Almost all Hoosier families will have access to school choice after a dramatic conclusion to the 2023 session of the Indiana General Assembly and the passage of the state’s next two-year budget, which also saw significant funding for a major mental health initiative.

Following intense negotiations at the Statehouse lasting well past midnight on April 28, the Indiana General Assembly passed a biennial $44.5 billion budget that Gov. Eric Holcomb hailed as one with “generational impact.”

Approximately half of the budget supports K-12 education statewide, with $2.3 billion in new funding that includes expanding school choice eligibility to 97% of Indiana families.

“This is about as close as you can get to universal school choice,” said John Elcesser, executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association (INPEA), which represents the state’s more than 400 non-public schools, including 175 Catholic schools. “Thanks to this historic legislation, virtually all families in Indiana will have the ability to choose the school that is the right fit for their son or daughter.”

Elcesser described the journey to this outcome as a rollercoaster ride to the end. While the Indiana House of Representatives had included a robust plan for school choice in its proposed budget earlier in the legislative session, the Indiana Senate later stripped all school choice-related measures in its version.

The final debate on the House floor in the early-morning hours of April 28 included impassioned arguments for school choice from House Speaker Todd Young

Near-universal school choice caps ‘generational’ legislative session

By Victoria Arthur

Young woman’s time with Christ leads to memorable moment for her husband, son

(Editors’ note: Many young adult Catholics experience the tremendous difference that eucharistic adoration makes in their relationship with God and the way they live their life. Here is the first of several stories in this continuing series.)

By John Shaughnessy

In a life that has been touched by struggles and challenges, 27-year-old Mary Jimenez has learned to savor the gifts she has been given by God, and one of the best happened for her during the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday at her church this year.

For years, Mary had been hoping and praying—especially during her times at eucharistic adoration—that her husband Kelvin would enter into the full communion of the Church. And that hope started to turn toward reality when Kelvin agreed to participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program at All Saints Parish in Dearborn County. Still, Kelvin had his own hope as he began to learn more and more about the Catholic faith.

Since their 8-year-old son Lucas would be receiving his first holy Communion this spring, Kelvin expressed his desire to receive Communion for the first time when Lucas also received his.

Pope on plane talks about Ukraine, returning artifacts to Canada

ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM HUNGARY (CNS)—The Holy See has a project underway related to peace between Russia and Ukraine, but Pope Francis told reporters he could not talk about it yet.

“There is a mission underway that is not public yet, when it is public, I will tell you about it.” Pope Francis told reporters traveling with him from Budapest, Hungary, back to Rome on April 30.

He also said discussions already were underway.

Pope Francis responded to questions from journalists during his flight from Hungary back to Rome on April 30. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)
Pope calls for ‘new sexual revolution’ that respects life and marital love

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Humanity needs a revolution in how it thinks about sex, Pope Francis said.

“We need to discover the beauty of human sexuality by once again turning to the great book of nature, learning to read it, valuing it and living it with respect,” he wrote in a message to participants in an academic conference on fertility published on April 28.

The pope said that serious education in the relational and procreative dimensions of sexual relationships is increasingly necessary “in a world dominated by a relativistic and trivialized view of human sexuality.”

Such education requires “an anthropological and ethical approach in which doctrinal issues are explored without undue simplifications or inflexible conclusions,” he wrote.

Pope Francis underscored the need to affirm both the unitive and procreative elements of sex, noting that without them “the experience of sexual love—too often impoverished, reduced to sensations that soon become self-referential, and its dimensions of humanity and responsibility are lost.”

“The tragedy of violence between sexual partners—including the murder of women—here finds one of its main causes,” he said.

The fertility conference, hosted at Rome’s Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, marks 70 years since the development of the Billings Ovation Method of natural family planning, which attempts to identify fertility patterns to avoid or achieve conception.

While this approach may have appeared “outdated and less reliable” when compared with artificial birth control, the pope said, the Billings method “has continued to prove timely and challenging,” since it has led to serious reflection on creating an integral vision of human sexuality and promoting “a culture that welcomes life.”

Pope Francis said the Billings method and others like it offer resources for responding to difficulties with conceiving and others like it offer resources for responding to difficulties with conceiving while helping couples identify their most fertile periods.
World Youth Day helps inspire young people to serve others, pope says

VAIATIC CITY (CNS)—World Youth Day (WYD) is an antidote against indifference, isolation and lethargy, Pope Francis said.

Since World Youth Days were established by St. John Paul II in 1985, "they have involved, moved, stirred and challenged generations of women and men," he said in the preface of a new book, A Long Journey to Lisbon, by Aura Miguel, a Portuguese journalist for Rádio Renascença. Vatican News published the preface on May 2.

The initial intuition that inspired St. John Paul “has not faded,” Pope Francis wrote, as today’s world, especially its young people, is facing enormous changes and challenges.

Young people, he wrote, “risk self-isolation every day, living in a virtual environment much of their life, ending up as prey to an aggressive market that creates false needs. ‘Getting out of the house, heading out with fellow travelers, having important experiences of listening and prayer combined with moments of celebration, and doing it together, makes these moments precious for everybody’s life,’ he wrote.

“We really need young people who are at the ready, eager to respond to God’s dream, to care about others, young people who discover the joy and beauty of a life spent for Christ in service to others, to the poorest, to the suffering,” the pope said.

Pope Francis repeated his call to young people not to live life “standing on a balcony watching life go by,” avoiding getting involved and getting their hands dirty, putting a screen between them and the rest of the world.

“Many times I have told young people not to be ‘couch potatoes,’ not to be ‘anesthetized’ by people who benefit from having them ‘dumb and numb,’” he wrote.

Being young is the time for dreaming, the pope wrote, and for being open to the real world, "discovering what is really worthwhile in life, struggling to conquer it; it is opening oneself to deep and true relationships, it is engaging with others and for others.”

But, he wrote, the world is facing so many challenges: the pandemic has shown that “we can only save ourselves together”; there is “the vortex of war and rearmament”; the arms race “seems unstoppable and threatens to lead us to self-destruction”; there is the war in Ukraine; and many wars and conflicts continue to be forgotten, “so much unspeakable violence continues to be perpetrated.”

How are young people to respond, the pope asked? "What are they being called to do with their energy, their vision of the future, their enthusiasm?”

Supreme Court dismisses suit against Indiana law requiring burial or cremation of aborted babies

By Natalie Hoefer

News broke on May 1 that the United States Supreme Court chose not to hear a case against Indiana’s 2016 law requiring the burial or cremation of aborted babies, thus leaving the mandate in place after seven years of legal battles.

“Every baby killed from abortion in Indiana should receive the dignity of burial or cremation,” said Indiana Right to Life president and CEO Mike Fichter in a statement issued following the May 1 announcement.

Before this law was passed, aborted babies were treated as common medical waste, dumped into landfills, and even flushed into sewer systems,” Fichter continued. “Their lives should never have been taken from them in the first place, and until abortion ends in our state, we must at least give these babies their final dignity.”

Shortly after the law was signed in March of 2016, Planned Parenthood filed a lawsuit declaring the requirement of proper burial or cremation of aborted babies, along with other provisions of the law, to be unconstitutional, according to a May 28, 2019, article at nbcnews.com.

The case made its way through the courts, finally coming before the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld the provision in a May 28, 2019, decision.

