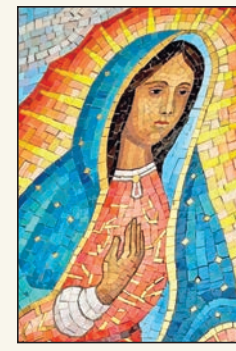




The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



December feast day

Parishes to host Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrations, page 7.

CriterionOnline.com

December 2, 2022

Vol. LXIII, No. 9 75¢



St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg is one of the 28 schools and parishes in central Indiana that participated in the continuing effort to emphasize the true meaning of Christmas and help make central Indiana the “Outdoor Nativity Scene Capital of the United States,” the goal of Jim Liston, who started the program. Jean McCorkhill, St. Malachy’s coordinator of children’s faith formation, and Father Sean Danda, pastor of the parish, pose by one of the Nativity scenes with Father Danda’s dogs, Finley and Bentley. (Submitted photo)

The love story of Christmas is celebrated and displayed in a Nativity scene project

By John Shaughnessy

Jean McCorkhill has a soft spot in her heart for a love story at Christmas.

And she can’t imagine a better one than the love story that features a mother, a father and a child—and the best Christmas gift that’s ever been given.

“It’s the gift of Christ’s birth,” McCorkhill says. “Without his birth, we couldn’t have his death and resurrection and our salvation. The love story between him

and us all begins with the birth of Christ.”

With that belief in her heart, McCorkhill embraced the opportunity to be part of the continuing effort to emphasize the true meaning of Christmas and help make central Indiana the “Outdoor Nativity Scene Capital of the United States.”

That effort started last year when Jim Liston—a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis—reached out to all the Catholic schools and parishes in the Indianapolis deaneries and Hamilton County in the Lafayette Diocese to

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Pope writes to Ukrainians, admiring their courage and commitment

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Nine months after Russia launched its war on Ukraine, Pope Francis wrote to the Ukrainian



Pope Francis

people expressing his admiration for their courage and commitment to their country in the face of so much death and destruction.

“In this sea of evil and sorrow—90 years after the terrible genocide of the Holodomor—I am in awe of your good passion,” the pope wrote in the letter on Nov. 24, which was not only nine months after the war began, but also the eve of commemorations of the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor, a famine engineered by Soviet leader Josef Stalin that led to the deaths of millions of Ukrainians.

“Despite the immense tragedy they are suffering, the Ukrainian people have never been discouraged or given in to pity,” the pope wrote. “The world has recognized a bold and strong people, a people that suffers and prays, mourns and struggles, resists and hopes: a noble and martyred people.”

Pope Francis assured Ukrainians that he prays for them constantly, calls attention to their plight publicly and continues to support humanitarian aid for them so they would know they are not alone and so that people around the world would continue to provide aid.

Ukrainian Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of Kyiv-Halych, who had met Pope Francis on Nov. 7 at the Vatican, said he was grateful for the letter, which was a response to his request that the pope make “a gesture of paternal concern that could reassure the Ukrainian people of the love and closeness of the Church.”

“While the highest representatives of the aggressor state deny the Ukrainian people their right to exist, their identity,

See UKRAINE, page 2

U.S. bishops reiterate Church’s ‘firm opposition’ to Respect for Marriage Act

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The chairmen of two U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) committees reiterated the U.S. bishops’ “firm opposition” to the “misnamed” Respect for Marriage Act.

In a Nov. 23 joint letter to all members of Congress, the chairmen said they were writing “to implore Congress to reverse course” on H.R. 8404, also known as RMA.

Issuing the letter were Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee for Religious Liberty, and Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minn., chairman

of the USCCB’s Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth.

“Tragically, Congress’s consideration

of RMA now takes place in the wake of the horrific attack in Colorado Springs,” they said, referring to the mass shooting at an LGBTQ bar in Colorado that left six people dead and many more injured. “We echo the statement of our brother Bishop [James R.] Golka of Colorado Springs in condemnation of this senseless crime.

“Our opposition to RMA by no means condones any hostility toward anyone

who experiences same-sex attraction,” Cardinal Dolan and Bishop Barron said. “Catholic teaching on marriage

is inseparable from Catholic teaching on the inherent dignity and worth of every human being. To attack one is to attack the other. Congress must have the courage to defend both.”

The prelates’ letter came ahead of the Senate’s expected final vote on the Respect for Marriage Act; the Senate advanced the measure with a 62-37 vote on Nov. 16.

The bill would codify the Supreme Court’s 2015 ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that found a

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Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan



Bishop Robert E. Barron

Pax Christi USA honoree



Pearlette Springer, the director of Black Catholic Ministry for the archdiocese, was honored with the Ambassador of Peace Award from Pax Christi USA during a Mass at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis on Nov. 13. Springer is one of 20 Ambassadors of Peace chosen from across the country by the national Catholic peace organization that is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. She received the honor for her determined efforts to fight racism. She has served Pax Christi USA since 2001, including being a co-leader of its anti-racism team and serving as the chairperson of its board of directors.

(Submitted photo)



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

December 3-14, 2022

December 3 – 5:30 p.m.
Mass and dinner for 75th Anniversary Celebration of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, Indianapolis, at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish

December 4 – 1-8 p.m.
Masses and visitations at Federal Correctional Institution, Terre Haute

December 6 – 10 a.m.
Clergy Advent Day of Prayer at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis

December 6 – 3:30 p.m.
Indiana Bishops' Province meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

December 7 – 9 a.m.
Indiana Catholic Conference meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

December 7 – 1 p.m.
Ascension Healthcare meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

December 8 – 8:15 a.m.
Virtual Judicatories meeting

December 8 – 10 a.m.
Mass at Marian University Bishop Chartrand Memorial Chapel, Indianapolis

December 8 – noon
Mass for Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

December 9 – 5:30 p.m.
Little Sisters of the Poor Christmas Celebration at The Willows, Indianapolis

December 11 – 10:30 a.m.
Mass and reception for 100th Anniversary Celebration of St. Roch Parish, Indianapolis, at St. Roch Parish

December 14 – 1:30 p.m.
Visit to Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School, Madison

Advent watching includes noticing God at work in daily life, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Being so distracted that one does not notice God's presence in daily life is a warning sign that one is not being vigilant enough, Pope Francis cautioned.

Vigilance during Advent is key, Pope Francis said, because Jesus "warns us: there is the danger of not realizing his coming and being unprepared for his visit."

Speaking to pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square for the recitation of the *Angelus* prayer on the First Sunday of Advent, Nov. 27, Pope Francis urged

Christians to be watchful for the signs of God's presence in ordinary life.

"God is hidden in our life," Pope Francis explained. "He is concealed in the most common and most ordinary situations in our life."

The pope contrasted the watchful spirit of Advent with the attitude common in the "days of Noah," when people went about their daily activities without paying attention to God's voice in their lives.

"People in the time of Noah ate and drank and 'did not know until the flood

came and swept them all away' " (Mt 24:38-39), Pope Francis said, quoting the day's Gospel reading from St. Matthew. "They were absorbed in their own things and did not realize that the flood was about to come."

The truth is that God is present "in our daily work, in a chance encounter, in the face of someone in need," Pope Francis said. "Even when we face days that seem gray and monotonous, it is right there that we find the Lord, who calls to us, speaks to us and inspires our actions."

During Advent, Pope Francis said, "Let us be shaken out of our torpor and let us awaken from slumber!"

To help the process, he suggested people ask themselves, "Am I aware of what I am doing? Am I alert? Am I awake?"

Doing this, the pope explained, people will be ready not only to celebrate Christmas, but their souls will be ready when Christ comes again at the end of the world.

"If we are unaware of his coming today, we will also be unprepared when he arrives at the end of time," the pope said. †

UKRAINE

continued from page 1

their language and their Church, the pope addresses this people, recognizes them and admires their resistance," the archbishop said.

In his letter, Pope Francis acknowledged how the people had been living with the "sinister roar of explosions and the ominous sound of sirens" since Russia launched the war in late February and how many people, especially women and children, had been forced to flee.

"Your cities are pummeled by bombs as showers of missiles cause death, destruction and pain, hunger, thirst and cold," he said. "Alongside your great rivers flow rivers of blood and tears every day.

"I would like to join my tears to yours and tell you that there is not a day when I am not close to you and do not carry you in my heart and in my prayers," he said. "Your pain is my pain.

"In the cross of Jesus today I see you, you who suffer the terror unleashed by this aggression," he wrote. "Yes,

the cross that tortured the Lord lives again in the tortures found on the corpses in the mass graves discovered in various cities, in those and so many other bloody images that have entered our souls, that make us cry out: 'Why? How can people treat other people this way?'"

Pope Francis, who has been in regular contact with the bishops of Ukraine and with the Ukrainian ambassador to the Holy See and has met Ukrainian government representatives and wives of Ukrainian soldiers, mentioned specific stories he has heard.

"First of all, those of the little ones: how many children killed, injured or orphaned, torn from their mothers," he wrote. "I weep with you for every little one who, because of this war, has lost his or her life, like Kira in Odessa, like Lisa in Vinnytsia and like hundreds of other children: in each one of them the whole of humanity is defeated."

Pope Francis also mentioned the children who, according to news reports and humanitarian organizations, have been forcibly taken to Russia. The pope described them as having been "deported" and noted that with the deaths, deportations and displacement, "the pain of Ukrainian mothers is incalculable."

Turning to Ukrainian young adults, the pope said he knew that "to courageously defend your homeland, you had to put your hands to weapons instead of the dreams you had cultivated for the future."

Pope Francis also praised the priests and religious who "have remained close to the people, bringing God's consolation and the solidarity of your brothers and sisters, creatively transforming community spaces and convents into shelters where you can offer hospitality, relief and food to those in difficult conditions."

Offering prayers for Ukraine's political leaders, the pope noted the heavy burden they have of governing "in tragic times," and trying "to make far-sighted decisions for peace" and for the recovery of the country and its economy, especially when Russia had targeted so much of the country's infrastructure, particularly its power grid.

Pope Francis said he knew the suffering could intensify as the winter cold sets in, but it also is the time of Advent and preparation for Christmas, celebrating the birth of Jesus, the prince of peace.

"May he fulfil the just expectations of your hearts, heal your wounds and give you his consolation," the pope said. †

The Criterion

Phone Numbers:
Main office:..... 317-236-1570
Advertising..... 317-236-1585
Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570
Circulation / Subscriptions: .. 317-236-1425
Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570

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

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

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The Criterion (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.

1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
317-236-1570
800-382-9836 ext. 1570
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Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
Copyright © 2022
Criterion Press Inc.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to:
Criterion Press Inc.
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

The Criterion 12/02/22

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Father Donald Buchanan served as a parish priest, teacher and Navy chaplain

By Sean Gallagher

Father Donald Buchanan, a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, died on Nov. 19 at Norton Hospital in Louisville, Ky. He was 90.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 28 at American Martyrs Church in Scottsburg. Burial followed at Austin Cemetery in Austin.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant of the funeral Mass. Father John Meyer, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, was the homilist.

An archdiocesan priest for 57 years, Father Buchanan served in central and southern Indiana as a parish priest and as a high school and college instructor and chaplain. From 1995-98, he ministered around the world as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy.

That wasn't his first experience in the armed forces. Before Father Buchanan became a seminarian in the late 1950s, he served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force.

In a 2015 interview with *The Criterion* on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his ordination, Father Buchanan recalled his military service on a hydrogen bomb-armed B-47 bomber at the height of the Cold War.

"I carried the uranium core strapped to my leg all the time in case I had to bail out to protect it, because it was priceless," Father Buchanan recalled.

It was during his military service, however, that he had a "religious experience."

"I just kind of surrendered to God," Father Buchanan said. "I would go to the seminary if that's he wanted. I felt at peace from then on. Before, everything I had tried I succeeded at. But it never satisfied me."

He found that satisfaction in his life and ministry as a priest.

"It's been a fantastic experience," said Father Buchanan. "I wouldn't want it to be any different."



Fr. Donald Buchanan

That satisfaction continued well into his retirement as Father Buchanan until about a year ago would regularly celebrate Mass and other sacraments, especially in Seymour Deanery parishes.

Father Daniel Staublin, pastor of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour and dean of the Seymour Deanery, described Father Buchanan as "the Energizer Bunny" and appreciated how he embraced his life and ministry as a priest.

"He truly took the servant part of that very seriously," said Father Staublin. "All those years, he served faithfully in the military. Then he came back home and was certainly a great servant to the parishes here in the Seymour Deanery—always with a smile."

Father Buchanan also valued priestly fraternity, according to Father Meyer. The two came to know each other when Father Meyer was serving as pastor of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison and Most Sorrowful Mother of God Parish in Vevay. Father Buchanan had previously ministered in both towns.

"He was a good support and friend," said Father Meyer. "He was somebody I could count on and talk to. He was always affirming to me in my ministry."

"It reminds me to trust that God will continue to use us as priests, even when we think that we've completed our mission in parishes."

Donald Edward Buchanan was born on Sept. 13, 1932, in Madison to the late Hubert and Evelyn (Smith) Buchanan. He was baptized in the former St. Michael Church in Madison and confirmed in St. Francis Xavier Church in Henryville.

After graduating from Austin High School in 1950, Father Buchanan attended Indiana University in Bloomington, participating there in the Reserve Officer Training Corps program.

After earning a bachelor's degree in education there and a master's degree at the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana, Father Buchanan served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force for four years during the Korean War.

Upon completing his service in the military, Father

Buchanan became an archdiocesan seminarian, receiving priestly formation at the former St. Mary's College in St. Mary's, Ky., and the former St. Maur Seminary in South Union, Ky.

Father Buchanan was ordained a priest on May 2, 1965, at the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad by Archbishop Paul C. Schulte. He celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving on May 9 at American Martyrs Church in Scottsburg.

