By John Shaughnessy

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson quickly focuses on his most memorable moments from World Youth Day in Portugal, a celebration of the Catholic faith with Pope Francis that drew about 1.5 million young people from around the globe.

The archbishop especially recalls his two-day visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima—one day with the 60 U.S. bishops who joined in the celebration of faith on Aug. 1-6, the next day with the other 187 pilgrims from the archdiocese who made the journey to Portugal. “The pilgrimage to Fatima was a particularly grace-filled experience.”

See WORLD YOUTH DAY, page 9

By Sean Gallagher

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Archbishop Charles C. Thompson blesses nine new archdiocesan seminarians during an Aug. 15 Mass at Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, He is assisted by transitional Deacon Samuel Rosko, left, and altar server Joe Gehret. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

With 32 seminarians, archdiocese has most potential future priests since 1997

By Sean Gallagher

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See SEMINARIANS, page 12

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson blesses nine new archdiocesan seminarians during an Aug. 15 Mass at Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, He is assisted by transitional Deacon Samuel Rosko, left, and altar server Joe Gehret. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)
Pro-life advocates rejoice as law saving most unborn babies in Indiana finally takes effect

By Natalie Hofer

Almost a year after the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Indiana, Planned Parenthood and other plaintiffs filed suit on Aug. 30, 2022, charging that Indiana’s new law protecting the lives of most unborn children (Senate Enrolled Act 1, or SEA 1) violated the state’s constitution, the law finally went into effect on Aug. 21.

On that date, the Indiana Supreme Court denied a July 31 request by the plaintiffs to re-hear their case. The Court had ruled on June 30 that the law was not in violation of the state’s constitution.

Now officially in effect, the law prohibits abortions except up to 10 weeks gestation in instances of rape or incest, up to 20 weeks gestation in cases of lethal fetal anomalies, or when the mother’s life is in danger from specific medical issues.

It also requires that abortions take place at a hospital or a hospital-owned surgery center, effectively closing abortion centers in the state.

“This is truly an historic day,” said Indiana Right to Life president and CEO Mike Fichter in a video statement released on Aug. 21. “We are so thankful to the thousands upon thousands of Hoosiers who worked so hard for over 50 years to spare annually.”

In an interview with The Criterion, Right to Life Indianapolis president Marc Tuttle noted that “under the new protections in Indiana law, it’s estimated that 9,000 fewer babies will be aborted per year, and the State has a duty to rejoin at 9,000 precious lives being spared annually.”

Brie Anne Varick, director of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity, shares Tuttle’s sentiments. “We have waited for SEA 1 to finally take effect, and I rejoice that the prayers of the faithful have been answered and abortion clinics in Indiana will finally be closed,” she shared with The Criterion.

Varick also noted that “with any victory in a war, there is joy that the battle has been won, but there is also grief as we acknowledge all the loss.”

There is great work left to do as we, through the grace of God, continue to heal, transform and unify the hearts of our community and our nation.”

Indiana was the first state to call a special General Assembly after the U.S. Supreme Court’s June 24, 2022, decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization returned power to the states in regulating abortion.

SEA 1 was signed into law by Gov. Eric Holcomb on Aug. 6, 2022. It was in effect between Sept. 15-22 that year, but a preliminary injunction issued on Sept. 22 as result of the ACLU/Planned Parenthood lawsuit placed the law on hold.

After the state Supreme Court’s June 30 decision that the law is not in violation of the state’s constitution, SEA 1 remained on hold for 30 days per state law to allow time for the plaintiffs to request a rehearing. A request was filed on July 31, causing the law to remain on hold until the court decided on Aug. 21 not to re-hear the case.

Another case charging that the law violates religious freedom is making its way through the Indiana court system. No preliminary injunction is in place for the case except for the few individuals comprising the plaintiffs.

“The pro-life community stands ready to offer help and assistance to moms in need,” said Tuttle. “Now is the time for Hoosiers to come together to show that we are generous enough to support all moms and babies in our state.”

Varick agreed. “We must double our efforts and continue to pray and support those in need of healing from the trauma of abortion,” said Varick. “We must continue to love and walk with moms in need, so they know they are not alone.

She is hopeful regarding the work ahead. “As Christian people, we do not despair but live in hope,” said Varick. “What God has started, he will bring to completion.”

For information on local ministries and organizations that support moms in need, go to www.walknewlifeonmomsindy.org.

Correction

For the Mass celebrating the 200th anniversary of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyds Knobs on 10:30 a.m. on Sept. 10, 2023, the address should have been 208 N. Main St., Floyds Knobs, IN 47119, not 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.

The 10th annual Indiana Biking for Babies ride to help raise funds for the Indiana Knights of Columbus UltraSound Initiative will take place on Sept. 8-10. Monies raised are used by the Knights to purchase life-saving ultrasound machines for Indiana Women’s Care Centers in hopes of more mothers choosing life for their unborn child.

Several roles need to be filled for this year’s event: bikers, donors, cheerleaders, sponsors and prayer warriors.

Bikers are needed to ride either the entire 170 miles—from the Illinois-Indiana state line west of Terre Haute to the Indiana-Ohio state line east of Richmond—or any leg of the three-day journey. Each rider has a goal of raising at least $300. The team goal is to raise $15,000, the approximate cost of a new ultrasound machine. The Knights of Columbus’ Supreme Headquarters in New Haven, Conn., will match every dollar with the goal of purchasing two ultrasound machines. To donate or to register to ride, visit indianakofc.org.

A midpoint rally will be held at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 5333 E. Washington St., in Indianapolis, at 1:30 p.m. on Sept. 9. The rally will include prayer and talks from pro-life speakers. According to a Proyer Institute Politifact article, nearly 90% of women in a crisis pregnancy choose life for their child after seeing an ultrasound image.

For more information, contact team captain Robert Newport at newportro@ gmail.com or Larry Kunkel, life director for the Indiana State Council of the Knights of Columbus, at life@indianakofc.org.

Indiana Biking for Babies will take place on Sept. 8-10, midpoint rally on Sept. 9.

For people living on the margins—We pray for those persons living on the margins of society, in inhumane life conditions; they may not be overlooked by institutions and never considered of lesser importance.

See Pope Francis’ monthly intentions at archindy.org/popesintentions.
Patricia “Pat” Etling recalls her husband John receiving a call decades ago from a gas station at 2 a.m. There was a family with children stranded there with no money for gas or food. “John said to go ahead and give them some gas, and he’d be by soon with some food,” Pat recalls.

“I said, ‘I don’t understand why people who know they have no money for gas or food go out on the road.’ John said, ‘That’s not for us to ask. They’re here and they need help.’ That really made a mark on me—it’s not ours to ask why, just to help.”

That mentality is still at work 50 years later through Catholic Charities Terre Haute (CCTH), co-founded by John E. Etling and Father Donald Schmidlin (both now deceased) in September of 1973. John served as the agency’s director for 32 years—with help and support from Pat every step of the way.

Through its food bank, Ryves Youth Center, Bethany House temporary emergency shelter, food bank, Christmas Store and other programs, CCTH has helped more than 1.2 million people in need in the Wabash Valley area of western Indiana during the last five decades. “I’m really proud that it was led by my dad and my mom,” says John C. Etling, who has served as the agency’s director since his dad retired in 2005. “There’s a lot of people better off because of it.”

‘If you want to do it, do it’

Teaching at a middle school and at the former Gibault School for Boys, both in Terre Haute, John E. was familiar with—and travailed by—the problems faced by struggling families.

He asked a religious brother at the school who also served on the archdiocesan board for Catholic Charities, “Why can’t we do something in Terre Haute like [Catholic Charities] in Indianapolis?” Pat recalls.

The religious brother asked the board, “and they said if you want to do it, do it.”

When CCTH began in 1973, “It was a time that local civic and religious leaders were troubled by the growing number of people experiencing hunger, suffering from prolonged unemployment and seeking assistance,” says David Bethuram, executive director of the archdiocese’s Secretariat for Catholic Charities.

“It was acknowledged that a more comprehensive and big-picture approach was needed to tackle the ever-increasing challenges. John E. and Patricia answered that call.”

The agency’s first program began in 1975. Refugees from Vietnam were pouring into the United States, and CCTH was tasked with resettling 260 of them.

“That was something else,” says Pat. “Some were whole families.”

Helping the refugees included providing clothing and food, so the agency began a free clothes closet program and a food pantry, of which the former is still in operation.

The agency’s Christmas Store opened in 1976. For three weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas, it provides 600 families with new clothing, undergarments, linens, hygiene products, household items and toys “so they can experience the joy of Christmas morning with their families and maybe have a little hope for moving forward,” says John.

The Christmas Store, which receives items through individual donations as well as unsold items from certain retailers, also serves year-round as a resource for flood and fire victims.

“The ultimate goal ... is long-term housing”


But the agency’s next program, Bethany House temporary emergency shelter, is still in operation. Opened in 1980, Bethany House provides temporary housing, food, clothing and case management for families, single women and married couples seeking safe housing.

Some of its first residents were among the 60 Cuban refugees the agency was asked to resettle in 1981—one of whom still works at the food bank, says Pat.

Since it opened, Bethany House has undergone two major renovations and serves nearly 35,000 people.