A second lawsuit was filed against the provision in 2020 on the grounds that it violated First Amendment religious rights, according to a Dec. 2, 2022, article at indystar.com. Court decisions and appeals again brought the suit to the U.S. Supreme Court. The justices gave no reason for their May 1 decision against hearing the case, according to an Associated Press article published that same day.

“We are hopeful today’s Supreme Court ruling is the end of the road for stonewalling challenges from Indiana abortion businesses,” Fichter said.

“We call on the Indiana Department of Health to confirm through inspections that all licensed Indiana abortion businesses are complying with Indiana’s humane final disposition law. If any abortion businesses are found to be noncompliant, their licenses should be immediately revoked.”

They are called to say, ‘We care.’ We care about what is happening in the world, and about ‘the fate of millions of people, of so many children, who have no water, no food, no medical care, while the rulers seem to be competing to see who can spend the most on the most sophisticated armaments,’ he wrote. "We care about everything," including all of creation and the digital world, “which we are challenged to change and make more and more humane.”

“World Youth Days have been an antidote to life on a balcony, to the anesthesia that makes people prefer the couch, to disinterest,” Pope Francis said in the preface.

Pilgrims cheer as Pope Francis leads the July 30, 2016, World Youth Day prayer vigil at the Field of Mercy in Krakow, Poland. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)
During this Easter season, we continue our celebration of Easter joy, but sometimes it’s hard to feel the joy.

Recalling the source of our joy while living in the shadow of the cross

During this Easter season, we continue our celebration of Easter joy, but sometimes it’s hard to feel the joy.

The Mass is not a performance

“The Mass is not a performance”

I had occasion recently to attend the Indianapolis West Deenay preparation meeting for the upcoming Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. I sat at a table with five members of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield. As we began our sharing, I asked what they had done during COVID, whether they had gone to a “parking lot Mass” at some point. The table became quiet, and one man spoke up and said, “I rode my bicycle over to the church just so I could be near [Christ].” Another gentleman looked over at him and said quietly, “I drove over to the church and parked….”

I’ve never seen such faith

Mary Schott Greenwood

The consecration to Mary is worth doing badly

I used to be spiritually allergic to Marian devotion. This changed one day when, at my university, I saw some students handing out pamphlets for Marian consecration based on Mary of the Immaculate Conception Foundation’s Michael E. Gailey’s 13 Days to Morning Glory. I picked up a pamphlet and decided to do it.

Letters to the Editor

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of viewpoints,” without promoting or limiting the expression of minority, unpopular or not literally structured. Affective worship with its spontaneity and vulnerability, sometimes seen as outright anti-liturgical. It can easily be mistaken as an idolization of spiritual consolation, wherein emotional affect and pathos is wrongly taken as the sign and proof of the Holy Spirit’s presence. However, there is a place for meritorious emotion in the act of worship. I think we should feel something when attending the Mass. Nonetheless, I view worship with its spontaneity and emotion without emotion in the act of worship. However, we should not prioritize emotions over reason. The Mass is multivalent; it has several meanings all at once. But the Mass is not a performance.

Kirth N. Roach

Indianapolis

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of viewpoints,” without promoting or limiting the expression of minority, unpopular or not literally structured. Affective worship with its spontaneity and vulnerability, sometimes seen as outright anti-liturgical. It can easily be mistaken as an idolization of spiritual consolation, wherein emotional affect and pathos is wrongly taken as the sign and proof of the Holy Spirit’s presence. However, there is a place for meritorious emotion in the act of worship. I think we should feel something when attending the Mass. Nonetheless, I view worship with its spontaneity and emotion.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
Jesús nos ofrece su amor y su misericordia para calmar nuestro corazón atormentado

“No se turbe su corazón. Ustedes creen en Dios, crean también en mí” (Jn 14:1).

La fecha de publicación de esta columna es el viernes 5 de mayo, el primer viernes del mes que tradicionalmente se dedica al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, una de las devociones más populares entre los católicos y los miembros de otras confesiones cristianas.

Esta devoción destaca el aspecto humano de Jesús, su compasión, su misericordia y su amor incondicional por nosotros a pesar de nuestro egoísmo.

Jesús fue la persona más perfectamente humana que jamás haya existido. (Su madre María, la Inmaculada Concepción, lo siguió de cerca, pero no siquiera ella alcanzó el grado de perfección que encontramos en su divino Hijo.) Los cristianos reconocemos a Jesucristo como verdadero hombre, en cualquier situación que deseemos para recibir las bendiciones que brotan de su santo corazón. Como dijo el Señor resucitado a sus discípulos: “No se turbe su corazón” (Jn 14:1). Nuestra fe en Dios, que nos ama y nos protege, que nos consuela y llena de alegría nuestros corazones atormentados, nos asegura que Dios está con nosotros. Nos invita a vivir “en Él y para Él” y a ser totalmente obediente a su voluntad. Conviértete en humilde, paciente, para y completamente obediente a tu voluntad. Cómedote, buen Jesús, que pueda vivir en ti y para ti. Protégeme en medio del peligro. Consuelame en mis aflicciones. Dame salud de cuerpo, astucia en mis necesidades temporales, bendiceme en todo lo que hago y dame la gracia de una muerta santa. Amén. (Sacerdotes del Sagrado Corazón)

Podemos acudir a Jesús, verdadero Dios y verdadero hombre, en cualquier situación que deseemos para recibir las bendiciones que brotan de su santo corazón. Como dijo el Señor resucitado a sus discípulos: “No se turbe su corazón” (Jn 14:1). Nuestra fe en Dios, que nos ama y nos protege, que nos consuela y llena de alegría nuestros corazones atormentados, nos asegura que Dios está con nosotros. Nos invita a vivir “en Él y para Él” y a ser totalmente obedientes a su voluntad sobre nosotros.

En este primer viernes, abramos en la divinidad del Señor, ya que no es apenas un ser humano compasivo, caritativo e inspirador sino que es Dios encarnado. Su amor y su misericordia son ilimitados y eternos; es más, creemos que, como Dios, Jesús no solamente tiene amor para dar, sino que él es amor. Antes de ser elegido Papa y de escoger por nombre Benedicto XVI, el cardenal Joseph Ratzinger escribió un maravilloso libro titulado Introducción a la cristianidad, una serie de reflexiones sobre la esencia de Dios, involucra no sólo los aspectos de Dios, sino también la cuestión de quién es Dios mismo. ... El Dios que encontramos aquí ... siente emociones al igual que los humanos, se alegra, busca, espera, va al encuentro. No es la geometría insensible del futuro Papa ofrece esta reflexión tan profunda y enriquecedora sobre la esencia de su divino Hijo. La devoción al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús no se da fuera de la liturgia y los sacramentos de la Iglesia, sino que es complementada y apoyada por todos los sacramentos de gracia. De hecho, la auténtica devoción al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús puede profundizar y enriquecer nuestro amor por el don más íntimo que Cristo nos hace de sí mismo en la Eucaristía. Del mismo modo, es nuestro amor a Jesús lo que nos impulsa a buscar su perdón libremente otorgado en el sacramento de la penitencia.

Una oración popular al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús expresa el modo en que esta devoción forma parte integral de nuestra vida como cristianos. En esta oración, pedimos humildemente: “Oh, Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, fuente de toda bendición, yo te adoro, te amo y con verdadero arrepentimiento por mis pecados, te ofrezco este pobre corazón. Conviértame en humilde, paciente, puro y completamente obediente a tu voluntad. Cómede, buen Jesús, que...
May 25
Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Benedictine Retreat, 400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Catholic Charities Refuge and Immigration Services Volunteer Information Session, 10-11 a.m., refreshments provided. Information, registration: cutt.ly/HCW8G or Laura Szeberan, lszeb@archindy.org.