His first pastoral assignment was as associate pastor of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish and as instructor at Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School, both in Indianapolis, serving at both from 1965-66.

He then ministered as associate pastor of the former St. Mary and St. Michael parishes and as an instructor at Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School, all in Madison, from 1966-67.

Father Buchanan next served as associate pastor of St. Patrick Parish and instructor at the former Paul C. Schulte High School, both in Terre Haute, from 1967-70.

From 1971-83, Father Buchanan ministered as a theology instructor at Marian University in Indianapolis and as a chaplain at the Indiana Boys School in Plainfield and the Clermont Girls School in Clermont.

He returned to Madison and Vevay in 1983, serving for two years as an instructor at Shawe, and as administrator of Most Sorrowful Mother of God and the former St. Anthony Parish in China.

From 1985-98, Father Buchanan served as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy, ministering in Bahrain, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Spain and the U.S., retiring with the rank of lieutenant commander.

Father Buchanan retired from active ministry in 1998.

He is survived by two sisters, Mary Ellen Buchanan and Jo Nell Buchanan, both of Austin, and a brother, Hubert Buchanan of Amherst, N.H.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Austin Alumni Association in care of Buchanan Funeral Home, 115 N. Second Street, Austin, IN 47102. †

With *America* magazine, pope talks about Church division, women, abortion

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In a wide-ranging interview with top staff of *America* magazine, Pope Francis decried increased polarization within the Catholic Church, affirmed the need to involve more women in Church administration, but ruled out women priests and emphasized the importance of the ministry of individual bishops over the role of a bishops' conference.

"The more polarization there is, the more one loses the Catholic spirit and falls into a sectarian spirit," the pope told staff from the Jesuit weekly. "What is Catholic is not either-or, but is both-and, combining differences."

Jesuit Fathers Matt Malone and Sam Sawyer, respectively the outgoing and incoming editors of *America*; executive editor Kerry Weber; Vatican correspondent Gerard O'Connell; and podcast host Gloria Purvis interviewed Pope Francis on Nov. 22. The interview was released on Nov. 28.

Asked about abortion and the way the emphasis on Church teaching against abortion seemed to be politicizing and polarizing Catholics in the United States, Pope Francis insisted a fetus is a human being and repeated his view that abortion is killing a human being to resolve a problem.

But, he said, the problem for the Church "arises when this reality of killing a human being is transformed into a political question, or when a pastor of the Church uses political categories."

"When I see a problem like this one, which is a crime, become strongly, intensely political, there is a failure of pastoral care in approaching this problem," the pope said. "We cannot deal with [abortion] as if it is only a civil matter."

Pope Francis did not explain how he thought a bishop or priest could explain Church teaching in a way that was pastoral but not political, and he declined to give an opinion on whether the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops should present the fight against abortion as its pre-eminent concern.

"This is a problem the bishops' conference has to resolve within itself. What interests me is the relationship of the bishop with the people, which is sacramental," he said. "The sacramental part of the pastoral ministry is in the relationship between the pastor and the people of God, between the bishop and

his people. And this cannot be delegated to the bishops' conference.

"Jesus did not create bishops' conferences," the pope said. "Jesus created bishops, and each bishop is pastor of his people."

On the question of women in the Church, Pope Francis insisted that ordained ministry is open only to men, but that the Church has a feminine, Marian dimension. He said administrative roles do not belong to either theological category, and the Church should appoint more women to those offices.

"That the woman does not enter into the ministerial life is not a deprivation. No," the pope said. The place of women, as a "mirror" of the Church as mother and spouse, "is much more important," although he admitted the Catholic Church has not done a very good job developing that aspect of theology and explaining it.

On the question of Russia's unjust war on Ukraine and on the Vatican's relationship with China, Pope Francis insisted that openness to dialogue is the best way forward.

While many Ukrainians and others would like the pope to condemn Russia and Russian President Vladimir Putin by name, the pope said he did not think it was necessary. "If you have a martyred people, you have someone who martyrs them."

"Why do I not name Putin? Because it is not necessary; it is already known," he said, adding that "the position of the Holy See is to seek peace and to seek an understanding. The diplomacy of the Holy See is moving in this direction and, of course, is always willing to mediate."

As for China, the interview was conducted two days before a bishop was installed as "auxiliary bishop of Jiangxi," a diocese the Vatican does not recognize and an appointment the Vatican said it did not agree to, in violation of its controversial accord with China on the appointment of bishops.

Asked about criticism that the Vatican has been silent on China's human rights violations in exchange for having input on the appointment of bishops, the pope said: "It is not a matter of speaking or silence. That is not the reality. The reality is to dialogue or not to dialogue. And one dialogues up to the point that is possible."

"With China, I have opted for the way

of dialogue. It is slow, it has its failures, it has its successes, but I cannot find another way," Pope Francis said. "There are

Christians there. They have to be cared for, so that they may be good Chinese and good Christians." †

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Editorial



A woman prays during Mass on the first Sunday of Advent at St. Sylvester Church in Medford, N.Y., on Nov. 27. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Make this Advent season a spiritually fruitful time

When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #524, Jn 3:3).

We've entered the season of Advent, a time in which the Church encourages us to listen actively, to prepare our hearts, to form our minds and improve our lives with the help of God's grace in anticipation of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ and his ultimate coming again in glory.

It is the beginning of a new liturgical year, a time we can use to re-set how we live as disciples of Christ. It also offers a stirring call to stay awake, to be vigilant for the presence of the Lord.

Because of the secular influences around nearly every corner we turn, there are distractions. And they come at us full force without hesitation—whether intentional or not—and offer materialistic things to divert us from centering our lives on the upcoming birth of our Savior.

Holiday advertisements—the vast majority of them secular in nature—fill TV and radio airwaves. Turn on your desktop computer or look on your phone, and pop-up ads try to lure you into buying things that you probably don't need. Our mailboxes include flyers from stores that are having holiday sales they insist you cannot miss.

In a season where people of faith want to be centered on the awareness that God is coming into the world as a babe in a manger, the temptations to focus on anything but Christ's birth seem to never end.

As we move ahead through Advent in the weeks leading to Christmas, we need to block out the noise and ask: what is the Lord calling me to do? Focusing on prayer, Scripture and the sacraments are among the opportunities that come to mind as ways to grow in our lives of faith.

We must keep prayer at the center of this season. As disciples of Christ, we

are called—day in and day out—to offer petitions for those in need. The hungry, the homeless, the unborn, those in war-torn countries and all our brothers and sisters in need should be at the top of our list. It is paramount to remember those who will go without life's basic needs and be the hands and feet of Christ to them.

Make time for spiritual reading. Many parishes offer faith-based reflections like *The Magnificat Advent Companion* or the Little Blue Book published for the Advent and Christmas season by the Diocese of Saginaw, Mich., each year. Or pick up a Bible and study in-depth the readings during Advent that will lead to the Nativity of our Lord.

Why not volunteer at your parish, at a shelter or food pantry—or at any facility—that offers assistance to those in need? Families who do this together offer a beautiful witness of faith—especially during this time of year. Our faith teaches us that Christ makes disciples through other disciples.

Finally, make time to receive the sacrament of reconciliation. Confession cleanses our souls and renews and restores us to receive God's gift of grace.

In a talk to young people during a visit to Hungary in 2021, Pope Francis called it a sacrament of joy.

"One does not go to confession as chastised people who must humble themselves, but as children who run to receive the Father's embrace," the pope explained to the young people. "And the Father lifts us up in every situation, he forgives our every sin. Hear this well: God always forgives! Do you understand? God always forgives!"

One is not going to a judge to settle accounts, the Holy Father continued, but "to Jesus who loves me and heals me."

Want to receive the sacrament of reconciliation? Peruse your parish bulletin or turn to page 7 in this week's issue of *The Criterion* for a list of the archdiocese's 11 deaneries and where confession services are being offered.

As we move forward in focusing our attention to the stable in Bethlehem, we pray the coming days are spiritually fruitful for people of faith.

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/John Shaughnessy

Will we accept and embrace this gift of love?

When I look in the mirror, I see my flaws.
When I look in my heart, my flaws are just as easy to see.



The thing is, I don't think I'm alone in having these reactions.

Yet while those thoughts may be nearly universal, so is the desire to be accepted, embraced and loved in spite of our flaws.

And when that happens, when we feel that acceptance, that embrace, *that love* deep in our bones, the world changes for us.

It can come in the love of parents and siblings who may know our flaws better than anyone, who occasionally remind us of our flaws, and who won't tolerate anyone outside the family who *even thinks* we have any flaws.

It can come in the love of grandparents, usually the only people on Earth who sincerely consider the possibility that we have no flaws.

It can also come in the love of just one true friend—which is enough if we've truly been blessed—who will stand with us in the tough times as well as celebrate with us in the good times.

And it can come in the love of someone who vowed to be our one and only, who once saw us through rose-colored glasses, and who continues to embrace that vow even as their vision has improved dramatically, and they now see our flaws oh so clearly.

All these loves are an extension of the way that God loves us, a love story that is renewed again at this time of year.

An angel appears with an offer of God's love.

A young woman embraces the offer because of her great love for God.

A man stands by the young woman, even as he has doubts, because his love starts and ends with his concern for her.

It's a compelling love story at all levels, and what makes it even more powerful is the choice that God made in shaping the story and his plan—that humanity, with all its flaws, would be at

the heart of the story; that the purpose of his plan would require the help and participation of flawed humans.

God chooses to send his Son, the Savior of the world, as a baby who will be completely dependent on two humans in a desolate part of the world.

In making that choice, God also sets up a choice that will continue through the ages, even to our current world.

Do we welcome Christ into our lives as Mary and Joseph did, or do we turn him away as the owner of the inn did?

Do we embrace and celebrate Christ in our lives as the shepherds and the three kings did, or do we reject him as Herod did?

Years ago, I shared the story of a man who made beautiful Nativity sets, a skilled artist who made his own defining choice in creating the stables. He added a cross to each one, explaining his choice in this way, "I just thought the cross should be an important part of the Nativity. Without the death and the Resurrection, there wouldn't be much of a reason for the Christmas story."

Flash forward to Christ's death and resurrection, a time when humanity's flaws were on full display as Christ's closest friends betrayed and rejected him. Yet in the midst of Christ's journey to the cross, a stranger—a man with flaws—becomes an essential partner in the scene as he helps Christ.

That sharing of the cross adds another defining dimension to the connection between God and man—as Christ and Simon walked together toward a moment that changed the world forever.

From beginning to end, God made a choice in including humanity, with all its flaws, at the center of his plan for salvation. It all flows from his acceptance of us, his embrace of us, his love for us—his desire to change the world for us.

Now, as in any love story, the choice is ours.

Will we accept and embrace this gift of love?

(John Shaughnessy is assistant editor of *The Criterion*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.) †

Be Our Guest/Sr. Constance Veit, L.S.P.

From darkness into light this Advent

Our motherhouse is located on a large property in a tiny village in rural France. With its old stone buildings, expansive pastures, flower gardens and shaded pathways, it's a gorgeously bucolic setting and the most peaceful place I've ever been.

During the year I lived there, I don't think I heard a single airplane overhead, an emergency siren or even a car horn. The nighttime silence and dark, starlit skies were especially striking.

Looking up at the stars, I felt the deep security of knowing I was enveloped by God's love.

The memory of those starry Breton skies still quiets my soul and fills me with a sense of peacefulness in the midst of life's inevitable difficulties.

What a contrast this is to the darkness enveloping our Ukrainian brothers and sisters this winter as their country continues to be bombarded on a daily basis. This darkness is not a blanket of security or prayerful serenity—although cries to God no doubt rise from it—but an inescapable cloud of fear and dread.

As I think of the people of Ukraine during this Advent season, I am reminded

of the words of the prophet Isaiah about the people dwelling in darkness (Is 9:2). This passage speaks of a burdensome yoke, a taskmaster's rod, boots tramped in battle and cloaks rolled in blood.

This is harsh military imagery.

The people living in darkness are wounded and oppressed, like our Ukrainian brothers and sisters today. They desperately need someone to shine a light into the cold cellars and improvised bunkers in which they huddle.

They need a savior.

It is just after the winter solstice, the darkest point of the year, that we celebrate the coming of our Savior at Christmas.

Isaiah proclaims, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who lived in a land of gloom a light has shone. ... For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace" (Is 9:1,5).

In their icons, Ukrainian Catholics and Orthodox Christians traditionally portray the Nativity scene as a black cave surrounded by jagged rocks. This inhospitable setting represents the cruel and sinful world into which Jesus was born.

From heaven, a large star sends a single shaft of light to pierce the darkness

See GUEST, page 14



Christ the Cornerstone

A voice of hope calls us to prepare for the Lord's coming

“John [the Baptist] was a burning and shining lamp, and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light. But I have testimony greater than John's” (Jn 5:35-36).

The Gospel reading for the Second Sunday of Advent (Mt 3:1-12) shines a light on the figure of St. John the Baptist, who was the last great Old Testament prophet.

Sacred Scripture first introduces us to John as an unborn child in his mother's womb. As St. Luke describes the scene, “When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, ‘Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb’” (Lk 1:41-42).

This same John later appears as a mature, charismatic figure preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Mt 3:2). People flock to hear his preaching and to receive the baptism of repentance that he administers.

As St. Matthew tells us:

John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and

wild honey. At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins. (Mt 3:4-6)

This baptism of repentance is intended to prepare for the greater baptism that Jesus will institute as the first and most fundamental sacrament that his disciples will receive once the Church is born at Pentecost.

John is a precursor (forerunner) of Jesus. “I am baptizing you with water, for repentance,” John tells the crowds, “but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire” (Mt 3:11-12).

Fire and the Holy Spirit are the gifts that Jesus will use to transform our hardened hearts and make possible the conversion of life that all of his followers are required to embrace.

