectation is that many of the priests and seminarians would stay in Miami, “I’ve already heard from a few bishops who need Spanish-speaking priests who would be happy to help them out,” Archbishop Wenski said.

He added that Catholic Charities and Catholic Legal Services of the Archdiocese of Miami were standing by to provide aid and to help the exiles with their immigration paperwork.

“Refugees or migrants arriving in Miami is sort of like a summer thunderstorm,” the archbishop said, noting that a few days earlier 114 Haitians had arrived by boat.

The Nicaraguans arrived from Washington on Feb. 12 and took part in a Mass celebrated at St. Agatha Church by exiled Nicaraguan Bishop Rolando José Baez, auxiliary bishop of Managua.

Bishop Baez was forced to leave Nicaragua in 2019 to avoid receiving death threats for his criticism of Ortega’s government. He now teaches Scripture at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, but conducts a weekly Mass at St. Agatha, which is livestreamed via Facebook to Nicaragua.

St. Agatha’s pastor, Father Marcos Somarriba, said it was a native of Nicaragua. The parish is located near an area of Miami known as Sweetwater, which, since the late 1970s, has been home to a large concentration of Nicaraguan exiles.

“Miami is the epicenter for the Nicaraguan community in the country. Just as Miami is the epicenter for the Cuban community,” Archbishop Wenski said.

“There’s a lot of pathos in this whole thing,” he added, because a few days earlier, speaking in front of Cuban government officials in August 2019 after receiving the pope’s cardinal’s hat, the president of the University of Havana, a papal envoy, Cardinal Benjamin Stella, had mentioned a potential amnesty for those jailed in Cuba after the anti-government protests in July 2021. Cardinal Stella was visiting the island to mark the 25-year anniversary of the historic visit of St. John Paul II.

“What happened in Nicaragua could be something similar to what might happen in Cuba with those political prisoners, so Miami might be on an emotional roller coaster the next few weeks,” Archbishop Wenski said.

Miami archbishop offers housing to exiled Nicaraguan priests and seminarians

Pope Francis ‘pained’ by Nicaraguan bishop’s 26-year prison sentence

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Just days after Bishop Rolando Alvarez of Matagalpa, Nicaragua, was sentenced to 26 years in prison in Nicaragua, he wrote to the pope expressing concern over his condition.

After praying the Angelus in St. Peter’s Square on Feb. 12, the pope said he was “pained” by the news coming out of Nicaragua and recollected “with concern” the situation of Bishop Alvarez, who had been arrested in August by the regime of President Daniel Ortega; the bishop was sentenced on Feb. 10 and stripped of his Nicaraguan citizenship.

Pope Francis prayed for Mary’s intercession to open the hearts of the “responsible politicians and all the citizens” to the pursuit of peace, which he said is achieved through the “patient exercise of dialogue.”

Bishop Alvarez played an important role in mediation efforts between the Nicaraguan government and protesters in 2018 following waves of civil unrest which killed more than 360 people. Ortega, who has been in power since 2007, has since arrested and imprisoned more than 2,400 people, including the bishop.

In his comments, the pope also noted the 222 political prisoners deported from Nicaragua to the United States on Feb. 9, a group which included five priests, a deacon, two seminarians and two media professionals employed by the Diocese of Matagalpa. Bishop Alvarez was on the list of deportees to be sent to the United States but refused to leave Nicaragua.

Those who did go to the United States were stripped of their Nicaraguan citizenship and were given a two-year human rights visa by the U.S. government. Spain has offered to give them citizenship.

One day after the deportees reached the United States, Bishop Alvarez was convicted of treason and undermining national integrity, among other charges, resulting in the 26-year prison sentence. He had been under house arrest since August.

The bishop’s arrest followed other moves by the Ortega regime targeted at the Catholic Church, including expelling Mother Teresa’s Missionaries of Charity and Archbishop Oscar Arias, who was awarded the Nobel peace prize in 1987.

Before the Mass in the United States at Dulles International Airport in Virginia on Feb. 9, Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski said on Feb. 11 of some of the exiled Nicaraguans, including “four or five priests, a couple of seminarians and a deacon,” were expected to arrive on the Miami Archdiocese, OSV News (photo/Neil Lamneck, Reuters)
Catholics in U.S. urged to aid, pray for quake victims in Turkey, Syria

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—Reacting to "heartbreaking scenes" of death and destruction in Turkey and Syria, the chairman of the U.S. bishops’ international policy committee urged Catholics in the U.S. and all people of goodwill to pray for the victims of the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that rocked the two countries on Feb. 6 and to give generously to those in need.

According to news reports on Feb. 14, the death toll had risen to more than 37,000.

"I join with our Holy Father Pope Francis in praying for the souls of the departed as we mourn the loss of so many lives," Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Ill., chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on International Justice and Peace, said in a Feb. 8 statement.

"We pray for those injured and the many others suffering, and we also pray for the safety and protection of emergency personnel working to save lives and tending to those in need in the wake of this disaster," he said.

Rescue workers were still "trying to free people from rubble, and those alive are facing freezing conditions as they try to salvage their belongings and seek shelter," Bishop Malloy said. "In a region that has experienced much conflict and hardship, these heartbreaking scenes call out to us to provide aid and assistance to our brothers and sisters in need."

The bishop urged U.S. Catholics "to give generously" to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) to support their efforts to provide emergency humanitarian relief.

"I also call upon the U.S. government to provide much-needed assistance and to work in conjunction with Catholic aid organizations to deliver effective assistance to those most in need," he said.

CRS, the U.S. Catholic Church’s overseas relief and development agency, is accepting donations. They can be made online by going to the CRS website, support.crs.org/emergencies/earthquakes. Donations can also be mailed to: Catholic Relief Services, Turkey Earthquake Relief (include in memo line), P.O. Box 17990, Baltimore, MD 21203-7090.

CRS is partnering with Caritas Turkey, Caritas Syria and Caritas Anatolia—members of Caritas Internationalis, a global confederation of Catholic relief organizations—to shelter displaced victims while ensuring access to food, clean water and hygiene supplies.

CNEWA, an agency of the Holy See, is looking to aid more than 2,000 families in Syria’s Aleppo and Hama regions—already long ravaged by conflict—by providing bedding, food, medicines, infant formula, diapers and clothing. Donations can be made online at cnewa.org/work/emergency-syria; by phone at 800-442-6392; or by mail to CNEWA headquarters, 1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10002.

Jesus is surprising theme of two ‘He Gets Us’ Super Bowl advertisements

GLENDALE, Ariz. (OSV News)—A feature of every Super Bowl is a panoply of commercials that air during the game portraying the latest laundry detergent, Doritos, laundry detergent and celebrities. This year was no different when the Philadelphia Eagles and the Kansas City Chiefs faced off on Feb. 12 at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, a Phoenix suburb, with the Chiefs besting the Eagles 38-35, rallying after a 10-point deficit in the first half to win their second Super Bowl in four years.

But one surprising ad theme creating buzz ahead of the Big Game was Jesus. A group of 50 Christian individuals and companies, including craft retailer Hobby Lobby, purchased air time on FOX, which broadcast the game, for two “He Gets Us” commercials. The 30-second and 60-second spots cost roughly $20 million.

The commercials, which are part of a media buzz, with ‘Christian Super Bowl’ ads to make fascism look benign.”

"We believe it’s more important now than ever for the real, authentic Jesus to be represented in the public marketplace as he is in the Bible,” He Gets Us spokesperson Jason Vanderground told Fox News Digital when asked to respond to the congressman’s attack and others.

Aside from Hobby Lobby being identified as a major funder of the ad campaign, “most of the people driving He Gets Us, including our donors, choose to remain anonymous,” the website says, adding that funding “comes from a diverse group of individuals and entities with a common goal of sharing Jesus’ story authentically.”

D-N-Y, who tweeted the night of the Big Game: “Something tells me Jesus would ‘not’ spend millions of dollars on Super Bowl ads to make fascism look benign.”

The Eucharist is one of the most profound sacraments of the Catholic church. It reminds us of God’s love for His people, that He offers himself to us in a whole form in the blood and bread, and that all He asks for in return is that we also give ourselves to Him fully.
Editorial

**40 Days for Life reminds us mission in building culture of life is far from over.**

If we’re about to begin our observance of Lent—which begins on Feb. 22. Ash Wednesday—that means our spring 40 Days for Life campaign is about to begin as well. This year’s campaign runs Feb. 17-April 2.

40 Days for Life is an international effort that seeks to end abortion through peaceful prayer vigils at abortion centers, and to raise community awareness of the consequences of abortion. A campaign also occurs for fall.

The purpose of the campaigns is to turn hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life and to bring an end to abortion. In the archdiocese, campaigns take place in Bloomington and Indianapolis.

During the 40-day campaigns, individuals and groups pray during one or more vigils in front of abortion centers around the world. The initiative offers us a unique opportunity to plant seeds of faith in the hearts of the unborn and their mothers are concerned, and it is a powerful example having people across the globe pray in unison for the unborn.