May 27

May 27, 28
Mary, Queen of Peace Church, 1005 W. Main St., Daviess. Bruté Weekend, Sat. 5:45 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m., Masses celebrated by Father Daniel Bedel, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary spiritual director, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501 or esanders@archindy.org.

May 9
Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Taizé Prayer at the Woods, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available. Information: Pastor Sisters of Providence or 812-535-2952.

May 13
Our Lady of the Greenwood Retreat
Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. parking lot. Indianapolis. St. Vincent de Paul Staff A Truck, 9-11 a.m., accepting clothing, housewares, yard sales, furniture, bicycles, helmets locks and backpaks. List of items most needed - cutt.ly/tanyaNeeds. Information: donation@vdpindy.org.

May 14, 15
St. Louis Church, 13 E. St. Louis Pl., Batesville. Brute Weekend, Sat. 5:30 p.m., Sun. 6:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Masses celebrated by Father Daniel Bedel, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary spiritual director, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501, esanders@archindy.org.

May 14
Mount Saint Francis for the Spirituality, Pumphouse Stutes, 101 St. Francis Pl., St. Mt. Francis. Bluegrass Jam, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: farm@masjon.com/bluegrass-jam.html Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, O’Shaughnessy Dining Room, Saint Mary-of-th Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Mother’s Day Brunch, reservations only, with three seating sessions: 9:30 a.m., 11:45 a.m. and 2 p.m., prices (excluding drinks and tax) $39.99 adults, $38.99 ages 62 and older, $19.99 ages 5-11, ages 4 and under free. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Information, registration: 317-788-0811, Brunch@stmaryofprovidence.org, zoomlink@cafesoup.com.

May 15
St. Thea Bowman Black Catholic Women Monthly Prayer Gathering, via Zoom, third Monday of each month, presented by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, 7 p.m. Join meeting, cutt.ly/5IFR. Information: 810-3567-0648 or dial in at 301-715-892. Information: Pearlette Spring, pearlette spring@ archindy.org or 317-236-1474.

May 15

May 18

May 19

St. Francis Xavier Parish, 101 N. Ferguson St., Henryville. Fish Fry, 5-7 p.m, fried fish, shrimp, fries, colseal, dessert table, dine in, carry out, $12 dinners. $8 fish sandwich, $9 pieces shrimp. Information: 812-294-4682, fishfry@ignatius-catholic.org.


May 20

May 25
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. Peace and Nature Garden Walk, 7-8:30 p.m.

Wedding Anniversaries
FREDRIC AND MARY MARGARET (GEHREING) CAMPBELL, members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on May 3. The couple was married in St. Mary Church (now a chapel of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish) in Richmond on May 3, 1958. They have three children: Cynthia Rockwell, Michael and the late Brenda Campbell. The couple also has two grandchildren.

STEVE AND NADIA (KELDY) DURKIN, members of Sacred Heart Parish in Jeffersonville, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on May 18. The couple was married in Most Blessed Sacrament Church in Louisville, Ky., on May 18, 1973. They have three children: Amanda Anderson, Amy and John Duke. The couple also has four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

LYNN AND CATHY (OLSHESKI) ANDREWS, members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on May 5. The couple was married in St. Anthony Church in Hightstown, N.J., on May 5, 1973. They have one child, Cecilia Andrews. The couple also has four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

DAVID AND SANDRA (GERLINE) MOELLER, members of Sacred Heart Parish in Richmond, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on May 1, 1958. They have four children: Kristy Cobbs, Michelle Milbourne, Matthew and Nicklaus Moeller. The couple also has 11 grandchildren.

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to cutt.ly/anniversaries or call 317-236-1585.
Kansas enacts 'born-alive' bill after legislature overrides governor's veto

(OSV News) —Lawmakers in the Kansas State Legislature voted on April 26 to override Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly’s veto of a “born-alive infants protection act.” The Kansas House voted to override the veto in an 87-37 vote, followed by the Kansas Senate in a 31-9 vote. The bill aims to protect infants born alive, regardless of whether the intent was to abort them, and marks the first piece of legislation enacted in the state since Kansas voters rejected an effort to strip abortion protections from their state constitution.

The bill, HB 2313, which would require physicians to provide medical care appropriate to the gestational age of the baby and to transport the baby to a hospital, is expected to go into effect on July 1, 2023.

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Supporters of the legislation argue that the practice of aborting a viable baby after a failed abortion procedure is being used in cases like that of Dr. Kermit Gosnell, a Philadelphia abortionist convicted in 2013 of first-degree murder for the killing of unborn children who were not expected to survive outside the womb.

Supporters of the legislation argue that the practice of aborting a viable baby after a failed abortion procedure is being used in cases like that of Dr. Kermit Gosnell, a Philadelphia abortionist convicted in 2013 of first-degree murder for the killing of unborn children who were not expected to survive outside the womb.

But opponents argue the law is not necessary as such instances rarely occur and would interfere with difficult medical decisions. They further argue it rejects the will of Kansas voters, who last year rejected a ballot measure that would have stripped existing protections for abortion from the state’s constitution.

When Kelly vetoed the bill, she said in a statement, “This bill is intrusive and unnecessary. Federal law already protects newborns, and the procedure being described in this bill does not exist in Kansas in any manner. The bill in question was vetoed in an April 14 statement. ‘The intent of this bill is to interfere in medical decisions that should remain between between doctors and their patients.’

Chuck Weber, executive director of the Kansas Catholic Conference, told OSV News on April 27 that it’s “almost unfathomable and unnecessary. Federal law already protects newborns, and the procedure being described in this bill does not exist in Kansas in any manner. The bill in question was vetoed in an April 14 statement. ‘The intent of this bill is to interfere in medical decisions that should remain between between doctors and their patients.’

In a statement, Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life, said, “We thank the leaders in the Kansas House and Senate who are leading the way in protecting babies born alive following an abortion.”

Tobias also praised “our affiliate Kansans for Life for their tireless and unceasing work in seeing this law passed.”

Jeanne Gwatkin, director of government relations for Kansans for Life, said in a statement, “We applauded the Kansas legislators from both sides of the aisle who stood together for compassion and basic human decency by repudiating Governor Kelly’s heartless veto of the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act.”

“Born-alive protections proved to be the very definition of a ‘middle-of-the-road’ position, with 96% of Kansans in agreement that babies born alive after attempted abortions deserve the same degree of medical care as any newborn of the same gestational age,” Gwatkin said.

The legislation also overrode the governor’s vetoes of measures providing some funding for crisis pregnancy centers, as well as another requiring abortion providers to provide information to patients about about abortion procedures and their effects, reversal, in which administering a dose of progesterone can halt the effects of a medication abortion. Opponents say it is an unjustified procedure.

Of all of the legislation approved by the legislature over the governor’s veto, Gwatkin said that “for the first time in state history, a bipartisan group of legislators came together to override a governor’s veto of pro-life policies. Not only did they have the courage to stand against the governor’s extremist views on abortion and infanticide, but ensured women are provided with potentially life-saving information and compassionation abortion alternatives.”

Administration outlines plan to reduce migrant arrivals when Title 42 ends

WASHINGTON (OSV News) — The Biden administration announced on April 27 new steps it would take in an effort to reduce migrants arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border when Title 42 expires in May. In remarks at the State Department, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas said the administration would set up migrant processing centers in Latin America to screen those seeking entry as to whether they have a legal pathway. The administration would also expand legal pathways for entry, while increasing deportations of those who enter the United States unlawfully.