“The average stay is 120 days,” says John.

During that time, the staff help residents develop job skills, and mental health counselors are also available. “We especially work to help them get some money in reserve so they can withstand emergencies and not go back into the shelter,” John says. “The ultimate goal is to help people find permanent, stable, long-term housing.”

Bethany House also offered a soup kitchen until 2016. That year, it offered sack lunches on weekends and holidays, but moved the weekday full meal operation to Ryves Youth Center.

“They feel included and loved”

Ryves opened in 1982 in response to a growing need for after-school care for impoverished youths.

“There were three schools in close proximity” in a neighborhood of the former St. Ann Parish, John explains. “The make-up of the community was shifting. There was a lot of unemployment, dysfunction, drug use and poverty.”

Using the basement level of an unfinished church started decades prior by a St. Ann pastor named Father John Ryves, CCTH started an after-school program—named for the priest—for the neighborhood youths, providing them with food and activities.

The program and building—rededicated as Ryves Youth Center at Etling Hall in 2002—have expanded through the years. In addition to activities and a hot meal, the weekday afternoon program for youths ages 5-17 now offers a gym, computer lab, tutoring, educational programs and a full-day preschool for 3- to 5-year-old children experiencing homelessness or other special housing needs.

Ryves has served about 46,300 youths since it was founded 41 years ago. Jim Edwards served as director of the youth center for 40 of those years, retiring in May 2022. At that time, he told The Criterion about Ryves’ many programs.

But those programs “are things,” he said. “What’s more important is [the children] walk in and they feel included and loved, and they need to feel those things.”

See CHARITIES page 14
A woman’s story teaches us to persevere on our journey of faith

We can learn a simple life lesson from the Canaanite woman asking Jesus to heal her daughter in last weekend’s Gospel (Mt 15:21-28).

Her story shows that perseverance is a characteristic that will serve us well on our journey of faith.

With today’s is—it’s all-about-me attitude that some have adopted, it should come as no surprise that wanting something—and demanding it now!—has become a staple for far too many in today’s ever-increasingly secular world. Someone would say even it be the human nature to get anything and everything an individual wants—no questions asked. But it’s an unhealthy habit that we believe is very detrimental if people get everything they want at a moment’s notice.

Past generations were taught at a young age that patience was a virtue. Waiting for something was an important life lesson. (Remember the adage: “Good things come to those who wait”?) But has that life lesson fallen by the wayside—not only where our children are concerned, but also wherever we are on our earthly pilgrimage?

We’ve had universal shepherds past and present talking about the gift of perseverance. During an Angelus address last fall, Pope Francis told his audience perseverance means being disciplined and persistent in understanding what the Lord wants for us, and to not lose focus on what that is. It means asking ourselves, he continued, about how well we persevere in striving to live by faith, justice and charity in our daily lives.

On more than one occasion, St. John Paul II mentioned the perseverance of saints and how it helped them overcome challenges they faced. The majority of saints—from the Blessed Mother to St. Peter, from St. Joan of Arc to St. Maximilian Kolbe and so many others—persevered with the aid of God’s grace through what life presented them, knowing because of their faith they were not facing those difficulties alone. Is there a better example of perseverance in prayer than St. Monica, who prayed for years for the conversion of her son St. Augustine?

John Paul II himself offered a wonderful example of perseverance. Despite an assassination attempt and serious health issues that filled his pontificate during his later years, he lived out his vocation as our shepherd to its fullest until God called him home. Like St. John Paul II and all the saints who have gone before us, the Canaanite woman in the Gospel showed great faith. And despite Jesus’ initial rejection—“I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel” (Mt 15:24)—there is humility and truth in her response: “Lord, help me” (Mt 15:25), she pleads, and later, “Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters” (Mt 15:27).

Jesus’ response, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish,” (Mt 15:28) should offer us all hope as it leads to the woman’s prayer for her daughter’s healing being answered. A search through Scripture will reveal verses that implore us to persevere in prayer on our journey of faith, including in St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans: “Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer” (Rom 12:12).

Like the Canaanite woman, our faith teaches us we must pray constantly and never grow tired of prayer during difficult times. As Pope Francis said during an Angelus address last November: “If we persevere—Jesus reminds us—we have nothing to fear, even in the sad and ugly events of life, not even in the evil we see around us, because we remain grounded in the good. … May Our Lady, servant of the Lord, persevering in prayer fortify our perseverance.”

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/Archbishop Charles T. Thompson

WYD experience provides a great infusion of renewed hope

While I must admit to some hesitation about attending World Youth Day (WYD) 2023 in Lisbon, I certainly have not been so fretful about having done so. It was a wonderful opportunity for the Church and city of Lisbon did an amazing job! The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) staff was great as well.

In addition to the opportunity to greet the other 187 pilgrims from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the time in Lisbon was a special time to bond with several bishops in a way that is not possible amid the full schedule of meetings during our spring and fall USCCB gatherings. Time was well spent with our diocesan groups, other bishops and staff members while having the opportunity to meet so many other people along the way. It was transformational for many.

Our Lady of Fatima certainly held a prominent place of pilgrimage and inspiration for WYD 2023, which was permeated by a Marian theme of “Rise Up!,” based on the Blessed Virgin Mary’s response of visiting Elizabeth immediately following the annunciation by the archangel Gabriel, but very Christ-centered throughout the experience. The small group sharing of the catechetical sessions, based on the synodal way of listening to the experiences, concerns and hopes of the young people, was particularly insightful and inspiring.

The highlight for many, of course, is the opportunity to gather with the Holy Father. Pope Francis was well-received and embraced by pilgrims of all ages. He spoke to the young people about being beloved children of God, embraced by the Church, called to holiness and mission, and the need to trust in the mercy of God to heal wounds.

He especially encouraged young people to arise above their fears and
dare to believe in themselves as capable of missionary discipleship in making a difference in the lives of others. Praying the Stations of the Cross was a particularly moving experience.

The bishops had several opportunities to encounter the young people, both within our diocesan groups and in various ways of dialogue and accompaniment. We met them in parks, churches, plazas, restaurants and on the streets. They exuded joy for the Gospel, love for Jesus, devotion to the Catholic faith, and a desire to serve.

Their enthusiasm for Jesus Christ and the Church, especially during and following the large events, was particularly palpable.

Several spoke of having profound personal experiences of encountering the Lord and being called to consider a vocation to the priesthood or religious life and several others shared about concerns back home for family members, friends and others who had fallen away from the Church and/or experiencing struggles in their lives.

Still others just wanted to encounter and be encountered. As depicted on the official WYD 2023 emblem, “JM7,” it seemed that all were entrusting their hopes and desires and fears, to God through Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

The experience of WYD provides a great infusion of renewed hope. The young people, we must always keep in mind, are not the future Church but the young Church of today.

As we know through engagement at confirmations, graduations, young adult gatherings, etc., young people have a great need to be formed and led by the Church by way of their gifts, talents and energy.

We can never tire of calling them forth and embracing all that they have to offer.

(Archbishop Charles T. Thompson is the shepherd of the archdiocese.)

Letter to the Editor

Thank you, Archbishop Thompson, for reaffirming God has a plan for us

This is to say “thanks” for Archbishop Charles T. Thompson’s column on life (Lazarus’ story shows God’s love and life-giving power”) in the July 28 issue of The Criterion.

There’s so much bad news on the TV—almost every night—that sometimes it’s easy to wonder: “God, where are you? Are you still in charge?”

The archbishop’s column reaffirms that God is not only in charge but has a plan for each of us, and that plan is centered on knowing him, being in a relationship with him, and life.

In the end, even death will not stop this plan, being swallowed up by life. In just a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we will go from this world to the next and see Jesus.

Thank you, Archbishop Thompson, for the column and the friendly and encouraging reminder.

Sonny Shanks

Corydon

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God” (Communio et Progressio, 116). Letters from readers are welcomed and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God. Letters should be relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to two letters every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters submitted but not published for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send 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.
el conocimiento de Dios? ¿Qué incomprensibles son sus juicios, e inscrutables sus caminos? (Rom 11:33). Podríamos expresar el mismo asombro absoluto en respuesta a la pregunta de Jesús: “¿Quién dice la gente que es el Hijo del hombre?”

Dios Padre nos ha concedido el gran don de su Hijo único mediante la acción del Espíritu Santo, y nosotros hemos sido facultados para proclamar esta Buena Nueva hasta los confines del mundo. Nuestra respuesta a la pregunta de Jesús es “el Cristo, el Hijo del Dios vivo”. Y aún más asombroso, “que nos hayan invitado a unirnos a Pedro y a todos los discípulos en la construcción de la Iglesia de Cristo aquí en la Tierra por todo el mundo hasta el final de los tiempos” (Rom 11:34-36).

El Papa Benedicto XVI escribió en una ocasión que para los cristianos la única respuesta aceptable a la pregunta de Jesús es una declaración profunda pero sencilla (como la de Pedro) que afirmar a Jesús como “el sentido de mi vida y del mundo”.

