

The

# Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



## Breaking new ground

Obaro Village, first Black Catholic youth camp, set for June and July, page 7.

CriterionOnline.com

May 1, 2026

Vol. LXVI, No. 29



Members of the Indiana National Guard and other rescue workers haul donated ice to a refrigerated truck parked beside St. Francis Xavier Church in Henryville on March 3, 2012. The previous day, a tornado ravaged the southern Indiana town. As the coordinator of disaster preparedness and response for the archdiocese's Catholic Charities, Jane Crady has responded to this natural disaster and many others in Indiana and around the United States in the past 20 years. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

## Jane Crady follows God's lead to give hope to people devastated by disasters

By John Shaughnessy

After all the heartbreak and devastation that Jane Crady has seen in the past 20 years, it's a wonder that this great-grandmother of four isn't looking for something more peaceful to do.

Instead, Crady still heads into the heart of natural disasters, doing everything she can to help people whose lives have been torn apart by hurricanes, tornadoes and floods.

It all started in 2006, months after one of the

worst hurricanes in American history—Hurricane Katrina—ripped through the southern states along the Gulf Coast. Believing God was calling her to help, Crady left her home in Indiana and traveled to Waveland, Miss., where the eye of the hurricane hit. She stayed there for the better part of three years, including the time she lived in a tent on a beach.

In the years since, she has dedicated her efforts in Indiana as the coordinator of disaster preparedness and response for the archdiocese's Catholic Charities.



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Jane Crady

## Americans continue to feel drawn to Pope Leo, first American pontiff, a year after election

CHICAGO (OSV News)—A year into his papacy, Pope Leo XIV is still enjoying popularity and rockstar-like fame, especially in Chicago, his hometown.



Pope Leo XIV

Beyond the pop culture interest, some of the faithful told OSV News his message of peace, dedication to the faith and outreach to young people have stood out.

After Easter morning Mass, Victoria Mendez and her family

stopped to talk by the heavy bronze doors of St. Rita of Casica Church on Chicago's South Side. The parish is run by Augustinians, the religious order and its Midwest province that formed Pope Leo.

"I think we've seen a lot of people fall in love with Catholicism, seeing that their pope is from Chicago," said 24-year-old Mendez.

While anecdotal, she said she has the sense Pope Leo is drawing interest in the faith. She has observed more youths in the Church since his election. Mendez also mentioned an uptick in conversions to the faith—not just in the U.S. but also in Europe, particularly this Easter. Though none of the reports about the bump in new Catholics have tied the pope's popularity to the numbers, several people told OSV News it may play a role.

"He's just very good with people. He's very into creating peace within different forms of Catholicism. And he's just so open-minded. And he cares about everybody," said Mendez. "You see that in all his actions and everything he says and does, and the way he reflects himself. You can tell he's really trying to bring peace on Earth."

See POPE, page 10

## An adult daughter views with awe the great gift her mom has given her parents

(In anticipation of Mother's Day on May 10, The Criterion has invited readers to share favorite stories about their moms. Here is one of our readers' stories.)

By John Shaughnessy

In the life of a family, children frequently look up to a parent, seeing someone who loves them, someone they long to be like some day.

In the life of a family, a teenager often focuses on the flaws of parents, leading the youth to seek a distance from his or her mom and dad.

Then there are the times in a family when an adult child views his or her parents in a different light again—in a way that makes them appreciate the parents and maybe even be in awe of them.

Sara Cave has found herself in that "adult child" moment as she has watched her mother, Susan Roszczyk—especially in the way that her mom

See MOM, page 2

Susan Roszczyk, left, and her daughter, Sara Cave, pose for a photo. (Submitted photo)



# Peoria diocese releases schedule of pilgrimage events for beatification of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

(OSV News)—Ahead of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen’s Sept. 24 beatification, the Diocese of Peoria, Ill., recently released a schedule of events, inviting those who plan to attend the beatification at The Dome at America’s Center in St. Louis, Mo., “go deeper” and “transform your trip into a sacred journey.”

“The Sheen Pilgrimage is a spiritual experience centered around prayer, reflection and celebration,” the diocese said. “Beginning in Peoria, Ill., on September 15, this pilgrimage includes the anniversary of Sheen’s ordination, the historic beatification Mass, and culminates in celebratory Masses and the Sheen Award Gala.”

The schedule begins with a nine-day novena of holy hours at 7 p.m. every evening at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Peoria from Sept. 15-23, and a Sunday, Sept. 20, anniversary Mass of Sheen’s ordination at the cathedral at 3 p.m., which requires tickets.

The festivities will continue in St. Louis with Vespers at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis at 5 p.m. on Sept. 23, also requiring tickets.

On the day of the beatification, there

will be an expo for attendees at The Dome at America’s Center from 8 a.m.-6 p.m., adoration and confession available at 9 a.m., followed at 10 a.m. by a pre-Mass show.

“With anticipation of a great number of people wanting to participate, we chose [The Dome] because of availability, being indoors and the close proximity to the Diocese of Peoria,” Bishop Louis Tylka of Peoria said on March 25 when details of the beatification were announced.

The beatification Mass will take place at 2 p.m. on Sept. 24. From 4-6 p.m., a relic of Archbishop Sheen will be presented for veneration.

Masses of Thanksgiving and various parish talks will take place in the Diocese of Peoria on Sept. 25, and the Sheen Award Gala, a ticketed event, will get underway at 6 p.m. in the Peoria Civic Center.

Masses of Thanksgiving, including a Byzantine Rite Mass of Thanksgiving, will also be celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Peoria on Sept. 26.

The diocese has more information and tickets for the events that require them at [celebratesheen.com](http://celebratesheen.com). †



## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

May 1–12, 2026

**May 1 – 1:30 p.m. CDT**  
Episcopal ordination and installation of Bishop Godfrey Mullen, O.S.B., at the Cathedral of St. Peter, Belleville, Ill.

**May 2 – 10 a.m.**  
Commencement Mass at Marian University, Indianapolis

**May 2 – 1:30 p.m.**  
Commencement ceremony at Marian University

**May 4 – Noon**  
Pastoral Planning Committee lunch gathering, rectory of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

**May 5 – 8 a.m.**  
Indiana Bishops and Major Superiors meeting at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis

**May 5 – 3:30 p.m.**  
Indiana Provincial Bishops’ meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

**May 6 – 9 a.m.**  
Indiana Catholic Conference Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

**May 7 – 10 a.m.**  
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

**May 9 – 2 p.m.**  
Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Bartholomew Parish, Columbus, and Prince of Peace Parish, Madison, at St. Bartholomew Church

**May 12 – 10:30 a.m.**  
Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

**May 12 – 2 p.m.**  
Virtual National Eucharistic Congress Board of Directors meeting

**May 12 – 6:30 p.m.**  
CYO Volunteer Awards ceremony at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

# Pope Leo advances sainthood causes, including nun who served in Missouri

(OSV News)—Pope Leo XIV issued decrees advancing the sainthood causes of five candidates, including a Dutch nun who served in St. Louis in the early 20th century.

During a meeting on April 27 with Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, the pope signed a decree recognizing the heroic virtues of Carmelite Sister Teresa of the Most Holy Trinity, born Teresa Ysseldijk.

Born in the Netherlands in 1897, she entered the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus at age 19 and professed her

vows in 1919. Eager to join her missionary sisters, the young nun traveled that same year to the United States.

However, she fell ill and was diagnosed with a severe kidney disease. Despite her illness, she continued to serve at her convent in St. Charles, Mo. According to her congregation’s website, Sister Teresa “wanted to serve God in the order, working in silent union with him.

“When work was no longer possible, she bore her pain silently, hidden from the world,” the congregation said. She died on March 10, 1926, at age 28, after serving

in the U.S. for about six years.

The other decrees approved by Pope Leo recognized:

—The martyrdom of Spanish Father Emanuele Berenguer Clusella, Montfort Brother of St. Gabriel Estanislao Ortega Garcia and 48 companions, killed “in hatred of the faith” in 1936 during the Spanish Civil War.

—The offering of life of Spanish missionary Pedro Manual Salado, a lay member of the Hogar de Nazaret home for abandoned children and adults with disabilities in Honduras, who died in

2012 in Esmeraldas, Ecuador, when he collapsed after rescuing seven children drowning at sea.

—The heroic virtues of Mother Maria Eletta di Gesù, an Italian Discalced Carmelite, who was born in Terni, Italy, in 1605 and died in Prague in what is now the Czech Republic in 1663.

—The heroic virtues of Italian Sister Maria Raffaella De Giovanna, founder of the Congregation of the Tertiary Minim Sisters of Saint Francis of Paola. She was born in Genova in 1870 and died there in 1933. †

## MOM

continued from page 1

has taken care of her elderly parents.

“The week after Christmas, after a brief illness, my mother said goodbye to her 95-year-old father. The same week, we moved my mom’s 93-year-old mother to a memory care facility,” recalls Cave, a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. “The transition was a whirlwind, a grueling one for all of us, but especially for my mom.”

In a way, Roszczyk’s care and involvement in those two heartbreaking moments mirrored the extra measure of love she has given her parents ever since they moved from Ohio to Indiana in 2000, after the couple lost their only son unexpectedly, Cave notes.

“My mother was the sole remaining sibling, so a move to be closer to family, myself included, seemed like an obvious

one, certainly one that provided hope for a happy future,” Cave shares. “But over the years, it came with a cascade of responsibilities that fell squarely on the shoulders of my mom.

“Beyond the duty of comforting aging, grieving parents was a mélange of cancer diagnoses, a triple bypass surgery, a heart valve replacement, [and] a dementia diagnosis, among other things.”

There were also the everyday requests—ranging from help with grocery shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic to assistance with the remote control for the television.

And Cave saw her mom continually rise to the occasion for her parents.

“One hundred percent of the time, my mother answered the phone, showed up, listened patiently, and served quietly and selflessly. Somewhere along the way, she became their mother. On the rare occasion that I could sense her frustration, she’d remind us both that she was blessed to

have both parents still alive and married for over 70 years.

“She’d make plans, even schedule trips, only to see them unravel with each new bump in the road. She never hesitated to put their needs ahead of her own desires, just as every good mother does. No doubt, there had to have been moments of exasperation, isolation and invisibility.”

As a parent of nine children herself with her husband Eric, Cave knows those feelings.

“I’ve felt those waves of emotion as well as anyone,” she notes. “From my perspective, I could see the burden of providing increasing support with day-to-day tasks while still preserving the dignity and honor that elderly adults, especially parents, deserve.”

Dignity and honor. Cave has seen how her mom—who is also a member of St. Bartholomew Parish—has given her parents those two gifts. Cave also knows

that her mother has lived those two gifts.

“The commitment, the patience, the generosity and the compassion required seems other worldly,” Cave says about a child caring for a parent. “And to know that a ‘win’ is a peaceful death for the two who brought you into the world, that kind of selflessness is admirable but also heart wrenching.”

As a child, Cave knew she was loved by her mom. She longed to be like her, too. She still does.

“I am thankful for my mom for so many reasons. But this year, I’m especially grateful for the ways in which I’ve watched her mother in this season, caring beautifully for her parents as their earthly lives come to an end.

“If God allows me the opportunity to care for my own mom someday, I can only pray I’ll have the same strength and tender care that my mom has shown. At least I can say that I will have had a stellar example of it.” †



**Phone Numbers:**  
Main office..... 317-236-1570  
Advertising..... 317-236-1585  
Circulation / Subscriptions ... 317-236-1425

**Price:** \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

**Postmaster:**  
Send address changes to *The Criterion*,  
1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

**Web site:** [www.CriterionOnline.com](http://www.CriterionOnline.com)

**E-mail:** [criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org)

Published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June to August (*summer schedule*). Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.  
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*The Criterion* (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June-Aug.

1400 N. Meridian St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
317-236-1570  
[criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org)

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# Deacon Cord one of 42 sharing stories in traveling People of Hope exhibit

By Natalie Hoefer

Deacon John Cord recalls the evening during a prayer service in a county jail when a woman “who looked far too young” to be incarcerated asked for prayers her baby, to whom she’d given birth two weeks prior at the jail.

“She was arrested for stealing the car seat Child Protective Services told her she would need to take the baby home,” he says.

She surrendered her newborn to the baby’s father and to her 16-year-old brother and had heard nothing from them since. Deacon Cord and others searched for her family the next day, to no avail.

That evening, as he and a team from Catholic Charities ministered to those in a homeless encampment, he says a “teenage boy carrying a dirty blanket approached us asking for skim milk ... ‘because that’s what babies drink.’”

The story that follows is one of hope made possible by everyday people helping those on the margins.

It is one of 42 experiences chosen from hundreds of nationwide submissions to be shared as short videos in Catholic Charities USA’s new People of Hope traveling exhibit.

The exhibit will tour primarily the eastern portion of the country in 2026, with a stop in Louisville, Ky., on May 14-16 (see below for more details). It will tour western states in 2027, and places missed or that want a repeat visit in 2028.

There will most likely be one or more stops in central and southern Indiana in 2027, although the schedule for that year has not been announced yet, says Kevin Brennan, vice president of communications for Catholic Charities USA.

The traveling exhibit is made possible by a \$5 million grant from the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment, Inc., through its National Storytelling Initiative on Christian Faith and Life.

“They approached us about applying for the grant,” says Brennan. “We put our heads together about how we could share inspiring stories of faith and came up with the idea for the traveling exhibit.”

A call was sent out to Catholic Charities offices throughout the country seeking short video clips of employees and volunteers sharing stories of hope brought about by serving those in need.

Deacon Cord recalls Dana Stone, then-archdiocesan director of appeals and creative services, asking him to stop by her office last summer to “talk about some of the interesting people I’d encountered in prison ministry,” he says.

“She’d done that before, so I didn’t think anything of it,” adds Deacon Cord, who was archdiocesan coordinator of Catholic Charities-Corrections Ministries at the time. “So, she started recording with her cell phone, and we chatted for about 30 to 40 minutes.”

One of the stories he shared was about the young mother and her baby. As it turns out, Stone clipped that story from the video and submitted it to Catholic Charities USA for possible inclusion in the People of Hope traveling exhibit.

“We chose this story because Deacon John captured and demonstrated how transformative Correction Ministry can be,” says David Bethuram, archdiocesan



Kevin Brennan



In this video screenshot, Deacon John Cord shares a story of providing hope by helping others. His story was one of 42 selected from hundreds of nationwide submissions to be featured in Catholic Charities USA’s traveling People of Hope exhibit.

executive director of Catholic Charities. “It reminds people of the importance of authentic encounter and our call to love and accompany those in need.”

