



The Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



Faith and Family

Let's try to see family life from a new perspective during this Lent, page 12.

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ICC following lead of the pope in putting the poor first

By Victoria Arthur

In the 2026 legislative season and beyond, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) has a new lens through which it can evaluate public policies that affect the poor: the first major document issued by Pope Leo XIV.

The American-born pope calls for prioritizing those in most need in the recently released "Dilexi Te" ("I Have Loved You"), the first apostolic exhortation of his pontificate. Begun by Pope Francis before his death, the document proclaims that "the poor are not a sociological category but the very 'flesh' of Christ," deserving of the utmost compassion and care (#110).

For the ICC, which for nearly 60 years has been drawing on 2,000 years of Catholic social teaching in carrying out its work, "Dilexi Te" offers additional clarity and immediacy.

"This document provides us a wonderful framework with which we can view legislation as it relates to caring for the poor," said Alexander Mingus, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "There's a beauty in the way the document goes through the history of the Church's love for the poor, identifying for us Catholics that love for the most vulnerable among us is a perennial commitment."

Signed by Pope Leo XIV on Oct. 4—the feast of St. Francis of Assisi—"Dilexi Te" has already been a source of guidance for the ICC during this year's short legislative session, which is now concluding. Mingus noted especially the pope's emphasis on the Church's long-standing "preferential option for the poor," which demands that the

See ICC, page 2



After a Mass celebrating Christmas on Jan. 10 in St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis, women of the Eritrean and Ethiopian Catholic community choir radiate joy as they perform a traditional *shebshebo* dance rejoicing at the birth of Christ. According to the Ge'ez rite calendar used by the Eritrean and Ethiopian Churches, Christmas is celebrated on Dec. 29, which is Jan. 7 on the Gregorian calendar used by most of the world. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

'At home' in Indy parish, Eritreans and Ethiopians also find joy in native Ge'ez rite

By Natalie Hoefer

The atmosphere in St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis was one of unrestrained joy during a special Mass on Jan. 10.

Festively-dressed Catholics greeted one another with radiant smiles. Those smiles also beamed during traditional dances and songs—by men before the Mass and by women afterward—accompanied by singing, clapping and the deep beats of a large drum.

It was a true celebration. And why

shouldn't it be? The Mass, after all, was celebrating the Jan. 7 feast of Christmas.

No, not the Epiphany but Christmas—according to the Catholic Ge'ez rite (pronounced like "geese" but with a z) used by the Eritrean and Ethiopian Catholic Churches. Eritrea and Ethiopia are neighboring countries in northeastern Africa.

"In the Ge'ez rite, everything is different—the Mass, the calendar," says Samson Gebray, a native of Ethiopia. "We are eight days behind [the Gregorian calendar used by most of the world], our

new year starts in September, and for us it's 2018. So, if you want to feel young, join the Ge'ez rite," he adds with a laugh.

Gebray, his wife and their four children are among the roughly 50 Eritrean and Ethiopian families who call St. Michael the Archangel Parish their faith home.

"We go to Mass every Sunday, we receive the sacraments, we contribute to the [parish], our kids go to school here," says Gebray. "The parishioners and [parish pastor] Father [John] Kamwendo

See ERITREAN, page 8

'Cultures in Communion' series highlights Church's cultural diversity in archdiocese

By Natalie Hoefer

The early history of the Church in central and southern Indiana is a story largely written by the Catholic immigrants who settled the land in the 16th—through the 19th centuries, most of them from Europe: French, Germans, Irish, Italians, Swiss and more.

Today, Catholics from other countries continue to add to that story.

They come from points around the globe: Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

What brought them here? What parish or parishes does each call their faith home? What unique and traditional expressions of the faith did they bring

with them from their countries? What does it mean for them to have opportunities to worship in their native language while still being part of their larger parish community?

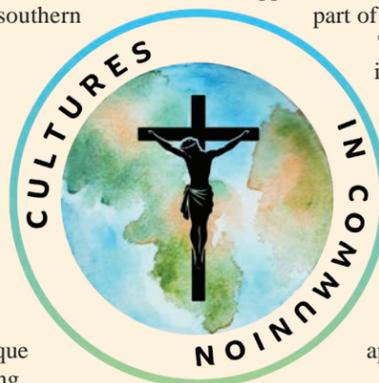
These questions will be explored in a new series in *The Criterion* called "Cultures in Communion." Each occasional article will feature a different international Catholic community based in one or more parishes in the archdiocese.

Each community is unique.

But the word "catholic" means "universal." All Catholics—regardless of native country, language, traditions or forms of worship—share the beliefs expressed in the Nicene Creed.

Together, we are "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church."

Together, we are all "Cultures in Communion." †





‘What’s especially relevant for our work at the ICC in light of Pope Leo’s recent document is how we think about the poor in relation to the use of public funds and public programs.’

—Alexander Mingus, executive director of the ICC

ICC

continued from page 1

needs of those in poverty take priority in economic and political decisions.

“Through this document, Pope Leo is reminding us of this preferential option for the poor,” Mingus said. “When we make decisions, the poor must come first. It really turns our decision-making process in the modern day on its head, because the poor are not often thought of first. But that’s the kind of framework we want to carry into our work at the Indiana Catholic Conference as we’re evaluating public policy.”

A prime example in this year’s legislative session is Senate Bill 197, an affordability measure that sought to curb debt collectors from garnishing the wages of those struggling to make ends meet. Its author, Sen. Greg Walker (R-Columbus), said the bill was about “preserving enough of a person’s paycheck so they can pay the rent and buy food.”

“This is about stability and hope,” Walker told members of the Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions Committee when presenting the bill in January.

Mingus testified in favor of the measure, mentioning the recently concluded Jubilee Year of Hope in his remarks.

“We’re at the tail end of a longstanding tradition in Christian history, called a jubilee year,” he told lawmakers at the committee hearing. “Part of that, if you know the Old Testament, is forgiving debt. So I want to emphasize that as you’re considering this bill and [various] mechanisms—that you carry forward the spirit of the jubilee year.”

The ICC was joined by numerous allies in supporting Senate Bill 197, including the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute. While the bill passed the Senate, it never received a hearing in the House.

Another measure involving the most vulnerable in Indiana is Senate Bill 285,

which is the most recent legislative attempt at prohibiting homeless encampments across the state.

Under the bill, law enforcement officials first encountering individuals sleeping or camping on public property would issue a warning and offer to connect them with local shelters and other resources. Repeat violations could result in a Class C misdemeanor, which carries a standard fine of \$500 or up to 60 days in jail.

Opponents say that the measure would criminalize homelessness. But those backing the bill argue that the primary intent is to link the chronically homeless with essential services that could lead them to healthier and more stable lives.

After taking a mostly neutral stance, the ICC recently issued an action alert opposing Senate Bill 285, urging people to contact their lawmakers to vote “no” on the measure.

“We had seen some minor improvements to the bill, and we know there were some good intentions behind it,” Mingus said. “But ultimately, we came to the belief that this bill would do more harm than good.”

Senate Bill 285 passed out of that chamber in late January and at press time was awaiting further action in the House.

The ICC also has concerns about elements of a more wide-ranging measure, Senate Bill 1, which is a key priority for Republicans in this legislative session. The bill aims to reduce waste, fraud and abuse within the state’s Medicaid program as well as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), more commonly known as food stamps.

“What’s especially relevant for our work at the ICC in light of Pope Leo’s recent document is how we think about the poor in relation to the use of public funds and public programs,” Mingus said.

Among other provisions, Senate Bill 1 mandates rigorous verification of immigration status for all Medicaid and SNAP applicants. In addition, applicants



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

February 25–March 5, 2026

<p>February 25-27 The Way Forward Ecclesial Gathering at University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn.</p> <p>February 28 – 4 p.m. Mass for Holy Fire Youth Event at Pike Performing Arts Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 1 – 2 p.m. Rite of Election at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 1 – 6 p.m. Rite of Election at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral</p> <p>March 2 – 1 p.m. Virtual Cross Catholic Outreach Board meeting</p> <p>March 3 – 10:30 a.m. Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p>	<p>March 3 – 7 p.m. Confirmation for the youths of St. Christopher Parish, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral</p> <p>March 4 – 11 a.m. Virtual Catholic Relief Services, Budget and Finance Committee meeting</p> <p>March 4 – 2 p.m. Virtual Evangelization Summit Planning Team meeting</p> <p>March 5 – 10 a.m. Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>March 5 – 2:30 p.m. Legal Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p>
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who fail to verify their legal residence may face immediate referral to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Pope Leo has criticized the immigration policies of President Donald J. Trump and called for the humane treatment of migrants. He has expressed particularly deep concern over the treatment of long-term residents of the United States who are undocumented and the separation of families in deportation actions.

In “*Dilexi Te*,” the pope summed up centuries of Catholic social teaching on the need to welcome and respect migrants.

“The Church, like a mother, accompanies those who are walking,” he wrote. “Where the world sees threats, she sees children; where walls are built, she builds bridges.”

“She knows that her proclamation of the Gospel is credible only when it is translated into gestures of closeness and welcome,” the pope continued. “And she knows that in every rejected migrant, it is Christ himself who knocks at the door of the community” (#75).

Mingus said the ICC recognizes the state’s need to ensure that its Medicaid and SNAP programs are functional and

adequately funded. However, he said he believes Senate Bill 1 goes too far.

“In some areas, the bill is more stringent than that which is required by federal law,” he said. “And in many ways, it does not think of the poor first.”

To underscore the spirit of the issue, Mingus points to the words of Pope Leo in the following excerpt from “*Dilexi Te*”:

“I am convinced that the preferential choice for the poor is a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society,” the pope wrote, “if we can only set ourselves free of our self-centeredness and open our ears to their cry” (#7).

To follow priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to ICAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church’s position on key issues. Those who sign up for ICAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

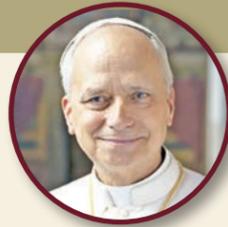
What act of joy and love helped you move closer to Christ and others in Lent?

With the Lenten season upon us, we are inviting you to share stories, ideas and acts of joy and love that brought you closer to Christ and others during a previous Lent.

We hope to share these stories and ideas with all our readers, to help all of us have a more meaningful Lent.

Send your submissions and your stories to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †

Pope Leo’s prayer intentions for March



• **For disarmament and peace**—Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

See Pope Leo’s monthly intentions at archindy.org/popesintentions.



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Hope and God's love guide those who help the poor, vulnerable

By John Shaughnessy

Phyllis Manfredi always makes a point of looking deeply into the face of a person.

It's her way of trying to see into the heart of someone, believing that God has put that person in front of her at that moment for a reason.

That approach guides her efforts for the Indianapolis council of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, where she works to help people whose lives have been devastated by poverty, including a young woman with an artistic gift whose spirit had reached the point of being broken.

What happened next touched both their lives.

"She was struggling to find a job that would support her basic needs," recalled Manfredi, who worked with the woman in the society's Changing Lives Forever program. "One could feel her pain in her struggles. Because of all the rejections she had received in the job market, she was negative, and her words spoke of a lack of hope."

During the 18 weeks of the Changing Lives Forever program, the young woman learned skills and insights that rebuilt her self-worth and her life.

"As the course progressed, she began to speak more, and her tone and words became less sharp," Manfredi noted. "Upon graduation, she was positive, and she went on to become a Changing Lives Forever facilitator. She also succeeded in getting a job teaching, which was her dream. She continues to stay in touch, and her contacts are a blessing."

That shared experience once again

reinforced Manfredi's commitment to helping people in need.

"To me, this was a reminder that poverty has many faces. Poverty should not be labeled as always being financial," she said. "It is through listening and understanding that everyone has a story worth hearing."

"It is a matter of seeking God and asking that we are given the strength to be in the moment with the individual. We see their faces, we hear their words, and with God's help we can have an influence in someone's life."

Manfredi believes God brings these people to her for another reason—the influence on her life.

"It gives one pause to stop and look at one's own life and say, 'Thank you, God.' It redefines why we were placed on this Earth and why Our Lord came to us. Nothing is more important to me than serving and giving back what has been given to me—his love."

Caring for the poor and vulnerable

Manfredi was part of a panel on poverty that was organized by the archdiocese's Catholic Charities at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis on Feb. 19.

The panel discussion was held "to address the reality of poverty impacting our seniors, children, veterans and those living within our urban and rural communities," said Theresa Chamblee, director of Catholic Charities-Social Concerns for the archdiocese.

The panel discussion was part of the evening's Poverty Awareness program. About 75 people attended the event,

which also included representatives from 22 service organizations who shared their efforts to help people challenged by poverty in Indiana.

A 2025 United Way of Indiana report noted that 12% of all households in the state live below the poverty line, and 32% of children and young adults younger than 25 face that reality.

Chamblee said the foundation of the event was based on Pope Leo XIV's first apostolic exhortation, "Dilexi Te" ("I Have Loved You"), which was issued on Oct. 4, 2025.

A passage from the exhortation has especially influenced her: "Love for the Lord, then, is one with love for the poor. This is not a matter of mere human kindness but a revelation. ..." (#7)

"Pope Leo's words reminded me that, yes, we will always have the poor with us, but that we can never become lukewarm in showing, through prayer, words and actions, that they matter and are worthy of love," Chamblee said. "That is why Catholic Charities-Social Concerns felt the need to host a poverty panel—to serve as a reminder of the beautiful truth that to love the poor is to love Christ."

Scott Seibert was another panel member who has strived to follow that approach in working with veterans affected by poverty.

Letting God's love shine through us

"Serving veterans who are often poor, broken and forgotten has taught me what accompaniment truly means," said Seibert, a clinical supervisor for the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. "There are days that are hard. Veterans can be disgruntled, grumpy and stubborn, but I am blessed to have them in my life. They teach me so much about Christ's love and about the importance of family, friends, community and faith."

His efforts always come back to the story of "a homeless veteran who was battling mouth cancer, recently divorced and estranged from his family."



Scott Seibert and Phyllis Manfredi served as members of the archdiocese's Catholic Charities' poverty panel on Feb. 19 at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

"We were able to connect him to medical care, secure housing, and over time, he mended relationships with his mother, sister, adult daughter and even his grandkids," Seibert recalled. "Today, he's been stably housed for five years. Seeing that transformation reminds me why this work matters."

Seibert embraces his powerful bonds with veterans, saying that "working in this area has profoundly changed my life."