Blinken said the centers would “improve qualified individuals’ access” to refugee resettlement and other available lawful settlement in the U.S. or other countries.

“These centers will take a hugely important step to prevent people, including children, from making the dangerous journey to the border by providing a much safer, legal option to migrate that they can pursue in and from their own countries,” Blinken said.

Mayorkas said that “when people have safe and orderly pathways to come to the United States, and face consequences for failing to do so, they are less likely to risk their lives.”

Title 42 is a part of federal U.S. public health law granted the federal government some authority to implement emergency action to prevent the spread of contagious diseases by barring some individuals from entering the country.

Then-President Donald J. Trump implemented the policy in 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the move was seen as part of his administration’s broader attempts to reduce migration. The policy was to expel migrants at the southern border was criticized by some public health experts, who argued it was public health motivated rather than evidence-based.

Since then, Title 42 has been invoked more than 2.7 million times to expel migrants, including those seeking asylum, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection data. Title 42 is set to end on May 11.

In a statement issued late on April 28, Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, chairman of the Board of Immigration Policy of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration, said the bishops “strongly support increased access to safe and orderly pathways from Latin America and the Caribbean as a reliable pathway to lasting safety for those who have no feasible alternative.”

He said the bishops “look forward to its close coordination with civil society and government authorities to enhance the successful integration of these newcomers.” Bishop Seitz added that resources used for this “should not determine remaining access to resettlement for other refugees or expedite the implementation of the proper functioning of immigration programs.”

The bishops “are relieved that the administration does not plan to detain vulnerable families, given the unjustifiable and immoral harms of doing so,” Bishop Seitz continued, but they also “are greatly concerned that such facilities—created for those with young children, and others will be subjected to racialized proceedings with the mindless due process of Title 42.”

The administration’s continued reliance on “expedited removal” coupled with “severe restrictions to freedom of movement and eligibility and access” is concerning, Bishop Seitz said, adding that “those most desperately in need of protection will bear the brunt of these measures.”

The acknowledged the “challenge of forcing massive population movements from our hemisphere” is “complex” and said that “the conditions necessary to sustainably reduce migration” will only happen by overhauling the U.S. immigration system and making a long-term commitment to addressing the root causes of migration and promote “integral human development throughout the Americas.”

J. Kevin Appleby, interim executive director of the Center for Migration Studies, told OSV News on April 27 that the Biden administration’s announcement seems “a positive shift.”

“Of course, as always, it depends on how something is implemented and what resources are devoted to the implementation that will decide if it’s a success or not or,” Appleby said.

“But it goes asylum-seekers an opportunity to tell their stories and have their cases adjudicated without taking a dangerous journey north,” Appleby said.

A fact sheet from the State Department about the new actions said, “The lifting of the Title 42 order does not mean the border is open.”

Lawmakers had looked at various options that were ultimately rejected, including a cigarette tax surcharge.

“I am pleased that we got substantial funding for Senate Bill 1, but we need a long-term sustainable funding source that doesn’t rely on general fund dollars,” Crier said. “I intend to keep working toward that goal. Cell phone fees, alcohol tax increase are all viable options.”

One major win for the ICC and advocates for the poor was the first appropriation in decades for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program in Indiana. The budget also saw increases in funding for the Children’s Trust Fund.

In addition, the ICC hailed the passage of changes to Indiana’s Earned Tax Credit, including better aligning the state tax credit with the federal one, eliminating the current marriage penalty and extending credits for larger families, including those with foster children.

“This is a big step in recognizing that married couples, foster parents and parents with more than two children shouldn’t have to face penalties,” said Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC.

Mingus also pointed to new budget allocations of $10 million for land conservation and $30 million for trail usage in Indiana’s state parks. Although those figures fell short of what the governor called for in his State of the State address, Mingus said the ICC was “pleased to see some investment in those areas.”

At the conclusion of this long legislative session, which saw the ICC’s steady presence at the Statehouse, Espada reflected on the past four months.

“After every legislative session, people like to count wins and losses,” she said. “The ICC is obviously happy with the expansion of school choice, the eventual increases to TANF and the success of many of our other priorities. However, we are more pleased that legislators are willing to listen to the ICC and their constituents. We are also pleased that people are willing to get engaged and reach out to their lawmakers.

“It takes all of us.”

For more information and ways to get involved with the ICC and its mission, visit www.indianacc.org.

Voilá, migrants, some expelled from the U.S. Mexico under Title 42 and others who have not yet crossed after the new immigration policies, receive Thanksgiving Day food at a camp on the banks of the Rio Bravo river in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, on Nov. 24, 2022. (CNS photo/LuisGonzalez, Reuters)

Venezuelan migrants, some expelled from the U.S. Mexico under Title 42 and others who have not yet crossed after the new immigration policies, receive Thanksgiving Day food at a camp on the banks of the Rio Bravo river in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, on Nov. 24, 2022. (CNS photo/LuisGonzalez, Reuters)

Continued on page 1...
From living in peace to finding meaning in life, readers share their favorite Scripture verses

(Editors' note: The Criterion has invited our readers to share a favorite Bible verse or a favorite quote that helps remind them of God’s presence in their lives and/or helps center them in their relationships with others. Here is part five of their responses.)

By John Shaughnessy

Having nearly 100 “all-time favorite quotes,” Kevin Burke finally narrowed his choice down to one—a Bible verse on mutual love from St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans, Chapter 12, verses 9-21.

“I find this passage works in just about any situation as a spiritual uplift and a guide as to what to do,” says Burke, a member of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour.

He especially finds the verse to be helpful during large family gatherings. “A quick read before the guests arrive helps me to be mindful of their needs and be responsive in a kind way whenever possible to their comments, opinions and expressions.”

Here are some of the parts of the passage from Romans that he relies on:

“Love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor” (Rom 12:10).

“Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer” (Rom 12:12).

“Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality” (Rom 12:13).

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep” (Rom 12:15).

“Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation” (Rom 12:16).

“If possible, on your part, live at peace with all” (Rom 12:18).

Burke sums it up this way, “Include all, no judgments, advise only when asked, and stay focused on serving and including all in the festivities. Laugh easily and smile genuinely and stay calm. This verse helps me to try my best to do that.”

A reminder that soothes the soul

For Suzanne Arruda, the simplicity of Psalm 46 soothes her soul in moments from two opposite sides of life—when the world overwhelms her and the beauty of nature surrounds her. The psalm counsels, “Be still and know that I am God” (Ps 46:11).

“The quote comes to mind at different times,” says Arruda, a member of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison. “Sometimes, it comes just when I am observing nature. Very often, I reflect on it when I feel stressed or uncertain about the future. It reminds me of the eternal immensity that is God and calms me in my fears.”

Finding meaning in life

We all eventually look for clarity in our lives, for direction of how we want to live, and what will give us meaning and purpose.

For Mike Kirsch, that moment of clarity came early in life—when he was 14—as he was about to be confirmed in the United Church of Christ.

As part of that preparation, he had to choose a confirmation verse that would affirm his baptismal commitment to a life with Christ.

After considerable thought, Kirsch chose Proverbs 22:1, “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.”

“I was a very good student, and I expected to get a good degree and a high-paying job, but I didn’t want to get caught up in the secular race for ever-more money and an ever-greater position in business and industry,” Kirsch recalls about that time in his life.