Brennan and others at Catholic Charities USA agreed.

The organization flew Deacon Cord—who retired from his archdiocesan role at the end of 2025 but still serves in St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour—his wife Gwen and the other selected storytellers and their spouses, all expenses paid, to its headquarters in Washington to make professional videos for the exhibit.

The “museum of hope” is housed in a retrofitted tractor-trailer that holds about 30 visitors at a time, says Brennan.

“Our hope is that people walk away inspired to serve others as we’re called to do by Christ, bringing hope by neighbors helping neighbors,” he adds.

Deacon Cord’s wishes are similar.

“I hope that this tour brings people to a much wider understanding of what it is to be called a Christian,” he says. “It’s about our vertical relationship with Christ on the cross, [like] when Jesus added to the numbers [of the Church] every day, and they reached out to people and invited them to the faith.”

“That’s the outstretched arms of Jesus Christ, and that’s what this tour is showing—the work of Jesus with arms outstretched, working for others through others.”

(The People of Hope exhibit can be seen in Louisville at Waterfront Park under the Big Four Bridge on May 14-16. The event is free and open to the public from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday. For more information about the exhibit and its tour stops, go to [peopleofhope.us](http://peopleofhope.us).) †

## Pope Leo’s prayer intentions for May

- **That everyone might have food**—Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food.

See Pope Leo’s monthly intentions at [archindy.org/popessintentions](http://archindy.org/popessintentions).

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# The Criterion

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## Editorial

# Draw closer to the Blessed Mother in May

In the Catholic Church, the month of May is traditionally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary as a time of special devotion honoring her unique role in salvation history and her motherly intercession for us, her faithful children.

This particular practice reflects the Church's longstanding veneration of Mary which began in the earliest days of Christian experience and grew through centuries of theological reflection, liturgy and popular piety.

Marian feasts are spread throughout the Church's liturgical calendar, and there is no shortage of opportunities to honor Mary as the Mother of God (*Theotokos* in Greek) and our mother.

The month of May, being in springtime, symbolizes new life and renewal. This makes May a fitting month for Marian devotion, which traditionally includes special prayers, the rosary, processions and other popular devotions aimed at our sanctification and drawing us closer to Christ through Mary's maternal guidance.

If we take this monthlong dedication to Mary seriously, we can intensify our relationship with Mary, who leads us to her Son and comforts us like a mother, nurturing our spiritual life with gentleness and healing. From the beginning of Christian history, the followers of Jesus Christ have believed that Mary points the way to her Son and that by drawing closer to her we can be united more intimately with Jesus.

Mary's unique role as a loving mother who intercedes with God on behalf of all her children has encouraged many who are devoted to Mary—notably Pope St. John Paul II—to call her “Mediatrice,” a title that suggests Mary participates in the distribution of divine graces on behalf of the whole Church drawing all to her Son, the one Mediator between God and man.

Although sacred Scripture does not explicitly call Mary “Mediatrice,” the Church understands her mediation in a subordinate and participatory sense to the sole mediation of Christ.

By cooperating in a unique way with Christ's redemptive work, Mary obtains grace for the Church; this role is spiritually effective and ongoing, especially as she continues to intercede for the Church after her Assumption into heaven.

Theologically, Mary is seen as a participant in the distribution of divine grace because she is mother of the

incarnate Word and Mother of the Church, making her a central channel through whom grace is dispensed. She is closely bonded with her Son and participates uniquely in the communion of saints on Earth. The Church portrays Mary as the “woman clothed with the sun,” symbolizing the divine radiance who helps us resist temptation, leads us closer to Christ and consoles us like a mother (Rev 12:1).

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary does not require us to explain or defend complex theological concepts. It simply means that we recognize in Mary an extraordinary degree of holiness. She is, after all, “full of grace” (Lk 1:28). And we honor her by making a sincere effort to follow her example saying, as Mary did, “Let it be done to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38).

Intimacy with Mary, our mother, means sharing with her our hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, successes and failures, so that she can comfort us, encourage us and lead us to her Son.

Mary shows us how to find Jesus, especially when we have lost our way. And when we have found him, Mary tells us the same thing she said to the servants at the wedding feast in Cana: “Do whatever he tells you” (Jn 2:5).

Praying the rosary in May—and anytime—deepens our faith by allowing us to make a contemplative journey into the mysteries of Christ's life through Mary's motherly presence, fostering peace, spiritual consolation, moral renewal and a closer relationship with Christ and the Church.

In addition, the fruitful practice of praying the rosary during May enhances our broader understanding of Marian spirituality, emphasizing Mary's role as our mother, a model of purity, and our intercessor and queen in God's plan of salvation.

The holy rosary grounds us in the lived reality of Jesus' life and in Mary's unique participation in it, providing a lifetime of contemplative opportunity that can enrich daily spiritual life.

The Church invites us in the month of May to increase our devotion to Mary, and so to grow in holiness. Let's take advantage of this great gift. Let's turn to Mary by seeking out the nearest Marian shrine, by inviting our Blessed Mother to walk with us through the 31 days of this special month, and, above all, by frequently praying the rosary.

—Daniel Conway



(OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

Be Our Guest/Greg Erlandson

## Popes are prophets of peace

“War is not always inevitable. It is always a defeat for humanity. International law, honest dialogue,



solidarity between states, the noble exercise of diplomacy: These are methods worthy of individuals and nations in resolving their differences. ... War is never just another means that one can choose to

employ for settling differences between nations.”

With those words, a pope sought to deter a war initiated by the United States in the Middle East. The pope was St. John Paul II, and the quagmire he sought to prevent was the second Gulf War begun by President George W. Bush, with the support of Australia, Poland and the United Kingdom, in 2003. John Paul went to great lengths in a futile effort to prevent that war, even sending his personal emissary to the White House to argue his case.

Fast forward to 2026, and another pope again made a similar plea that any war is a defeat for humanity.

“I would simply say, once again, what I said in the ‘*Urbi et Orbi*’ message on [Easter] Sunday: asking all people of goodwill to search, always, for peace and not violence; to reject war, especially a war which many people have said is an unjust war, which is continuing to escalate and which is not resolving anything,” Pope Leo XIV said on April 7.

Among other things, the pope was responding to the rapidly escalating attack on Iran by U.S. and Israeli forces. The war was accompanied by increasingly bellicose rhetoric.

When President Donald J. Trump made profane threats to destroy Iranian civilization by wiping out such civilian infrastructure as power plants, water treatment plants and bridges, Pope Leo XIV rebuked those comments as “a threat against the entire people of Iran” and “truly unacceptable.”

Media outlets around the globe, for understandable reasons, have focused on the world's two most prominent Americans in such direct conflict. Subsequent statements by President

Trump attacking Pope Leo in very personal terms only fed the controversy.

But for Catholics, it is important to remember that this is not the first time that a pope has challenged a president and leaders of other nations who wage unjust wars. Not as a politician but as a spiritual leader, the pope speaks from the perspective of the Church's centuries of thought regarding war and its consequences.

In the case of the Iraq war, early claims of victory by President Bush (“Mission Accomplished”) proved premature. The reasons used to justify the war (weapons of mass destruction) turned out to be erroneous, and the cost in terms of U.S. and Iraqi lives was huge. We continue to live with the damage to our own soldiers and their families. The social upheaval in Iraq gave rise to ISIS and further regional conflict. Meanwhile, the country's Christian minority has shrunk almost to the vanishing point.

It was, in short, a defeat for humanity in multiple ways.

It is too soon to tell all the evils that will be unleashed by the U.S. and Israeli war on Iran. The excuses for launching the war are many but, from a moral point of view, unsatisfying. As Pope Leo's comments implied, the attack does not conform to the standards of Catholic teaching about just wars, including just and clear cause, a last resort, reasonable outcome of success and proportionality.

American Catholics have been politically divided for some time. Often one's support for, or opposition to, the war is likely to have more to do with one's political stance than with a careful consideration of the pope's words and Church teaching. However, the president's policies and his verbal attacks on the pope have had one unintended consequence: U.S. Catholic leadership is more unified and less polarized than it has been in many years as it rallies around Pope Leo.

Let us hope that it has a similarly unifying effect on Catholics in the pews.

(Greg Erlandson is an award-winning Catholic publisher, editor and journalist whose column appears monthly at OSV News. Follow him on X @GregErlandson.) †

## Letter to the Editor

### Reader: Published opinions should reflect the depth, balance and reverence that Catholic teaching deserves

I am writing in response to the recent letter with the headline “Stop weaponizing God's name for political gain, reader says.” As a practicing Catholic, I found the letter troubling—not because of its concern about reverence for God's name, but because of how it presents that concern.

The letter reduces a serious commandment to a narrow and politicized interpretation, and in doing so, does not reflect the fullness of Catholic teaching.

In Catholicism, taking the Lord's name in vain is a matter of personal reverence, humility and one's relationship with God. It is not something that can be so easily applied as a blanket judgment on others, particularly in the public sphere.

I agree that God's name should never be used carelessly or for self-serving purposes. However, publishing a letter that frames this issue primarily through a political lens risks deepening division and misunderstanding rather than fostering thoughtful reflection.

Quite frankly, I am tired of seeing my faith drawn into political commentary in ways that feel reductive and, at times,

misrepresentative. Not every concern of faith needs to be expressed through the filter of politics, and doing so can diminish the sacredness of what is being discussed.

I respectfully suggest that greater care be taken to ensure that published opinions reflect the depth, balance and reverence that Catholic teaching deserves.

Charles Ringle  
Jeffersonville

## Letters Policy

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## ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



# Christ the Cornerstone

## In life and work, St. Joseph built up family and faith

Today is May 1, the Memorial of St. Joseph the Worker. The Church proposes to us today the common, simple and human virtues of the foster father of Jesus to help us understand the fundamental Catholic social teaching about the dignity of every human person. We are all equal in the eyes of God regardless of where we came from, who our ancestors were, what we possess or what we have accomplished in the world's estimation.

Human dignity is not earned. It is God-given. This is what makes human rights universal: Every person has been created in the image and likeness of God, and no human being is more deserving of dignity and respect than anyone else. As children of God, and brothers and sisters to each other, we are all equally blessed with the same rights and responsibilities.

It is easy to lose sight of this fundamental truth. We human beings constantly make distinctions that are totally irrelevant to God. We judge others by the color of their skin, by their education (or lack of it), by their social status and/or political affiliation. We look down on strangers, and we vilify our enemies. We welcome and show respect for those who look, talk

and think the way we do, and we are quick to dismiss anyone who is different from us.

This narrow-mindedness is part of the human condition, the result of original sin. It's a dysfunction that makes living and working together much more difficult than it should be. That's why followers of Jesus Christ must undergo a profound conversion of mind and heart. Christians must surrender their racist, nativist, elitist, and sexist prejudices and accept that all God's children are equal to one another.

The feast of St. Joseph the Worker is deeply connected to Catholic social teaching's defense of the dignity of work as a fundamental part of the dignity of every human life. Work is an intrinsic and dignified part of human life, reflecting the use of God-given gifts, time and talents to produce goods and services which sustain the community. This principle is rooted in biblical and Church tradition, encompassing Old Testament teaching, Jesus' ministry, St. Paul's writing and the Church's magisterium. Work is not merely a means to material ends but an integral part of life's purpose, incorporating both temporal and

spiritual dimensions (*Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 261-266).

The feast of St. Joseph the Worker highlights Joseph's role as a faithful laborer or craftsman who lived and worked in humility and obedience, embodying the dignity and sanctity that the Church attributes to work. The Church honors him precisely because he exemplifies the sanctifying value of daily labor and the integration of work with family and faith.

Given St. Joseph's role as a worker and protector of the Holy Family, this memorial feast powerfully symbolizes the intrinsic value of human labor. Work is meant to build up the family and society, and ultimately to glorify God. This feast situates the dignity of human labor within the broader Catholic commitment to family, human dignity, social justice and the common good.

In fact, it is by working together that people who are different from one another discover that they are not so different after all. Good, honest work unites people as individuals and as communities. This is why the Church urges us to look beyond our differences to the universal truth represented by

one who in the words of Pope St. John Paul II was recognized as a just man, a husband and father, and a faithful worker:

*Work was the daily expression of love in the life of the Family of Nazareth. The Gospel specifies the kind of work Joseph did in order to support his family: he was a carpenter. This simple word sums up Joseph's entire life. For Jesus, these were hidden years, the years to which Luke refers after recounting the episode that occurred in the Temple: "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them" (Lk 2:51). This "submission" or obedience of Jesus in the house of Nazareth should be understood as a sharing in the work of Joseph. Having learned the work of his presumed father, he was known as "the carpenter's son." At the workbench where he plied his trade together with Jesus, Joseph brought human work closer to the mystery of the Redemption. ("Redemptoris Custos," #22).*

Today as we venerate the simple dignity of St. Joseph the Worker, let's keep in mind that he symbolizes every human person who in his or her work builds up the family and society, giving glory and praise to God. †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## Con su vida y obra, san José edificó la familia y la fe

Hoy es 1 de mayo, memorial de san José Obrero. La Iglesia nos recuerda hoy las virtudes comunes, sencillas y humanas del padre putativo de Jesús para ayudarnos a comprender la doctrina social católica fundamental sobre la dignidad de toda persona humana. Todos somos iguales a los ojos de Dios, independientemente de dónde vengamos, de quiénes hayan sido nuestros antepasados, de lo que poseamos o de lo que hayamos logrado a juicio del mundo.

La dignidad humana no se gana; es un don de Dios. Esto es lo que hace que los derechos humanos sean universales: cada persona ha sido creada a imagen y semejanza de Dios, y ningún ser humano merece más dignidad y respeto que otro. Como hijos de Dios y hermanos unos de otros, todos somos igualmente bendecidos con los mismos derechos y responsabilidades.

Es fácil perder de vista esta verdad fundamental. Los seres humanos hacemos constantemente distinciones que son totalmente irrelevantes para Dios. Juzgamos a los demás por el color de su piel, por su educación (o falta de ella), por su condición social o su afiliación política. Menospreciamos a los desconocidos y desprestigiamos a nuestros enemigos. Acogemos y respetamos a quienes se nos parecen,

hablan y piensan como nosotros, y nos apresuramos a rechazar a quienes son diferentes.