"When I encounter someone who feels abandoned or shunned, I see Christ crucified in them," he said. "It reminds me that love is not about convenience or comfort, it's about presence—even in the messiness of life. My prayer each morning is that God gives me the eyes to see him in everyone I meet, and that his love shines through me and the work I do."

That's the approach Pope Leo wants every Catholic to embrace, Chamblee said. That's the approach, she believes, that will make a difference in the lives of the people we help and in our own lives.

"They are the face of Christ to each of us. For the sake of each of our souls, we must never become stagnant in our love," she said. "It can be a temptation to think that we are being the face of Christ to the poor to help them get to heaven."

"In reality, they are the face of Christ who is providing us the way to heaven." †

Helping in the fight against poverty

The panel members for the "Poverty Awareness" program organized by the archdiocese's Catholic Charities on Feb. 19 included these participants:

Phyllis Manfredi, a facilitator in the Changing Lives Forever program of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul-Indianapolis; Joyce Beaven, senior services director for Catholic Charities Indianapolis; Rachelle Frink, program director of Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis; Michelle Radomsky, executive director of St. Mary's Child Center in Indianapolis; Jennifer Tames, assistant agency director of Catholic Charities Terre Haute; and Scott Seibert, a clinical supervisor for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. †

Entries are now being accepted for John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest

The Serra Club of Indianapolis is sponsoring its 2026 John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest.

It is open to any student who is Catholic in seventh through 12th grade in parochial or public schools or who is home-schooled in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Students entering the contest are asked to write about the following question:

As our nation marks the 250th

anniversary of its founding this year, we also remember the priests and religious who built our parishes, schools, missions and communities of faith which have strengthened the soul of our nation. As America enters its next chapter, the Church depends on a new generation willing to listen for God's call. What can the story of our past teach the youths in our Church today about their own vocation and their role

in the future of the Church? How might God be calling you to make your own contributions?

Essays should be between 300 and 500 words in length and may be typed or hand-written.

For more details or to get an essay submission form, contact your school religion teacher, religious education program instructor, or parish catechist/youth minister. Information is also

available from the archdiocesan Office of Vocations at vocations@archindy.org.

Submitted essays must be postmarked no later than Friday, March 13. Essays can be mailed to:

Serra Vocations Essay Contest
c/o Office of Vocations
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. †

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Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher* Sally Krause, *Associate Publisher*
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Editorial

Amid the celebration and heartbreak of the Olympics comes a golden moment of faith

If you are among the millions who tuned into the Winter Olympics in Italy on Feb. 6-22, the Games again provided high-energy drama and spirited competition that displayed both “the thrill of victory” and “the agony of defeat.”

One only need to look at the roads travelled by both the U.S. women and U.S. men’s hockey teams to see how persistence, dedication and teamwork led to gold medals for both teams.

On the other end of the spectrum, viewers witnessed the heartbreak of 21-year-old U.S. figure skater Illia Malinin, the heavy favorite to win the men’s

individual figure skating gold at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan. In the lead going into his final skate, Malinin dropped to 8th place after falling twice during his free skate.

To his credit, Malinin spoke to a reporter immediately after his mistakes and blamed himself for his disappointing finish.

There are other Olympic results and stories that rarely make headlines in the secular media because faith is on display, but thanks to our media partner OSV News, we are able to share the story of 19-year-old Polish ski jumper Kacper Tomasiak.

The teenager captured two silver medals and a bronze, becoming Poland’s first ski jumper to win three medals at a single Winter Olympics. But instead of a flashy celebration, Kacper asked for a thanksgiving Mass, placing his medals on the altar in gratitude to God.

His rapid rise to fame immediately attracted commentators and fellow

athletes, as reported by OSV News, but beyond his records and athletic precision, Kacper’s sign of the cross before each jump drew nearly as much attention, thanks be to God.

After winning his first silver medal, Kacper reflected on his performance with humility—which is, friends say, his normal trait. “I don’t really know how I did it. I jumped well. Maybe not perfect, but very well. I’m definitely a bit tired after all of it, but I’m also very happy.



This is the happiest day of my sporting life,” said Kacper, who is an altar server at his parish in Poland.

Father Edward Plen, a longtime Olympic chaplain

of Polish athletes, said Kacper’s gesture and his desire to attend Mass reflects something deeply authentic.

“Kacper came to me and said it would be good to thank God for these medals,” Father Plen told OSV News. “He came, and I must say it was a Mass full of gratitude to God and for Kacper. It was very moving. I said that the most beautiful thanksgiving for a medal is when the medals are placed on the altar and during the elevation—God himself comes to that altar, and looks not only at those medals, but above all at Kacper’s beautiful, pure heart.”

Father Plen added that, despite his success, Kacper’s humility is striking.

“You do not have to loudly proclaim that you love Jesus,” the priest said. “People who look at your life will begin asking about Jesus themselves. And that is the greatest victory.”

—Mike Krokos

The joy of seeing people embrace their faith in public

It should be inspiring when we see people unafraid to publicly display their faith.

And it happened earlier this month on Ash Wednesday which, ironically, is not a holy day of obligation in our Catholic tradition.

Many churches—Catholic and others—had good attendance on Feb. 18 as people of faith wanted to begin Lent with Christ at the forefront of this important liturgical season.

There were local and national TV anchors and reporters who wore ashes on their foreheads on news programs. In supermarkets, post offices and other places of business, ashes were evident among many customers.

Even walking down a busy downtown street, many passed businessmen and

women who displayed ashes.

We thank God that many of our brothers and sisters—Catholic and non-Catholic alike—still see religion as an integral part of their lives.

As we’ve written before, in today’s culture, we are encouraged to live our faith inside our churches and our homes, but to shy away from sharing it beyond those places.

Politicians, government officials and others may not like it, but we believe we need to continually let them know that sharing our beliefs in the public square is among the most important duties we have as disciples of Jesus Christ.

If we do not, who will?

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/Michael O’Connell

Practice makes perfect. Or does it?

For almost 50 years as a tennis teaching professional, I would often share this statement with my students and their parents: “Practice makes ...” and stop in the middle of the sentence.

One hundred percent of the time, a student or parent would finish the sentence by saying, “Perfect!” They would repeat it back to me: “Practice makes perfect!”

Most of us have heard and used this cliché.

I would always get a kick out of it when I replied, “No, it doesn’t,” and they thought something was wrong with me.

I then finished the statement as I had planned: “Practice makes permanent,” and then would explain. I saw very intense and dedicated hours of practice, but if they were practicing the wrong strokes and incorrect mechanics, they were only getting better using the wrong form.

What does this have to do with faith? I believe it has a lot to do with spiritual preparation. Many times in conversations with people—even some Catholics—I would hear statements contradictory or incorrect to what Scripture says and how a person was interpreting it.

I am certainly no Scripture scholar and the last to judge anyone, but I certainly feel compelled to respectfully say I believe that Scripture needs to be properly

understood as it is reflected upon.

Otherwise, like a tennis student, you may go through life practicing a wrong virtue or spreading an incorrect message.

If you look back on history, you see many holy wars that were fought because of people’s faith and beliefs. As a result, some lost their lives.

I am especially concerned with today’s youths, who may not have had the right formation in their faith journey. As they grow up, they may not be fully living the faith.

I offer the following for them and all of us: as you continue your spiritual journey, be sure you are correctly learning our beliefs and practicing what our faith teaches. If you are not certain, why not seek out a priest, spiritual director or others who have been trained and dedicate themselves to understanding Scripture? Also, pray intently for the grace to know the truth.

Let us pray: O God, grant me the grace to practice and train for the truth and follow the commandments as you have taught them, and help all of us learn how to correctly practice our faith. Amen.

(Michael O’Connell is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington.) †

Letter to the Editor

Hundreds make Christmas meal at St. Philip Neri School gym a reality

I was really pleased to read the brief article and see the photo featured in the Jan. 16 issue of *The Criterion* about the Christmas meal held in St. Philip Neri School gymnasium in Indianapolis each Christmas Day.

I wanted to add a little insight that the meal is the result of the collaborative effort of a tremendous group of people, who unselfishly give of their time and themselves in order to provide an opportunity for the homeless to have a wonderful Christmas celebration.

There are literally hundreds of people who freely contribute to make this event happen.

For example, there is Linda Clodfelter, without whom this event simply would not happen. She gathers and coordinates the food, the facilities, the manpower and so much more in order to provide a sumptuous feast.

There is Father Jeffrey Dufresne, pastor of St. Philip Neri Parish, who provides the kitchen and the gym and helps us recruit both volunteers and participants.

Then there’s Bill Sahn, president of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, and Ben Reilly, who together provide the four 14-passenger buses that pick up participants from several homeless shelters.

There are the St. Vincent de Paul conferences of Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Christopher parishes, both

in Indianapolis, who solicit legions of volunteers from those parishes, not to mention the staff and volunteers at the St. Vincent de Paul Distribution Center in Indianapolis. They not only volunteer at the event but also spend a large amount of time and effort beforehand gathering and assembling gift bags for the children, backpacks full of necessities for the adults, warm winter coats for all, centerpieces and decorations for the tables—people like Bobbi Sisk, Mary LaBuz and so many, many more.

The problem with singling out any individuals is that you then, by omission, fail to recognize the significant, loving, caring contributions of so many, many others. There are literally hundreds of people whose combined efforts make the Christmas meal happen.

And, of course, there are the participants—the people this meal is actually about. They bring the joy. In spite of their circumstances, they celebrate with us.

This meal does not bring about a lasting difference in circumstances, but we pray that it at least provides a moment of normalcy and a moment of hope to many people for which those kinds of moments are in short supply.

Stephen Hastings
Indianapolis

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 letters from readers as necessary

based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org. †

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

The light of Christ has been given to each of us

From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard: "This is my beloved Son, hear him." (Mt 17:5)

The Gospel reading for the Second Sunday of Lent (Mt 17:1-9) offers us a rare glimpse into the divinity of Jesus and into his relationship to two pillars of the Old Testament: Moses the Lawgiver and Elijah the Prophet.

As St. Matthew tells us:

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. (Mt 17:1-3)

The imagery used by the Evangelist is striking. "His face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light" (Mt 17:2). Christ is the light that illumines the world's darkness. We see him here shining brilliantly, bringing us closer to his holiness and helping us to understand that he is not just an ordinary person, but a radiant star come down from heaven to dispel the darkness of sin and death.

It's no wonder that the Apostles were overwhelmed. They had never seen

anything quite like this. The blinding light, the presence of the long-dead figures of Moses and Elijah, and, of course, the thundering voice that proclaims Jesus as God's beloved Son.

Peter understandably wants to preserve this sacred moment:

Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (Mt 17:4)

But God interrupts Peter:

While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." (Mt 17:5)

The Transfiguration of the Lord is a manifestation of the Holy Trinity. The Father speaks with an authoritative voice and reveals the identity of his beloved Son. Jesus shines with unimaginable brightness in the company of the two great figures of Jewish Law and prophecy. And the Holy Spirit hovers over the scene in the form of a shining cloud.

God is present here in all his wonderful unity-in-diversity. He reveals himself to Peter, James and John, but as they are coming down

from this holy mountain, Jesus gives them strict instructions: "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead" (Mt 17:9).

The vision that the three Apostles have seen cannot be properly understood apart from the Lord's passion, death and resurrection. His divinity has to be seen as united with his humanity in order for our redemption to be understood. He has to be humiliated, bruised and beaten, and cruelly executed before he can rise from the dead and his light can shine eternally. Until Jesus has risen from the dead and returned to his Father in heaven, the full extent of the mystery of his Incarnation has to remain hidden.

In Sunday's second reading (2 Tm 1:8b-10), St. Paul reinforces this profound insight:

He saved us and called us to a holy life, not according to our works but according to his own design and the grace bestowed on us in Christ Jesus before time began, but now made manifest through the appearance of our savior Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. (2 Tm 1:9-10)

The light of Christ shines through the darkness of his passion and death. He brings life and immortality into the world because the brilliance of his inner life cannot be obscured by the darkness of his suffering and humiliation on the Cross.

"Bear your share of hardship for the Gospel with the strength that comes from God" (2 Tm 1:8), St. Paul admonishes us. It is through our suffering that we give vibrant witness to the light of Christ. Jesus "saved us and called us to a holy life" (2 Tm 1:9) not because of anything we have done to deserve this, but because he wants us to share in his glory.

The astonishing miracle that St. Matthew reveals to us in this Sunday's Gospel is meant to inspire us to accept the Lord's invitation to be holy as he is holy. The light of Christ has been given to each of us at our Baptism. We are called to be holy women and men, who dispel our own inner confusion as well as the darkness of the world around us.

May the light of Christ shine in us always. And may we use this Lenten season to share with others the strength that comes from our Triune God. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Cada uno de nosotros ha recibido la luz de Cristo

Una nube luminosa los cubrió con su sombra, y salió de la nube una voz que decía: "Éste es mi Hijo amado, en quien me complazco; escuchadle." (Mt 17:5)

La lectura del Evangelio del segundo domingo de Cuaresma (Mt 17:1-9) nos ofrece una rara visión de la divinidad de Jesús y de su relación con dos pilares del Antiguo Testamento: Moisés el Legislador y Elías el Profeta.

Como nos dice san Mateo:

Seis días después, tomó Jesús consigo a Pedro, a Santiago y a su hermano Juan, y los llevó aparte, a un monte alto. Y se transfiguró delante de ellos: su rostro se puso brillante como el sol y sus vestidos se volvieron blancos como la luz. En esto, se les aparecieron Moisés y Elías, que conversaban con él. (Mt 17:1-3)

Las imágenes que utiliza el evangelista resultan sorprendentes. "Su rostro se puso brillante como el sol y sus vestidos se volvieron blancos como la luz" (Mt 17:2). Cristo es la luz que ilumina las tinieblas del mundo. Aquí lo contemplamos resplandeciente, acercándonos al misterio de su santidad y ayudándonos a comprender que no es un hombre cualquiera, sino una estrella radiante que ha venido

del cielo para disipar las tinieblas del pecado y de la muerte.

No es de extrañar que los Apóstoles se sintieran abrumados. Nunca habían visto nada semejante: la luz deslumbrante, la presencia de Moisés y Elías, y, por supuesto, la voz poderosa que proclama a Jesús como el Hijo amado de Dios.