It is true that pro-life advocates scored a big victory last summer when the U.S. Supreme Court overturned its 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion on demand across the United States. Dobbs vs. Jackson Women’s Health Organization, which centered on a Mississippi law that banned abortion after 15 weeks, overturned Roe and Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania vs. Casey, which struck down earlier laws that had even more severe consequences. As a result of the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in Dobbs, the matter of regulating or restricting abortion was returned to states’ legislatures.

Indiana’s pro-life legislation making most abortions in the state illegal—Senate Bill 1, which was signed into law by Gov. Eric Holcomb last August—continues to be under an injunction while the Indiana Supreme Court reviews a case by Planned Parenthood and others, claiming the law violates the state constitution. A second case against the law was filed last September by Hoosier Jews for Choice and others, claiming the law violates Indiana’s Religious Freedom Restoration Act passed in 2015.

We believe that is enough reason for people of faith in central and southern Indiana to continue taking part in 40 Days for Life campaigns.

Tim O’Donnell, 40 Days for Life coordinator for the Indianapolis campaign and a member of the Knights of Columbus, said as much in a recent e-mail to The Criterion, citing five reasons why it is important to continue taking part in this pro-life effort. They include:

- Praying that the Indiana Supreme Court rules against the lawsuits brought against Senate Bill 1.
- Even with Senate Bill 1 in force, there will be abortions due to exceptions. Every child needs to be rescued from the sin of abortion.
- Offering a public witness to the sanctity of life to those who work, visit or drive by Planned Parenthood centers.
- Chemical abortion has dramatically expanded because CVS and Walgreens drug stores provide abortion pills.
- Solidarity with our brothers and sisters across the country and the world. Even in a pro-life America, more than 80% of abortions will continue to happen,” O’Donnell wrote. “We love our country and these precious children. We will stand shoulder to shoulder with pro-life warriors with one heart and mind: loving them both to make abortion unthinkable.”

The Indianapolis campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood abortion center at 8590 Georgetown Road. Parking is available along Georgetown Road; do not park in the Women’s Care Center parking lot or at the industrial complex across from the Planned Parenthood facility. To sign up, go to 40daysforlife.com/en/indianapolis for additional information, contact O’Donnell at 317-317-0040 or e-mail idipsumsapere@att.net.

The Bloomington campaign will take place on the public right-of-way outside of the Planned Parenthood facility at 421 S. College Ave. Parking is available at the meters along the street at $1 per hour. Do not park in the Planned Parenthood parking lot. To sign up, go to 40daysforlife.com/en/bloomington.

For more information, contact Deacon Russell Woodard at 317-456-7722 or e-mail rbwoodard@ameritech.net.

The central Indiana Knights of Columbus will host an overnight prayer vigil from 7 p.m. on March 24 to 7 a.m. on March 25 outside the Planned Parenthood center in Indianapolis. All are invited to participate.

For more information or to sign up at sites outside of the archdiocese—including in Evansville, Louisville and Cincinnati—go to www.40daysforlife.com and select “Locations.”

Because U.S. President Joe Biden, in his State of the Union address on Feb. 7, called on Congress to codify Roe v. Wade “to protect every woman’s constitutional right to choose,” we understand our mission in building a culture of life is far from over.

May we continue, please God, to do all we can to protect the most vulnerable members of our society and convert those hardened and uniformed hearts who fail to understand what a precious gift each child is.

—Mike Krokos

**Reflection/Sean Gallagher**

Christ-like power is found in suffering witness of Nicaraguan Bishop Álvarez

On Feb. 9, the government of Nicaraguan dictator Daniel Ortega put 222 of its political opponents on trial. Our Church (it’s really the one) that can actually change the hearts and minds of the people.

Not everyone in Nicaragua’s notorious Modelo prison, Bishop Álvarez may not be able to preach in his cathedral, broadcast messages on his diocese’s Catholic radio stations (all shut down by the government) or communicate on social media, but his witness speaks louder than ever.

Like the Lord who he was, 

Bishop Rolando Álvarez: 

**Be Our Guest/Paul Kamichski**

This Lent, pray the rosary daily

for peace in the world, readers JPEG
**El evangelio del séptimo domingo de tiempo ordinario (Mt 5:38-48)** contiene algunos de los dichos de Jesús que se han prestado a malas interpretaciones.

La lectura del Evangelio del séptimo Domingo de tiempo ordinario (Mt 5:38-48) contiene algunos de los dichos de Jesús que se han prestado a malas interpretaciones. A cualquiera que te haga oir una idea sobre Jesús en su evangelio que no te sea familiar, o que se te haga extraña, o que te parezca que no sigue con lo que has escuchado hasta ahora, quizás debas conocer un poco más sobre el contexto en el que Jesús dijo esas palabras.  

**Amen a sus enemigos y oren por lo que los persiguen**

En la segunda lectura de este Domingo (1 Cor 3:16-23), St. Paul admonishes los cristianos, al igual que de Jesús, a amar y a odiar. En el texto bíblico, St. Paul nos dice que debemos mostrar amor y respetar a nuestros enemigos, incluso aquellos que nos persiguen. Esto nos recuerda que el amor de Dios es all-encompassing—no hay lugar para la venganza. Cuando nuestra actitud es de amor y perdón, nuestras relaciones se transforman y podemos incluso dar un paso más allá en nuestras relaciones con los demás.

**To your enemies, pray for those who persecute you**

The Gospel reading for the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 5:38-48) contains some of the most misunderstood sayings of Jesus:

*When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand over your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go for two miles.* (Mt 5:39-41)

Is Jesus telling us to be pushovers who allow ourselves to be bullied by others? Why would he counsel us to turn the other cheek, hand over our cloak, and go the extra mile in situations that are clearly unjust? Don’t the demands of basic fairness give us the right to fight back, to insist that we be treated justly?

When we think about this particular Gospel, it’s important to remember that the people who first heard these words were used to the saying “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.” They were taught to believe that “getting even” was the appropriate response to any harm done to them. Unfortunately, this is the attitude that causes people to seek revenge rather than justice, and to reject mercy as being incompatible with fairness. Jesus turns the traditional ideas about revenge upside-down. In fact, he calls for a complete reversal of our thinking:

*You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.* (Mt 5:43-45)

What Jesus is telling us is that we must always remember that every human life—without exception—is worthy of respect. Even our enemies and those who are out to get us (our persecutors) are children of God. They are deserving of our love, and they should never be treated as objects of vengeance or retribution—even when we’re convinced they deserve it!

When we love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, we affirm that we are called to be all of the above in Christ, *“children of our heavenly Father”* (Mt 5:45).

St. Paul follows the Gospel reading for this Sunday (1 Cor 3:16-23), St. Paul admonishes the Corinthians, and a we do not understand these words to say that we are to be pushovers who allow ourselves to be bullied by others. Why would he counsel us to turn the other cheek, hand over our cloak, and go the extra mile in situations that are clearly unjust? Don’t the demands of basic fairness give us the right to fight back, to insist that we be treated justly?

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St. Paul follows the Gospel reading for this Sunday (1 Cor 3:16-23), St. Paul admonishes the Corinthians, and all of us, saying, “Brothers and sisters: Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Cor 3:16). By virtue of our baptism, all of us have become temples of the Holy Spirit, for, as St. Paul reminds us, “the temple of God, which you are, is holy” (1 Cor 3:17). As women and men called to holiness, our first priority should be love, not vengeance, and our commitment to following Jesus demands that we “turn the other cheek” (Mt 5:39), as he did.

There is nothing weak or submissive about refusing to engage in violence when we are treated unfairly. When we pray for those who mistreat us, we acknowledge that God’s love and mercy are more powerful than our anger and desire for vengeance can ever be. When we agree to walk the extra mile instead of insisting that it is unfair, we are following in the footsteps of Jesus who accepted the unjust sentence of death on the cross even as he forgave his enemies.

The first reading from the Book of Leviticus (19:1-2, 17-18) provides support for Jesus’ teaching:

*You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart. Though you may have to repress your fellow citizen, do not incur sin because of him.* Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against any of your people. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Lv 19:17-18) It is human nature to cherish grudges and to nurture the desire for revenge. But the way of life that Jesus proposes demands that we surrender our feelings of bitterness and anger in order to let God’s love and forgiveness take their place.

*God’s love is all-encompassing—*for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. When our hearts are full of love, there is no room for vengeance. When we respect the holiness in others, we become holy ourselves. We become disciples of Jesus Christ who bear no grudges and who forgive others as he did.

Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to help us love our enemies and pray for those who would do us harm. Let’s turn the other cheek, and go the extra mile, to show that we are holy as the Lord our God is holy. Amen! 

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**No abrigues en tu corazón odio contra tu hermano. Razona con tu prójimo, para que no te hagas cómplice de su pecado. No te vengues, ni guardes rencor contra los hijos de tu pueblo. Amo a tu prójimo como a mí mismo.** (Lev 19:18) Es propio de la humanidad naturaleza abrigar rencores y alimentar el deseo de venganza. Pero el modo de vida que propone Jesús exige que renuncien a nuestros sentimientos de amargura e ira para permitir que el amor y el perdón de Dios ocupen su lugar.