Esta estrechez de mente forma parte de la condición humana, producto del pecado original. Es un desorden que hace que la convivencia y el trabajo en común resulten mucho más difíciles de lo que deberían. Por eso, los seguidores de Jesucristo deben someterse a una profunda conversión de mente y corazón. Los cristianos deben renunciar a sus prejuicios racistas, xenófobos, elitistas y sexistas y aceptar que todos los hijos de Dios son iguales entre sí.

La fiesta de san José Obrero está profundamente vinculada a la doctrina social católica y su defensa de la dignidad del trabajo como elemento fundamental de la dignidad de toda persona. El trabajo es una dimensión intrínseca y digna de la vida humana que refleja el empleo de los dones, el tiempo y los talentos recibidos de Dios para producir bienes y servicios al servicio de la comunidad. Este principio tiene sus raíces en la tradición bíblica y eclesial, que abarca la enseñanza del Antiguo Testamento, el ministerio de Jesús, los escritos de san Pablo y el magisterio de la Iglesia. El trabajo no es un mero medio para alcanzar fines materiales, sino parte integrante de la finalidad

de la vida, que incorpora dimensiones temporales y espirituales (*Compendio del Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*, 261-266).

La fiesta de san José Obrero destaca el papel de José como artesano fiel que vivió y trabajó con humildad y obediencia, encarnando la dignidad y santidad que la Iglesia atribuye al trabajo. La Iglesia lo honra precisamente porque ejemplifica el valor santificador del trabajo diario y la integración del trabajo con la familia y la fe.

Dado el papel de san José como trabajador y protector de la Sagrada Familia, esta memoria litúrgica simboliza con fuerza el valor intrínseco del trabajo humano. El trabajo está destinado a construir la familia y la sociedad y, en última instancia, a glorificar a Dios. Esta fiesta sitúa la dignidad del trabajo humano dentro del compromiso católico más amplio con la familia, la dignidad humana, la justicia social y el bien común.

De hecho, es trabajando juntos como quienes son distintos descubren que, al fin y al cabo, no lo son tanto. El trabajo bueno y honrado une a las personas tanto en lo individual como en lo comunitario. Por eso la Iglesia nos exhorta a mirar más allá de nuestras diferencias, hacia la verdad

universal representada por quien, en palabras del papa san Juan Pablo II, fue reconocido como un hombre justo, esposo y padre, y un trabajador fiel:

*Expresión cotidiana de este amor en la vida de la Familia de Nazaret es el trabajo. El texto evangélico precisa el tipo de trabajo con el que José trataba de asegurar el mantenimiento de la Familia: el de carpintero. Esta simple palabra abarca toda la vida de José. Para Jesús éstos son los años de la vida escondida, de la que habla el evangelista tras el episodio ocurrido en el templo: "Bajó con ellos y vino a Nazaret, y vivía sujeto a ellos" (Lc 2:51). Esta "sumisión," es decir, la obediencia de Jesús en la casa de Nazaret, es entendida también como participación en el trabajo de José. El que era llamado el "hijo del carpintero" había aprendido el trabajo de su "padre" putativo. [...] Gracias a su banco de trabajo sobre el que ejercía su profesión con Jesús, José acercó el trabajo humano al misterio de la redención. ("Redemptoris Custos," #22).*

Hoy, al venerar la sencilla dignidad de san José Obrero, tengamos presente que simboliza a toda persona humana que, con su trabajo, construye la familia y la sociedad, dando gloria y alabanza a Dios. †

# Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/events](http://www.archindy.org/events).

## Every Wednesday:

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](mailto:jjdav887@gmail.com)

## May 5

Holy Trinity Cemetery, Outdoor Pavillion, 2473 Green Valley Road, New Albany. **Burial Service for babies miscarried or stillborn at local hospital**, 4 p.m., all are welcome. Information: MaryBeth Schmidt, 812-944-0417, [cemetery@stmarysna.org](mailto:cemetery@stmarysna.org).

## May 6, June 3

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30-8:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—ages 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday 1 p.m. lunch events. Information: 317-796-8605.

## May 7-9

St. Ann Parish, 6350 S. Mooresville Road, Indianapolis. **Church Festival**, Thurs. 5-10 p.m., Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. noon-11 p.m., rides, food, activities, casino, beer garden, free admission. Information: 317-821-2909, [admin@stannindy.org](mailto:admin@stannindy.org).

## May 9

White Violet Center, Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Lunch and Learn: Native and Invasives of Indiana Woods**, noon-3 p.m., lunch followed by guided hike with forester Stuart Haney, \$40. Information: [Events.SistersofProvidence.org](http://Events.SistersofProvidence.org), 812-535-2932, [lrobinette@spsmw.org](mailto:lrobinette@spsmw.org).

## May 15

Liter House, 5301 Winthrop Ave. Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, IMMI chief executive officer Larry Gray and senior vice president of mission Jon Tice presenting “Your Work Matters to God,” \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. May 12. Information, registration: [cutt.ly/CBE-Reg](http://cutt.ly/CBE-Reg).

## May 16

St. Roch Parish, 3600 S. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. **Mayfest: A Taste of the Southside Festival**, 2-11 p.m., features Mexican, Irish, German, Italian and American cuisines, bounce houses, games, beer garden, food prices vary, free admission. Information: 317-784-1763, [church@strochindy.org](mailto:church@strochindy.org).

St. Anthony of Padua Parish, 316 N. Sherwood Ave., Clarksville. **Living Rosary**, 2 p.m., rosary procession around the church (weather

permitting), free. Information: 812-282-2290, [a.macaluso@stanthony-clarksville.org](mailto:a.macaluso@stanthony-clarksville.org).

## May 18, June 15

**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](http://tinyurl.com/SrTheaPrayerGrp). Information: [iowhosomaddox@archindy.org](mailto:iowhosomaddox@archindy.org), 317-261-3381.

## May 22-24

Carmelite Monastery, 59 Allendale, Terre Haute. **Monastic Experience Weekend**, 3 p.m. Fri.-3 p.m. Sun., vocation discernment retreat for women ages 18-40, includes accommodations and meals, free. Information: 812-299-1410, ext. 214, [vocations@heartssawake.org](mailto:vocations@heartssawake.org).

## May 28-30

St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8155 Oaklondon Road, Indianapolis. **St. Simon Festival**, Thurs. 5-11 p.m., Fri. 5 p.m.-midnight, Sat. 3 p.m.-midnight; food, beer garden, games, Vegas room, rides, \$20 per family. Information: 317-826-6000, [chair@saintsimonfestival.com](mailto:chair@saintsimonfestival.com).

## May 29-30

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **International Festival**, 5 p.m.-midnight, food, amusement rides, carnival games, \$5,000 raffle,

live music, sponsor booths, evangelization station, free admission. Information: 317-291-7014, [eesparza@stgabrielindy.org](mailto:eesparza@stgabrielindy.org).

## May 29-31

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Summerfest 2026**, Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. 3-11 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., \$4,000 raffle, Bingo Fri. and Sat., Monte Carlo Fri., rides, silent auction, live entertainment, food, beer, wine, games for kids and adults, \$10 admission for \$10 in event coupons. Information: 317-357-8352 ext. 102, [ifsummerfest@littleflowerparish.org](mailto:ifsummerfest@littleflowerparish.org).

## June 4-6

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Summer Festival**, Thurs 5-11 p.m., Fri. 5 p.m.-midnight, Sat. 2 p.m.-midnight; rides, games, Monte Carlo, bingo, cake wheel, grand raffle, quilt raffle, children’s games, live music, beer tent, fair food, free

admission. Information: 317-888-2861, [info@olgreenwood.org](mailto:info@olgreenwood.org).

## June 7

St. Paul Parish, 824 Jefferson St., Tell City. **Parish Picnic**, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. CT, pulled pork or BBQ chicken dinners \$12, live music and live raffle, free admission. Information: 812-547-7994, [stpaulch@psci.net](mailto:stpaulch@psci.net).

## June 11-13

St. Anthony Parish, 337 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis. **Crossroads of America Festival**, 4-11 p.m., carnival rides, food, live entertainment, raffle, free admission. Information: 317-742-0103, [sandra@saintanthonyindy.org](mailto:sandra@saintanthonyindy.org).

## June 12-13

St. Mary Parish, 2500 St. Mary Dr., Lanesville. **Festville on the Hill**, Fri. 5:30-9 p.m., Sat. 4-10 p.m., fried chicken dinner, raffles, games for all ages, beer and wine garden, live music from Smokin’ Joe and Midnight Radio, fireworks, free admission and parking.

Information: 812-952-2853 ext. 24, [makayla.mccarty@catholic-community.org](mailto:makayla.mccarty@catholic-community.org).

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Italian Street Festival**, 5-11 p.m., Marian procession Sat. 6:45 p.m. prior to 7 p.m. Mass, Italian food, drinks, live entertainment, free admission and parking. Information: [indyitalianfest.org](http://indyitalianfest.org), 317-636-4478, [info@holyroaryindy.org](mailto:info@holyroaryindy.org).

## June 20

Griffin Bike Park, 10700 Bono Road, Terre Haute. **Quick Quack 5K Trail Run**, 6:30-7:30 a.m. registration, 8 a.m. race, benefitting Catholic Charities Terre Haute, chip timing, refreshments, register by June 12 for T-shirt, \$25 through April 19, \$30 April 20-June 19, \$35 race day, team discount available: register with a team of four to receive \$5 off per participant. Information, registration: [tinyurl.com/quickquack26](http://tinyurl.com/quickquack26). †

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to [www.archindy.org/events/submission](http://www.archindy.org/events/submission), or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Ann Lewis, or by fax at 317-236-1593.

## Events in May mark Oldenburg Franciscan Sisters’ 175th anniversary

Two events will be held in May as part of the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of St. Francis in Oldenburg.

First, all are invited to take a self-guided tour of the motherhouse and grounds at 22143 Main St., in Oldenburg, from 2-4:30 p.m. on May 16.

Guests are invited to explore parts of the convent’s history dating back to the 1850’s and to learn about foundress Mother Theresa Hackelmeier.

A highlight of the tour is the Immaculate Conception chapel. A timeline of the history of the Sisters of St. Francis will be on display that traces their remarkable journey. Golf-cart tours of the cemetery and Memorial Chapel will also be available. Sisters will be available throughout the tour to answer

questions and engage in conversation, and light refreshments will be served in the Sisters’ dining room.

For more information, call 812-934-2475.

Second, a Mass honoring Sisters who have served in parishes and schools in the Indianapolis area will be celebrated at Bishop Chartrand Chapel at Marian University, 3200 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis, at 2 p.m. on May 31. All are invited.

A reception will follow the Mass. The reception is free, but space is limited and reservations are required by May 13. To register, contact Grace Vanderbur at [grace.vanderbur@oldenburgfranciscans.org](mailto:grace.vanderbur@oldenburgfranciscans.org) or 812-933-6495. †

## Retreat at Saint Meinrad on May 27 will focus on stories of women in the Church

A retreat called “Heart on Fire” will take place at the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., in St. Meinrad, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. CT on May 27.

The retreat will focus on the stories of women in the Church who have bravely and boldly stood in the fire of the Holy Spirit, and can enrich the lives of people today. During the retreat, Jane Feliz Rush, who earned a master’s degree in theology from Saint Meinrad

Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, will consider saints, mystics, doctors of the Church and women who serve as models today.

The cost of the retreat is \$75, which includes lunch. Overnight accommodations are available at \$75 for a single-bed room or \$150 for a double-bed room.

For more information or to register, go to [saintmeinrad.org/retreats](http://saintmeinrad.org/retreats) or call 812-357-6611. †

## Wedding Anniversaries

**WAYNE AND HELEN (RIPBERGER) DRAKE**, members of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Cambridge City, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on May 5.

The couple was married in St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church in Cambridge City on May 5, 1956.

They have four children: Donna Wallace, Darrell, David and Dean Drake.

The couple also has eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

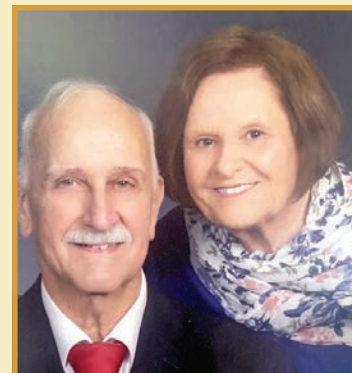


**RICHARD AND PENNY (BISESI) MOSS**, members of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on May 6.

The couple was married on May 6, 1966.

They have three children: Karianne Brown, Amy Duke and Courtney Moss-White.

The couple also has nine grandchildren.



**PAUL AND NANCY (STINEBUCK) RIEHLE**, members of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on May 1.

The couple was married in Assumption Church in Mount Healthy, Ohio, on May 1, 1976.

They have two children: Stacie Donnelly and Kevin Riehle.

The couple also has three grandchildren.

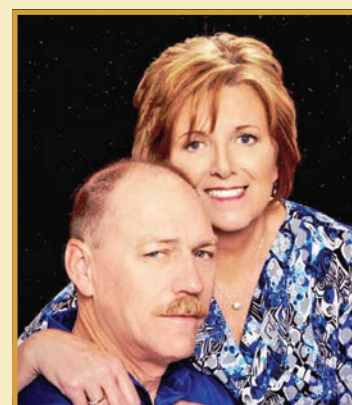


**ROGER AND KIMBERLY (SAULMAN) STEWART**, members of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 30.

The couple was married in St. Joseph Church in Corydon on April 30, 1976.

They have three children: Jennifer Wilke, Jeremy and Joshua Stewart.

The couple also has six grandchildren.



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

# Obaro Village, first Black Catholic youth camp, set for June and July

By Natalie Hoefer

It's been less than a year since Irorobeje Crystal Owghoso-Maddox was hired as archdiocesan coordinator of Black Catholic Ministry, and already she is breaking new ground with the archdiocese's first Black Catholic summer youth academy in June and July.

The program, designed for students entering fifth through ninth grades, is called Obaro Village.

"Obaro means 'future' in the Urhobo language of Nigeria," explains Owghoso-Maddox, whose parents are natives of the West African country.

The idea for the academy stemmed from two realities she observed.

"When I started my job last July, I noticed there wasn't a youth program through the Black Catholic Ministry," says Owghoso-Maddox.

"Second, there is kind of a decline in the Black Catholic community," she adds. A February 2021 Pew Research Center study reported that 54% of Black Catholics in America who were raised in the faith no longer affiliate with the Church. "So I thought, 'How can I create an environment to develop a sense of belonging for Black Catholic youths in the archdiocese?'"

The answer was simple. She created Obaro Village based on a youth summer camp she created in her former job as director of K-12 school and community programs at Marian University in Indianapolis.