During the season of Advent, we re-live the experience of intense longing that characterized the people of Israel who came to hear what John the Baptist

prophesied. What John promised was the fulfillment of Isaiah's vision as outlined in this Sunday's first reading (Is 11:1-10):

Not by appearance shall he judge, nor by hearsay shall he decide, but he shall judge the poor with justice, and decide aright for the land's afflicted. He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. Justice shall be the band around his waist, and faithfulness a belt upon his hips. Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them. (Is 11:3-6)

The longed-for future will be radically different from the present. Peace, harmony, unity-in-diversity, and compassion for people in need is the promise that John the Baptist affirms through his self-denial, his preaching and his baptism of repentance.

Jesus himself describes John as “a burning and shining lamp” (Jn 5:35). But his light is only temporary. John prefigures the light of Christ, but he insists that the one who is to come is “mightier” than he is, and that

the coming Lord will “burn with unquenchable fire.”

In the second reading for this Sunday (Rom 15: 4-9), St. Paul tells us that “whatever was written previously was written for our instruction, that by endurance and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (Rom 15:4).

This is what Advent is all about: Waiting in joyful hope for the One who is himself our “Blessed Hope.” He is the one whose baptism is not simply symbolic but is truly transformational and redemptive.

As St. Matthew says, it was of John the Baptist that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: “A voice of one crying out in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths” (Mt 3:3).

John is the voice of hope. He challenges us to prepare for the Lord's coming, and he assures us that the prophetic vision of Isaiah will be realized in Christ.

This Sunday, let's listen to the word of God as it invites us to be ready when Jesus comes again. And let's pray that the Holy Spirit who has baptized us in Christ will enkindle in us the unquenchable fire of God's love. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Una voz de esperanza nos llama a preparar la venida del Señor

“Juan era una antorcha que ardía y alumbraba, y por algún tiempo ustedes quisieron regocijarse en su luz. Pero yo cuento con un testimonio mayor que el de Juan” (Jn 5:35-36).

La lectura del Evangelio del segundo domingo de Adviento (Mt 3:1-12) destaca la figura de san Juan Bautista, el último gran profeta del Antiguo Testamento.

Las Sagradas Escrituras nos presentan primero a Juan como un niño no nacido en el vientre de su madre. Tal como san Lucas describe la escena: “al oír Elisabet el saludo de María, la criatura saltó en su vientre y Elisabet recibió la plenitud del Espíritu Santo. Entonces ella exclamó a voz en cuello: ‘¡Bendita eres tú entre las mujeres, y bendito es el fruto de tu vientre!’” (Lc 1:41-42).

Ese mismo Juan aparece más adelante como un personaje maduro y carismático predicando en el desierto de Judea y diciendo “Arrepiéntanse, porque el reino de los cielos está cerca” (Mt 3:2). La gente acude en masa a escuchar su prédica y a recibir el bautismo de arrepentimiento que administra.

Como nos dice san Mateo:

Juan usaba un vestido de pelo de camello, llevaba un cinto de

cuero alrededor de la cintura, y se alimentaba de langostas y miel silvestre. A él acudía la gente de Jerusalén y de toda Judea, y de toda la provincia cercana al río Jordán, y allí en el Jordán la gente confesaba sus pecados y Juan los bautizaba. (Mt 3:4-6).

La finalidad de este bautismo de arrepentimiento era allanar el camino para el bautismo mayor que Jesús instituirá como el primer y más fundamental sacramento que recibirán sus discípulos una vez que nazca la Iglesia en Pentecostés.

Juan es el precursor de Jesús. “A decir verdad, yo los bautizo en agua en señal de arrepentimiento, pero el que viene después de mí, de quien no soy digno de llevar su calzado, es más poderoso que yo. Él los bautizará en Espíritu Santo y fuego. Ya tiene el bieldo en la mano, de modo que limpiará su era, recogerá su trigo en el granero, y quemará la paja en un fuego que nunca se apagará” (Mt 3:11-12).

El fuego y el Espíritu Santo son los dones que Jesús utilizará para transformar nuestros corazones endurecidos y hacer posible la conversión de vida que todos sus seguidores están obligados a asumir

Durante el tiempo de Adviento revivimos la experiencia de intenso

anhelo que caracterizó al pueblo de Israel que acudió a escuchar lo que profetizó Juan el Bautista. Lo que Juan prometió fue el cumplimiento de la visión de Isaías esbozada en la primera lectura de este domingo (Is 11:1-10):

No juzgará según las apariencias, ni dictará sentencia según los rumores. Defenderá los derechos de los pobres, y dictará sentencias justas en favor de la gente humilde del país. Su boca será la vara que hiera la tierra; sus labios serán el ventarrón que mate al impío. La justicia y la fidelidad serán el cinto que ceñirá su cintura. El lobo convivirá con el cordero; el leopardo se acostará junto al cabrito; el becerro, el león y el animal engordado andarán juntos, y un chiquillo los pastoreará. (Is 11:3-6)

El futuro anhelado será radicalmente diferente del presente. La paz, la armonía, la unidad en la diversidad y la compasión por los necesitados es la promesa que Juan el Bautista afirma a través de su abnegación, su predicación y su bautismo de arrepentimiento.

El propio Jesús describe a Juan como “una antorcha que ardía y alumbraba” (Jn 5:35). Pero su luz es únicamente temporal; Juan pregona la luz de Cristo, pero insiste en que el que ha de venir es “más poderoso”

que él, y que el Señor que viene trae “un fuego que nunca se apagará.”

En la primera lectura de este domingo (Rom 15:4-9), san Pablo nos dice que “Las cosas que se escribieron antes, se escribieron para nuestra enseñanza, a fin de que tengamos esperanza por medio de la paciencia y la consolación de las Escrituras” (Rom 15:4).

De eso se trata el Adviento: esperar jubilosamente a Aquel que es en sí mismo la “Buena Nueva.” Aquel cuyo bautismo no es un mero acto simbólico, sino que es verdaderamente transformador y redentor.

Tal como señala san Mateo, el profeta Isaías se refería a Juan el Bautista cuando dijo: “Una voz clama en el desierto:

Preparen el camino del Señor; enderecen sus sendas” (Mt 3:3).

Juan es la voz de la esperanza que nos desafía a prepararnos para la venida del Señor, y nos asegura que la visión profética de Isaías se cumplirá en Cristo.

Este domingo, escuchemos la Palabra de Dios que nos invita a estar preparados para cuando Jesús vuelva. Y recemos para que el Espíritu Santo que nos ha bautizado en Cristo encienda en nosotros el fuego inextinguible del amor de 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.

December 3-22

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Shop INN-Spiced Christmas Sale**, Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Dec. 3 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Dec. 10, 17 and 22 9 a.m.-noon; many items 25-75% off. Information: 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

December 5-January 6

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish, 23455 Gaven Ln., Bright. **Bright Lights: Christmas Light Drive-Thru Display**, 6-10 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, free. Information 812-512-1941 or brightlightsdcc@gmail.com.

December 6

The Ritz Charles, 12156 N. Meridian St., Carmel, Ind. **Right to Life of Indiana Christmas Gala**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., CEO and founder of Babylon Bee Seth Dillon presenting, \$100 individual, \$1,000 table of 10. Information, registration: 317-413-9123 or irtl.org/GALA.

December 7

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and

social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

December 8-10

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **40 Hours Devotion**, 8 p.m. Thurs.-5:30 p.m. Sat., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with talks by guest priests, free. Information: 317-888-2861.

December 10

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteering Opportunity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., ages 12-18, assist retired Providence Sisters. Information, registration: TeenVolunteer.SistersofProvidence.org, jluna@spsmw.org or 361-500-9505.

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Christmas Fun at the Woods**, 1:30-4:30 p.m., \$7, ages 3 and younger free.

Information, registration: 812-535-2952, cutt.ly/woodsfun22 or provctr@spsmw.org.

December 12

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

December 13

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available at cutt.ly/Taize. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

December 14, 28

Group Lectio via Zoom, 7 p.m., second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, Benedictine Sister Jill Marie Reuber, facilitator, sponsored by Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Information: vocation@thedome.org.

December 15

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery

and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Christmas Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Director of Vatican's *Laudato Si'* Action Platform John A. Mundell presenting "Walking the Walk: Business, Catholicism, and the Environment," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Dec. 13. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

December 17

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House Chapel, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Service of the Longest Night**, 6 p.m. CT, prayer service for those grieving during the holidays, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presiding, refreshments provided, RSVP requested. Information: 800-987-7380 or info@abbeycaskets.com.

December 18

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center O'Shaughnessy Dining Hall,

1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Sunday Brunch with Santa**, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m., \$19.50 adults, \$18.50 ages 62 and older, \$9.50 ages 5-11, ages 4 and younger free. Information: Events.SistersofProvidence.org or 630-776-0811.

December 19

Sr. Thea Bowman Black Catholic Women Monthly Prayer Gathering, via Zoom, third Monday of each month, sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, 7 p.m. Join meeting: cutt.ly/SrTheaPrayer, meeting ID: 810 3567 0684 or dial-in at 301-715-8592. Information: Pearllette Springer, pspringer@archindy.org or 317-236-1474.

The Villages of Indiana online Foster Parenting Virtual Information Night, 6-8 p.m., for those interested in becoming a foster parent, free. Information, registration: 317-775-6500 or cutt.ly/villagesindyreg.

December 21

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Christmas Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

December 22

St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

2023

January 6

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

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass 5:45 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Rd. W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion**, 11:45 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512. †

Retreats and Programs

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

December 16-18

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Benedictine Spirituality as Lived in Marriage**, for married couples, Deacon Rich and Cherie Zoldak presenting, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

December 18

Virtual Advent Retreat: New Beginnings with Jesus, 7:30-8:45 p.m., fourth of four stand-alone sessions, women ages 18-42, sponsored by Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, free. Information and registration: 361-500-9505 or jluna@spsmw.org.

2023

January 9-13

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Winter Chant Workshop: Singing and Conducting Chant**, Benedictine Brother John Glasenapp presenting, \$750 single, \$835 double, commuter \$200. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

January 11, Feb. 16, March 9

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40 per day, includes room, continental

breakfast, lunch and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional \$30, dinner additional \$10. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681 or lcoons@archindy.org.

January 14, April 1

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Faith and the Arts**, 9 a.m.-noon, Indiana State University Professor Emeritus Dr. Arthur Feinsod presenting, \$25 includes materials, refreshments provided, register by Jan. 11 for

Jan. 14 and by March 29 for April 1. Information, registration: 812-535-2952, jfrost@spsmw.org or spsmw.org/events.

February 10-12

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Welcoming In-laws**, Valentine retreat for married couples, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

February 28-March 2

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Freedom Through Forgiveness**,

Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, \$300 single, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

March 17-19

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Christian Hospitality: Welcoming One Another As Christ**, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, \$300 single, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

March 19

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-

the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Mystics—A Journey of Discovery: St. Bridget of Sweden**, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Providence Sister Paula Damiano presenting, \$25 includes materials and refreshments provided. Information, registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or spsmw.org/events.

March 24-26

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Welcoming In-laws**, second Valentine Retreat for married couples, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats. †

Philippine Simbang Gabi Mass novena will take place in nine Indianapolis area churches on Dec. 15-23

Nine Indianapolis area churches will take part in a series of nine Masses leading up to Christmas as part of Simbang Gabi, a traditional Philippine Advent devotion, from Dec. 15-23.

"Simbang Gabi" is Filipino for "night Mass." Traditionally, the Masses take place in the nine evenings prior to Christmas, although early morning Masses are acceptable before the sun rises.

Simbang Gabi is hosted by the archdiocesan Philippine Ministry. A potluck dinner will follow each Mass at the parish where the Mass was held. All are welcome.

The Mass schedule is as follows:

- Dec. 15: 5:30 p.m. at St Luke the Evangelist Church, 7575 Holliday Dr., in Indianapolis.
- Dec. 16: 6 p.m. at St Simon the Apostle Church, 8155 Oaklandon Road, in Indianapolis.
- Dec. 17: 9 a.m. at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 10655 Haverstick Road, in Carmel, Ind., (Lafayette Diocese).
- Dec. 18: 6 p.m. at St. Monica Church, 6131 N. Michigan Road, in Indianapolis.
- Dec. 19: 5:15 p.m. at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.
- Dec. 20: 5 p.m. at St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., in Indianapolis.
- Dec. 21: 6:30 p.m. at Holy Angels Church, 740 W. 28th St., in Indianapolis (Mass in Philippine Tagalog language).
- Dec. 22: 5:30 p.m. at St. Louis de Monfort Church, 1441 Hague Road, in Fishers, Ind., (Lafayette Diocese).
- Dec. 23: 6 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., in Indianapolis.

For more information email Maria Solito at mariasolito@yahoo.com. †

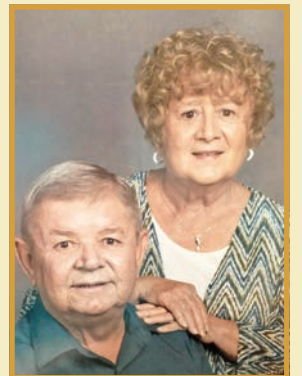
Wedding Anniversaries

MARK AND MARY JANE (HAHN) FELTS, members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary on Dec. 2.

The couple was married in Holy Cross Church in Indianapolis on Dec. 2, 1967.

They have four children: Chris, Mike, Nick and Tony Felts.

The couple also has 13 grandchildren.



DAVID AND MARGARET (SEDNEK) SMITH, members of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 23.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Rushville on Nov. 23, 1972.

They have three children: Kristin Dellinger, Kris Sednek and Andrew Smith

The couple also has five grandchildren.



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

Parishes to host Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrations

Criterion staff report

The following Masses and special events for the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe throughout central and southern Indiana were reported to *The Criterion*.