*El amor de Dios lo abarca todo: “hace salir su sol sobre malos y buenos, y que hace llover sobre justos e injustos.”* (Mt 5:45) Cuando nuestros corazones están llenos de amor, no hay lugar para la venganza. Cuando respetamos la santidad de los demás, nos hacemos santos nosotros mismos; nos convertimos en discípulos de Jesucristo que no guardan rencor y que perdónan a los demás como lo hizo él.

**Pidamos al Espíritu Santo que nos ayude a entender y a rezar por los que quieren hacernos daño.** Pongamos la otra mejilla y hagamos un esfuerzo adicional para demostrar que somos santos al igual que el Señor, nuestro Dios. Amen!
March 3-5


March 4, 17

St. Matthew the Apostle Parish Gym, 400 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Fish Fry. 5-7:30 p.m. dinner prices TBD. Information: 317-257-4297, bulletin@bajamart.org.

March 25

Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, 3360 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. Smartly Party Fundraiser. 6:30 p.m., trivia night, door prizes, raffle, costume and table decorating, must be 21, $25 individual. $200 for table of 10. Information: 317-927-7826 or esubrin@cardinalritter.org.

March 7

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

March 26, 27


March 28-26

Mary’s Assumption Church, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Parish Mass. 7 p.m. each night, Father James Farrell presenting “Eucharist in Every Mass,” reception afterward. Information: 317-257-4297, bulletin@bajamart.org.

March 1

Archbishop Edward I. admitted Saturday at 1:30 p.m., Sunday at 8:30 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., Blessed Sr. Thea H. Pray for me Lord. Information: 317-927-7826 Ext. 8000.

March 2

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 323 S. Merton St., Greenwood. First Friday pilgrimage. 4-7 p.m. available for six orders or sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-759-8623, mngreg@indy.com.
WASHINGTON (OSV News)—During Black History Month in February, Catholics are being invited to register to attend this summer’s National Black Catholic Congress, which through the years has made history of its own.

The National Black Catholic Congress XIII will be held on July 20-23 at the Gaylord National Resort in National Harbor, Md., just outside the District of Columbia. It marks the third time the Washington area has hosted the gathering, and each of those times, key participants included noted figures in U.S. Catholic history.

St. Augustine Parish in Washington—the mother parish for Black Catholics in the nation’s capital, founded by free men and women of color in 1858—hosted the inaugural congress gathering, which opened on New Year’s Day 1889 and included a Mass celebrated by Father Augustus Tolton, the first U.S. Catholic priest publicly known to be Black and whose cause for sainthood is now being considered. He was declared “Venerable” by Pope Francis in 2019.

Five of those congresses were held before the turn of that century, and then that movement was revived with National Black Catholic Congress VI held in 1987 on the campus of The Catholic University of America in Washington, where the speakers included Sister Thea Bowman, a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration who died of cancer in 1990. Her sainthood cause also is underway. She has the title “Servant of God.”

At the National Black Catholic Congress this summer, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory—the archbishop of Washington who was elevated to the College of Cardinals by Pope Francis in 2020, becoming the first African American cardinal in history—will give the opening keynote speech and celebrate the opening Mass. The 2023 congress has as its theme “Write the Vision: A Prophetic Call to Thrive,” and is the largest national gathering in support of Black Catholic ministry that brings together lay people, clergy and religious for prayer, dialogue and discernment.

Wendi William, a representative director of the Office of Black Catholic Ministry for the archdiocese, noted that the National Black Catholic Congress “coming to the Archdiocese of Washington is a coming home at an important time for Black Catholics, coming out of COVID, really sensing the needs and interests as they exist today, and how we plan to move the priorities forward.

She explained that “the congress movement is a mechanism to involve the lay faithful with the Black Catholic ministry. By attending, the lay faithful are involved with decisions and priorities that will become the pastoral plan [of the National Black Catholic Congress] for the next five years.”

That national pastoral plan is integral to diocesan plans and parish outreach for Black Catholics, Williams said, noting that it exemplifies the synodality that Pope Francis has encouraged in preparation for the world Synod of Bishops at the Vatican in October.

“The congress is an important lay movement that helps ensure that the voices of the lay faithful are heard and acted upon,” Williams told the Catholic Standard, newspaper of the Washington Archdiocese. “It’s about listening, dialogue, discernment and journeying together.”

In preparation for the National Black Catholic Congress XIII, parish representatives from throughout the Archdiocese of Washington in November 2022 participated in a day of reflection at St. Joseph Parish in Largo, Md., to shape local recommendations for the national gathering.

Washington Auxiliary Bishop Roy E. Campbell, Jr., who also is St. Joseph’s pastor and president of the National Black Catholic Congress, welcomed those participants, saying, “We look at what we can do as a prophetic people for our communities, families and Church.”

The National Black Catholic Congress, which meets every five years, was held in Orlando, Fla., in 2017; in Indianapolis in 2012; in Buffalo, N.Y., in 2007; in Chicago in 2002; in Baltimore in 1997; in New Orleans in 1992; and in Washington in 1987. At each gathering, the congress renews its mission with a new pastoral plan.

Several key recommendations in the Pastoral Plan of Action from the most recent National Black Catholic Congress gathering in Orlando included enabling Black Catholics to enhance their Africentric spirituality; increasing awareness of Black saints; creating opportunities for lay leadership in the Church; identifying and eradicating racism; increasing prison ministry and outreach; providing support for those experiencing domestic violence; and increasing awareness of and working to eliminate human trafficking.

Other recommendations were: developing Africentric religious education programs; providing outreach to unchurched members of the community; creating more sustainable Catholic schools; promoting and supporting Black Catholic vocations; and having parishes and dioceses “address the urgent issue of disengaged Black Catholic youth.”

Bishop Campbell said the pastoral plan devised in the upcoming congress will help Black Catholic parishes and parishes with Black Catholic members “address the vision of what we’re called to do.”

The early congresses and now the modern gatherings have had a goal of showing that “Black Catholics have an equal place in the Church with any other Catholics,” he said. The gathering, he said, can help Black Catholics persevere in their faith and show the gifts from God that they have to share.

Discussing the impact that the National Black Catholic Congress can have on individuals, parishes and dioceses, Bishop Campbell said, “We start with a change of our hearts and move to change the hearts of others, so we’re all walking together. That’s what we do in our parishes. Just like a family is the building block of society, the parishes are the building blocks of the Church.”

Pope Francis: Jesus wants us to love fully, not flaunt facade of following rules

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Religious rules are good and necessary, but Jesus wants his disciples to go beyond the letter of the law and fully live out its meaning, Pope Francis said.

“The commandments that God has given us must not be locked up in the airless vaults of formal observance; otherwise, we are limited to an exterior, detached religiosity, servants of ‘God the master’ rather than children of ‘God the Father,’” the pope said.

“Jesus wants this: not to have the idea of serving a God the master, but the Father; and this is why it is necessary to go beyond the letter of God’s commandments, he said before praying the Angelus with visitors in St. Peter’s Square on Feb. 12.

The pope reflected on what Jesus meant when, in the day’s Gospel reading, he told his disciples, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill” (Mt 5:17).

“Do not kill.” The pope added, “This is not fulfillment.”

“Do not commit adultery” is also “not enough if one then lives a love tainted by duplicity and falsehood,” the pope added.

“Not to kill, steal or violate the other commandments is ‘formal observance,’ which is satisfied with the bare minimum, whereas Jesus invites us to aspire to the maximum possible,” he said.

Jesus’ message is clear, he said. “God loves us first, freely, taking the first step toward us, without us deserving it; and so we cannot celebrate his love without, in our turn, taking the first step toward reconciliation with those who have hurt us.”

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Serving our friends and customers for 35 years in Central Indiana. Specializing in Brokerage, Legal and Investment Services for all types of real estate transactions.
Archdioceses take part in synod's continental phase

By Sean Gallagher

Archdioceses Catholics who took part in the continental phase of the preparation for the world Synod of Bishops on synodality, a series of U.S. and Canadian synods. Launched by Pope Francis in October 2021, the multiyear preparation for the synod meeting—the theme of which is “communion, participation and mission”—seeks to cultivate an ongoing dynamic of discernment, listening, hearing and engagement within the Church.

The word “synod” itself derives from the Greek words for “with” and “path,” signifying a way in which “the people of God walk together,” according to a 2018 document by the Vatican’s International Theological Commission.

Initially scheduled to culminate at the 15th Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops at the Vatican in October 2023, the synod was extended by Pope Francis to include a second session in October 2024, allowing what he called “a more relaxed period of discernment.”

Among its three stages—diocesan, continental and universal—the synod has solicited the insights of Catholics around the world, as well as those who have left the faith and those of other faith traditions. Marginalized communities have been especially encouraged to participate in the listening sessions, which have taken place in Catholic parishes, schools and Church centers across the globe.

The current continental phase has gathered the U.S. and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) and more than 900 bishop-selected delegates at meetings variously conducted in English, Spanish and French—at which listening session reports from 236 U.S. and Canadian dioceses were presented and discussed. According to the USCCB, the Catholic Church in Mexico and the Latin American bishops’ council (CELAM), given its long partnership with that conference.