"It combined STEAM [science, technology, engineering, arts and math] activities, college exposure and character development based on Franciscan values," explains Owghoso-Maddox.

But rather than focus on Franciscan values, Obaro Village's faith component will be rooted in Black Catholic spirituality.

Incoming fifth- through ninth-grade students may attend either or both the June 13-19 and July 11-17 sessions.

Both cover three tiers, says Owghoso-Maddox: "First, to create an opportunity for the youths in the archdiocese to enhance their spiritual enrichment, and then STEAM activities and college exploration."

Each session starts with a focus on the family.

## Dreaming 'big at even this young age'

"I call them Holy Family Days," says Owghoso-Maddox of the first two days—Saturday and Sunday—of both sessions.

"My goal is that the families aren't just dropping their kids off and leaving, but that parents and guardians will have an idea of what we're doing, especially when it comes to spirituality and faith formation, so that these

conversations can continue at home as the students ask them about their own faith journey."

Most days begin and end at Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis. Outings to Marian and Butler universities, also in Indianapolis, will provide college campus exposure and an introduction to possible STEAM careers.

"The kids will also make mini-cars for a soapbox derby, which involves a lot of engineering and physics principles," says Owghoso-Maddox.

During the July session, students will participate in the two-day Youth Entrepreneur Series at the Indiana Black Expo in Indianapolis.

"These are young, ambitious youths who I'm sure have millions of ideas about what entrepreneurship is," she says. "[The series] will be able to guide [the Obaro Village youths] through how they can dream big at even this young age."

Youths who participate in both Obaro Village sessions "will enter into kind of a leadership role for the second week," she adds. "That will allow them to kind of have an ownership over their experience and be able to put those leadership practices and characteristics to play."

Whether students participate in one or both Obaro Village sessions, "I want them to walk away empowered to know that there are many different avenues of careers and that they can dream about these places that they want to go in life, whether they want to go to college or they want to have a certain profession that is adjacent of a college degree," Owghoso-Maddox says. "Just that exposure alone to those options at this age is really important."

But education and career choices are not separate from faith, she notes. That's why faith and Black Catholic spirituality are interwoven throughout both sessions of Obaro Village.

## 'Faith does not have to be separate'

"While kids of any faith are welcome to participate, the camp is completely grounded in the Catholic faith," says Owghoso-Maddox.

Students will learn about the parts of the Mass and worship at Mass twice each session, and there will be "components to praise and worship every day," she says.

Several leaders in Black Catholic ministry will call in to speak with the youths remotely. Among them are Deacon Royce Winters, director of the Office for African American Pastoral Ministries for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, and Dr. Ansel Augustine, assistant director of African American Affairs for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.



**'I want the kids to see that they can start dreaming about what they want to do and that their faith does not have to be separate, doesn't have to be an isolated part of who they are, that it can be integrated in everything that they do.'**

—Irorobeje Crystal Owghoso-Maddox, archdiocesan coordinator of Black Catholic Ministry

"We'll also have visitors coming from the Tolton Center of Spirituality in Chicago," says Owghoso-Maddox. "It's named for Venerable Father Augustus Tolton, America's first Black priest. He was born into slavery and faced challenges from racial inequality in the Church."

One activity will use faith to explore the career of journalism.

"The kids will interview family members and different people in the community about their faith journey," says Owghoso-Maddox. "And [the students] will learn to tell their own stories."

She notes that the slogan for Obaro Village youth summer academy is "Rooted in Christ, Ready to Rise."

"I want the kids to see that they can start dreaming about what they want to do and that their faith does not have to be separate, doesn't have to be an isolated part of who they are, that it can be integrated in everything that they do," says Owghoso-Maddox.

"And I want these children to walk away with a deeper relationship with Christ, anchored in Christ and their faith. I want them to know who they are and whose they are—that they're a child of God."

"And I want them to have fun! Because it's summer, and it's good to be a kid."

*(Obaro Village will have two sessions: June 13-19 and July 11-17, with up to 50 spots available per session. Participants must be entering fifth through ninth grades in the fall and may sign up for either or both sessions. The cost is \$100 per camper per week, with a \$25 sibling discount for each additional child and \$50 off when attending both sessions. Lunch is included. Scholarships and payment plans are available and can be requested on the application form. To register, go to [tinyurl.com/Obaro2026](https://tinyurl.com/Obaro2026). Volunteers are also needed for providing food and snacks; leading a workshop or session on faith and joy of the Gospels, praise and worship, leadership, culture and Black Catholic spirituality; and to be interviewed by youths about your faith journey, vocation or lived experience. To volunteer, go to [tinyurl.com/ObaroVolunteer26](https://tinyurl.com/ObaroVolunteer26). For more information on Obaro Village youth summer academy, contact Crystal Owghoso-Maddox at [blackcatholicministry@archindy.org](mailto:blackcatholicministry@archindy.org) or 317-261-3381.) †*

# Anglicans, Catholics must work to overcome differences, pope says

(OSV News)—Although the path to full communion has become "more difficult to discern," Catholics and Anglicans must continue on the path



Pope Leo XIV

of dialogue and "proclaim Christ to the world," Pope Leo XIV said in his first meeting with Anglican Archbishop Sarah Mullally of Canterbury.

In his address to Archbishop Mullally during her visit to the Vatican on April 27, the pope acknowledged that, while much progress has been made on "historically divisive issues, new problems have arisen in recent decades" which have made the "ecumenical journey" more challenging.

Nevertheless, he said, it "would also be a scandal if we did not continue to work toward overcoming our differences, no matter how intractable they may appear."

According to a statement by the archbishop's office, Archbishop Mullally joined the pope for midday prayer in the 17th-century Chapel of Urban VIII, located in the Apostolic Palace.

Welcoming the archbishop of Canterbury to the Vatican, Pope Leo noted

that while "our suffering world greatly needs the peace of Christ, the divisions among Christians weaken our capacity to be effective bearers of that peace.

"If the world is to take our preaching to heart, we must, therefore, be constant in our prayers and efforts to remove any stumbling blocks that hinder the proclamation of the Gospel," the pope said. "This focus on the need for unity for the sake of a more fruitful evangelization has been a theme throughout my own ministry; indeed, it is reflected in the motto I chose when I became a bishop: 'In Illo uno unum', 'In the One—that is Christ—we are one.'"

While the ecumenical path of communion is complicated, Pope Leo said the Catholic Church and the Church of England continue to "journey together in friendship and dialogue."

He also prayed that the Holy Spirit, "whom the Lord breathed on the disciples on the evening after his resurrection, will guide our steps as we prayerfully and humbly seek the unity which is the Lord's will for all his disciples."

"Your Grace, in thanking you for your visit today, I pray that the same Holy Spirit will remain with you always, making you fruitful in the service to which you have been called," the pope said.

In her address to Pope Leo, which was published by her office, Archbishop Mullally expressed her gratitude to him for speaking "about the many injustices in our world," especially during his recent apostolic journey in Africa.

"The world needed this message at this

time—thank you," she said. "It reminded us that, despite our sufferings, people long for life in all its fullness, and countless people are working each day for this vision of the common good."

The archbishop of Canterbury noted that in the ecumenical journey embarked upon by Catholics and Anglicans, the "Holy Spirit is inviting us into a deeper practice of hospitality, not simply as welcome, but as a form of ministry."

It is "a willingness to make space for one another as those created in the image of God and called to grow more fully into his likeness," she said. "Already, we receive from one another gifts we cannot generate alone: depth in prayer, courage in witness, perseverance in suffering and faithfulness in service. In these, our common witness is strengthened."

Recalling King Charles III and Queen Camilla's visit to the Vatican in October, Archbishop Mullally said the British monarch "valued his recent visit" and assured Pope Leo "of a warm welcome from the Church of England should you honor the United Kingdom with a visit." Appointed as archbishop of Canterbury by King Charles in October, Archbishop Mullally is the Church of England's first female to lead the Anglicans "in its 1,400-year history," the Diocese of Canterbury said.

Anglicans claim 1,400 years of history because they identify the Church of England not as a new entity created during the 16th-century Reformation, but as the continuation of the Church established in England

by a Catholic saint—St. Augustine of Canterbury—in 597.

Archbishop Mullally's meeting with Pope Leo was part of a four-day pilgrimage to Rome, which, according to her office, is meant "to strengthen Anglican–Roman Catholic relations through prayer, personal encounter and formal theological dialogue."

"The archbishop of Canterbury's visit takes place within the context of the long-standing ecumenical relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church, rooted in the historic 1966 meeting between Archbishop Michael Ramsey and Pope Paul VI," Anglican Communion News Service said.

The pilgrimage began on April 26 with a visit to St. Peter's Basilica and the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome to pray before the tombs of the Apostles. In a message posted on X, Archbishop Mullally called for prayers "for the unity of his disciples and all God's people."

"Our world is deeply wounded by war, division and fear, and it longs for the peace, justice, reconciliation and hope that are found in Jesus Christ alone. We are called to proclaim and live this Gospel together, for the sake of the life of the world that God so loves," she wrote.

In the evening, following her meeting with Pope Leo, Archbishop Mullally presided over Vespers at the Church of St. Ignatius of Loyola, with Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization as homilist. †

# CRADY

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She was there helping people recover from the 2008 floods that overwhelmed Martinsville, the 2011 floods that swept through Bloomington, and the 2012 tornadoes that led to tragedy in Henryville and other places in southern Indiana, damaging hundreds of homes and killing 13 people. And she was all across Indiana last year when 56 tornadoes touched down across the state.

Such natural disasters often shake the foundations of a person's faith, but not hers.

"I struggled with my faith many years ago, and got way past it," says the lifetime member of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville. "I know why I am there, and I know who we're representing. And I truly know we are the hands and feet of Jesus on the ground."

She also has no doubt that God is right there with her, for one simple reason.

"I can't believe I've been doing this for 20 years. What keeps me going is the little miracles I see every day," she says.

Then she shares her favorite story to back up that belief.

## 'God puts people in the right place'

"After Hurricane Katrina, we were trying to get this lady back in her house," Crady begins. "We got everything done, but the tile needed to be laid on the floors. I told her, 'I don't have a tile person yet, but I'm working on it.' As we were talking, we were sitting under a big tree, out by where the church was before it got swept away, and my phone rang. I said, 'Excuse me, honey.'

"It was a guy who said, 'I'm coming from Missouri, and I want to volunteer.' I asked him, 'What's your skill?' He said, 'I'm a tile man.' I said, 'How soon can you be here?' He said, 'I can be there tomorrow.' I told him, 'I've got a job for you.'

"Those little miracles happen all the time. God puts people in the right place at the right time."

God did the same thing with her in 2006, she believes, with an assist from her younger brother, John Cord, now an archdiocesan permanent deacon who serves at St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour.

"When Hurricane Katrina hit, he and his family went to volunteer. He would tell me every day, 'We can see what needs to be done, but we can't find the families, and we can't find anyone with materials. We need someone down here with management skills and construction skills. We need somebody on the ground.'

"I said, 'I'll go.' I immediately looked up and said, 'I didn't say that, God, *that was you.*' I was an alcohol counselor for a probation department at the time. I had never done anything with disasters before. That's how I got down there. So, it's a God thing. He puts me where he wants and where he needs me."

## 'When they cry, I cry'

Crady has recently been helping people in the far northwestern Indiana counties of Newton, Jasper and Starke where a March 10 tornado devastated or caused major damage to about 60 homes, sending the lives of the affected families into a heartbreaking spiral of despair.

"We had a mess up there," says the mother of three and the grandmother of eight. "A lot of them are insured, but we work with the most vulnerable people—the uninsured and the underinsured."

Her efforts in the northern part of the state coincide with her other role beyond the one she has for Catholic Charities Indianapolis. She's also the chairperson of Indiana's Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).

"We convene all the disaster groups in the state to work together in giving services," she says. "There are over 100 disaster response organizations that belong to it. I'm the chair and have been for 10 years. Homeland Security depends upon us. I'm the one they contact because I coordinate with all the other organizations."

The challenges are many, starting with this reality: "Major disasters are happening more often and becoming more severe and more costly," she says.

Prices for materials have skyrocketed while grants to pay for services can be as unpredictable as spring weather in Indiana.

Still, Crady endures and rises to the moment when the disasters come.

"On an average year at Catholic Charities, we work on at least 400 houses and with that many families with what we have," she says. "I also train people from the community. They know the community, and they know a lot of people in the community. By doing that, I have a cadre of trained people if they're needed elsewhere."

Working with Crady since the days of Hurricane Katrina, Bert Williams has seen firsthand the difference she has made in Indiana and across the country during times of natural disasters.

"Jane is the best when it comes to long-term recovery," says Williams, assistant divisional emergency disaster services director for Salvation Army Indiana. "She'll be out there two to three times a week if that's what is needed to help people.

"The reason Indiana VOAD is in the good position it is in is because of a lot of the work that Jane has done to hold the group together, to provide us direction, and always being willing to help anybody out. I shudder at the day when Jane moves on. It is going to take five, six people to do what she does."

As the executive director of Catholic Charities in the archdiocese, David Bethuram marvels at the impact Crady makes.

Her leadership in disaster response "provides help and creates hope for our most vulnerable neighbors," Bethuram says. "Through Jane's many years of experience, she has impacted our approach to be the tent that doesn't pack up when the cameras roll out of town because this is our community that we care so deeply about."

Crady prides herself on having that "first-in, last-out" approach to disaster response. As an example, she notes that a Catholic Charities grant to help people in Henryville finally came to a close in 2023, 11 years after the tornado struck there.

"We were still doing work from that disaster," she says. "Other organizations come in, they do their job, and they're gone. We're always the first group in, and we don't leave until people are either back in their homes, relocated or we run out of funds or resources. We do our best to help them. We've built a reputation of being there for people. When they cry, I cry. We do a lot of crying."

There have also been times when she has felt her life threatened—not by a natural disaster but by the people she has tried to help.

## 'I never knew Catholics did this'

As she assists people in the aftermaths of disasters, Crady often wears a teal shirt with the words "Catholic Charities Disaster Response" on it. In communities where there has been a history of being staunchly anti-Catholic, some people still carry that hatred within them.

Crady had to quickly climb to the roof of her car after one man set his dogs loose on her. Another man pointed a gun at her.

"I advise people to never, never go by themselves," she says. "But, of course, sometimes I have to."

Fortunately, the balance sheet of responses overflows with the gratitude that Crady receives.