Si Jesús no es el centro fundamental de nuestra propia vida, no hay forma de que pudamos proclamarlo eficazmente como “el Cristo, el Hijo del Dios vivo” a los demás. Si no podemos dar testimonio de Cristo como el sentido de nuestras propias vidas, entonces creer en él es relativo. Al igual que los discípulos originales, lo único que podemos hacer es informar lo que dicen los demás. “Jesús es un hombre bueno, un profeta, un sanador o un predicador que nos inspira.”

Pero Jesús nos pide mucho más: nos pide que declaramos con toda nuestra mente, corazón y fuerza que él es Dios, el sentido de nuestras vidas y del mundo. Nuestra respuesta a la pregunta del Señor no debe ser nada evasiva. O lo es todo para nosotros (el centro de nuestro ser) o es meramente incidental (al margen de nuestras vidas).

Cuando oigamos proclamar este Evangelio este fin de semana, respondamos con audacia: “¿Tú eres el Cristo, el Hijo del Dios viviente?”
Catholic Charities Bloomington to host Mental Health Wellness Luncheon on Sept. 20

Catholic Charities Bloomington will hold a Mental Health Wellness Luncheon at Ivy Tech Community College Bloomington’s Shreve Hall, 200 National Rd. E., at 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sept. 20. From the west parking lot, enter at door #9.

At the luncheon, which is part of the program’s 40th anniversary, one of the agency’s clients will share her story. The event also includes learnable techniques for lowering stress, door prizes and more.

The event is free, but donations are requested. Checks can be made payable to Catholic Charities Bloomington. Those who wish to cover the cost of their meal can add $10 to their donation. Registration is required by Sept. 7.

For more information or to register, call 317-547-7994.

September 12 Fall Festival, 5-10 p.m., live music, kids and teen games, raffles, bingo, beer and wine garden, food including hand-breaded tenders, hand-buttered corn dogs, hot air balloon rides (depending on weather), free admission. Information: 317-831-4142, nwagner@stm-church.org.

September 15-16 Northside Events and Social Business Exchange, presenter Jack Schmitz, CYO executive director, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, $18 members, $24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Sept. 12. Information, registration curt@BC-E-Beg.

September 10 St. Michael Parish, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville, Fall Festival, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., eat-in or carry-out dinners, concessions, soup by the gallon, cash raffle, quilt, raffle, prizes, games, free admission. Information: 317-547-7994.

September 8 Right to Life of Johnson and Morgan Counties to host benefit dinner on Sept. 21 in Mooresville

Right to Life of Johnson and Morgan Counties will hold a benefit dinner at Mt. Gilead Church, 6019 E. State Road 144, in Mooresville, at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 21.

Attorney General Todd Rokita will offer remarks at the event, and Greg Mayo, local author of the book Almost Daddy: The Forgotten Story, will serve as keynote speaker. Mayo has spent decades talking to groups about abortion, recovery and authentic masculinity. He speaks nationwide about the pain and struggle men experience after an abortion. The cost is $35, with the meal catered by The House of Mooresville. Registration must be received by Sept. 14.

For more information or to register, call 317-560-6078 or email RightToLifeIFC@MCI.com.

Theodore and Mary (Agresta) Kappes, members of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 25. The couple was married in St. Theresa Church in Paterson, N.J., on Aug. 25, 1963. They have five children: Debra Ann Hiner, Susan Gonzales, Kathleen MacGill, Rachel Vantrease and Michael Maley.

The couple also has nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Jon and Pat (Popp) Millman, members of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 26. The couple was married in St. Roch Church in Sellersburg on Aug. 26, 1963.

They have two children: Karen Haas and Clark Millman.

The couple also has four grandchildren.

Anthony and Sandra (Dunn) Krenz, members of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Aug. 10. The couple was married in St. Roch Church in Indianapolis on Aug. 10, 1968.

They have two children: Matthew and Todd Krenz.

The couple also has two grandchildren.

Donald and Barbara (Striby) Carr, members of St. Martin of Tours Parish in Martinsville, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on Sept. 12.

The couple was married in St. Neri Church in Indianapolis on Sept. 12, 1953.

They have seven children: Christine Anderson, Barbara Kindred, Donna Phelan, Mary Wheatley, Andrew, Michael and Timothy Carr.

The couple also has 13 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

George and Bette-Jane (Hendershot) Maley, members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on Aug. 25.

The couple was married in St. Theresa Church in Paterson, N.J., on Aug. 25, 1963.

They have five children: Debra Ann Hiner, Susan Gonzales, Kathleen MacGill, Rachel Vantrease and Michael Maley.

The couple also has nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Events Calendar

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The event is free, but donations are requested. Checks can be made payable to Catholic Charities Bloomington. Those who wish to cover the cost of their lunch can add $10 to their donation. Registration is required by Sept. 7.

For more information or to register, call 317-560-6078 or email RightToLifeIFC@MCI.com.

Those who cannot attend the lunch can opt to donate to Catholic Charities Bloomington by calling 317-547-7994.

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/evens.
Francisco Javier y Teodora Guérin fueron evangelizadores apasionados y llenos del Espíritu

A principios de este año, el Papa Francisco aprovechó su audiencia general semanal de los miércoles para ofrecer sus reflexiones sobre la labor misionera de la Iglesia, destacando a varias de las mujeres y hombres santos que han predicado el Evangelio con extraordinario celo apostólico.

Francisco Javier, para ilustrar lo que entiende por “modelo ejemplar de celo apostólico,” menciona a Francisco Javier, a quien San Francisco Javier y la Madre Teodora Guérin nos hablamos de su vida y obra en el Decreto. La Madre Teodora Guérin (1798-1856) se enfrentó a un anticatolicismo hostil, al hambre y la privación, y una indigencia casi completa como resultado de un incendio que destruyó la escuela de la comunidad. A pesar de todo, la Madre Teodora (como se la conocía entonces) perseveró. Bajo su liderazgo florecieron las Hermanas de la Providencia en Estados Unidos, educando a miles de niños en Indiana y el Oeste Medio.

San Francisco Javier y la Madre Teodora Guérin (santa Teodora) nos muestran cómo tomaron en serio la llamada que todos hemos recibido a ser evangelizadores llenos del Espíritu. Como nos enseña el Papa Francisco: “salir de la patria para predicar el Evangelio […] es el catolicismo.”

Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.
By John Shaughnessy

The desire to have an impact on even more young lives came in a moment of prayer and inspiration for Bruce Scifres. For 27 years, he had been the head coach of the football team at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, leading a program that stressed the foundations of faith, character and a Catholic education while earning seven state championships in his tenure.

Yet after Roncalli’s undefeated, championship season in 2016, Scifres embraced the opportunity to influence more young people in 2017 by becoming the executive director of the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization (CYO)—which each year draws about 20,000 children and youths from across central and southern Indiana in such areas as sports, music, chess and Camp Rancho Framasa in Brown County.

“A key thing that led to me leaving Roncalli and coming to CYO was a coaching retreat I attended around 2015,” Scifres recalls. “One of the things they had us do was to write a personal mission statement about why we coach. They said to write two sentences. The first sentence focused on who we were and the second sentence focused on what we wanted to be. It was something like, ‘I want to influence kids to be the best version of themselves that they can be’ and ‘I want to make a difference in their lives’.

“After I had written that, I kept it in my office. It’s something I’ve held on to ever since then.”

Scifres recalls. “One of the things they had us do was to write a personal mission statement about why we coach. They said to write two sentences. The first sentence focused on who we were and the second sentence focused on what we wanted to be. It was something like, ‘I want to influence kids to be the best version of themselves that they can be’ and ‘I want to make a difference in their lives’.

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The Criterion
Page 8

Q. What led to your decision to retire?
A. “I’ve loved my time at CYO. It’s been an honor to work for the archdiocese. I’m a better person because of it. My faith life is stronger. I feel like I’ve done a lot of really good things here, but I feel there’s even a broader realm of people to influence. I’ve had some opportunities to speak with coaches, and I hope I’ve had a positive impact on them, but with all the other administrative duties that are included in the executive director’s role here, that was something I kind of missed the daily interaction with churches and athletes. After praying about it for several months and hitting full retirement age, I just thought I wanted to do this project in retirement.”

Q. Talk about the new ministry you want to pursue in retirement.
A. “Beyond the Goal Line Sports Ministry. I look to put on conferences, workshops, retreats for coaches. Football guys commit themselves heart and soul to playing the game and crossing that goal line. And every sport has a goal like that. But when you’ve done that for the last time, what lies beyond that? All of us will play our last game eventually. And so, what kind of preparation do we receive from coaches and parents beyond that last game? I believe that our ultimate goal line sits at the pearly gates of heaven. That’s the final goal line we want to cross. If we believe that heaven is this wonderful place, where we get to spend eternity with God, then it doesn’t end there really. I think there’s two more questions we have to ask ourselves. Number one, if we are blessed to cross that final goal line, who are we taking with us? And what about the preparation do we receive from coaches and parents beyond that last game? I believe that our ultimate goal line sits at the pearly gates of heaven. That’s the final goal line we want to cross. If we believe that heaven is this wonderful place, where we get to spend eternity with God, then it doesn’t end there really. I think there’s two more questions we have to ask ourselves. Number one, if we are blessed to cross that final goal line, who are we taking with us? And what kind of preparation do we receive from coaches and parents beyond that last game?”