Now, McStravog. Coll and some 18 fellow team members will undertake a “writing retreat,” during which they will prayerfully distill the responses from the Church in the U.S. and Canada into one of the seven reports due to be submitted to the Vatican on March 31.

Both said they will be working with impressive raw material.

“What’s really powerful is how many common themes seem to be expressed across these different groups—languages, backgrounds and the like,” said Coll.

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Joy, gratitude and honest words mark close of synod’s phase

By Sean Gallagher

Archdiocese Catholics who took part in the continental phase of the preparation for the world Synod of Bishops meeting on synodality found the experience was a boost to their faith and strengthened their hope in the Church’s future.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, archdiocesan chancellor Christopher Walsh and archdiocesan director of catechesis Ken Ogorek were joined in this participation by Anita Bardo, Vanessa Alcantara Chavez and Lucy Wahnsiedler.

Each took part in online meetings with Catholics from across the U.S. and Canada from mid-December through late January.

In discussing synodality, they explored how the faith-filled are called to contribute to the guiding of the life of the Church through prayerful listening and sharing their own thoughts.

Bardo is a member of St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis and serves there as director of faith formation. She also recently became the archdiocese’s coordinator of evangelization and discipleship.

She described taking part in the continental phase of the Synod of Bishops as an opportunity to be mindful of others’ thoughts and to listen with a sincere heart.

“Listening is guiding us in our lives, recognizing that Christ is the center of our lives,” Bardo said.

“This experience is an encouraging and important one that will allow me to strengthen my faith, listen more to God’s voice and to be a witness to others.”

Chavez has been involved for many years on a volunteer basis in a variety of ministries at St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis. Her profession allows her to help victims of domestic violence.

She found encouragement in interacting with Catholics across North America who, like her, are giving themselves in service to others.

“Sometimes in this job, one gets tired, but this experience helped me remember that there is always someone interested and thinking about my spiritual well-being,” Chavez said. “There is always someone who wants to listen to me and who wants to remind me that I am an important and needed member of this great family.”

At 22, Wahnsiedler brought a young adult perspective to the archdiocese’s participation in the synod meetings.

Having recently become the archdiocese’s special events coordinator for the Office of Stewardship and Development, Wahnsiedler said the meetings gave her the opportunity to experience the genuine love of and service to the Catholic Church throughout the continent.

“By speaking and listening to other individuals, I was able to see how the unity of Christ can truly penetrate the diversity of the world in a way that is full of God’s authentic and true advocacy for the Church, her teachings, and her mission,” said Wahnsiedler, a member of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

“Personally, I loved the focus on prayer throughout the synodal experience.”

Ogorek helped organize the archdiocese’s phase of preparation for the Synod of Bishops within the Church in central and southern Indiana.

He was glad to take part in the experience of this synod process with people from other dioceses across North America.

“It was affirming in some ways to hear that the joys and concerns of folks from other states as well as Canada are at least somewhat similar to our own,” he said.

As the Church moves forward to the universal phase of the synod to take place at the Vatican in the fall, Ogorek encouraged the archdiocese Catholics to “fast and pray for the intention of God’s holy and perfect will manifesting itself over the course of this synod and as well as future experiences of this regular way for Church leaders to gather and identify the Holy Spirit’s ongoing work.”

Dance party for ‘friends’ with special needs

The archdiocesan Office of Catechesis will sponsor a Circle of Friends Dance Party at St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 3535 E. 60th Ave., in Indianapolis, from 7-10 p.m. on March 4.

The event, while excluding just for this year the dinner that usually accompanies the dance, still promises to be a fun evening, says Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis.

The Office of Catechesis “will soon hire a new Disabilities Ministry Coordinator to help carry this year’s event or to be a dinner dance,” he says. “A country western/homeward is our theme, so we will look forward during the week up posting for photos and doing some fun games and activities.”

This year’s event will offer dancing, snacks, drinks and door prizes.

Catholics with special needs—friends throughout central and southern Indiana are invited to participate in this annual event.

The event is already connected with the archdiocese’s special needs community should receive an e-mail invitation (no parental invitation this year).

However, says Ogorek, “We don’t have e-mail addresses for everyone, so we’ll rely on the special needs community to help each other get registered when the e-vite arrives.

Please share this information as soon as you can with everyone you can.”

While registration is not required, it is requested for planning purposes.

For more information and for those interested in attending who do not receive an e-vite, call 317-263-9768.

“We welcome everyone to participate in this fun dance party,” says Ogorek. “If an e-vite isn’t accessible, we encourage prospective guests to call the number above. We’re looking forward to an awesome, enjoyable evening!”

The Criterion, Friday, February 17, 2023
“Do you remember what led you to choose the person you married?”

I recently heard this question proposed as a way for families to discover their core values. The idea was that whatever values attracted you to your spouse begin to reveal what you value as a family, over other good things. These are the things that bring you together and help you to choose how you spend your time, talent and treasure.

In our archdiocesan Pre-Cana retreats for engaged couples, we spend some time talking about marriage as a mission, and the engaged couples have the opportunity to reflect on the mission of their marriage.

For the newly married couple with growing careers and many social engagements, knowing their family mission and values keeps them grounded and helps them decide what opportunities to seize and invitations to accept.

For the young family who is learning to stay afloat with the demands of little children, having clarity on why they are going through the hustle day after day brings peace and purpose in the midst of growth.

For the family with older kids and increasing extracurricular demands, a mission and core values provide a measure for saying yes to good things and no to other good things that don’t fully align.

For grandparents, there is an opportunity to revisit family values and mission in light of new generations and decide how that mission will be lived out anew.

For those who are single and feeling called to marriage, reflecting on one’s own core values and looking for core values in a potential spouse will offer food for thought in the process of discernment, not just of marriage to one’s beloved, but of the family life that will be built together, by God’s grace.

For those who are married and have not been able to have children are especially called to consider the mission of their marriage, based on their core values, because every marriage is meant to be generously open to life and bear fruit. This is most tangibly seen in having and raising children, but it is also seen in the vocation of husband and wife as a family, to be the Church in the world and to embrace spiritual motherhood and spiritual fatherhood.

Establishing a mission and core values helps couples prioritize family life at any stage.

By Gabriela Ross

Gabriela Ross is the director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The Office of Marriage and Family Life exists to promote the vocation, restoration and mission of the family. She can be reached at gross@archindy.org or 317-592-4007.
**Barnes-Annee**

Elizabeth Nicole Coons and Adam Christopher Simmons will be married on May 28 at Holy Name of Jesus Church in Berch Blvd. The bride is the daughter of Vince and Michelle Barnes. The groom is the son of Mark and Sonnie Simmons.

**Ertel-Nixon**

Courtney Anna Duffell and Isaiah Michael Nixon will be married on June 24 at St. Malchy Church in Brownsburg. The bride is the daughter of William and Carla Duffell. The groom is the son of David and Candace Box.

**Henn-Brite**

Akelig Heir Fenn and Steven Gerald Shepard will be married on Sept. 26, 2022, at St. John the Baptist Church in Greenwood. The bride is the daughter of Walter and Mary Beth Fenn. The groom is the son of Gary and Marilyn Shepard.

**Hession-Annee**

Emily Jean Jarvis and Kevin Nolan Zander will be married on Sept. 22, 2022, at St. Paul's Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Robert Joyce and Laura Kangas Joyce. The groom is the son of Richard King and Tony Peadley.

**Koepfer-Myers**

Karlke Kolb and Tom Aaron Myers were married on Dec. 17, 2022, at St. Luke's Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Keith and Terri Zander. The groom is the son of Larry and Nancy O'Byran.

**Pence-Kozik**

Jennifer Elizabeth Pence and Eric Franklin Kozik will be married on March 25 at St. Mary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Thomas and Melissa Pence. The groom is the son of Frank Kozik and Ann Myers.

**Wallander-Challer**

Mary Margaret Wallander and Lucas John Schaller will be married on Oct. 1 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Jill and Karen Wallander. The groom is the son of Ted and Judy Schaller.

**Coons-Simmons**

Theresa Marie Fonten and Anthony Carl Woden will be married on June 10 at Marian University's Bishop Chatard Memorial Chapel at Marian University in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Joseph and JoAnn Fonten. The groom is the son of Michael and Mary Woden.

**Fenton-Worden**

Amiee Hession and Nick Annee will be married on Dec. 17, 2022, at St. Malchy's Church in Brownsburg. The bride is the daughter of Todd and Nancy Hession. The groom is the son of Michael and Evelyn Bex.

**Kolb-O'Bryan**

Karla Kolb and Tom O'Byran were married on Dec. 17, 2022, at St. Agnes Church in Nashville. The bride is the daughter of Chri and Doe Koepfer. The groom is the son of Chris and Ann Myers.

**Perkins-Perkins**

Nancy Eleanor Perkins and Robert Christopher Perkins were married on Dec. 17, 2022, at St. Matthew's Apseyle Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Lance and Kathy Lubienski. The groom is the son of Scott and Amy Perkins.

**Wallis-Surface**

Amy Josephine Walls and Lucas Stephen Surface will be married on June 18 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Jill and Karen Wallander. The groom is the son of Ted and Judy Schaller.