"I have a stack of letters and thank-you notes," she says. "There was a 93-year-old Methodist lady that we helped with her mobile home. She told me, 'I never knew Catholics did this. I think I ought to become Catholic.'

"In one of the tornadoes last fall, a lady and her husband lost their home. Their barn was gone. Their animals were scattered. I went down there, and for some reason, our eyes met. I was talking to someone else at the time. She came over and said, 'I knew the moment I saw you, I needed to know you. It's a God thing.' I told her how we'd be able to help."

More stories flow from Crady.

"I just got a call the other day from some lady who just called to thank me for how much better her life is because we were able to help her. And a little envelope came in the mail. I opened it up. Inside was this tearjerking thank you. We helped this family three



A camaraderie develops among volunteers who assist the archdiocese's Catholic Charities Disaster Relief efforts in times of natural disasters. While helping people whose lives were uprooted by the tornado that struck Henryville in 2012, a group of volunteers share a moment of joy, knowing they represent "the hands and feet of Jesus" in their efforts. (Photo courtesy of Jane Crady)

years ago. Every year, she sends me a card. She couldn't thank us enough."

For Crady, everything flows back to her belief that she is being "the hands and feet of Jesus on the ground" for people who are desperate for help and hope.

She even views disaster response efforts as the ultimate example of bringing life to the Beatitudes.

"Disaster response is the only thing I can think of that a person can do and it uses all of the Beatitudes," she says. "We take care of the hungry, the sick, the dead. We work with all of them. And with positive outcomes."

Twenty years later, Crady still focuses on providing help and hope amid the heartbreak and the devastation.

She still strives to live her faith and, even more, to restore it to people who have lost so much.

"I know there's heartbreak. I know there's sorrow. But I know we leave them in better shape than where they were before. We not only leave them on a road to recovery from the disaster but on a road to recovery of their lives. And we build stronger communities.

"It's heart wrenching, but it's very rewarding to see their attitude and their faith change. We give them that back. They're mad at God when the disaster happens. Then they see us come in, and they realize God is going to take care of them."

(To donate to the archdiocese's Catholic Charities Disaster Relief efforts, go to [bit.ly/CCDisasterRelief](https://bit.ly/CCDisasterRelief).) †

## Catholic Charities Indianapolis receives national award for helping people devastated by disasters

By John Shaughnessy

Catholic Charities Indianapolis recently received a national award from



David Bethuram

Catholic Charities USA, honoring its commitment "to providing meaningful and impactful services to those in need, before, during and after disasters."

As the coordinator of the archdiocese's Catholic Charities' Disaster Preparedness and Response efforts, Jane Crady accepted the Innovation in Disaster Excellence Award on March 17, during a weeklong conference in Orlando, Fla., organized by Catholic Charities USA.

The conference brought together Catholic Charities agencies, non-profit organizations and government agencies for training to help the Catholic Charities network across the country be better prepared to provide short-term and long-term aid in the aftermath of disasters.

Providing help to people after disasters is "chaotic and difficult work that requires adaptability, flexibility

and creativity by all involved," said Kim Burgo, vice president of disaster operations for Catholic Charities USA, in announcing the honor.

"Catholic Charities Indianapolis has certainly demonstrated innovative and exciting programs, partnerships and procedures to overcome barriers to ensure help and hope find their way to disaster survivors in their time of need."

The national honor reflects the archdiocese's commitment to disaster response efforts, under the leadership of Crady, noted David Bethuram, the executive director of the archdiocese's Catholic Charities.

"I am so proud of Jane's leadership both here in Indiana and throughout the country," Bethuram said. "It is through her commitment to disaster recovery ministry that Catholic Charities of the archdiocese was selected to be this year's recipient of the Catholic Charities USA 2026 Innovation in Disaster Excellence Award.

"Jane's leadership embraces for Catholic Charities that disaster response is not simply a program area. It is an expression of our mission to provide help and create hope for our most vulnerable neighbors."

Crady said, "I am humbled and honored by this award. Catholic Charities USA is like a family to me." †

# Pope Leo XIV brings message of peace and hope to Africa

(OSV News)—Pope Leo XIV concluded his first trip to Africa on April 23, capping a four-country visit marked by urgent calls for peace, direct engagement with conflict zones and a backdrop of international political tension.

Traveling on April 13–23 through Algeria, Cameroon, Angola and Equatorial Guinea, the pope met civil and religious leaders, celebrated public Masses and encouraged Catholics to remain steadfast witnesses to the Gospel.

His visit brought him into regions scarred by violence, including Cameroon's separatist conflict, while also addressing inequality and corruption in Angola, promoting interreligious dialogue in Algeria and a just society in Equatorial Guinea.

## Algeria

Pope Leo's 11-day trip began with an unexpected controversy after President Donald J. Trump criticized him in a late-night April 12 post on Truth Social.

Trump called the pope "weak on crime" and "terrible for foreign policy," accusing him of believing "it's OK for Iran to have a nuclear weapon." The remarks followed the pope's criticism of the Iran war and his repeated calls for peace.

Journalists aboard the papal flight quickly pressed for a response.

"I have no fear, neither of the Trump administration nor of speaking out loudly of the message of the Gospel, which is what I believe I am here to do," Pope Leo said.

"We are not politicians," he added. "We are not looking to make foreign policy ... but I do believe in the message of the Gospel: 'Blessed are the peacemakers' [Mt 5:9] is the message that the world needs to hear today."

Pope Leo struck a positive tone before landing, saying he was "very happy to visit the land of St. Augustine again."

In Algiers, he visited the Great Mosque, calling the encounter a sign "that we can learn to respect one another, live in harmony and build a world of peace."

Later, at the Basilica of Our Lady of Africa overlooking the Mediterranean, he honored Algeria's Christian martyrs and highlighted interreligious dialogue in the Muslim-majority nation.

The basilica, he said, is a "sign of our desire for peace and unity," symbolizing "a Church of living stones, where communion between Christians and Muslims takes shape."

On April 14, the pope traveled to Annaba, near the ruins of ancient Hippo Regius, where St. Augustine served as bishop from 395 until his death in 430.

The visit held personal significance; Pope Leo has often described himself as "a son of Augustine" because he was previously an Augustinian priest and leader of the religious order inspired by the great doctor of the Church.

Celebrating Mass at the Basilica of St. Augustine, he urged Christians to follow the saint's example, "fervently seeking the truth and serving Christ with ardent faith."

"Be heirs to this tradition, bearing witness through fraternal charity ... as a hope of salvation for the world," he said.

Addressing Algeria's small Christian community, he praised their quiet witness.

"Your presence in this country is like incense," he said. "A glowing grain that spreads fragrance because it gives glory to the Lord and joy and comfort to so many."

## Cameroon

During his flight to Cameroon, Pope Leo reflected on Algeria as "a special blessing," noting that St. Augustine's life offers a vision of unity and respect across differences.

That message carried into Cameroon, a country scarred by separatist violence. Addressing authorities in Yaoundé, the pope acknowledged the suffering caused by conflict in the English-speaking northwest and southwest regions.

Since 2017, fighting between separatist militias and government forces has killed more than 6,500 people and displaced more than 500,000.

"Lives have been lost, families displaced, children deprived of schooling and young people no longer see a future," he said. "Behind the numbers are the faces, stories and shattered hopes of real people."

Days before his arrival, separatist groups declared a three-day ceasefire to allow safe travel during the visit.

The highlight of the April 15–18 stop was the pope's visit to Bamenda, in the heart of the conflict zone. Addressing Catholics at St. Joseph's Cathedral, the pope was met with enthusiasm after declaring, "I am here to proclaim peace."

After hearing testimony from local residents—including a chief imam who described a deadly attack on a mosque—the pope strongly condemned violence carried out in God's name.

"But woe to those who manipulate religion and the very name of God for their own military, economic and political gain," he said, warning against dragging what is sacred "into darkness and filth."

Celebrating Mass for 20,000 people at Bamenda's airport, he urged hope rooted in faith.

"This is the moment to change, to transform the story of this country," he said. "The time has come, today and not tomorrow."

He called on Cameroonians to "restore the mosaic of unity" by embracing the country's diversity.

On April 17, he celebrated Mass in Douala for an estimated 120,000 faithful, urging Africans to share God's love by feeding the hungry and offering spiritual nourishment.



Worshippers react as Pope Leo XIV celebrates the final Mass of his apostolic journey to Africa at Malabo Stadium in Equatorial Guinea on April 23. (OSV News photo/Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters)

## Angola

Arriving in Luanda, he focused on Angola's challenges and the Church's role in offering hope. Home to more than 20 million Catholics, Angola has deep Christian roots but continues to struggle with inequality, corruption and the legacy of a civil war from 1975-2002 that claimed up to 800,000 lives.

Addressing government leaders, the pope urged them to prioritize the common good.

"Place the common good before every particular interest," he said. "Never confuse your own part with the whole."

He warned that the people have suffered when power is abused.

"They bear the scars not only of material exploitation, but also of the presumption of imposing an idea upon others," he said.

On April 19, Pope Leo celebrated Mass for about 100,000 faithful in Kilamba. Reflecting on the Gospel story of disciples on the road to Emmaus, he cautioned against despair in societies marked by prolonged suffering.

"When one is long immersed in a history characterized by pain, one can risk losing hope and remaining paralyzed by discouragement," he said.

Afterward, he traveled to the Sanctuary of Mama Muxima, southern Africa's most visited Catholic shrine, where tens of thousands had gathered—many camping for days in intense heat.

Calling the shrine a place where "the heart of the Church" is alive, he noted its enduring role in Angola's spiritual life.

"For centuries, many have prayed here in joy and sorrow," he said. "Mama Muxima has quietly kept the heart of the Church alive and beating."

On April 20, the pope flew east to Saurimo, near Angola's largest diamond mine. There, he visited a nursing home housing 74 elderly residents, many rejected by their families due to superstitious beliefs.

"The care of the weakest is a sign of the quality of a nation's social life," he said. "The elderly must not only be assisted, but listened to, because they preserve the wisdom of a people."

Celebrating Mass for tens of thousands, he also addressed exploitation linked to the diamond industry.

"How often the hope of many is frustrated by violence, exploited by the overbearing and defrauded by the rich," he said.

"We were not born to become slaves," he added. "Every form of oppression, violence and dishonesty negates the resurrection of Christ, the supreme gift of our freedom."

## Equatorial Guinea

The final leg of Pope Leo's 11-day journey took him to Equatorial Guinea. Upon landing on the island of Malabo,

the pope was welcomed by President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who has ruled the oil-rich Central African nation since seizing power in a 1979 coup and is widely regarded as one of the world's most authoritarian leaders.

Nevertheless, in his address to the country's civil authorities, the pope appealed for justice and ethical governance in a country long criticized for corruption and human rights abuses.

Drawing from St. Augustine's classic work *The City of God*, Pope Leo noted that the "city of God" is characterized by love, especially for the poor, while the "earthly city ... is centered upon the proud love of self, on the lust for power and worldly glory that leads to destruction."

"Every human being can benefit from the ancient realization of living on Earth as a pilgrim," he said. "It is essential to discern the difference between that which lasts and that which passes, remaining free from the pursuit of unjust wealth and the illusion of dominion."

Celebrating Mass on April 22 at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in the eastern city of Mongomo, the second-largest Catholic church in Africa, the pope renewed his call to the country's leaders and citizens to prioritize the common good.

"May the Lord help you to become a society in which everyone, each according to their respective responsibilities, works ever more fully to serve the common good rather than private interests, bridging the gap between the privileged and the disadvantaged," he said.

In his final Mass in Malabo Stadium on April 23, Pope Leo offered a word of hope to the country's Catholics, urging them to seek strength, justice and hope from the Gospel and the sacraments.

Encouraging the faithful to "joyfully proclaim" that "Christ is everything for us," Pope Leo reminded Christians that in Jesus, "we find the fullness of life and meaning."

"Our problems do not disappear in the Lord's presence, but they are illuminated," he said. "Just as every cross finds redemption in Jesus, so too the story of our lives finds its meaning in the Gospel."

As the Mass concluded, the pope bid farewell to the African continent, saying that his visit was "an invaluable treasure of faith, hope and charity."

Highlighting the continent's significance, the pope said that "today, Africa is called to contribute significantly to the holiness and missionary character of the Christian people."

"I entrust this intention to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, to whom I commend myself wholeheartedly, as well as your families, your communities, your nation, and all the peoples of Africa," the pope said. †



Pope Leo XIV holds a baby at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Muxima in Muxima, Angola, on April 19. (OSV News photo/Simone Risoluti, Vatican Media)

# POPE

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On the day of his election, from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, Pope Leo's first words were, "Peace be with you all!"

His message for peace has been consistent throughout the past year. And these days, it is more fervent because of the war in Iran that the U.S. and Israel began on Feb. 28.

Mendez pointed out Pope Leo also "connects with the younger generation" through his social media posts and stories of his youth told by his brothers about growing up in Dolton, a southern suburb of Chicago.

Pope Leo, born Robert F. Prevost, lived in Dolton until he entered the Augustinians' minor seminary in Holland, Mich., when he was 13. He completed an undergraduate degree in math at Villanova University near Philadelphia in 1977, earned a master's degree from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago in 1982, the year he was ordained to the priesthood, and earned a doctorate in canon law in 1984 at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome.

He then ministered in Peru's impoverished northwest region for nearly 20 years, serving as the bishop of the Diocese of Chiclayo from 2015-2023. He also held leadership positions in Rome, including prior general for the Augustinians, head of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America and prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops. He became a cardinal in September 2023 and was elected pope on May 8, 2025.

Born and raised on Chicago's South Side herself, Mendez said "it makes me happy" that Pope Leo is relatable to even non-Catholics, especially as a fellow fan of the South Side-based Chicago White Sox.

Mendez's mother Maria said the family was drawn to St. Rita and recently began attending Mass there because of its ties to the pope. She said the papal connection and the Augustinian charism of fostering unity have made the parish very attractive.

The Augustinians "approach people

in a different way that makes people come back. [It's] the welcoming [way], their hospitality," said Maria.

Pope Leo is "a happy pope," she said, adding, "He brings happiness to every individual. It doesn't matter the nationality or age, he's there for everyone. Yeah, we could feel it."

Northeast of St. Rita, people walked on April 7 under a bright spring sun and braced themselves against strong, cold wind as they left the downtown Holy Name Cathedral following daily Mass.

Tom Pyden was descending the cathedral's steps when he told OSV News that Pope Leo has "done a very good job" for the Church and the world because of "his repeated calls for peace and not backing down from that."