Es comprensible que Pedro quisiera preservar aquel momento sagrado:

Tomó Pedro la palabra y dijo a Jesús: "Señor, está bien que nos quedemos aquí. Si quieres, haré aquí tres tiendas, una para ti, otra para Moisés y otra para Elías." (Mt 17:4)

Pero Dios interrumpe a Pedro: *Todavía estaba hablando, cuando una nube luminosa los cubrió con su sombra, y salió de la nube una voz que decía: "Éste es mi Hijo amado, en quien me complazco; escuchadle." (Mt 17:5)*

La Transfiguración del Señor es una manifestación de la Santísima Trinidad. El Padre habla con voz firme y revela la identidad de su Hijo amado. Jesús resplandece con un brillo inigualable en compañía de las dos grandes figuras de la Ley y los Profetas judíos. Y el Espíritu Santo se cierne sobre la escena en forma de nube luminosa.

Dios se hace presente en su admirable unidad en la diversidad. Se

revela a Pedro, Santiago y Juan; pero, al descender de aquel monte santo, reciben una instrucción estricta: "No contéis a nadie la visión, hasta que el Hijo del hombre haya resucitado de entre los muertos" (Mt 17:9).

La visión que contemplaron los tres Apóstoles no puede comprenderse plenamente separada de la pasión, muerte y resurrección del Señor. Su divinidad ha de contemplarse inseparablemente unida a su humanidad para que podamos entender el misterio de nuestra redención. Era necesario que fuera humillado, herido y golpeado, y que padeciera una muerte cruel, antes de resucitar de entre los muertos y manifestar su luz eterna. Hasta que Jesús no resucitara y regresara al Padre, el misterio de su Encarnación debía permanecer completamente oculto.

En la segunda lectura del domingo (2 Tm 1:8-10), san Pablo refuerza esta profunda intuición:

[Él] nos ha salvado y nos ha llamado con una vocación santa, no por nuestras obras, sino por su propia determinación y por su gracia, que nos concedió desde toda la eternidad en Cristo Jesús. Esta gracia se ha hecho patente ahora con la Manifestación de nuestro Salvador Cristo Jesús, quien ha destruido la muerte y ha hecho irradiar

vida e inmortalidad por medio del Evangelio. (2 Tm 1:9-10)

La luz de Cristo brilla a través de la oscuridad de su pasión y muerte. Él trae al mundo la vida y la inmortalidad, porque el resplandor de su vida interior no puede ser vencido por las tinieblas de su sufrimiento ni por la humillación de la Cruz.

"Soporta conmigo los sufrimientos por el Evangelio, ayudado por la fuerza de Dios" (2 Tm 1:8). A través de nuestro sufrimiento damos un testimonio vivo de la luz de Cristo. Jesús "nos ha salvado y nos ha llamado con una vocación santa" (2 Tm 1:9) no por nada que hayamos hecho para merecerlo, sino porque quiere que participemos de su gloria.

El asombroso milagro que san Mateo nos revela en el Evangelio de este domingo pretende inspirarnos para que aceptemos la invitación del Señor a ser santos como Él. La luz de Cristo nos ha sido dada a cada uno de nosotros en el Bautismo. Estamos llamados a ser mujeres y hombres santos, que disipen su propia confusión interior y la oscuridad del mundo que nos rodea.

Que la luz de Cristo resplandezca siempre en nosotros. Y que aprovechemos este tiempo de Cuaresma para compartir con los demás la fuerza que proviene de nuestro Dios trino. †

Events Calendar

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

March 4, 11, 18, 25

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Corpus Christi Parish Hall, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Catholics in Recovery Support Group**, 7 p.m., meets every Wednesday, Catholic 12-step program serving those with addictions and unhealthy attachments. Information: 317-557-8888, jjdav887@gmail.com.

March 6

St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. **The Soul's Journey: Choir Concert**, 7:30 p.m., Carthage College choir performing, free. Information: 317-637-3983, musicdirector@stainmarysindy.org.

March 7

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.

Anderson Hills Church, 7515 Forest Road, Cincinnati. **Stephen Ministries 50th Anniversary Celebration and Learning Event**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., check-in 8 a.m., \$15 includes light breakfast and snacks, additional box lunch is \$12. Information, registration: stephenministries.org/celebrateCIN.

Lindenwood Retreat Center, 9601 Union Road, Plymouth (Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend). **Entering Canaan: A Day of Prayer and Healing for Women Who Have Experienced Abortion**, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., includes personal testimony, Scripture meditations, eucharistic adoration, sacrament of reconciliation, Mass, lunch, free. Information: leverett@diocesefwsb.org. Registration: diocesefwsb.org/project-rachel.

March 8

McGowan Hall, 1305 Delaware St., Indianapolis. **Irish Hooley Celebration**, 2-7 p.m., Irish bands, Irish dancing, corned beef sandwiches, Irish stew and soda bread available for purchase, cash bar, live auction, games, \$10, clergy and children 12 and younger

free, walk-ins welcome, proceeds benefit St. Vincent de Paul Indianapolis' unsheltered programs. Information, advance tickets: 317-924-5769, dsweeny@svdpindy.org, svdpindy.org/hooley.

March 12-13

Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Servant Leadership Workshop**, Thurs. 6:15 p.m.-Fri. 4:30 p.m., archdiocesan executive director of the Secretariat of Evangelizing Catechesis Ken Ogorek presenting, \$295 includes meals, \$100 additional overnight accommodation, \$50 deposit required for registration. Information, registration: saintmeinrad.edu/workshops, 812-357-6611.

March 13-15

Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center, 5440 Moeller Ave, Norwood, Ohio. **Worldwide Marriage Encounter**, \$75 non-refundable fee. Registration: www.wwme.org. Information: Andy and Melanie Reinerman, 859-653-8464.

March 15

Ancient Order of Hibernians St. Patrick's Day Events.

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis: **Celtic Cross Blessing, Mass, Parade:** 10:15 a.m. Celtic cross blessing in church courtyard followed by 10:30 a.m. Mass, 11:30 a.m. parade to Indiana Roof Ballroom, 140 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, for **Ancient Order of Hibernians St. Patrick's Celebration**, 11:45 a.m., plated luncheon, Irish bands, raffle for Ireland trip for two, \$40 adults, \$16 ages 12 and younger, register for dinner by March 10. Information: aohindy.com/spc. Registration: 317-341-3570, kmcginley720@sbcglobal.net.

March 16

Virtual Sister Thea Bowman Black Catholic Women's Prayer Group, 7 p.m., meets online monthly on third Monday, sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, all women welcome. Meeting: tinyurl.com/SrTheaPrayerGrp. Information: iowhosomaddox@archindy.org, 317-261-3381.

March 20

Liter House, 5301 Winthrop Ave. Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, presenter

TBD, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. March 17. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

March 27-28

Planned Parenthood, 8590 N. Georgetown Road, Indianapolis. **Indiana Knights of Columbus Overnight prayer Vigil**, Fri. 6 p.m.-Sat. 6 a.m., rosary 6 p.m., join for a few minutes, an hour or longer. Information: 317-223-4892.

March 27-29

Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Come and See Retreat**, 4 p.m. Fri.-2 p.m. Sun., for single Catholic women ages 18-42 wanting to explore religious life, free, meals and housing provided. Information, registration: 361-500-9505, jluna@swsmw.org, ComeandSee.SistersofProvidence.org.

March 28

St. Felix Catholic Center, 1280 Hitzfield St., Huntington (Diocese of Fort Wayne-

South Bend). **Ava's Grace Healing Retreat**, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., for couples and individuals who have suffered miscarriage, stillbirth or infant loss, witness talks, couple conversation, small group discussion, eucharistic adoration, pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady on the retreat center grounds, lunch, free. Information: leverett@diocesefwsb.org. Registration: diocesefwsb.org/avas-grace.

March 30

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Leave the Light On**, 9 a.m.-7 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation, no appointment needed. Information: 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

April 2

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Simple Soup and Bread Luncheon**, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., fundraiser for Catholic Charities Crisis Office, \$10, register online or pay cash at the door. Information, registration: 317-236-1411, cbush@archindy.org, tinyurl.com/ccsoupbread26. †

Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra concert at Sacred Heart Church on March 15 will feature sacred music and jazz

"Sacred Brass, Swinging Streets," a concert of sacred music and jazz, will be held at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 1530 Union St., in Indianapolis, at 2 p.m. on March 15.

Featuring the polyphony of Renaissance Venice and the rhythms of American jazz and Latin dance, this brass program spans centuries of musical expression. Works by Giovanni Gabrieli and J.S. Bach anchor the concert's classical roots, while music by Francis Poulenc, José Pablo Moncayo, Irving Berlin and Alice Gomez bring color, swing and rhythm.

This performance is presented as part of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's partnership with the Sphinx Organization.

Among the pieces in the program are: —Canzon per sonare No. 2, Giovanni Gabrieli

—Sonata from Die Bänkelsängerlieder,

Anonymous (Germany, 19th century)

—Sonata for Horn, Trumpet, and Trombone (1922), Francis Poulenc

—Huapango (1941), José Pablo

Moncayo

—Canzon per sonare No. 1,

"La Spiritata," Giovanni Gabrieli

—Canzon per sonare No. 4,

Giovanni Gabrieli

—"Puttin' on the Ritz," Irving Berlin

—"Black Bottom Stomp," Jelly Roll

Morton

—"Strike Up the Band," George

Gershwin

—"Salsa Metálica," Alice Gomez

The concert is free, although

donations will be accepted.

For more information, call Judith

Essex at 317-902-3006 or e-mail

judithessex@icloud.com. †

Retreats and Programs

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

March 14

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Road, Mt. St. Francis. **Lenten Letting Go Retreat: Clearing the Path to God this Lenten Season**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., facilitated by Judy Ribar, includes lunch and retreat materials, \$60. Information, registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/lent-offerings, 812-923-8817.

March 18, May 12

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$55, includes

room, lunch, Mass and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stay available for additional \$42, dinner additional \$14.40. Registration: 317-545-7681, ftm.retreatportal.com/events, lcoons@archindy.org.

March 20-22

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **The Lord's Prayer: Praying the Prayer Jesus Taught Us**, 6 p.m. Fri.-noon. Sun, Father James Farrell presenting, \$250, includes room and meals. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events,

317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Road, Mt. St. Francis. **Death, Dust and New Life: Creating Soul Images in Lent**, Fri. 7 p.m.-Sun. 11 a.m., facilitated by Peggy Holthaus and retreat director Dr. Regina Proctor, includes materials, optional spiritual direction, private room and meals, \$275, bring notebook/journal. Information, registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/lent-offerings, 812-923-8817. †

Apologist Tim Staples will offer retreat on 'The Gift of the Church and the Magisterium' in Bloomington

Catholic apologist Tim Staples will offer a retreat on "The Gift of the Church and the Magisterium" at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, in Bloomington, on March 20-22.

Staples is a senior apologist—a defender of the faith—for Catholic Answers, a media ministry focused on helping others know and understand Church teaching.

Raised a Southern Baptist, Staples attended a Bible college and became a youth minister in an Assemblies of God community.

Later, he met a knowledgeable Catholic who challenged him to study Catholicism from Catholic and historical sources. That encounter sparked a two-year search for the truth. Determined to prove

Catholicism wrong, Staples instead embraced the faith and was welcomed into full communion of the Church in 1988.

He spent the following six years in formation for the priesthood before discerning in 1994 that he was not called to that vocation. Since that time, Staples has worked in Catholic apologetics and evangelization.

The cost for the retreat is \$290 for a single-bed room, \$480 for a two-bed room, \$670 for a three-bed room, and \$860 for a four-bed room. The cost includes four meals and lodging for two nights.

The price for commuters is \$90, which includes lunch.

For more information or to register, call 812-825-4642, ext. 1, or go to motheroftheredeemer.com. †

Wedding Anniversaries

Douglas and Connie (Bowling) Andres, members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on March 6.

The couple was married in St. Ann Church in Louisville, Ky., on March 6, 1976.

They have three children: Katie Dillman, Matt and Nick Andres.

The couple also has six grandchildren.



David and Deborah (Hitz) Feist, members of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on March 5.

The couple was married in St. Dominic Church in Cincinnati on March 5, 1976.

They have three children: Katie Lonneman, Stephanie and Joel Feist.

The couple also has eight grandchildren.



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

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

One in Christ/Daniel Conway

Disarmament is necessary to achieve peace

In his first World Day of Peace Message issued on Jan. 1, Pope Leo XIV quotes the 1963 encyclical of Pope St. John XXIII, “*Pacem in Terris*” (“Peace on Earth”), about the importance of disarmament.

Pope Leo shares his predecessor’s conviction that surrounding ourselves with weapons of mass destruction is not an effective way to build or sustain authentic peace.

St. John XXIII writes:

Everyone must realize that, unless this process of disarmament be thoroughgoing and complete, and reach people’s very souls, it is impossible to stop the arms race, or to reduce armaments, or—and this is the main thing—ultimately to abolish them entirely. Everyone must sincerely cooperate in the effort to banish fear and the anxious expectation of war from our minds. But this requires that the fundamental principles upon which peace is based in today’s world be replaced by an altogether different one, namely, the realization that true and lasting peace among nations cannot consist in the possession of an equal supply of armaments but only in mutual trust. (#113)

The peace of Christ is not achieved by force. The Incarnation—God’s decision to take on human flesh and become one with us—contradicts our ordinary assumptions about power.

As Pope Leo says: “The mystery of the Incarnation, which reaches its deepest descent even to the realm of the dead, begins in the womb of a young mother and is revealed in the manger in Bethlehem.”

The Son of God comes without any armaments to establish peace on Earth. He is totally defenseless, an infant who cannot even care for himself, and yet he is heralded by a host of angels as the Prince of Peace. His whole life is a witness to the truth that nonviolence, not brute strength, is the only way to build a lasting peace.

Pope Leo quotes Pope Francis’ encyclical “*Fratelli Tutti*” (“On Fraternity and Social Friendship”), inspired by St. Francis of Assisi, a true peacemaker and a model of all that is necessary to build lasting peace:

In the world of that time, bristling with watchtowers and defensive walls, cities were a theater of brutal wars between powerful families, even as poverty was spreading through the countryside. Yet there Francis was able to welcome true peace into his heart and free himself of the desire to wield power over others. He

became one of the poor and sought to live in harmony with all. (#4)

“This is a narrative that we are called to continue today,” Pope Leo writes, “and that means joining forces to contribute to a disarming peace, a peace born of openness and evangelical humility.”