**Duffel-Bex**

Emilie Rose Ertel and Nickolas David Nixon were married on June 18, 2022, at St. Mary Church in Westfield. The bride is the daughter of Jason and Rachel Ertel. The groom is the son of Todd and Nancy Nixon.

**Finn-Shepard**

Sydney Ellen Henn and Zakary Douglas Myers were married on Oct. 15, 2022, at St. Jude Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of David and Mary Ellen Henn. The groom is the son of Michael and Evelyn Bex.

**Lovig-Stonebraker**

Julia Rose Lovig and James Robert Stonebraker will be married on June 24 at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Michael and Lori Lovig. The groom is the son of Daniel and Lorraine Stonebraker.

**Rulon-Hayden**

Amanda Jane Rulon and Christopher Andrew Hayden will be married on April 29 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Scott and Danyelle Hayden. The groom is the son of Christ and Gina Hayden.

**York-Stacy**

Monica Ann York and Trevor papageorgiou will be married on June 10 at St. Mary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Russell Spinazze and Melinda York. The groom is the son of Tony and Stacy Wallander.

**Endris-Jahnke**

Kailin Renee Hagedorn and Matthew Thomas Moran will be married on May 6 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Jerome and Michelle Hagedorn. The groom is the son of Kevin Moran and Margaret Lewis.

**Jarvi-Zander**

Jillian Ashley Joyce and Justin Turner Peadley King were married on Sept. 22, 2022, at St. Paul's Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Robert Joyce and Laura Kangas Joyce. The groom is the son of Richard King and Tom Peadley.

**McDonagh-Lecher**

Merrilith Emily McDonagh and Patrick Joseph Lecher will be married on April 22 at St. Patrick Church in Bryan, Ohio. The bride is the daughter of John and Katherine McDonagh. The groom is the son of Steven and Edith Lecher.

**Spinazz-Cunningham**

Gabriella Spinazze and Thomas Cunningham will be married on June 3 at St. Mary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Russell Spinazze and Cheryl Nakfoor. The groom is the son of Philip and Pamela Cunningham.

**Hagedorn-Moran**

Kathryn Madalyn Jarvi and Thomas Andrew Zander will be married on April 14 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Michael and Lori Lovig. The groom is the son of Daniel and Lorraine Stonebraker.

**Joyce-King**

Katherine McDonagh and Joseph Lecher will be married on April 14 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Joseph and JoAnn Fonten. The groom is the son of Michael and Mary Woden.

**Spinazze-Cunningham**

Jared Emery Ertel and Brittany Elizabeth Finn will be married on June 26, 2022, at St. John the Baptist Church in Greenwood. The bride is the daughter of William and Mary Beth Fenn. The groom is the son of Gary and Marilyn Shepard.

**Lawrence-Shepard**

Garrett Joseph Ertel and Kari Ann Shepard were married on June 10 at Marian University's Bishop Chatard Memorial Chapel at Marian University in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Jerome and Michelle Hagedorn. The groom is the son of Kevin Moran and Margaret Lewis.

**Pre-Cana Retreats, Tobit Weekend and One in Christ program prepare engaged couples for marriage**

*Corrected information for one post listed in this section has been removed.*

**One in Christ**

One in Christ marriage preparation, which includes a medical panel to address questions on reproduction and fertility, is a three-day program spanning a weekend and the following Saturday. The first day of the program is 8 a.m.-5 p.m., the second day is 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and the third day is 8 a.m.-5 p.m. The cost is $300 per couple, which covers meals and two nights in hotels.

The next retreat takes place on April 28-30, June 25-27 and Sept. 15-17.

To register, go to www.archindy.org/medicationcourse.

**Tobit Weekend**

Tobit Weekend retreats take place at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 3353 E. 96th St., in Indianapolis, and are offered in English. The cost is $299, which includes program materials, meals, snacks and two rooms for two nights.

The next retreats take place on April 28-30, June 25-27 and Sept. 15-17.

To register, go to www.archindy.org/tobitweekend.

**Couples may announce engagement or marriage next spring in The Criterion**

Engagement announcements will be published in the July 26 issue of The Criterion for couples marrying between July 14 and Feb. 1, 2023, in a marriage that is recognized by the Church as a valid sacrament or valid natural marriage. Submission may also be sent by couples who wish to publish their engagement any time in The Criterion. The wedding announcement form is available online at www.archindy.org. Digital photos must be clear, high-resolution images with the couple close together. Photos can also be 20 in U.S. Mail to Ann Laws, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. To receive the photo back, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Due to print quality, Xerox copies of photos will not be accepted.

**Wedding Anniversary Mass with Archbishop Thompson is set for Aug. 27**

The archbishop Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass, to be celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1345 N. Meridian St., at 2 p.m. on Aug. 27. A reception will follow across the street at the Archbishop Edward E. Dufour Catholic Center.

The Mass and reception, sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, are for all couples of the archdiocese married sacramentally in the Catholic Church. All couples who register will receive a certificate. The event is free but registration is required and will open in May at archindy.org.
As Gabriela Ross became more involved in marriage preparation ministry, she noticed a coincidence—about divorce.

“I see in my marriage preparation ministry how divorce affects a person’s choice to embrace the vocation of marriage, and how the unaddressed wounds of their family of origin bring discord into their new family life,” said the archdiocesan director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life.

“While there has been some awareness and response to the needs of Catholics who experience divorce,” she said, “there was little in the way of Church ministry to address ‘the wounds and effects of divorce on children, whether they were in childhood or adulthood when the family breakdown took place.’

Life-Giving Wounds fills that ministerial void.

It was founded in 2018 by Dr. Daniel and Bethany Meola. The parents of two children met and married while studying for master’s degrees at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Washington.

“When he was studying there for his Ph.D., that’s when the Institute started working on Recovering Origins, a weekend conference on the effects of divorce on children,” said Bethany on behalf of her husband, who was out of town at the time of the interview.

“It really connected with Dan, because of his experience with his parents’ separation when he was a child and their divorce when he was 26. “He got heavily involved in what [the Institute was] doing with their pastoral approach to adult children of divorce.”

From the Recovering Origins conference, Daniel created a weekend retreat in 2015 for adults who, whether as children or adults, experienced the separation or divorce of their parents.

“We were discussing what we would do when he graduated, we were encouraged by a priest to pursue our passion in marriage and families,” Bethany said. “We wanted to develop the retreat further and offer it throughout the country. The Institute gave us their blessing.”

So began the ministry in 2018. The couple brought not only their degrees focusing on marriage and families and Daniel’s experience leading retreats, but also Bethany’s seven years serving on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth.

Now, Life-Giving Wounds three-day retreats for adults ages 18 and older are offered in 10 locations in the U.S.—with several more in works—as well as an online retreat in the fall that takes place weekly for seven weeks.

The retreats are divided into three topics. First is “uncovering and grieving various layers of the wound” participants experienced in their parents’ separation or divorce, according to the Life-Giving Wounds website. The focus then shifts to “accepting their deepest identity as a beloved child of God and becoming more aware of Christ in their lives and wounds.” Finally, the retreat helps participants discover “a way forward to sustain healing and a mission in the midst of their suffering.”

A traveling team leads the first retreat in a location. They also train local leaders to lead future retreats in that location.

“It’s a peer ministry, so the people leading it are by large adult children of divorce, so they can give that witness of having gone through the experience of healing through Christ and are able to give back to others,” said Bethany. “It’s a blessing for people to hear from those who really get it.”

The organization also offers online blogs, online support groups and other resources.

“The support groups don’t have a curriculum like the retreats,” explained Bethany, who serves as the organization’s vice president of operations, communications and development and as board secretary. “We try to address topics that are similar but don’t go into them as deep as the retreats.”

Amanda DeRoche has attended two online retreats.

“Some people do it every time,” said the 34-year-old member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “It’s a good base for exploring this part of your life story.”

DeRoche appreciates the presence of a retreat leader with a psychology background, “so it brings in psychology and science along with theology.”

She also appreciates connecting with others who not only “share the same life experience but also share your theological viewpoint. I can talk to friends at the office whose parents divorced, but it’s different when you can talk about it with people who share your faith.”

DeRoche said the retreats offer a “very specific approach to the experience through the lens of the Church. It’s about how you’re impacted [by your parents’ divorce or separation], regardless of the situation—it could’ve been a positive experience in your family.”

“But we know [divorce and separation are] not what God intended, so it creates a wound. It’s the loss of your parents’ love together, regardless of how that pans out, positive or negative, because we know what God intended for the sacrament of marriage.”

Recognizing those wounds is the first step toward healing, she said, a step the Life-Giving Wounds retreats helped her acknowledge. From there, the blogs and support groups can help with healing and moving forward, “along with other things like spiritual direction, counseling and prayer, depending on each person’s need,” said DeRoche.

She was initially drawn to the retreat after a “relationship change” that made her reflect on her vocation. I wanted to focus on the call to marriage and thought maybe my parents’ divorce had an effect on me, that maybe I needed to explore that more.”

Bethany said anytime is a good time for adults to explore wounds from their parents’ separation or divorce, but especially those preparing for marriage.