Q. Talk about your own faith journey to eventually becoming a Catholic.
A. “I was raised a Christian for sure. Went to an interdenominational church, Camby Community Church. Mom and dad made sure we went to church every Sunday. That’s been good for me, too, to have an innate appreciation for different faith denominations. “My wife, Jackie, was from a large Catholic family in Seymour. We got married in the Catholic Church in 1987, and then I came back to be the head coach at Roncalli in 1990. So I was teaching at a Catholic school, married to a Catholic gal, going to a Catholic church with her, and we committed that we were going to raise our kids Catholic.”

Q. What will you remember most about leading the CYO?
A. “For sure, the best part of CYO is the people. Our office staff here and our camp staff are just amazing people. We work hard because there’s a lot of work that needs to be done, but we love each other, we respect each other, we have fun. And through all that, I firmly believe we’re doing God’s work.

“We’re helping kids with wholesome, meaningful activities, and we also influence their families doing so. There’s the sense that we’re affecting thousands of lives every year in a very positive and impactful way, presenting opportunities for kids to do good things. My mantra here is the same one I had at Roncalli. Without question, our number one job is to help the young people we serve get to heaven. It’s been very rewarding doing that kind of work.”

Q. What terms of Beyond the Goal Line.
A. “Research shows over and over again for athletes that next to a young person’s parents, so many times a coach is the next most influential adult in their life. And that influence can be both positive and negative. If a coach doesn’t have his priorities right, if he doesn’t see the big picture, it can be a very negative influence on young people.

“Recreational coaches teach a kid how to play a game. Transformational coaches teach a kid how to play a game and have fun, but way beyond that, they teach them how to be the person God created them to be—how to become better husbands and wives and parents and productive members of society. Coaches have such a wonderful platform to do that.”

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WORLD YOUTH DAY

continued from page 1

moment," Archbishop Thompson recalls. “Witnessing the faith, devotion and enthusiasm of people was a deeply profound grace. It was quite evident that the devotion and enthusiasm for the faith exuded by young people had an inspiring impact on Pope Francis and the bishops.

“Despite the heat, humidity and various obstacles along the way, the young people continued to evidence great joy, energy, curiosity and passion for their Catholic faith.”

The archbishop notes that the theme of this year’s World Youth Day had a clear connection to the Blessed Mother—both with the emphasis on Our Lady of Fatima and the “Rise up and go in haste” sessions related to Mary’s actions after the annunciation that are captured in Luke 1:39. At the same time, the archbishop says, “the celebrations of Mass and eucharistic adoration provided a very Christ-centered focus.”

The closing Mass of World Youth Day celebrated by Pope Francis in Lisbon provided another memorable moment for the archbishop.

“Pope Francis consistently and emphatically proclaimed the unconditional love of God for each of us, as well as faith in each of us to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ with the grace of the Holy Spirit,” the archbishop says. “He stressed the power of that love to heal wounds, warm hearts and overcome our fears. He made it very clear that all are welcome and have a place within the Church, the family of God.”

That welcoming, embracing message echoed throughout all the events of the World Youth Day celebration, according to the archbishop.

“In the spirit of synodality, it was important to listen to the hopes, dreams, concerns and insights of those participating in World Youth Day. Many young people, including several of those from the archdiocese, participated in respectful, fruitful and genuine dialogue.”

The archbishop has a hope of his own after those conversations and experiences of World Youth Day.

“It is certainly my hope that those participating in World Youth Day, whether in person or virtual, will carry with them that message of being beloved children of God with a sense of belonging, meaning and purpose as missionary disciples—to embrace their role in the Gospel mission of Jesus Christ to transform the world in bringing about peace, hope, healing and reconciliation.”

“It was nothing like I could have ever imagined”

At 18, Caroline Bell viewed participating in World Youth Day as a special way to thank God for being with her through her cancer diagnosis and recovery earlier this year.

“Through cancer, I was really able to have my relationship with God really flourish and grow strong because of the trials I had gone through,” says Bell, whose thyroid cancer is now in remission.

While she had the opportunity to share her gratitude with God in Portugal, her experiences were still beyond her expectations.

“Even though I tried to prepare myself, it was nothing like I could have ever imagined. Being surrounded by so many people who shared the same faith, who have the same love for Christ, was just so amazing, so beautiful.”

A member of St. Malachi Parish in Brownsburg, Bell became overwhelmed with emotion when she entered a setting where nearly 200 huts were set up for people to take part in the sacrament of reconciliation, with long lines stretching outside the tents—“everyone waiting to receive the grace of God and forgiveness for our sins.”

The 2023 graduate of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis also became emotional when she joined the 26,000 pilgrims from the United States “on their hands and knees, just worshipping and praising God” during eucharistic adoration in a field.

She even had a feeling of joy as she walked 5 miles in near-100-degree heat to sleep overnight in a field—in preparation for being there the following morning when Pope Francis celebrated Mass for 1.5 million people.

“Just gratefulness to God for being able to be there,” she says about the entire experience. “And I really felt that even more with Mary being one of the main themes for this—to go in haste. She went with haste to see Elizabeth after she said yes to God. I could feel God’s presence. There was just an overwhelming joy and peace that I had never experienced before.”

Her goal is to continue to grow in her faith, to draw closer to God as she begins her studies at St. Louis University, hoping to pursue a career researching cures for brain diseases.

“One thing that Pope Francis said was that this is an amazing time to be here together, but what really matters is what you choose to do after this when you leave. Thinking about that, I thought about how I could grow my faith. So, I’m trying to go to daily Mass and say the rosary every day and really grow in my prayer life.”

“The joy of being gathered together in Christ”

One of the distinctive features of World Youth Day is to meet people from different countries and cultures, at the same time knowing there’s the bond that’s already shared as followers of Christ and members of the Church.

That reality came to life in a memorable way for Father James Brockmeier, director of the archdiocese’s Office of Worship and the rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

“The thing that impacted me the most about World Youth Day was encountering so many young people, both in our own archdiocesan group and from countries all over the world, who shared their love for Jesus with joy,” says the 33-year-old Father Brockmeier.

“At Fatima, along with a few of our pilgrims, I met a young man from the Netherlands named Marcel. When he found out we were from the United States he got a big smile on his face.

“He was there with his twin brother and some other friends who were students in Amsterdam. Marcel shared with me and our pilgrims how much he wanted his identical twin brother to be a priest. With his brother right next to him, he said, ‘I know him better than he knows himself, and he would be such a wonderful priest.’ He asked me to tell his brother how I decided to become a priest, so I get to share my vocation story.

“I told Marcel’s brother I would come to his ordination in Amsterdam if he discerns the priesthood. I was so moved at how much these young men loved our Lord and how much they wanted to share that joy with us.”

Two other moments stood out to Father Brockmeier.

“Another memorable highlight was the experience of hundreds of thousands of people being silent at the same time during eucharistic adoration. Only Jesus could quiet the hearts of that huge crowd.”

Over and over again, I saw people having reunions with friends they hadn’t seen in a while but ran into at World Youth Day. It was a little vision of the joy of
I had no idea what it was going to be like or how many everyone at World Youth Day was invited to attend, and a big, life-changing, groundbreaking moment in my life. We were together in Christ was present in everything."

The opening Mass was the very first large event that happened when we arrived in Lisbon, Portugal. (Submitted photo by Emily Mastronicola)

"God calls us to be interrupters in other people's lives so that we can show them his love, his truth and his goodness," she says. "Just like our presence on the faith on the highway for us, so too are we called to interrupt and speak God's love into the lives of others who don't know God, who need his presence, who need his light. Lisbon, so too are we called to interrupt and speak God's love into the lives of others who don't know God, who have fallen away from the Church, or who don't want God as something to be actively practiced."

"A big thing for me when we were there was the eucharistic adoration," he says. "We'd go, go, go all day. It was refreshing to just sit down and talk to people and offer up what was on our hearts and whatever was hurting on my body. Being able to offer that up to my family at home and people who I know are struggling with things."

The challenges of the pilgrimage—the heat, the exhaustion—"enthroned tapped into a constant message shared by Father Jonathan Meyer, who serves the four parishes in Dearborn County. Father Meyer told the group that Jesus was with them, constantly seeking them. Hombach experienced that feeling at different points of the journey."

"This really showed me that Jesus is seeking us. He wants us to come seek him as well. To tell him changing after us was really powerful, just to know that he really is with us at all times."

A view of the meaning of friendship

The scene is engrained in Father Navarrete's mind, a moment that reminds him of one of the most powerful stories of friendship and faith. He remembers seeing a small hill looking for a better view of Pope Francis during the day of his arrival. I am hopeful that our pilgrimage to the vigil site brought them comfort and hope.

"I met pilgrims from Canada and Australia, rode the metro with pilgrims from Germany and France, and befriended a group of Singaporean pilgrims through the blazing temperatures, it was a beautiful slice of cultural discovery and celebration of Christ and community."

This experience overall reminded me that we are all pilgrims, that this earthly life isn't permanent. We are working together to reach our heavenly home. Things are perfect, and there are always challenges throughout life, so we must trust in Jesus Christ to guide us in the moments we have little influence over."

"We arrived two hours early just to try to get a spot within the park and had to wait for 30 minutes just to get through security. While we were waiting, a group of our students decided to go into the park, groups were waving their country's flags, singing popular songs from their cultures, and there was an excitement in the air that I don't think I've ever experienced before.