“God does not see us as man sees us. He sees what’s in our hearts.”

“God’s word is not meant to be confused by worldly wisdom,” he says. “It was in my mind then and is even more so now.”

Kevin Burke

“Love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor.” (Rom 12:10)

The gift—and the experiences of joy

Mike and Rebecca Kirsch pose for a photo in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris during a visit there in March. (Submitted photo)

I have come to realize that without my faith I wouldn’t have been able to get through many of the things that I’ve been through. It influences everything my husband and I are doing with our children. I want to instill in them the importance of faith because that’s what my parents did for me. At this point, I don’t know where I would be without my faith.”

—Mary Jimenez

Mike and Rebecca Kirsch

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Mike and Rebecca Kirsch
Queen Elizabeth II in September 2022—

identity in speeches after the death of the late queen, to be defender of all faiths, not just one, in a modern multicultural society, wish, in a modern multicultural society, face threats of disintegration, of British royal pageantry and reaffirm the unbroken line of monarchs dating back to the 10th century. He also assumes the role of supreme governor of the Church of England. As the national title of “defier of the faith,” bestowed in 1521 by Pope Leo X on King Henry VII.

And while he’s long declared his wish, in a modern multicultural society, to be defender of all faiths, not just one, King Charles III reaffirmed his Protestant identity in speeches after the death of Queen Elizabeth II in September 2022—and will reaffirm it again during the coronation service. This has caused some disappointment, not least among Britain’s Catholics.

The Catholic Church will be represented at the abbey by Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster, who will share a blessing with Protestant and Orthodox leaders. Catholic bishops from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland will also join the congregation, along with the Vatican’s secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, and the newly appointed apostolic nuncio to Great Britain, Spanish Archbishop Miguel Mauro Baendia.

But Catholic prelates were not included among 50 public figures assigned formal roles in the order of service, published on April 28. This will include a Bible reading by Britain Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, a practicing Hindu, and the presentation of regalia by Muslim, Jewish, Sikh and Hindu leaders.

Susan Doran, an Oxford University historian, said she regretted the bulk of the ceremony will be exclusively Protestant, with Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury and other Anglican prelates playing a dominant role.

"With its plummeting membership and many problems, it’s not surprising the Church of England seeks to hold on to its link with the monarchy, and sees the coronation as an opportunity to proclaim this," Doran told OSV News.

But at a time when the monarchy seems to be losing meaning for many people, I think it will fuel further alienation if they go too far down a narrow Protestant route—particularly among the young and people of other faiths," she added.

That could be the reaction of some Catholics, too, especially those conscious of how bitter past conflicts have defined modern Britain’s religious outlook.

Relations with Rome, dating from the first mission to Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the sixth century, were broken off under Henry VIII in 1534 during the Reformation conflicts. After a brief restoration under Henry’s Catholic daughter, Mary I, hostility reared again under the Protestant Elizabeth I, who was declared excommunicated and deposed as a "servant of wickedness" in 1570 by Pope St. Pius V.

Persecution of Catholics intensified under Elizabeth’s successor, James I, particularly after the infamous 1605 Gunpowder Plot to blow up the king and his parliament. Some historians now dispute whether such a plot really existed. But it sealed the fate of English Catholics in the next 250 years as perceived heretics and traitors.

In the late 19th century, the Catholic Church was treated as an alien element in national life, deprived of equal rights. Although a Church hierarchy was re-established in 1850, it took until 1871 for Catholic academics even to be admitted to Oxford and Cambridge universities, and until St. John Paul II’s historic 1982 visit for formal diplomatic ties to be established.

Since then, the Catholic Church’s profile has been rebuilt, bringing it closer to full acceptance as a British institution.

Recent statistics show that Catholics make up around 13% of the United Kingdom’s 67 million inhabitants, with Anglicans at 14%, although religious affiliations have declined sharply across the country, with only around half of citizens declaring themselves Christian in recent surveys, compared to more than 70% two decades ago.

Although King Charles’ consort, Queen Camilla, was baptized a Protestant, she was married by a Catholic priest in 1973 to her Catholic first husband, Andrew Parker-Bowles, and brought up her son and daughter as Catholics.

Technical formalities aside, Charles has shown personal openness to Catholics, postponing his own wedding to Camilla in 2005 to attend St. John Paul II’s funeral.

Before his fourth Vatican visit in October 2019 for the canonization of St. John Henry Newman, Charles published an article in L’Osservatore Romano and The Times of London hailing the event as a celebration “not merely for Catholics, but for all who cherish the values by which he was inspired.”

Heading a 12-member Catholic delegation to pledge allegiance to the new king on March 9, Cardinal Nichols duly paid tribute to Charles “commitment to religious faith” and assured him of Catholic support.

On April 19, the pope himself reciprocated, donating two splinters from the Cross of Christ, preserved among relics in the Vatican Museums, for incorporation into a new Cross of Wales, which will lead the king’s coronation procession.

The king will be crowned as he sits on a 700-year-old chair with the solid-gold St. Edward’s Crown, made for Charles II in 1661. He will be presented with the orb and scepter pictured last autumn sitting atop the late queen’s coffin.

Holy oil for anointing the monarch and Camilla was consecrated on March 4 at Jerusalem’s Church of the Holy Sepulcher by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem.

Catholic bishops and other British Catholic bishops urged Catholics to take full part in coronation events, including special weekend Masses and a May 3-5 triduum of prayer, as well as a nationwide day of volunteering and charity work set for May 8.

“The world has immeasurably changed since 1953 [coronation of Queen Elizabeth II], with many more opportunities and challenges,” Cardinal Nichols acknowledged in a prayer card circulated to all parishes in April. The prayer asks God to help Charles III “constantly secure and preserve for the people entrusted to his care the freedom that comes from civil peace.”

Father Timothy hinted at his own disappointment, all the same, that the Catholic Church won’t be assigned a fuller part, given the “godly role” it’s always tried to play in society.

“Catholic social teaching could be a precious gift for a nation needing to renew its social bonds and rediscover a common life and purpose,” Father Radcliffe told OSV News.

Cardinal Nichols’ spokesman, Alexander DesForges, was more sanguine. Although Catholic clergy aren’t playing a significant role in the coronation, they’ll at least be present—for the first time since Henry VIII and his Reformation.

“We have to be realistic. The king has a formal role in the Anglican Church of England, and this service is taking place in Westminster Abbey.” DesForges told OSV News. “The fact that six bishops will be present, including the Vatican’s Cardinal Parolin, whereas there was no Catholic representation at all 70 years ago, clearly shows things have changed.”
God blesses us with gifts and talents to use in loving service

(OSV News)—On the night before he entered into his passion and death, Jesus gave all of us a compelling model to follow. Serve as Christ served, give as Christ gives, freely and fully.

Jesus asks us—priests, deacons, religious, married, single—to follow in his footsteps. We know that Jesus’ footsteps led him to Calvary, and to his rising again in glory.

As members of Christ’s body the Church, we must, always with the help of God’s grace, give of ourselves as Jesus did.

Responding in gratitude for his redeeming love, we care for others with compassion, offer hospitality, share food with the hungry, provide clothing to those who have little. We will experience crosses along this way, but we know the way also leads to resurrection, to renewal—of both our world and ourselves.

Are you a person who gives of himself- or herself in service to others?