“It’s important for Catholic leaders—and especially those working in marriage preparation or young adult ministry—to realize the impact [their parents’ divorce or separation] can have on their own call to marriage,” she said.

“People who come from a divorced family are less likely to marry, more likely to cohabit, more likely to struggle in their own marriage or get divorced, less likely to be open to children or more likely to experience a fear of having children—it’s all been proven.

“They need mentors to give them witness that this lifelong commitment can be happy.”

Bethany noted that the retreat content “doesn’t just talk about marriage. We talk about identity, faith life, our relationship with God, emotions—there’s so much that’s covered. But all of that can help people be more equipped for marriage if that’s the Lord’s call for them.”

Ross couldn’t agree more.

Life-Giving Wounds has been prophetic in seeing the needs of the Church in our world today, particularly addressing the breakdown of the family,” she said. “If we are serious about the Church being a family of families and supporting the family as a domestic Church, then we need to acknowledge that the breakdown of a family has ripple effects on a psychological and spiritual level, and the Church is called to shine the light of Christ in those dark places and bring people to healing through Christ and his Church.”

The Office of Marriage and Family Life is working with the organization, with hopes of starting a chapter in the archdiocese and making retreats available here in 2024.

Ross said the Life-Giving Wounds program “was written from the heart of the Church, with some of the most talented national ministry leaders, who themselves have experienced the wound of divorce in their families.

“I would recommend this retreat and ministry to anyone who has experienced their parents’ divorce or separation as a way to reflect on their experience through the eyes of faith and be more rooted in their identity as sons and daughters of God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, after which every family is modeled.”

(For more information on Life-Giving Wounds, to sign up for a retreat or support group or to view their online resources, go to lifegivingwounds.org. The next online support group will begin on March 2.)
What the Catechism says about Lent

The season of Lent is mentioned in the Catechism of the Catholic Church in various sections. It is brought up in #540 in the section that explains Christ’s public ministry. In #1095, Lent is discussed in regards to the way in which the Church, especially in its liturgy, sees Christ prefigured in various ways in the Old Testament. In #1438, “The seasons are particularly appropriate for spiritual exercises, penitential liturgies, pilgrimages as signs of penance, voluntary self-denial such as fasting and almsgiving, and fraternal sharing (charitable and missionary works).”

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Pro-lifers, Catholics react to Biden’s State of the Union address

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—In reiterating his call to codify Roe v. Wade on Feb. 7, President Joe Biden drew criticism from Catholic and other pro-life groups.

During his State of the Union address, Biden called on Congress to codify Roe “to protect every woman’s constitutional right to choose.”

The Supreme Court’s ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization last June overturned the high court’s previous abortion-related precedents in Roe v. Wade and Planned Parenthood v. Casey. Several states have moved to either restrict or expand access to the procedure since the Dobbs ruling. Biden said he would veto any effort to restrict the procedure at a federal level.

“Make no mistake: if Congress passes a national abortion ban, I will veto it,” Biden said.

The White House also released a list of individuals invited to join first lady Jill Biden in the viewing box for Biden’s speech who “personify issues or themes to be addressed by the president in his speech, or they embody the Biden-Harris administration’s policies at work for the American people,” according to a news release.

Those guests included Amanda and Josh Zurawski of Austin, Texas. The White House said Amanda nearly died of pregnancy complications after doctors wouldn’t intervene because they did not want to “violate the Texas abortion ban, which prohibits abortion unless a woman’s life is in danger.” She later developed sepsis, according to the White House.

In a joint statement, the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists (AAPLOG) said: “Our hearts go out to Amanda and Josh Zurawski, but argued that there are “no laws in any state that permit timely and compassionate care for a miscarriage—which is the exact care Mrs. Zurawski needed.”

“Denying proper health care to patients facing miscarriage complications is not consistent with the law,” the statement said. “Miscarriage care is not abortion.”

“Unfortunately, there are many abortion activists eager to exploit difficult situations like these and the people involved, in order to preserve the ability to kill preborn humans at any stage of pregnancy, and for any reason,” the statement continued. “AAPLOG is dedicated to continuing education on excellent miscarriage care and providing women with fully informed consent, while supporting both of our patients—woman and child.”

Dr. Ingrid Skop, a board-certified OB/GYN and director of medical affairs at Charlotte Lozier Institute, argued that the law does not prevent doctors from intervening to save a pregnant woman’s life.

“Pro-life laws protect unborn children, but they continue to protect the lives of women as well,” Skop said.

Louis Brown, executive director of Christ Medical Protection Fund, said Biden’s position on abortion and expressed concern for the conscientious rights of health care providers who refuse to participate in such procedures.

Brown said in a statement that Biden’s “anti-life and anti-religious freedom policy agendas destroy and exploit the dignity of pregnant mothers, and violate the religious freedom and medical conscience rights of health care professionals.”

“We hope, pray and encourage members of Congress and senators to work for pro-life legislation, defend against attacks on their conscience rights, and to empower medical professionals, Catholic health centers, and other faith-based health care entities in their health ministry to care and heal the sick, the suffering and the vulnerable,” he said.

Holy Land

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Knights of Columbus helps families enjoy economic security when they need it most, while turning some of the profits from our insurance business into charitable impact.
By Lorene Hanley Duquin

A friend who has been away from the Church for years starts to reminisce about growing up Catholic. A co-worker tells you that she was baptized in the Church, but never received any other sacraments. A neighbor begins to ask questions about God after the death of his wife. A family member joins a non-denominational Bible study and begins to criticize the Church. A stranger sitting next to you on an airplane admits that he was raised Catholic, but no longer goes to Mass. These common, everyday events are all opportunities for evangelization. Unfortunately, too many Catholics don’t understand their role in the evangelization process. As a result, people who are struggling in their relationship with God or the Church are often ignored.

As Catholics, we believe that conversion is an ongoing, grace-infused process throughout our lives that brings us into closer union with God through Jesus Christ and his Gospel message. Sometimes, conversion is a dramatic event that shakes us to the core of ourselves. Other times, it happens quietly as we are drawn toward new understandings and insights. Conversion is always the work of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit uses ordinary people and events to bring about conversion. When you allow the Holy Spirit to work through you to bring someone to conversion, you have discovered the essence of what it means to evangelize.

Why do we need to evangelize?

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus commanded us to evangelize when he said, “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...” (Mt 28:19). Throughout his ministry, Jesus used a variety of images about the need to evangelize. He talked about catching fish (Lk 5:10), sowing seeds (Mt 4:1-9), lighting a lamp (Mk 4:21-25), and how few workers there were for the harvest (Lk 10:2). He told stories about great disciples of all nations... .” (Mt 28:19). Jesus was the first and greatest evangelizer. He came to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God. We see in his teaching, his miracles, his interaction with people and his sending out of his Apostles the example of his own evangelizing activity. If we want to follow in the footsteps of Christ, then we must become evangelizers, too.

Who needs to be evangelized?

Children need to be evangelized in order to grow in faith and understanding. Inactive Catholics who no longer attend Mass regularly need to be evangelized so that they can return to a life of active faith. Alienated Catholics who have left the Church need to be evangelized so they know how much we miss them and want them to return. It’s important for them to have a new encounter with Christ so they can experience his desire for them to have a renewed relationship with them in the Church. People who have no faith need to be evangelized so they can be welcomed into a new life with Christ and the Church. We also need to be evangelized ourselves in order to strengthen our relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church.

How do we evangelize?

There are four essential elements in the process of evangelization.

—Listening—A crucial step in evangelizing is to listen attentively to the stories of other people. When we listen, we enter into people’s hearts, minds and souls. We see their search for meaning. We catch a glimpse of their struggle or their pain.

—Sharing our faith—We can share what our faith means to us in words by telling others how the Holy Spirit has worked in our lives. We can also share our faith through actions that demonstrate the ways in which, with the help of God’s grace, we try to live authentically the Gospel message.

—Extending an invitation—It might be an invitation to come to Mass or to a Catholic devotion, to talk with a priest or spiritual adviser, to read a book or pamphlet, to listen to a lecture, to assist in some ministry, to pray together or to attend a parish social event. Such an invitation not only gives others an opportunity to see the Church up close, it also is a sign to others that you care about them.

—Praying—St. John Paul II tells us, “There must be unceasing prayer to nourish the desire to carry Christ to all men and women. While all of these elements are essential, the important thing to remember is that there is no step-by-step recipe for evangelization. The Holy Spirit will use your natural gifts and talents for the work of evangelization if you are open and willing. Before long, you’ll begin to see that you’ve developed your own style of evangelization.

In an article next week, we’ll explore different aspects of varying styles of sharing the Gospel as well as ways to see if other people might be open to hearing the good news of God’s kingdom.

(Lorene Hanley Duquin is the author of Catholic books, pamphlets and articles on a variety of evangelization and ministry topics. She has conducted workshops in parishes and at diocesan conferences in the United States and Canada.)
Who are catechists? All of us called to teach the Gospel

Several months ago, I was ordained a permanent deacon for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

In the Rite of Ordination, just after the laying on of the hands by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, the newly ordained deacons—now vested in the diaconal stole and pectoral cross—stood before the archbishop while he places the Book of the Gospels in each deacon’s hands and says: “Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you see, touch what you believe, and practice what you teach.”