Once we were seated in the park, sitting on our makeshift tarps and on patches of grass and dirt, I was overcome with emotion and sat there until the Mass continued to pour into the park.

By the time Mass began, there were over 100,000 people packed into the park, with everyone speaking the Mass parts in their native languages. I don't think I've ever experienced anything like that before."

Our Mass was the very first large event that everyone at World Youth Day was invited to attend, and a big, life-changing, groundbreaking moment in my life. We were together in Christ was present in everything."
He said the conviction was “a real opportunity to recognize that I have 31 brothers now. I can grow in love and charity for them.”

Transitional Deacon Samuel Rosko reflected during the convocation that fraternity among the seminarians is first based in prayer.

“The most important thing we can do in these days is to grow in our relationship with Christ in prayer and in our love of the Lord,” he said.

Praying together at Mass, in the Liturgy of the Hours and in a daily holy hour during the convocation, Deacon Rosko said, strengthens the spiritual bonds of the seminarians when they go their separate ways for a year of seminary formation.

“Having moments of prayer together, when we’re all kneeling before our Lord in the Eucharist just before the start of the semester, will unite us in the mystical body of Christ even though we’ll be separated at different seminaries,” he said.

“God is pouring out his graces on our archdiocese.”

What has led to the greatest number of seminarians for the archdiocese in a quarter of a century?

Priests involved in promoting vocations and priestly formation and archdiocesan seminarians spoke with The Criterion about several potential reasons.

Father Augenstein has been involved in vocations ministry for 10 years. He was vocations director and oversaw the archdiocese’s seminarians from 2013-19. Since 2019, he has ministered as director of seminarians and as pastor of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis.

When he served as vocations director full time, he was the only priest assigned to that ministry, which limited his ability to meet one-on-one with men discerning the priesthood.

“I was only able to be at one place at one time,” he noted.

In late 2019, Archbishop Thompson created a team of deacons, Deacon Anthony Armbruster and Deacon Bobby Vogel.

Variegated: Although many factors may play into the significant growth in archdiocesan seminarians, Father Keucher said its ultimately rooted in prayer.

“Any vocation is a work of God. You can analyze it to a certain extent, but you can’t get to the final reason. It’s all God’s grace at the end of the day.”

(For more information on the 32 archdiocesan seminarians and on a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.)
By Natalie Hoefer

Throughout the Bible, three archangels are listed by name: Gabriel, messenger of good news to Mary and Zechariah; Michael, defender of heaven who cast the devil into hell; and Raphael, the traveling companion of Tobias.

The recipients will receive their awards at the 2023 messenger, defender and companion of Tobias. The winners are Beacon of Hope Crisis Center CEO Sandy Ziebold for the “messenger”, Angel Michael Award; Megan Weisenbach Foundation co-founder Theresa Weisenbach for the “companion”, Angel Raphael Award; and Roncalli High School English and psychology teacher Kim Striby for the “messenger” Angel Gabriel Award.

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Three women receive Sisters of St. Benedict’s Angels of Grace awards

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Kim Striby

Kim Striby

Kim Striby is in her 18th year of teaching English and psychology at Roncalli High School. Throughout her time at Roncalli, she has earned the respect of her students and peers for excellence in the classroom as well as her giving heart.

Striby has a passion for teaching, but her focus is not so much for teaching, but her giving heart. She lives her life with a daily focus on how she can help others.

For more information about Roncalli High School, visit their website at www.roncalli.org.

*(The Angels of Grace Luncheon will be held at Primo Banquet Hall, 2015 National Ave., in Indianapolis, from 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. on Sept. 30. Tickets are $45. Proceeds benefit women’s programming at Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Beech Grove. For more information, to register, to donate or to be a sponsor of the event, go to benedictinn.org/angels-of-grace, call 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictinn@benedictinn.org.)*
We need to be part of the solution
continued from page 3

“We need to be part of the solution”

The year 1983 also saw the founding of another still-thriving program—the Catholic Charities Terre Haute Food Bank. By providing food to distributors, its impact in helping those experiencing a food emergency or food insecurity is felt beyond Terre Haute.

After remaining in the same location for 37 years, the food bank opened a new, 10,000-square-foot warehouse—more than double the size of the former structure—in 2019.

In an interview with The Criterion at the new facility’s grand opening, the agency’s then-development director Jennifer Buesl (now CCHT assistant agency director Jennifer Tames), said Feeding America’s 2018 Map the Meal Gap survey showed that one in seven adults and one in five children in the food bank’s “seven-county service area are food insecure—they lack access to adequate amounts of nutritious food to lead a healthy lifestyle.”

That need for food grew exponentially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the food bank never ceased operations.

“We saw so many households and families who were one missed paycheck away from not making ends meet,” said CCHT development manager Jessica Murphy in a recent interview with The Criterion. “When I know that we can provide them a service and do it in a way that is respectful and makes them feel comfortable, I think that’s so rewarding.”

Since the food bank opened, it has distributed nearly 74 million pounds of food, equating to more than 61.5 million meals for more than 1.2 million people.

Its latest improvement was the opening of a covered drive-through pick-up space in July.

Looking to the future, John says he would like to see the food bank create “a hub and spoke system, where we would provide food and maintain hubs in under-served or more remote and rural areas to take the load off of pantries and so people can drive 5 instead of 30 miles to get to food.”

He would also like to see the food bank “move to a network of pantries and partners offering more produce and less processed food.”

“We want people to have healthier options, because we know better food choices result in better health care outcomes. We need to be part of the solution by teaching people that there is great value in eating healthier and doing things that have better health consequences from better choices.”

“An opportunity God put in front of me”

While some might say CCHT was blessed by the Etlings’ impact, Pat says the opposite is true.

“Our kids have always been involved in the agency, she says of the couple’s 10 children, one of whom died from leukemia two months after the agency started.

Pat retired from her official roles with CCHT in 2009, four years after her husband retired in 2005.

When their son John C., then 45, took on the role as agency director, it was quite different from his educational and professional experience.

“I studied microbiology and environmental science,” he says. “I had a different idea of what my future would be—up until 9/11,” when the Twin Towers in New York were attacked in 2001.

“That was a pivotal time in my life to re-evaluate things. My family and I were living in Michigan. I knew that my dad was thinking about retiring, and he asked if I was interested in moving back to Terre Haute.

For more information, please contact us at 317-236-1482 or ccri@archindy.org.

Have you ever struggled with whether or not to make a charitable gift anonymously or publicly recognized? There are pros and cons to both. And it’s ultimately the donor’s decision.

While some are motivated to remain anonymous in their gift-giving out of humility, others wish to conceal their wealth to deter too many organizations from soliciting them. These are all certainly valid reasons; we challenge you to consider the following:

We need models of generous Catholics to inspire others to greater generosity. We also need to set an example for the next generation of young Catholics, who through your stories of faithfulness and sacrifice, will also come to learn stewardship as a way of life.

And finally, your legacy gift at the time of your passing stands as a testimony to the life you lived in giving back to God.

Whatever your choice, know that at the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Catholic Community Foundation, we will always honor your decision and follow through on your gift intentions.

For more information, please contact us at 317-236-1482 or ccri@archindy.org.

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11am to 6pm
Raffles, Games for All Ages & Beer Garden with Live Entertainment
Grand Raffle: $5,000 1 for $5 or 5 for $20 Runner-Up: $600 $100 Drawings every half-hour (12-5)
Kids Games: Have Fun and Win Prizes
Carryout Stand Indoor/Outdoor Sausage Drive-Thru
Chicken Dinners
$15 Fried Half-Chicken
Grand Raffle: $5,000 1 for $5 or 5 for $20 Runner-Up: $600 $100 Drawings every half-hour (12-5)
Kids Games: Have Fun and Win Prizes
Carryout Stand Indoor/Outdoor Sausage Drive-Thru
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true freedom we find our real dignity. “Freedom then,” writes St. John Paul, “is rooted in the truth about man, and it is ultimately directed towards communion” (#96).

One’s conscience judges an act. It does not determine moral truth. “Conscience” is a key word in “Veritatis Splendor,” appearing 108 times. St. John Paul knew that many people erroneously think their conscience is the final guide to what is truth and good. “The individual conscience is accorded the status of a supreme tribunal of moral judgment,” he writes, “which hands down categorical and infallible decisions about good and evil” (#32).

He notes that some people set aside truth and replace it with “a criterion of sincerity, authenticity, and being at peace with oneself,” which can lead to “a radically subjective conception of moral judgment” (#32). Ironically, those claiming they have attained truth by appealing to their conscience actually deny the existence of a universal, objective truth. The problem worsens when they construct a morality based on whims divorced from universal truth. The conscience is given “the prerogative of independently determining the criteria of good and evil and then acting accordingly.” This reflects “an individualistic ethic, wherein each individual is faced with his own truth, different from the truth of others” (#32). Ultimately, this leads to a denial of “the very idea of human nature” (#32). There are two ways of approaching reality: trying to create our own reality, which is destructive, or conforming ourselves to reality—what really is. And, importantly, but contrary to popular opinion, one’s conscience can be wrong.