Pyden was in Chicago from Plymouth, Mich., visiting his son for Easter week. Though he is not from the Windy City, he said that he is "so very proud" that the pope is from the U.S."

"I read daily inspirational sayings from him. I think he's very inclusive. And I don't know him, but it seems like he has a wonderful personality that draws people together," said Pyden.

Pilar Villa of Guadalajara, Mexico, was visiting Chicago for Easter with her twin teenage daughters. She told OSV News she likes that Pope Leo has given clear messages and has dedicated time to youths and young people.

"He recently talked about the importance of young people not having ties to artificial intelligence, that they should follow God and believe in God," she said.

Pope Leo has spoken via video twice with American youths, first in June and then in November.

In a video message to youths in June



Pope Leo XIV greets fourth grader Augie Wilk, who was elected "Pope Augustine" in a mock conclave at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy in Chicago, during the pope's weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Oct. 8, 2025. Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago looks on. The students' re-enactment on May 6, 2025 of a papal election went viral days before Pope Leo's own election on May 8, 2025. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

at the Chicago archdiocesan Mass of thanksgiving for his election as pope, he emphasized the importance of recognizing God's presence in their lives, especially "that longing for love in our lives, for ... searching, a true searching, for finding the ways that we may be able to do something with our own lives to serve others."

In November, Pope Leo had a live video encounter with young people at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis. "Look to Jesus. Trust his mercy and go to him with confidence. He will always welcome you home," he said.

Retired Bishop Daniel T. Turley of Chulacanas, Peru, a native Chicago South Sider and Pope Leo's past Augustinian superior during his missionary work, said Pope Leo's solid upbringing in the faith and missionary life in impoverished Peru beset with domestic terrorism have influenced Pope Leo's leadership.

"[He] is a pope at a time of crisis, so he brings to his papacy a great deal of balance, of joy, but also a message asking

for peace, asking for non-violence, asking to respect the dignity of life throughout the world, and asking countries to search out ways of unity. And he is a pope that is trying to build bridges," he told OSV News.

Bishop Turley said a "Leo effect" might be having some impact on the faithful coming into the Church or returning. He said he has celebrated numerous large-group confirmations throughout the Chicago archdiocese during the past year, and pastors at those parishes have observed increased numbers of those preparing to be received into the Church.

"There's a 'Leo effect' for Chicago in particular," he said. "It's like a ripple of the ocean, the waves, you know. So, it's a wave of energy, happiness, joy, hope. That's rippling through the Augustinian order. It's rippling through the United States of America because he's the first American pope in the history of the Church. But he's also the first pope from Chicago. There's a 'Leo effect' in Chicago, in the United States, and then in the whole world." †

## Pope Leo to new priests: Keep Church door open, don't be an obstacle

(OSV News)—Priests are called each day to leave the doors of the Church open to a "suffering humanity" in need and not "be an obstacle to those who wish to enter," Pope Leo XIV told 10 transitional deacons just before ordaining them to the priesthood.

The vocation to priestly ministry is a call to reflect Christ's "patience and tenderness" and "to keep the threshold open and direct others to it, without using too many words," the pope said on April 26 during his homily at an ordination Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

"Today more than ever, especially when statistics seem to indicate a divide between people and the Church, keep the door open! Let people in, and be prepared to go out. This is another secret for your life: You are a channel, not a filter," he said.

Of the 10 priests ordained by Pope Leo, eight were ordained for the Diocese of Rome, including six Italians, a Cameroonian and a Colombian. Four received

formation at Rome's major seminary and four were prepared for the priesthood at the Neocatechumenal Way's Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Rome.

Two priests were ordained for other dioceses or congregations. Mexican Father Armando Roa Nuñez was ordained for the Diocese of Miao, India, while Father Selwyn Pinto Loyce was ordained as a member of the Idente Missionaries.

According to Vatican News, an estimated 5,000 people, comprised of family and friends of the ordinands, were present at the ordination Mass which coincided with the celebration of the Church's World Day of Vocations.

After greeting those present at the Mass, Pope Leo began his homily by exclaiming, "This Sunday is full of life." He said that "although death surrounds us," Jesus' promise in the Gospel reading—that he came "so that they might have life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10)—was fulfilled.

"We see great generosity and enthusiasm in the willingness of these young men whom the Church calls today to be ordained as priests," the pope said. "As a numerous and diverse community gathered around the one Master, we feel a presence that renews us. It is the Holy Spirit who unites people and vocations in freedom, so that no one lives for themselves any longer."

Reflecting on the priestly vocation, the pope reminded the candidates that the deeper their bond with Christ, "the more radical your belonging to all of humanity," thus binding their hearts to "an indissoluble love."

Like the love of spouses, he explains, "the love that inspires celibacy for the kingdom of God must also be guarded and constantly renewed, for every true affection matures and becomes fruitful over time.

"You are called to a specific, delicate and difficult way of loving and, even more so, of allowing yourselves to be loved in freedom," the pope said. "This will make you not only good priests, but also honest, helpful citizens, builders of peace and social friendship."

Recalling the Gospel reading, the pope noted that Jesus' reference to "aggressive figures and actions," such as thieves, robbers and strangers who "disregard boundaries," shows that Christ knows "the cruelty of the world, where he walks with us."

This, however, does not "deter him from giving up his life," the pope said.

"Denunciation does not become renunciation; danger does not lead to flight. This is another secret for the life of the priest: We must not be frightened by reality. It is the Lord of life who calls us. May the ministry entrusted to you, dear brothers, convey the peace of those who know that they are safe, even amid dangers," he said.

Pope Leo noted that the need for security in today's world "makes people aggressive, causes communities to close in on themselves and leads people to seek out enemies and scapegoats."

Nevertheless, despite the presence of fear, the pope encouraged the new priests to find their security not in "the role you hold but in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as well as in your participation, along with your people, in the story of salvation.

"This salvation is already at work in the many good deeds that are quietly carried out by people of goodwill in the parishes and settings where you will join them as fellow travelers. What you proclaim and celebrate will protect you, even in difficult times," he said.

Pope Leo said that Jesus' reminder that he is the gate means that "he does not stifle our freedom," while noting the existence of "communities that suffocate; some groups are easy to enter but are impossible to leave.

"This is not the case of the Lord's Church, nor of the community of his disciples," he said.

"We all seek shelter, rest and care," the pope explained. "The Church's doors are open, but not to cut us off from life: life does not end in a parish, in an association, in a movement, in a group. Whoever is saved can 'go out and find pasture,'" he said.

The pope invited the new priests to "go out and discover culture, people and life" and to marvel "at the things that God makes grow without our having sown them.

"The people you will serve as priests—lay faithful and families, young and old, children and the sick—inhabit pastures that you must come to know," he said. "At times, it will seem to you that you lack the necessary maps. But the Good Shepherd has them; listen to his very familiar voice." †



Pope Leo XIV hands a chalice and paten to one of 10 priests as he celebrates their ordination Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on April 26. Priests are called each day to leave the doors of the Church open to a "suffering humanity" in need and not "be an obstacle to those who wish to enter," Pope Leo told the deacons just before ordaining them to the priesthood. (OSV News photo/Mario Tomassetti, Vatican Media)

# SIMPLY CATHOLIC

## St. Catherine of Siena influenced popes, was a light in dark time of the Church

By D.D. Emmons

(OSV News)—Born on the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord in 1347, St. Catherine of Siena became a stalwart voice of the Church, a shining light in one of the darkest, most turbulent periods of Christian history.

She gave her short 33 years of life in service to God during the chaos of the Great Western Schism, of two duly elected popes, the bubonic plague, a papacy relocated to France, of great political upheaval and warring in her native Italy.

Possessing God-inspired wisdom, Catherine provided a sense of confidence and certainty that influenced popes, nobles and commoners alike.

The Church celebrated her feast earlier this week on April 29.

At age 6, Catherine had a vision in which the Lord made the sign of the cross over her. From that time, she was graced with unique gifts from God and her spiritual journey was set.

When she was 12, her parents urged her to start considering a suitable husband, a typical practice for families at that time. But Catherine already had given herself to Christ alone. She avoided suitors and even cut off her hair to make herself less attractive.

In her early years, she sought out times of prayer, meditation and solitude. Never a nun, she became a member of the Third Order Dominicans.

In 1366, Catherine received another vision in which Christ put a ring on her finger, a ring that only she could see, a symbol binding her forever to Christ.

Eventually she was called from her life of solitude and prayer to share her gifts of faith with others. Her holiness soon was well known not only in Siena, but also throughout Tuscany. People increasingly looked to her for spiritual guidance.

Catherine had a special love for the Eucharist. In his book *Saint Catherine of Siena: Her Life and Times*, C.M. Antony describes this eucharistic experience of hers: “When Catherine advanced to receive holy Communion, her face was glowing with a deep color and bathed in tears and drops of sweat. After receiving our Lord, she fell into an ecstasy of great length, and when she recovered the use of her faculties, was unable to speak all that day.”

Later it was explained that when Catherine received Communion on this occasion, the material world around her and anything that could occupy her intellect or give her natural pleasure was “nothing but emptiness and dust” for her.

“She had then implored her Divine Spouse,” Antony wrote, “that she might henceforth only please and possess him, that he would take away her will and gave her his. This he did immediately, promising her that, from that moment, no exterior event should trouble her heart, change her intention or disturb her peace.”

Complete abandonment to the Eucharist sustained Catherine in all things.

When nearly 20, Catherine was called to intercede in the 14th-century crises brewing in Italy, in the Church and especially in the papacy. In 1309, Pope Clement V

(who ruled from 1305-14) decided to move from Rome to Avignon, France, where the Holy See remained for nearly 70 years.

Not only were all the Avignon popes French, but so, too, were most of the members of the College of Cardinals.

This situation was not well received by many Catholics outside of France. Also, the papal absence from Rome contributed to political and religious disorder throughout Italy, a situation prompting the popes to remain in France.

In Rome, there was infighting among the nobility. Likewise, there were conflicts in the Papal States in what is now central Italy between middle-class workers and their employers.

In some instances, these groups hired mercenaries to attack others; the mercenaries worked for the highest bidder and, when not employed, assaulted people living in the countryside. Pope Gregory XI (who ruled from 1371-78) tried to govern from France by sending legates to Italy, but these emissaries often aggravated the situation.

Some Italians sided with the pope, and others were against him. The crisis in Florence was especially severe, and the pope eventually placed Florence under interdict, which meant that the sacraments could not be celebrated there. Catherine used her influence to limit the hostility and was asked by the those in Florence who resisted the pope to intercede with him on their behalf.

It was then, in 1375, that Catherine received the holy stigmata. These marks of Christ’s suffering were not visible to others until her death: “But at her request, Our Lord made the marks visible only to herself, and ... the marks became quite pronounced after her death, as verified by her incorrupt hands and feet” (*The Incorruptibles* by Joan Carroll Cruz).

In 1376, Catherine went to Avignon and sought the attention of Pope Gregory XI. The Florentines now turned away from her. She was on her own trying to convince the Holy Father to bring peace to the Papal States and, most importantly, to move the papacy back to Rome.

While Catherine regarded the pope as the Vicar of



A statue of St. Catherine of Siena is seen on April 18, 2024, in the cloister courtyard of the home of Dominican friars next to the Basilica of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome. The saint, who lived only 33 years, influenced popes and worked to bring peace to Italy. Her spiritual writings led her to be named in 1970 as one of the first two women doctors of the Church. (CNS photo/Pablo Esparza)

Christ, she did not hesitate to point out his shortcomings. In a letter encouraging Gregory XI to return the papacy to Rome, she wrote: “The wolf is carrying away your sheep, and there is no one found to help them. ... The hungry sheep await your coming to hold and possess the place of your predecessor and champion, Apostle Paul.

“For you as Vicar of Christ should rest in your own place. Come, then, come and delay no more; and comfort you, and fear not for anything that might happen, since God will be with you.”

Gregory saw several obstacles to a return to Rome. His cardinals did not support the action. The pope feared an assassination attempt on the journey, and the chaos that was taking place not only in Rome but throughout Italy remained a serious concern. Catherine’s direct approach to the pope was not a common practice, and only her well-known holiness made such an approach acceptable.

Pope Gregory, in 1377, and much because of Catherine’s influence, returned to Rome. Among his first acts was to dispatch Catherine to Florence in an effort to bring peace among all the warring factions there. This mission of peace was not successful until Urban VI, an Italian, was elected pope in 1378. Unfortunately, the end of one crisis was followed by another.

The cardinals who elected Urban quickly regretted their decision. They found they had selected a zealous reformer, an overbearing man who eliminated the niceties that the cardinals had grown accustomed to.

The cardinals left Rome and gathered at Anagni, Italy, where they asked Urban to resign, claiming they had chosen him under threats from the Roman populace to select an Italian pope. The duly-elected Urban refused, and the cardinals elected another pope, Clement VII, who returned to Avignon. The Church now had two popes.

Catherine called the cardinals “incarnate demons” and supported Urban, whom she considered the legitimate pope. Urban summoned Catherine to Rome and asked her to help him find a way out of this schism. For the next year, she prayed and fasted continuously while seeking a harmonious solution.

But God had other plans. On April 29, 1380, she died of a stroke. Catherine had given her life to God and to the Church.

Pope Pius II, serving in Rome, declared her a saint in 1461. Along with St. Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena was one of the first two women to be named as doctors of the Church. St. Paul VI made this historic decision in 1970.

(D.D. Emmons writes from Pennsylvania.) †



Detail of a painting depicting St. Catherine of Siena in adoration of the Sacred Heart, created around 1739, is displayed at the Church of Saint-Martin de Montchamp in Valdallière in the Normandy region of France. (OSV News photo/Wikimedia Commons-cc 4.0)

Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

## The Seagull on the Chapel: New book offers rare gift of shared delight

In the end, after two days of breathless anticipation, the white smoke shared the stage with a seagull.

The whole world was abuzz. An American pope! A seagull! With so many eyes trained on the same chimney, the bird had appeared in exactly the right spot at exactly the right moment, amusing spectators across the globe.



Eric A. Clayton, a Catholic father of two, remembers the scene outside the Sistine Chapel fondly. “How rare in this moment in time that we can all see something delightful for us to smile at?” he said. “It is

rare—a real gift, a real grace.”

As politics immediately entered the discussion—which way would Pope Leo XIV lean? How would he compare with Pope Francis?—the seagull became a source of levity and unity.