Responding to the call: service

We are shown the depths of God’s love in Christ, who came to bring us the fullness of life, and to show us God’s way of living. The more we come to know Christ, the more we recognize that all we are, all we have and all we will be is purely a gift from God. Our response to this generosity, as we follow in Christ’s footsteps, is to give freely and generously to others.

Sometimes what’s possible for us to give and do seems insignificant. Giving of ourselves in ministry, in service or simply by assisting those who need it the most—while rewarding in and of itself—can seem to be like trying to bail out the ocean with a teaspoon.

But those of us who become involved in voluntary service, be it in our parish or for any number of charitable agencies, soon learn that that’s not the case. We see with our own eyes evidence that one person really can make a difference.

Jesus knew this when he called us to serve others. Even more importantly, he knew that when we respond to his call, our service, offered with a generous spirit infused by his grace, changes not only those we serve but those who serve.

Consider serving in your parish, neighborhood or city and you may find yourself being enriched in ways you would never have thought possible.

Serving with joy

Where is your service needed?

Making the decision to offer service is an important first step for us. It is the moment in which we say that our faith really does guide us, and that Jesus’ way is the most important priority in our lives.

This decision brings joy—but it also brings questions with it. No doubt, the need for your service is great. But where can you best serve?

That’s a question you can best answer with honest self-examination and prayer. Is there a ministry in your parish that could use your talents and abilities? A nonprofit service organization near your home or work that needs helping hands? Are there particular causes to which you feel a sense of commitment? Answers to these questions can provide clues of where you can do the most good.

What talents do you bring to service?

Each of us has been given talents, ways of interacting with information or with people that come naturally to us. We have a responsibility to develop those talents and use them throughout our lives, particularly in service.

Indeed, countless people have learned through the years that the best way to find passion and purpose is in using their God-given talents in service.

Prayerfully consider these questions when pondering the service of others?

What talents have you been given?

What kinds of activities seem to come naturally to you?

What do other people say you do well?

—What skills do you use at your place of work or in your family that you could offer to your parish?

—Do you have a hobby or a skill you’ve developed just for fun, that could also be offered in service?

—How might you apply your talents to the areas of service to which you feel called?

What time will you offer?

Each of us has been given a particular span of years by God. How long a time we have, we don’t know. What we do know is that time is a precious gift—not to be taken lightly, nor hoarded or wasted. We need to remember to stay balanced, to allow for the many other commitments we already have:

—What responsibilities do I have in my life, and for whom?

—How much of my time is committed to work?

—What commitment do I make to caring for my spiritual, mental, physical and emotional well-being?

—What portion of my time am I prepared to give in service of others?

Making the commitment to action

Once all the questions have been asked and the answers discerned, it’s time for action.

Often, it helps to put your commitment in writing. You might want to post your commitment in a place where you will frequently see it. You can make a note on your calendar that periodically reminds you to evaluate your progress on that commitment.

We are less likely to excuse away inaction when we see our commitment from time to time; placing your signature at the conclusion of your commitment is like saying “Amen!” “I will do this!”

Some people find that sharing their commitment with another boosts the likelihood that they will follow through. If you are new to volunteering or to offering yourself in ministry, or if you know yourself to be a person for whom accountability is beneficial, invite a family member or friend to witness your commitment, perhaps while sharing his or her commitment with you.

Pray for each other and ask God to give you the strength and wisdom to act with love and compassion.

Many parishes have an annual opportunity to sign up for a ministry or organization. Whether you take advantage of that opportunity, simply talk with a staff person or a parishioner who coordinates service in your parish, or get in touch with a local organization or service agency, the important thing is to act without hesitation.

Someone is waiting for your service ... in Christ’s name. †
Seven awesome songs to sing this Easter season

To celebrate Easter and our renewed ability to be able to shout “Alleluia!” to God at the top of our lungs, we’ve put together an “Alleluia! He is risen!” Easter playlist, which includes a few selections from tracks that have a special place in our Easter memories—tracks that are of interest to you.

• “Alleluia! Jesus is risen!” This traditional Easter hymn (see above), written by Herbert Brokering and set to the tune of “Earth and All Stars,” is a mainstay during Holy Week and every year I forget how much I love it. I understand why my daughter wants to sing out the chorus and proclaim Christ risen?

• “Hallelujah” chorus” from Handel’s “Messiah.” You can’t do without this classic that is sometimes associated with Christmas as Easter, and which is chock full of the “A” word (or technically the “H” word in this case). There is a lot of mumbling during the majority of the song, but the conducting and the Hallelujahs are solid. “For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

• “I can’t help my sin” by Michael W. Smith. This gradually building version starts with Hallelujahs that feel like they are full of the weight and newness of the Resurrection. “Alleluia, alleluia, for our Lord God Almighty reigneth!” Full disclosure: I first heard this in college while on a retreat, and it maintains a special place in my heart.

• “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today.” Another classic hymn that is so iconic that it practically can’t be the Easter season without it. My favorite verse is the third, bringing us directly into the first verse of Good Friday into the joy of Easter: “But the pains which he endured, alleluia! Our salvation hath procured, and that is up above the sky he’s king, alleluia! Where the angels ever sing, alleluia!”

• “Alleluia” by Maher. OK, so this song doesn’t actually have an “alleluia” in it, but I am a big fan of Maher’s music and I have now officially abandoned in indoctrinating my children. The intro guitar riff, plus the drums, and the “We sing for joy, we shout your name, we celebrate your Resurrection Day!” lyrics make it so full of Easter joy that it’s a must-listen in our house (and a must-dance).

• “Glorious Day (Living He Loved Me)” covered by the Daughters of St. Paul. This is the feast of victory for our God. “Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!”

• “This Is the Feast of Victory.” Finally, this Lutheran hymn is based on chapter four of the Book of Revelation and is filled with triumph—and a boatload of alleluias—that make it a delight to sing. “Power, riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and blessing and glory is his. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!” Indeed it is. May your Easter season continue to be filled with enthusiastic praise to God. Alleluia.

(Gregten Crate is the editor-in-chief of OSV News.)

Add the word

What do we do when our heroes let us down?

My wife took Christ off our living room wall. We have a church mosaic, an excited image of a mosaic created by Jesuit Father Marko Rupnik. She said it made her feel like it was time to have it up.

Rupnik is a remarkable artist, a renowned Jesuit. His mosaic adorns chapels and basilicas around the world, the Basilica of St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, D.C., and the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary in Lourdes, France. And until now, we kept a living room wall.

Father Rupnik stands “accused of sexual, psychological or sexual abuse by hundreds of people, over the course of almost 40 years,” according to a report by Paulina Griak at OSV News. Many of the cases involved women under his spiritual direction. Three years ago, he was even briefly excommunicated for granting absolution to a converted woman with whom he had sex, though the excommunication was lifted when he confessed and repented.

The recent allegations are so serious that the bishop responsible for the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, which holds the largest mosaic, has appointed a reflection group to consider whether the mosaics installations on the facade of the lower basilica in 2008 should be removed.

A few months ago, I visited Lourdes for the first time. The mosaics, I groaned out loud. Rupnik’s style is immediately recognizable, and my first thought was that the art would forever be tainted by his crimes. Certainly, for anyone who was abused by Rupnik, but especially for those women helped by other priests or religious leaders, the art would never be just art.

What is the proper response when our heroes, our leaders, our artists, let us down?

