



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



That All May Be One

Nov. 16 gathering to highlight interreligious dialogue, Vatican II document, page 12.

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Young woman finds a path to a new life with help of ‘friends’—saints who struggled

By John Shaughnessy

If we’re fortunate, our lives are touched by people who influence us with their goodness and their grace, helping us to find something special in ourselves—which then leads us to try to share our gifts in a way that adds goodness and grace to the lives of others.

Then there comes a time when we want—*when we need*—to honor and thank those people who have influenced us so powerfully.

That’s how 24-year-old Sophia Chamblee felt as she boarded a plane from Indianapolis to Italy in early September.

The member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis was traveling to Rome and Assisi to celebrate and thank the person—the fellow “huge nerd” she called him—who not only gave her life a new direction, but who also helped restore her faith and her connection with the Church.

His impact on Chamblee—who now uses her artistic and social media talents to promote the Catholic faith—was so powerful that she felt the need to stand in front of him and thank him for the hope and joy that he had given her, two qualities that had once been in short supply in her life.

‘In many ways, I saw friends in them’

Before introducing you to the person who influenced Chamblee so dramatically, it seems more important to introduce you first to the person that Chamblee was at the age of 15 and 16.

“When I was in high school, I was very lonely,” she recalls. “A lot of things had happened during that point of my life where it felt I had been abandoned by the Church. So, there was a part of me that was thinking, ‘Why should I remain in a Church that does not look out for me, when

See CHAMBLEE, page 8



Sophia Chamblee came to St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Sept. 7 for the canonization Mass honoring the saint who changed her life—St. Carlo Acutis. (Submitted photo)

Archbishop Thompson receives ‘an incredible boost’ from meeting Pope Leo XIV during pilgrimage

By Sean Gallagher

The news about it came quickly for Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and the group of pilgrims he led in Rome in late September.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

While riding on a bus in the Eternal City on the afternoon of Thursday, Sept. 25, the archbishop received a text and then a phone call letting him know that he and the group of people he was traveling with could meet Pope Leo XIV in a private audience at 9 a.m. on Saturday.

Archbishop Thompson was leading a group of 30 pilgrims from across the U.S. on a pilgrimage from Sept. 23-Oct. 2 sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The scheduled centerpiece of the pilgrimage was the group’s participation in the Jubilee for Catechists, one of a series of celebrations in Rome during this Jubilee Year of Hope. The archbishop was leading the pilgrimage group as the chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis.

That centerpiece changed for Archbishop Thompson and the pilgrims when they learned of their private audience with the pope.

Other significant moments happened on the pilgrimage. Archbishop Thompson gave a presentation to English-speaking catechists from around the world in a historic church in Rome on how catechists are doors of hope. He got to pray at the tomb of Pope Francis at the Basilica of

See PILGRIMAGE, page 9

Camino pilgrims hope God will provide—and he does

(Editor’s note: A record 499,239 pilgrims from all over the world walked the historic Camino pilgrimage in northern Spain in 2024. The Criterion has invited people from the archdiocese who have made all or part of that pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, to share how that experience has influenced their life and their faith.)

Second in an occasional series

By John Shaughnessy

Teresa Venatta embraces two fundamental beliefs about life, starting with this one:
God will provide.

See CAMINO, page 16



Teresa Venatta, right, and her daughter, Liz Venatta Potter, hiked 275 miles on the Camino, a journey filled with unexpected graces. (Submitted photo)



Therese Hauersperger, left, a member of the college student organization of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, and Leslie Venegas, a Fellowship of Christian University Students' missionary at the parish, prepare food on Oct. 9 for the Cathedral Kitchen in Indianapolis. On Nov. 8, an open house and blessing will highlight recent Cathedral Kitchen restorations, including upgrades to electrical, plumbing and structural systems. (Photo by Emily Mastronicola)

Cathedral Kitchen to host Nov. 8 open house celebrating legacy, renovations and new partnerships

Criterion staff report

All are invited to attend the Cathedral Kitchen Ministry Open House and Blessing behind SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 1 p.m. on Nov. 8 in celebration of nearly 100 years of service to area community members experiencing poverty and homelessness. Themed "Renewed to Serve, United to Nourish," the event will highlight recent Cathedral Kitchen restorations, including upgrades to electrical, plumbing and structural systems. It will also introduce its new partnerships with St. John the Evangelist Parish's Emmaus outreach, Midwest Food Bank, Papa Johns and Second Helpings, all in Indianapolis. Founded during the Great Depression, the Cathedral Kitchen began by serving peanut butter sandwiches and has grown into a vital ministry offering meals, dignity and hope. Despite ongoing repairs, the

kitchen never stopped serving meals, thanks to volunteers and community support. "We're not just reopening a building—we're renewing our mission," said Terrence Toon, Cathedral Kitchen manager. "This is a chance to honor our past, celebrate our present, and invite the community to be part of our future." Guests are encouraged to bring a jar of peanut butter or jelly, hot chocolate packets, or other commercially pre-packaged snacks as admission. Donations of bottled water and in-peel fruit are also appreciated. Please note that home-cooked or frozen items cannot be accepted. About 40 additional volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve hot meals this winter. Interested individuals must complete a registration form at tinyurl.com/cathedral-kitchen-ministry and archdiocesan Safe Parish training at www.archindysafeparish.org. (Use code Archindy2021.) For more information, contact Toon at cathedralkitchen@archindy.org. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

October 25—October 30, 2025

October 25 – 10 a.m. CST

Diaconate ordination at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln followed by lunch at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Meinrad

October 25 – 4 p.m. CST

Wedding Anniversary Mass at St. Paul Church, Tell City

October 26 – 1 p.m. CST

Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Isidore the Farmer Parish, Perry County; St. Mark Parish, Perry County; St. Pius V Parish, Troy; St. Augustine Parish, Leopold; St. Paul Parish, Tell City; and Holy Cross Parish, St. Croix, at St. Paul Church.

October 28 – 10 a.m.

Fall Clergy and Parish Life Coordinator business meeting at St. Joseph Parish, Jennings County

October 28 – 2 p.m.

Council of Priests meeting at

St. Joseph Parish, Jennings County

October 29 – 11:30 a.m.

Strategic Pastoral Planning Initiatives meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 29 – 6:30 p.m.

White Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, followed by reception at McGowan Hall, Indianapolis

October 30 – 10 a.m.

Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

October 30 – 1:30 p.m.

Legal Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

October 30 – 6 p.m.

United Catholic Appeal Advance Mass and Dinner at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, Floyd County

Marriage is a 'noble, exalted' vocation, path to holiness, Pope Leo says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Sacramental marriage and traditional family life increase joy in the good times, give strength during hard times and are a path to true holiness, Pope Leo XIV said. Marking the 10th anniversary of the canonization of SS. Louis and Zélie Martin, the parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, Pope Leo said the couple "bears witness to the ineffable happiness and profound joy that God grants, both here on Earth and for eternity, to those who commit themselves to this path of fidelity and fruitfulness." The pope's comments came in a message to Bishop Bruno Feillet of Séez, France, the home diocese of the Martin family. The message was released at the Vatican on Oct. 18, the date of the anniversary of the Martins becoming "the first couple to be canonized as such," the pope said. At a time when much of the media and popular culture seem to present lifelong marriage and a commitment to family life as "outdated and dull," the pope said, "Louis and Zélie Martin testify that this is not the case: they were happy—deeply happy!—giving life, radiating and transmitting the faith, seeing their daughters grow and flourish under the gaze of the Lord."†

Workshop on Nov. 12 will empower parish leaders to embrace synodality

Criterion staff report

Parish leaders, both lay and clergy, and parishioners are invited to attend a dynamic workshop titled "Growing Together as a Listening Church" at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., in Indianapolis, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Nov. 12. In a preface to a book written by two priests in 2023, Pope Francis wrote, "The synodal path undertaken by the Church is a path of in-depth listening. ... [I]t allows the Spirit to move us and make us change ... to lead us to concrete decisions."

Ken Ogorek

This free workshop is part of the Church's ongoing synodal journey. The session will guide participants in applying synodal principles to everyday parish life. Topics include enhancing meetings, fostering inclusive discussions, and strengthening decision-making processes to promote parish vitality and shared responsibility. The workshop is sponsored by the archdiocese and will be led by Ken Ogorek, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Evangelizing Catechesis. While there is no charge for the event, registration is required for planning purposes. For more information or to register, go to tinyurl.com/growingtogether-11-25 or scan the QR code provided. †



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Panel discussion explores the deeper roots of suicide, ways to prevent it

By Sean Gallagher

Suicide is a tragically growing phenomenon in the U.S. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the suicide rate in the U.S. increased 35% between 1999 and 2018.

And according to the National Institute of Mental Health, suicide is becoming more prevalent among younger people. In 2023, it was the second leading cause of death of people between the ages of 10 and 34 and the fourth leading cause of death of people between the ages of 35 and 44.

The pro-life ministries of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish and St. John the Evangelist Parish, both in Indianapolis, hosted a discussion on the phenomenon of suicide during a Sept. 12 session of its pro-life film series.

The session, held at Holy Rosary, featured a 2022 Public Broadcasting System documentary *Facing Suicide* and a panel discussion afterward. On the panel were two Catholic psychologists, Peter Malinoski and Eric Gudan, both Holy Rosary parishioners; Father Jerry Byrd, Holy Rosary's pastor; and Jessica Inabnitt, St. John's wedding and events coordinator. Her son Tyler died by suicide when he was 18 in 2009.

'Witnesses of hope'

The documentary told the stories of people who were on the verge of taking their lives and how their relationships with friends and relatives played a crucial role in their survival. It also explored neurological and social factors that can lead to people being at a greater risk of suicide.

Gudan appreciated how the documentary "talked about meaning and community" to help people "avoid despair" and how it portrayed people who were "witnesses of hope" in the lives of those considering suicide.

Malinoski remarked that a "big weakness" of the documentary was "its underlying anthropology, which was operating from an essentially secular perspective."

He noted that the film's exploration of suicide focused too much at "the end of the causal chain," the factors and causes of suicide closest to the act of suicide itself.

"We need to actually go much further upstream," Malinoski said. "When there are a lot of struggles around suicide, we're dealing with real questions around identity. Who am I? Who is God? Who is my neighbor?"

These questions, he said, are best answered in the Catholic faith that helps people struggling with these questions find "greater interior integration." Such integration prevents the troubled side of a person's psyche from dominating and possibly leading to suicide.

Father Byrd reflected on how the difficult issues of the people shown in the documentary are those that's heard about often in the sacrament of penance and in his broader priestly ministry.

He wondered sadly if such people "know who Jesus is?"

"Do they know that they're loved by God, that the Father delights in them and loves them as sons and daughters?" he asked. "Those are the questions that are going through my mind."

"For anybody that's in a situation that seems so dark, I know where there's light."

'The loneliest grief'

Inabnitt shared with the people at the film series session the dark places she found herself in after her son Tyler died by suicide in 2009.

"The grief of suicide is the loneliest grief that anybody will ever have to go through," she said, "because the only person that you want to see or talk to at that moment is the person that is gone. And the only person that you can be mad at, because they are gone, is the person that's gone."

For her, the loss of her son also led to guilt, much like it does for many friends and relatives of those who have died by suicide.

"There's so much guilt involved," Inabnitt said. "Why didn't I answer the phone? If I had just called five minutes before. All of that."

At the time of her son's death, she said that she and her son were largely inactive in their faith. After Tyler's suicide, returning to the Church revived hope in Inabnitt.

"Early on, I knew that I couldn't get through that without my faith and without being close to the Lord," she recalled. "So, little by little, I started going to Mass every Sunday. And then, it was going to Mass more than just on Sundays."

The life she found in her faith and taking part more and more in the life of the St. John community eventually led her to serving on its staff.

Now 16 years after Tyler's death, Inabnitt is convinced that a secular and scientific approach alone is inadequate to solving the problem of suicide.

The focus that faith in general and the Catholic faith in particular puts on communion among people, she said, can be a factor to help individuals, families and communities avoid the tragedy of suicide.

"We need to dive deeper," Inabnitt said. "We're called by God to be present with Jesus in the Eucharist and then also to be present with each other."

'Everybody can be present to someone'

Gudan reflected on the factor of communion during the panel discussion.

"You have to have somebody who understands," he said. "The desire to be understood and how much we need that as human persons is just really profound."

"We're supposed to be good at that as therapists and psychologists, but everybody can be present to someone and hear them and understand them. And that's a very powerful healing experience."

Father Byrd added his own thoughts on the importance of personal connections with God and other people in the Catholic faith that can help people who are struggling and might be on the path to considering suicide.

"We're united together on a physical level, a spiritual level and emotional level," he said.

Suicide, Father Byrd went on, "breaks that person-to-person communion."

"We're created for union with God and union with each other," he said. "We have that opportunity to assist each other in this life, and to receive that gift of the other person assisting us. And when we cut life short through suicide, it steals that away."

He noted that the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that suicide is gravely contrary to the love of self, of others and of God. At the same time, Father Byrd discussed how the catechism also teaches that people have "reason to hope in God's mercy" in the face of another person's death by suicide. (See #2280-2283 for what the catechism teaches on suicide.)