Allow me to focus on the phrase “teach what you believe.” As a permanent deacon, my role is not only to proclaim the Gospel at Mass, but also to teach it outside the walls of the church.

But it is not simple. All of us who are baptized in Christ are called to teach the Gospel in our own way and according to our God-given grace. Because we teach the Gospel, because we teach the truth of our faith in the Catholic Church, we can be called catechists.

So, who are our catechists? In the recently released book Directory for Catechesis from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, it states there are different types of catechists. Each role has a specific function. Some have a specific role—from the bishop, as the Directory for Catechesis calls catechists.

The role of deacons in catechesis is particularly valuable in the life of charity and of the family. Their actions can be considered a role—from the bishop, as the first catechist, to clergy, such as priests and deacons, and culminating in the role of catechist of parents and grandparents. The catechist is responsible for the ministry of catechesis, but each one according to his particular condition in the Church: ordained ministers, consecrated persons, and lay faithful” (“Directory of Catechesis,” #110-111).

Among several prompts, the bishop concerns himself with catechists by engaging directly in the transmission of the Gospel and keeping the deposit of faith intact. The bishop sees it to that catechesis is trained and thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of the Church.

The deacon as a catechist must “assist the Christian faithful to grow in knowledge of their faith in Christ, to strengthen them in the Sacraments and to express it in their family, professional, and social lives.” Deacons are called to offer “pious and devoted attention to catechesis of the faithful of all stages of Christian living” (“Directory of Catechesis,” #17).

Lent is an opportunity to fully embrace the effects of salvation

Lent, that great season of embracing more fully the effects of salvation in Christ, is upon us.

The effects of salvation in Christ are universal. How does the Church teach this truth? On Nov. 21, 1964, the Church expressed this truth in “Lumen Gentium” (“Light of the World,” Second Vatican Council’s “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.”) We visited a portion of this document in my column in October 2020. At that time, I summarized the teaching.

As we embark upon the journey of Lent, let us examine the words the fathers of the council set down for us in paragraph 16:

In his wisdom and goodness, the eternal Father created the whole world and made it a holy dwelling place, for the salvation of all peoples, and decreed that men should be raised up to share in the divine life.

When they fell in Adam, he did not abandon them but always kept providing them with aids to salvation, in consideration of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Before the ages, the Father already knew all the elect and predestined them to be made into the likeness of his Son, so that they might share in his divine glory.

God resolved to gather into holy Church all who believe in Christ. The Church, foreshadowed even from the beginning of the world, so marvelously prepared in the history of the people of Israel, established in these last times and tested by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, will be made perfect in glory at the end of time.

Then, as we read in the Fathers of the Church, all the righteous from Adam onward—from Abel, the righteous, to the last of the elect—were gathered in the universal Church in the presence of the Father.

For the journey/Effie Caldarola

Living my Lenten discipline through the lessons of Black History Month

(Feburary is Black History Month.)

My friend Sister Mary Hogan told me an interesting story about a woman who remembers most vividly about her experience in Selma. In 1965, it was the “hate state.”

Sister Mary was a young religious sister in Detroit when Archbishop (later Cardinal) John Dearden named her to the Archdiocesan Office for Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs. He is also the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.†

...continued...
The Sunday Readings
Saturday, February 19, 2023

Thursday, February 23
St. Pelandry, bishop and martyr
Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Lake 9:22-25

Friday, February 24
Isaiah 58:1-9a
Psalm 3:4-9, 18-19
Matthew 9:14-15

Saturday, February 25
Isaiah 89:9-16
Psalm 89:1-6
Luke 5:27-32

Sunday, February 26
First Sunday of Lent
Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7
Psalm 51:3-6, 12:14, 17
Romans 5:1-5, 12-17, 19
Matthew 4:1-11

Daily Readings
Monday, February 20
Sirach 1:1-10
Psalm 95:1-2, 5
Mark 9:14-29

Tuesday, February 21
St. Peter Damian, bishop and doctor of the Church
Sirach 2:1-11
Psalm 37:3-4, 18-19, 27-28, 39-40
Mark 9:30-37

Wednesday, February 22
Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:12-18
Psalm 51:3-6b, 12:14, 17
2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper
Church does not oblige Catholics to believe in private revelations

Do I have to accept apparitions like Fatima and follow its rules? (New York)

The Church considers apparitions such as Fatima and Lourdes, along with mystical writings of various visionary saints such as St. Faustina Kowalska’s diary to be “private revelations.” This is in contrast to “public revelation,” which is the self-revealing of God given to humanity through sacred Scripture and sacred tradition as they have been interpreted by the Church’s teaching authority down through the centuries.

ongoing public revelation via sacred Scripture ended with the death of the last Apostle. As the Second Vatican Council’s declaration St. Paulinus states: “...we now await no further new public revelation before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ” (#4)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church acknowledges the existence of private revelations, while still noting that “they do not belong, however, to the deposit of faith. It is not their role to improve or complete Christ’s definitive revelation, but to help live more fully by it in a certain period of history” (#67). In other words, private revelations do not fall into the Church’s core doctrinal teachings, but are only meant to help us deepen our faith in the publicly revealed truths.

Naturally, belief in the existence of private revelation is obligatory for Catholics. But since private revelations are not a part of the deposit of faith, they are essentially optional. Therefore, no Catholic is obligated to follow any of the devotional “rules” accompanying a particular private revelation or to take on any of the prayers urged by the seers of an apparition.

Of course, the Church does approve some sort of private revelation. We see this in an especially striking way when feasts such as Our Lady of Fatima are included in our liturgical calendar.

However, the fact that a private revelation is approved only means that we can assent to it with human faith—i.e., that the Church has discerned that we can safely use our human reason to conclude that it is like the other genuine private revelation and of heavenly origin.

This is in contrast to the supernatural faith with which we are assented to the doctrines set out in our creeds, such as Christ’s resurrection or the Holy Trinity.

As one might imagine, the Church takes the approval of new purported apparitions or other forms of private revelations very seriously. Not everyone claiming to be graced with private revelation is likely to experience them.

Since visions are usually inherently subjective, would-be seers might simply be misinterpreting something with their own normal human psychology with respect to imaginative religious experience. But potential fraud and even demonic involvement would also need to be ruled out.

One of the main issues investigated is the specific content of the revelations. Namely, if anything in an alleged private revelation contradicts the public revelation of Scripture and sacred tradition or established doctrine, then it cannot be approved or accepted.

The general credibility of the visionary also is exam. The Church will investigate questions as to whether the supposed seers generally have a good grasp on reality, if they have any potential psychological issues, if they stand to benefit financially from their would-be visions, this is a negative sign), and whether they are striving for holiness in their life outside of their visions.

This brings us to another important point: While approved private revelations may be truly inspiring and devoutly helpful to many of us, the humble daily work of growing in holiness is far more important than enthusiasm for any particular apparition. And we already have everything we need for our Christian journey of holiness in our Scriptures and sacred tradition, the Church’s teachings, liturgy and the sacraments.

Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.
WASHINGTON (OSV News)—A conservative law firm acting on behalf of students allegedly kicked out for wearing pro-life messages said they were asked to leave the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum and the National Archives Museum while in Washington for the March for Life and were asked to remove or cover up slogans such as “January over pro-life messages on their attire.”

And, at times, it seemed like they succeeded. Lawsuits filed against Smithsonian, Archives on behalf of students allegedly kicked out for wearing pro-life messages.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the Archdiocese of Washington to participate in the National March for Life and were asked to remove or cover up slogans such as “January over pro-life messages on their attire.”

Please submit to writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obligations of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed otherwise.

Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are informed thereof, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; they should be separate obituaries on this page.

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By Natalie Hoefel

What do you get when you mix a chair factory, a Presbyterian church and a Methodist-founded university? You get the history of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Green Castle. Founded in 1835, the parish was literally the “seat” of Catholicism in Putnam County—its first church building was a former chair factory. Even in 1866, the parish purchased and moved to a former Presbyterian church building just a block-and-a-half from DePauw University. The church has remained the faith community’s home ever since, serving the faithful of the county and the students of DePauw.

“The cathedral of Putnam County” is just finished up a renovation of our church,” says St. Paul the Apostle pastor Father John Hollowell, who also serves as pastor of Annunciation Parish in Brazil. “We added two transepts with seating on both sides of the sanctuary, so if you look at the church from above, it now looks like a cross.”

“There wasn’t anything in the church that was left untouched,” Archdiocese of [Charles C.] Thompson dedicated the space. The parishioners now call it the cathedral of Putnam County.

The parish is home to about 300 families. Father Hollowell credits the Ladies Guild with the money to raise funds for the parish, and he calls the Knights of Columbus council “really active. They usually win some state awards every year for the size of the parish versus the number of men active.”

It is also part of the Putnam County Society of St. Vincent de Paul council’s efforts in helping those in need in Putnam County.

“We get a lot of requests for assistance,” says Father Hollowell.