“Conscience, as the judgment of an act, is not exempt from the possibility of error” (#62). The conscience cannot create moral truth. Rather, it makes an informed judgment about actions, based on what is true and morally right, because conscience “is a moral judgment about man and his actions, a judgment either of acquittal or of condemnation, according as human acts are in conformity or not with the law of God written on the heart” (#59).

In 1998, then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger described “Veritatis Splendor” as “a milestone in the elaboration of the moral message of Christianity” while noting that it had “more positive receptions among thinkers outside the Church than among some proponents of Catholic theology.”

The situation remains much the same today. Truths about man, Christ, freedom and conscience still require understanding supporting and undermining it. Conscience is a powerful, but not infallible, guide to moral truth.

St. John Paul II is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Patrick Church in Smithtown, N.Y. Aug. 6 marked the 30th anniversary of the issuing of his encyclical letter on moral theology, “Veritatis Splendor” (“The Splendor of Truth”). (OSV News photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)
Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Anita Bardo

Pope Francis encourages us to be “a missionary Church, to be evangelizers.” What we’ve forgotten is how to listen, understand the cultures and traditions of others and use this to build bridges and communities.

This is not a one-time process but something we need to do again and again. We are all called to heal, reignite and talk about it. Discernment is so evident. Being present is what leads us to trust in God’s grace and lean on God through our prayers, which allow us to be a more authentic community.

We must use our imagination, and we must bring our creativity to evangelize by reaching our unchurched, our alienated, our practitioners of all faiths, who are all yearning for the Gospel.

Our experience with God, our encounter with him is, as Pope Francis says, “when we allow God to take us beyond ourselves.” Then we have that desire to share with others.

I would like to share with you a story from an address on Archbishop Pierre’s thoughts and Pope Francis’ teachings.

We are all invited to enter a process, opening our hearts and sharing our love with one another. Where are we? Where is our Church leadership? We are in a spiritual state of arrested and discarded, all trying to find our spiritual path. Are we lost in the worldly way or lost in the Church itself? Is our Church losing its sense of discord, all trying to find our spiritual path. Are we lost in the worldly way or lost in the Church itself? Is our Church losing its sense of understanding the direction we are going. Are they looking for：

The life of faith is richer for both.

He invited them to “examine how well local churches embody the characteristics of an evangelizing community... Do we go forth to make a difference? Do we take initiative? Do we accompany others, showing patience? What are the fruits that we are seeing from our evangelization efforts?” Furthermore, he said our local Churches demonstrate the joy, which flows from the Eucharist.

We need to trust more and lean on God through our relationships.

St. Paul said that “for all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God” (Rom 8:14). We don’t need to know that same Spirit. Every teacher and guide others. Are you ready to evangelize?

Perspectives

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

Interreligious relationships can enrich personal, spiritual life. Recently, a Passionist priest came to Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis for a mission appeal. He had flown from Australia, where he works in the Passionist headquarters and assists at a large local parish. His “base” for his mission appeals is in Louisville, Ky.

He grew up in India, in the southeastern-most state of Tamil Nadu. To the west is the state of Kerala. Both are home to the majority of Indian Catholics.

Father Giltus Mathias is one of four children. His father was Roman Catholic, his mother, Hindu. Raised as a Catholic, he grew up learning to appreciate the Hindu philosophy, its feasts, food, and customs.

He told me his life of faith was richer because of his exposure to Hinduism. Richer, but not threatened. His relationships with both Catholic father and Hindu mother were primordial and formative. Baptized a Catholic, he embraced his faith even as he witnessed another.

This past year, I met a married couple: he, a practicing Jew, she a practicing Catholic. They raised their three children in the Catholic faith and taught them Judaism on Saturday, and their Catholic parish on Sunday.

This family found a richness in the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. They spoke openly about their varied religious and worship experiences in their home. They maintain that these experiences open them to a variety of interreligious relationships.

Through my life, I have been blessed to know other people in interreligious marriages. Their trust in their relationship has allowed for us to be open to what is different and what is good in the other’s belief structure. Not all of us have been able to meet such couples. Not all of us have been able to be in relationship with a person of another religion.

It is the relationship as human beings which comes first. The trust built through the relationship can lead to openness to our differences, especially how we see God, pray, worship and the culture(s) from which our religions emerge and blend.

On Sept. 10 from 1-5 p.m., the 11th annual Festival of Faiths will take place at University Park in downtown Indianapolis.

As in past years, many religions will be represented: Sikh, Hindu, Jain, Bahá’í, Islam, Judaism, Buddhist, Pagan, Latter Day Saints, Roman Catholic, and other Christians, to name a few.

Nourishing our spirits is this year’s theme. The festival booths will offer a variety of ways each religion feeds the spirit of its believers: prayer, worship, friendship, food, festivals.

The archdiocese will have three connected booths.

Our Fatima Retreat House will show how a retreat house offers spiritual nourishment opportunities for Catholics, Christians, and others. In 1996, Fatima was the host for the inaugural and subsequent meetings of the Midwest Region Catholic-Muslim Dialogue of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The archdiocesan Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs will occupy the other two booths. In one, the Eucharist as “the source and summit” of our spiritual nourishment will be the central focus. In the last, various Catholic spiritualities— Benedictine, Dominican, Trappist and Jesuit—will be offered. Practitioners of each will share the uniqueness in how it expresses a Catholic spiritual life.

The festival offers moments for all visitors from a variety of religions to learn something about each other. Such learning, if carried forward, can lead to understanding. This can lead to appreciation and interreligious understandings and a growth in the value and embracing of one’s own religion.

Where does this lead us? It explores the spiritual richness, diversity, and commonalities of the human spiritual journey. Be well fed, literally and figuratively!

Moving by faith and love.

The festival offers moments for all visitors from a variety of religions to learn something about each other. Such learning, if carried forward, can lead to understanding.

(Father Rick Ginther is director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs. He is also the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis.)

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Parents teach their children the most important lessons

A new school year has begun. For some families, it may have started a month or more ago. For others, kiddos have had to wait until school only in recent days.

Learning, however, never stops at home. More broadly speaking, no matter how important—neither does formation.

God has given parents the mission to form their children to become adults who are solidly among the disciples of Christ living lives of virtue and holiness.

This basic human reality is why the Church recognizes parents as the primary educational authority of their children. It is the reason why our Catholic schools, no matter how faith-filled they may be, is it’s not any of the many dedicated educators who staff our school. And it’s certainly not supposed to be our government in general or the greater power of our technology-driven culture.

Parents, the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, are to create a “special school” wherein tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity and disinterested service are the rule. The home is to be a “school of spiritual education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment and self-mastery—the preconditions of all true freedom.” (2223).

Given that our culture in many cases only pays lip service to the values and virtues and often promotes ways of living that run wholly counter to them, this duty of parents can easily seem like their own “mission impossible.”

And certainly if approached from this human perspective, it will inevitably fail at this task—and sooner rather than later.

But if the mission of parents in forming their children is given to them by God, then we are invited to trust that he will give us the help for us to accomplish it.

In fact, veteran Catholic parents often discover as they look back on their years of trials and blessings in raising their family that, more often than not, God, in his mysterious working of his providence, they’ll witness the wonders of Providence, did the heavy lifting in bringing their children to a virtuous and faith-filled adulthood.

Formation in the values noted in the catechism doesn’t proceed according to carefully drawn up lesson plans. It happens slowly and often imperceptibly in the ups and downs of daily life. But even if it is difficult for parents to observe how this formation is working in its tiny, incremental steps, there is the still the necessity for them to put themselves into this mission with great intentionality.

This doesn’t mean that parents go into the parenting task with childlike innocence. They’re not, and they’ll only drive themselves crazy if they think they are.

But God blesses parents with the power of reason, with their own experiences and those of friends and family. When parents have these gifts with the power of God’s grace and providence, they’ll witness the wonders he works in their children. And parents, whose miraculous qualities grow the more unpredictable and unexpected they are.

Our faith teaches that disciples of Christ are called to demand of parenting into an adventure with God’s glory as its goal. Yet our heavenly Father has given us love that will still care for them, their children ever closer to him on the altar at Mass, joining them to Christ’s perfect sacrifice of himself for the salvation of the world.†
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, August 27, 2023

- Isaiah 22:19-23
- Romans 11:33-36
- Matthew 16:13-20

The first section of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for Mass this weekend.

In this passage, Isaiah speaks for God. With God’s authority, Isaiah declares that a new master of the court should be named. The master functioning as the king’s chief representative and exercising the authority of the crown. The symbol of office was a key.

Having a master of the palace, along with subordinate figures, enabled the king to reign more efficiently. In the midst of Isaiah, and of all the prophets while the monarchy existed, the ultimate purpose of the king’s reign was to draw people to God. Maintaining the nation’s faithfulness to God was the king’s first duty.

As part of the apparatus of government, the master shared in this duty. The royal duty also bound the master, who would be the king’s delegate. Hence, the appointment of the master was a serious step.

This reading is hardly the only occasion when God speaks to people through human instruments. This is the message: We have our needs. We are only human. God lovingly supplies for our needs.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans provides the second reading. The Christians in Rome lived in what was the most imposing city on Earth, or the Earth as it then was known in the west. Much of Rome’s splendid lay in the great temples within the city dedicated to various gods and goddesses. Even today, tourists marvel at the Pantheon, an ancient temple in Rome intact after all the years largely due to the fact that it was later turned into a Catholic church.