A peace born of humility cannot be achieved by amassing nuclear arms. It requires disarmament. In “*Pacem in Terris*,” St. John XXIII says:

Those entrusted with the highest public responsibility must give serious thought to the problem of achieving more humane relations between States throughout the world. This adjustment must be based on mutual trust, sincerity in negotiations and the faithful fulfillment of obligations. Every aspect of the problem must be examined, so that, eventually, a point of agreement may emerge from which sincere, lasting, and beneficial treaties can be initiated. (#118)

Taking peace seriously means letting go of the need to circle our wagons and surround ourselves with things that are familiar and comfortable. On the contrary, it means opening ourselves to new ideas and points of view.

“This is the disarming path of diplomacy, mediation and international law,” Pope Leo says, “which is sadly too often undermined by the growing violations of hard-won treaties, at a time when what is needed is the strengthening of supranational institutions, not their delegitimization.”

More than 60 years ago, St. John XXIII told us that true and lasting peace cannot consist in the possession of an equal supply of armaments but only in mutual trust.

“Peace is more than just a goal,” Pope Leo adds. “It is a presence and a journey. Even when it is endangered within us and around us, like a small flame threatened by a storm, we must protect it, never forgetting the names and stories of those who have borne witness to it.”

Disarmament is necessary to achieve lasting peace. “Even in places where only rubble remains, and despair seems inevitable,” our Holy Father assures us, “we still find people who have not forgotten peace.”

May all of us work together to ensure that authentic peace is possible in our world today.

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



Uno en Cristo/Daniel Conway

El desarme es necesario para lograr la paz

En su primer Mensaje para la Jornada Mundial de la Paz, emitido el 1 de enero, el papa León XIV cita la encíclica de 1963 del papa san Juan XXIII, “*Pacem in Terris*” (Paz en la Tierra), sobre la importancia del desarme.

El papa León comparte la convicción de su predecesor de que rodearnos de armas de destrucción masiva no es un camino eficaz para construir ni mantener una paz auténtica.

El papa Juan escribe:

Todos deben, sin embargo, convencerse que ni el cese en la carrera de armamentos, ni la reducción de las armas, ni, lo que es fundamental, el desarme general son posibles si este desarme no es absolutamente completo y llega hasta las mismas conciencias; es decir, si no se esfuerzan todos por colaborar cordial y sinceramente en eliminar de los corazones el temor y la angustiada perspectiva de la guerra. Esto, a su vez, requiere que esa norma suprema que hoy se sigue para mantener la paz se sustituya por otra completamente distinta, en virtud de la cual se reconozca que una paz internacional verdadera y constante no puede apoyarse en el equilibrio de las fuerzas militares, sino únicamente en la confianza recíproca. (#113)

La paz de Cristo no se alcanza por la

fuerza. La Encarnación—la decisión de Dios de hacerse carne y convertirse en uno con nosotros—contradice nuestras nociones habituales de poder.

Tal como nos lo explica el papa León: “El misterio de la Encarnación, que tiene su punto de mayor abajamiento en el descenso a los infiernos, comienza en el vientre de una joven madre y se manifiesta en el pesebre de Belén.”

El Hijo de Dios viene sin armamento para instaurar la paz en la Tierra. Se presenta totalmente indefenso, como un niño que ni siquiera puede valerse por sí mismo, y sin embargo es proclamado por una hueste de ángeles como el Príncipe de la Paz. Toda su vida es testimonio de que la no violencia y la renuncia a la fuerza bruta, son el único camino para construir una paz duradera.

El papa León cita la encíclica “*Fratelli Tutti*,” inspirada en san Francisco de Asís, verdadero artífice de la paz y modelo de todo lo necesario para edificar una paz perdurable.

En aquel mundo plagado de torreones de vigilancia y de murallas protectoras, las ciudades vivían guerras sangrientas entre familias poderosas, al mismo tiempo que crecían las zonas miserables de las periferias excluidas. Allí Francisco acogió la verdadera paz en su interior; se liberó de todo deseo de

dominio sobre los demás, se hizo uno de los últimos y buscó vivir en armonía con todos. (#4)

“Es una historia que quiere continuar en nosotros, y que requiere que unamos esfuerzos para contribuir recíprocamente a una paz desarmante, una paz que nace de la apertura y de la humildad evangélica.”

Una paz nacida de la humildad no puede alcanzarse acumulando armas nucleares. Exige el desarme. San Juan XXIII dice:

Que en las asambleas más previsoras y autorizadas se examine a fondo la manera de lograr que las relaciones internacionales se ajusten en todo el mundo a un equilibrio más humano, o sea a un equilibrio fundado en la confianza recíproca, la sinceridad en los pactos y el cumplimiento de las condiciones acordadas. Examínese el problema en toda su amplitud, de forma que pueda lograrse un punto de arranque sólido para iniciar una serie de tratados amistosos, firmes y fecundos. (#118)

Tomarse la paz en serio implica renunciar a la necesidad de rodearnos de lo familiar y cómodo; significa abrirnos a nuevas ideas y a otros puntos de vista.

En palabras del papa León: “Es el camino desarmante de la diplomacia, de la mediación, del derecho internacional,

tristemente desmentido por las cada vez más frecuentes violaciones de acuerdos alcanzados con gran esfuerzo, en un contexto que requeriría no la deslegitimación, sino más bien el reforzamiento de las instituciones supranacionales.”

Hace más de 60 años, el papa Juan nos recordó que la paz verdadera y duradera no se basa en la posesión de un armamento equivalente, sino únicamente en la confianza mutua.

El papa León añade que: “Antes de ser una meta, la paz es una presencia y un camino. Aunque sea combatida dentro y fuera de nosotros, como una pequeña llama amenazada por la tormenta, cuidémosla sin olvidar los nombres y las historias de quienes nos han dado testimonio de ella.”

El desarme es indispensable para alcanzar una paz duradera. “Incluso en los lugares donde sólo quedan escombros y donde la desesperación parece inevitable hoy encontramos a quienes no han olvidado la paz,” asegura nuestro Santo Padre.

Que todos trabajemos juntos para construir una paz auténtica en nuestro mundo de hoy.

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

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

ERITREAN

continued from page 1

have all been so welcoming, so helpful.”

But each year, the Eritrean and Ethiopian Catholic community invites a priest to celebrate the Ge'ez Mass for three feasts according to the rite's calendar—Christmas, Easter and a day in July honoring the mercy of the Blessed Mother.

Gebray's eyes light up when he talks about those Masses.

“We wait so eagerly for getting at least those three main, important days in our rite,” he says.

‘Mass hits deeper in your own language’

That rite uses the Ge'ez language. Gebray likens it to Masses celebrated in Latin: “Nobody speaks Ge'ez except in the Mass.”

Like anyone worshipping at Mass in an unfamiliar language, Gebray admits when he came to the U.S., “At first, every Sunday I didn't know what they were saying.”

Language is not the only difference between the Roman and Ge'ez rite Mass. The latter follows a different order, includes more symbolic gestures and is longer.

“It was so short!” Gebray recalls of his first Mass in the U.S. “When it was over, I thought, ‘Are we done already?’ At home in Ethiopia, Mass was two hours every Sunday.

We get used to the Mass here, but your heart and worship feel empty at first.”

Even Rossa Zerezgi, a native of Eritrea who arrived



Rossa Zerezgi

in the U.S. 12 years ago at the age of 7, says she “vividly” remembers worshipping in her home country “because our Mass is so lively. There would be a lot of music.”

While she speaks mostly in English now, “When I hear the Mass in Ge'ez, I feel different,” says Zerezgi, a student at Indiana University in Bloomington. “The Mass hits deeper when you hear it in your own language.”

‘We are grateful for this parish’

Making the three yearly Ge'ez rite Masses happen is a labor of love—starting with finding a priest.

“We have to search around the states,” says Gebray. “They mostly come from Washington and Atlanta, and also from Columbus, Ohio—there is a large Ge'ez community there.”

The celebrant for the Christmas Mass this year, Vincentian Father Haile Suba, is a native of Eritrea working on a master's degree at St. John's University in Queens, N.Y.

As with all of their guest priests, the Eritrean and Ethiopian families paid Father Haile's travel and housing costs for his trip to Indianapolis.

But the search and cost are nothing compared to the joy of celebrating Mass in the language and form so deeply rooted in their hearts.

“We bring our music, we have a big drum,” says Gebray. “We do special dances and chant and sing in the church before and after the Mass. Some join from all over Indiana and even from Kentucky.

“To be honest, I wish we could do this every Sunday. It makes a big difference to worship in the way you were raised.”

Zerezgi agrees.

“It's beautiful to see my parents really fully immerse themselves” in the Ge'ez Masses, she says. “I love seeing everybody get together on these holidays when we can get our own priest. It's beautiful to be able to express our faith in that way.”

There are other unique expressions of the Ge'ez rite beyond the Mass.

“On Good Friday [according to the Ge'ez calendar], we fast all day and stay in the church from 3 a.m. until 5 p.m. praying and chanting,” Gebray explains.

“The people at St. Michael work with us so we don't conflict with their schedule. They're very cooperative.”

But there are other aspects of the Ge'ez rite that are more difficult to accommodate.

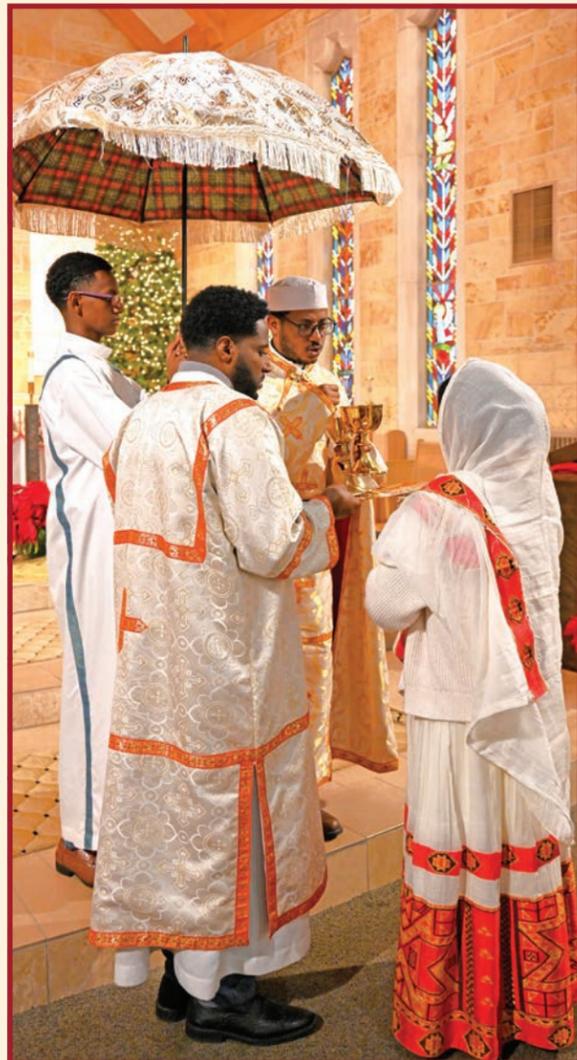
“When someone dies, we come together and mourn for four days,” says Gebray. In an active parish like St. Michael, it's simply not possible to dedicate space “to do funerals like we do in Ge'ez,” he notes.

“We hope to find a place on the west side or downtown that we could rent or buy to use for our funerals and other rituals.

“Then, if the community grows, the dream would be to have our own parish.”



Vincentian Father Haile Suba, a priest from Eritrea temporarily studying in New York, incenses the altar in St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 10 during a Mass in the Ge'ez rite celebrating Christmas for the Eritreans and Ethiopians who are members of the westside parish. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)



A woman receives the Eucharist during a Ge'ez rite Mass in St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis where Eritrean and Ethiopian Catholics worship. During the reception of Communion in the Ge'ez rite Mass, an umbrella (“tsilal”) is used to show respect for the Eucharist and the priest.



Samson Gebray, a native of Ethiopia, worships during a Christmas Mass in the Ge'ez rite in St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 10.

That dream is in no way a negative reflection on St. Michael, Gebray assures.

“We are grateful for this parish, the people and Father Kamwendo,” he says on behalf of the Eritrean and Ethiopian Catholic community. “They give us that sense of belonging. We feel at home here.”

(For information on when the Ge'ez rite Mass is celebrated at St. Michael the Archangel Church, contact Samson Gebray at akbe-g@yahoo.com. For more photos of the Jan. 10 Ge'ez Mass, read this story on our website at www.CriterionOnline.com.) †

Worshipping in the Ge'ez rite

There are numerous differences between the Latin-rite Mass of the West and the Ge'ez rite (also known as the Ethiopian or Abyssinian rite) Divine Liturgy used in the Ethiopian and Eritrean Churches.

Below is an excerpt from “Roots run deep for Ge'ez rite Catholics in Ethiopia” by Thomas Landy. To read the entire article, go to tinyurl.com/GezRite.

“The Ethiopian Rite involves considerable movement by the clergy around the altar, as well as standing and kneeling, singing. ...

“During worship, women generally sit separately from men, but families may sit together. ...

“The Catholic liturgical year is organized around the traditional calendar of the Ethiopian Church, which derives from the ancient Coptic calendar and the Roman Julian [pre-Gregorian] calendar. The Ethiopian liturgical calendar includes several feasts, including nine major feasts of Christ and 33 dedicated to the Virgin Mary. ...

“The Divine Liturgy is divided into two parts: the introductory portion and the *anaphora* [Eucharistic prayer]. Traditionally, leavened bread is used to

celebrate Mass. Normally, five [roles] are required: two priests, a deacon, a subdeacon, and a lector. ...

“The Divine Liturgy begins with a profound veneration by the priest and prayers at the foot of the altar. Immediately afterward, there is a first offertory in which the priest wraps the host in the small veil and raises it toward the cross.

“Before reading the Gospel, the priest recites preparatory prayers, during which he gives his blessing to the entire world, since the Gospel is to be preached to everyone. At the end, he kisses the book and touches it with his forehead, as a

sign of gratitude and veneration. ...

“After consecrating and adoring the Precious Body, the priest bows toward the chalice to pronounce sacred words. Then, he inclines the chalice four times in succession, toward the four cardinal points, to signify the blood shed for the entire world. ...