“To come to this moment from different places and have this universalizing experience is really beautiful,” said Eric, 37, a writer who is a member of Nativity Parish in Timonium, Md. “It speaks to our God, who desires to bind us together.”

A couple of days later, Eric was waiting for a haircut when his friend Shannon texted him. The children’s book on Mary they had co-written had just been released, and they were in celebration mode. A friend had told Shannon that the story of the papal seagull would make a good children’s book.

“What do you think?” Shannon asked. “Should we give it a go?”

Soon, the two friends were brainstorming background stories for the seagull.

Their rapid-fire text exchange turned into a shared Google document, with one writer noodling it—playing around with new lines, tracking changes, adding questions—then passing the baton. They established a premise near and dear to Eric’s heart: that the seagull, who yearned to be as special as a dove, lands in a sacred moment and is deemed worthy of God’s love.

“We all need to be reminded that God delights in us, and we’re beloved,” said Eric, who works as deputy

director of communications at the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States.

That message profoundly touched Eric when his first spiritual director, a beloved Jesuit priest at his college, told him that as a sophomore.

“I was awed,” Eric said. “He assigned the Scripture where Jesus was baptized. ‘I want you to pray with this and imagine God saying those words to you: “You are my beloved.”’ I go back to that all the time. It’s foundational in my spiritual life. It underpins all my writing. Man, if people knew God delighted in them—onward and upward!”

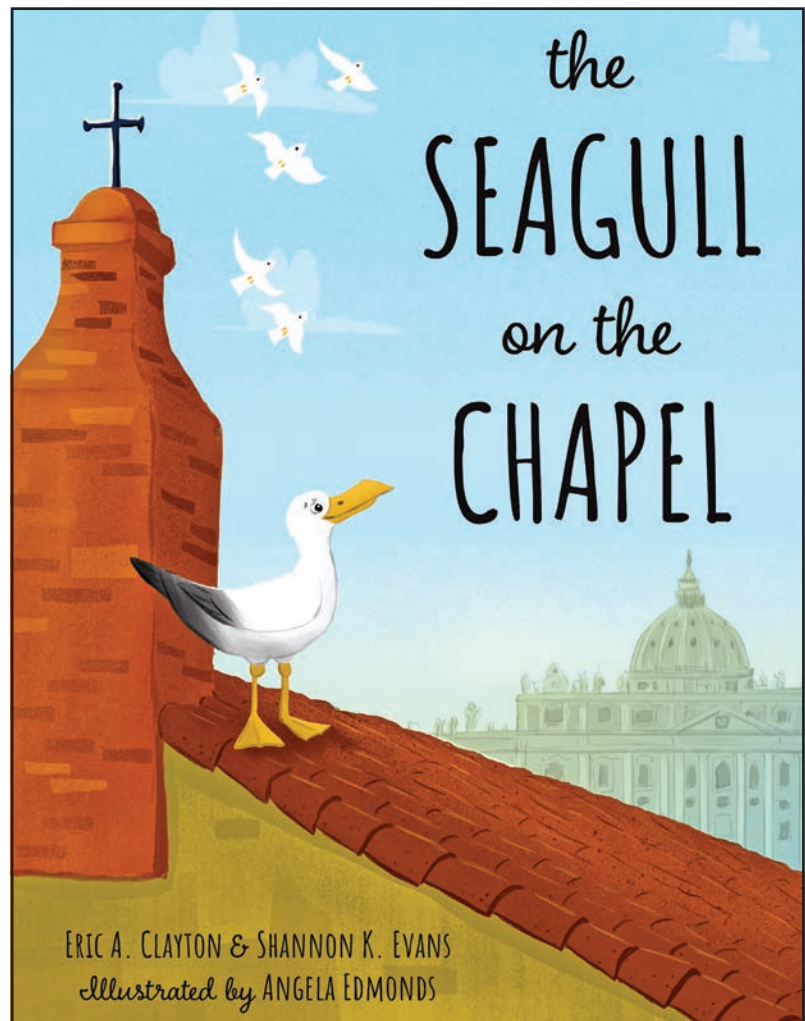
It’s still sinking in for Eric—as is learning to accept who he is and who he isn’t.

“It’s a constant challenge,” Eric said. “There’s always more you could be doing. There’s always more success you could be reaching.”

But Eric is learning to embrace his unique and God-given path, like the seagull in his new book, *The Seagull on the Chapel*. Paraclete Press timed its release to mark the one-year anniversary of Pope Leo’s election. It was co-written by Shannon K. Evans and richly illustrated by Angela Edmonds, a former Disney artist.

Celebrating one year of Pope Leo comes naturally to Eric. “God provided the pope we need right now,” he said. “The humble way with which he reminds us of our shared call to live the Gospel is inspiring.”

Meanwhile, Eric will keep hammering away on his laptop—e-mailing ideas to himself, mapping out the next book, finding fresh ways to express God’s love. The imaginative prayer used in Ignatian spirituality is “inherent to creativity” and a springboard for storytelling. To really make it effective, Eric tries to limit his use of social media and ground himself in prayer. It helps him embrace who he is today rather than chase a more ideal, future version of himself.



“There’s this false image of ourselves that is always ‘beyond’—after we’ve sold more books, made more money, done more push-ups,” he said. “But we are already God’s beloved. We can delight in who we are.”

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Grey Cloud Island, Minn.) †

Faith at Home/Laura Kelly Fanucci

## What the Easter Scriptures teach us about how to live as family of faith

Family life is hard. In case no one has affirmed that for you lately, let me be the one.

Whether you’re in the stage of diapers, nursing or bottles, wiping faces and losing sleep or whether you’re worrying about the children who have grown, the now-adults making their stumbling way through a suffering world, families will always be holy, hard and humbling schools of love.

Sometimes we look to Scripture and ask, “Does anything here speak to my life today?” Especially when biblical times, societies and structures differ sharply from our own, we may be more likely to seek support, advice or models for our daily struggles from more contemporary sources. But the Gospel readings at Mass in the first days of the season of Easter offer refreshing, realistic and surprisingly relevant stories for the struggles we face as families.

Take Mary Magdalene, the first to encounter the risen Christ. In the Gospel of John, she stands weeping at the empty tomb—but because she is willing to enter fully into her grief, she alone is there to meet the Lord (Jn 20:1-18). Her witness reminds us that God is always making a way to meet us in grief and loss, even after deep trauma, as Jesus did for Mary whom he freed from seven demons (Lk 8:2).

Or take the story of Peter sitting on the shore with the friend he denied. What searing regret he must have felt—and what a shocking twist for Jesus to offer nothing but mercy, extending the greatest second chance of all time: “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” (Jn 21:15-19). Peter teaches us that forgiveness after deep hurt is the way of the Christian life. Like Jesus, we must keep offering forgiveness. Like Peter, we must keep answering yes to love.

The struggles of families—and the ordinary work that keeps us going—are all over the Easter Gospels. Thomas reminds us how often we feel confused, left out or misunderstood, even among those who know us best. Sometimes it takes time,

humility and a willingness to show up again to see the truth before us.

The myrrhbearers (the men and women who cared for Jesus’ body after his death) underscore the quiet holiness of tasks of care. Like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, we can carry our heavy burdens together. Like the women who brought oil and spices to anoint Jesus’ body, we learn how the smallest offerings let us care for Christ in each other.

Notice where Jesus meets his disciples after the resurrection. On the road to Emmaus, when his friends were grieving and aimless. In a house in the town, breaking bread over dinner. On the lakeshore, after a long night of failed fishing. In locked rooms, where they huddled together in terror. God will meet us in the same places. On the road, over ordinary meals, in daily work. In the midst of grief, loss and fear.

The gritty humanity of the first disciples ranks among the greatest gifts that God gave us. We do not have ancestors in faith who got everything right, whose families always flourished, whose faith never wavered or whose witness was perfect. Instead, we got sisters and brothers just like us: longing, loving but losing their way and stumbling back to God, over and over again.

Much like pregnancy, fostering or adoption, Easter takes a long stretch of time, much longer than we might have realized when we first set out. Far from a single Sunday, Easter is a gift of 50 days—because the sacred mysteries that we recall and re-live during this season are so great that we need plenty of time every year to pray through the Resurrection again.

What goodness of God, to give the gifts we need: extra time, real companions, rich stories and relentless grace. In the family of faith, even in our hardest days, we are never alone on the road.

(Laura Kelly Fanucci is an author, speaker and founder of *Mothering Spirit*. Her latest book is *Living Easter: 50 Days to Practice Resurrection*.) †

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

## When we gather for Mass, let us become one with our fellow believers

When arriving for Mass at your local parish, what thoughts do you have when first arriving?

Do you truly take notice of all of the little ideas that shoot through your head? This process is called mindfulness.



For example, take a brief moment to think about each of the following questions: Are you more focused on what people wear to Mass than the fact that they are there? Are you focused on the type of music chosen, or even the lack of any music? Do you prefer that more incense is used?

Do you prefer Mass in Latin or the common language of the local community? Are you pleased to see young members participating, as well as

babies and toddlers sitting among the pews?

How does one keep the mind focused on the central intent of this sacred celebration: the praise and worship of our triune God?

In late October, we heard proclaimed the Gospel about the Pharisee and the tax collector (Lk 18:9-14). And in early November, we heard St. Paul, in his First Letter to the Corinthians, say that a believer’s body is a temple of God (1 Cor 6:19-20).

My understanding is that this “temple” applies to every person who has gathered to give glory to God—not just those with similar theology, dress, physical appearance or liturgical preferences as ours.

How can we be so judgmental in our thoughts, especially with others *who already believe* and still hope to be united as Jesus prayed in the Gospel of John, “so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are

in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me” (Jn 17:21).

In January, in St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, he writes, “... that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose” (1 Cor 1:10).

And lastly, as we pray at Mass, “... in my thoughts and in my words.”

The next time that you enter a church, pay close attention to the very thoughts that swirl in your mind (like those of the Pharisee) and see what you learn.

Can we as a faith community strive to move ever closer to becoming one with our fellow believers?

(Richard Etienne has a degree in theology from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and resides in Newburgh, Ind.) †

Fifth Sunday of Easter/Msg. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 3, 2026

- Acts 6:1-7
- 1 Peter 2:4-9
- John 14:1-12

Once again this season, the Acts of the Apostles provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. The early chapters of Acts vividly reveal to us the lives led by the early Christians. Obvious in this glimpse into events so long ago is the primary place of the Apostles, and the superior position among them of St. Peter.



The Apostles led the Church because the first Christians recognized the Apostles' special relationship with and calling from the Lord. Indeed, reverence for the Apostles was so deep that the people placed their possessions at the Apostles' feet, allowing the Apostles to control even the material assets of the faithful.

In this part of Acts, the Church was situated in Jerusalem. Although the very heart of Jewish life and a city supremely symbolic for Jews, Jerusalem was not Corinth. It was not Antioch. It most certainly was not Rome. In the total scheme of Roman culture, it was not a great city.

Even in Palestine, Caesarea, a seaport on the Mediterranean Sea, was more important. In Caesarea, the Roman governor resided, and the Roman armed occupation had its headquarters. Jerusalem was secondary.

(The ruins of Caesarea now are in the suburbs of modern Tel Aviv. It is interesting, incidentally, that the only relic of the administration of Pontius Pilate as governor, aside from mention in the Gospels, is a stone carved with his name. The stone was found at the site of ancient Caesarea.)

The way of life of the first Christians is clear. Care of the needy was their priority. This especially included widows, who were ordinarily very needy. Evidently the Apostles directed such care. The Apostles also taught the Gospel, with Peter as their spokesman.

To assist in providing this care and to proclaim the Gospel, the Apostles chose seven holy men to be deacons. Calling deacons was an exercise not just of organization, but also of the Apostles'

authority to act in the name of Jesus.

The First Letter of St. Peter provides the second reading, centering Jesus as essential in salvation. The reading urges Christians to be true to Jesus.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last reading. Not a resurrection narrative, it recalls the Lord's discourse with the Apostles, telling them what to expect in the future. As it looks ahead—and frankly suggests that obstacles await them—it is an appropriate reading now as people contemplate Christian living amid modern troubles.

Reassuringly, Christ says that he will be with us always. He is "the way, the truth, and the life," which belongs only to the Son of God (Jn 14:6).

## Reflection

Almost a month has passed since Easter. For weeks, the Church joyfully has told us of the Resurrection. Christ lives!

Before long, the season will end. We will return to life in 2026, with its burdens and rewards.

The Church tells us that Jesus still is with us as Savior, teacher and guide, our rock and our shield. We today compose the community of Christians that is the Church. But to be authentic, the Church of today must mirror the community described in Acts.

Applying the picture in Acts to the present is interesting. Which Christian community reflects the gathering of Christians in Jerusalem long ago? It must be the Catholic Church, precisely because the Church still relies upon the Apostles with Peter clearly and actually as their head.

The nascent Church in Acts showed profoundly its dedication to the Lord, caring for the sick and the needy. Ever since, care for others has been no charming sideline for Christians. It is of the essence of their faith.

Finally, the Church tells us, as the Easter season concludes, that Christ is with us. In turn, we must cooperate with God's grace that draws us into the Church that the Lord created.

Being in this community of faith is more than joining a club. We must give our hearts to the Lord freely and totally. †

## Daily Readings

### Monday, May 4

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

### Tuesday, May 5

Acts 14:19-28  
Psalm 145:10-13b, 21  
John 14:27-31a

### Wednesday, May 6

Acts 15:1-6  
Psalm 122:1-5  
John 15:1-8

### Thursday, May 7

Acts 15:7-21  
Psalm 96:1-3, 10  
John 15:9-11

### Friday, May 8

Acts 15:22-31  
Psalm 57:8-12  
John 15:12-17

### Saturday, May 9

Acts 16:1-10  
Psalm 100:1b-2, 3, 5  
John 15:18-21

### Sunday, May 10

Sixth Sunday of Easter  
Acts 8:5-8, 14-17  
Psalm 66:1-7, 16, 20  
1 Peter 3:15-18  
John 14:15-21

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

## Church has a process set in place for appeals of canon law tribunal rulings

**Q**I have a question about appeals to Rome of the declaration of nullity process. The metropolitan tribunal of my



local archdiocese has completed their review of the case and stated that it has been proved that there is sufficient ground to find the marriage invalid (a "decision in the affirmative").

However, my former spouse has appealed the decision to the Roman Rota. I imagine that the Roman Rota is very busy and might not get around to reviewing this appeal.