"What's going on in that moment [of suicide]?" Father Byrd wondered. "We're not there in that moment. God is, and I can't begin to presume on God's mercy



Eric Gudan, left, Peter Malinoski, Father Jerry Byrd and Jessica Inabnitt take part in a Sept. 12 panel discussion about suicide at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

or God's justice—one way or the other. So that's why the catechism tells us to be hopeful toward his mercy."

Malinoski and Gudan spoke of the difficulty of assessing the mental state of a person who dies by suicide.

"Thinking about [suicide] in specific cases invites trying to assess the state of a person's soul, not just the state of their mind, but the state of their soul," Gudan added. "That is always a really tricky thing."

"How free was the individual in the moment where that decision was taken? That gets to questions around how compromised was their capacity to understand what was going on? Sometimes when you are in a dark place like that, you get very much tunnel vision. How was the will in that situation?"

Malinoski spoke about how, through the years, he's treated many people who struggle with substance addiction or who "have habitual difficulties in seeing things clearly," people who might be at a high risk for suicide, noting that it can be hard to know the degree of true freedom such people have.

"I'm not sure where it's at, but I try to help somebody take the next good step that they can," Malinoski said. "We try to increase freedom and reduce internal and external pressures."

(To learn more about Peter Malinoski and his clinical psychological practice, visit www.soulsandhearts.com. To learn more about Eric Gudan and his clinical psychological practice, visit www.integritaspsych.com. For a list of mental health support groups and vetted Catholic counselors, go to tinyurl.com/ArchIndyMentalHealth. For information on the *You Are Not Alone* ministry for survivors of suicide loss at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis, go to tinyurl.com/FatimaYANA. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the national suicide and crisis hotline at 988.) †

Legacy Gala

Life, Education, and Real Presence



Friday, February 6, 2026 | 5:30 pm
JW Marriott Indianapolis | White River Ballroom

Join us for an inspiring evening of faith, fellowship, and celebration with over 1,000 brothers and sisters in Christ. Together, we'll support three vital ministries, hear from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, enjoy dinner, a silent auction, and end the night with music and dancing.

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Editorial



Pope Leo XIV greets people at an audience in the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican on Oct. 13 as part of a conference on the life and work of Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val, who lived from 1865-1930. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Let a ‘Litany of Humility’ guide you in today’s chaotic world

It isn’t every day that our universal shepherd offers advice to “all those who exercise responsibilities in the Church.” But, with an assist to the late Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val, that is what Pope Leo XIV did at a meeting on Oct. 13 with people attending a conference on the cardinal’s life and work.

And we believe the Holy Father’s words of advice are something not only meant for Church leaders at the recent meeting, but something that all of us should strive to follow in living out our vocations.

A Spaniard who was born to a noble family in 1865 and died in 1930, Cardinal Merry del Val served as apostolic delegate to Canada in the late 1800s. He later served at the Vatican as secretary of state and as prefect of what is now known as the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Despite the positions of prominence he held in the Church, the cardinal “... knew that the only true triumph is to be able to say every day: ‘Lord, I am where you want me to be, doing what you entrust to me today,’ ” Pope Leo noted.

Cardinal Merry del Val penned what became known as the “Litany of Humility,” a prayer asking for deliverance from pride, vanity and self-seeking, and for the grace to embrace humility as Christ did. It was a prayer he is said to have recited every day after celebrating Mass.

Humility is something that seems to be lacking in today’s world, where an “it’s all about me” attitude is so prevalent in so many walks of life. In our call as missionary disciples, we need to more selfless, not selfish, as we do our part in building up the body of Christ.

If we are to be true witnesses of faith, we must let Christ’s presence shine through us in all we say and do. As we read in the Gospel of John, “He must increase; I must decrease” (Jn 3:30).

Whether you exercise responsibilities in the Church or are living out a vocation to ordained ministry, consecrated life or marriage—or are still discerning your vocation—we encourage everyone to take Cardinal Merry del Val’s “Litany of Humility” to heart.

Pray it as often as possible, with persistence, endurance and without getting weary. Pray that your petitions bear fruit.

Together, let us pray:

*O Jesus, meek and humble of heart, Hear me.
From the desire of being esteemed, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the desire of being loved, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the desire of being extolled, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the desire of being honored, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the desire of being praised, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the desire of being preferred to others, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the desire of being consulted, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the desire of being approved, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the fear of being humiliated, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the fear of being despised, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the fear of suffering rebukes, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the fear of being calumniated, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the fear of being forgotten, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the fear of being ridiculed, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the fear of being wronged, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the fear of being suspected, Deliver me, O Jesus.
That others may be loved more than I, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be esteemed more than I, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be chosen and I set aside, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be praised and I go unnoticed, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be preferred to me in everything, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
Amen.*

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/ Jason Adkins

Restore Christ the King and end the divided life

Pope Leo XIV has urged the faithful—especially those in public life—not to live “divided lives.” That is, we must not



compartmentalize our faith or exclude it from shaping every area of life. Faith is not a private hobby; it is the foundation by which we order our actions, relationships, and society itself.

One way the Church can help the faithful overcome this divided, overly individualistic approach to faith is to restore the feast of Christ the King to its original date: the last Sunday of October, just before the solemnity of All Saints. Originally instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1925, the feast was a clear response to growing secularism and nationalism. It proclaimed that peace, order and justice in the temporal world come only under the reign of Christ.

Liturgical details might seem minor, but “*lex orandi, lex credendi*”—the law of prayer is the law of belief. And belief shapes identity. What we believe about Christ’s kingship should inform how we live, not just personally, but socially and politically.

We are called not merely to be saved, but to become saints by making Christ present in every part of our lives, especially in public life.

Pope Leo echoes the vision of St. Augustine in *The City of God*, reminding us that two spiritual cities contend for our loyalty: the city of God, built on the love of God, and the city of man, built on self-love and autonomy. In the latter, Satan—the usurper prince of this world—invites us to live by our own rules. This leads to chaos, conflict and despair.

But when we live under God’s law—theonomy, not autonomy—we bring divine order to our institutions, relationships and communities. Through baptism, we share in Christ’s sonship. Through the Holy Spirit, we are empowered to make his kingdom manifest on Earth, as it is in heaven.

Christ is king not in metaphor or in some future time, but in reality and right now. He has conquered death, defeated the prince of this world and reigns in glory. The Church, his mystical Body, has been commissioned to baptize the nations and draw all things into communion under his reign.

The modern celebration of Christ the King, which was moved to the final Sunday

of the liturgical year in 1970, focuses on the end of time, when Christ will return in glory. This is true, but it risks sidelining the feast’s original intent: to proclaim Christ’s kingship here and now over the temporal order, and to call Christians to make that kingship visible in public life.

Moving the feast back to its original date would re-establish its connection with All Saints’ Day, reminding us that sanctity is not a private affair. Saints are those who enthrone Christ not just in their hearts only, but in their work, families, institutions and cultures.

The modern temptation is to treat the Church as a private club, a therapeutic community for spiritual encouragement or a lifestyle group for people with shared devotional tastes. But the Church is not peripheral to the world. It is a movement of God’s people in history drawing economics, politics, education and culture into the life of the kingdom.

A privatized form of faith has too often muted the Church’s influence. In the name of pluralism and good manners, many Catholics keep their faith to themselves, allowing secularism to dominate American public life. But Christ is either King or he is not.

To reduce him to a helpful personal option is to deny the Gospel’s power and its universal claim.

The good news is that Christ has already won the victory (the actual meaning of the Greek word for

gospel, the *euangelion*). Now he calls us, the Church militant, to carry out his mission.

We become saints not just through piety, but by living the Gospel in every part of life. It is hard work, to be sure, and it requires love and sacrifice. But the soul of the world depends on it.

Restoring the feast of Christ the King to its original place won’t solve everything, but it will send a clear signal. It will remind the faithful that our mission is not only heaven, but also the transformation of Earth under Christ’s reign.

This work gives purpose, meaning and joy to a world in desperate need of it, and is truly good news.

(Jason Adkins is host of Our Sunday Visitor podcast “Catholic in America,” which explores topics related to the missionary imperative of faithful citizenship in our time. You can find “Catholic in America” on the major podcast platforms or visit catholicinamerica.osvpodcasts.com.) †

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

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit

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

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Humility raises us up and sets us free

I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted. (Lk 18:14)

The Gospel reading for the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Lk 18:9-14) contains a parable of great wisdom. St. Luke tells us that “Jesus addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else” (Lk 18:9). Today, his audience might very well be those who use social media to assert their infallible opinions and denounce anyone who disagrees with them:

Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, “O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity—greedy, dishonest, adulterous—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.” But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed,

“O God, be merciful to me a sinner” (Lk 18:10-13).

Jesus tells the story of these two different people—a proud religious leader and a despised social outcast who both go into the temple to pray. One is full of himself. The other acknowledges his unworthiness and seeks God’s forgiveness. Which one found favor with God? Which one left the temple “raised up” by the hand of God? Which one left puffed up with his own self-importance but no better off in the eyes of God?

We have heard this parable so many times that we know the answer. Of course, it was the tax collector who earned the praise of Jesus by his candor, his humility, and his desire for God’s mercy. And it was the Pharisee whose self-righteousness prevented him from humbly accepting God’s grace.

But let’s not be too quick to judge. After all, there is something of the tax collector and the Pharisee in us. We are all sinners who are blinded by our own egos. We all tend to compare ourselves favorably to people who appear to be worse sinners than we are. And yet, we all know, deep down inside, that we should fall on our

knees and humbly pray: “O God, be merciful to me a sinner.”

In the first reading from Sirach, we read:

The Lord is a God of justice, who knows no favorites. Though not unduly partial toward the weak, yet he hears the cry of the oppressed. The Lord is not deaf to the wail of the orphan, nor to the widow when she pours out her complaint. The one who serves God willingly is heard; his petition reaches the heavens. The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds; it does not rest till it reaches its goal, nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds, judges justly and affirms the right, and the Lord will not delay. (Sir 35:12-14, 16-18)

God knows who we are. He does not play favorites; he loves each and every one of us as we are. But it’s also true that our Lord challenges every one of us to be better than we are—by emptying ourselves of false pride and pretense and by letting the grace of God fill us with holiness and love.

In Sunday’s second reading (2 Tm 4:6-8, 16-18), St. Paul gives personal testimony to God’s power to change us from ego-driven

sinners to missionary disciples who empty ourselves and put on Jesus Christ, who came to serve, not to be served.

Beloved: I am already being poured out like a libation, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance. (2 Tm 4:6-8)

St. Paul is not boasting of his own accomplishments. He is praising God for what the Lord has been able to do through him. In reading his words, we must remember that this is the same man who once persecuted the followers of Jesus, and who was compelled by the grace of Christ to fall to his knees and beg for God’s mercy.

Each of us is called to cast off our self-righteousness and assume the kind of humility that allows us to change and grow as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. Let’s ask God to help us ask for his mercy today and always. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

La humildad nos eleva y nos libera

Les digo que este recaudador de impuestos volvió a casa con sus pecados perdonados; el fariseo, en cambio, no. Porque Dios humillará a quien se ensalce a sí mismo; pero ensalzará a quien se humille a sí mismo. (Lc 18:14)

La lectura del Evangelio del XXX domingo del tiempo ordinario (Lc 18:9-14) incluye una parábola que encierra gran sabiduría. San Lucas nos dice que “a unos que alardeaban de su propia rectitud y despreciaban a todos los demás, Jesús les contó esta parábola” (Lc 18:9). Hoy en día, su público bien podría ser aquellos que utilizan las redes sociales para afirmar sus opiniones infalibles y denunciar a cualquiera que discrepe de ellas:

Dos hombres fueron al Templo a orar. Uno de ellos era un fariseo, y el otro un recaudador de impuestos. El fariseo, plantado en primera fila, oraba en su interior de esta manera: “¡Oh Dios! Te doy gracias porque yo no soy como los demás: ladrones, malvados y adúlteros. Tampoco soy como ese recaudador de impuestos. Ayuno dos veces por semana y pago al Templo la décima parte de todas mis ganancias.” En cambio, el recaudador de impuestos, que se

mantenía a distancia, ni siquiera se atrevía a levantar la vista del suelo, sino que se golpeaba el pecho y decía: “¡Oh Dios! Ten compasión de mí, que soy pecador” (Lc 18:10-13).

Jesús cuenta la historia de dos personas diferentes: un orgulloso líder religioso y un despreciado marginado social que van al templo a rezar. Uno se cree más que los demás; el otro reconoce su indignidad y busca el perdón de Dios. ¿Cuál encontró el favor de Dios? ¿Cuál salió del templo “ensalzado” por la mano de Dios? ¿Quién se fue engreído de sí mismo, pero no mejor a los ojos de Dios?

Hemos oído esta parábola tantas veces que conocemos la respuesta. Por supuesto, fue el recaudador de impuestos quien se ganó los elogios de Jesús por su franqueza, su humildad y su deseo de la misericordia de Dios. Y fue el fariseo cuya arrogancia le impidió aceptar humildemente la gracia de Dios.