Paul constantly had to draw Christians away from the lure of the gaudy, materialistic, libertin e Roman culture to the God of Jesus. In this reading, Paul emphasizes the majesty of God, greater than the God of Jesus. In this reading, Paul later turned into a Catholic church. Many years largely due to the fact that it was

The Church offers us a selection from St. Matthew’s Gospel.

The setting is Caesarea Philippi, a place northeast of Capernaum, still quite picturesque and pleasant. The Jordan River forms southward from springs in this place. Even today, Israelis go there to relax.

Jesus and St. Peter enter a dramatic exchange. The Lord asks Peter, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” (Mt 16:13). Jesus identifies himself as the “Son of Man,” an Old Testament title describing one who acted on God’s behalf and was unfaithfully true to God.

Peter replies that people are confused. Some see Jesus as John the Baptist, Elijah or another prophet. But, for himself, Peter declares that Jesus is the “Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16).

The criterion

World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal, a few weeks ago, was exciting to watch, even if our own youth has long gone personally and if the sight was only provided by television or on online.

More than a million Catholic young people from around the globe gathered around the pope. They enthusiastically proclaimed their faith in Jesus Christ, and they enthusiastically proclaimed their faith.

None knew what the future would hold, but they were confident and hopeful. Jesus, the Son of God, the loving Lord, the Risen, the Redeemer, was with them and would be with them.

Throughout the centuries, countless numbers of people, young and old, have found excitement in knowing that the Lord lives, and that the Lord is beside them and with them at moment of life, be it sad or glad.

Nothing equals the relief, joy and perception discovered when Christ fills a human heart. It is no wonder that believers can exclaim with the determination of Peter, “You are the Christ the Son of the living God.”

As The Criterion will not have an issue next week due to its summer schedule, the reflection of Msgr. Campion for Sunday, Sept. 3, will be posted at www.archindy.org/campion.

The various Eastern Catholic Churches have a tradition of married priests. There is also a pastoral provision that allows ministers from Protestant communities with a liturgical tradition, such as Anglicanism or Lutheranism, who have converted to Catholicism to discern a vocation to the diaconate or priesthood, allowing for the possibility of their ordination even if they are married. The Church allows in some cases for married men to be ordained as priests, permanent deacons, etc. cannot re-marry if their wife dies. And in the case of your pastor, a widowed man who later becomes a priest obviously would not be allowed to marry again.

Is a tattoo a good way to develop a devotion to Our Lady? (Wisconsin)

Tattoos are certainly not one of the Church’s first line, go-to recommendations for deepening any sort of devotion. And as far as I am able to tell, the Church does not have any specific teaching regarding tattoos in general.

That being said, whether or not a tattoo could be useful for a specific person to develop a devotion to Our Lady depends on that particular individual, his or her particular life circumstances and cultural context. Personal spirituality and unique spiritual needs. While there needs to be sufficient reflection for any permanent decision, in theory I would imagine that a tasteful and artistically beautiful tattoo in a Marian theme could help some people further love and honor Our Lady.

Interestingly, although the Church doesn’t have any official doctrine on tattoos, there are a few instances where tattoos are part of a broader cultural Catholic tradition. One good example is a custom dating back to the Middle Ages, where Catholic pilgrims to the Holy Land get a religious tattoo to commemorate their pilgrimage.

Biography

By Paige Hash

Made of simple wax and wick, my eye is drawn to your flicker and flick. You clothe yourself in red, to bring attention to another instead. Your time you melt away by minute, hour, and day.

Silently and humbly ablaze to bring another praise.

May I learn to be more like you, in all that I choose to do.

Bringing praise and glory in His name with the flicker of my flame.

Journey to God

Sanctuary candle

(Catholic QA@osv.com)
Rest in peace

Black-eyed Susan blossoms grace the grounds of Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis on Aug. 5. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Providence Sister Adela Beacham was an environmental advocate for 43 years

Providence Sister Adela Beacham, previously Sister Joseph Therese, a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, died on Aug. 7 at Mother Theodore Hall on the campus of her religious community’s motherhouse. She was 97.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 17 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery.

Sister Adela was born on March 9, 1926, in Toronto, Canada, and later lived with her family in Dallas, Ohio. She entered the Sisters of Providence on July 22, 1946, and professed final vows on Jan. 25, 1954.

Sister Adela earned a bachelor’s degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master’s degree in reading at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee and a master’s degree in theological studies at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

In her 77 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Adela served for 30 years in Catholic education in schools in Illinois and Indiana. In 1979, she began ministering in parishes. Retiring from ministry in 1998, Sister Adela continued to volunteer in prison ministry. Beginning in 2020, she dedicated herself entirely to prayer.

In the archdiocese, Sister Adela served in Indianapolis at St. Anthony School from 1949-50, as a school supervisor in the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education from 1969-72 and at the former Holy Cross Central School from 1972-79, and as a pastoral associate at St. Anne Parish in New Castle from 1979-82. At the motherhouse, she ministered as director of development from 1987-90. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876.


One Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of our publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries included here, unless they are sisters and brothers are Order priests and religious.

The Criterion Friday, August 25, 2023

Virginia Smith and David and Joseph Grut. Brother of John, Peter and Donny Livingston.

Agent of Judy Copper, Husband of Marlene Green. Conception, Aurora, July 16.


As a master’s degree in reading at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee and a master’s degree in biology at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, died on Aug. 7 at Mother Theodore Hall on the campus of her religious community’s motherhouse. She was 97.

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Providence Sister Helen Vinton was an environmental advocate for 43 years

Providence Sister Helen Vinton, a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, died on Aug. 5 in New Iberia, La. She was 90.

A funeral service was held on Aug. 12 at the David Funeral Home in New Iberia. Burial followed at Our Lady of the Rosary Cemetery in Jeannette, La.

Sister Helen was born on Dec. 12, 1932, in Gordon, Neb. She entered the Sisters of Providence on July 22, 1953, and professed final vows in Jan. 23, 1961.

Sister Helen earned a bachelor’s degree in English at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master’s degree in biology at St. Mary University in Winona, Minn.

A member of the Sisters of Providence for 70 years, Sister Helen served in Catholic education for nine years in schools in Illinois and Indiana. She then served on the staff of publications of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference in Des Moines, Iowa. In 1980, Sister Helen began ministry with the Southern Mutual Help Association in Jeannette, La., serving in it until her death. In this organization, she was an advocate on environmental issues, assisted families involved in farming and fishing and sought to remedy problems related to pesticides in Louisiana.

In the archdiocese, Sister Helen served at St. Mary School (now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School) in Richmond from 1954-64, and at Indianapolis at the former Ladywood School for Girls from 1964-70 and the former Ladywood-St. Agnes High School from 1973-75.

Sister Helen is survived by a sister, Donna Connedy.

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Investing with Faith/Kimberly Pohovey

A personal choice: the pros and cons of giving anonymously

Sharing our blessings with others brings great joy not only to those we support, but also to us. Still, once we’ve decided to give to those in need, we might find ourselves wondering whether it is better to give publicly or anonymously.

From a Catholic perspective, the answer isn’t as clear as we might think. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus cautions us against doing good to attract the praise of others the way hypocrites do. Instead, he counsels, “When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you” (Mt 6:3-4).

But in the very same teaching, he also tells us, “Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father” (Mt 5:16).

Faithful Catholic donors may wish to keep their generosity private in order to avoid the spotlight and remain humble. Those who do, trust that God knows their hearts—and their gifts. On the other hand, however, those who give in more public ways may inspire others to join them in generously sharing what they have. They may also want to draw attention to a particular charitable endeavor or a favorite cause by openly voicing their support. But there are other practical things to consider too.

Pros and cons

Like most of the choices we make, there are pros and cons, advantages and drawbacks to both anonymous and public giving.

Reasons donors have for giving anonymously include:
• Wanting to remain humble before God and others.
• The need to avoid associating your name with a cause that is controversial generally, or just among your friends and family members.
• A desire to avoid receiving an overwhelming number of other requests.

• A preference for keeping personal facts private,
• A passion for giving credit to those who provide services, rather than to those who fund them.
• Reasons donors have for making a charitable giving known include:
• The hope that your gift may encourage others to support a cause close to your heart—or theirs.
• A desire to make others aware of a particular need.
• A willingness to allow a charity to use your name to gain more support for their organization and mission.
• An aspiration to set an example of responsible stewardship for your family and/or community.

Eagerness to voice confidence in a particular charitable initiative.

The choice is a personal one

Some thought should be given to the decision you make regarding whether your charitable giving should be made public or kept private. The fact that most charitable institutions prefer public giving may influence what you do, but the choice is a very personal one only you can—and should—make.

Choosing how we give is certainly important, but never as important as the choice to give at all.

Giving is always a win-win, especially when it comes to spreading the compassion of Jesus Christ throughout central and southern Indiana.

So, whether you decide that anonymity is the way to go or choose to embrace the call to share your faith as well as your assets, know that you are building God’s kingdom right where you are.

Not sure what’s best for you? The Catholic Community Foundation is happy to help you decide. Contact us at 317-236-1482 or ccf@archindy.org.