Is there a time limit on this? If we never hear from them, does that mean that my marriage is invalid? Also, theologically, what is the purpose of an appeal? It is my understanding that the Church does not actually make the marriage valid or invalid. It either is or isn't valid. So, if the tribunal has found that it is invalid, how can an appeal change how God sees this?

**A**Your question actually contains several questions, which I'll try to answer one by one.

But to start out, for those who are not familiar with the marriage nullity process

in general, if a person thinks their marriage might be invalid and they have a reason for wanting the status of their union to be formally clarified by the Catholic Church, they can bring their case to a local diocesan marriage tribunal. This becomes what is called the court of "first instance," since this is the first time any Catholic tribunal investigates the case.

If both the petitioner and the respondent accept the decision the first instance tribunal issues, then that decision stands as it is written.

However, both parties have the right to challenge or appeal the first instance decision within a certain time frame. If an appeal is launched, this is heard by an appeals court, also called the tribunal of "second instance."

Ordinarily the court of second instance is the local metropolitan archdiocese, although in some places an ecclesiastical province (the group of local dioceses surrounding an archdiocese) might have a round-robin system in which each diocese functions as their own first instance tribunal while taking on second instance cases from one of their neighboring dioceses.

If the second instance tribunal agrees to hear the case, it will begin what is essentially a new nullity trial and will issue its own decision, which may or may not be in agreement with the one rendered in the court of first instance. If one or both of the parties object to the decision that the second instance tribunal comes to, the Roman Rota is the "third instance" and the final possible court of appeal.

Like you, I would assume the Roman Rota is busy, and, for obvious reasons, sending a case to Rome comes with its own set of inconveniences, like dealing with international postal services and occasional language barriers. But diocesan marriage tribunals are accustomed to sending cases to Rome, and often communication is routed through the local tribunal.

Speaking from personal experience as a diocesan tribunal judge, it's not usually possible to predict how long a case sent to Rome will take. I have seen some third instance cases resolved in a matter of months, and others that took years. Still, the Roman Rota will never simply ignore or "not get around to" an appeal. The Rota may decline to hear a case at the outset, but if this happens the interested parties will be informed.

In terms of the theological purpose of the appeals process, you are correct that a tribunal does not actively nullify a valid marriage, but only potentially recognizes that a marriage was always invalid from the beginning, in actual fact.

The reason why canon law allows for appeals is because, even while tribunal judges prayerfully seek to arrive at the most accurate decision possible with moral certainty, at the end of the day we are merely human and not infallible.

Unlike sacred Scripture, a tribunal decision is not the inspired word of God but is rather the Church's leadership making a prudential judgement.

(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](mailto:CatholicQA@osv.com).) †

## My Journey to God

# LOVE'S COMMAND

By Gayle Schrank

Lord our world is filled with such mysteries  
For the skies were formed by Your hands  
And all the created things in our universe  
Come from Your almighty love's command  
The people who have gone before us  
Help us know what we're called to do  
You came into our world long ago  
Preparing the way for our return to You  
This journey we each are on  
Gives us a personal glimpse of You  
When we follow Your light we find love  
You give perspective and new points of view  
Recalling those three kings on a journey  
Like them we follow stars and find You  
We will bring our gifts and give you homage  
Bowing in reverence because we are made new  
Your presence among us is important  
Without You we are incomplete  
Your intimacy with us in the Eucharist  
Is where our souls and Your love can meet

(Gayle Schrank is a member of St. Mary Parish in Navilleton. Photo: The sun peeks through tree branches behind a heart-shaped cactus in Canyon of the Eagles Nature Park in Burnet, Texas, in this photo from Dec. 28, 2024.) (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



# 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.

**AHLERS, Dorothea A.**, 97, Christ the King, Indianapolis, April 10. Mother of Bob, Jr., Chris, Drew and Matt Ahlers. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of nine.

**AJAME, Marie**, 104, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, March 24. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

**BARLOW, Lisa J. (Shaw)**, 61, St. Mary, North Vernon, April 11. Mother of Alex, Joe and Nick Barlow. Grandmother of two.

**BORDENKECHER, Ann (Sheridan)**, 87, St. Anthony, Indianapolis, April 16. Mother of Millie, Dan, John and Robert. Grandmother of five.

**HANAHAN, James R.**, 93, St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, April 17. Husband of Linda Hanahan. Father of Elizabeth Wortman, David and James Hanahan. Grandfather of two.

**HARPENAU, Sylvia N.**, 99, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg,



## World's oldest nun

Sister Francis Dominici Piscatella, a member of the Sisters of St. Dominic of Amityville, N.Y., who is recognized as the world's oldest nun, poses with Dominican Father Ron Henery after attending Mass on her 113th birthday on April 13 at the Dominican Sisters' motherhouse in Amityville. Sister Francis has been a religious sister for 95 years. (OSV News photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

April 9. Mother of Charlotte Cooley, Sharon Dobis, Benita Pate, Marvin and Stephen Harpenau. Sister of Martha Buechlein. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of eight. Great-great-grandmother of two.

**HOFFMEIER, Clifford N.**, 92, All Saints, Dearborn County, April 18. Father of Beverly Fisher, Sheila Knollman, Jeff and Ronald Hoffmeier. Brother of Lorán and Lester Hoffmeier. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of eight.

Step-grandfather of four. Step-great-grandfather of eight.

**HOLMAN, Betty**, 78, St. Paul, Tell City, April 1. Mother of David and James Holman. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of seven.

**HUTCHINSON, Sr., Merrill L.**, 91, All Saints, Dearborn County, April 11. Father of Jan Jackson, Julie Moore, Ed, Merrill, Jr., and Ted Hutchinson. Brother of Helen Cullen. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of 22.

**ISON, Paula K. (Konkle)**, 65, Prince of Peace, Madison, April 12. Wife of Denny Ison. Mother of Jared Ison. Sister of Donald, James, Loren and Robert Konkle.

**MARKET, Joan M.**, 92, Christ the King, Indianapolis, April 5. Mother of Larry and Richard Reader. Stepmother of Mary Weymouth. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of two.

**MCALOON, Adam**, 40, St. Simon the Apostle,

Indianapolis, April 16. Son of Greg and Molly McAloon. Brother of Erin Smith and Tyler McAloon. Uncle of several.

**POPP, Pauline A.**, 83, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, April 11. Mother of Alicia Bender and Michelle Cissell. Sister of Linda Russell and Darlene Stewart. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of eight.

**RAMSEY, Carlos B.**, 87, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, April 10. Husband of Carolyn

Ramsey. Father of Brandy Hettinger, Brad, John and Kevin Ramsey. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of two.

**RICHARDS, Anna Jo (Fry)**, 59, St. Mary, Rushville, April 18. Mother of Joe Richards. Sister of A.J. and Tom Fry.

**VOGEL, Melvin J.**, 78, St. Joseph, Jennings County, April 15. Husband of Rebecca Vogel. Father of Donna Vojkufka and Vincent Vogel. †

## Bishops' head calls for prayer after gunman attacks White House press dinner

(OSV News)—Following a gunman's attempted assault on the annual White House Correspondents' Association Dinner, forcing the evacuation of the president, first lady and members of the Cabinet, the head of the U.S. Catholic bishops' conference denounced the violence and called for all to resort to prayer.

"We are grateful the lives of the President, those who protect him, and everyone in attendance last night were spared from serious harm," Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), said in a statement on April 26.

"Let us all pray for our elected leaders and public officials that they may receive God's blessings," he said. "Because human life is a precious gift, there is no room for violence of any kind in our society."

President Donald J. Trump, first lady Melania Trump, Vice President JD Vance and several Cabinet members were whisked out of the annual dinner with the White House press corps on April 25, after a man rushed toward the main ballroom of the Washington Hilton where the event was held and briefly exchanged gunfire with law enforcement.

According to The Associated Press, witnesses heard about five to eight gunshots. Law enforcement told AP the suspect opened fire before Secret Service agents subdued him. One Secret Service officer was hospitalized after the alleged gunman shot at his bullet-proof vest but was released the next morning, according to the agency.

Attendees—largely hundreds of journalists who cover the White House—took shelter under tables, with some providing moment-by-moment updates to their various outlets amid the confusion.

The suspect was arraigned in federal District Court on April 27 and charged with three federal counts: attempted assassination of the President; discharging a firearm during a crime of violence; and transportation of a firearm and ammunition in interstate commerce with intent to commit a felony. Additional charges, including assault on a federal officer, remain a possibility as the investigation continues, law enforcement officials said.

Media reports have identified the suspect as Cole Tomas Allen, 31, a video game developer and teacher from the Los Angeles suburb of Torrance, Calif., who recently won a "teacher of the month" award.

Trump and the White House Correspondents' Association had initially wanted to continue with the program but deferred to law enforcement's judgment to cancel the event and evacuate. The event is expected to be rescheduled within 30 days.

The White House Correspondents' Association was founded in 1914, with its first dinner hosted in 1921. The

association, which has close to 900 members from almost 300 media outlets, works to ensure robust journalistic coverage of the White House.

Shortly after the incident, Bishop David J. Bonnar of Youngstown, Ohio, released a statement deploring the attack and calling for prayer.

"The United States is built on freedom and respect for all. There is no room for violence that endangers the life of any human being," said Bishop Bonnar.

"Moreover," he said, "the issue of gun violence must be addressed. Violence is never the answer."

Bishop Bonnar added, "We all must look deeper into the human heart to build each other up rather than tear each other down. We pray for peace in moments of disagreement and discord."

Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minn., a member of the Trump administration's Religious Liberty Commission, posted a message on the X social media platform on April 26, expressing his gratitude that the president and his entourage were unhurt.

"May I raise my voice against the viciousness and tribalism that are so prevalent on the internet and that contribute mightily to the violence we see in our political culture," he said. "Can we please remember that it is possible to disagree with a politician's ideas without demonizing and de-humanizing him? Jesus commended us to love our enemies, and that includes our ideological opponents."

Rob DeFrancesco, executive director of the Catholic Media Association, told OSV News the organization was "deeply unsettled by the attack."

"We are grateful to the brave men and women who stopped the assailant. We are also mindful that journalists today, including our own members, often work in environments where their profession puts them in danger," he said.

"Our mission is to share the truth in love," said DeFrancesco. "That mission requires a society where reporters can seek the truth without the threat of violence." †

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P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410  
**317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548**  
[victimassistance@archindy.org](mailto:victimassistance@archindy.org)

# New national garden promises healing for abuse survivors, all Catholics

WASHINGTON (OSV News)— A national garden in the nation's capital proposed by survivors of clergy sexual abuse promises to foster healing not only for survivors but also for the Catholic Church as a whole.

"We can't heal alone," said Mike Hoffman, chair of the National Healing Garden Working Group. "We want to heal with you, with our Church, with the bishops, with the priests. We want to heal together," added the executive director of the National Catholic Restorative Justice Initiative (NCRJI), a group dedicated to restorative justice for survivors of Catholic clergy abuse.

Hoffman, a survivor of childhood sexual abuse by clergy, and Deacon Bernie Nojadera, executive director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection, spoke with OSV News about the efforts behind the National Healing Garden, which will be on the grounds of The Catholic University of America in Washington.

In a statement, Peter Kilpatrick, president of Catholic University, said that the garden "will serve as a tangible sign of God's mercy and an extension of our commitment to lift up human dignity."

The university is managing fundraising efforts as well as collaborating on the design. Organizers are seeking to raise \$200,000 by spring 2027 to fund the garden that will include flowers, shrubbery, seating, plaques and a prayer labyrinth representing the nonlinear pathway of healing. The garden, which is currently being designed, will serve as a healing space for survivors of clergy abuse and for anyone who has been abused or impacted by abuse.

"Our outreach is to all survivors across the country of any kind of abuse ... no matter their faith background, no matter where they came from and no matter who the perpetrator was," Hoffman said.

The vision statement by the National Healing Garden Working Group—a group of seven clergy abuse survivors and other members, including Auxiliary Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala of Washington

driving the garden—reflects this desire.

Members of The Catholic Project, a Catholic University initiative dedicated to collaboration between clergy and laity in the wake of the Church's sexual abuse crisis, were also part of the working group from the beginning, including Stephen White, former executive director, and Sara Perla, acting director.

"As clergy sexual abuse survivors from across the United States, in relationship with the Church, we offer empathy and acknowledgement to all survivors of any kind of abuse," the statement reads. "In this sacred healing space, we invite the entire body of Christ into the journey of accompaniment and reconciliation, imploring God's mercy to bring healing to the lives of everyone harmed by abuse in the Church."

It concludes: "Pledge with us to continue working to respect, protect, defend and restore the dignity that all deserve as children of God."

The garden is put forth in relationship with the Church, particularly the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People. As liaison between the working group and the bishops' committee, Deacon Nojadera said the working group of survivors did the heavy lifting for this new project.

"In the end, I'm hoping the Church transforms, converts and ends up even a healthier and holier Church—and that's going to be with the assistance of our survivors, of our survivor-victims, who, in a way, are showing us what it is they need for this healing, for their healing," he said.

The garden draws inspiration from other, more local healing gardens across the country, including one in Chicago, which Hoffman was also behind, and five in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Hoffman, who also serves as chair of the Hope and Healing Committee of the Archdiocese of Chicago, said the Chicago garden helped him in his healing journey. He first came forward to tell his story of clergy abuse in 2006. He called a meeting with the late Cardinal Francis

E. George of Chicago, a Catholic University alumnus, his "major healing milestone." As a Church leader, the cardinal apologized to him.

"One reason why I'm here today is because I could unburden myself to Cardinal George, and he could hear that," Hoffman said of their 2008 meeting.

Hoffman stressed the importance of placing gardens in public, visible spaces. He said how these gardens are used is also important. The Chicago garden, which has been in place for more than a decade, holds an annual child abuse prevention prayer service attended by hundreds.

"That's healing to me," Hoffman said. "The issue has driven so many of us apart, and here is a healthy and healing space that has brought us together."

Hoffman suggested the garden's opening might coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Dallas Charter in 2027.



Pinwheels are seen planted in the Chicago Healing Garden in this 2014 photo. Plans for a similar garden are underway at The Catholic University of America in Washington, with organizers hoping to raise \$200,000 by spring 2027 to fund an area to include the flowers, shrubbery, seating, plaques and a prayer labyrinth. (OSV News photo/courtesy of St. Ignatius College Prep)

The charter, formally called the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," is a set of procedures from the USCCB for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by clergy and prevention of further acts of abuse. It was established by the USCCB in its 2002 spring plenary assembly held in Dallas. †

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