“The Sacred Host is elevated twice in succession. In the first Elevation, there is the injunction: ‘The Holy One is for the saints,’ reminding the faithful of the state of grace required to receive Communion. In the second, the invocation, ‘Christ, have mercy on us,’ is repeated 41 times” †

Beech Grove pastor takes part in candlelight vigil for fallen police officer; area school's initiative keeps officers in daily prayer

By Sean Gallagher

BEECH GROVE—As the sun set in a beautiful, clear sky on Feb. 18 in Beech Grove, some 1,000 people gathered on Main Street in the small, southern Marion County town.

But it wasn't the balmy weather or the day's record-setting 70-degree temperature that drew so many people outside.

They gathered instead to honor Brian Elliott, an officer with the Beech Grove Police Department who had been shot and killed in the line of duty just 48 hours earlier.

His squad car was parked along Main Street outside the police station with dozens of floral bouquets and homemade signs expressing the support of the close-knit town of about 14,000 people.

As the sun sank below the horizon, the people on Main Street gathered in front of a stage next to Elliott's police car and held small taper candles for a candlelight vigil service for the fallen police officer.

Father Robert Robeson, pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, was the first to speak and offer a prayer at the vigil.

'He is united to Christ'

In trying to help those present understand the loss of Elliott, who was just 33 at the time of his death, Father Robeson shared this quote from St. Augustine:

"Is it not likely that God makes certain that no life is shortened or lengthened beyond that span required for it to sound its proper note and thus take its place in the harmony of creation's song?"

The priest added, "By all accounts, Brian Elliott sounded a beautiful note. His impact within the harmony of creation's song has been deeply moving to those who have listened. And his note continues to be sounded through the family members, friends and co-workers who have been the recipient of his love.

"He remains with us as he plays his note in the heavenly symphony where he has achieved a measure of freedom that we all long for. He's no longer bound by the anxieties and struggles of human life. He is free in a way that we all hope to be free. He is united to Christ in a way that gives him the fullest measure of freedom."

Father Robeson then offered a prayer for Elliott's family and friends and those present at the vigil, asking God to help them "find peace in the memory of his goodness ..."

Praying for the members of the Beech Grove Police Department, Father Robeson asked God to "help them to know how deeply we honor their courage, generosity and sacrifice as they dedicate their lives to the protection of our Beech Grove community."

Beech Grove mayor James Coffman, a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish,

spoke next at the vigil. He took office in January 2024. In September of that year, he swore Elliott in as a member of the Beech Grove Police Department.

Coffman praised Elliott as a native son of the town, a 2011 graduate of Beech Grove High School who was proud to serve his hometown as a police officer, describing him as "one of us."

"We are standing at the place where Officer Elliott started his last shift on Monday," Coffman said. "Our officers leave their family and friends each day. And they choose to walk through the doors [of the police station] not knowing if they will make it back home.

"That is what our officers do. That is what Brian did. ... And that is what our officers will continue to do each and every day."

Coffman later quoted John 15:13 in reflecting on the fallen police officer: "Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."

"We lost Brian Elliott just 48 hours ago," Coffman said. "And I assure you, he will never be forgotten. He offered his life for something greater and, in doing so, he changed all of our lives forever. Officer Elliott, his memory and his service are still alive and are with us.

"And I want his family to know that we are your family now. We will never forget you or our beloved Brian. Our city is who are because of the people who are gathered today. Our community is strong and we are resilient. And in this darkness, I am humbled by the outpouring of support and love, but I am not surprised. We are Beech Grove."

Other speakers included Beech Grove Police Chief Michael Maurice, Rick Snyder, president of the Indianapolis Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and chaplain for the National FOP and Avis Frieson, a member of the Beech Grove Common Council.

Have faith 'that good will prevail'

After the vigil, Father Robeson spoke with *The Criterion* on what it was like for him when he learned of the death of Elliott, who had helped provide security at Holy Name's annual Octoberfest.

"It was devastating," Father Robeson said. "It just made my heart drop. I know so many of the Beech Grove police officers. They're so good to our parish. Whenever we have any issue, they're there in a heartbeat. They really work on trying to build that up so that we trust them. And we do trust them very much."

He said that the parish he leads is "an engaged member of the Beech Grove community, as am I."

Father Robeson was asked to bless the city's new police station when it was opened in 2023. Several members of the police department and the town's fire department are Holy Name parishioners.

So, when Father Robeson was asked the day after Elliott was killed to take part



Father Robert Robeson speaks on Feb. 18 during a candlelight vigil for Brian Elliott, a member of the Beech Grove Police Department who was shot and killed in the line of duty on Feb. 16. The vigil took place outside of the department's police station. Father Robeson is pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

in the vigil service, his decision was an easy one.

"I immediately agreed to do it," he said. "It's a moment of great tragedy in the town."

Coffman also spoke with *The Criterion* after the vigil. He said he was not surprised by the large turnout for the event.

"This is what Beech Grove does," he said. "We come together in triumph, and we come together in pain. This is what we do."

The vigil took place on Ash Wednesday, a day of penance for Catholics and other Christians who observe the day that begins the season of Lent.

Coffman reflected on the role of his Catholic faith in coping with the loss of one of his town's police officers.

"To be honest, I've struggled this week," he said. "But I know Officer Elliott is in a much better place. I know that this is God's plan and that things happen for a reason. We just have to rely on him and know that this is his plan.

"We're not sure why. But we have to have faith that there is a reason. We have to have faith in the greater good and that good will prevail and evil will not."

Students offer daily prayers, become spiritual friends

On the morning after Brian Elliott died in the line of duty as a member of the Beech Grove Police Department, the students of Lumen Christi Catholic School, a few miles north in Indianapolis, did something they've done every Tuesday morning for several years.

After worshipping together at Mass, the students prayed the Litany of St. Michael the Archangel, in the words said by the student who leads it each week, "for the safety and protection of police officers in Indianapolis."

As part of an initiative, each student in the school is assigned a particular police officer to pray for each day using the following prayer:

"Dear God, Keep my officer safe day and night. Give them courage, strength and might. St. Michael the Archangel, pray for [name of police officer]."

The Legion of St. Michael the Archangel Lumen Christi Prayer Warriors does what its name suggests—pray for the safety and protection of Indianapolis police officers.

"In doing so, each student will become a spiritual friend and companion of their police officer," states the group's mission.

"Police officers voluntarily place themselves in positions of danger to keep order in our city and to provide protection to its citizens," the prayer group cites as a reason for their initiative. "Lumen Christi



People gather for a Feb. 18 candlelight vigil for Beech Grove police officer Brian Elliott, who was shot and killed in the line of duty on Feb. 16. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

School students wish to practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, of which we have all been called, by praying daily with pure hearts for the protection of police officers."

Kris Barnes, an administrator at the school, has been involved with the program since its inception. She said former teacher Carol Feick had thoughts of such a ministry after the shooting and death of Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Officer David Moore in January of 2011.

"I think Carol was heartbroken at the death of Officer Moore and was asking what she could do," Barnes said. "I do believe the Lord put it on her heart what we as a school were to do."

It took several years, but the program came to fruition in January of 2017.

Starting in the second grade, students pray for their police officers by name every day during their classroom prayer times.

"Our seniors today have been praying for the same man or woman officer since they were fourth graders," Barnes noted. "Their officers will be passed on to second graders next year."

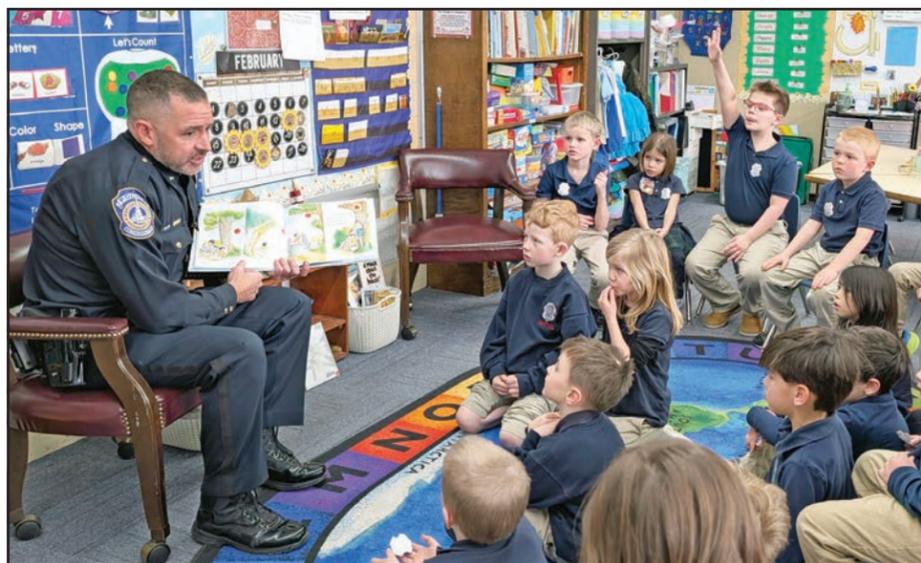
While prayer is at the forefront of the initiative, students also collect snacks for the police department in their area a couple of times a year, and classes make cards every year that are passed on, too.

Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department officers also visit the school and its students on occasion.

"Last year, our eighth graders coordinated a luncheon with some of the officers they actually had been praying for since second grade," Barnes said.

Although Officer Elliott was not on the school's pray partner list, Barnes is "confident that he was prayed for during prayers in the classrooms."

(Editor Mike Krokos contributed to this story.) †



Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department officer Shane Foley reads a book to kindergarten and first-grade students at Lumen Christi Catholic School in Indianapolis during a Feb. 6 visit to the school. Lumen Christi students have a regular practice of praying for police officers in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

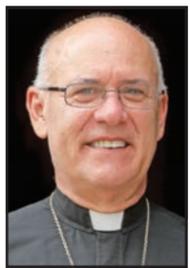
Holy Hour for Peace

Right: Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and Father James Brockmeier, right, rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, kneel in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament on Feb. 18 in the cathedral during a Holy Hour for Peace on Ash Wednesday. Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, had invited dioceses and parishes across the country to hold such Holy Hours in response to civil unrest in the country. Below: Maria Vega and Gerardo Hernandez, members of St. Philip Neri Parish in Indianapolis, kneel in prayer during the Holy Hour. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)



Bishop Rhoades makes biblical case for response to 'immense' migration crisis

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (OSV News)—Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and the secretary for the U.S. Conference



Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

of Catholic Bishops, delivered a lecture at Holy Cross College on what he described as a "crisis of immense proportions."

During the college's twice-annual Mind and Heart Lecture, Bishop Rhoades said "the migrant and refugee crisis" is "one of the greatest challenges our world faces today." The event took place on Feb. 18 in Holy Cross' St. Joseph's Chapel.

Drawing on the most recent United Nations data, Bishop Rhoades underscored the staggering scope of global displacement.

"This past June, the most recent reporting period, the U.N. reported that there are 117.3 million displaced people in the world, of whom 42.5 million are refugees; 67.8 million are displaced within their own countries; and 8.42 million are asylum seekers," he said.

"Refugees are people forced to flee their own country and seek safety in another country," Bishop Rhoades explained. "There are various reasons they are forced to flee: to escape war, conflict, violence, persecution or serious public disorder." Many, he added, flee out of "a well-founded fear of harm."

Even as he presented these statistics,

Bishop Rhoades cautioned against focusing solely on numbers.

"These are real people," he said. "Over 40% of refugees today are children under the age of 18. Over 60% of refugees are in family units."

Bishop Rhoades described the trauma many endure, including dangerous journeys, overcrowded refugee camps, lack of clean water and adequate shelter and years of uncertainty.

"As Christians, we must never treat the suffering of others as if it does not concern us," he said.

"We must look at this issue first and foremost from the perspective of God's revelation transmitted to us in Scripture and tradition, and not from the perspective of one's political party or narrow ideologies," Bishop Rhoades said.

Migration, he reminded the audience, is a major theme in Scripture. He pointed to the Exodus, when Moses led the Hebrews out of slavery in Egypt. The bishop also recalled God's command in the Book of Exodus: "You shall not oppress an alien; you know how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt" (Ex 22:20).

Bishop Rhoades also cited the Book of Leviticus: "You shall treat the stranger who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you. Have the same love for him as for yourself" (Lv 19:34).

In the New Testament, he highlighted the flight of the Holy Family, which Pope Pius XII in the 1952 apostolic constitution "*Exsul Familia Nazarethana*" called "the archetype of every refugee family." The Gospel of Matthew describes how Jesus,

Mary and Joseph, who were the lawful subjects of King Herod the Great, had to flee the kingdom of Judea shortly after Jesus' birth, and cross into the borders of Roman-ruled Egypt beyond the reach of Herod, who was seeking to kill Jesus.

Bishop Rhoades invoked the story of Cain and Abel from Genesis, recalling Cain's response to God after murdering his brother: "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gn 4:9) The bishop suggested that this question continues to resonate in modern debates about migrants.

"Perhaps the most direct instruction for us comes from the words of Jesus in the parable of the Last Judgment: 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me'" (Mt 25:35), he said, referring to Christ's teaching in the Gospel of Matthew. "In welcoming the immigrant ... we are welcoming Jesus."

He added, "There is no doubt from the teaching of Scripture that we have a Christian responsibility to 'welcome the stranger among us'" (Mt 25:35).

Shifting to Catholic social teaching, Bishop Rhoades explained the principle of the "universal destination of goods," which teaches that the goods of the Earth are intended for all.

"We are stewards of the goods of the Earth, not absolute masters, and we are morally obliged to ensure that our goods benefit those in need, including migrants and refugees."

He also highlighted the Church's preferential option for the poor.

"As disciples of Jesus, we cannot be indifferent to the poor, to migrants and refugees or to anyone living in misery," he said. "Human misery elicited the compassion of Christ and needs to elicit our compassion."

The second half of the lecture focused on what Bishop Rhoades called a "fundamental and natural right that is too often overlooked": the right to stay in one's home country and be able to flourish there.

"The Church teaches that people have a right to find safety, economic opportunity and dignity in their own homeland," he said.

The bishop discussed the work of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the overseas charitable arm of

the Catholic Church in the U.S., on whose board he has served. CRS operates in more than 100 countries, providing emergency relief and development so families can remain in their homelands.

However, he noted, severe cuts to funding for the federal government program USAID last year eliminated nearly 50% of the CRS budget, forcing staff layoffs and reducing many life-saving programs.

"This has jeopardized food security, health services and other humanitarian help for millions of poor people," he said. Despite these challenges, he encouraged the audience to support CRS through increased private giving, particularly during Lent.