( Kimberley Pohovey is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese. Tax or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice. Always consult with your legal, tax or financial advisors before implementing any gift plan. For more information on the Catholic Community Foundation, visit www.archindy.org. CCF, e-mail ccf@archindy.org, or call 317-236-1482)

SCIFRES continued from page 8

our children in the Catholic Church.

“A turning point for me was with Joe Hollowell, who I think had 11 kids and was president of Roncalli at the time. I always made the excuse I was too busy to go down through the [Kfite of Christian Initiation of Adults] process. Joe and I would talk about it. He said, ‘If you ever decide to take that step, I’d be honored to be your sponsor.’ It was like a light switch went on for me. ‘For heaven’s sake, Bruce, you big step, I’d be honored to be your sponsor.'

“Gosh, at the end of the day, it’s like your compass, your moral compass. In our human condition, periodically we stray a little bit, but our faith always becomes the compass guiding us home—ultimately, just as a compass magnetically points to the North Pole, I think our Catholic faith magnetically points us to heaven. That’s what we’re gravitating towards.”

Q. What does the Catholic faith mean to you?

A. “It becomes the core of who you are and how you’re going to live your life. Certainly, I believed in Jesus and God and heaven prior to becoming Catholic, but the Catholic faith for me kind of felt like coming home—to where you feel a part of a family.”

“At that time, I had no more excuses to not become Catholic.”

Q. What does the Catholic faith mean to you?

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Q. What do you want to be remembered for? (The question that led to the story you tell)

A. “It’s hard to answer that without getting emotional. Maybe to be remembered as somebody who loved kids and loved his faith. And wanted to share that faith with kids and their families. Somebody who worked hard to make it close to his family and God proud. And maybe somebody who worked hard to make it to heaven and take others with him.”

...
The archbishop told those in attendance the saint was “firmly rooted in Jesus Christ through a deep commitment to prayer, Scripture and the sacraments,” and that “his witness bore the good fruit of a life rooted in personal relationship with Jesus Christ.”

Like St. Irenaeus, Archbishop Thompson said, “we must allow ourselves to be instruments of his saving grace of healing, unity, mercy and reconciliation.” Relying upon God’s divine grace available through word, sacrament and service, the archbishop encouraged the graduates to help carry out Jesus’ mission.

“Remaining forever deeply rooted in personal relationship with Jesus Christ, bearing the fruit of Good News of Salvation,” he continued, “let us go and make a difference in the lives of others. By your fruit of faith in action, may you be known.”

The liturgy was celebrated on the feast of St. Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyons in what is now France for 25 years before being martyred around 202. He was known for his writing to dispute the heresies of his time and to explain principles of the Christian faith. The archbishop told those in attendance the saint was “firmly rooted in Jesus Christ through a deep commitment to prayer, Scripture and the sacraments,” and that “his witness bore the good fruit of a life rooted in personal relationship with Jesus Christ.”

Bartolomé de Columbus y graduado del Instituto Pastoral Intercultural, reflexiona sobre su experiencia en el programa de dos años. (Foto: Mike Krokos)

“I received a call from Dr. Carmen Hernandez [the coordinator of IPI], urging me to return and finish the leadership program,” said Salcedo, a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. Although he initially told Hernandez “no, no, no… she kept insisting, until she convinced me to return to the institute. Thank you very much, doctor, for your insistence.

“I finally learned that my ‘no, no, no…’ was insignificant before the will of God,” Salcedo continued. “That is why I place myself before God’s disposal, that he use me as his instrument, and his will be done, not mine.”

Salcedo was chosen to give a speech on behalf of his classmates during IPI’s Pastoral Leadership certification ceremony held on June 28 at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson began the event by celebrating Mass, and the archbishop followed with the certification ceremony, the presentation of diplomas and dinner.

IPI forms pastoral and catechetical leaders within the various ethnic communities in the archdiocese and the Lafayete Diocese, and at the gathering, 22 graduates were recognized.

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“The teaching model of Jesus”

In her remarks to the 11th graduating class of the two-year formation program, Hernandez acknowledged the efforts, dedication, enthusiasm and commitment of the students.

“Starting today, you are going to give life to your lives. You are going to give life to your new paths as pastoral leaders,” she noted. “Always remember that the best model of Catholic leadership is that of the servant leader, the teaching model of Jesus that leads us to unite in prayer and help our brothers, particularly those most in need. St. John Paul II pointed it out well when he said, ‘Love is looking at the other, not to make use of him, but to serve him.’

As they minister in the future, Hernandez continued, it will offer the graduates the chance to grow closer to Jesus, follow him, serve him and lead others to him. “The God-love is the true strength of the soul, the powerful conviction that moves us to have confidence in him and to walk toward him, from love to the brother and in particular to the most in need, to the poor in a material and spiritual sense,” Hernandez said. “This is the direction that you, now pastoral leaders, must have as your north.”

Loving and serving God, Salcedo noted, will be at the heart of his mission.

“If we remain faithful to God, without a doubt, love will flourish in our being,” he said. “This is the love that comes from God who transforms us, makes us more serene, more optimistic, more compassionate, wiser. And it’s through love where you get the true way to serve and live in this world for others.”

(To learn more about the Intercultural Ministry Institute and its program, visit www.archindy.org/multicultural )

Los graduados del IPI están llamados a dar fruto en el servicio a los demás

Por Mike Krokos

Oscar Salcedo estuvo a punto de no graduarse del IPI.

Debido a problemas personales tuvo que dejar las clases en el Instituto Pastoral Intercultural (IPI) de la Arquidiócesis tras su primer año de estudio, lo que le llevó a pensar que no completaría el programa de liderazgo de dos años. Pero una llamada telefónica lo cambió todo.

“Recibí una llamada de la Dra. Carmen Hernández [coordinadora del IPI], instándome a regresar y terminar el programa de liderazgo,” recordó Salcedo, miembro de la parroquia de San Bartolomé en Columbus. Aunque el principio le dijo a Hernández “No, no, no. … Pero siguió insistiendo, hasta que me convenció para que volviera al instituto.” (Gracias por insistir, doctor.)

“Finalmente me di cuenta de que mi negativa era algo insignificante ante la voluntad de Dios”—continuó Salcedo—. “Por eso me pongo a disposición de Dios, para que me use como su instrumento y se haga su voluntad, no la mía.”

Aecedido fue elegido para pronunciar un discurso en nombre de sus compañeros durante el programa de certificación de Liderazgo Pastoral del IPI, celebrado el 28 de junio en la Casa de Retiros Nuestra Señora de Fátima de Indianápolis. El arzobispo Charles C. Thompson inició el acto celebrando una misa, y la velada incluyó también una ceremonia de graduación, la entrega de diplomas y una cena.

El IPI forma lideres pastorales y catequéticos en las diversas comunidades étnicas de la Arquidiócesis y de la diócesis de Lafayete, y en la reunión se otorgó reconocimiento a 22 graduados.

“Vayamos y marquemos la diferencia”

En su homilía, compartida en español, el arzobispo Thompson felicitó a los graduados por haber obtenido sus certificados. Señaló que su trabajo incluía mucho tiempo de “oración, estudio y discernimiento para el servicio en la Iglesia.

“Aquellos que se han mantenido firmes en la fe, perseverantes en sus esfuerzos y fervientes en el discipulado misionero serán reconocidos por el fruto de su labor. Como los árboles que dan buenos frutos porque sus raíces son profundas en la tierra, así las raíces de los que se certifican en guía espiritual y liderazgo pastoral deben permanecer profundamente conectadas a la persona de Jesucristo. Sin un encuentro personal con Jesucristo, la dedicación, el entusiasmo y el compromiso de los estudiantes no se materializarán.

“A partir de hoy, van a dar vida a sus vidas, a sus nuevos caminos como líderes pastorales”—señaló Thompson—. “Recuerden siempre que el mejor modelo de liderazgo católico es el del líder servidor, el modelo de enseñanza que nos lleva a unirse en la oración y a ayudar a nuestros hermanos, en particular a los más necesitados. San Juan Pablo II lo destacó cuando dijo: ‘El amor es mirar al otro, no para servirse de él, sino para servirse.’

Hernández aseguró que al alministrar en el futuro, los graduados tendrán la oportunidad de seguir creciendo cerca de Jesús, servirle, servirse y guiar a otros hacia él.

‘El amor a Dios es la verdadera fuerza del alma, la poderosísima convicción que nos mueve a tener confianza y a caminar hacia él, desde el amor al hermano en particular a los más necesitados, a los pobres en sentido material y espiritual’—expresó Hernández.—. ‘Esta es la dirección que ustedes, ahora líderes pastorales, deben tener como norte.’

Salcedo señaló que servir y servirse de Dios será el núcleo de su misión.

‘Si permanecemos fieles a Dios, sin duda, el amor florecerá en nuestros corazonet. Este es el amor que proviene de Dios que nos transforma, nos hace más serenos, más optimistas, más compasivos, más sabios. Y es a través del amor donde se consigue la verdadera forma de servir y vivir en este mundo para los demás.’

(Para conocer más sobre el Instituto Pastoral Intercultural y su programa, visite www.archindy.org/multicultural)