I was a misgynistic creep who drove lovers to suicide. How do we look at his painting “Guernica” now? Woody Allen may have been a hero of his. He called it “a damn how much of a nuisance a writer can be. Sometimes I read him and realize, I guess, that it mattered not a damn how much a writer could make of himself, especially when drunk. The only thing that counted was how well he wrote. But what about Roman Polanski? Jean Vanier? Bill Cosby? Theology? McNally Jackson?

In the age of #MeToo and tell-all bios, we have grown adept at maneuvering around the moral disasters of famous lives, but it is far easier when the scandals involve someone we admired, perhaps even revered.

We can ignore Bill Cosby’s comedy routines or skip Woody’s latest flick. We can take the picture down from the living room wall. But do we strip the mosaics from a church?

One response may be simply to recognize that once completed, the art stands on its own, regardless of its creator’s moral standing.

Newspaper correspondent William Shirer recounted in his memoirs the time he heard a very different voice from the one that he and several others had. The man who had been a hero of his. He called it “a rather disillusioning evening.” Yet time drove him a different person, one that he was not who he was known as.

I was not yet grown up enough to realize, I guess, that it mattered not a damn how much a writer could make of himself, especially when drunk. The only thing that counted was how well he wrote. But what about Roman Polanski? Jean Vanier? Bill Cosby? Theology? McNally Jackson?


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The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 7, 2023

• Acts 6:1-7
• John 14:1-12

Once again in this season of Easter, the Acts of the Apostles provides the first reading. The early chapters of Acts display in concise detail the lives of the early Christians. Obvious in this glimpse into history, the primary place is held by the Apostles, with St. Peter having the superior position among them. As the Apostles were acknowledged because the Christians recognized their special relationship with and calling from the Lord. Indeed, reverence for the Apostles was so deep that the people placed their possessions at their feet, allowing them to control even the material assets of the community.

In Acts, this community was situated in Jerusalem. Although the very heart of Jewish life, Jerusalem was not Corinth or Antioch. It most certainly was not Rome. In the total scheme of things, it was not a great city.

Caesarea, a seaport on the Mediterranean Sea, was more important. The Roman governor resided there. It held the headquarters of the Roman occupation. Its port provided the way to Rome.

Not surprisingly, Acts also speaks of events in the vicinity of Caesarea.

(There is Caesarea now are in the suburbs of modern Tel Aviv. It is interesting, incidentally, that the only relic of ancient Caesarea, a stone carved with his name, found at the site of ancient Caesarea.) Very clear in Acts is the way that the first Christians lived. Care of the needy and of poor widows was their priority. The Apostles directed such care. The Apostles also taught the Gospel, with Peter always as their spokesman.

To assist in providing care and proclaiming the Gospel, the Apostles chose seven holy men to be deacons. Calling deacons was not just an exercise of organization but also of the Apostles’ authority to act in the Lord’s name. The first Epistle of St. Peter provides the second reading, proclaiming Jesus as essential in life. The reading urges Christians to be true uncompromisingly to Jesus.

St. John’s Gospel supplies the last reading. Not a resurrection narrative, it recalls the Lord’s Last Supper discourse with the Apostles, telling them what to expect in the future. Looking ahead and frank about the obstacles awaiting, Jesus prepared them for their future duties.

As we come along, reassuringly, the readings say that the Lord will always, “the way, the truth, and the life,” the Almighty, the merciful Son of God (Jn 14:6).

Reflection

Weeks have passed since Easter. Throughout all of them, the Church joyfully has told us of the Resurrection. The Lord lives!

Before long, this Easter season will end. We will return to life in 2023, with its burdens and rewards. What will assist our discipleship in our time?

These post-Easter readings at Mass answer this question by putting before us the Church, as a viable, active institution.

This weekend’s lesson from Acts reveals the endurance and the timelessness of the Church through successors of the Apostles. Christ ascended to heaven, but the Apostles continued the work of salvation through successors of the Apostle’s. Through successors of the Apostles, the Church still tells us that Jesus is with us as Savior and guide. The Church still cares for the poor.

In the variety of modern religions, which Christian community truly reflects the gathering of the first Christians in Jerusalem? It uniquely is the Catholic Church, precisely because the Church still relies upon the Apostles with Peter clearly as their head.

My Journey to God

Called

By Janine Schorsch


The Eucharist calls me to listen. Listen to the voice of God. Listen to others with Christ’s heart. Listen and answer “Yes.”

The Eucharist calls me to adore ... The Father who formed me. The Son who redeemed me. The Spirit who dwells in me.

The Eucharist calls me. God, Himself, speaks. I AM, I LOVE. I AM, I LOVE. Called and sent forth to carry His love to the world.

Daily Readings

Monday, May 8
Acts 14:5-18
Psalm 115:1-4, 15-16
John 14:21-26

Tuesday, May 9
Acts 14:19-28
Psalm 145:10-15, 21, 14:27-31a

Wednesday, May 10
St. John of Avila, priest and doctor of the Church
St. Damien de Veuster, priest
Acts 15:1-6
Psalm 122:1-5
John 15:1-8

Thursday, May 11
Acts 15:7-21
Psalm 115:1-5, 13-14, 10
John 15:9-11

Question Corner

Books in the Bible serve different purposes, answer different questions

How do we reconcile the story of Adam and Eve and original sin with evolution? (New York)

Thanks for the question!

We can say the creation story in the Book of Genesis—while being true—was not meant as a literal or technical scientific account of how the material world was formed.

Although we often refer to the Bible as one book, it’s actually a collection of different books.

And while all sacred Scripture is the inspired word of God, the human drafters of the various books within the Bible were writing at different times, for different reasons and in different literary genres.

Within the Bible, we have books which are plainly intended as eyewitness historical accounts (e.g., the Gospel of St. John) along with other works which were obviously meant as symbolic allegories (e.g., Revelation).

Likewise, we have works that spell out practical laws (Leviticus) along with sacred poetry (Psalms).

To draw a comparison with secular literature, it would be unreasonable to criticize a cookbook for not having much of a plot. It would be silly to say that a fantasy novel was wrong because it didn’t teach you how to do your taxes or fix a leaky faucet.

We understand that different kinds of books have different purposes, and that no one book can meet every need.

Just so, we could describe the beginning of Genesis as a sort of “theological history,” because it tells us, in narrative form, some real and important things about the nature of God and his relationship to creation. Namely, from the Book of Genesis we know that God created everything out of nothing in an act of pure will; that God’s creation is to be good; that God wished to create humanity in his own image and likeness—meaning that humans have free will—and that the first humans abused this power of free will to turn away from God.

Significantly, from the creation story we learn that God did not act as a divine tyrant, humanity to experience suffering or death, but rather that this fundamental disorder in the universe came about because of a primordial human choice.

Conversely, the creation story in Genesis is not the equivalent of a textbook in geology, physics or biology. The creation story doesn’t try to concern itself with those details such as the wavelength of the first light created or where exactly the first plants and animals would fit into modern biological classification systems.

We don’t even know exactly how long each of the first seven “days” were in Genesis, since the term “day” in this context is used in a clearly poetic sense—that is, the author of Genesis couldn’t have intended to speak of “days” in literal astronomical terms, since the sun itself was only created on the fourth “day” (Gen 1:14-19).

Still, it is legitimate for us to be curious and ask questions about how God’s process of creation manifested itself concretely in the physical world. That type of scientific inquiry, however, proposes the answers to different kinds of questions than what the Book of Genesis seeks to address—though it is interesting that even Genesis seems to allude to a certain evolutionary process of sorts, with God creating simpler life forms before the more complex ones, and with humanity being the capstone of creation.