Holy Spirit Parish, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 9: 7 p.m. Mass in honor of St. Juan Diego
- Dec. 11: 10 p.m. Mass in Spanish
- Dec. 12: 8:30 a.m. school Mass, 7 p.m. bilingual Mass

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 St. Meridian St., Greenwood.

- Dec. 3-11: Virgin of Guadalupe novena Masses, 6 p.m. in daily chapel
- Dec. 12: 5:30 a.m. morning song, 6:30 a.m. Aztec dance, 7:30 a.m. bilingual Mass, 5:20 p.m. bilingual rosary, 6 p.m. bilingual Mass, 7 p.m. Aztec dance, 7:30 p.m. apparition re-enactment

Prince of Peace Parish, St. Patrick Chapel, 301 W. State St., Madison.

- Dec. 11: noon Mass

St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus.

- Dec. 11: 9-11 p.m. devotional activities, 11 p.m. vigil Mass
- Dec. 12: midnight *mañanitas*, 6 p.m. bilingual Mass followed by dinner

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, St. Mary Campus, 720 N. "A" St., Richmond.

- Dec. 12: 6 p.m. Mass

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 11: 7 p.m. rosary,

- 8 p.m. apparitions re-enactment, 9 p.m. *Guadalupe* Dance, 10 p.m.-midnight choirs
- Dec. 12: midnight *mañanitas* and Spanish Mass, 5 p.m. bilingual Mass, 7 p.m. Mass in Spanish with *mariachi* followed by reception in cafeteria.

St. Joseph Parish, 1125 E. Broadway St., Shelbyville.

- Dec. 12: 6 p.m. serenade with *mariachi*, 6:40 p.m. rosary, 7 p.m. Mass, 8 p.m. Marian hymns with Mexican band, 8:30 p.m. fellowship in cafeteria

St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis.

- Dec. 3-11: 7 p.m. novena
- Dec. 11: 11 p.m. *mañanitas*
- Dec. 12: 7 p.m. Mass, 8 p.m. *danzas*

St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis.

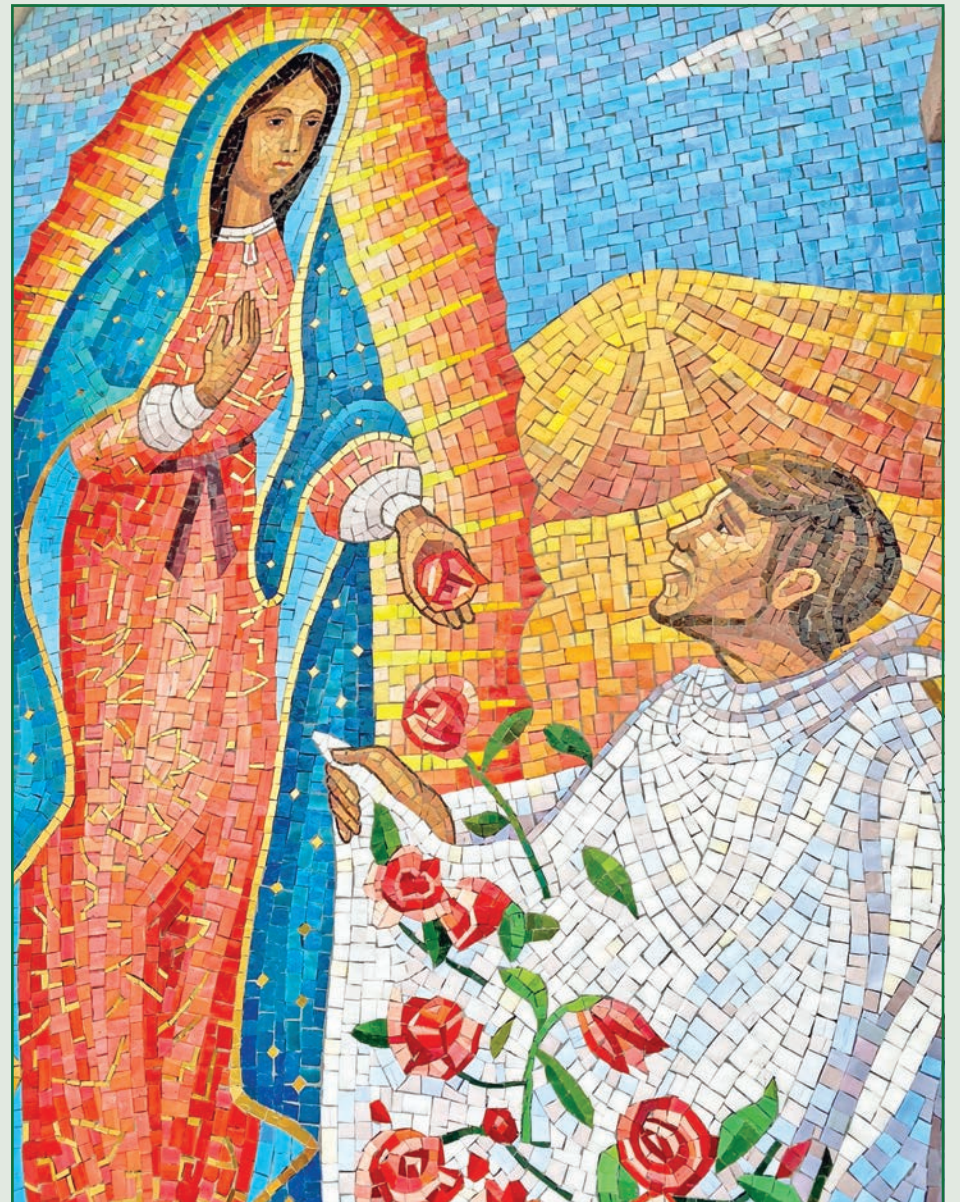
- Dec. 11: 8 p.m. outdoor procession, 9 p.m. rosary, 10 p.m. Mass, 11 p.m. apparition re-enactment, 11:30 p.m. dances
- Dec. 12—midnight *mañanitas*, 6:30 p.m. rosary, 7 p.m. dances, 7:30 p.m. Mass, 8:30 p.m. fellowship

St. Mary Parish, 415 E. Eighth St., New Albany.

- Dec. 11: 10 p.m. rosary, 10:45 p.m. apparition re-enactments, 11:15 p.m. hymns and serenades
- Dec. 12: 6 p.m. rosary, 6:45 p.m. Mass, 7:30 p.m. dinner in Trinity Hall

St. Michael Parish, 101 St. Michael Dr., Charlestown.

- Dec. 11: 6 p.m.-midnight *mañanitas*, rosary, music and blessing
- Dec. 12: 7 p.m. procession (outdoor, weather permitting) followed by Mass and dinner



A mosaic at a Guadalupe shrine in St. Juan Diego Church in Pasadena, Texas, depicts Our Lady of Guadalupe giving St. Juan Diego roses. (CNS photo/James Ramos, *Texas Catholic Herald*)

St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis.

- Dec. 11: 8 p.m. *mañanitas*, rosary, apparition re-enactments, *mariachi*
- Dec. 12: midnight bilingual Mass with Aztec dancers, 6:30 p.m. Mass in Spanish followed by procession with Aztec dancers, reception in

gym with music and *Chinelos* dancers

St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington.

- Dec. 11: 10 p.m. rosary, 11 p.m. *mariachi*
- Dec. 12: midnight Mass followed by reception †

Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

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

Batesville Deanery

- Dec. 2, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at All Saints Parish, St. Martin campus, Dearborn County
- Dec. 6, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
- Dec. 7, 6:45-7:45 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
- Dec. 9, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
- Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Catherine of Siena, Enochsburg Campus
- Dec. 13, 6-8 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
- Dec. 14, 6-8 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Millhousen
- Dec. 14, 6:15 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
- Dec. 15, 6-7:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville

- Dec. 16, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville
 - Dec. 20, 6:30-8 p.m. during healing service at St. Nicholas, Ripley County
- Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Batesville Deanery are as follows:*
- Wednesdays 5-6 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan
 - Saturdays following 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Nicholas, Ripley County; 4-5 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan; and after 4 p.m. Mass at St. Maurice, Napoleon
 - Sundays after 10 a.m. Mass at St. Maurice, Napoleon

Bloomington Deanery

- Dec. 7, 6-9 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo, St. John the Apostle and St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington, and St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer, at St. Paul Catholic Center
- Dec. 13, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Mitchell, and St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, at St. Vincent de Paul
- Dec. 14, 6 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville

Connersville Deanery

- Dec. 9, 5:30 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Holy Family Church, Richmond
- Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
- Dec. 15, 6 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville

Indianapolis East Deanery

- Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at Holy Spirit

Indianapolis North Deanery

- Dec. 18, 2 p.m. at St. Lawrence
 - Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary
 - Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at St. Simon the Apostle
- Additionally, reconciliation in the North Deanery is available on the following date:*
- Dec. 12, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., no appointment needed

Indianapolis South Deanery

- Dec. 10, 8:30 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood

- Dec. 14, 7 p.m. for St. Jude and St. Mark the Apostle at St. Jude
- Dec. 15, 7 p.m. for Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, and Good Shepherd at Holy Name of Jesus

New Albany Deanery

- Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
- Dec. 7, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown (bilingual)
- Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier, Henryville
- Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
- Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
- Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary of the Knobs, Floyd County
- Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
- Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight
- Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville

Seymour Deanery

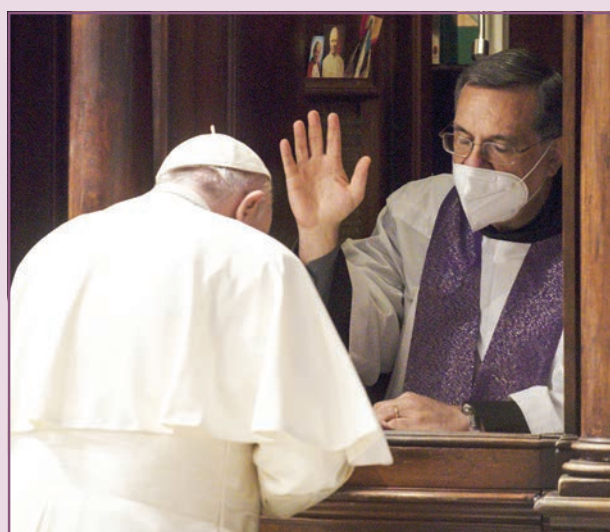
- Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, and Prince of Peace, Madison, at Prince of Peace
- Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m. at St. Ambrose, Seymour
- Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. for Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, and St. Bartholomew, Columbus, at St. Bartholomew
- Dec. 20, 4 p.m. at American Martyrs, Scottsburg
- Dec. 21, 4 p.m. at St. Patrick, Salem

Tell City Deanery

- Dec. 11, 1:30-3 p.m. at St. Paul, Tell City
- Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m. at St. Boniface, Fulda

Terre Haute Deanery

- Dec. 3, 10 a.m. at Annunciation, Brazil
- Dec. 4, noon-3 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle
- Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Terre Haute
- Dec. 14, 6 p.m. for Sacred Heart of Jesus, Clinton, and St. Joseph, Rockville, at Sacred Heart of Jesus
- Dec. 16, 9 a.m.-9 p.m., for St. Margaret Mary and St. Patrick, Terre Haute, at St. Margaret Mary
- Dec. 19, 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute †



Pope Francis goes to confession during a Lenten penance service in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on March 25. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

NATIVITY

continued from page 1

have them ask their families who would be interested in buying a Nativity scene to display in front of their homes.

That first year led to 600 new Nativity scenes being displayed across the area, which surpassed Liston's goal so much that he decided to do it again. And this year, 1,378 more Nativity scenes were sold, including 206 at St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg where McCorkhill led the charge as the parish's coordinator of children's faith formation.

"There was a lot of excitement in the parish about it," says McCorkhill, who credits pastor Father Sean Danda and Father Michael Clawson, the parish's assistant pastor, with promoting the effort during Masses and also praising parishioner Abby Hendrickson for encouraging the effort in the parish school. "People were so glad we did it."

McCorkhill had the same grateful reaction a year ago when she put away the Christmas lights, the gift boxes and the deer that she normally displayed in her front yard and instead just put up a Nativity set with a spotlight focused on the scene.

"I enjoyed it so much better," she says. "I enjoyed seeing it lit up at night. It keeps me focused on the reason for the season—Christ."

That's exactly the hope that Liston had when he started the project. It ties



Msgr. William F. Stumpf, vicar general of the archdiocese and pastor of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, blesses the crates of nearly 1,400 Nativity sets before they were distributed to 28 schools and parishes in central Indiana. (Submitted photo)

in with the mission of the Catholic Business Exchange, a group that Liston founded to promote faith, friendship and business.

Nativity scenes blessed before they were distributed. The blessing was done by Msgr. William F. Stumpf, vicar general of the archdiocese and pastor of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

"It's always important to keep Christ at the center of Christmas," Msgr. Stumpf says. "That's why I was happy to go out and bless them."

After they were blessed, the Nativity sets were distributed from a central location during two days in mid-November. When representatives of the schools and parishes picked up their orders, Liston always thanked them. In return, he was often thanked for making it so easy for people to get them. Still, Liston's favorite story from the pickup site involved a forklift operator who loaded the crates of Nativity sets into people's trucks.

"At the end of the two days, he asked me, 'How do I get one of those?'" Liston recalls. "When I asked if it was for him, he said, 'No, it's for my mom.' He wanted to get her one by Thanksgiving. What I love about that is he was thinking about his mom. I told him I would help him get one."

'This is why we have Christmas'

The project also offered some financial help to each school and parish that participated. Liston negotiated with the

manufacturer to reduce the usual \$110 cost to \$90. Then \$20 was added to the price—money that each school and parish could use for a project of their choice.

Cathedral High School in Indianapolis contributed its funds to tuition assistance for families in need, while St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis is steering its profits toward its young adult programs.

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood used some of its funds to help defray the cost of the school's eighth-grade trip to Washington, while St. Malachy will use its profit to help restore statues on the parish grounds.

Still, McCorkhill of St. Malachy says the best windfall of the project is its priceless message.

"This is why we have Christmas—keeping the Christ in Christmas," she says.

Liston is touched by the simplicity of the Nativity and the love story it represents.

"The Nativity is in my DNA now," he says. "Christmas means even more to me now. I hope displaying the Nativity becomes common, the norm for communities. There's obviously a thirst among people to be reminded of the true meaning of Christmas." †



Jim Liston of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis has coordinated the effort to emphasize the true meaning of Christmas and help make central Indiana the "Outdoor Nativity Scene Capital of the United States." (Submitted photo)

'It's just a wonderful feeling'

"We should all feel good that during the Advent season there will be more than 1,900 Nativity sets in place around central Indiana that wouldn't have been there without us launching this campaign," Liston says. "It's just a wonderful feeling."

He is also heartened by the increase in the number of schools and parishes that participated in the project this year—growing from 10 last year to 28.

There was also one special touch that Liston wanted to add this year—having the

diminish or repeal any such protection."

It also "confirms that nonprofit religious organizations will not be required to provide any services, facilities, or goods for the solemnization or celebration of a marriage."

The amendment was worked out by a bipartisan group of negotiators—headed by Sens. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., and Susan Collins, R-Maine—who had asked the Senate for more time to consider "an amendment designed to respond to the concerns of GOP lawmakers who feared the legislation could put churches and other religious institutions at legal risk if Congress voted to codify same-sex marriage rights."

With the amendment, 12 Republicans—including Indiana Sen. Todd Young—joined every Democrat in supporting the marriage bill.

But the USCCB analysis said that if the bill passes, even with the amendment "religious objectors are likelier to be denied exemptions under the First Amendment and RFRA in cases where they would have prevailed but for the passage of RMA."

The measure "would have a ripple effect that hurts religious freedom in every context where conflicts with same-sex marriage arise, not just in the context of compliance with RMA itself," the analysis said.

"Employment decisions, employees' spousal benefits, eligibility for grants or contracts, accreditation, tax exemptions—it runs the full gamut, even in religious liberty conflicts arising out of state or local laws," it added.

"Unfortunately, a number of religious groups and senators are asserting that the amended text of RMA sufficiently protects religious freedom," Cardinal Dolan

and Bishop Barron said in their letter.

They added that from the perspective of the USCCB, "whose bishops' ministries comprise the largest nongovernmental provider of social services" in the U.S., the provisions of the bill "that relate to religious liberty are insufficient."

"If passed, the amended act will put the ministries of the Catholic Church, people of faith and other Americans who uphold a traditional meaning of marriage at greater risk of government discrimination," the two prelates said.

"This bill is needless and harmful and must be voted down," they said. "At the same time, Congress, and our nation as a whole, must resolve to foster a culture where every individual, as a child of God, is treated with respect and compassion."

The U.S. House passed the bill on July 19 with a large, bipartisan vote of 267-157. If the measure passes the Senate as amended, it goes back to the House for another vote.

Ahead of the House vote, the chairmen of the U.S. bishops' pro-life and marriage and family committees wrote a joint letter to House members urging they reject the measure.

The Respect for Marriage Act would repeal the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, signed into Law by President Bill Clinton. It barred the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriage until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that law unconstitutional in 2013.

The push in Congress to codify a right to same-sex marriage in federal law followed an opinion by Justice Clarence Thomas in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* ruling that overturned *Roe v. Wade*. †

MARRIAGE

continued from page 1

constitutional right to same-sex marriage.

In a Nov. 17 statement, Cardinal Dolan called the bill "a bad deal for the many courageous Americans of faith and no faith who continue to believe and uphold the truth about marriage in the public square today."

"It is deeply concerning that the U.S. Senate has voted to proceed toward potential passage of the Respect for Marriage Act," he said. "[It] does not strike a balance that appropriately respects our nation's commitment to the fundamental right of religious liberty."

In their joint letter, Cardinal Dolan and Bishop Barron said that measure's "rejection of timeless truths about marriage is evident on its face and in its purpose." They repeated the cardinal's earlier point that it "would also betray our country's commitment to the fundamental right of religious liberty."

The text of their letter and a lengthy detailed analysis by the USCCB on how the bill would endanger religious liberty can be found at bit.ly/3H22Z74.

"First, the bill will be used to argue that the government has a compelling interest in forcing religious organizations and individuals to treat same-sex civil marriages as valid," the analysis said.

An amendment to the bill says it "protects all religious liberty and conscience protections available under the Constitution or federal law, including but not limited to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), and prevents this bill from being used to

'School of Evangelization' to start in Greenwood in January

By Sean Gallagher

Ken Ogorek has worked for a long time to help people learn more about the faith. But he knows that, with many people, it can be one thing to learn about



Ken Ogorek

the faith but a whole different matter to share it with others.

"We hear all the time how important evangelization is," said Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis. "In some ways, it's not that complicated.

But I think that a lot of our faithful might be lacking in the confidence that can be helpful in evangelizing outreach."

With that in mind, the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization will sponsor next year a "School of Evangelization" that will meet weekly starting on Jan. 19 for two-hour meetings at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood. After a break during the summer months, the school will conclude at the end of September.

"This opportunity will help clarify what evangelization is and what it is not," Ogorek

said. "It will provide some very practical, doable and achievable tips for evangelizing in your own circles—friends, family, neighbors, co-workers. But it'll also be helpful to parishes who want to get a little bit more organized and strategic in how this ministry unfolds at the parish level."

The School of Evangelization will be operated by St. Paul Street Evangelization, an apostolate based in Warren, Mich., that helps people share the faith in many contexts.

The two-hour sessions will include time for worship, small-group discussions and presentations on the faith and how to share it. Participants will be given assignments to help them grow incrementally more comfortable with being evangelists, says Adam Jenke, the chief operating officer of St. Paul Street Evangelization.

"Each week you have evangelization homework that's a little bit outside of our comfort zone, but is simple enough that we're going to build on that throughout the year," he said. "Suddenly, by the end of the program, you're an effective evangelist."

Peter Doane will be the chief instructor for the school. A member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, Doane previously



SAINT PAUL STREET EVANGELIZATION

served as director of evangelization at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Carmel.

"As an instructor, I'm not only instructing them academically but I'm modelling for them how to evangelize to certain groups, to non-believers, to non-practicing Catholics," Doane said. "I can draw out of my experience and go out with them to model that for them."

Toward the end of the school, participants will work and launch a program to help promote evangelization in their own parish communities.

"People leave the school not only with knowledge and confidence but, because of that project, with a very practical way of evangelizing and helping others to be better evangelizers as well," said Ogorek.

Janke emphasized that the school is designed for people with no experience in evangelization.

"You can come if you're already a seasoned evangelist and have lots of work

under your belt," he said. "But this is a program for absolute beginners. So, if you're like, 'Man, I've never evangelized in my entire life before,' this is a program for you."

Ogorek added that evangelization is not for specialists, but is a mission for all the faithful.

"Very few of us are called to be theologians or professors," he said. "But we're all called to be disciples and evangelizers. You don't have to be a theologian to be an evangelizer. The School of Evangelization will help people to not only to take this to heart but to put it into practice."

(The School of Evangelization that will take place at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood starting in January costs \$600. Scholarships are available. For more information or to sign up, visit streetevangelization.com/parish-schools.) †

Benedictine sisters in Beech Grove celebrate monastic jubilees

Criterion staff report

Seven Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove are celebrating their monastic jubilees this year.

The celebrations of two of them were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic from when they would ordinarily have occurred in 2020.

Benedictines ordinarily determine their anniversary date from the date on which they professed first vows.

60-YEAR JUBILEES

Benedictine Sister Sharon Bierman, born in Starlight, entered Our Lady of Grace in 1960. She professed first vows on July 11, 1962, and perpetual vows on July 6, 1967.

Sister Sharon earned an associate degree in physical therapy at Vincennes University in Vincennes, Ind., a bachelor's degree in elementary education at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, Ind., a bachelor's degree in physical therapy at Indiana University, and a master's degree in health science at the University of Indianapolis.

In the archdiocese, Sister Sharon served as a teacher at St. Columba School (now St. Bartholomew School) in Columbus from 1964-66 and 1967-74, and at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville from 1966-67.

Beginning in 1978, Sister Sharon began ministry in health care. She ministered at the former St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove as a physical therapist from 1978-99 and as administrator from 2000-13. She served in the monastery as director of formation from 1984-89, as director of health care from 1992-2002 and as a physical therapist from 1974-2013.

Sister Sharon currently lives in retirement at the monastery.

Benedictine Sister Dolores Fritz, born in Cincinnati, entered Our Lady of Grace in 1960. She professed first vows on July 11, 1962, and perpetual vows on July 6, 1967.

Sister Dolores earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, Ind., and a master's degree in elementary education and special education at the University of Cincinnati.

In the archdiocese, Sister Dolores served in food service at the former St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove from 1965-66, at the monastery from 1966-69 and 1976-79. She ministered in Catholic education in Indianapolis at the former Assumption School from 1969-70 and at the former All Saints School (now St. Anthony School) from 1970-76.

Sister Dolores currently lives in retirement in Dayton, Ohio, where she volunteers as a tutor.

Benedictine Sister Joann Hunt, born in Seymour, entered Our Lady of Grace in 1960. She professed first vows on July 11, 1962, and perpetual vows on July 6, 1967.

Sister Joann earned a bachelor's degree in elementary

education at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, Ind., and a master's degree in education at Indiana University.

In the archdiocese, Sister Joann ministered in Catholic education in Indianapolis at St. Pius X School from 1964-65, Christ the King School from 1965-66, the former St. Patrick School from 1972-74, and Central Catholic School from 1974-76 and 1977-78.

She also served at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville from 1966-69 and 1978-82, the former St. Paul School in Tell City from 1969-70, St. Ambrose School in Seymour from 1970-71, and Our Lady of the Greenwood School in Greenwood from 1971-72.

Sister Joann ministered as an administrative assistant for the archdiocese from 1976-77 and as a director of religious education in Indianapolis at St. Christopher Parish from 1983-90 and at Holy Spirit Parish from 1990-2014.

She currently lives in retirement at the monastery.

50-YEAR JUBILEES

Benedictine Sister Karen Byerley, born in New Albany, entered Our Lady of Grace in 1968. She professed first vows on June 20, 1970, and professed perpetual vows on July 13, 1975.

Sister Karen earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education at Indiana University Southeast in New Albany and a master's degree in education at Indiana University.

In the archdiocese, Sister Karen served in Catholic education at Christ the King School in Indianapolis from 1972-73, at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville from 1973-76, 1976-77 and 1985-2004, and at the former St. Paul School in Tell City from 1977-85.

Sister Karen currently serves in the monastery as its archivist and as a spiritual director.

25-YEAR JUBILEES

Benedictine Sister Ann Patrice Papesh, born in Indianapolis, entered Our Lady of Grace in 1993. She professed first vows on July 23, 1995, and perpetual vows on June 11, 2000.

Sister Ann Patrice earned a bachelor's degree in theology at Marian University in Indianapolis.

Prior to entering the monastery, she ministered in the archdiocesan Catholic Youth Organization in youth ministry and as director of retreats from 1978-92. After entering the monastery, she ministered at Central Catholic School in Indianapolis as director of



development from 1995-2001, at the monastery as an administrative assistant in the development office from 1992-96, as director of development from 2001-14 and as director of technology and an administrative assistant from 2014 to the present.

Benedictine Sister Cathy Ann Lepore, born in Marlborough, Mass., entered Our Lady of Grace in 1995. She professed first vows on Aug. 2, 1997, and perpetual vows on June 16, 2002.

Sister Cathy Ann earned a bachelor's degree in physical education at Westfield College in Westfield, Mass., and a master's degree in athletic training at Indiana University.

In the archdiocese, Sister Cathy Ann ministered as a teacher at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis from 1997-2019. She has served in the monastery as director of physical therapy since 2003 and as director of health care since 2019.

Benedictine Sister Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick, born in Salem, Ill., entered Our Lady of Grace in 1995. She professed first vows on Aug. 2, 1997, and perpetual vows on June 16, 2002.

Sister Sheila Marie earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry at the University of Illinois and a master's degree in information science at the University of Pittsburgh.

In the archdiocese, Sister Sheila Marie worked as a data analyst for Eli Lilly and Company from 1989-2002, and as director of facilities for the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Beech Grove since 2002.

(For more information about Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, visit www.benedictine.com.) †

Archdiocesan delegates drawn ‘out of boat, closer to Jesus’ at NCYC 2022

By Therese Hartley

Special to *The Criterion*

LONG BEACH, Calif.—The ripple effects of the 2022 National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) held on Nov. 10-12 in Long Beach, Calif., are sure to reach Indianapolis. A delegation of seven students and six chaperones comprised the archdiocesan delegation to the event that recently moved from biennial to annual, alternating between host cities Indianapolis and Long Beach.

Even though this was his second NCYC, high school senior Nick Belby said this experience took him deeper into his faith life than he had ever before experienced.

“It forced me to open up and find what I was struggling with internally and how that was affecting my life externally and my relationship with others,” said the member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “[This] NCYC was the best experience that I’ve had in my faith life.”

Each three-day NCYC experience features keynote speakers and breakout workshops exploring the challenges the Church’s high school youths face today. The second evening includes opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation as well as communal eucharistic adoration—often the highlight for the youths in attendance.

“I came to have a much deeper understanding of adoration where I felt the presence of God,” said high school senior Maria Serrato, also a member of St. Luke. “NCYC was one of the most impactful experiences I have encountered with my faith.”

Cheyenne Louagie, a high school junior from St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, called this year’s NCYC “life changing.”

“I grew so much in my faith, and I learned to appreciate [eucharistic] adoration a lot more,” added Cheyenne.

Even adults are impacted by the time for reconciliation and adoration. Chaperone Paige Hash reflected on her experience of the evening through the lens of this year’s NCYC theme, “Walking on Water.”

“Before attending, I felt I was following Jesus closely, as I am sure Peter did before he stepped out of the boat and into the water,” said Hash, also a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg. “Just as I am sure the experience of walking on water forever changed Peter, something happened [for me] both in eucharistic adoration and reconciliation at NCYC, something that drew me out of



Members of the archdiocesan delegation to the 2022 National Catholic Youth Conference in Long Beach, Cal., on Nov. 10-12 show off their checkered flag bucket hats. They are Cheyenne Louagie, left, Sophia Delgado, Maria Serrato, Addie Gauck, Nick Belby, RJ Sturgill and Kaylee Smith. Cheyenne, Addie and Kaylee are members of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, while the others are members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

the boat and even closer to Jesus in ways I didn’t see coming.”

Megan Gehrich is the youth minister and coordinator of religious education at St. Mary. She looks forward to bringing the lessons of this year’s conference to her parish and students at home.

“NCYC in Long Beach was one of the most impactful experiences in my life in so many ways,” she said. “Personally, I came to have a much deeper understanding of the gift that the sacrament of reconciliation is, and spiritually, I felt the presence and healing of God through adoration.”

“I learned more about how to guide young people on their faith journey, and I learned the importance of taking care of my own faith life in order to help others take care of theirs.”

Every conference impacts participants in a variety of ways, but most cannot leave without some type of conversion.

“NCYC [continues to be] one of the most amazing experiences of my life,” said high school senior and St. Mary parishioner Addie Gauck. “When I attended last year, my life changed for the better. Ever since then, I have helped run [the] youth ministry at my church. It’s truly been an amazing journey.”

The next National Catholic Youth Conference will take place on Nov. 16-18, 2023, in Indianapolis. For more information, go to ncyc.us.

(Therese Hartley is director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.) †



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Faith *Alive!*

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Father Patrick Kenny blesses U.S. Army Specialist Ulises Lopez of Phoenix during his daily rounds as chaplain at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. With Lopez are his sisters Adelina and Elvira. Advent is a season in which joy and suffering are reconciled through the coming of Christ. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

Advent reconciles joy and suffering in the coming of Christ

By Mary DeTurris Poust

The image of St. John the Baptist in the Gospel reading for the Second Sunday of Advent stands in stark contrast to the secular holiday images that bombard us from every side during this season.

Camel hair for clothes and locusts for food are a far cry from a red velvet suit and a plate of cookies. And, yet, here we are, trying to navigate between two very different worlds with two very different messages. Ho, ho, ho, you brood of vipers!

This Sunday's readings can be a tough sell. We listen, we hear, but it's hard not to feel just a little bit disappointed to be handed threshing floors and unquenchable fires as we decorate our Jesse trees and open the doors on our Advent calendars.

And while John's dire warnings may

seem out of place in a season of hopeful waiting, if we dive deeper into the readings, we find glimmers of a hope that will outlast anything we might find under the tree come Christmas morning.

For starters, we can soothe our jagged souls by spending a little time with St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, the second reading for the Second Sunday of Advent, to offset some of the harshness John is serving out.

In Paul we find endurance and encouragement, harmony and hope. That's more like it, we want to shout. But the hard truth is that ours is not a faith of either/or but one of both/and. We do not get the harmony and hope without the repentance and refinement through spiritual fire.

We probably should not expect

anything less from a God who was willing to break into our world to save us by becoming one of us.

"The Advent mystery in our own lives is the beginning of the end of all, in us, that is not yet Christ," wrote famed 20th-century Trappist monk Thomas Merton in his essay "Advent: Hope or Delusion?"

"It is the beginning of the end of unreality. And that is surely a cause of joy! But unfortunately, we cling to our unreality, we prefer the part to the whole, we continue to be fragments, we do not want to be 'one man in Christ.'"

That sounds suspiciously like an updated version of the message John the Baptist brings us today.

This mystery we call Advent, this path through darkness toward light, is not only about preparing the way of the Lord but preparing ourselves for the Lord's coming—on Christmas, yes, but also at the end of time.

Advent is a season that dwells in both realities. We prepare to celebrate a birth even as we prepare for the end of the world as we know it.

But what does that mean for those of us who are living in the world, cooking dinners (not of the locust variety), buying gifts for family and friends, decorating our house and sipping eggnog?

Can we enjoy those moments of lighthearted joy even as we accept John's message of repentance? Yes, because Jesus showed us how.

Throughout Scripture, we see Jesus attend parties, share meals with friends and find joy in the innocence of children. Ours is not a joyless faith, just the opposite. It is a faith that finds joy even amid suffering, which is no easy thing.

This season of Advent and the Scripture readings that guide our way day by day provide the operating instructions

for the difficult task of letting go of our unreality and clinging to the only reality that matters: Jesus Christ.

The rest of the world wants you to blast Mariah Carey around the clock, bake cookies till you drop and spend so much you'll need six months to dig yourself out of debt. When you think about it, that doesn't sound all that joyful, does it?

Advent, on the other hand, asks you to slow down, pause, breathe, wait, be. Can't you feel your shoulders relax as you hear that? If you want a recipe for real joy, skip the world's version and find what's hiding in the challenging words of Scripture.

"Our task is to seek and find Christ in our world as it is, not as it might be," wrote Merton. "The fact that the world is other than it might be does not alter the truth that Christ is present in it and that his plan has been neither frustrated nor changed: indeed, all will be done according to his will.

"Our Advent is a celebration of this hope. What is uncertain is not the 'coming' of Christ, but our own reception of him, our own response to him, our own readiness and capacity to 'go forth to meet him.'"

In other words: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths" (Mt 3:3; Is 40:3).

Turns out John the Baptist is right on time, not only in this season but in this period of history. The world tries to tangle us up in heartbreak and division, but John reminds us in the bluntest of terms that this world holds nothing for us.

We belong to the One who is and was and is to come.

(Mary DeTurris Poust is a writer and retreat leader living in upstate New York. Visit her website at www.notstrictlyspiritual.com.) †



A deacon lights candles on the Advent wreath. The second Sunday of Advent falls on Dec. 4 this year. (CNS photo/Jaclyn Lippelmann, Catholic Standard)

Finding God in All Things/Elise Italiano Ureneck

Easing burdens through technological temperance

When we speak about the burdens that people bear, we tend to reference what they “carry on their backs” or what’s been placed “on their shoulders.” When it comes to the hardships of today’s children and adolescents, we should think instead about what we’re placing in their hands.



In October, the Institute for Family Studies released a report on the relationship between family structure and teen tech use (specifically gaming, social media, video chat, online shopping and texting).

Given the ubiquity of devices and the social pressure exerted on kids to get them early and stay on them often, researchers wanted to understand how parents and families are navigating this gauntlet, serving as perhaps the last defense against addiction.

The short story is that teens raised in intact families (defined by their two married biological parents) use digital media an average of two hours less per day than their peers who are being raised in nonintact homes.

The authors conclude that this margin, which does have an effect on sleep, mental health and self-image, likely has to do with the fact that intact families tend to set and enforce more family rules, including around the use of smartphones or tech devices.

In the words of one sociologist whom I recently interviewed, “Marriage and family matter now more than they did 30 or 40 years ago when it comes to a number of outcomes for kids.” It turns out that technology use is now one of them.

What is shocking, however, is that children in intact families still spend an average of eight to nine hours a day on digital or social media, which the scholars note is a “staggering amount of time, considering the time children spend sleeping, eating, going to school, watching TV [which was not included as digital media] and participating in extracurricular activities.”

There are any number of topics to consider in light of this statistic: how we as a society understand the value of the time we’re given, whether or not we appreciate that we are social animals in need of embodied relationships, that there are important things that we are missing out on like play and recreation, and that we need mental and emotional space that’s free of comparison, affirmation and self-reference.

As a mother of two young children, I am cognizant of how my children are affected when I pull out my phone in their presence. I’m also aware of the fact that they are growing up at a time in which most public spaces are adorned with televisions and smart devices.

As a mother who considers herself devoted to trying to help her kids cultivate their imaginations, be comfortable

with silence and socialize with others in person, the battle with screens feels Sisyphean.

These are things that my parents worked at, but they counted on redundancies to support their efforts: neighbors, parishioners, coaches, Scout leaders and teachers were all in on the plan.

The institute’s report confirms what many of us know: that parents are now the primary but also, in most cases, the only figures that can shape their kids’ relationship with screens.

The good news is that where families create tech-free spaces and periods of time, particularly around meals and bedtime, kids seem to be able to learn habits of detachment. And when groups of parents join together in solidarity to delay giving their kids smartphones, their tweens and teens are more amenable because they aren’t the only ones without them.

Those of us who came of age before the tech revolution understand the burdens that we’re all now shouldering because we remember life without them.

While our children might have to hold these devices in their hands, perhaps we can preserve their innocence a little longer and give them a taste of how things were—and can be—with some technological temperance.

(Elise Italiano Ureneck is a communications consultant and a columnist for Catholic News Service.) †

For the Journey/Effie Calderola

‘All the leaves are brown’

“All the leaves are brown. And the sky is gray.”

As we lean into another Advent, that opening line of “California Dreamin’ ” plays in my head. I love the Mamas and the Papas’ 1965 version of that famous song.



In the part of the country where I live, a warm, magnificent autumn has suddenly

turned into a cold, gray winter.

“I’ve been for a walk on a winter’s day.” Yes. Yes, I have. Dug out my gloves and knitted hat and realized that the vivid colors of fall have given way to barren branches and piles of fading leaves waiting to be composted into the good earth. In some parts of the country, much snow has fallen.

The abrupt coming of winter sparks a little sadness. It’s a reminder of the swift passage of time, the brief moments of the cycles of our lives. And so, we go into a season of waiting. In our Christian tradition, we wait for the Savior’s birth, the reception of the Savior into our hearts and the second coming of this Savior, promised to us in Scripture.

In the busyness of a culture that often prioritizes spending and consumption, it’s hard to focus on the bare bones of our faith. But the cold, gray winter invites us to be more reflective.

But how? Again, the traditions of our faith inspire.

Do you have a creche for your home? This simple portrayal of Luke’s Gospel story was supposedly St. Francis of Assisi’s idea, and what a great idea it was. A soft candle burning by the creche on a dark, wintry Advent morning beckons us to prayer.

And for children, the creche is an introduction to imaginative faith. You can find very nice figures that are unbreakable, so little fingers can grasp them and rearrange them.

When I was small, we had a simple set. Some of the characters were plastic, some were breakable. But we children were allowed to move them around, a tangible way of making the story of Jesus’ story personal.

I still have my favorite angel from those childhood days, and even though her head has been glued on due to an unfortunate storage incident in Mom’s attic, she still has a spot in my nicer Nativity set, and the memories make her priceless.

I have seen my own children, and later my grandchildren, immersed in the Christmas story when the creche is brought out at Advent.

Do you have an Advent wreath? Catholics light the candles, adding one each Advent Sunday, at Mass. But your own set makes a beautiful dinner table centerpiece, and every evening as you light the appropriate candles, you might offer personal prayers. Is there a friend having a difficult time at school? Is a relative ill? Let your prayers be reflected in the light of the Advent wreath.

Giving is a huge Christmas tradition, but it sometimes becomes “getting” for many kids. Introduce your children or grandchildren to the wish lists of your favorite charity or to the giving tree at church. Help them select the gifts and explain what the charity does and how it reflects our faith.

When we lived in Alaska, we had friends who hosted a caroling party every year. If you can go caroling on a December night in Anchorage, you can carol anywhere. What a great way to dispel the darkness and celebrate the community aspect of Jesus’ birth by singing through the neighborhood—with lots of hot cocoa and cookies to follow.

Like life itself, Advent passes swiftly. Let each day find its moment of reflection.

(Effie Calderola writes for Catholic News Service.) †

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

Immigration as a moral imperative in light of justice

The influx of immigrants is often portrayed as problematic. But is it so?

Recently, Bishop Giovanni Battista Scalabrini was declared a saint for founding the Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo that enabled Italian immigrants to assimilate into American culture and enjoy its prosperity.

My grandfather was an Italian immigrant who benefited from the work of St. Scalabrini and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini. The education he and my mother received was at the heart of their later success.

We must wonder what would happen if vacant office space in cities was converted into educational centers and corporations advertised for people to be “missionaries” to the immigrants grounded in the history and culture of the people they serve and possessing heartfelt duty to respond to their needs.

What if these educational centers taught American inculturation: how to shop, get a driver’s license, open a bank account, find employment? What if studies were conducted to learn of immigrant success stories?

What if there was the philosophy of enabling immigrants to better learn how to help themselves and

giving them due credit for possessing talent? What if there was a routine practice of praising their music, cuisine and family values?

One of the tragedies of the influx of immigrants is labeling it a threat to our economy. Equally tragic is building walls that stigmatize immigrants as undesirable people and busing them as unwelcomed vagrants.

These negative images that denigrate their humanity are unjust.

A first principle of justice states that justice consists in living one with another, and the just person has an obligation to deal with the other.

This responsibility is inherited from God, who created us as social beings. Equally true, being responsible for one another is the basis of decency.

Plato speaks of a debt, an obligation, owed to one another as the heart of justice. And yet, some feel immigration is negatively affecting our economic debt. How ironic to place an economic debt over a moral debt.

What if assisting immigrants is seen as a moral imperative, as an opportunity to repay God for our endowment of a blessed sense of responsibility for the other?

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

Find silence for God each day, listen to his message

It seemed time to ponder the role of silence in my life again.

This topic is one that I have focused on at various junctures in my life—only to return to a busier lifestyle until it becomes clear that something is missing again!

But, oh, how I avoid it!

It is so easy to look at that phone when it starts to get quiet. It is second nature to turn on some form of sound when I start on a journey in a vehicle. There is a natural tendency to start up the computer or turn on a television when I finally “crash” in the evening. To what ends I will go to create noise in my life!

I will even turn on a radio or television while I am busy with a somewhat mindless task (washing dishes, dusting, cooking, or woodworking, to name a few) just for background noise to avoid a silence!

Creating more silent space in my world is a lesson that I must return to regularly as I venture through life. It would be wonderful to learn this “once and for all,” but I have yet to reach this pinnacle. I must continue to be mindful of the tendency to avoid those silent moments.

My latest efforts require using a 20-minute timer and trying to just be still and breathe for this period of time. With some practice, it is actually getting easier.

I try to focus my mind on my breath and a couple of syllables—for example, Jesus, thank you or Spirit. I attempt to just

“be,” to momentarily stop the impulse to be “doing” that next task on my to-do-list and just quietly rest in God’s hands.

On how many occasions in Scripture can one find Jesus has gone “away” to a deserted place or mountain to be alone and pray, listen and communicate with the Father?

On one such instance in the Gospel of Luke, we find Jesus has left the crowds and gone up on a mountain (Lk 6:12). Need we strive for any less?

I wish you luck as you try to structure your time so that you can be with God in silence and listen for his message for you each day. And we all know that there is no time like the present!

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

Second Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, December 4, 2022

- Isaiah 11:1-10
- Romans 15:4-9
- Matthew 3:1-12

As with the first Sunday of Advent, the first section of the Book of Isaiah provides the first biblical reading for this second Sunday of this season of preparation for Christmas.



This weekend's reading is in the same mood as that of last week. Isaiah was very unhappy with the turn of events of his time. As was so often the case with the

ancient Hebrew prophets, Isaiah saw the misfortunes facing his people as the result of their own disloyalty to God.

While direct and uncompromising, however, his words were not menacing or hostile. Rather, they were reassuring. They declared the prophet's firm belief that, despite the sins of the people, God would not forsake them. Furthermore, in due time, God's holy will would be vindicated. Wrongs would be righted. Errors would be corrected. Justice and peace would prevail.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans supplies the second reading this weekend.

In this reading, the Apostle Paul repeats the basic message given earlier by Isaiah. It is a testimony to God's love. Throughout history, St. Paul maintains, God guided the chosen people to righteousness and ultimately to union with himself. Paul describes God as the source of all patience and encouragement. Despite human failings, God is constant in love and care.

The Apostle also counsels the Christians of Rome to accept each other in love and good will. After all, he insists, Christ accepted them. Indeed, Christ was a visible and effective instrument on Earth of God's mercy and goodness.

For its third reading, the Church this weekend offers us a reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew. The central figure is St. John the Baptist, mentioned in Luke as the child of Elizabeth and Zachariah. Elizabeth, of course, was a kinswoman of Mary, probably a cousin. Therefore, John himself was related to Jesus.

From the earliest days of Christianity, John the Baptist has been a favorite figure. His absolute commitment to the most basic dedication to God has made him a model for the devout since the first century.

When John spoke boldly to the Pharisees and Sadducees, religious authorities of the day, John showed that he was on a mission to prepare the way for Jesus.

John never sugar-coated the failings of people or the stubbornness of some in his demands that the people reform. In this reading, he chastises his listeners, in effect, for their pride and self-interest. Their lack of true devotion to God only strengthens and protracts the reign of sin in the land. Thus, their personal shortcomings add to the burdens weighing heavily upon the entire society.

He challenges the people to purge themselves of this self-interest and humbly to turn to God.

Reflection

As we progress through Advent, the Church calls us to make ourselves worthy of receiving God. Advent's purpose is not just to plan for a memorial of Christ's birth. It is primarily to make our hearts fitting dwelling places for the Lord. To be fitting dwelling places, we must, with God's help, rid ourselves of our sins.

This may not be easy. Advent calls us to a firm resolve in confronting our own sins and turning from sin. As an example, John the Baptist himself was determined and direct, honest and frank, completely committed to God.

To realize our personal sinfulness and the sinfulness of the world, we too must be resolute, making no excuses. We must be frank with ourselves, as hard as that can be. Frankness comes only in humility.

Placing John the Baptist before us, the Church urges us to face facts and to put first things first. Our goal must be union with God. Following self-interest and self-deception leads away from God.

God will empower us. He will be our strength and guide. He loves us and forgives us. †

Daily Readings

Monday, December 5

Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 85:9-14
Luke 5:17-26

Tuesday, December 6

St. Nicholas, bishop
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 96:1-3, 10-13
Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday, December 7

St. Ambrose, bishop and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 40:25-31
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday, December 8

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Genesis 3:9-15, 20
Psalm 98:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Luke 1:26-38

Friday, December 9

St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin
Isaiah 48:17-19
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday, December 10

Our Lady of Loreto
Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Sunday, December 11

Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10
Psalm 146:6-10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

The purpose of Third Commandment is to help Christians grow in interior life

(Editor's note: This column by Father Kenneth Doyle was originally published in 2016.)



QI write to ask for guidelines on the Third Commandment—keeping holy the Lord's Day. I do not consider some of the things that I do to be work—cooking, for example, minor

cleanups, mowing, trimming, weeding. Does the Church look upon all chores as work? I find it very hard not to do some of the things that need to be done around the house.

I am thankful that God did give us this commandment, for I certainly do look upon Sunday as a day of rest—to spend with family when possible and

to simply enjoy the day.

My husband (who is not a Catholic) is a business owner who can work from home. He is in a very challenging situation right now, without sufficient staff. On Sundays, he puts in a good six to eight hours of office work before he rests—otherwise the remainder of the week's schedule would be overwhelming. (New York)

AI credit you for your sincere desire to set Sunday aside as a special day, which honors the fact that even the God of all creation rested on the Sabbath.

You have captured the spirit of what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says on the matter, "Sunday is a time for reflection, silence, cultivation of the mind and meditation which furthers the growth of the Christian interior life" (#2186).

Basic household maintenance is exempted from the prohibition against "servile work" on that day; doing the dishes, preparing a meal and what you describe as "minor cleanups" are certainly permitted. A modest amount of gardening or lawn cultivation can be recreational and surely not "servile." What the Sabbath command means to avoid is unnecessary shopping or heavy housekeeping that could be deferred.

Employment needs or economic circumstances may prevent one from observing the Sabbath rest, and this the catechism envisions and exempts. Your husband's current challenge, in my mind, fits in here.

I would hope, though, that his circumstance will only be temporary. While I don't know his religious history or principles, wisely does the catechism note, "The faithful should see to it that legitimate excuses do not lead to habits prejudicial to religion, family life and health" (#2185).

I might point out that, among American males, there can be a slavish addiction to Sunday televised sports, doing damage to the Sabbath goals of family time, reflection and rest.

And finally, nowhere does your question mention Sunday Mass, which must always be the central feature of a Catholic's Lord's Day observance. For 2,000 years, followers of Jesus have come together as a family of faith to celebrate the day of Christ's resurrection and to be nourished by his body and blood. †

My Journey to God

Christmas Haikus

By Tom Yost

I
Like shepherds watching
As angels singing on high
We welcome Jesus

II
Good Christian Stewards
Sharing our gifts like Magi
Christmas and year round

(Tom Yost is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. Photo: A stained-glass image depicts Jesus in a manger surrounded by his mother Mary, Joseph and two shepherds.) (CNS photo/Sam Lucero, The Compass)



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.

BANGUIS, Dr. Eliseo T., 85, St. Jude, Indianapolis. Husband of Lucia Banguis, Nov. 17. Father of Noreen Cagle, Eileen Thomason, Jennifer Randall and Chris Banguis. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of two.

BECKER, James A., 69, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, Oct. 30. Husband of Susan Becker. Father of Therese Born. Brother of Raymond Becker. Grandfather of five.

BERLIER, Carol, 84, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 17. Wife of Jack Berlier. Mother of Beth, Julie and Doug Berlier. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of four.

CASSE, Norma Jean, 90, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Nov. 7. Mother of Joan Carlson, Jennifer Hohlt, Michael and Steve Casse. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of 10. Great-great-grandmother of one.

EVANS, Margaret A., 75, St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, Nov. 15. Wife of David Evans. Mother of Katherine Boyce, Gail Cathey, Lisa McDonald, Natalie Pardue, Jean Stevens, Jeremy and Joshua Evans. Grandmother and great-grandmother of several.

FEDOR, Naomi L., 74, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Sept. 7. Wife of Jody Fedor. Mother of Brian and Chris Fedor. Sister of Philip Smith. Grandmother of four.

FRTIZ, Jr., Oscar A., 86, Holy Family, New Albany, Oct. 31. Husband of Kathleen Fritz. Father of Vickie Elder, Jacqui, Ronnie and Terry Fritz.



A woman in Venice, Italy, wades through water in flooded St. Mark's Square on Nov. 21. (CNS photo/Manuel Silvestri, Reuters)

Brother of Millie, Bob and Steve Fritz. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of nine.

GLENN, Linda M., 75, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Nov. 8. Wife of Michael Glenn. Mother of Paula Glenn-Tharp and Patrick Glenn. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of one.

HUTCHINSON, Joan, 90, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 14. Mother of Kathy Hedlund and Tom Frazier. Sister of Donna Monahan and Joe Brosnan. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of five.

MAXWELL, John J., 95, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Nov. 4. Husband of Margaret Mary Maxwell. Father of Catherine Bonadurer, Jane Hughes, Marnie, Mary, John III and Thomas Maxwell. Brother of Mary Jane Biro, Paula Koch and Michael Maxwell. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of five.

MORIARTY, Mary I., 92, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis,

Nov. 13. Wife of Denis Moriarty, Sr. Mother of Aidan, Brendan, David, Denis, Jr., and Gerard Moriarty. Grandmother of nine.

OSTING, Walter, 87, St. Mary, Rushville, Nov. 15. Father of Julia Connolly, Tina Hidde and Elizabeth Voorhees. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of four.

POWERS, Richard, 62, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 14. Father of Krystal Timmerman. Brother of Judy Anderson, Barb Christianson, Pat Dehner, Kathy Farr, Chris and Marilyn Helms, Ginny Rose, Lisa Sweezy, Sandy Russell, Bill and Mike Powers. Grandfather of five.

SCHMIDT, Collin S., 33, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Nov. 10. Son of Linda Schmidt. Brother of Griffin Schmidt. Grandson of Donald and Patricia Schmidt.

SCHREINER, Dorothy I., 90, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 12. Mother of Paula Bales, Patricia Matus, Edward and Frank Schreiner, Jr. Sister of Norma Schreiner. Grandmother of eight.

WOLFE, Betty Jean, 80, St. Mary of the Knobs, Floyd

County, Nov. 13. Sister of Flora Jacobi and Charles Wolfe. Aunt of several.

YOUNG, Roxanne L., age 1, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Nov. 12. Daughter of Robert and Anahi

Young. Sister of June and Cooper Young. Granddaughter of Bernardino and Lucia Arias and Robert Young. †

Providence Sister Regina Ann Lynch served in Catholic schools for 46 years

Providence Sister Regina Ann Lynch, a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, died on Nov. 15 at Mother Theodore Hall on the campus of her religious community's motherhouse. She was 91.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 29 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Regina Ann was born on March 25, 1931, in Indianapolis where she grew up as a member of St. Anthony Parish and graduated from the former St. John Academy. She entered the Sisters of Providence on Feb. 2, 1948, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1955.

Sister Regina Ann earned a bachelor's degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree in education at Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

During her 74 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Regina Ann ministered in Catholic schools for 46 years in Illinois, Indiana and North Carolina. In 1996,

she became a certified nurse's assistant and ministered at the former St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove for five years before doing volunteer ministry at St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis for four years.

Sister Regina Ann retired to the motherhouse in 2006, where she volunteered for many years at Providence Health Care. She dedicated herself entirely to prayer beginning in 2018.

In the archdiocese, Sister Regina Ann served in Indianapolis as a teacher at Our Lady of the Greenwood School in Greenwood from 1955-58, St. Patrick School in Terre Haute from 1958-60, St. Paul School (now St. John Paul II School) in Sellersburg from 1966-67, and at All Saints School (now St. Anthony School) in Indianapolis from 1979-96. She ministered at the former St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove from 1996-2002, did volunteer ministry at St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis from 2002-06 and at Providence Health Care at St. Mary-of-the-Woods from 2006-18.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

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



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

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

GUEST

continued from page 4

and guide the viewer's eye directly onto the baby lying in the manger. This babe is the light that will dispel all darkness.

An Orthodox monk reflecting on a Nativity icon wrote, "O God, upon whom will the light shine if not those who live in darkness? If I truly feel that I am in darkness, then I surely will seek the light."

This insight helps us to understand that the miracle of Christmas is not automatic. We must realize our need to be plucked out of the darkness that surrounds us—we must intentionally seek the light.

For most of our contemporary world, Christmas is filled with bright lights, shiny baubles and excesses of every kind. It is difficult to quiet our hearts enough to seek the true light we so desperately need.

Perhaps an act of solidarity with our Ukrainian brothers and sisters can help us to clarify our priorities this Christmas.

Archbishop Borys Gudziak, metropolitan of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia and the highest-ranking Ukrainian clergyman in the United States, recently spoke at a meeting of U.S. bishops.

He suggested that we open wide a window in our home, turn the lights out and sit there long enough to really feel the cold. This act of solidarity, he suggested, will help us to feel what the Ukrainian people are experiencing every day as this war drags on.

May this simple gesture of empathy and solidarity inspire us to intensify our prayers for peace, that the light of Christ will truly pierce the darkness this Christmas—the darkness of sin and war enveloping our world, and the darkness that lurks in each human heart.

O Lord, God-Hero and Prince of Peace, how we need you! Come into our world anew this Christmas and dispel the darkness with your divine light!

(*Little Sisters of the Poor Sister Constance Veit is director of communications for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the United States and an occupational therapist.*) †

Archbishop celebrates milestone anniversaries at Tell City Deanery Mass

By Leslie Lynch

TELL CITY—When Marlene Kunkler read an article in *The Criterion* about the archdiocese's annual Wedding Anniversary Mass in Indianapolis, the member of St. Mark Parish in Perry County thought about the couples in her parish—and the three-hour drive to the state capital.

"Making the journey to Indianapolis would be difficult or impossible for many from here," she recalled thinking.

A seed was planted. What started as an idea for a parish wedding anniversary Mass soon included four parishes, then was extended to the entire Tell City Deanery.

On Oct. 29, the plans came to fruition.

In a first-of-its-kind event outside Indianapolis, St. Paul Parish in Tell City hosted a deanery-wide Wedding Anniversary Mass. More than 80 couples and their families worshipped at the Mass, which was celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, then enjoyed a dinner reception after the Mass.

In an interview with *The Criterion*, Trish Edwards, a member of the celebration's planning committee, captured the spirit of the evening.

"We are so excited about doing this for the families!" she said, her face glowing with joy.

Committee chair Becky Hubert agreed.

"We're so honored to have the archbishop here with us, grateful that he was open to the idea of coming," she remarked at the reception.

During the Mass, the archbishop reflected in his homily about the importance of marriage and families.

'Keeping Jesus Christ at the center'

In his homily, Archbishop Thompson recalled the words of Pope Francis on June 22 as he addressed the World Meeting of Families.

He noted the Holy Father said that "whenever a man and a woman fall in love, God offers them a gift; that gift is marriage, which contains the power of God's own love: strong, enduring, faithful, ready to start over after every failure or moment of weakness. In marriage, Christ gives himself to you, so you can have the strength to give yourselves to each other."

He paused and glanced at the pews filled with anniversary honorees before saying, "But I'm preaching to the choir here!" A ripple of chuckles followed his remark.

"By the grace of the sacrament [of marriage], God makes [family life] a wonderful journey, to be undertaken with him and never alone," he continued.

The archbishop went on to speak of the foundational role of marriage and family. As couples welcome each other, then welcome children, relatives, friends and even strangers, they share God's grace in transforming the world, he said.

Archbishop Thompson noted that the day's Gospel reading about Zacchaeus "really highlights the transforming power of divine grace made available in welcome and acceptance. Zacchaeus encounters Jesus and is immediately transformed.

"Jesus Christ and [that] transforming

divine grace is available to each person and relationship, especially within the vocation of marriage and family."

The archbishop shared an anecdote of a couple dating when cars had bench seats.

"Remember that?" he asked. "When you'd sit so close to each other that from behind, it looked like one body with two heads?"

"And then with time, she starts sitting a little farther away, until she's all the way over by the passenger door. Then one day, she bursts out, 'What happened to us? We used to be so close! We've grown so far apart!' He looks over and says, 'Don't blame me, I never moved.'"

After the laughter died down, Archbishop Thompson explained the story wasn't just about married couples but each person's relationship with God.

"When we feel lonely or distant from God, we have to remember who moved," he said. "Don't blame God."

He continued, "You don't get to 50-plus years of marriage without keeping God in the driver's seat. The Lord is with us each and every day of the journey. Amid the various crises of life, the ups and downs, opportunities and challenges, joys and sorrows, we draw inspiration from the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ on the cross to persevere in faith, hope and love.

"It's not the absence of struggle that makes a marriage last, but keeping Jesus Christ at the center of our lives and relationships."

The archbishop then led the couples in prayer, asked them to silently renew their vows, and conferred God's blessing on them as generations of descendants looked on.

'Lots of give and take'

The couples and their families gathered for a dinner celebration after the Mass.

Among the couples was a group of three sisters—Nellie, Ruth Ann and Nancy—and their husbands.

Nellie Peter met her husband Richard on a 4-H trip to Purdue University as teenagers, though they only lived 6 miles apart growing up. The couple, members of St. Mark, raised eight children and have five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

With 61 years of marriage witness, Nellie advised married couples to "remember the commitment you made when you got married."

Her sister Ruth Ann Brumfield agreed, adding, "You have to hear both sides, not just one side. Lots of give and take."

She and her husband Bob—high school sweethearts—have been married 59 years, have a daughter and two grandchildren and are members of St. Paul.

Nancy and Bill Ludwig, also St. Paul parishioners, met on a blind



Richard and Nellie Peter, left, Ruth Ann and Robert Brumfield and Nancy and Bill Ludwig smile with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during a reception following a Mass honoring milestone wedding anniversaries for couples of the Tell City Deanery at St. Paul Parish in Tell City on Oct. 29. (Submitted photo by Jane Hubert)

date. They have three children and five grandchildren.

"We went to a movie, then dragged Main Street like people did back then—you know, seeing who's with who," she recalled.

After 58 years of marriage, Nancy advised couples to "have patience and understanding."

In remarks after dinner, Hubert said the gathering "is such a testament of the devotion to one another. So much wisdom, faith, and love present in this room. I congratulate each and every one of you for this accomplishment."

Father Anthony Hollowell, pastor of St. Paul and St. Mark parishes and dean of the Tell City Deanery, noted with awe that the couples in attendance represented more than 5,200 combined years of marriage.

Two couples merited special mention: Hubert and Eulalae Hagedorn of St. Paul, married 75 years, and their fellow parishioners Ovalee and Dorothy LaGrange, celebrating 74 years of marriage.

"The evening was a blessing on so many levels for me," said Becky Hubert, a daughter of the Hagedorns. "Not only were we blessed with Archbishop Thompson's presence, but the sheer number of [couples] and families in the church was a testament to their faith-centered family values."

(Leslie Lynch is a member of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville.) †



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson raises a chalice during a Mass honoring milestone wedding anniversaries for couples of the Tell City Deanery at St. Paul Church in Tell City on Oct. 29. Concelebrating with him are Benedictine Father Kolbe Wolniakowski, second from left, Father Brian Esarey, third from right, Father Steve Donahue and Father Anthony Hollowell. Deacon Kenneth Smith, left, assisted at the Mass. (Photo by Leslie Lynch)

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Employment

St. Pius X Catholic Church Business Manager

St. Pius X in Indianapolis is seeking a full time Business Manager to manage the financial, physical and personnel resources of the parish in consultation with the Pastor and Parish Finance Committee. The Business Manager will be expected to oversee the parish office and all business operations including ensuring that parish assets are used efficiently and effectively toward the mission of the St. Pius X community. The Business Manager will be required to have professional experience, knowledge and skills in the following areas: accounting, human resources, facilities management, and supervision. This position will also be responsible for managing the tuition program, managing payroll, preparing the annual parish budget, assisting with developing short and long-range maintenance plans, overseeing major maintenance projects, and direct supervision of maintenance and parish staff.

Applicants are required to have at least five years of professional experience in the fields of finance, business or accounting. Candidates who have a degree in a related field are preferred, but a degree is not required.

Please submit cover letter, resume and at least three professional references, in confidence by December 23rd to: Emily Brown ebrown@spxparish.org, St. Pius X Catholic Church, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46240



'You don't get to 50-plus years of marriage without keeping God in the driver's seat. The Lord is with us each and every day of the journey. Amid the various crises of life, the ups and downs, opportunities and challenges, joys and sorrows, we draw inspiration from the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ on the cross to persevere in faith, hope and love.'

—Archbishop Charles C. Thompson



Holiday help

As part of its holiday outreach, Teachers Credit Union (TCU) on Nov. 16 presented a \$10,000 check to the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry (SVdP) in Indianapolis. Wendy Harlow, SVdP philanthropy director, said the donation comes at a perfect time. "This time of year is particularly challenging. Food pantry visits are up more than 10%, and we are serving more than 3,400 families every week. In addition, food prices have skyrocketed due to inflation," she noted. Harlow added SVdP is also struggling to find food pantry volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, visit cutt.ly/HelpSVdP. Pictured are, left, Lynne Tromble, SVdP chief financial officer; Adam Young, TCU area manager; Bob Williams, SVdP Food Pantry director of operations; Wendy Harlow, SVdP philanthropy director; Tahanna Jenkins, TCU learning and performance facilitation manager; and Darlene Sweeney, SVdP director of volunteer services. (Submitted photo)

Doing God's will means working for peace, pope tells World Jewish Congress

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Christians and Jews are called to give witness to their faith by "working to make the world more fraternal, combating forms of inequality and promoting greater justice," Pope Francis told members of the World Jewish Congress.

"Together we recognize that war, every war, is always and everywhere a defeat for all humanity," the pope told the group on Nov. 22. "Think of the conflict in Ukraine, a sacrilegious war that threatens Jews and Christians alike, depriving them of their loved ones, their homes, their property and their very lives!"

Before meeting the pope, the executive committee of

the congress held a special session with Vatican officials and diplomats accredited to the Holy See. The gathering focused on strengthening the bonds between the Vatican and the congress, which represents Jewish communities in more than 100 countries.

Pope Francis said their visit itself "testifies to and strengthens the bonds of friendship uniting us," and builds on more than 50 years of official dialogue since the Second Vatican Council.

Catholics and Jews, he said, have learned to recognize that they "share priceless spiritual treasures," beginning from faith in the one God who made heaven and Earth,

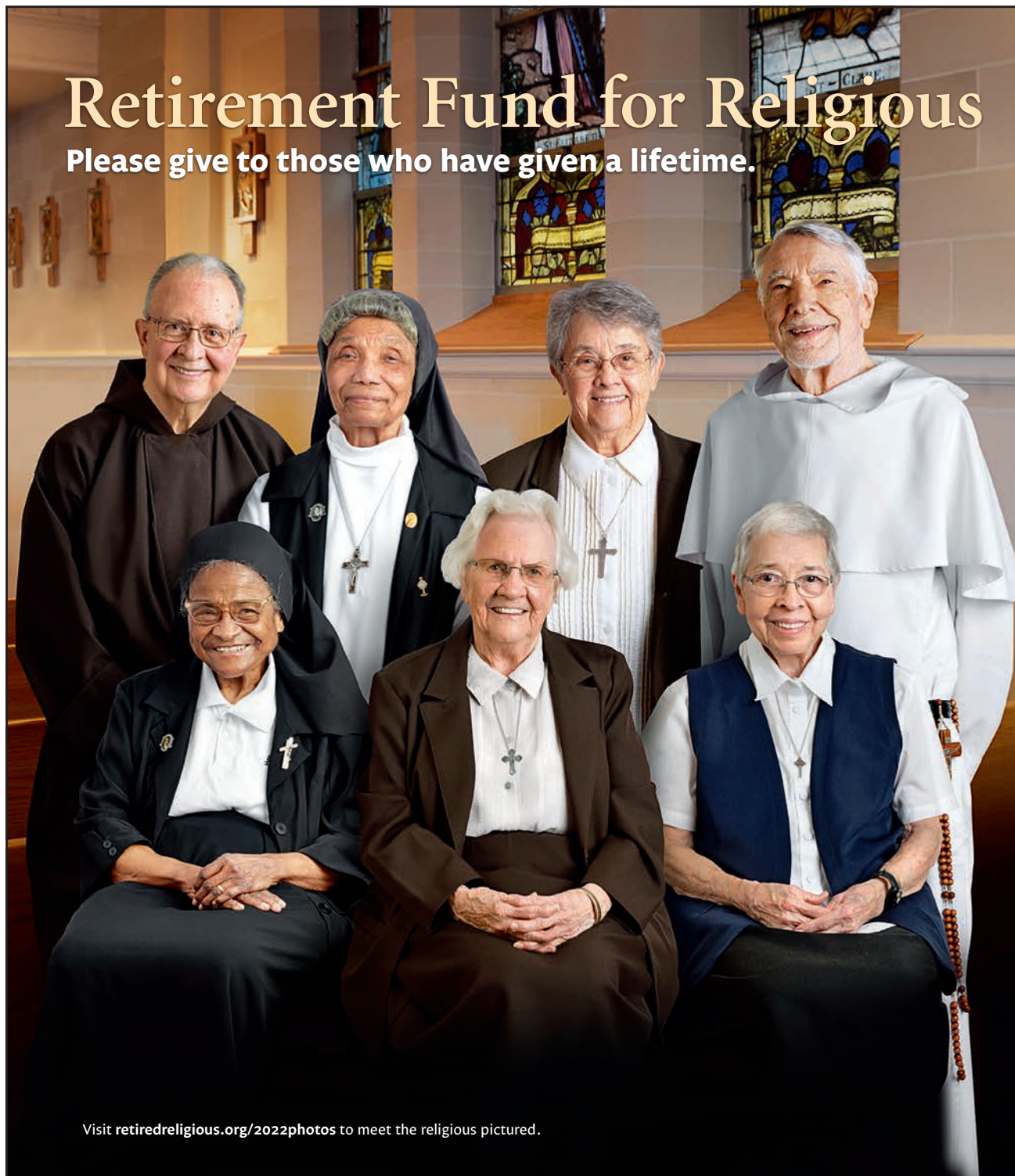
"who not only created humanity, but forms every human being in his own image and likeness."

Together "we believe that the Almighty has not remained distant from his creation, but has revealed himself, not communicating only with an isolated few, but addressing us as a people," the pope said. And "through faith and the reading of the Scriptures handed down in our religious traditions, we can enter into a relationship with him and cooperate with his providential will."

"As Jews and Christians," he said, "let us seek to do all that is humanly possible in order to put an end to war and to pave paths of peace." †

Retirement Fund for Religious

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