“St. Vincent de Paul has a cell phone you can call 24 hours a day and leave a message. Depending on the situation, it might require a team of people to meet with that person or family, or they may meet at the church. Everyone in the county knows they can call for assistance and we’ll get back with them.”

The parish also ministers to the Catholic students at DePauw University, particularly overseeing the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) missionaries serving at the university. “We offer a Sunday 5 p.m. Mass that’s geared toward the students,” says Father Hollowell. “Between the Mass and the FOCUS Bible studies, we serve about 120 DePauw students.”

DePauw draws students, alumni and football fans to Green Castle, particularly during the football season, he notes. While many choose the DePauw tradition of eating at Marvin’s—famous for their garlic cheeseburger—Father Hollowell prefers to “eat healthier” at the deli at Myers Market next to the parish (go to myersmarketkc.com for hours). He also recommends Tony Wapo—which is also near the church—and Don Julio’s, located on the Green Castle town square.

“We would love to have anyone for Mass anytime,” says Father Hollowell. “And anyone who hasn’t seen our restored church, it’s definitely worth the trip.”

St. Paul the Apostle Church is located at 202 E. Washington St. in Green Castle. For Mass times, go to www.spaulgreen castle.com or call 765-653-5678.

See the stars—or dance under them—and more

There are plenty of day-trip opportunities to Green Castle and Putnam County that can include worshipping at Mass at St. Paul the Apostle Church.

DePauw offers more reasons than football to visit this university town: concerts, plays during the school year, and its McKim Observatory offers a fora for viewing the moon, planets, star clusters and more. For a schedule of open houses, go to curt.lv/MckimObservatory.

For activities more down to Earth, Putnam County is home to Laerber State Recreation Area, known for Cataract Falls—Indiana’s largest waterfall by volume—as well as hiking trails and Eagles Mill Lake. For more information, go to curt.lv/LaerberSRA.

Central western Indiana is known for its historic covered bridges, and Putnam County boasts nine of them, dating from 1880-1922. They make for lovely photos year-round. For more information, go to curt.lv/PutnamCoveredBridges.

If you prefer your outdoor time to involve 18 holes, try one of the county’s three golf courses: Tiger Pointe Country Club and Old Hickory Golf Course, both in Green Castle, and Clover Meadows Golf Course in Greencastle.

You don’t have to stay far from St. Paul the Apostle Church to find plenty to do. Just a few blocks away is Green Castle’s courthouse square where events take place outdoors from May through October.

During those months, enjoy an outdoor farmers Market on the square on Saturdays from 8 a.m.-noon, or come on the first Friday of the month between 6-11 p.m. for local food, children’s games and music stages around the square featuring multiple performers and bands. For more information on these events, call 765-620-4653.

The square is also home to the Green Castle Music Fest, held on the last weekend of August. The event features two full days of music and entertainment for the whole family. For more information, go to Greencastlemusicfest.com.

Employment

Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Louisville, Kentucky has an immediate opening for a full time Director of Youth Ministry. Holy Trinity has a Faith Formation Team that collaborates to provide ongoing Faith Formation to the parish and the community. The Holy Trinity Director of Youth Ministry is a tenacious person who wants to use his or her background and gifts to impact our faith community and share the joy of the Gospel. The ideal candidate is passionate about youth ministry and wants youth to come to know the person of Jesus and the richness of the Catholic faith. This person will be a self-starter, reliable and driven. Qualified candidates include a bachelor’s degree preferably in a field such as theology or catechesis and/or 3 years of programming experience. Holy Trinity has a dedicated Youth Center for accommodating dynamic, and engaging events and opportunities focused on Youth Ministry.

This position also requires coordinating and overseeing the Confirmation program to Holy Trinity and public school students.

A competitive salary and benefits are being offered.

To apply please send your resume and cover letter to Christina Smith, Director of Faith Formation.

Christina Smith
Holy Trinity Catholic Church
501 Cherrywood Rd.
Louisville, KY 40207
ccsmith@stpaulrich.org

One Lenten wake-up call for those who often sit in segregated pews is to read Letter from Birmingham Jail, King’s stirring admonition to “moderate” whites to Christian church leaders who often disappointed him.

Written in 1963 while King languished in jail for civil disobedience, the letter still holds relevance and challenge for our Church today.

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” wrote King.

As the Church, how do we stand for justice?

(Rollie Caldarola writes biweekly for OSV News. †)
The archbishop then presented the Legacy Award to Deacon Kellams’s wife, Chris, his daughter, Staci, and his grandson, Bradford Dollens as the gala audience gave the family members a standing ovation in honor of Deacon Kellams.

Family was also a focus in the recognition of Thomas-Day, who was joined at the gala by her husband, John, their four daughters, three sons-in-law, six grandchildren, and her two sisters, one who came from Texas and the other from California.

Thomas-Day smiled and was touched with humility as she listened to the video tributes for her that were played during the gala celebration.

Her longtime friend, Father Joseph Moriarty, touchingly described her as “someone who lives the Gospel.”

“She lives it in her marriage,” said Father Moriarty, rector of the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. “She lives it as a mother. She lives it as a Catholic educator in religious education.”

Mary Ann Griggs shared what it was like to be Thomas-Day’s secretary for more than 40 years.

“She was not only my boss, but a very close friend. There’s so many words to describe her—loving, compassionate, giving, very Christ-like. That’s why I was here so long.”

The archbishop Charles C. Thompson continued the praise, noting, “She clearly has a deep love for Jesus Christ, a deep love for the faith, and a deep love for others—to lead them to Christ.

“That’s the key you want from any director of religious education or pastoral associate or youth ministry anywhere in the Church. You want them first to have their own personal relationship with Christ, to be rooted in prayer, word and sacrament, to be committed to serve as they serve others. She’s certainly earned this recognition.”

As the archbishop presented the award to Thomas-Day, the audience once again rose to share a standing ovation.

Noting that welcoming an encounter with Christ is at the heart of the way that Thomas-Day and Deacon Kellams have lived, Archbishop Thompson reminded the gala audience that the National Eucharistic Congress will take place in Indianapolis on July 17-21, 2024.

Stating that the Eucharist is “the source and summit of our Catholic faith—the body, blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ,” the archbishop said the Eucharistic Congress “will offer us an encounter with the living Jesus Christ, renewing our Church, and sending us on mission for the life of the world.”

In his closing remarks, Archbishop Thompson said that while it was important to honor Deacon Kellams and Thomas-Day for the way they have touched so many lives through their encounter with Christ, it was also important to focus on the way that everyone in the audience—and everyone in the archdiocese—has an impact on other people.

“We honor these people here as we should, but it’s also to remind us of how our lives, when we allow Christ to shine through us, touch the lives of others. I hope everyone here leaves here inspired, not only to look up to these people, but to realize as we go home tonight that there are people in our lives that we touch—a family member, a co-worker, a classmate, a friend, maybe a stranger—that you are making a difference.

“I hope you never take for granted how God is using your life to be such a blessing to the lives of others. The world needs our witness. Christ is working in you to transform the world. And I thank you for that witness.”†

Gala supports three ministries that do the work of Christ in changing lives

When Dr. David Wolf was asked to be the co-chairperson of the archdiocese’s Legacy Gala this year with his wife, Anne, he viewed it as a way of giving back for a gift he once received, a gift that changed the course of his life.

He recalled growing up in the Indiana community of Evansville, part of a family that didn’t have the money to pay for his tuition to a Catholic school.

“I know that someone else paid for me, and I feel like now I’ve been very fortunate, very blessed,” he said. “And I feel an obligation that now’s the time where I need to help others that would like to have that opportunity, but don’t have the means to do that.”

The couple also praised the efforts of Catholic Charities agencies across southern and central Indiana for their ability to change lives, and they view supporting the education of seminarians as so important because, “we need great priests.”

“The reason for this event is to give money to three very important causes,” David said.

The program for the Legacy Gala in Indianapolis at the JW Marriott on Feb. 10 shared some of the ways that Catholic Charities, Catholic schools and the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis have an impact on lives.

Catholic Charities has served 195,000 meals to people who are hungry, provided shelter and crisis relief services for 40,000, and helped 2,800 people with pregnancy and adoption services.

The 67 Catholic schools in the archdiocese educate and share the faith with about 21,000 students through the dedicated efforts of nearly 2,300 staff members.

The Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary has formed 40 priests, and there are currently 27 seminarians studying for the priesthood there.

“All we’re really talking about is how we’re creating community, and that’s what we all do,” said David Bethuram, executive director of Catholic Charities for the archdiocese, describing the impact of these three ministries.

“That’s what we’re teaching in our seminary, and that’s what we’re teaching in our schools, and that’s what we’re experiencing in Catholic Charities.”

As the rector of the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, Father Joseph Moriarty sees the three ministries as representing to people “the hands and feet of Christ, reaching out to them, touching them, helping them in some way.”

“And I’m so aware that we couldn’t do what we do without the support of our generous benefactors.”

For Brian Disney, the superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese, these three ministries are all about doing God’s work.

“We go out to serve others which really fits with our ministries,” Disney said. “We’re taking Christ out into the world. And when we go with that attitude, what an opportunity it gives us to make a difference in the world.”†