As St. John Paul II writes at the very start of his 1998 encyclical letter, “Fides et Ratio”: “Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth. God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth” (#1).

(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.)

Tuesday, May 9
Psalm 57:8-10, 12
John 15:12-17

Saturday, May 13
Our Lady of Fatima
Acts 16:1-10
Psalm 90:7-15, 16
John 15:18-21

Sunday, May 14
Sixth Sunday of Easter
Acts 8:5-8, 14-17
Psalm 115:1-5, 9-10
1 Peter 3:15-18
John 15:21-25
ERLANDSON (continued from page 12)

The only caution to add is that the last resort would be to destroy the art. We are lucky that Caravaggio’s “The Calling of Matthew” was not destroyed for the artist’s sins. If Rupnik is guilty of abuse, he should be punished, but perhaps we need more time before we condemn his works as well.

(Greg Erlanson is an award-winning Catholic publisher, editor and journalist whose column appears monthly at OSNews. Follow him on Twitter @GregErlanson.)

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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• CDU offers classes in Catechism of the Catholic Church

20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners.

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

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, there are steps you can take to report it.

• Ethics Point
• Confidential, Ombuds Reporting
www.archindy.org/sexualmisconduct.ethicspoint.com or 888-382-9836, ext. 1548

Victim Assistance Coordinator, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—A Florida-based Catholic relief and development organization has been playing an important part in assisting with Pope Francis’ aid efforts for Ukraine, the organization’s president said.

Michele Sagarno, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, told Catholic News Service they have helped secure funding, ambulances, prosthetics and supplies for “all the various medical needs when the health system was turned upside down” to those in need in war-torn Ukraine.

Now they are looking at how best to get urgently needed food and nutritional support for Ukrainians who have been internally displaced or fled the country, she said on April 26.

Sagarno was part of a Cross Catholic Outreach delegation which included: Jim Cavnar, CEO and founder; Msgr. Ted Bertagni, director of clergy and diocesan relations; Shannon Burns, associate director of clergy and diocesan relations; and Father Bernard Olszewski, outreach and support.

They were in Rome for three days at the end of April to meet with the heads of different Vatican dicasteries, particularly with the Dicastery for the Service of Charity and Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the papal almoner.

Sagarno said they came to thank the dicasteries and to learn more about the needs in Ukraine.

Cross Catholic Outreach lent its support to the Dicastery for the Service of Charity “right from the very beginning when they decided to really have a big impact there,” she said.

“The pope really wanted to provide a lot of aid so we supported ambulances, medical supplies, funding” and other essentials at a time of great need, she said.

##The Criterion: Friday, May 5, 2023##
Spring seeds

This member of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Fortville was one of several who recently dispersed wildflower seeds on the parish’s Garden Street property. The Pollinator Garden is composed of Indiana native wildflowers with future plans to include native trees. (Submitted photo)

Employment

Mother Theodore Catholic Academy
Maintenance Technician

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking to hire a full-time maintenance technician. The person hired for this job will train with the Archdiocese Catholic Center Staff but will become the primary maintenance technician for the Mother Theodore Catholic Academy (MTCA). The MTCA has four schools in Marion Co., Indianapolis. This person will be responsible for the maintenance of all four schools.

The major responsibility of the person in this position is to oversee the maintenance of our four MTCA schools. This is a hands-on position, but it also requires the oversight and management of subcontractors.

- The person in this job will need to be an independent thinker.
- Responsible for the maintenance and safety of the MTCA buildings.
- Good communication skills are required
- 10 years of experience in property management or commercial building maintenance.
- GED is required.
- A valid driver’s license is required.

Interested candidates apply to Daniel Herbertz at Dherbertz@archindy.org.

Employment

Assistant Director of Development
Scéina Memorial High School

We are seeking a full-time Assistant Director of Development to join our Development Team in the rewarding work of engaging donors to support and advance the mission of Scéina Memorial High School.

Key responsibilities include:
- Helping design and execute an annual development strategy to support school priorities and programs.
- Building and maintaining relationships with a portfolio of donors and prospects and helps identify other prospective donors.

The successful candidate must demonstrate a commitment to Catholic education. Experience preferred but not required. Archdiocese of Indianapolis benefits provided. More information and full job description at sceina.org/careers. Please send a cover letter, resume, and salary expectations, in confidence, to Beth Murphy at bmurphy@sceina.org.

High School Youth Minister

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Noblesville (Diocese of Lafayette) is seeking a full-time High School Youth Minister. This position will work as part of an experienced and skilled Youth and Young Adult Ministry team of three to coordinate high school youth ministry and preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Youth Minister will have the opportunity to work with people in a variety of ways: as a guide and mentor for teens, as a partner with parents/families, and as a leader for a dedicated group of volunteers. The goal of the Youth Minister is to grow one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church in the parish and in Noblesville.

Some responsibilities of this position include: coordinating weekly youth ministry sessions for high school youth, organizing retreats and special events, coordinating a two-year Confirmation preparation program, and regularly communicating with teens, volunteers, and families.

An excellent candidate for this position would be gifted at relational ministry and possess outstanding communication skills. He/she would be seeking a flexible schedule but a willingness to work some nights and weekends. The candidate would have a Bachelor’s degree and would be a role model for living the Catholic faith.

Previous youth ministry experience is preferred.

Please submit your resume and cover letter to Larry Kunkel at lkunkel@parish.dol-in.org or to 9900 E 191st St, Noblesville, IN 46060. Applications will be accepted until May 19, 2023 or until the position is filled. Expected start date is July 1, 2023.

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Pope Francis met with Russian Orthodox Metropolitan Hilarion of Budapest and Hungary, the former head of external relations for the Moscow Patriarchate, on April 29 in the Vatican nunciature in Budapest. The two discussed Russia’s ongoing war on Ukraine, which neighbors Hungary. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

"How sad and painful it is to see closed doors," he said in his homily. He cited "the closed doors of our selfishness with regard to others; the closed doors of our individualism; a society of growing isolation; the closed doors of our indifference toward the underprivileged and those who suffer, the doors we close toward those who are foreign or unlike us, toward migrants or the poor."

Orbán and President Katalin Novák, who have promoted the migration restrictions, were among the estimated 50,000 people attending the Mass in the square in front of the Hungarian Parliament building.

The pope also preached openness on April 28 during a meeting with Hungary’s bishops, priests, religious, seminarians and catechists.

He called Hungarian Catholics to embrace “prophetic welcoming” and “prophetic receptivity,” which, he said, “is about learning how to recognize the signs of God in the world around us, including places and situations that, while not explicitly Christian, challenge us and call for a response.”

As for his conversation with Metropolitan Hilarion, the pope responded that “peace is made by opening channels. You cannot create peace with closure. I invite everyone to open doors, channels of friendship.”

As for his travel plans, Pope Francis said that when he got sick in late March, he did not lose consciousness, but he was in such pain that he skipped lunch and went to take a nap.

"I did not lose consciousness but, yes, I had a high fever, and at 3 in the afternoon the doctor had me immediately taken to the hospital," he said. “It was a strong case of pneumonia in the lower part of the lungs.”

He spent three nights between March 29-April 1 in Rome’s Gemelli hospital. The Vatican press office said he had doctors diagnosed bronchitis.

"I am willing to do anything that must be done” to promote peace, he said.

Asked about his health, Pope Francis said that when he got sick in late March, he did not lose consciousness, as some media reported, but he was in such pain that he skipped lunch and went to take a nap.

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