Turning to the right to migrate, the bishop affirmed that when a person's life and dignity are threatened, "one has the right to migrate elsewhere where they can live humanly."

"We have a moral responsibility to recognize, uphold and defend this right," including the right of asylum, Bishop Rhoades said.

At the same time, he acknowledged that the Church "recognizes the right of nations to control entry of migrants and to protect their borders," he said, citing the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, where the Church teaches that prosperous nations are obliged, "to the extent they are able," to welcome the foreigner in search of security and livelihood. (#2241)

He stressed the importance of safe and legal pathways, family reunification and a humane asylum process.

"There are approximately 3.4 to 3.5 million asylum cases awaiting a hearing or final decision in the United States," he said, calling the backlog "a terrible one."

Throughout the lecture, Bishop Rhoades returned to the principle of solidarity, quoting St. John Paul II. The late pontiff described solidarity not as "a feeling of vague compassion," but as "a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good."

"That includes our migrant brothers and sisters," Bishop Rhoades said. "To be indifferent to them," he concluded, "is to be indifferent to Jesus." †

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SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Grace draws believers into Christ's life of prayer and his forgiving mercy

By Father James Dominic Brent, O.P.

(OSV News)—God lives a most mysterious form of life. High above all things, dwelling in unapproachable light, God is the eternal Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The life of the Holy Trinity is resplendent with unutterable glory. The three-in-one rejoice in abundant bliss simply over being God.

No human being on Earth has the power to fathom or comprehend either the life or the bliss of the Holy Trinity. Analogies and comparisons might give us something of a glimpse, but all comparisons utterly fall short of the mystery of the Most High. Yet, it pleases God—the good God who loves us—to share his triune life with us.

It was generous enough for God simply to create the world. It was a gratuitous gift all of its own just for God to give us all life and breath and freedom to pursue all that is good in the world. But the love of God for us is excessive indeed, and God did not stop at simply giving us the world. In a special gift of love going beyond everything that creatures have a right to expect from God, it pleased God to give us not only the world but to give us also himself.

God has always planned not only to reveal the secret of his triune life to us, but to draw us into this mystery. He calls us to know him and love him and enjoy his triune life in the depths of our hearts. To work such a wondrous mystery in our hearts, God grants us in our baptism the gift of sanctifying grace. Sanctifying grace is a real participation in the life of the Holy Trinity.

Human beings have no natural right to such a thing. We have no natural right to sanctifying grace. We have no natural right to participate in the triune life of God. Yet, it pleases God to lavish such grace upon us nonetheless. It pleases God to do so just because he is good.

It was for this reason, to lavish his grace upon us, to grant us a participation in his own wonderful life, that God the Father sent his eternal Son into the world.

Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son of God come in the flesh. He freely chose to die for us on the cross. Yet, God raised him from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and now he stands before the Father of lights. Day and night, he pleads for us all to receive the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks to Jesus Christ, and no one else, all who are baptized in Christ can now say: “The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rom 5:5).

The grace of the Holy Spirit poured into our hearts in baptism is a new and altogether higher form of life. The life of grace is not some lower form of life such as plant life or animal life. The life of grace is also not simply a more human life of the kind we received from our parents.

We do not need baptism to give us more natural, biological, human life. The life of grace is also not an angelic form of life wonderful though the life of angels may be. The life of grace is, rather, something altogether supernatural. It is beyond the nature of all created beings whatsoever. The life of grace is something of God's own life—divine life—animating the depths of the soul.



A crucifix is pictured at a Catholic church in Maryland. Jesus' first words from the cross were a prayer: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Lk 23:34). (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

Those who live the life of grace still live their natural human form of life. They still sleep, eat, drink, talk and walk the face of the Earth with others, but in the depths of their souls, something supernatural is going on. In the depths of their souls, they are living something of the life of the Holy Trinity.

Most people are unaware of the greatness of the gift given to them in their baptism, but all of the baptized live under the call to wake up to it. The life of grace is a gift of inestimable worth. It is the pearl of great price. It is the treasure buried in the field of the heart. It is like a mustard seed.

Sanctifying grace tends to grow into a conscious union of hearts with the Most High.

Yet, for such a wondrous event to take place in our hearts, the most fundamental and essential quality we need is a faith that listens to the word of God. Many people think that Solomon asked for wisdom, but he did not. Rather, Solomon asked for a listening heart (cf. 1 Kgs 3:9). In turn, God poured out on Solomon an abundance of wisdom.

The lesson is clear. If we ask for the grace of a listening heart and take practical steps to acquire one, then true wisdom—a loving awareness of the presence of God—will dawn in our hearts in due season.

One special form of listening to God is meditation on the seven last words of Jesus. The last words of a person can move us to the core because of their power to reveal

the person in a special way. St. Thérèse of Lisieux's last words were: “My God, I love you!” Pope St. John Paul II's last words were: “Let me go to the Father's house.”

If listening to the last words of saints moves us, how much more should the last words of the Lord move us? The more we listen to his seven last words, the more our hearts come to reflect his own—the more our hearts will live something of his own eternal Sonship in the Spirit.

“Jesus died praying,” Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger once observed (before he was elected pope and took the name Benedict XVI). Even in the midst of crucifixion, the heart of Jesus was with his Father. The first thing he does on the cross is call upon his Father: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Lk 23:34).

The first thing Jesus asks is for the mercy of the Father upon sinners. Jesus lived his life in prayer to the Father, and he died in a state of prayer to the Father. The heart of Jesus was all prayer to the Father.

Among all the prayers of the people of Israel, the prayer of the Lord Jesus was unique. Jesus was the first to call God his Father: “Abba.” None of the patriarchs or prophets dared to call God their personal Father as that Aramaic word implies. But Jesus did. In so doing, he lived out his eternal and divine Sonship in a very human way. Prayer is a very human thing, and Jesus simply called upon his Father in prayer.

Jesus also taught his disciples to call upon Our Father, but it was not his intention for us simply to imitate him outwardly in using the word “Father.” Rather, the Lord's intention was for our hearts to be united inwardly with his in one life of prayer. His purpose in teaching us the Our Father was later fulfilled when the Spirit fell upon his disciples.

Once the Spirit came, the hearts of the first Christians also began to cry out “Abba, Father!” (cf. Rom 8:15, Gal 4:6). The heart of the risen Lord Jesus in heaven and the hearts of his disciples on Earth were united in a single, common, interior life of prayer. Even now, heaven and Earth are united in the life of prayer of Christian hearts.

In his crucifixion, the Lord Jesus asked the Father to forgive his persecutors. In so doing, Jesus practiced what he preached in the Sermon on the Mount (cf. Mt 5:44). In the Our Father, we, too, ask God to forgive those who trespass against us. We ask also for the grace to be forgiving ourselves. Forgiveness is the only way home to the Father's house in the heavenly places.

Participation in the life of the Trinity might seem like an abstraction. It might seem far removed from our daily life, but the Lord Jesus has brought the mystery down to Earth. How, practically speaking, do you and I participate in the life of the Trinity? Let's begin with an Our Father. One Our Father devoutly said is a bigger deal in heaven and on Earth than anyone might think.

(Dominican Father James Dominic Brent, an assistant professor of philosophy at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C., is the author of *The Father's House: Discovering Our Home in the Trinity.*) †



Pope Leo XIV baptizes one of 20 children on Jan. 11, the day this year on which the feast of the Baptism of the Lord was celebrated, in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican. Sanctifying grace is poured into the soul of the person who is baptized, allowing him or her to share in the divine life of the Trinity. (OSV News photo/Simone Risoluti, Vatican Media)

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Let's try to see family life from a new perspective during this Lent

Colin, who is 12 and is my youngest son, loves to draw. He has several sketchbooks filled with all kinds of incredible drawings. He and a school friend even have a hobby of creating their own small comic books and selling some of them to their classmates.



Once last fall, when he and his classmates spent time in eucharistic adoration, Colin was allowed to take a sketchbook with him. As he gazed upon our Lord present on the altar, the eye of his heart and mind took him up and out of the pew in which he was sitting.

The result was a pencil drawing that took my breath away when I saw it.

The view of the monstrance he created was as if the viewer was inches from and slightly above the sanctuary candle held in an ornate brass holder attached to the left wall of the sanctuary about 10 feet above the floor in the church where Colin and his classmates were praying.

Colin had drawn the candle holder, in all its fine details, very large in the foreground. But the beautiful altar and monstrance holding the Blessed Sacrament were

still seen, if smaller in perspective, in the background.

An amazed and proud father, I saw Colin's own budding love for our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament in the great care with which he created his drawing.

And I was grateful that he gave me a perspective on the Eucharist in my own parish church of many years that I had never even imagined.

But that is what God calls parents and children to do for each other. In the midst of the ordinary ins and outs of daily family life, with all its crosses and blessings, parents and children can and should help each other see various aspects of life from many perspectives.

We can recognize the value of learning to see life from different points of view from a human perspective alone, apart from anything supernatural.

But when you add faith into the equation, we can recognize that parents and children, husbands, wives and siblings all coming to see aspects of their shared life from the perspectives of others in the house *can* be a channel of grace.

It *can* lead the members of a family to be more understanding of the shortcomings that all of us have and which can so often be the source of daily (or hourly) irritation for parents and children alike.

You might have noticed that in those observations, I put the emphasis on "can." Seeing life from different points of view can be a channel of grace in a family, but it's not always that way. We may want to see life from the perspective of our annoying teenager, our grumpy parent or our crazy brother or sister. And sometimes, thanks be to God, we do and are able to show mercy to each other.

But, just like so many other things in life, we're inconsistent about it. Sometimes—all right, maybe a lot of times—we get locked into viewing life from our own perspective alone, and anyone who doesn't see things the way I do—especially those I live with—is wrong.

Colin helped me see the Eucharist in my parish church from a beautiful perspective that I had never imagined.

Maybe during this Lent, we parents and children, spouses and siblings can open ourselves more to God's grace that will help us see life from the point of view of those who bother us the most. Then maybe we can start to die to ourselves in showing them mercy, the mercy that flowed from Christ's pierced side as he died for us on the cross. †

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

This Lent, let's examine how other religions are partners in dialogue

"True or False?" How often did you dread school quizzes and test sections that were so named?

Such juxtaposition led to either/or thinking. If an item was true, then the "other" must be "false."



This leaves little room for "both/and," subtleties or nuances. These lead to depth and insight for enhanced understanding.

Our choice of descriptive words is important.

"There is one true Church."

"There is one true religion."

These two short sentences have been used to describe Roman Catholicism and Christianity, respectively.

Yet, if there is one true Church, does that make all other "churches" false?

If there is one true religion, does that make all other religions

false?

Historically, the first statement has been used by adherents of Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran and other Christian denominations to describe themselves.

Each denomination has criteria for using the word "true." Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox use the four marks of the Church spoken in the Nicene Creed—one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

These four theological terms speak of origin in the person of Jesus. He wished for his believers to be one as he and the Father are one (Jn 17:22). He mandated its holiness and universal mission (Mt 28:16-20). The Apostles thus were to be the initiators of the mission to be handed on to their successors.

Sadly, the great schism of 1053 between the West and the East persists today between the creators of the Nicene Creed. They are not one.

The Roman Catholic Church speaks of itself as the one true Church. "True" here is rooted in the consistency of holding to the four marks yet to this day.

All other Christian churches or ecclesial communities hold parts of the truth,

but not the fullness. But this does not make them false. They have a share of the truth, as stated in "*Lumen Gentium*," which is the Second Vatican Council's "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (#14-17). The same is reiterated in "*Unitatis Redintegratio*," the council's "Decree on Ecumenism."

The statement "There is one true religion" rests on the salvific gift of the Incarnation.

God became one of us in Christ and brought about salvation for all humanity.

No other religion professes God with us in this way.

Catholic Christianity is the sacrament of salvation for the world ("*Lumen Gentium*," #48).

Does this statement of salvific truth mean that all other religions are false?

Both "*Lumen Gentium*" and "*Nostra Aetate*," also a document of Vatican II, speak of other religions as partners in dialogue. That dialogue is to pursue understanding of the truth of the divine in each religion.

While apprehension of the divine differs among religions, there are many shared qualities and "truths." The Golden Rule is notably one of them. Another is the gift of creation and humanity's charge to care for it.

True or false? In the context of church and religion, how we use these two words is important to greater understanding.

Holding too tightly to a narrow definition of either one does not allow for the Spirit of God to enlighten minds and hearts.

Holding too tightly to a narrow definition of either one reinforces polarization, exclusion of the other and the demeaning of others' ability to think and believe.

Perhaps our Lenten journey this year will be a growing appreciation of truth in the breadth and depth of our Church, our religion and its relation to others of faith and religion.

(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.) †

Called to Holiness/Jaymie Stuart Wolfe

Let's become the 'somebody' to step up during the Lenten season and beyond

The thing about Mardi Gras in New Orleans is the scale of what happens here.

A few weekends ago, I went to eight parades. I saw 277 floats from four different artistic design and construction companies, carrying nearly 10,000 riders, throwing tens of thousands of trinkets to the crowds, flanked by dozens of marching bands and other costumed groups who dance, roller-skate or ride bicycles, motorcycles and even motorized recliners (I kid you not!) down the nearly 5-mile route.



Now add police, EMTs, power workers, media and street cleaners to the mix—and the crowd numbers north of a couple hundred thousand. It's practically impossible to imagine if you've never seen it for yourself. And that wasn't even the weekend before Mardi Gras!

The amount of time, effort, money and creativity required to put together a parade that lasts only three or four hours is breathtaking. Even more amazing is the fact that Mardi Gras is produced voluntarily by private citizens, organizations and clubs.

There is no overarching steering committee coordinating everything that goes on here, nor are there any corporate or government sponsors footing the bill. Each one of the almost 60 parades is a unique and extravagant gift between neighbors in this vibrant community. And that's why more than a million visitors come to see it.

There are a lot of life lessons to be learned from what

happens here, but chief among them is this: The most wonderful things in the world don't just happen on their own.

Everything we love, cherish and enjoy—the best and most meaningful experiences we remember all our lives—require people who are willing to spend their resources, share their talents and work their tails off to make them happen.

That principle applies to everything, whether we're talking about preparing a delicious meal, celebrating a birthday, decorating for Christmas, updating a bathroom, planting flowers or planning a vacation.

It also applies to the Church.