Pero no nos apresuremos a juzgar. Al fin y al cabo, hay algo de recaudador de impuestos y de fariseo en cada uno de nosotros. Todos somos pecadores cegados por nuestro propio ego; todos tendemos a compararnos favorablemente con personas que parecen ser peores pecadores que

nosotros. Y, sin embargo, en el fondo todos sabemos que debemos arrodillarnos y rezar humildemente: “¡Oh Dios! Ten compasión de mí, que soy pecador.”

En la primera lectura del Libro del Eclesiástico, encontramos lo siguiente:

Porque el Señor es juez, y para él el prestigio de las personas no cuenta. No hace acepción de personas en perjuicio del pobre y escucha la oración del oprimido. No desdén la súplica del huérfano, ni el lamento de la viuda. Quien sirve de buena gana, es bien aceptado, y su plegaria sube hasta las nubes. La oración del humilde atraviesa las nubes; hasta que no llega a su término, él no se consuela. No desiste hasta que el Altísimo le atiende, juzga a los justos y les hace justicia. (Si 35:12-14, 16-18).

Dios sabe quiénes somos; no tiene predilectos; nos ama a cada uno tal como somos. Pero también es cierto que el Señor nos desafía a ser mejores de lo que somos, a vaciarnos de falsos orgullos y pretensiones y a dejar que la gracia de Dios nos llene de santidad y amor.

En la segunda lectura del domingo (2 Tm 4:6-8, 16-18), san Pablo da

testimonio personal del poder de Dios para cambiarnos de pecadores movidos por el ego a discípulos misioneros que nos entregamos desinteresadamente y nos vestimos de Jesucristo, que vino a servir, no a ser servido.

Por tanto, Mi vida está a punto de ser ofrecida en sacrificio; la hora de mi muerte está al caer. He luchado con valor, he corrido hasta llegar a la meta, he conservado la fe. Por lo demás, me está reservada la corona de justicia, que en aquel día me dará el Señor, el juez justo; y no sólo a mí, sino también a todos los que aman su venida (2 Tm 4:6-8).

San Pablo no presume de sus propios logros, sino que alaba a Dios por lo que el Señor ha podido hacer a través de él. Al leer sus palabras, debemos recordar que se trata del mismo hombre que una vez persiguió a los seguidores de Jesús y que, por la gracia del Señor, se vio obligado a caer de rodillas y suplicar la misericordia de Dios.

Cada uno de nosotros está llamado a despojarse de su propia arrogancia y a asumir el tipo de humildad que nos permite cambiar y crecer como discípulos misioneros de Jesucristo. Pidamos a Dios que nos ayude a pedir su misericordia hoy y siempre. †

Events Calendar

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

October 28

Lumen Christi Catholic High School, 717 S. East St., Indianapolis. **Catholic in Recovery**, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, sponsored by Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, free. Information: catholicinrecovery.com, cir.church.holyrosary@gmail.com.

October 31-November 1

St. Mary Church, 2500 Saint Mary Dr. NE, Lanesville. **All Saints Vigil**, 9 p.m. Fri.-10:30 a.m. Sat., Mass 9 p.m. Fri., all-night adoration and communal prayer of Liturgy of the Hours, all invited, free. Information: 812-738-2742, ext. 22, benjamin.reinhart@catholic-community.org.

November 1

St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 213 W. Ripley St., Milan. **Harvest Dinner**, 3-7 p.m., Mass at 5 p.m., pulled pork dinner, cash prizes, quilt raffle, country store, kids’ games, \$15 dinner, ages four and younger free. Information: 812-654-7051, st.charleschurch@yahoo.com.

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **All Saints Mass**, noon. Information: 317-784-4439, catholiccemeteries.cc.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 8-8:30 a.m. confession, followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

St. Matthew the Apostle Church, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Children’s Rosary**, 9 a.m., children of all ages invited to pray rosary every first Saturday, donuts and fellowship to follow, free. Information: julie3reyes@gmail.com.

Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteering Opportunity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., ages 12-18, visit with elder sisters and help them with activities such as Bingo, exercise, baking and more. Information, registration: teenvolunteer.sistersofprovidence.org, jluna@spsmw.org, 361-500-9505.

November 3

Holy Angels Church, 2822 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St., Indianapolis. **Celebration of feast day of St. Martin de Porres**, 6 p.m. Mass. The intercultural celebration

welcomes members of the archdiocese’s Black, Afro-Caribbean, Hispanic, Filipino and broader Catholic communities to come together in faith and fellowship. Dinner to follow liturgy. Event is hosted by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis Black Catholic Ministry.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Durufié Requiem Mass**, 7 p.m., choral and orchestral presentation of composer Maurice Durufié’s “Requiem” performed during traditional Latin Mass, free. Information: 317-636-4478, info@holynosaryindy.org.

November 5

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **A Requiem for Infants**, 6 p.m. Mass offered for infants lost through miscarriage, stillbirth, abortion or early childhood loss, special music written for Mass, confession available 5 p.m., resources available after Mass for parents grieving loss of child of any age and for post-abortive healing for men and women. Information: tday@olgreenwood.org.

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane,

Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30-8:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

November 7

Women’s Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, womenscarecenter.org.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion**, 11:40 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

November 8

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 535 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. **“The Great Story of Jesus” Evangelization Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., doors open at 8:30 a.m., retreat for all seeking to bring others to Christ, Catherine of Siena Institute speaker Katherine Coolidge presenting, lunch provided, registrant’s parish assessed \$35 after event, register by Oct. 27. Information, registration: tinyurl.com/2025EvangRetreat.

Huber Winery, Plantation Hall, 19816 Huber Road, Borden. **St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities Reverse Raffle**, 5:30 p.m., buffet dinner, reverse raffle, premium prize raffles, games, 50/50, pull tabs, bourbon raffle and more, free admission. Reverse raffle chances, more information: creid@stecharities.org, 812-924-4003. Premium prize raffle chances: tinyurl.com/SECCGiftRaffle. Bourbon raffle chances: tinyurl.com/SECCBourbonRaffle.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish parking lot, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **St. Vincent de Paul Stuff-A-Truck**, 9-11 a.m., accepting clothing, household goods and linens (all in closed bags), furniture, bicycles, bicycle

helmets and locks, backpacks. cutt.ly/ItemsNeeded. Information: bsisk@svdpindy.org.

Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ School Gym, 3310 S. Meadow Dr., Indianapolis. **Harvest Night Dinner and Dance**, 6:30-10 p.m., catered dinner, DJ, bring own beverages, \$50 per couple, register by Oct. 25. Information, registration: nativityindy.org/marriage-ministry, 317-357-1200.

St. Mary Parish, 415 E. 8th St., New Albany. **25-Year Time Capsule Reveal**, 1-3 p.m., opening of time capsule buried by former St. Mary School students 25 years ago, free. Information: 812-944-8283, ldavis@holyfamilynewalbany.org.

Holy Cross and St. Joseph Cemetery, 2446 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Indulgence Walk**, 1 p.m., prayerful one-mile walk, historical information, obtain plenary indulgence for poor souls (with completion of other conditions), sponsored by Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. Meet at Pleasant Run Pkwy. Gate, free. Information: 317-636-4478, info@holynosaryindy.org. †

Retreats and Programs

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

Enjoy Christmas shopping, fun at parishes and sites in central and southern Indiana

It’s the time of year when parishes and Catholic sites throughout the archdiocese offer Christmas events, bazaars and craft fairs which offer the opportunity for gift-shopping, food and fun. Below are the events reported to *The Criterion*:

November 1

St. Martin of Tours Parish, 1720 E. Harrison St., Martinsville. **Christmas Holiday Bazaar**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., vendor booths, St. Martin’s Attic and Crafts, Christmas cookies and caramels by the pound, homemade baked goods, raffle cash prizes, handmade quilt wall-hanging door prize, hourly door prizes, food and drinks, carry-out available, free admission. Information: 765-342-6379, parishoffice@stmtours.org.
St. John the Apostle Church, 4607 W. State Road 46, Bloomington. **Holiday Craft Show**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., handmade crafts from 35 local artisans, bake sale, lunch served 11 a.m.-1 p.m., free door prize ticket upon entry, free admission. Information: 812-821-1152, nothingfancyceramics@gmail.com.

November 7-8

St. Agnes Parish, 1008 McLary Road, Nashville. **Christmas and Craft Bazaar**, Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-3 p.m., crafts, Christmas décor and gifts, silent auction of gift baskets and trees, home baked goods, quilt raffle, free admission. Information: 812-988-2778, StAgnesNashville@gmail.com, StAgnesCatholicNashville.org.

November 15

New Albany Knights of Columbus Hall, 809 E. Main St., New Albany. **New Albany Knights of Columbus Annual Christmas Craft Bazaar**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., handmade crafts, treats and more, free admission. Information: 812-944-0891.
Knights of Columbus Council #3228 Fatima Event Center, 1040 N. Post Road, Indianapolis. **God’s Embrace Coffee**

Christmas Bazaar, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., food, drinks, Santa available all day, Toys for Tots collection, free admission, vendor tables \$25 for 6-foot table. Information, vendor registration: 317-402-1930, c-simon@att.net.

November 28-January 4

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish, 23345 Gavin Lane, Bright. **Bright Lights Christmas Light Display**, Fridays and Saturdays 6-10 p.m., Sundays 6-9 p.m., freewill donations accepted.
All information for this event and those below can be found at brightlightsindiana.com.
—Nov. 28: Opening Night Concert with My Brother’s Keeper, 6:30 p.m. in St. Teresa Church, freewill donations.
—Dec. 6: St. Nick at Bright Lights, 6-8 p.m. in St. Teresa Church, photos and treats available, freewill donations.
—Dec. 13 Feast of St. Lucy, 6-8 p.m. at Ars Café on the grounds of St. Teresa Benedicta Parish, hot chocolate and cookies available, freewill donations.
—Dec. 19: Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra concert in St. Teresa Church, 6:30 p.m., freewill donations.

December 13

Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Christmas Fun at the Woods**, 1:30-4:30 p.m., cost TBA. Information: spsmw.org/event, 812-535-2946, lrobinette@spsmw.org.

December 14

Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ Church, 7225 Southeastern Ave., Indianapolis. **Carols and Classics with the Vickery Family**, 4 p.m., Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra violinist Peter Vickery, his wife pianist Joyce Vickery and their family present classic and original carols for the Christmas season, freewill offering. Information: 317-357-1200, tmarin@nativityindy.org. †

November 3, 19

Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-

of-the-Woods. **Dementia Education Series: A Positive Approach to Care**, 1-3 p.m., fifth and sixth of six stand-alone sessions, respite care available

for five families, limited space, registration encouraged, online option available. Information, registration: 812-238-1561, spsmw.org/events, ecollins@spsmw.org. †

Retreats help hearts—even grieving ones—prepare for the coming of Christ as Christmas

To help prepare hearts for the coming of the Lord at Christmas, several retreat centers in the archdiocese are offering Advent-related retreats in November and December. Following is a list of these retreats, including an evening retreat on Nov. 2 (registration deadline is Oct. 31) at Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, in Mt. St. Francis, to help those who are grieving find comfort in the November-December holiday season:

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. Information, registration: retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org, 812-923-8817, mountsaintfrancis.org/advent-retreat.
—Nov. 2: Holding Hope in the Holidays: A Grief Retreat, 4-6:30 p.m., Mount Saint Francis associate director Regina Proctor presenting, soup and bread supper, \$25, register by Oct. 31.
—Dec. 13: Advent Retreat: A Journey of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Mount Saint Francis associate director Regina Proctor presenting,

includes coffee, pastries and lunch, \$60.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Registration: fm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.
—Dec. 6: Jesse Tree Advent Day of Reflection, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., led by Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House staff, \$40 includes lunch, register by 9 a.m. Dec. 5.
—Dec. 9, 10, 11: Advent Days of Silence, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$45 per day, includes room, continental breakfast, lunch and use of the common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional \$32 per night, dinner additional \$11 per meal.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. Information, registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.
—Nov. 14-16: The Infancy Narrative According to the Gospel of Luke, Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. †

Wedding Anniversaries

JOHN AND MARCIA (STILGER) ENGLEMAN, members of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon, will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary on Nov. 7.
The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Lanesville on Nov. 7, 1970.
They have two children: Dana Johnson and Sean Engleman.



Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to cutt.ly/anniversaries or call 317-236-1585.

In illo uno unum (In the One Christ we are one)

One in Christ/Daniel Conway

Ecumenical journey reminds us we are all pilgrims of hope

On Thursday, July 17, Pope Leo XIV greeted a very special group of pilgrims led by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, N.J., and Greek Orthodox Archbishop Elpidophoros of America. The pilgrims were embarking on an ecumenical journey that would take them to numerous sites of significance to Catholic and Orthodox traditions as they traveled from Rome to Constantinople (today known as Istanbul).

Bearing the title “From Old Rome to New Rome: A Roman Catholic and Orthodox Pilgrimage,” the event commemorated the 1700th anniversary of the Church’s first ecumenical council, the Council of Nicaea, which resulted in the Nicene Creed that expresses the core beliefs of the Christian faith.

During his welcoming remarks, Pope Leo said:
You have set out from the United States, which as you know, is also my native country, and this journey is meant to be a return to the roots, the sources, the places, the memorials of the Apostles Peter and Paul in Rome, and of the Apostle Andrew in Constantinople. It is also a way to experience anew and in a concrete way the faith that comes from listening to the Gospel, hearing the Gospel handed down to us by the Apostles (cf. Rom 10:16).

It is significant that your pilgrimage is taking place this year, in which we celebrate one thousand seven hundred years of the Council of Nicaea. The symbol of faith adopted by the assembled Fathers remains—together with the additions made at the Council of Constantinople in 381—the common patrimony of all Christians, for many of whom the Creed is an integral part of their liturgical celebrations. Then too, by a providential coincidence, this year the two calendars in use in our Churches coincide, with the result that we were able to chant as one the Easter Alleluia: “Christ is risen! He is truly risen!”

The Easter Alleluia proclaims that the darkness of sin and death has been vanquished by the Lamb that was slain, Jesus Christ our Lord. According to the Holy Father, this acclamation “inspires us with great hope, for we know that no cry of the innocent victims of violence, no lament of mothers mourning their children will go unheard.” We place our hope in God, but “precisely because we constantly draw from the inexhaustible

source of his grace, we are called to be witnesses and bearers of hope.”

“Pilgrims of Hope” is the theme chosen by Pope Francis for the current Jubilee Year.

“It is my hope,” Pope Leo said, “that your pilgrimage will confirm all of you in the hope born of our faith in the risen Lord!”

Unity among those who believe in Christ is one of the signs of God’s gift of consolation, the Holy Father said. Scripture promises that “in Jerusalem you will be comforted” (Is 66:13). “Rome, Constantinople and all the other Sees, are not called to vie for primacy, lest we risk finding ourselves like the disciples who along the way, even as Jesus was announcing his coming passion, argued about which of them was the greatest” (cf. Mk 9:33-37).

Pope Leo described this particular pilgrimage as “one of the abundant fruits of the ecumenical movement aimed at restoring full unity among all Christ’s disciples in accordance with the Lord’s prayer at the Last Supper, when Jesus said, “that they may all be one” (Jn 17:21). He noted that at times “we take for granted these signs of sharing and fellowship that, albeit not yet signifying full unity, already manifest the theological progress and the dialogue of charity that have marked recent decades.”

The Holy Father recalled that “on December 7th, 1965, on the eve of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, my predecessor Saint Paul VI and the Patriarch, Athenagoras signed a joint declaration removing from memory and the midst of the Church the sentences of excommunication that followed the events of the year 1054. Before then, a pilgrimage like your own would probably not even have been possible.”

Pope Leo observed that it is the grace of the Holy Spirit that creates in hearts the readiness to take initial steps “as a prophetic presage of full and visible unity.”

He concluded, saying, “For our part, we too must continue to implore from the Paraclete, the Consoler, the grace to pursue the path of unity and fraternal charity.”

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee.) †

Uno en Cristo/Daniel Conway

La peregrinación ecuménica nos recuerda que todos somos peregrinos de la esperanza

El jueves 17 de julio, el papa León XIV saludó a un grupo muy especial de peregrinos encabezado por el cardenal Joseph W. Tobin de Newark, Nueva Jersey, y el arzobispo griego ortodoxo Elpidophoros de Estados Unidos. Los peregrinos estaban embarcándose en un viaje ecuménico que los llevaría a numerosos lugares de importancia para las tradiciones católica y ortodoxa en su recorrido de Roma a Constantinopla (hoy Estambul).

Bajo el título “De la vieja a la nueva Roma: Una peregrinación católica romana y ortodoxa” el evento conmemoró el MDCC aniversario del primer concilio ecuménico de la Iglesia, el Concilio de Nicea, del que surgió el Credo de Nicea, que expresa las creencias fundamentales de la fe cristiana.

En su discurso de bienvenida, el papa León expresó:

Partieron de Estados Unidos, que, como saben, es mi país natal, para este viaje, que quiere ser un regreso a las raíces, a las fuentes, a los lugares y a los recuerdos de los apóstoles Pedro y Pablo en Roma, y del apóstol Andrés en Constantinopla. Es también una forma de experimentar de manera nueva y concreta la fe que nace de escuchar el Evangelio,

de sentir el Evangelio que nos han transmitido los Apóstoles (cf. Rom 10,16).

Es significativo que su peregrinación tenga lugar este año, en el que celebramos los mil setecientos años del Concilio de Nicea. El Símbolo de la fe adoptado por los Padres reunidos sigue siendo, junto con las adiciones aportadas por el Concilio de Constantinopla en el año 381, patrimonio común de todos los cristianos, para muchos de los cuales el Credo es parte integrante de las celebraciones litúrgicas. Además, por una providencial coincidencia, este año los dos calendarios en uso en nuestras Iglesias coinciden, de modo que hemos podido cantar al unísono el Aleluya pascual: “¡Cristo ha resucitado! ¡Ha resucitado verdaderamente!”

El Aleluya pascual proclama que el Cordero inmolado, Jesucristo nuestro Señor ha vencido las tinieblas del pecado y de la muerte. En palabras del Santo Padre, esta aclamación “nos inspira una gran esperanza, porque sabemos que ningún grito de las víctimas inocentes de la violencia, ningún lamento de las madres que lloran a sus hijos quedará sin ser escuchado.” Depositamos nuestra esperanza en Dios, pero “precisamente

porque bebemos constantemente de la fuente inagotable de su gracia, estamos llamados a ser testigos y portadores de ella.”

“Peregrinos de esperanza” es el tema que el papa Francisco eligió para el actual Año Jubilar, por lo que el papa León señaló: “¡Espero que su peregrinación les confirme a todos en la esperanza que nace de la fe en el Señor resucitado!”

La unidad entre los que creen en Cristo es uno de los signos del don de consolación de Dios, afirmó el Sumo Pontífice. Las Escrituras nos prometen que “en Jerusalén serán consolados” (Is 66:13). “Roma, Constantinopla y todas las demás Sedes no están llamadas a disputarse la primacía, para no correr el riesgo de encontrarnos como los discípulos que, en el camino, precisamente mientras Jesús anunciaba su pasión inminente, discutían sobre quién de ellos era el más grande” (cf. Mc 9:33-37).

El papa León describió esta singular peregrinación como “uno de los frutos abundantes del movimiento ecuménico destinado a restablecer la plena unidad entre todos los discípulos de Cristo, según la oración del Señor en la Última Cena, cuando Jesús dijo: “para que todos sean uno” (Jn 17:21). Destacó que

a veces “a veces damos por sentados estos signos de compartir y de comunión que, aunque aún no significan la plena unidad, ya manifiestan el progreso teológico y el diálogo en la caridad que han caracterizado las últimas décadas.”

El Santo Padre recordó que “el 7 de diciembre de 1965, en vísperas de la conclusión del Concilio Vaticano II, mi predecesor, san Pablo VI, y el patriarca Atenágoras firmaron una Declaración Conjunta, borrando de la memoria y de la vida de la Iglesia las sentencias de excomunión que siguieron a los acontecimientos de 1054. Antes de eso, una peregrinación como la suya probablemente ni siquiera habría sido posible.”

El papa León observó que es la gracia del Espíritu Santo la que crea en los corazones la disponibilidad para dar los pasos iniciales “como presagio profético de la unidad plena y visible.”

Concluyó diciendo: “Por nuestra parte, debemos seguir implorando al Paráclito, al Consolador, la gracia de recorrer el camino de la unidad y de la caridad fraterna.”

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.) †

In illo uno unum (En el único Cristo somos uno)

CHAMBLEE

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it claims to look out for everybody?”

At the same time, Chamblee didn’t give up completely on her faith. Instead, she started exploring it from a different direction, picking up books in her family’s home that related to the Catholic faith, especially books about the saints.

One of the books particularly captured her attention—*Saints Behaving Badly* by Thomas Craughwell, which focuses on 32 saints whose pasts weren’t always saintly before they devoted their lives to God.

“I always thought that saints were these holier-than-thou people on pedestals,” Chamblee notes. “Their stories of mental and spiritual struggles were a lot of comfort for me.”

Her reading also led her to a story about another saint she could identify with—St. Padre Pio.

“Essentially, he was feeling a lot of isolation, and he was being told by those around him that nobody cared that he was isolated, that nobody cared about the stories he had to tell, nobody cared about the struggle he was going through.

“I saw myself in that. To me, it was like, ‘Well, *I care.*’ And I know there are other people out there who feel the same way. And I want to show them what I have learned—that the saints went through similar things like us.

“In many ways, I saw friends in them. I saw their struggles and how they rose above those struggles and how they were able to help the Church in their own way, however history demanded it. It made me feel that holiness is attainable. That I can find a community with the saints.”

Her connection with the saints took an artistic turn in high school when she learned to draw and she focused on drawing saints.

“I was that art girl in the back of the classroom, doodling in her textbook. For a while, to my parents and everyone else, it was ‘*just a thing she’s doing.*’ Then there was this self-portrait I drew one time that inspired my parents. When I graduated, they bought me an iPad that I still use to this day where I am able to draw digitally. That really helped my artistic journey.”

It was a journey that was just beginning, leading her to the one person



A banner in St. Peter’s Square depicts the image of St. Carlo Acutis, who became the Church’s first millennial saint on Sept. 7. (Submitted photo)



‘I saw myself in Carlo as having that dream of using the Internet as a tool to evangelize. I’ve used the Internet to learn how to draw, how to film, how to use different apps. I wanted to use it to talk about Catholic saints. So, he kind of became the patron saint of my mission.’

—Sophia Chamblee

whose influence changed everything for her.

A message for people who feel lost, lonely

She became aware of Carlo Acutis when she was a student at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio.

“I first heard about Carlo Acutis during COVID,” Chamblee says. “That was when he was beatified. He really stood out to me because he was a nerd. And I am also a huge nerd. I was a huge *Star Wars* fan growing up, and that’s drifted off into other things. I really saw myself in Carlo. When he was 6 years old, he was in a Spiderman costume. When I was that age, I was dressed as Darth Vader’s apprentice or something. So, I totally get it,” she says with a laugh.

The more she learned about him, the more she was impressed—and felt a bond with him.

“He wanted to use the internet to evangelize. And that’s what I wanted to do as well,” she says. “Maybe not in the same way as him. He built a website documenting eucharistic miracles. That way people had all the information they needed in one place.

“I saw myself in Carlo as having that dream of using the Internet as a tool to evangelize. I’ve used the Internet to learn how to draw, how to film, how to use different apps. I wanted to use it to talk about Catholic saints. So, he kind of became the patron saint of my mission.”

Since graduating from college in 2023, Chamblee has created the website, www.playgroundsaints.shop, where she sells stickers, prints and keychains featuring the saints.

She also shares her focus on saints on the social media platform Instagram @playgroundsaints. She posts stories and self-described “goofy” videos about the saints, hoping to show their humanity.

Her efforts have led to about 63,000 followers and an invitation to take part in the Vatican’s Jubilee of Digital Missionaries and Catholic Influencers in Rome in late July—a gathering that drew more than 1,000 people from more than 70 countries.

“Being an influencer was not my plan, but I was invited,” she says. “When I got there, there were other influencers who recognized me and said, ‘Oh, my gosh, I love your stuff.’ Then I had fans approaching me. I’m not used to that. When you work behind a screen, you have no idea how many people you are inspiring until you meet them firsthand. “It blows my mind. I feel a sense of accomplishment. I’m able to reach out to people all over the world. I’m doing something right here, and I’m helping people.

“There are plenty of ideas I have for content, but I ask myself, ‘Is that pointing to me or is that pointing to the saints and heaven?’ If it’s pointing to me, that’s not the goal.”

The goal is clear for her. “I hope to prove to people that sainthood is possible for anybody. That no matter what you’ve done or where you’ve been or what background you come from, you can achieve sainthood,” she says. “It does take work on your end, but it is possible.

“I especially want to tell that to people who really see sainthood as something that’s not attainable for them, as well as for the people who feel just lost and lonely. That you can pull yourself out of this. And God can give you the grace to pull yourself out of it. Because that’s what helped me. In many ways, I want to return



With a banner showing the image of St. Carlo Acutis in the background, Pope Leo waves to the crowd in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Sept. 7, the day he celebrated the canonization Mass for St. Carlo and St. Pier Giorgio Frassati. (Submitted photo)

that to other people.”

That hope also led her to return to Italy just several weeks after the Jubilee of Digital Missionaries and Catholic Influencers.

She was in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Sept. 7 when Pope Leo XIV celebrated the canonization Mass for St. Pier Giorgio Frassati and St. Carlo Acutis, the Church’s first millennial saint, who died of leukemia at the age of 15, the age when Chamblee was lonely and struggling with her faith.

‘That was a very powerful moment’

“I had to go,” she recalls about being there for the canonization. “For me, it was like hearing that a friend of yours was getting an award and you wanted to be there for the ceremony to support him. That’s the way it was for me. I *had* to be there to see him be canonized.

“Carlo’s family was up there. His brother was reading the first reading. Pope Leo was giving the announcement that Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio are saints. Seeing all of that happen and being surrounded by tens of thousands of people who were there for the same thing, it showed me the Church is real and it’s alive and it’s young.”

It’s a view of the Church that gives her joy.

“I see a newfound energy in the Church that I really didn’t see very much growing up. There is very much a spiritual awakening. It is a re-embrace of the faith, but our generations are doing it in a way that fits us. We’re doing it through the Internet. We’re doing it through social media. We’re doing it through local community. And that’s something that I didn’t think I’d ever see. It gives me a lot of hope.”

Her focus on the saints has also led her to a closer relationship with Christ.

“It’s a lot stronger than it used to be,” she says. “I see him as a familiar friend and as a guide. Christ has a vocation for all of us. He certainly had vocations for the saints.”

She pauses before

adding, “I feel like I’m at a point where I’m figuring out what he wants me to do. I know that what I’m doing now, I won’t be doing forever. When you figure out what your vocation is, when you figure out what God wants to do through you, I think that’s where you feel the most alive.”

Her recent trips to Rome and the Vatican brought all those feelings alive for her again. Still, there was one more trip in Italy that she needed to make.

Shortly after the canonization, she traveled to Assisi, to the church where the body of St. Carlo Acutis lies in repose in a glass tomb.

“I went there because I wanted to see Carlo for myself,” she says. “I wanted to see the person I had worked so hard to see canonized. When I got to Assisi, it was very, very busy around the church where he was. It had already hit me that this was real when I was at the canonization. But seeing him in the tomb—and you could see him fully—that was when it was like, Carlo is real for me.

“Just being able to see him up-close and seeing he’s wearing jeans, and he’s wearing sneakers, like me. That was a very powerful moment.”

A moment to say thank you to the saint who changed her life. †



Sophia Chamblee holds up the playful stickers that she created of St. Carlo Acutis and St. Pier Giorgio Frassati, who became saints on Sept. 7. (Submitted photo)

PILGRIMAGE

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St. Mary Major in Rome. And he and the pilgrimage group met the mother of St. Carlo Acutis in Assisi.

But all of those memorable events take on a different perspective when Archbishop Thompson recalled the surprise he felt when he learned that Pope Leo invited him to meet with him one-on-one that Saturday morning before the pontiff met with the pilgrimage group.

‘I had no idea that that was going to happen’

The group arrived at the Vatican about 40 minutes in advance of the audience. Archbishop Thompson soon was guided to a different room.

“They took me out and down some stairs, walking into a rather large hall,” Archbishop Thompson said, noting that he could hear Pope Leo through a doorway to an adjacent room where he was speaking in Spanish to another group of people.

“At that point, I realized that he’s going to come out that door and I’m going to be standing here,” Archbishop Thompson said. “I guess he’s greeting me before he greets the group.”

Pope Leo greeted him and invited the archbishop to join him in another adjoining room.

“It was a small room,” he recalled. “There was a desk and two chairs, one on each side of the desk. He motioned me to sit down. I sat down. He sat down. The door was closed, and we spent about 10 minutes talking.”

Archbishop Thompson told *The Criterion* that he had met three other popes, twice as a bishop in *ad limina* visits to the Holy See. Such visits are prepared for months in advance, with reports about the bishop’s diocese being prepared and sent to the Vatican. But he had never met a pope in a one-on-one encounter.

“It’s one thing to write a report, send it and then discuss it when you go over there,” Archbishop Thompson said. “This was one-on-one. This was very informal, ‘Tell me about the Church in Indiana.’ ”

And he was happy to tell Pope Leo about the archdiocese.

“We do so many wonderful things here,” he said. “I shared that we have a very vibrant Church here in central and southern Indiana. We talked about how our people are so very good at doing national events, mentioning the Eucharistic Congress.”

He also spoke about the upcoming National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) to be held on Nov. 20-22 in Indianapolis. On the morning of Nov. 21, Pope Leo will have a live interactive video encounter in Lucas Oil Stadium with the estimated 15,000 youths who will attend NCYC.

“It was nice to be able to say all these beautiful things that we do, the wonderful people and how they embrace and love



Pope Leo XIV poses for a photo with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of Indianapolis, chair of the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Evangelization and Catechesis, and members of a pilgrimage for the Jubilee of Catechists at the Vatican on Sept. 27. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

their faith,” Archbishop Thompson said.

Reflecting on the time he got to spend with Pope Leo, Archbishop Thompson spoke about how unexpected it was.

“I was so taken aback by the opportunity,” he said. “I have to admit that there was some nervousness there, of course. I had no idea that that was going to happen.”

While describing it as “an incredible boost, a profound encounter of joy and excitement” for him in his ministry in shepherding the Church in central and southern Indiana, Archbishop Thompson did admit that he second-guessed himself after the meeting.

“I probably spent the rest of that day and especially in the evening thinking about what I should have done,” he recalled. “Did I talk too much? Did I not talk enough? Did I follow proper protocol? You’re questioning everything you did afterward.”

From the way Archbishop Thompson described how Pope Leo received him and the pilgrimage group, the U.S.-born pontiff was hospitable, even if his guests were a bit nervous.

“He was very gracious,” Archbishop Thompson said. “I found him very personable, very humble, very engaging, and very sharp, too.”

After meeting with Archbishop Thompson, Pope Leo met with the pilgrimage group and spoke with them for about 15-20 minutes.

Now that he’s back in the archdiocese, Archbishop Thompson cherishes his memories of the pilgrimage as a whole and his opportunity to spend time with Pope Leo.

“It was a once-in-a-lifetime moment that I’ll never forget, that I’ll always appreciate,” he said. “I’m grateful to the Holy Father. His schedule is so tight. Not only was he gracious enough to fit us in. But he was so engaging, so personal,

so humble. It was a wonderful moment to just be in his presence.”

‘Something we do every day’

As much of an impression that his audience with Pope Leo made on Archbishop Thompson and the pilgrimage group, they knew that they had come to Rome for a larger purpose—to be confirmed in their life of faith as pilgrims of hope.

“That’s something that we do every day,” said Archbishop Thompson. “That’s not something we just did from September 23 to



Pope Leo XIV greets Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of Indianapolis, chair of the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Evangelization and Catechesis, during a private audience at the Vatican on Sept. 27. The archbishop was leading a pilgrimage for the Jubilee of Catechists. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

October 2. The pilgrimage to Rome was a moment within our call to be pilgrims. It was a unique moment. It was a profound and powerful moment. But it was something within what we do day in and day out.”

He noted that coming to Rome specifically for the Jubilee for Catechists “kind of heightened the notion of what it means to be a pilgrim of hope.”

That was made clear for him when he was asked by the Holy See’s Dicastery for Evangelization to give a presentation on Sept. 27 to English-speaking catechists from around the world and to have a question-and-answer session with them.

“To hear from catechists from around the world sharing their experience, their struggles, their hopes and how we do this even more effectively, what the pitfalls are and the opportunities—it was a great time of solidarity, a great time of interaction and dialogue with the Spirit being present there,” Archbishop Thompson said.

The following day, Pope Leo celebrated Sunday Mass in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican for the estimated 20,000 pilgrims in Rome for the Jubilee for Catechists. Archbishop Thompson recalled the message Pope Leo shared with the pilgrims in his homily at the Mass.

“When he talked about catechists being witnesses, he said each must pronounce the word [of God] with his or her own life as a person of the word,” Archbishop Thompson explained. “He spoke about accompanying people from childhood to old age. We don’t leave anybody behind. We have to be attentive to every person that we are to accompany and walk with, from womb to tomb in a lifelong formation and conversion process.”

‘Called to be sent out’

With the Jubilee for Catechists and the pilgrimage over, Archbishop Thompson has had time to reflect on the broader meaning of what he experienced in Rome for the life of all Catholics across central

and southern Indiana.

He said that all the baptized have a call to share the Gospel and help people understand the faith better.

“Every baptized person is called to be sent out,” Archbishop Thompson said. “Catechists do that in a very unique way, just as bishops, priests and deacons do that and religious do that. We each have our own unique way—lay or ordained—to carry that out. But we all have that same common baptismal call to holiness and mission and to proclaim through witness and action the good news. How do we draw people to Jesus Christ?”

He said that this common call to evangelization and catechesis, emphasized by Pope Leo in his homily during the Mass for the Jubilee for Catechists, echoes one of the principal messages of the Synod on Synodality concluded a year ago: co-responsibility.

“Every baptized person has a co-responsible part in the mission of the Church,” he said. “The Church, by nature, is missionary. The Church exists for the mission of evangelizing catechesis. We all have the responsibility, the opportunity and the ability to proclaim the good news, not by our own merit, our own particular gifts and talents, as much as by the grace of God that’s working in us.”

In reflecting on the Church’s mission and the responsibility of all the baptized for carrying it out, Archbishop Thompson emphasized that the various ways that the faithful can contribute to it in their daily lives must always be rooted in and directed toward Christ.

“Remember that we’re drawing people to Jesus, not to ourselves, not to our egos, not to our ideologies,” he said. “Our ultimate goal is to draw people to the person of Jesus Christ. He is the only savior. We’re instruments. We’re disciples. We’re missionaries. We’re pilgrims.

“But we’re not saviors. The only savior is Jesus Christ. Pope Leo beautifully reminded us of that.” †



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson is pictured with Marilyn Santos, left, associate director of the Secretariat of Evangelization and Catechesis for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Antonia Salzano, St. Carlo Acutis’ mother, during a pilgrimage stop in Assisi, Italy.

(Submitted photo courtesy of Marilyn Santos)



St. Peter Claver Day and Works of Mercy Project

Knights of Peter Claver (KPC) and Ladies Auxiliary of the Indianapolis Central Committee (ICC) celebrated Claver Day at St. Andrew the Apostle Church in Indianapolis on Sept. 7. St. Andrew the Apostle Council and Court #201 spearheaded the Works of Mercy Project, collecting 623 items (hats, gloves and socks) for the homeless. After Mass, the ICC councils and courts had lunch, fellowship and recognized award winners. ICC consists of St. Rita Council #97; Christ the King Court #97; Junior Knights/Junior Daughters; St. Bridget Council #109; St. Catherine of Siena Court #109; Juniors Knights/Junior Daughters; SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Council #191; St. Andrew the Apostle Council #201; KPC 4th Degree Assembly #14; and KPC Ladies of Grace Chapter #14. ICC clergy members include Deacon Kerry Blandford, Father Jeffrey Godecker and Father Benjamin Syberg. (Submitted photo)

Pray, recommit to journeying with young for vocations, says bishop

(OSV News)—An annual observance centered on vocations is a moment for prayer and rededication to helping young people find their place in God’s plan, said Bishop Earl A. Boyea of Lansing, Mich.

“With fervor ... let us pray and renew our commitment to journey with and encourage young people as they discover the hope God has placed in their hearts through discerning how he has called them to be witnesses of the love ‘poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit,’ ” said Bishop Boyea, quoting Romans 5:5.

The bishop, who serves as chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, issued an Oct. 15 statement ahead of National Vocation Awareness Week, which the nation’s Catholics will mark on Nov. 2-8.

Launched in 1976 by the U.S. bishops, the observance was moved in 1997 to coincide with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord in January, then returned in 2014 to the first full week in November.

Regardless of scheduling, the goal of National Vocations Awareness Week remains timeless and crucial—and the aim is a whole-of-Church effort, said the USCCB in its Oct. 15 media release containing Bishop Boyea’s statement.

“Each year, national Catholic organizations, dioceses, schools and local parish communities sponsor events and provide different resources to raise awareness for vocations and help those who are discerning a vocation, particularly one to ordained ministry or consecrated life,” said the USCCB.

The USCCB’s website, www.usccb.org, includes a dedicated page with resources

for National Vocations Awareness Week—available in both English and Spanish—including prayers, handouts and bulletin inserts, a recommended reading list for those discerning a vocation, and links to helpful ministries and organizations.

The Catholic Church defines a vocation—from the Latin word “*vocare*,” meaning “to call”—as “the calling or destiny we have in this life and hereafter.”

Laity are intended to shape temporal affairs in accord with God’s will, while priestly and religious vocations “are dedicated to the service of the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation,” states the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

“In this Jubilee Year of Hope, let us celebrate all who have responded to God’s

call, whether to serve as husbands, wives, parents, priests and others as ordained ministers, or consecrated persons,” said Bishop Boyea.

He quoted a June 24 meditation Pope Leo XIV offered during the Jubilee of Seminarians, in which the pope said, “If you cultivate your heart through daily periods of silence, meditation, and prayer, you will learn the art of discernment.”

In that meditation, Pope Leo stressed the importance of “learning discernment,” since young hearts in particular can “overflow with desires, dreams and ambitions,” often rendering them “overwhelmed and bewildered.”

By following the example set by Mary, said the pope, “we will surely learn to keep all those things in our heart and meditate on them.” †



A ros(M)ary event in Connersville

Students of St. Gabriel School in Connersville—including third-graders Hudsyn Burgdoerfer, left, Lincoln Faw, Mia Lakes and Cole Goldey—celebrated the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on Oct. 7 with an all-school, student-led rosary as well as eucharistic adoration in St. Gabriel Church. Later, Father Dustin Boehm—pastor of St. Gabriel Parish, St. Bridget of Ireland Parish in Liberty and St. Mary Parish in Rushville—blessed a new statue of Mary on the St. Gabriel School grounds. The purchase of the statue was made possible through the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation’s Queen & Divine Mercy Center Endowment Fund established by the late Father Elmer Burwinkel to promote devotion to the Queenship of Mary and to the Divine Mercy of Jesus. For a 2-minute video of Father Boehm and St. Gabriel School principal Michelle Struewing describing why and how the statue was purchased, go to tinyurl.com/connersville-statue. (Photos by Mary King)

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Life and teachings of St. Teresa of Avila show pilgrimage paths to God

By J.J. Ziegler

(OSV News)—More than 90,000 pilgrims flocked in May to the Basilica of the Annunciation of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Alba de Tormes, Spain, where the remains of St. Teresa of Avila were displayed for veneration.

The previous August, her tomb in northwestern Spain had been reopened for the first time in a century for an in-depth study of her relics.

Both the inquiry and the crowds indicate widespread devotion to and enduring fascination with one of Spain's most famous saints, the foundress of the Discalced Carmelites, whose feast day is on Oct. 15.

Recent popes have showered praise on St. Teresa. In 1970, St. Paul VI declared her a doctor of the Church, and in 1982, St. John Paul II traveled to Spain to commemorate the 400th anniversary of her death.

In 2011, Pope Benedict XVI described her as “one of the peaks of Christian spirituality of all time” and “a true teacher of Christian life for the faithful of every time.” Pope Francis called her “a sure guide and attractive model of total donation to God” in a message to then-Father Saverio Cannistrà, the Discalced Carmelites’ superior general, on March 28, 2015, her 500th birthday.

During that celebration of her birthday, the bishop of Avila, Spain, joined by Carmelite superiors, celebrated Mass and led a large procession of the faithful to the first convent she founded. Father Saverio (whom Pope Francis named archbishop of Pisa, Italy, in February) wished his order’s foundress happy birthday from “your daughters and sons, your large family that recognizes you as mother and teacher; those Christians whom you have caused to discover what a good friend Jesus is and how our life is changed by learning to be with him in simplicity and love, limiting ourselves to gazing on him who gazes at us.”

Teresa Sánchez de Cepeda y Ahumada was born in Avila, Spain, in 1515. Teresa’s father had three children by his first marriage. After he was widowed, he remarried, and Teresa was the third of nine children of the new marriage.

“I had a father and mother who were devout and feared God,” the saint wrote in her autobiography. “My father was a man of great charity toward the poor, and compassion for the sick, and also for servants; so much so that he never could be persuaded to keep slaves. ... My mother also was a woman of great goodness, and her life was spent in great infirmities.”

When Teresa was a child, she loved to read the lives of saints, and one day she and her brother decided to run away in order to seek martyrdom among the Moors in Africa—only to be stopped by an uncle who took them home. When she was 13, her mother died, and at 16, her father sent her to an Augustinian convent school. After a little more than a year away, she returned home, ill.

Desiring the safest way to avoid hell, she resolved to enter religious life when she was 18. After her father refused his consent, she and a brother ran away from home one night—he to seek admission to a Dominican friary and she to enter a Carmelite convent. The Carmelites sent her father word that she was with them,

and he finally gave his consent.

The early years of Teresa’s religious life were years of joy, interior struggle and serious illness. In the years that followed, she received many interior graces that led her to a deeper practice of prayer. The convent was not cloistered; visitors frequently came, and the sisters sometimes were asked to visit others outside.

At the age of 39, Teresa experienced a deeper conversion to the Lord. “It came to pass one day, when I went into the oratory, that I saw a picture,” she recalled. “It was a representation of Christ most grievously wounded. ... So keenly did I feel the evil return I had made for those wounds, that I thought my heart was breaking. I threw myself on the ground beside it, my tears flowing plenteously, and implored him to strengthen me once for all, so that I might never offend him anymore.”

Four years later, St. Teresa was granted a vision of the place she deserved in hell, and she began to desire a stricter observance of the Carmelite life, noting that in her convent “the rule also was kept, not in its original exactness, but according to the custom of the whole order, authorized by the bull of mitigation” of Pope Eugene IV (1432), who relaxed the original 13th-century Carmelite rule.

One day, as she received holy Communion, she sensed a command from the Lord to proceed with the founding of a new convent that followed the original rule. She found much opposition to her plan among her convent’s nearly 200 sisters.

“I was now very much disliked throughout the whole monastery, because I wished to found another with stricter enclosure,” she recalled. “It was said I insulted my sisters, that I could serve God among them as well as elsewhere.”

In 1562, with the permission of the bishop and joined by two other sisters, she founded the Convent of St. Joseph in Avila. With the support of some Church leaders and the opposition of others, she founded 17 convents during the remaining two decades of her life and worked with St. John of the Cross to promote reform among the Carmelite friars as well.

During her last decades, she also wrote books through which she has exercised a lasting influence on Catholic spirituality: the autobiographical *Life* (1565); *The Way of Perfection* (1566), written for novices; her classic *Interior Castle* (1577); and the *Book of Foundations* (1573-1582), in which she discussed the founding of her reformed convents.

Teresa of Jesus died on Oct. 4, 1582, and was declared a saint in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV.

In celebration of the opening of the jubilee year honoring St. Teresa on Oct. 15, 2014, Pope Francis sent a message to the



St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), mystic and founder of the Discalced Carmelites, along with St. Catherine of Siena, was one of the first two women to be named a doctor of the Church. She is depicted in a church in Troyes, France. (OSV News photo/Crosiers)

bishop of Avila, in which he said, “At the school of the saintly traveler, we learn how to be pilgrims.”

The saint “understood life as a way of perfection, along which God leads man, from task to task, up to him and, at the same time, puts him on a journey toward mankind,” the late pope continued, as he named four of the saint’s “paths” that “do me much good.”

The first path, said Pope Francis, is the path of joy. Because she knew the Lord loved her, St. Teresa was a woman with a “contagious and unconcealable joy.” This joy, the pope noted, “is not reached by an easy shortcut that bypasses sacrifice, suffering or the cross but is found by enduring labor and pain, looking to the crucifix and seeking the Risen One.”

St. Teresa described the second path, the path of prayer, as “being on terms of friendship with God, frequently conversing in secret with him who, we know, loves us.” St. Teresa’s emphasis on the absolute necessity of prayer “is of perennial relevance,” Pope Francis said. “Thus, go forth along the path of prayer, with determination, without stopping, until the end!”

The saint’s third path, the pope continued, is “the way of fraternity,” or brotherhood and sisterhood, “in the bosom of the Mother Church.” In response to immense problems in the Church and society of her time, St. Teresa saw the importance of creating small communities in which women could together journey toward Christ as sisters, in mutual charity, detachment and humility.

The final path is that of time, of recognizing that the Lord meets us moment by moment, even “amidst the pots and pans,” as St. Teresa put it. In response to difficulties, she did not give in “to bitter complaining,” the pope observed, but accepted them “in faith as an opportunity to take a step forward on the journey.”

The “realism” of St. Teresa, Pope Francis said in summary, thus “requires work instead of emotions, and love instead of dreams”; it is “the realism of humble love,” rather than “anxious asceticism.”

More than five centuries after her birth, we can ask this Carmelite reformer to help us travel the paths of joy, prayer, fraternity and time in our own pilgrimage to God.

(J.J. Ziegler writes from North Carolina.) †



The silver urn containing the body of St. Teresa of Avila in Alba de Tormes, Spain, was opened earlier this year in May for the first time since 1914 and marked the beginning of a study of her relics, which was carried out by Italian doctors and scientists with Vatican approval. Noted for her deeply spiritual writings, she was the founder of the Discalced Carmelites and, along with St. Catherine of Siena, was one of the first two women to be named a doctor of the Church. (OSV News photo/courtesy Order of Carmel)

Faith at Home/Laura Kelly Fanucci

The tender theology of lullabies is carried through generations

When I was a child, I thought I was the luckiest kid in the world because I got four lullabies sung to me every night—one each from my mother, father, sister and brother. I can still hear their voices—



soprano, alto, tenor and bass—singing my favorite songs. To be loved like that, so specifically and tenderly, night after night, year after year, was one of the strongest shaping influences from my childhood. But it wasn’t until I started singing lullabies to my own children that I realized the power of this bedtime ritual.

Lullabies sing a tender theology, soft words of love and comfort to remind a child they are safe and cherished, all through the night. Lately I’ve been musing on the words I sing to my youngest children in the dark, and I realized that their favorite songs hold deep truths of our faith.

“Tender Shepherd” sings of God as the Good Shepherd watching over us. The Shaker song “Simple Gifts” gives thanks for forgiveness and the gift of turning back to each other in love. Even “Frère Jacques” sings of waking with the morning bells, the monastery’s call to prayer.

With gentle rocking rhythms, generations of parents have hushed their children to sleep with the same songs, the tunes we know by heart, the words we heard from our elders, the gifts we now pass to our young.

Lullabies stretch back for centuries. Today I sing a song to my youngest that my grandmother sang to me. In the mystery of the communion of saints, I feel her love with me in the well-worn words: “Now run along home, jump into your bed, say your prayers, and cover your head.”

Not every family sings lullabies of course. But bedtime rituals and nighttime prayers are common across cultures, the routines that help children (and adults) settle down for sleep. A therapist once told me that the same routines that help to calm children—rocking in the dark to gentle music—can help adults struggling with anxiety, too. Our bodies remember the first rhythms of comfort, starting with the soft swaying within our mother’s womb, her heartbeat our first lullaby.

Lullabies even evoke what is central to our Catholic liturgies: remembering God’s faithfulness through daily prayers and practices. The beauty of making music together. The traditions that anchor us in a turbulent world. The rituals that make us who we are.

Let it be known that bedtime traditions need not compete with high Church rituals. (I have also been

singing “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” to our 8-year-old for a year now.) But what matters is giving a child your full attention for a few moments each night, reminding them that they are seen, known and loved.

No matter our age or stage of life, the smallest moments matter most in love. A morning cup of coffee waiting for your spouse. A text to a friend on a hard day. A favorite dish cooked every family holiday. A sidewalk shoveled by a kind neighbor. In our unsettling world, gentle rituals and loving gestures keep us grounded.

God loves us in small, specific ways, too. The morning sunrise we catch with awe. The song on the radio that lifts our spirits. A line of Scripture that makes us sit up and pay attention. A hug from a friend when we need it most. God moves in gentle, daily moments like the still, small voice that whispered to Elijah.

The greatest gift of my life has been mothering my children, singing them songs of love through the years. The deepest hope of my heart is that the memory of that tender love will linger with them long after I am gone, just like a lullaby echoing in the hushed dark.

(Laura Kelly Fanucci is an author, speaker and founder of Mothering Spirit, an online gathering place on parenting and spirituality.) †

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

Nov. 16 talk to highlight interreligious dialogue, Vatican II document

“*Nostra Aetate*” is 60 years old! So what? “In our time” Those are the opening words of this “*Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*” of the Second Vatican Council.



It was promulgated on Oct. 28, 1965, by Pope Paul VI. The bishops of the Second Vatican Council had approved it by a vote of 2,221 to 88. The document speaks of the universal human longing for encounter with and meaning from the divine. It formally mentions Islam, Buddhism and Judaism. From this document sprang a series of dialogues between the Roman Catholic Church and many of the religions of the world.

These dialogues are formal in structure and inclusive of scholars and theologians. There is a bishop appointed to co-lead with a like appointed co-leader of the other religion.

Currently, active dialogues exist with Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism. There are also multilateral dialogues.

Among those dialogues, the dialogue with rabbinic Judaism is most important.

The 2,000 years of Jewish/Catholic Christian relations is checked. Sadly, the effects of negative encounters, condemnations, intolerance and persecution were seared in many minds and hearts. The estrangement was intense.

And then, “*Nostra Aetate*” opened the door to a more loving and peaceful relationship.

The Roman Catholic Church, being the largest Christian body in the world, took a giant stride with “*Nostra Aetate*.” For the first time, an official Church document addressed the relationship that Catholics are to have with Jews.

This came about, in part, through the thoughts of Pope Saint John XXIII. Before his death, he wrote a statement which he intended to be read aloud in all Catholic churches of the world on a fixed date:

“We are conscious today that many, many centuries of blindness have cloaked our eyes so that we can no longer either see the beauty of [God’s] Chosen People nor recognize in their faces the features of our privileged brethren. We realize that the mark of Cain stands upon our foreheads. Across the centuries, our brother Abel has lain in the blood which we drew or shed the tears we caused by forgetting Thy Love. Forgive us for the curse we falsely attached to their name as Jews. Forgive us for crucifying Thee a second time in their flesh. For we knew not what we did.”

At 1,793 words, “*Nostra Aetate*” is the shortest of all the council’s documents. Among those words of urgings and insights are:

“The Church keeps ever in mind the words of the Apostle about his kinsmen: ‘theirs is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the law and the worship and the promises; theirs are the fathers and from them is the Christ according to the flesh’ [Rom. 9:4-5], the Son of the Virgin Mary. She also recalls that the Apostles, the Church’s mainstay and pillars, as well as most of the early disciples who proclaimed Christ’s Gospel to the world, sprang from the Jewish people” (#4).

The full document is so worth reading! A fuller exploration of its meaning and import will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis at 7 p.m. on Nov. 16. Dr. Philip A. Cunningham, director of the Institute for Jewish-Catholic Relations at St. Joseph’s University in Philadelphia, will offer reflections on the document’s enduring legacy. A panel discussion will follow with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and Rabbi Dennis Sasso, senior rabbi emeritus of Congregation Beth-Elzedek in Indianapolis. This event is sponsored by the archdiocese and the Jewish Community Relations Council. Admission is free but registration is requested. To register, go to tinyurl.com/NostraAetateEvent.

(Father Rick Ginther is director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs. He is retired from full-time pastoral ministry but is still active as a priest of the archdiocese.) †

The Roman Catholic Church, being the largest Christian body in the world, took a giant stride with “Nostra Aetate.” For the first time, an official Church document addressed the relationship that Catholics are to have with Jews.

Papal Words/Michael Heinlein

Pope’s first text contains hidden roadmap for unifying fragmented Church

Pope Leo XIV has given the Church the first official text of his pontificate’s magisterium, “*Dilexi Te*,” an apostolic exhortation addressed “to all Christians on love for the poor.”



While the text is explicitly addressing the reasons why love and care for the poor are central to the faith, there are also some clues that can help us sharpen our perspective of how Pope Leo is shepherding the Church in our day.

When Pope John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council, the world was terribly divided. He wanted the council to bring its own internal unity to the fore as a model to overcome the global strife plaguing the world in the aftermath of two world wars. The Church can only be a haven to society, however, if we are faithful to the unity Christ willed for us the night before he died to set us free.

But, as Pope Leo became the Church’s universal shepherd earlier this year, the Church finds itself divided more than in recent memory—carrying with it the burden of grave consequences. “*Dilexi Te*” manifests both Pope Leo’s recognition that we need to grow in unity and subtly illustrates a means to bring such unity to a

fractured Church, something he has spoken of from the earliest days of his pontificate.

This is important to remember as Catholics endlessly bicker on social media, or as even cardinals find ease in publicly questioning the Church’s teaching, or when hearing bishops are at odds with their faithful over liturgical preferences. All this, of course, cannot endure. In examining how we practice the faith, vis-à-vis our love and concern for the poor as the exhortation intends, Pope Leo warns: “Either we regain our moral and spiritual dignity or we fall into a cesspool” (#95).

For ecclesial unity to be nurtured, especially as divisions fermented during the last decade, Pope Leo provides in “*Dilexi Te*” a means for Catholics to find common ground, offering a concrete opportunity to foster consensus, communion and authenticity.

In it we find, perhaps, Pope Leo is offering the Church an opportunity to hit the reset button, issuing an invitation for the Church to stop and reprioritize ourselves, to see the difference Christ makes in our lives and must lead us to make a difference in the world. As St. Paul famously taught, “the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor 13:13).

A great deal of the in-fighting among Catholics today, especially in the United States, is due to a lopsided ordering of priorities and allegiances. And to all those shaped more by politics, economics or ideologies—all of

which might “lead to gross generalizations and mistaken conclusions” regarding the poor—Pope Leo warns of “the need to go back and re-read the Gospel, lest we risk replacing it with the wisdom of this world” (#15).

In situating Christian love for the poor in a robust Christology (“Love for the Lord ... is one with love for the poor,” #5), in thoroughly collating the Church’s tradition on care for the poor in the lives of some truly remarkable saints and papal predecessors, and in underscoring the importance of love for the poor as intrinsic to the Church’s mission and call to holiness, Pope Leo is giving us an occasion to live the wisdom expressed by Pope John XXIII: to strive for “that which unites rather than that which divides.” In every line of his exhortation, Pope Leo is reminding us how “charity has the power to change reality” (#91).

Do yourself a favor and read every word of the text. As you do, and as you reflect upon it as an examination of conscience regarding our individual and collective care for the poor, don’t miss what appears to be a hidden roadmap for how Pope Leo is gently working to unify a fragmented Church.

(Michael R. Heinlein is author of Glorifying Christ: The Life of Cardinal Francis E. George, O.M.I. and a promised member of the Association of Pauline Cooperators.) †

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, October 26, 2025

- Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18
- 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18
- Luke 18:9-14

The Book of Sirach provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. The book is part of that group of biblical writings classified by scholars collectively as the wisdom literature.



These Old Testament books developed through an interesting and very understandable process. As conditions worsened in the Holy Land several centuries

before Christ, many Jews emigrated.

Many likely prospered economically in new places. Prosperity, however, came at a price. In new surroundings, paganism abounded. The riches and pleasures of the pagan culture were powerful attractions for the children of these Jewish transplants. Devout Jews and conscientious Jewish parents realized that they had to convince their youth, and also their less than fervent Jewish neighbors, of the worth of the ancient Hebrew religion.

This literature was part of this process to persuade audiences that Judaism was the summit of human logic, a bold claim in the Greek culture in which human reasoning was so exalted.

With this overall objective, each of the wisdom books was composed in its own time and in the face of its own circumstances. Thus, it is important always to know the context in which a book was written, even if a similar purpose was the driving force and paganism was the common concern.

It is easy and not out of place to imagine the conditions in which this particular work, the Book of Sirach, was composed. The message is clear. Sirach offers a picture of the God of Hebrew revelation as far above the tawdry shortcomings and schemes of humans and the less than admirable traits of the pagan gods.

God is perfect. Humans are not. It is the greatest wisdom.

St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy provides the second reading. Paul taught Timothy the deep meaning of the Gospel and guided him in the process of spiritual

development. Timothy was serving as a bishop of a local Church at the time of the letter's writing.

In this reading, Paul encourages Timothy to be true to the Lord. The great Apostle offers himself as an example. He has been imprisoned and mistreated for Christ. His way has been rocky and uphill, but he has remained loyal.

St. Luke's Gospel furnishes the final reading. Here again, Jesus presents the smug and insincere as being apart from the blessings of God, who instead favors the humble and unassuming.

The reading makes two points. It teaches that those who have heartfelt love for God will endure. Gaudy, outward appearances mean nothing. Good works must rise from genuine faith and love.

Second, the reading echoes what already has been said in the first reading. God is perfectly just and desperately needed by humanity. Human reasoning and ability are inadequate.

Reflection

The Book of Sirach suggests a time and conditions long ago, but they are quite similar to circumstances met in life today, or in any day. Humans always exaggerate their ability. They cannot admit their limitations despite all the proof for it. It is the result of pride. It is a byproduct of original sin.

Simply put, God alone is almighty and truly wise. Realizing God's majesty and human imperfections, it is obvious that God alone is the model of perfection. Earthly rewards are empty and fleeting. God alone provides the only reward. God is everything.

Anyone who seeks a reward other than in God, as the Pharisee pursued other ends in the story told by Luke, chases after phantoms. The humble man in the Gospel truly is wise, so he is humble. He receives the reward. He succeeds. He achieves.

Humility is an essential Christian virtue. It is not a denial of who and what we are. Rather, it expresses the deepest insight of who and what we are. We are limited. Nonetheless, may we miraculously and marvelously rely upon the blessings of God's guidance and strength. †

Daily Readings

Monday, October 27
Romans 8:12-17
Psalms 68:2, 4, 6-7b, 20-21
Luke 13:10-17

Tuesday, October 28
St. Simon, Apostle
St. Jude, Apostle
Ephesians 2:19-22
Psalms 19:2-5
Luke 6:12-16

Wednesday, October 29
Romans 8:26-30
Psalms 13:4-6
Luke 13:22-30

Thursday, October 30
Romans 8:31b-39
Psalms 109:21-22, 26-27, 30-31
Luke 13:31-35

Friday, October 31
Romans 9:1-5
Psalms 147:12-15, 19-20
Luke 14:1-6

Saturday, November 1
Solemnity of All Saints
Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14
Psalms 24:1b-4ab, 5-6
1 John 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12a

Sunday, November 2
The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)
Wisdom 3:1-9
Psalms 23:1-6
Romans 5:5-11
or Romans 6:3-9
John 6:37-40

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Sacraments provide believers with sufficient protection against demons

Q In families that are suffering from generational curses or that are involved in a lot of occult practices, why doesn't baptism free their infants from the power of demons? (Ohio)



A The short answer is that I wouldn't be so quick to assume that baptism doesn't do this.

Often when people think of exorcism, what first comes to mind is the over-the-top Hollywood version. Or on a related note but more accurately, they might think of what we call the Church's ritual of "major exorcism" or "solemn exorcism," which can be celebrated only by a specially-mandated exorcist priest with his bishop's permission.

A major exorcism is ordered to cast out demons in those who are clearly suffering from true possession, as verified by obvious signs after a process of careful discernment.

But exorcism in general is a broader category. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines it: "When the Church asks publicly and authoritatively in the name of Jesus Christ that a person or object be protected against the power of the Evil One and withdrawn from his dominion, it is called exorcism" (#1673).

Besides the rite of major exorcism, the Church also has several "minor exorcisms" in her treasury of prayers. A minor exorcism is a prayer for protection against and deliverance from evil spirits which can be prayed by any priest in scenarios other than demonic possession.

The sacrament of baptism itself has an exorcistic character, since, as the catechism puts it: "baptism signifies liberation from sin and from its instigator the devil" (#1237).

When people

are baptized, they—or their parents or godparents on their behalf, if they are an infant and unable to speak for themselves—promise explicitly to "reject Satan ... and all his works."

Furthermore, the Rite of Baptism also contains a minor exorcism as part of the ritual. One option for this in the Rite of Baptism of infants reads:

"Almighty and ever-living God, you sent your only Son into the world to cast out the power of Satan, spirit of evil, to rescue man from the kingdom of darkness, and bring him into the splendor of your kingdom of light. We pray for this child: set him [her] free from original sin, make him [her] a temple of your glory, and send your Holy Spirit to dwell with him [her]. We ask this through Christ our Lord."

Even beyond baptism, the other sacraments can have exorcistic effects, insofar as they free us from sin (such as in the sacrament of penance) and strengthen us against temptations and the lure of darkness. In fact, the sacraments in and of themselves are more powerful against Satan than the ritual for solemn exorcism.

When it comes to things such as curses and other frankly supernatural activity related to involvement with the occult, the Church does not have much clear-cut official teaching. Much of the details of what is known about these phenomena comes from the personal observations of practicing exorcists—which can be useful as far as it goes, but is not on the same level as the official dogma we would find in places like the catechism or other teaching documents from the Church.

Still, the spiritual common sense around such things is that the baptized, who are delivered from the powers of darkness by their baptism, normally will not experience any extraordinary demonic afflictions unless they do something of their own free will to "open a door," such as attempting to engage in the supernatural through illicit means or committing certain serious sins.

While God in his mysterious providence might permit some people to experience demonic torments through no fault of their own in very rare cases (as happened in the lives of some saints), for the most part a baptized Catholic who, with the help of grace, strives to avoid sin and who regularly receives the sacraments won't need the specific ministry of an exorcist.

(Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.) †

My Journey to God

Why Lord?

By Carol S. Likins

Why do I cry
Why do I sigh
When I know
You know
All that was
All that is
And what is to
Become
Why do I tremble
With fear
Why do I weep
As you draw near
When I know
You are my safety
My security
Amidst all my insecurities

(Carol S. Likins is a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. Photo: A stained-glass window in the chapel of the National Shrine of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini in Golden, Colo., depicts a vision from a dream the saint had of the Sacred Heart of Jesus telling her, "What do you fear, my child? ... Take courage and fear not. I am with you.")

(Photo by Natalie Hoefer)



Investing with Faith/Jolinda Moore

Beneficiary designation is an option to consider in estate planning

Few conversations stir discomfort quite like those about money and mortality. Both topics alone can feel like emotional heavy lifting, but when they converge in the realm of estate planning, it's no wonder so many people delay the process. Getting your affairs in order, well before you need to, is truly a gift to your heirs. It's extremely stressful for surviving spouses, children and other loved ones to be faced with the emotional stress of saying goodbye. After that, they have the responsibility of picking up the



financial pieces while coping with their feelings of grief. A few easy steps can make things easier for your loved ones, steps that are simple and meaningful. Many people choose to support their favorite charities in an estate plan through a beneficiary designation. As you work with your attorney and other advisors, be sure to review the beneficiary designations on your insurance policies and retirement plans. Pay close attention to tax-deferred retirement plans such as 401(k)'s and IRAs. Typically, you'll name your spouse as the primary beneficiary of these accounts to provide income following your death and to comply with legal requirements. But as you and your advisors evaluate whom to name as a secondary beneficiary of these tax-deferred accounts, consider naming

the Church to fulfill your philanthropic desires. Beneficiary designation is by far the most tax-efficient, streamlined way to make gifts to your favorite causes upon your death and establish a philanthropic legacy. A contribution like this avoids not only estate tax, but also income tax on the retirement plan distributions. You and your advisors may determine that naming the Church—which could be your parish, an endowment within the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation (CCF) or the United Catholic Appeal—provides a simple and meaningful contribution. We've all heard stories about the sad consequences of someone not having an estate plan or having out-of-date beneficiary designations. Estate planning

documents, including wills, trusts and beneficiary designations, often turn out to represent generous acts of clear distribution and help to avoid conflict. Take time to ensure that your beneficiary designations are properly documented and up to date. Please reach out to the CCF team as you work with your advisors on your estate plan. We are happy to review the numerous ministries of the Church to help determine which align with your philanthropic goals and share language for a beneficiary designation. For more information, contact the CCF at ccf@archindy.org, archindy.org/CCF or 317-236-1482. (Jolinda Moore is executive director of the archdiocesan Office of Stewardship and Development.) †

Pope: When there are cries for help, do Christians respond with love?

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Canonizing seven new saints on World Mission Sunday, Pope Leo XIV said God is present wherever the innocent suffer, and his form of justice is forgiveness. “God grants justice to all, giving his life for all,” he said in his homily during a canonization Mass in St. Peter’s Square on Oct. 19—the second-to-last Sunday of October, when the Church prays for missionaries and their efforts in evangelization, education, health care and other ministries. “Indeed, it is this faith that sustains our commitment to justice, precisely because we believe that God saves the world out of love, freeing us from fatalism,” he said. “When we hear the cries of those in difficulty, let us ask ourselves, are we witnesses to the Father’s love, as Christ was to all?” Jesus “is the humble one who calls the arrogant to conversion, the just one who makes us just,” he said. During the second canonization ceremony of his pontificate, Pope Leo declared the sainthood of seven men and women from the 19th to the 21st centuries, including Venezuela’s first saints: St. Maria Rendiles Martínez and St. José Gregorio Hernández Cisneros. St. Maria was the Venezuelan founder of the Congregation of the Servants of Jesus. She was born in Caracas in 1903 and died in 1977. St. José Gregorio was born in 1864 and became a Third Order Franciscan. A Venezuelan doctor, he became known as “the doctor of the poor.” He was killed in an accident in 1919 on his way to helping a patient. The pope also canonized: —St. Ignatius Maloyan, the martyred Armenian Catholic archbishop of Mardin, which is in present-day Turkey; born in 1869, he was arrested, tortured and executed in Turkey in 1915. —St. Peter To Rot, a martyred lay catechist, husband and father from Papua New Guinea. Born in 1912, he was arrested in 1945 during the Japanese

occupation in World War II and was killed by lethal injection while in prison. —St. Vincenza Maria Poloni, founder of the Sisters of Mercy of Verona, Italy; she lived from 1802-1855. —St. Maria Troncatti, a Salesian sister born in Italy in 1883 who became a missionary in Ecuador in 1922. She died in a plane crash in 1969. —St. Bartolo Longo, an Italian lawyer born in 1841. He had been a militant opponent of the Church and involved in the occult, but converted, dedicating himself to charity and to building the Pontifical Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary of Pompei. He died in 1926. The pope called the new saints “faithful friends of Christ” who are “not heroes or champions of some ideal, but authentic men and women” who were martyrs for their faith, evangelizers, missionaries, charismatic founders and “benefactors of humanity.” Having faith on Earth is what “sustains the hope for heaven,” the pope said in his homily. In fact, Christ tells his disciples “to pray always” without becoming weary, he said. “Just as breathing sustains the life of the body, so prayer sustains the life of the soul: faith, in fact, is expressed in prayer, and authentic prayer lives on faith.” In his parable of the persistent widow in the day’s Gospel reading (Lk 18:1-8), Jesus asks his disciples if they believe God is a just judge toward everyone, and “if we believe that the Father always wants our good and the salvation of every person.”

It is important to ask because two temptations test this belief, the pope said. The first temptation “draws strength from the scandal of evil, leading us to think that God does not hear the cries of the oppressed and has no pity for the innocent who suffer. “The second temptation is the claim that God must act as we want him to: prayer then gives way to a command to God, to teach him how to be just and

effective,” he said. But Jesus “frees us from both temptations,” especially with his words during his passion, “Father, your will be done,” Pope Leo said. “The cross of Christ reveals God’s justice, and God’s justice is forgiveness. He sees evil and redeems it by taking it upon himself,” he said. “When we are ‘crucified’ by pain and violence, by hatred and war, Christ is already there, on the cross for us and with us. “There is no cry that God does not console; there is no tear that is far from his heart,” he said. “The Lord listens to us, embraces us as we are, and transforms us as he is. “Those who reject God’s mercy, however, remain incapable of mercy toward their neighbor. Those who do not welcome peace as a gift will not know how to give peace,” he said. Jesus invites the faithful “to hope and action,” and he asks, “When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith in God’s providence?” the pope said. After the Mass and before praying the *Angelus*, Pope Leo thanked the leaders and dignitaries from different countries who attended the canonization Mass, including Italian President Sergio Mattarella and Lebanese President Joseph Khalil Aoun. He told some 70,000 people present

that “today is World Mission Day.” While the entire Church is missionary, “today we pray especially for those men and women who have left everything behind to bring the Gospel to those who do not know it,” he said. “They are missionaries of hope among all peoples.” †



Relics of the seven new saints are displayed near an image of Mary and the Child Jesus during the canonization Mass celebrated by Pope Leo XIV in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Oct. 19. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

Classified Directory

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CALVARY CEMETERY, 435 W. Troy, Indianapolis, IN. Two plots, Sec 22, Holy Family, lot 894, spaces 3 and 4. Must be sold together, \$2500 for both. Call or text 317-965-0900.

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Dan Shea, RHU
Long time Parishioner of St John the Evangelist Indianapolis.

With reverence, smile, volunteer with Down syndrome inspires parish

(October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month.)

NOVI, Mich. (OSV News)—Around the Novi area, many are already familiar with Robby Heil.

With his contagious smile and warm personality, locals might recognize 26-year-old Robby from his famous touchdown for the Novi Wildcats during a 2016 football game. Or maybe they know him from his appearance in Keith Famie’s PBS documentary, *Chromosomally Enhanced: What’s Your Superpower?* Soon, others will recognize Robby’s Rudy-like story in a fictional film that is in production, inspired by his life.

However, where Robby, who has Down syndrome, is perhaps most known and has the biggest impact is at St. James Parish, where he serves as an extraordinary minister of holy Communion three times a week on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

“I’m working on Robby becoming a saint,” said Charles Heil, Robby’s dad and “Uber driver.”

“I am pretty sure there are people who come to Wednesday night Mass and want to receive Communion from Robby,” Heil said. “They meet him, and he’s in the news a lot, so many people know him. If you’re around Robby, you become a happy person.”

Heil stays busy as Robby’s designated chauffeur: where Robby goes, Heil goes, and Robby’s schedule is packed. In addition to serving as a eucharistic minister and carrying the cross in procession before and after Mass, Robby recently joined a video team at the parish and fills his time with baseball, basketball and power lifting.

Robby and his dad also make time for trips to Disney World—Robby’s favorite

character is Mickey Mouse—and recently returned from Rome, where they walked through all of the Holy Doors for the Jubilee Year of Hope.

Almost every day, the pair visit the gravesite where Robby’s mom, Debbie, is buried, followed by a trip to Starbucks.

Heil attributes all of Robby’s experiences and involvement with the Church to his late wife, who passed away nearly five years ago after a battle with breast cancer, but not before she saw Robby score that locally famous touchdown.

“We are here because my wife talked to our pastor, Father Ed Zaorski, and she’s why Robby scored the touchdown—she spoke with the coach,” Heil told *Detroit Catholic*, the news outlet of the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Debbie was also instrumental in ensuring Robby received his first Communion 20 years ago, when, Heil explained, it was a challenge for churches to accommodate children with Down syndrome.

In recent years, the Church has become better at accommodating people with special needs, Father Zaorski said.

Before he was ordained a priest, Father Zaorski said he worked as the director of the Archdiocese of Detroit’s office ministering to those with disabilities, and noted he’s seen changes over the years.

“This was way back when folks were still institutionalized. People didn’t fully understand persons with challenges, and we knew we had to do more,” Father Zaorski said. “I think if anything, [Robby] is a real example not only for people with Down syndrome, but for all young people. If Robby could do it, everyone should do it.”

Robby and Father Zaorski have developed a friendship and mutual respect over the years. “I love him; he’s doing well every day,” Robby said.

Robby once dressed up as Father Zaorski



Robby Heil, 26, a liturgical minister at St. James Parish in Novi, Mich., distributes Communion during Mass on Sept. 8. Robby is a regular volunteer during parish Masses and is a well-known fixture at St. James, said Father Ed Zaorski, pastor, Robby’s friend and mentor. Although Robby’s story has been told in several local news outlets, his biggest impact is at his parish, said his father Charles Heil. (OSV News photo/Gabriella Patti, *Detroit Catholic*)

for Halloween—complete with a bald cap.

“Robby spars with me on occasion, but it’s with love,” Father Zaorski laughed. “Most people in the parish know Robby probably more than they know me,” he added jokingly.

Father Zaorski admires Robby’s reverence for the Eucharist and says it sets an example for the rest of his parishioners at St. James.

“Every time he receives or distributes the Eucharist, there’s such reverence—it

is a wonderful sign and symbol of how we should all truly appreciate the Eucharist,” the priest said. “When Robby’s giving out Communion, people really approach with reverence. You can tell with his reverence and the way he distributes, he knows what the Eucharist is, and I think that’s a testimony to his mom and even his dad really forming him in the faith.

“He’s been an inspiration for people with Down syndrome and all the young folks,” Father Zaorski added.†

CAMINO

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Here’s her second belief: When God gives her the opportunity, she needs to provide for others.

These two beliefs are tied to her *Camino* experience.

“Ever since seeing the movie, *The Way*, starring Martin Sheen in 2011, I felt an immediate attraction to

the *Camino de Santiago* [“The Way of St. James”] that I could not explain,” Venatta recalls.

“I was in my early 50’s, and in this busy season of life, I had responsibilities with work, immediate family and my aging mother and mother-in-law. I wasn’t in a ‘life position’ to even entertain a pilgrimage, so I held this attraction in my heart.”

During those years, Venatta helped with the care of her mother-in-law, Betty Welsh, until her death in 2014. She

also helped care for her mother, Mary Anita Jansen, until her death in 2016.

Their deaths filled her with sadness. After a time, her mother’s passing also led to a different feeling for Venatta.

“I felt her ‘permission’ and even ‘encouragement’ to explore the possibility of a *Camino* further,” says Venatta, a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis.

So, in the summer of 2016, Venatta made plans to walk the *Camino* with one of her daughters, Liz Venatta Potter.

They set aside three weeks to hike 275 miles in Spain, first from Leon to the Cathedral of St. James in Santiago, and then onward to two other destinations in Spain that are featured in the movie, Finisterre and Muxia.

“We carried everything with us,” Venatta recalls. “We had not pre-booked our *albergues* [pilgrims’ hostels], and relied on God, our guidebook and each other to map out our days and

nights. I felt my parent’s presence along the journey within the freedom and rhythm of walking.

“There was also a freedom in the daily uncertainty of what the path would be like and not knowing where we would be staying at night.”

In that daily uncertainty, mother and daughter saw God providing for them in a range of “unexpected graces,” from their bonds with other pilgrims during the day to the kindness of the managers of the *albergues* who welcomed them in the evening.

“There was a beauty in the simplicity of waking, walking, praying along the path, finding a place to lay our heads, washing our clothes for the next day and falling asleep with a satisfying exhaustion.

“So, my primary memory of my *Camino* is how God provided daily for us. Sometimes in unexpected ways and often within missteps and on rugged paths.

“We traveled with an openness to each day. Not having every detail known or planned gave me a deeper awareness of God’s faithful presence in all of life. We simply needed to take each step in trust and God provided. I can still feel this pilgrim awareness to this day.”

A moment of transformation in the rain

For 10 straight days and 65 miles, Eran McCarty walked the *Camino* with a dreary, constant companion most people would dislike.

“I walked the last 104 kilometers of the *Camino* in May of 2024,” McCarty recalls. “There were many transformative moments along ‘The Way,’ but I think the one thing that threaded its way throughout my journey was water. You see, it rained every day of our walk.”

Still, McCarty viewed that disheartening reality as an opportunity to embrace one of the main goals she had for her journey—to move closer to God.

“Thank God for good rain gear and waterproof boots!” McCarty says before sharing a deeper outpouring of her appreciation for his presence during her journey.

“Walking along in the mud and rain, I tried to see the lesson the Holy Spirit was showing me,” says McCarty, a member of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Fortville. “Water, being washed clean, baptism. Without liquid water, there would be no life. Quenching thirst of the land and of my spirit.

“After days of walking in the rain, it became like an old friend.”

That feeling continues for her.

“Every time I walk in the rain, I have to smile as it reminds me of the journey I made to the Cathedral in Santiago de Compostela.” †



Dark skies and rain accompanied Eran McCarty for 10 straight days during her journey on the *Camino*, an experience in which she felt the Holy Spirit was sharing a lesson with her. (Submitted photo)