Beautiful liturgies don't happen by accident or luck. Neither does parish hospitality, adult formation, catechesis, adoration or access to the sacraments. Somebody has to book the Lenten mission speaker and sing in the choir. Somebody has to make sure there's enough coffee and get to the hall early to wipe down the tables and set up the coffee urn. Somebody has to teach fourth-grade religious ed, repose the Blessed Sacrament, lead the Bible study, the rosary or the book club.

In most parishes, the same handful of people do everything. That is not how the Church is supposed to work. Maybe that's why it sometimes doesn't. For every aspect of parish life we have—or wish we did—somebody must be willing to step up and do what's necessary. The problem is that for too many Catholics that "somebody" is always somebody else.

When we're kids, good things simply appear like magic and out of thin air. There's always a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving, presents from Santa under the tree, and jellybeans hidden around the house in pastel plastic

eggs. Part of growing up is realizing that someone else has been orchestrating the special events in our lives all along. Grown-ups know that genuine gratitude means handing it all on—stepping up to give others what they themselves received, and even things they did not receive but wish they had.

And that's what I think Lent is for. This penitential season gives us a chance to consider whether we're people who show up and watch, or people who do what it takes to make things happen. It gives us an opportunity to consider how we might move from consumers to creators, from spectators to participants, from beneficiaries to benefactors.

The streets of New Orleans fill with crowds of people ready to watch a Mardi Gras parade only because an enormous number of other people have taken it upon themselves to produce the spectacle they come out for. Without them, there would be nothing to see. The culture that animates this city would quickly become a thing of the past.

If everyday Catholics continue to sit back and wait for someone else to step up to the plate, to bear the burden, to spend themselves for the sake of others, I worry about what will remain in a generation or two. The truth is we ought to stop waiting for Father, Deacon, Sister and the parish "church lady" to do everything for us. It's time for us to step up and do everything for each other.

(Jaymie Stuart Wolfe is a sinner, Catholic convert, freelance writer and editor, musician, speaker, pet-aholic, wife and mom of eight grown children, loving life in New Orleans.) †

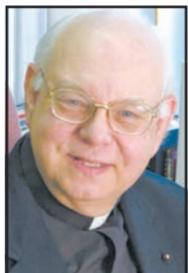
Second Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 1, 2026

- Genesis 12:1-4a
- 2 Timothy 1:8b-10
- Matthew 17:1-9

The Book of Genesis is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. As its name suggests, Genesis reveals the divine origin of life and the divine plan in the forming of the Hebrew people.



First and foremost, Genesis is a splendidly vivid revelation of God's majesty and power, but also of the dignity

of humanity and purpose of life. It is a great pity that this marvelous book has been so tortured and misconstrued by well-meaning but misinformed readers over the years. The core message of Genesis is not about the details of how creation occurred.

This weekend's reading is about Abraham. Considered by scholars to have been an actual person and not a myth, Abraham is regarded as the father of the Jewish people.

The reading makes several points. God is active in human affairs and communicates with humans, and they with him.

Abraham has strong faith. God rewards this faith by pledging that Abraham's descendants, until the end of time, will be his special people. It is a dignity conferred with an obligation. Abraham's descendants must be loyal to God and, by their lives of faith, reveal God to the world.

For its second reading, this weekend's liturgy presents a passage from St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy.

Timothy was a disciple of Paul. The Church venerates Timothy as a great saint, an important figure in the early days of the Church. According to the New Testament, Timothy was the son of a pagan father and a devout Jewish mother. He was Paul's secretary for a period and once was imprisoned with him, although he was eventually released. An early tradition holds that Timothy was the first bishop of Ephesus, then a major city. Its ruins are now in present-day Turkey on the coast of the Aegean Sea.

Paul encourages Timothy to be strong in his Christian belief despite difficulties and obstacles.

St. Matthew's Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is the story of the Transfiguration, ablaze with symbols of God which would have been recognizable to any Jew in Jesus' day as these images appear throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.

In these Scriptures, brilliant light, mountaintops, clouds and pure white all symbolized God. Finally, surrounding Jesus were Moses and Elijah, the great heroes of the Hebrew religious tradition.

This scene completely contrasts with that of Calvary. Instead of shimmering clothes, Jesus is crucified after being stripped of his garments. Instead of glowing clouds and brilliant light, gloom and darkness surround the cross.

Reflection

Lent is little more than one week along, and already the Church is encouraging us, reinforcing our faith, just as Jesus strengthened the faith of the Apostles who stood trembling and in dismay before the divine sight manifested on the mountain.

The message is clear. Jesus is God, active and present among us.

We must believe to be saved. And in our belief, we must commit our very lives to Christ. Abraham is critically a part of this weekend's lesson as an example.

Nowhere in these readings is there any account of the Crucifixion, no reference to Calvary. Nevertheless, the event of the Lord's death on the cross is essential to understanding fully this weekend's message.

Calvary represents the world. It was for a moment, seemingly, the triumph of earthly power and human sin over good. Certainly, the enemies of Jesus saw the crucifixion as their victory. Jesus died. But then came the wonder of Easter.

Every human being can be tricked into assuming that earthly things, or earthly satisfaction, will bring them reward. Instead of reward, sin and earthly attachments bring death. All around it is gloom and darkness.

So, the Church counsels us to have faith, see beyond the gloom, be smart and rejoice in the light of Jesus. Remember the Transfiguration and remember Abraham, our model of absolute faith. Remember the Lord, our only hope. †

Daily Readings

Monday, March 2

Daniel 9:4b-10
Psalm 78:8-9, 11, 13
Luke 6:36-38

Tuesday, March 3

St. Katharine Drexel, virgin
Isaiah 1:10, 16-20
Psalm 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23
Matthew 23:1-12

Wednesday, March 4

St. Casimir
Jeremiah 18:18-20
Psalm 31:5-6, 14-16
Matthew 20:17-28

Thursday, March 5

Jeremiah 17:5-10
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Luke 16:19-31

Friday, March 6

Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a
Psalm 105:16-21
Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46

Saturday, March 7

St. Perpetua, martyr
St. Felicity, martyr
Micah 7:14-15, 18-20
Psalm 103:1-4, 9-12
Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Sunday, March 8

Third Sunday of Lent
Exodus 17:3-7
Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9
Romans 5:1-2, 5-8
John 4:5-42
or John 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Church's Lenten disciplines highlight the communal nature of penance

QI think the Catholic Church's Lenten discipline is kind of a joke. Specifically, Friday abstinence really isn't that tough since most people aren't going to suffer if they can't have meat for one day a week.



Why doesn't the Church require something more demanding, like omitting all animal products on days of

penance, or fasting on only bread and water?

AI think it might make sense to start by drawing a distinction between the personal penance an individual member of the faithful freely embraces for himself or herself and the communal nature of the Church's required Lenten penances.

With respect to personal penance, it is a longstanding principle in our faith that all Christians need some sort of asceticism—that is, spiritual practice of self-denial—in their lives of faith. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us:

"Christ's call to conversion continues to resound in the lives of Christians. This second conversion [i.e., after baptism] is an uninterrupted task for the whole Church who, 'clasping sinners to her bosom, [is] at once holy and

always in need of purification, [and] follows constantly the path of penance and renewal.' This endeavor of conversion is not just a human work. It is the movement of a 'contrite heart,' drawn and moved by grace to respond to the merciful love of God who loved us first" (#1428).

And while an interior conversion of heart is always the primary and most important thing, the catechism further observes that nevertheless "interior conversion urges expression in visible signs, gestures and works of penance" (#1430).

To be truly effective as a means of interior purification, the personal penances we embrace for ourselves need to be appropriate for our own unique circumstances. That is, they should be serious enough that we notice them, but also not so burdensome that they interfere with the duties of our state in life or injure our health.

For example, waking up an hour or two before dawn to study Scripture devoutly might be helpful to a young university student, but might be overly taxing and thus spiritually counterproductive to a sleep-deprived nursing mother.

In contrast, the Church's official Lenten disciplines are meant to apply broadly to the faithful in general to be observed together, as a community. This not only fosters an important sense of Catholic identity, it also reminds us that nobody is saved on his or her own. These communal penances are fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday and, as you mentioned in your question, abstaining from meat on all Fridays in Lent.

There are some limited exceptions to these disciplines. As per canon 1252 of the *Code of Canon Law*, strictly speaking, only Catholics ages 14 and older are obliged to abstain from meat on Fridays (although "pastors of souls and parents are to ensure that even those who by reason of their age are not bound by the law of fasting and abstinence, are taught the true meaning of penance.")

The requirement to fast is only binding on Catholic ages 18 to 59 who are medically able to restrict food safely. And even so, the fast the Church requires doesn't restrict to any particular amount of food. Catholics can have one full meal on fast days, with two smaller snacks if needed, as long as the two snacks together are not as much as the full meal. So, while there are some objective parameters, it is at least somewhat customizable to the strength of the individual.

You're right that none of these required communal penances are overly demanding for most of the faithful. But, in some ways that is a feature, not a bug. A more demanding common discipline would require far more exceptions, which could make it difficult for the majority of the Church to observe them together as one spiritual family.

Like so many Catholic things, this isn't a matter of "either/or," but of "both/and." That is, we are called to practice both the Church's required Lenten discipline and to our own personal penances.

(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

Crosses of His Choosing

By Sandra Behringer

This Lent, deciding my own sacrifices of body and mind, let me not be blind to the times God gives me crosses.

I rise from bed, worn out, yet with work to do or I'm sick with flu and wondering how to get through today and tomorrow. Or suddenly I lose a friend to death and droop in sorrow.

Look for crosses? Why not take the ones at hand? God alone needs to know how tired I really am and pains of head and stomach can be suffered for someone for whom no-one prays. In obedience I can accept the loss of a much-loved face by thanking God for the grace of having shared my friend's life and blessing the knife of loneliness, whose wound is the price of love.

Lord, don't let me ignore crosses of Your choosing and so risk losing chances to draw near to You. Let my head be bent and my mouth not complain. If I could, I would offer them to spare You, Lord, a tiny portion of Your saving pain.



(Sandra Behringer is a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: Crosses and crucifixes hang from rosaries left at a devotional shrine outside El Santuario de Chimayo in New Mexico in this April 2015 photo.) (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

Rest in peace

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

BLESSINGER, Mary E., 92, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Feb. 8. Mother of Charles and David Blessinger. Grandmother of five.

BRUNS, Ronald V., 83, St. Michael, Brookville, Feb. 10. Husband of Bonnie Bruns. Father of Tina Jackson, Michelle Riedman and Kim Verkley. Brother of Alice Stang, Linda Worm, Cecil and Ivan Bruns. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of 11.

HAGNER, Dorothy Jane (Slinger), 97, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Feb. 8. Wife of Carl Hagner. Mother of Julia England, Carla Gregory, Karen Haseman, Sandra Howarth, Nancy Knight, Diane Rhea, Kenneth and Lawrence Hagner. Sister of Charles Slinger. Grandmother of 20. Great-grandmother of 31.

HALEY, John E., 75, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Feb. 8. Husband of Linda Haley. Father of Kara Baugues, Jakob and Jonathan Haley. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of four.

HARBISON, Shirley (Striegel), 87, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Feb. 11. Wife of Robert Harbison, Jr. Mother of Victoria Spray, Christopher and Gregory Harbison. Sister of Christine Baumann,

Deborah Page, Barbara Vance, Marvin, Robert and Tony Striegel. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of six.

KENNEDY, Mary Agnes, 82, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, Feb. 1. Mother of Kevin, Mike and Ray Kennedy. Grandmother of 11.

KINNICK, David E., 74, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 29. Husband of Debra Kinnick. Father of Anthony Kinnick. Stepfather of Stacy

and Jeffrey Robey. Brother of Karen Errett. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of one.

LUCAS, Mary E. (Basinger), 82, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Feb. 6. Sister of Frank and Louis Basinger. Aunt of several.

MAPLE, Donald D., 71, St. Louis, Batesville, Feb. 16. Husband of Margaret Maple. Father of Hilary Goins, Adam and Nicholas Maple. Brother

of Brenda Boozer and Melvin Maple. Grandfather of seven.

POSTEL, Leroy R., 95, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Feb. 5. Father of Pattie, Sandy, Tracy, Chris and Michael Postel. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of four.

REAGAN, Richard D., 89, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Feb. 16. Husband of Margie Reagan. Father of Tamara Thomas, Angela and Ronald Reagan. Grandfather

Devil's Bridge

Hikers wait in line on Feb. 7 to have their pictures taken on Devil's Bridge near Sedona, Ariz. Devil's Bridge is the largest natural sandstone arch in the area, offering a moderate 1.8- to 4.6-mile roundtrip hike, popular for its stunning, walkable bridge-like structure that is 54 feet high and hovers over the edge of a canyon that has a 100-foot drop. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)



Team USA's hockey gold honors star tragically killed with brother in 2024

(OSV News)—When the U.S. men's hockey team dramatically captured its first Olympic gold medal in 46 years at the 2026 Winter Games on Feb. 22 in Milan, Italy, the triumph was defined not only by athletic achievement but by remembrance and faith.

After the dramatic 2-1 overtime thriller over Canada, U.S. captain Auston Matthews and teammates skated around the ice holding the late Johnny Gaudreau's No. 13 jersey, ensuring that a beloved player—gone too soon—was at the forefront of their celebration.

Johnny Gaudreau, widely known as “Johnny Hockey,” and his brother Matthew were killed on Aug. 29, 2024, when they were struck by an alleged drunk driver while cycling near Salem County, N.J., on the eve of their sister's wedding. Johnny was 31.

Before the Olympics began, the Gaudreau family issued a heartfelt message that underscored

Gaudreau's lifelong dream to represent his country.

“Representing Team USA at the Olympics was one of his greatest dreams,” the family wrote, noting that in his final summer Johnny was training harder than ever to earn a spot on the Olympic roster. “We know he will be so very present with Team USA and all of his close friends competing throughout these games. ... John loved this game and loved representing his country.”

Both Gaudreau brothers were hockey standouts and played for Boston College. Matthew competed professionally and later became involved in coaching at his high school alma mater, but he never played in the National Hockey League (NHL). Johnny, however, played 11 seasons in the NHL—nine with the Calgary Flames and, desiring to be closer to home, his final two with the Columbus Blue Jackets.

Johnny Gaudreau's Catholic faith was a central part of his life from his youth through his professional career. He and his brother both attended Gloucester Catholic High School in New Jersey, where their father, Guy, helped build the school's ice hockey program. The brothers were not only sporting stars, they were devoted sons, brothers, fathers and active members of their Catholic community. Gloucester Catholic, founded on faith and service, became the spiritual home for the family, offering prayer services and communal support in the wake of their deaths.

In the weeks after the accident, Gloucester Catholic High School held a Night of Remembrance attended by hundreds, emphasizing prayer and the role of faith in coping with tragedy. The funeral Mass for Johnny and Matthew, held at St. Mary Magdalen Church in Media, Pa., highlighted the “incredible love” they had for each other and their parents. The Gaudreau family has also supported Catholic education through annual fundraisers for Gloucester Catholic to help families with tuition.

Throughout the 2026 Winter Games Olympics in Milan Cortina, Team USA kept Johnny Gaudreau's memory at the forefront. His No. 13 jersey was displayed in the locker room, a constant symbol of his presence among teammates. That practice continued into the gold medal game, where teammates Auston Matthews, Zach Werenski and Matthew Tkachuk carried the jersey onto the ice after the final buzzer.

After the victory, the team ensured that Gaudreau's family was included in the celebration. Players brought

two of Johnny's three children—Johnny Jr., 2, and Noa, 3—onto the ice for the official team photo, holding their father's jersey beside them. From the stands, his widow, Meredith, and his parents, Guy and Jane, witnessed a tribute that blended athletic triumph with deep personal loss.

“I honestly felt [Johnny's presence] the whole tournament,” Werenski, Gaudreau's teammate with the Blue Jackets, told The Athletic. “Felt he was here. I felt that feeling a lot in Columbus, and I felt it at the world stage, World Championships last year, now here at the Olympics. I feel like that he's following us, and he's got our back.”

“This is something John would have been at,” he continued. “And to see his family here supporting us and seeing his kids, bringing them on the ice, we talked about playing for him, making him proud and I think we did that.” †



Gold medalists Dylan Larkin and Zach Werenski of the U.S. men's hockey team celebrate with Noa Harper Gaudreau and Johnny Edward Gaudreau, two of the children of the late John Gaudreau, during the victory ceremony after defeating Canada 2-1 in overtime during the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan, Italy, on Feb. 22. (OSV News photo/Marton Monus, Reuters)

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

- Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
- CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church
- 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners

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



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2 Victim Assistance Coordinator**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

Investing with Faith/Robin Davidson

New tax provision offers unique opportunity to maximize your giving

If you could give a little more this year to support the mission of your parish, would you consider it?



Beginning in 2026, a new federal tax provision creates a meaningful opportunity for many parishioners to do just that. Under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, taxpayers who take the standard deduction (often called “non-itemizers”) may deduct up to \$1,000 (individuals) or \$2,000 (married filing jointly) for cash contributions to qualified charities, including churches.

As the business manager for St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour, I would like to encourage you to consider how this provision might support both your personal stewardship and the mission of your parish. While you could certainly apply this benefit to what you already give, you might also prayerfully consider making an additional gift to your parish in light of this opportunity.

Is there a special ministry within your parish that you feel passionate about supporting, such as a homeless mission, a parish you have a twinning relationship with, a prison ministry or the parish’s St. Vincent de Paul Society

that could benefit by a one-time or ongoing donation?

Perhaps you might make a special gift at Easter or Christmas or slightly increase your weekly or monthly Sunday contribution with this provision in mind. Even modest increases, when multiplied across a parish community, can make a real and lasting difference.

To put the numbers in perspective, the \$1,000 or \$2,000 annual amount breaks down to approximately \$83 per month for an individual or \$167 per month for a family. If just 50 families were able to participate at that level, it could generate an additional \$100,000 per year in support for the parish. Not every family can commit to a large increase, but again, even small gifts matter greatly when a parish community acts together.

Here at St. Ambrose, additional support would allow us to strengthen vital ministries, care for our facilities and invest in programs that nurture our Catholic faith across generations.

Recently, we have seen an increase in people seeking financial assistance. In response, one of our parishioners set up a recurring gift of \$100 per month to support our parish’s St. Vincent de Paul Society. This kind of steady, ongoing support provides us with stable resources to help the poor in our community. I invite you to reflect on

how even a modest recurring monthly gift could impact a parish ministry close to your heart.

Another meaningful way to make an extra contribution is through a one-time or recurring gift to your parish’s Catholic Community Foundation (CCF) endowment fund. Endowments are a wonderful form of stewardship, providing lasting support that benefits the parish both now and well into the future.

At St. Ambrose, parishioners may choose to support our church, school, religious education program or parish cemetery through one of our four CCF endowment funds. Each fund provides valuable distributions year after year to their respective areas—and grows in the meantime.

Finally, while this new provision offers potential tax benefits, we remember that giving is not motivated by tax reasons alone. Giving is an act of faith, gratitude and stewardship in which we are called to give back to God the first fruits of his blessings. This provision may also be an opportunity to encourage adult children or

grandchildren to begin their own journey of stewardship with a small, recurring monthly contribution to a charity that speaks to their heart—perhaps even to their parish!

I invite you to take a moment to pray and discern how this new “above-the-line” charitable deduction might impact your stewardship. Whether through a small increase, a recurring gift or support of a particular ministry, your generosity truly matters.

Together, they allow our parishes to continue Christ’s work in our communities.

(Robin Davidson is the business manager at St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour. She also serves as a member of the Catholic Community Foundation’s Planned Giving Committee. Tax or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice. Always consult with your legal, tax or financial advisors before implementing any gift plan. For more information on the Catholic Community Foundation, visit www.archindy.org/CCF, e-mail ccf@archindy.org, or call 317-236-1482.) †

Employment

Principal

St. Michael School, Brookville, Indiana

St. Michael Catholic School is seeking a principal to lead our 200+ Pre-K-8th grade students for the 2026-2027 school year. As the administrative head, the principal has chief responsibility for the effective operation of the school following the policies and guidelines established by the Office of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Duties include, but are not limited to, professional development and leadership of faculty and responsibility of building and reinforcing a strong school culture through faith-based leadership.

To be considered for the position, a candidate must be a Catholic in good standing, possess exceptional leadership and communication skills and possess or working towards a valid administrator’s license. While qualified candidates of varying levels of experience will be considered, the ideal candidate will be seasoned, experienced, and comfortable in the positions of leadership that require confident, consistent, reasoned, and decisive judgement.

Questions, along with resumes and any other supporting documentation (i.e. cover letter, references) should be directed to:

Anne Krieger; Office Manager, Administrative and Teacher Personnel
Office of Catholic Schools
317-236-1444
akrieger@archindy.org

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Human Resources Specialist – Retirement & Benefits

Join our HR team and support retirement and benefits for employees, clergy, and retirees.

Key Responsibilities:

- Administer 403(b) enrollments, distributions, and inquiries
- Process pension calculations for lay employees and priests
- Manage clergy benefit reimbursements
- Oversee continuation of benefits and maintain HR documentation
- Support HR operations including I-9 tracking, payroll changes, and personnel files

Qualifications:

- Experience in HR or benefits administration required
- Strong communication, organization, and attention to detail
- Commitment to confidentiality and the mission of the Catholic Church

Apply Today:

Send cover letter & résumé to: James Audley, HR Generalist,
jaudley@archindy.org

Classified Directory

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For advertising rates call (317) 236-1585.

Employment

Editorial Assistant

The Criterion

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis seeks a detail-oriented and creative Editorial Assistant to support the weekly production of its newspaper, The Criterion. The position resides within the Secretariat for Communications, supporting mission-driven storytelling across print and digital platforms.

This position is ideal for someone with basic layout/design skills (InDesign or similar), strong writing, proofreading, and attention to detail, ability to meet weekly deadlines and an interest in journalism, communications, or Catholic media.

For the Full Job Description and Qualifications, visit www.archindy.org/hr/jobs/2026-01-Editorial.html or scan the QR code.



To Apply: Send résumé, cover letter, and writing/design samples to Mike Krokos, editor, – mkrokos@archindy.org.

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Payroll Specialist: Downtown Indianapolis

This full-time, hourly position will join The Central Payroll Team with payroll processing.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Processing of bi-weekly payrolls
- Assist business locations and employees with payroll related questions.
- Monitor general payroll inbox with responses, training, and troubleshooting.
- Assist accounting staff with billing and general ledger questions.
- Clerical tasks related to garnishments and employee verifications.

Education and Experience needed:

- High school diploma or equivalent is required.
- Two to Three years payroll experience
- Experience with processing payrolls using Paylocity software is a plus.
- High attention to detail and accuracy with data entry
- High level of discretion and confidentiality

For consideration, please send resume to tsteale@archindy.org

USCCB calls for adoration hours, works of mercy to celebrate America's 250th anniversary

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—As the U.S. prepares to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has encouraged Catholics to participate in initiatives, including a collective 250 Hours of Adoration and 250 Works of Mercy.

To celebrate the occasion, the initiatives encourage prayer for the unity and healing of the U.S., according to a resource guide the USCCB has published called "America 250."

The conference also announced previously that the U.S. bishops will consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in June.

In his encyclical "*Dilexit Nos*," Pope Francis "instructs us to 'nourish our lives with the strength of the Eucharist' in Holy Communion and adoration, so that we might understand Christ's love for all more deeply and live out this love ourselves," the "America 250" guide states. "Our contemplation of the Sacred Heart leads us deeper into the mystery of our salvation and deeper into our love for Christ found in the faces of our sisters and brothers—especially those most in need."

The guide says parishes can participate in 250 Hours of Adoration by offering a Holy Hour on a weekly or monthly basis leading up to the nation's July 4 anniversary. It notes that this could include continuing current practices or inviting new people to join. It suggests similar efforts to carry out 250 Works of Mercy.

It includes resources for Holy Hours for life, peace, marriage, religious liberty, vocations, an end to racism, as well as

a Sacred Heart Holy Hour.

"Consider hosting a holy hour or series of holy hours at your parish using the templates provided. ... You may have other ways to invite members of your community to spend some time in prayer for our country with Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament," the guide says. "To prepare for the Consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart, parishes can also incorporate the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus into their Holy Hour."

As examples of works of mercy, the guide encourages parishes to find ways to assist women who are facing a crisis pregnancy; donate to food pantries and clothing closets, and community beautification programs; raise money for an overseas development project; sponsor a refugee family; tutor children; or volunteer at homeless shelters.

"The seven Corporal Works of Mercy

come to us directly from the Scriptures in the Gospel of Matthew," the guide says. "Rooted in our lives of faith, the actions that Jesus calls us to in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and imprisoned, burying the dead, and giving alms are central elements of our Catholic identity."

It quotes from Pope Leo XIV's

apostolic exhortation "*Dilexi Te*," which itself draws on Pope Francis' "*Dilexit Nos*": "As we contemplate Christ's love, 'we too are inspired to be more attentive to the sufferings and needs of others, and confirmed in our efforts to share in his work of liberation as instruments for the spread of his love.'"

The guide can be found at tinyurl.com/USCCBAmerica250. †



Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minn., blesses pilgrims on July 17, 2024, at the opening of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. As the United States prepares to commemorate its 250th anniversary on July 4, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is encouraging Catholics to participate in initiatives, including a collective 250 Hours of Adoration and 250 Works of Mercy as part of anniversary preparations. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

March 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
 March 6, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Martin Church of All Saints Parish, Dearborn County
 March 10, 6 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
 March 20, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
 March 24, 6:30 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Church of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Decatur County
 March 25, 6:30 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
 March 25, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
 March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
 March 28, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
 April 1, 9-11 a.m. and 6:30-8:30 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville



A priest offers the sacrament of reconciliation to a youth attending the St. Carlo Acutis Youth Day at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Wisconsin on Oct. 18, 2025.

(OSV News photo/Sam Lucero)

Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Batesville Deanery:

Fridays 11 a.m.-noon at St. John the Evangelist Church of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Decatur County
 Wednesdays 5-6 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan
 Saturdays after 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Nicholas, Ripley County, and 4-5 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan

Bloomington Deanery

March 9, 6:30 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
 March 17, 7-9 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
 March 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer
 March 26, 6-7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
 April 1, 6-9 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo, St. John the Apostle and St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington, at St. Paul Catholic Center

Connersville Deanery

March 11, 6:30 p.m. at St. Bridget of Ireland, Liberty
 March 12, 6 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville
 March 13, 5:30 p.m. at Holy Family Church of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery

March 12, 6:30 p.m. at Holy Spirit

Indianapolis North Deanery

March 1, 2 p.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas
 March 2, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence
 March 3, 7 p.m. at St. Luke the Evangelist

Additional opportunity for reconciliation in the Indianapolis North Deanery:

March 30, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., no appointment needed

Indianapolis South Deanery

March 3, 7 a.m.-7 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
 March 11, 7 p.m. for St. Jude and St. Mark the Evangelist, at St. Mark the Evangelist
 March 12, 6:30 p.m. for Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, and Good Shepherd, at Holy Name of Jesus
 March 18, 6 p.m. at St. Barnabas
 March 26, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
 March 28, 8:30-10 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

March 3, 7 p.m. for St. Gabriel the Archangel, St. Michael the Archangel and St. Monica, at St. Monica
 March 10, 7 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg
 March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony
 March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Christopher

New Albany Deanery

March 5, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Lanesville; St. Joseph, Corydon; and St. Bernard, Frenchtown, at St. Mary (confession available in English and Spanish)
 March 11, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
 March 12, 6 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany (confession available in English and Spanish)
 March 23, 7 p.m. for St. John the Baptist, Starlight, and St. Mary, Navilleton, at St. John the Baptist
 March 25, 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
 March 25, 7 p.m. for St. Michael, Charlestown, and St. Francis Xavier, Henryville, at St. Michael (confession available in English and Spanish)
 March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville

Seymour Deanery

March 4, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus
 March 10, 6:30 p.m. for St. Mary, North Vernon, and St. Ann and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Mary
 March 19, 6:30 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, and Prince of Peace, Madison, at Prince of Peace
 March 24, 6 p.m. at Holy Trinity, Edinburgh
 March 25, 6:30 p.m. for St. Ambrose, Seymour; St. Patrick, Salem; and American Martyrs, Scottsburg, at St. Ambrose

Tell City Deanery

March 15, 2 p.m. CT at St. Paul, Tell City

Terre Haute Deanery

March 6, 1-4 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute
 March 24, 6-8 p.m. at Annunciation, Brazil
 March 25, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute
 March 25, 6 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
 March 26, 6-8 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle