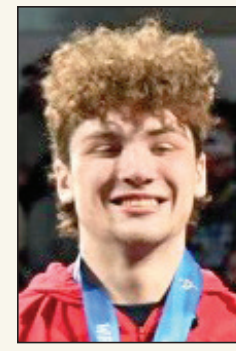




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Bond between parents, high school athlete integral in championship journey, page 16.

CriterionOnline.com

March 17, 2023

Vol. LXIII, No. 22 75¢



A migrant boy, who is traveling with his family to seek asylum in the United States, plays with a Captain America action figure along the border between Mexico and the United States in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, on Dec. 27, 2022. Some families in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis have welcomed unaccompanied children at the border into their homes, serving as short-term foster parents for the children who hope to be reunited with their parents and other family members in the United States. (CNS photo/Jose Luis Gonzalez, Reuters)

Families open their hearts and homes to unaccompanied children crossing the border

By John Shaughnessy

Like many people, Sara Fichtner struggles to overcome her introverted nature when she first meets someone new.

In these moments, she's learned to take a deep breath, to whisper a short prayer and to always remember this thought:

"Imagine all the people in your life who were once strangers whom you now love; people who have taught you something, supported you, inspired you, challenged you and loved you back."

On a recent winter morning, around 2 a.m., the 46-year-old Fichtner tried to imagine what was going through the mind of the 10-year-old girl standing before her.

Fichtner knew the girl was one of the thousands of unaccompanied children from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and other Central American countries who have made a long journey to cross the Mexican-American border and enter the United States in the hope of being reunited with their parents.

See FAMILIES, page 8

'Fraternity, tears, smiles': Pope shares hopes for the future

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In interviews focused on the 10th anniversary of his election, Pope Francis insisted it is not his task to make an accounting of what he has or has not accomplished since March 13, 2013.



Pope Francis

"The Lord will do the appraisal when he sees fit," the pope told the Italian newspaper *Il Fatto Quotidiano*.

However, he said he was certain the criteria for judgment would be from Matthew 25: feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, caring for the sick and visiting prisoners.

But he did have three words for what he hopes for the future: "Fraternity, tears, smiles."

As Pope Francis marked his anniversary celebrating Mass with cardinals in the chapel of his residence, Vatican News released a short "podcast" that included the pope's three-word response to a question about his dreams for the Church, the world and humanity.

"We are all brothers and sisters," he explained, and more efforts must be made to live like it.

"And to learn not to be afraid to weep and to smile," he said. "When a person knows how to cry and how to smile, he or she has their feet on the ground and their gaze on the horizon of the future."

"If a person has forgotten how to cry, something is wrong," Pope Francis said. "And if that person has forgotten how to smile, it's even worse."

The 86-year-old pope also asked the Vatican News interviewer, "What's a podcast?"

In the handful of interviews Pope Francis granted in connection with his anniversary, several topics kept coming up: the war in Ukraine and wars around the world, women in the Church, outreach to LGBTQ Catholics, handling criticism and even whether he thinks about death.

See POPE, page 3

Ministry leaders reminded of the power of the Eucharist at Bloomington gathering

By Sean Gallagher

BLOOMINGTON—In the midst of the three-year National Eucharistic Revival, parish catechetical leaders and leaders in youth and college campus ministry across central and southern Indiana face challenges in planting and nurturing seeds of faith in the hearts of young people immersed in an increasingly secular culture.

Despite these daily obstacles, they continue on, convinced in their hearts of the truth, beauty and goodness of Christ, his Gospel and the Church.

See BLOOMINGTON, page 9



Timothy O'Malley, director of education at the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame, gives a presentation on the Eucharist to archdiocesan leaders in catechesis, youth ministry and college campus ministry on March 1 at St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Mental health crisis response bill remains a key priority for ICC

By Victoria Arthur

As lawmakers debate the next state budget, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) is among the chorus of voices calling for full funding of a measure that



would extend a lifeline to people experiencing a mental health crisis.

The ICC recently joined numerous faith leaders in a “Call for Care” rally in support of Senate Bill 1, which would transform emergency response procedures in mental health crisis situations. Supporters consider it a potentially lifesaving measure that would more properly and safely address the needs of those in extreme distress due to mental illness or addiction.

“People dealing with mental health issues are vulnerable and are deserving of



Angela Espada

dignity,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. “Too often in our communities, we have seen people suffering from mental health crises responded to by police, who are usually not equipped or trained to handle these types of situations. Sadly, many of these crises have ended in the death of the person who needed assistance.”

For Espada, who spoke at a press conference held in conjunction with the March 7 rally at the Statehouse, this reality is deeply personal. She has a connection to the family of Herman Whitfield, a 39-year-old pianist and composer, who died at his parents’ home in Indianapolis last April after suffering a mental health crisis and being tased by police.

“Had an appropriate response system been available, there is very little doubt in my mind that he would be alive today,” Espada said. Backed by the governor’s office and a growing coalition of Hoosiers, Senate Bill 1 would boost local implementation of the 988 national suicide and crisis hotline launched last year, and continue

building an infrastructure to provide for the mental health needs of people in the most urgent situations. The legislation would establish mobile crisis intervention teams that are trained to respond to mental health emergencies across Indiana’s 92 counties and fund additional community-based mental health clinics statewide.

The measure, which passed the Senate unanimously in February, is now moving through the House. Despite the broad base of support for the bill, advocates are alarmed because the legislation was stripped of its proposed \$30 million funding during deliberations in the Senate.

But the author of the bill, Sen. Michael Crider (R-Greenfield), remains confident that the measure will not only make it through the General Assembly, but receive the funding required to implement it.

“Right now, everything looks good, and I don’t anticipate any problems at all in the House with the bill moving,” Crider said. “The thing that most people are concerned about is the finance portion of it, which will be an end-to-the-process decision and part of the budget discussions.”

This is a long session of the General Assembly, held every other year and culminating in the passage of the state’s two-year budget, which originates in the House. Crider explained that because his bill originated in the Senate but had a budget appropriation attached, it was not unusual for the proposed funding to be removed and tabled for the budget discussions late in the legislative cycle.

“I’m committed to be in there fighting for all the budget we can get,” said Crider, a member of the Senate appropriations committee. “This has been my mission for the last decade, and it’s encouraging to see us get to this point. I’m very, very hopeful that we’re going to get substantial changes made for the people of Indiana.”

The lawmaker has seen firsthand the pressing need for improved mental health services in the state. In a former role as director of disaster management and security at Hancock Regional Hospital in Greenfield, Crider frequently had to calm down crisis situations in an emergency room.

“This is an issue that captured my attention, and I knew there had to be



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

March 17–26, 2023

<p>March 17 – 10 a.m. Indianapolis Firefighters Emerald Society Memorial Ceremony, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 17 – 11:30 a.m. St. Patrick’s Day Parade, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 18 – 1 p.m. Mass and dialogue at Putnamville Correctional Facility, Greencastle</p> <p>March 19 – 2 p.m. Baptism at St. Gabriel Church, Louisville, Ky.</p> <p>March 20 – 10 a.m. All School Mass at Cathedral High School, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 20 – 5:15 p.m. Installation of Acolyte at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 21 – 10 a.m. Clergy Lenten Day of Prayer at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, Bloomington</p>	<p>March 21 – 2 p.m. Virtual National Eucharistic Revival Congress Board meeting</p> <p>March 22 – 10 a.m. Catholic Center Connection at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 22 – 7:30 p.m. Awake Night at Marian University, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 23 – 10 a.m. Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>March 23 – 1:30 p.m. Prayer for Indiana State Senate at Indiana Statehouse, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 25 – 9 a.m. Day of Prayer with Young Adult Discerners at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p>March 26 – 1 p.m. Mass and dialogue at Plainfield Correctional Facility, Plainfield</p>
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improvement in that space,” he said. “I firmly believe that if we can get help to people when they need it, they won’t end up in our emergency rooms and in our county jails.”

Crider credits the faith community and the other wide-ranging coalition of advocates who continue to support Senate Bill 1.

The March 7 “Call for Care” rally, sponsored by the advocacy group Faith in Indiana, drew leaders from a cross-section of Christian faiths as well as the Jewish community.

“Regardless of the particular religion, one of the common themes that day was respecting the dignity of the person,” Espada said.

In addition to Senate Bill 1, the ICC is tracking other legislation of interest in this second half of the 2023 session, anticipated to conclude at the end of April. The ICC strongly supports the school choice expansion elements of

House Bill 1001, the budget bill, which likely will face challenges in the Senate.

House Bill 1009, backed by the ICC and numerous other advocates, would allow a court order to require a father to pay for half of pregnancy and childbirth expenses. The measure, authored by Rep. Elizabeth Rowray (R-Yorktown), passed the House almost unanimously and is now moving through the Senate.

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

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus [Little Flower] Parish in Indianapolis, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

ICC podcast is added to weekly Catholic Radio Indy programming

By Victoria Arthur

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) now has another way to amplify its voice.

Thanks to a partnership with Catholic Radio Indy, the ICC is sharing its weekly podcast with countless listeners in central Indiana and beyond. The ICC—the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana—has been producing a new podcast every week during the past several legislative sessions, but this is the first time that it has been offered on local radio.


The Indiana Catholic Action Network (ICAN) podcast is hosted by ICC executive director Angela Espada and Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC, who cover legislation and issues in the light of Catholic social teaching. ICAN is the principal mode of communication for the ICC.

Catholic Radio Indy is airing the ICAN podcast on Saturdays and Sundays—typically in the afternoon, with times varying based on other programming. Listeners can catch the podcast on the following stations:

- 89.1 FM (west side of Indianapolis to Terre Haute).
- 90.9 FM (Hamilton County).
- 89.5 FM (south side of Indianapolis to Columbus).
- 98.3 FM (Anderson).

“It’s exciting to have this new audience for our podcast,” Mingus said. “We are very grateful to everyone at Catholic Radio Indy for helping us to share the work of the ICC and ways that everyone can get involved in our mission.”

The ICAN podcast is also available anytime at www.indianacc.org. †



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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

Published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.
Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2023 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

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
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Study: Trusted relationships with priests is key to fostering vocations

(OSV News)—A new study cites trusted relationships with parish priests as a deciding factor in cultivating vocations and reducing the priest-to-parishioner ratio as essential for making such encounters possible.

The 2023 “State of Priestly Vocations in the United States” by Texas-based Vocation Ministry concludes that “the overall role of priests in fostering vocations is significant,” with “around 70% of those ordained” reporting that they were invited by a priest to consider the calling.

“We know the priest is the number one factor for a young man saying ‘yes’ to the priesthood,” Vocation Ministry founder Rhonda Gruenewald told OSV News.

But as ordination numbers decline while many parishes close or merge, priests are becoming responsible for a greater number of parishioners, Gruenewald said. With increased administrative and pastoral responsibilities, clergy often have little time and energy to mentor teens and young men who might be interested in ordained ministry.

“If that [priest-to-parishioner] number is lower, then priests can create relationships that foster vocations,” said Gruenewald, whose report draws on data from the *Official Catholic Directory* along with input from vocation directors and seminarians from around the country.

According to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University (CARA), in 2022

there were 34,344 priests (24,110 diocesan, 10,234 religious) and 452 priestly ordinations in the U.S., serving 16,429 parishes and 66.5 million “parish-connected” Catholics. Just 66% of the diocesan priests were in active ministry, with an average of one active diocesan priest per parish.

The Vocations Ministry study grouped the nation’s Catholic dioceses into four tiers based on the size of their Catholic population, and then calculated how many replacement priests, seminarians and ordinations are needed in each diocese for pastoral viability, based on current conditions.

Gruenewald, who has conducted training sessions for thousands of priests, catechists, Catholic school educators and laity in more than 50 dioceses, concluded that the 2021 vocation data showed only 33 dioceses ordained enough men to satisfy a “base need ordination rate,” while 17 were meeting their “base need seminarian rate.” Another 42 dioceses had no ordinations during that period.

She admits that the data “might be difficult for some to digest.”

CARA executive director Jesuit Father Thomas Gaunt, who reviewed the Vocations Ministry report, told OSV News the study did not account for shifts in the Catholic population across the U.S., which have led to a “massive movement of Catholics out of the cities and into the suburbs, and from the Northeast and Midwest to the South and West” of the nation.

However, Father Gaunt noted the report was correct in its “overall contention on targeting the importance of relationships in encouraging vocations.”



Fr. Father Thomas Gaunt, S.J.

Of the four population tiers in the Vocations Ministry report, the highest-performing group was that with the lowest population and the lowest priest-to-parishioner ratio. Dioceses in this tier—which included Lincoln, Neb.; Tulsa, Okla.; and Reno, Nev.—typically ordain six times as many men as do the nation’s most populous dioceses.

Gruenewald stressed that Catholics have plenty of options for countering the declines in priestly vocations—

such as regular prayer, education about vocations and how to foster them, affirmation of current priests and seminarians, and youth ministry.

“Priests and parishioners need to find those pockets where young people are and bring the vocations message to them,” she said. “Instead of throwing our hands up and saying, ‘Oh well,’ we need to be intentional and strategic. Vocations can happen if you believe. Let’s get to work.”

(To download the 2023 “State of Priestly Vocations in the United States,” visit vocationministry.com/stateofpriestlyvocationsreport.) †

POPE

continued from page 1

He does, he told the Argentinean website Perfil. He said he thinks about death often and “very peacefully” because “it is necessary to remember” that no one lives forever.

The Argentinean newspaper *La Nacion* asked Pope Francis about the importance of the Synod of Bishops on synodality, a process the pope launched in October 2021 and that will culminate with synodal assemblies in 2023 and 2024.

In the context of explaining how he has tried to revitalize the synods, which were reinstated by St. Paul VI after the Second Vatican Council, the pope told *La Nacion* that including more voices is an ongoing process.

During the 2019 Synod of Bishops for the Amazon, he said, “the question was asked: Why can’t women vote? Are they second-class Christians?”

The Vatican’s answer always had been that while the input of many was essential to a synod, it was the role of bishops to discern and vote. However, 10 priests—and occasionally a religious brother—traditionally were elected by the men’s Union of Superiors General of religious orders as full voting members of the synod alongside bishops.

In February 2021, Pope Francis named

Xavière Missionary Sister Nathalie Becquart one of the undersecretaries of the synod general secretariat, a post that would make her an automatic voting member of the assembly.

So, *La Nacion* asked the pope if only one woman would have a vote at the next synod assembly.

“Everyone who participates in the synod will vote. Those who are guests or observers will not vote,” he said, but whoever participates in a synod as a member “has the right to vote. Whether male or female. Everyone, everyone. That word everyone for me is key.”

On the question of LGBTQ Catholics, Pope Francis insisted to the Perfil interviewer that “everyone is a child of God and each one seeks and finds God by whatever path he or she can.”

While the pope insisted matrimony can only be between one man and one woman, he also repeated his support for the legal rights guaranteed by civil unions for gay couples and others who share a life. And he said, as he told the Associated Press in January, homosexuality should not be criminalized.

As for Catholic teaching that homosexual acts are sinful, like any sexual activity outside of marriage, Pope Francis said he did not think those sins would send a person to hell.

“God only sets aside the proud, the rest of us sinners are all in line,” he said, and

God always is reaching out to save sinners who seek his help.

In the interviews with both *La Nacion* and Perfil, Pope Francis insisted there is a difference between a pastoral outreach to LGBTQ Catholics and accepting “gender ideology,” which, he said, “is one of the most dangerous ideological colonizations.”

“Why is it dangerous? Because it dilutes differences, and the richness of men and women and of all humanity is the tension of differences. It is to grow through the tension of differences,” the pope said.

A gender theory that sees being male or female as a social construct or choice rather than a fact related to biological identity “is diluting the differences and making the world the same, all blunt, all equal,” the pope said. “And that goes against the human vocation.”

In each of the interviews, he spoke of the horror of war and his concern for the continued fighting in Ukraine.

Asked by Vatican News what he would want as a gift for his 10th anniversary, Pope Francis responded: “Peace. We need peace.” †

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Editorial

Saint's wisdom can lead to conversion during the Lenten season and beyond

Conversion is the task of a moment; sanctification is the work of a lifetime. The divine seed of charity, which God has sown in our souls, wants to grow, to express itself in action, to yield results which continually coincide with what God wants. Therefore, we must be ready to begin again, to find again—in new situations—the light and the stimulus of our first conversion. And that is why we must prepare with a deep examination of conscience, asking our Lord for his help, so that we'll know him and ourselves better. If we want to be converted again, there's no other way. (St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, a Spanish priest who founded Opus Dei, an organization of laypeople and priests dedicated to the teaching that everyone is called to holiness by God and to discover sanctity in their ordinary live.)

The words St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, who died in 1975, shared in a homily on the first Sunday of Lent in 1952, speak to people of faith about a lifetime of conversion.

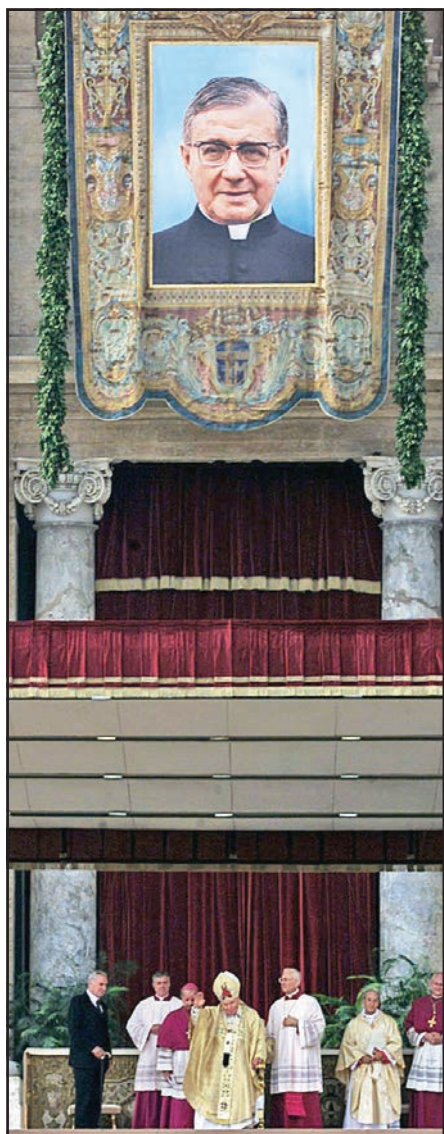
And as we mark the halfway point of Lent, it seems appropriate to ask: How are we doing? In increasing the time we spend in prayer? In fasting, not only from meat on Friday, but from gossiping, spending too much time in front of screens or in other things that deter us on our journey as disciples? In almsgiving, in sharing our gifts with our brothers and sisters in need?

A friend, who I consider a faithful Catholic, recently offered this wisdom about Lent. He said his pastor, during his Ash Wednesday homily last year, reminded his congregation that no matter how hard they try, human nature will cause many of them to invariably fall at one time or another in their Lenten practices. And the priest told his parishioners that was OK, because as St. Escrivá shared in his Lenten homily seven decades ago, “We must be ready to begin again, to find again—in new situations—the light and the stimulus of our first conversion.”

Beginning again. Starting anew. Forging ahead and not looking back. As disciples of Christ—despite our best efforts—many, if not all of us, have fallen short in our Lenten practices. And that's OK, because our faith reminds ongoing conversion is possible for those of us who truly seek it.

The Gospel on the third Sunday of Lent last weekend focused on Jesus and his conversation with the Samaritan woman at a well. They were strangers able to have a civil conversation, which seems unlikely in today's polarized society. Sadly, it is far from the norm.

But the heartfelt conversation our Savior engaged in with the woman—where he as a Jew was not afraid to speak to a Samaritan woman, shared portions of her life story and talked about giving her “living water” so the woman would never thirst again—led to her conversion. And the message she shared about Jesus back in her hometown—her work of



Pope John Paul II blesses pilgrims at the end of the canonization Mass for Opus Dei founder Msgr. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer on Oct. 6, 2002, outside St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. At least 300,000 people packed St. Peter's Square and nearby streets during the service proclaiming the Spanish priest a saint. (CNS photo from pool)

evangelization—led many Samaritans to want to meet him, leading to spending time with him and undergoing their conversion as they recognized Christ was “... truly the Savior of the world” (Jn 4:42).

Like the woman and other Samaritans in this Gospel story, we understand that, in real conversion, we come away changed. And on our journey as missionary disciples, it leads us to thirst for more.

If you've fallen short in your Lenten practices, we encourage you to begin anew. And we also encourage those who are seeking God's healing and grace to partake in the sacrament of reconciliation. *The Criterion* has a list of Lenten penitential opportunities featured on page 16 in this week's issue.

It is our responsibility as believers in Jesus during Lent—and in every liturgical season—to allow his wisdom to guide our living.

We must be ready to begin anew. May that be the case so Christ can continually transform our lives.

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/Fr. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, OSV News

Dissolving the dead

In recent years, a number of U.S. states have legalized a new way to process human corpses that some have called “dissolving the dead.” Its technical name is “alkaline hydrolysis,” but it is also known as biocremation, aquamation, green cremation and resomation.

The basic process involves placing a body in a heated, pressurized metal chamber and hastening its decomposition by adding lye (water mixed with a small quantity of potassium hydroxide or sodium hydroxide) to break down proteins, fats, DNA, etc. This rapidly digests the tissues of the body and reduces it to skeletal fragments. The procedure, which some claim is merely an accelerated version of what happens if you're buried, requires 3 to 4 hours.

Afterward, the dissolved tissue, a brown soup comprised of simple organic materials like salts, sugars and lipids, is released from the machine into a drain, then into the sewer system before it makes its way to water treatment facilities. The leftover bone fragments inside the machine are collected, ground up and, as in standard cremation, pulverized into a powder (colloquially and imprecisely termed “ashes”), which can be given to the family in an urn.

For alkaline hydrolysis, many instinctively object that dissolving bodies in a vat of chemicals and pouring the resultant liquid down the drain is not a respectful way to dispose of our loved ones' remains, because it seems to treat their bodies as waste to be flushed away.

Others note that standard embalming involves similar steps, as the drained blood and viscera that are extracted through the aspiration of the body cavities are also sent down the drain. The idea of flame cremation, they add, raises parallel concerns, as numerous parts of a person's body are degraded and flare up a pipe or chimney into the atmosphere.

As a society, we have laws prohibiting desecration of the human body, illegal burial and other abuses against the human body, and we can ask whether alkaline hydrolysis or liquification of the human body raises any of the same concerns and whether the process meets the standard of reverent treatment of our earthly remains.

Because of the novelty of alkaline hydrolysis, the Catholic Church does not yet have an official teaching that addresses the practice. Instead, the Church stresses the importance of showing careful regard for human remains and honoring the memory of the deceased.

These considerations should influence our decisions as Catholics when we are offered options like cremation or alkaline hydrolysis. Neither is intrinsically evil, but each can lead to abuses and provoke misunderstandings about our human nature. In an age in which many misidentify the human person as only

corresponding to the soul, without recognizing the sacredness of the human body, the Church tries to emphasize the importance of full-body burial as the best way to assure loving homage toward those who have died as well as witnessing to our belief in bodily resurrection.

Both cremation and alkaline hydrolysis, meanwhile, bring with them the potential for irreverence and a certain casualness when it comes to attending to human remains.

After cremation, rather than being reverently disposed, ashes are often kept in the attic or in the living room on the fireplace mantel, something that would never be done with a whole human body. Instead of being reverently reserved in the consecrated ground of a cemetery, our loved one's remains may be subjected to unbecoming or even superstitious treatment. At a deeper level, do we minimize or even negate someone's embodied human reality when we dissolve them in lye, or incinerate them in fire?

On the other hand, when the whole body is buried in the ground, there is a greater sense of connection to those mortal remains, which speak to us of the full embodiment of the person who once lived and breathed as we do, body and soul.

These notable differences in terms of according respect toward the deceased means that we should generally prefer whole body disposition of human remains, as the Church recommends, even though extenuating circumstances can allow for cremation and, until the Church formally teaches otherwise, alkaline hydrolysis. I believe it is unlikely the Church will ultimately counsel or encourage the use of this latter method for laying our loved ones to rest after death.

When alkaline hydrolysis is carried out, the same basic principles that are at work in cremation to protect human dignity should be applied. Bone fragments, powder and ashes left over from the process should be placed in a suitable container like an urn, and not scattered or divided among family members. The urn should be interred in the family plot, a mausoleum or a columbarium. This establishes a specific

point of reference in time, space and geography where we can commemorate our deceased family members. In this way, we are not only invited to respect their mortal remains, but also to pray for the repose of their souls as we mourn their passing in the hope of resurrection and beatitude.

(Reprinted with permission. Fr. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D., earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org and www.fathertad.com.) †

Because of the novelty of alkaline hydrolysis, the Catholic Church does not yet have an official teaching that addresses the practice. Instead, the Church stresses the importance of showing careful regard for human remains and honoring the memory of the deceased.

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

There is still time for joy in a season of sacrifice

O God, who chose the Bishop Saint Patrick to preach your glory to the peoples of Ireland, grant, through his merits and intercession, that those who glory in the name of Christian may never cease to proclaim your wondrous deeds to all, (Collect).

The publication date for this column is Friday, March 17, which is St. Patrick's Day. As most people know, Patrick is the patronal saint of Ireland, and the Irish people take special pride in his holiness and his evangelization of their homeland.

In spite of the fact that this memorial feast occurs during Lent, St. Patrick's Day is a day when people of Irish descent, whether at home or abroad, and all who are Irish at heart, celebrate with abundant food, drink, dancing and music.

Isn't this contrary to the spirit of the Lenten season? Aren't we supposed to spend these 40 days fasting and doing penance?

Catholic faith and practice are often characterized by the expression "both/and." We resist the rigidity of the "either/or" mentality, and we recognize that there are times and places for everything.

Yes, Lent is a penitential season

whose primary emphasis is on prayer and spiritual renewal. Unlike the Christmas and Easter seasons, which are focused on the joyful truths of Christ's incarnation and resurrection, Lent has a more somber feel overall. After all, during Lent we are deliberately walking with Jesus on the Way of the Cross.

But it is a mistake to regard Lent as a time of gloom and misery. We fast, pray and do charitable works during Lent as a preparation for the joy of Easter. Conscious that the suffering and death that Christ endured was necessary to free us from the fatal consequences of sin and death, we give up good things, and we make other sacrifices in order to appreciate more fully the great gift we have received through our Lord's passion, death and resurrection.

The liturgical calendar for this time of year acknowledges the both/and nature of our experience.

This year, for example, the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is celebrated on March 20, instead of the 19th, in order to give precedence to the Fourth Sunday of Lent, known as *Laetare* Sunday, which falls on March 19 in 2023.

All of the Sundays of Lent are exempt from the season's fasting requirements, but this particular Sunday in Lent the color violet or rose is used, instrumental music is permitted, and the altar may be decorated with flowers. We are still in the penitential season of Lent, but the Church takes a breather, if you will, to remind us that we are destined for joy. "Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her," we proclaim in the entrance antiphon. "Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast" (Is 66:10-11).

A similar break in the Lenten ethos will happen the following weekend, on March 25, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. This is a particularly joyful liturgical celebration because it recalls the moment when the Angel Gabriel announced that Mary was destined to be the mother of our Savior, and she freely accepted God's will for her. We know (and Mary surely sensed) that many sorrows would follow, but once again our faith reflects the truth that both joy and sorrow are part of the human condition. What is significant for us is that we believe that the joy of Easter is victorious over all our pain and sorrow.

Lent is the liturgical season that

prepares us to endure the hardships and sorrows of Christian discipleship in order to experience the lasting joy that comes with our redemption.

Yes, Lent is a penitential season, a time to pray, fast and engage in good works. But Lent is not a time to be downhearted or gloomy. It's a time to practice what we preach: Namely, that if we follow Jesus, all our sorrows will be replaced by joy, and all our fears will be overcome by the peace of the risen Christ.

So, let's not hesitate to celebrate St. Patrick's Day today, St. Joseph's Day next Monday, and the Solemnity of the Annunciation the following Saturday. And let's rejoice this weekend on *Laetare* Sunday with the confidence and hope that can only come from faith in our Lord's victory over sin and death.

Both sorrow and joy are reflected in this penitential season of Lent. Let's give thanks to God for the witness of all his saints and martyrs, the women and men who have gone before us—but who walk with us even now—on the synodal journey of Lent. With them, we should take seriously the call both to do penance and to rejoice.

Lá fhéile Pádraig sona dhaoibh!
Happy St. Patrick's Day! †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Aun en época de sacrificios hay tiempo para la alegría

Oh Dios, que elegiste al obispo san Patricio para predicar tu gloria a los pueblos de Irlanda concede, por sus méritos e intercesión, que los que se glorían bajo el nombre de cristiano no cesen nunca de proclamar a todos tus maravillas. (Colecta).

La fecha de publicación de esta columna es el viernes 17 de marzo, la festividad de san Patricio. Como la mayoría sabe, Patricio es el santo patrono de Irlanda, y el pueblo irlandés se enorgullece especialmente de su santidad y de que haya evangelizado su patria.

A pesar de que esta fiesta conmemorativa tiene lugar durante la Cuaresma, en el Día de San Patricio los descendientes de irlandeses, ya sea que vivan en su país o en el extranjero, y todos los que son irlandeses de corazón, lo celebran con abundante comida, bebida, baile y música.

¿Acaso no contradice esto el espíritu de la Cuaresma? ¿No se supone que debemos pasar estos 40 días ayunando y haciendo penitencia?

La fe y la práctica católicas a menudo se caracterizan por la expresión del "tanto y el como." Nos resistimos a la rigidez de la mentalidad de "o lo uno o lo otro" y reconocemos que hay momentos y lugares para todo.

Sí, la Cuaresma es un tiempo de penitencia en el que se hace hincapié

en la oración y la renovación espiritual. A diferencia de la Navidad y la Pascua, que se centran en las alegres verdades de la encarnación y la resurrección de Cristo, la Cuaresma tiene un aire más sombrío ya que, en definitiva, estamos recorriendo el vía crucis junto a Jesús.

Pero es un error considerar la Cuaresma como un tiempo de tristeza y sufrimiento. Ayunamos, rezamos y hacemos obras de caridad durante la Cuaresma como preparación para la alegría de la Pascua. Conscientes de que el sufrimiento y la muerte que Cristo padeció fueron necesarios para liberarnos de las consecuencias fatales del pecado y de la muerte, renunciamos a cosas buenas y hacemos otros sacrificios para apreciar más plenamente el gran don que hemos recibido mediante la pasión, muerte y resurrección de nuestro Señor.

El calendario litúrgico de esta época del año reconoce la naturaleza dual de nuestra experiencia.

Este año, por ejemplo, la solemnidad de san José, esposo de la bienaventurada Virgen María, se celebra el 20 de marzo, en lugar del 19, para dar precedencia al cuarto domingo de Cuaresma, conocido como domingo de *Laetare*, que en 2023 cae el 19 de marzo.

Todos los domingos de Cuaresma están exentos de los requisitos de ayuno de la temporada, pero en este en particular

se utiliza el color morado o rosado, se permite tocar música instrumental y se puede decorar el altar con flores. Todavía estamos en el tiempo penitencial de la Cuaresma, pero la Iglesia hace un breve receso, por así decirlo, para recordarnos que estamos destinados a la alegría. "Todos ustedes, los que aman a Jerusalén, ¡alégrense y regocíjense con ella!" proclamamos en la antífona de entrada. "¡Llédense de regocijo por ella, todos los que por ella se han entristecido! Porque ella los amamantará en sus pechos, y los consolará y dejará satisfechos" (Is 66:10-11).

El fin de semana siguiente, el 25 de marzo, se produce una ruptura similar del espíritu cuaresmal durante la solemnidad de la Anunciación del Señor. Se trata de una celebración litúrgica particularmente gozosa porque recuerda el momento en que el ángel Gabriel anunció que María estaba destinada a ser la madre de nuestro Salvador, y ella aceptó libremente la voluntad de Dios para con ella. Sabemos (y María seguramente intuyó) que vendrían muchas penas, pero una vez más nuestra fe refleja la verdad de que tanto la alegría como la tristeza forman parte de la condición humana. Lo que es significativo para nosotros es que creemos que la alegría de la Pascua triunfa sobre todo nuestro dolor y tristeza.

La Cuaresma es el tiempo litúrgico que nos prepara para soportar

las dificultades y los dolores del discipulado cristiano con el fin de experimentar la alegría duradera que acompaña nuestra redención.

Sí, la Cuaresma es un momento de penitencia, de oración, de ayuno y de buenas obras, pero no es un tiempo para estar abatido o sombrío sino de practicar lo que predicamos: que si seguimos a Jesús, todas nuestras penas se cambiarán por alegría, y todos nuestros miedos serán vencidos por la paz de Cristo resucitado.

Así pues, no dudemos en celebrar hoy el día de san Patricio, el próximo lunes el día de san José y el sábado siguiente la solemnidad de la Anunciación. Y alegrémonos este fin de semana en el domingo de *Laetare* con la confianza y la esperanza que sólo pueden venir de la fe en la victoria de nuestro Señor sobre el pecado y la muerte.

Tanto el dolor como la alegría se reflejan en este tiempo penitencial de Cuaresma. Demos gracias a Dios por el testimonio de todos sus santos y mártires, las mujeres y los hombres que nos han precedido, pero que caminan con nosotros incluso ahora, en el camino sinodal de la Cuaresma. Junto con ellos, debemos tomarnos en serio la llamada tanto a hacer penitencia como a alegrarnos.

Lá fhéile Pádraig sona dhaoibh!
¡Feliz Día de San Patricio! †

Events Calendar

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

March 17-May 28

RISE UP! Daily Lent and Easter Reflections, one- to two-minute video reflections led by Father Jonathan Meyer, pastor of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, receive link via text or email, text "Riseup" to 84576, free. Information: 812-576-4302, clairkeck.asp@gmail.com.

March 20

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: Pearlette Springer, pspringer@archindy.org, 317-236-1474.

March 21

Virtual Mini-Retreat: A Day in the Life of a Sister, 7:30-8:45 p.m., sponsored by Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Providence Sister Tracey Horan presenting, single women ages 18-42 exploring religious life, free. Registration, information: MiniRetreat.SistersofProvidence.org, 361-500-9505, jluna@spsmw.org.

March 23

Virtual Visio Divina using Raising Lazarus Illumination from the Saint John's Bible, noon-12:30 p.m., sponsored by Marian University, free, register by March 22. Information, registration: 317-955-6783, merdosy@marian.edu.

March 24

St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. **Fish Fry**, 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m., dinners (\$11.50-\$16) include choice from seven entrées, two sides, soda, bread and dessert, entrée only \$11.50-\$13.75, side orders à la carte \$1-\$4, delivery available for six orders or more. Information: 317-632-9349, stritchcatholicindpls@gmail.com.

St. Anthony of Padua Parish, 316 N. Sherwood Ave., Clarksville. **Men's Club Annual Fish Fry**, 5-7:30 p.m., baked or fried fish, oysters or shrimp with two sides, dine in, carry out, adults \$11-\$12, children \$3-\$7. Information: 812-282-2290, communications@stanthony-clarksville.com.

March 24, 31

St. John Paul II Parish, St. Joe Hill campus, 2605 St.

Joe Road, W., Sellersburg. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., fried fish, shrimp or baked fish, fries, baked potato, baked beans, coleslaw, mac and cheese, cheese pizza, dessert table, dine in, carry out, drive through, \$14 dinner, \$10 sandwich and side, \$8 sandwich. Information: 812-246-2512.

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, 5901 Olive Branch Road, Greenwood. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 5:30-7:30 p.m., sit-down or to go, \$12 adult meal: 2-piece fried fish or one piece baked fish or one grilled cheese sandwich, choice of three sides plus salad or coleslaw; \$10 children's meal: one piece baked or fried fish or grilled cheese, two sides plus salad or coleslaw; extra fish \$1 apiece. Information: 317-859-4673.

St. Francis Xavier Parish, 101 N. Ferguson St., Henryville. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., fried fish, shrimp, fries, coleslaw, dessert table, dine in, carry out, dinner \$10, fish sandwich \$8, 8-piece shrimp \$8. Information: 812-294-4682, stfrancissecretary@northclarkcountycatholic.org.

March 24, 31, April 7

St. Ann Parish, 6350

S. Mooresville Rd., Indianapolis. **Fish Fry Fridays**, 5:30-7:30 p.m., fish, side items vary weekly, freewill donation. Information: 317-821-2909.

March 24-25

Planned Parenthood, 8590 Georgetown Rd., Indianapolis. **40 Days for Life Knights of Columbus Vigil**, Fri. 7 p.m.-Sat. 7 a.m., free. Information: 317-372-0040, idipsumsapere@att.net.

March 25

All Saints Parish, St. John the Baptist Parish Hall, 25743 State Route 1, Guilford. **Married Couples Event: Overcoming Dysfunction and Putting Christ at the Center of Our Marriage**, 6-9 p.m., authors Dr. Andrew and Sarah Swafford presenting, includes dinner, free, registration required. Information, registration: cutt.ly/AS-swaffordevent23, 812-576-4302, clairekeck.asp@gmail.com.

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Alpaca Encounter**, 1-3 p.m., meet at White Violet Farm Store, \$25 per person, register by March 20.

Information, registration: events.SistersofProvidence.org 812-535-2932, wvc@spsmw.org, spsmw.org/events.

March 25, April 1

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Hall, 1125 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Catholicism 101 Workshop**, third and fourth of four independent sessions, free. Information: 317-638-5551.

March 25-26

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Bruté Weekend**, Sat. 5:30 p.m., Sun. 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 5 p.m. Masses celebrated by Father Andrew Syberg, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary vice rector, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501, esanders@archindy.org.

March 30

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Benedictine Room, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigrant Services Volunteer Information Session**, 10-11 a.m., refreshments provided. Information, registration:

cutt.ly/CCRIS, Laura Sheehan, lsheehan@archindy.org.

April 1

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Rd. W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, confessions 8:10-8:30 a.m. followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

April 2

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Bluegrass Jam**, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam.

St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Rd., Indianapolis. **40 Days for Life Closing Rally**, 3 p.m., free. Information: 317-372-0040, idipsumsapere@att.net.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Outdoor Stations of the Cross**, 3-4 p.m., Father Keith Hosey facilitating, meet in retreat house lobby. Information: lcoons@archindy.org, 317-545-7681. †

Retreats and Programs

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

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 and refreshments, register by Mar. 29. Information, registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org, spsmw.org/events.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Priest, Prophet and King—Day of Reflection**, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., Deacon Robert Beyke facilitating, \$45 includes lunch, program and Mass, register by March 31. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

April 3-June 12

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Ramsey Solutions' Financial Peace University**, nine Mondays, 6:30-8:30 p.m., \$79.99, led by

Ramsey Solutions' Matt Wolfert. Registration, class schedule: fpu.com/1160319. Information: givinghopefinancialservices@gmail.com, 317-389-0885, www.ramseyplus.com.

April 4

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Coffee and Conversation: Who We Serve**, 10-11:30 a.m., Patty Moore facilitating, series based on book *The Broken Way*, sixth of six independent sessions, \$25, journals provided. Information, registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

April 4, 5, 6

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Holy Week Days of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40 per day, includes room, lunch and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional \$30 per night, dinner additional \$10 per meal. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

April 5

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Contemplative Prayer**, in person or via Zoom, 2-3:30 p.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind presenting, freewill donation. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgosf.com, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

April 5-9

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Celebrating the Paschal Mystery**, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting, Holy Week retreat, \$465 single, \$735 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

April 6-8

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Holy Week and Triduum Retreat**, 9 a.m. Thurs.-4 p.m. Sat., Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Peterson facilitating, includes three-night stay at Loftus House, use of kitchen and spiritual direction, limited to six participants,

\$250. Information: retreatcommunications@mountsaintfrancis.org or 812-923-8817.

April 6-9

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Triduum Retreat**, 4:30 p.m. Thur.-1 p.m. Sun., \$375, includes meals and accommodations. Information, registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Easter Triduum Retreat**, 6 p.m. Thurs.-8 a.m. Sun., Franciscans of the Immaculata Fathers Terrance Chartier and Matthias Sasko facilitating, \$50.70 per adult, children free, includes lunch and dinner on Sat., overnight accommodations additional cost, call for details. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com.

April 7

Benedict Inn Retreat and

Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Good Friday Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40, includes private room for the day and lunch. Information, registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

April 14

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$70 with spiritual direction. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

April 15

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Making Sacred Journals**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Carolyn Stewart facilitating, \$30 includes materials. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center Sacred Heart Chapel, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Divine**

Mercy Day of Reflection, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Franciscan Friars of the Immaculata Father Matthias Sasko facilitating, registration not required, free. Information: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com.

April 16

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Coffee Talk: Flannery O'Connor**, 10:45 a.m.-noon, Franciscan Sister Amy Kistner facilitating, freewill donation. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Divine Mercy Sunday**, 1-4 p.m., 1 p.m. adoration and confessions, 1:45 p.m. Benediction, 2 p.m. Mass with blessing of images, 3 p.m. procession of relic of St. Maria Faustina with sung Chaplet of Divine Mercy, free. Information: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com. †

Applications to become a Providence Associate accepted through June 30

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods invite all to consider becoming a Providence Associate. The deadline for applications for the coming year is on June 30.

Providence Associates are women and men of faith who enter into a deeper relationship with the Sisters of Providence and help carry the mission

of love, mercy and justice to the world through their everyday lives. Currently, more than 300 Providence Associates live and serve across the United States and in Taiwan.

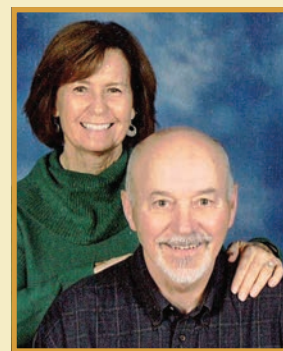
To request an application, go to ProvidenceAssociates.org or contact Providence Associate co-director Providence Sister Sue Paweski at 312-909-7492 or spaweski@spsmw.org. †

Wedding Anniversaries

RUSS AND LINDA (DURBIN) JENKINS, members of St. Mary Parish in Rushville, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on March 24. The couple was married in Zion United Church of Christ in Shelbyville on March 24, 1973, and had their marriage convalidated by their son Father Aaron Jenkins at the Wedding Church of Cana in Cana, Israel, on June 16, 2011.

They have two children: Mollie Rauh and Father Aaron Jenkins.

The couple also has three 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.

Father Wilfred “Sonny” Day and Frances Brown to be honored at gala

By Natalie Hoefler

At its annual Giving Hope-Changing Lives fundraising gala, St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany presents one or two Spirit of Hope Awards to honor those who have contributed generously of their time and talent in helping the organization and those it serves.

Frances Brown and Father Wilfred “Sonny” Day will each receive a Spirit of Hope Award at this year’s gala, to be held on April 20 at The Galt House Hotel in Louisville, Ky.

“St. Elizabeth has been blessed to have two such loving and caring people as part of our team,” said agency director Mark Casper. “We are very proud to have them receive the Spirit of Hope award this year.”

This year’s winners are featured below.

‘A ministry of presence’

Frances Brown, 81, was on a routine trip to the grocery recently. Being a self-proclaimed “people person,”



Frances Brown

she struck up a conversation with the store manager. And being a devotee to the mission of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities, she mentioned the organization.

“He said, ‘If I can help in any way, let me know,’” Brown recalled. “I said, ‘I will—what have you got to give me now?’ He gave me 10 bouquets.”

“Run if you don’t want to help, because I’ll take you up on it if you say yes!”

The story embodies comments about Brown by Casper.

“Fran is unique in that she is very effective in inviting and connecting other people and organizations to St. Elizabeth and donate their time, talent and treasure to further the St. Elizabeth mission,” said Casper.

Brown, a member of Epiphany Parish in Louisville, Ky., has been a member of the St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities executive board since 2009. She said she likes to “direct folks to the ministry and bring them onsite to try to raise awareness of the mission and this wonderful organization.”

She does more than call others to serve the charity—Brown devotes much of her time to helping and mentoring the residents of the maternity home, emergency shelter and domestic violence transitional program.

“I started mentoring a young lady” at the maternity home in 2009, she recalled. “I took my sewing machine

one day to see if she might be interested in sewing. That was the start of my beginning to be in the maternity home pretty much on a weekly basis and providing programs for the residents. That grew to a team approach to facilitate sewing, crafts, games and cooking.”

Sewing projects—with neighbors and friends Brown also recruited—now include making blankets, hats and scarves for the charity’s Marie’s Blessings distribution ministry and the supported living program—a ministry near to Brown’s heart as a former special education teacher.

Spending time with the women served by St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities is “a ministry of presence,” she said. It’s part of the Benedictine spirituality of “listening with the ears of your heart” she’s learned as an oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad.

“The Church is about community, being a community of people that work and pray for the good of others,” she noted. “It gives me great pleasure to connect with people and listen to their stories. ... You never know what piece of a puzzle you’re plugging into someone’s life and what they’re plugging into yours.”

Brown engaged with others years before joining the St. Elizabeth board. She joined her husband Charlie, a retired deacon of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky., in helping those he served since his ordination in 1996.

“We could write a book because we’re joined at the hip,” Brown joked. “Serving others is the way we answer God’s call.”

She said she was “humbled” to receive the Spirit of Hope Award.

“I only accept it because of other people I have collaborated with through the years, either on the board or other volunteers,” she said. “I really feel their prayer, support and encouragement—we’re all a team.”

A team, perhaps, but with Brown serving as a role model, said Casper. “Fran leads by action,” he said. In doing so, he said “she challenges all the St. Elizabeth stakeholders to do more every day.”

Just ‘doing my duty’

Father Day has spent 45 of his 56 years as a priest serving in the New Albany Deanery. His roles there included parish administrator, assistant pastor, pastor, high school teacher and dean. Despite retiring in 2022, he still serves as sacramental minister for St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight and St. Mary Parish in Navilleton.

That is a list of his official appointments.



“St. Elizabeth has been blessed to have two such loving and caring people as part of our team. We are very proud to have them receive the Spirit of Hope Award this year.”

—Mark Casper, agency director of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities

But an unofficial role he took on for himself was as a volunteer and promoter first of St. Elizabeth Maternity Home when it was founded in 1989 and then of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities after the two organizations joined in 2004.

Father Day supports the charity because “it’s a good way of serving

the needy and poor. They find themselves in a bad situation and struggling to make ends meet. They’re people in need of a helping hand.

“I’m always amazed at how the ministry responds to so many needs here in southern Indiana

and the Louisville area, too. If there’s a possible way of responding, St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities does.”

Father Day said he promoted the ministry and encouraged people to support it during his years serving in the New Albany Deanery. And he would volunteer and attend events when he could.

But now that he’s retired, he has more time to help at St. Elizabeth in person. One of his favorite programs to volunteer with there is Marie’s Blessings community distribution service, which provides free baby food, diapers, formula, clothing, car seats, baby beds, household items, appliances and furniture to local families in need.

He was pastor of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Jeffersonville when the late Marie Robertson, founder of the formerly named Marie’s Ministry, started the service.

“She had that ministry going there [at the parish] for years,” Father Day recalled. “When she passed away, St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities picked it up to serve the poor and needy.”

Father Day said he likes “to meet the clients, to be as friendly as I can be. When people come asking for something, I try to do my best not to do anything to make them feel

uncomfortable and to be as welcoming and kind as I can be.”

He recalled one young woman who sought help at Marie’s Blessings.

“Obviously, she was in a terrible situation, just ready to cry,” Father Day said. He was touched “just to be able to console her, that she’d be OK, that we would help her in every way we could. That’s what strikes me about that ministry.”

Recently, Father Day has also been available to offer Mass and bless new sculptures at the organization’s Holy Trinity Heritage Park located next to the St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities administration building.

“As St. Elizabeth director, I can say Father Sonny has always been there when an issue arose where his experience and guidance was always available,” said Casper.

He said the priest’s “actions of support and guidance to St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities has contributed to the growth and community support of the St. Elizabeth mission. In both his spoken word from the pulpit and his actions, Father Sonny Day challenges us all to live out the works of charity Jesus called us to.”

Father Day said he was surprised to hear he was chosen to receive the award.

“I just thought I was doing my duty, and that’s what I will hopefully continue to do.”

(The Giving Hope-Changing Lives Gala will take place on April 20 at The Galt House Hotel, 140 N. Fourth St., Louisville, Ky. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., and dinner will be served at 7 p.m. The evening will include client witnesses, videos and a live auction. Three virtual auctions will also take place from March 21-April 20 at bidpal.net/stegala2023, with a preview available on March 17. Items will be Derby-themed from March 21-31, general from April 3-17 and premium from April 13-20. The gala will end between 9:30 p.m.-10 p.m. Register to attend by April 5 at www.stecharities.org/gala-reservations or by calling 812-949-7305 or e-mailing info@stecharities.org.) †

Nicaraguan president who jailed bishop is ‘unbalanced,’ Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, who has strongly persecuted the Church in the country and jailed a prominent bishop, is “unbalanced,” Pope Francis said.



Pope Francis

In a wide-ranging interview with Argentinean media outlet *Infobae*, the pope compared the current Nicaraguan government to the “communist dictatorship of 1917,” referring to the Russian revolution, and Hitler’s dictatorship in Germany before World War II, calling them “obscene” in Argentinean slang.

In the interview published on March 10, Pope Francis spoke about Bishop Rolando Álvarez of Matagalpa, who

was sentenced to 26 years in prison on Feb. 10 after refusing to be sent to the United States with 222 political prisoners deported by the Nicaraguan government. Bishop Álvarez and the Church throughout Nicaragua have been targeted for allegedly supporting opposition to President Ortega and his government.

With the sentencing of the bishop, “I have no choice but to think that the person in charge is unbalanced,” the pope said.

According to the Associated Press, the Nicaraguan government announced on March 12, in response to the pope’s interview, that it was considering suspending diplomatic relations with the Vatican. It expelled the apostolic nuncio to Nicaragua last year.

On March 7, the Nicaraguan government stripped the legal status from two Catholic universities in the country.

Still speaking of Latin America, the pope said that he wants to go to Argentina, but that the right moment has not presented itself.

And he said he believes regime change is possible in Venezuela, since “historical circumstances will make them change the way of dialogue they have.” The U.N. refugee agency estimates there are more than 7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants worldwide due to high inflation and political persecution.

Pope Francis also discussed resistance in the Roman Curia, saying that he appreciates direct and productive criticisms, but that resistance “on the verge of schism” is “ugly.” He cited “a well-known American bishop, who was nuncio” as an example of “poorly managed resistance.”

“We do not know if this man is

Catholic or not, he is on the edge,” said the pope.

Despite a promise he made to Our Lady of Mount Carmel in 1990 to not watch television, Pope Francis said he was kept up to date on the 2022 World Cup final, in which his native Argentina beat France in a penalty shootout.

“I was in a meeting here with six Alitalia pilots and their wives. At one point I went to go find something, and when I came back one told me ‘they are winning’” along with the score.

Argentina was winning the match 2-0 with slightly more than 10 minutes left before conceding two late goals to go into overtime.

“We Argentinians have this: We start things with enthusiasm, and we have a culture—I don’t know, at least I have it—of leaving things halfway,” said Pope Francis. “Be it in the positive or negative.” †

FAMILIES

continued from page 1

The member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis also knew those journeys could be heartbreaking and even touched with fear and violence for these children.

The mother of two young sons also knew how politically divisive and emotionally-charged the whole border issue is in the United States.

But none of that mattered in that moment when Sara looked into the nervous eyes of the quiet, tired girl who had spent the past 24 hours being processed at the border and then put on an airplane, with a U.S. government official, to Indianapolis. There, Sara and her husband Mario had agreed to welcome the child into their Indianapolis home as her short-term foster parents—all part of the girl's transition to hopefully being reunited with her parents after five years.

After picking up the girl at the agency that oversees this transitional foster care program in Indianapolis—Bethany Christian Services—Sara led the girl to her car as a soft snow began to fall.

"The first few minutes of the car ride were a bit nerve-wracking as we tried to think of what to say to each other," Sara recalled later in a blog she writes. "When our family started fostering back in August and picked up our first child, it was like leaving the hospital for the first time with a newborn baby. We felt the excitement and relief that we could do something important, but that was mixed with anxiousness at the sheer responsibility of taking care of another human being.

"For a stretch of the drive, the little girl and I were quiet as I navigated the dark streets, and the snow fluttered past my windshield. After some deep breaths and prayers, I broke the ice. I asked if she had ever seen snow before. She said no. I asked if she had lived in a big city or a small town, and then I said something funny that made her laugh. I could hear the relief in her voice as she answered my questions, both of us taking a little bit of an exhale.

"I didn't want us to be strangers, so my not-quite-perfect Spanish and introverted nature were overcome by my need to make her feel safe and welcome, and loved."

Dangerous journeys, heartbreaking stories and a touch of love

As the parents of five grown children, Anne and Jerry Corcoran are quick at observing the actions of children, and they've learned one revealing behavior of the 10 unaccompanied children that they have welcomed into their home in the past year.

"One of the things I've noticed is that when you show them their room, they're quite happy and relieved, but they always say good night at the door, and you hear them lock it," Anne says. "They'll do that for a week and a half. After that, you'll be reading stories in their room or talking with them. But before that time, they're real careful about keeping themselves safe."

In many cases, that cautious, often-fearful reaction is a reflection of the journeys they have made to try to reunite with their parents and families.

"Their trips to the border are traumatic events for the most part," Jerry says. "It's violent and scary, and it takes a long time to make the journey."

Anne adds, "They're just trying to get to parents who



As foster care parents who have welcomed into their home 10 unaccompanied children who have crossed the Mexican-American border, Anne and Jerry Corcoran of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis believe they are living their Catholic faith. (Submitted photo)

are already here or other family members who are already here. Some are being sent with 'coyotes' [someone who smuggles immigrants across the border], and it's really dangerous. We've heard some crazy stories. There were some who were hiding in a warehouse for a week. Another was in a boxcar for a couple of days without food and water. The Mexican police will extort them."

As short-term foster parents, the Corcorans offer a contrasting world: a safe place to live, nourishing meals and opportunities to be a child again—playing games, exercising, doing art projects, going to movies and restaurants.

"We also take them to church," says Jerry, who is a member of St. Monica Parish with Anne. "We try to attend the Latino Mass at St. Monica. It's just an extension of what we hold dear to us in terms of our faith."

The children also make daily visits to Bethany, which collaborates with the Social Concerns Ministries of Catholic Charities in the archdiocese and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. At Bethany, the children receive medical care, emotional counseling, educational assessments and lessons in speaking English.

There are also the phone calls they make daily to talk with the parents they are looking forward to being reunited with—and phone calls to the family members they have left behind.

"Sometimes, that's the heartbreaking thing," says Anne, a former pastoral associate at St. Monica Parish who retired in 2021. "This one little boy from Honduras was on his way to his mom who he hadn't seen in seven years. So he's calling his mom, and then he got permission to call his aunt, who was kind of his mom because that's who he had lived with for the past seven years in Honduras.

"He'd almost light up more when he talked to his aunt. You really realize how torn they are because they had loving relatives who cared for them in one place, but they can't wait to be with their parents."

'There's the commandment to love your neighbor'

As short-term foster parents, the Fichtners and the Corcorans receive a stipend for providing food, clothing and other necessities for the immigrant children they welcome into their homes.

They also have completed an extensive training program to become licensed as foster parents by the Indiana Department of Child Services. And there are also requirements involving background checks, job history and proof of insurance.

Helping the immigrant children directly appeals to both couples.

"I just wanted to do anything I could to support them," Anne says about the children they have welcomed into their home. "Evidently, there's a law that you can't hold the kids at the border for more than 72 hours. The government has to get them into a child-friendly place. And they prefer foster care. They're with us for as long as it takes for their parents to prove who they are. The average stay is about two weeks."

Jerry adds, "Through Anne's work at St. Monica, we had gotten to know quite a few Latino parishioners, and we became really good friends with them. And St. Monica has a relationship with a small country parish in Honduras. I've done five different trips there over the last 10 years as part of that mission ministry. I have quite a few friends I've gotten to know in Honduras over time. So we're both drawn to the Latino community not only in Indianapolis but globally."

While sharing that commitment, the Fichtners also have two other important reasons for becoming foster parents for immigrant children.

First, their family is marked by immigrant stories, with Mario arriving in the United States from Argentina when he was 28, and Sara's mom coming to America from the Philippines.

They also view this experience of opening their homes



As members of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, Sara and Mario Fichtner and their two sons, 13-year-old Cristian and 9-year-old Roman, have opened their home on a temporary basis to unaccompanied children who have crossed the Mexican-American border in the hope of being reunited with their parents. (Submitted photo)

as an eye-opening opportunity for their two sons, 13-year-old Cristian and 9-year-old Roman.

"I'd like for our kids to see how fortunate they are living here and not going through some of the struggles that kids from somewhere else have to go through," Mario says. "This also helps our kids practice their Spanish."

Sara notes, "I wanted to do some kind of service with our kids. This is a ministry that we could do together as a family. And part of this service is teaching our kids about our faith. There's the commandment to love your neighbor. We have to care about people and take care of them as we can."

The experience has been both a blessing and a challenge for Cristian.

"I like to hear about how the kids lived, what they ate, and what they called certain things," Cristian says. "I enjoy playing sports with them and showing them things they wouldn't see where they came from."

"The hardest thing about this is communication.

Sometimes I would say the wrong word in Spanish or not be able to speak fast enough. I learned that people have to leave their homes and come to a place they aren't familiar with. I have peace in my mind when they leave happy to see their parents."

'Sometimes the hugs just don't end'

Sara Fichtner's thoughts return to the 10-year-old girl she first met on the snowy morning earlier this winter.

She remembers how the girl told them she liked basketball, so they took her to an Indiana Pacers' game.

She remembers how the girl spent Christmas Day with Sara's extended family, delighting in the presents she was given.

Most of all, Sara remembers learning about the best gift the girl received shortly after Christmas.

Accompanied by a caseworker from Bethany, the girl took a plane from Indianapolis International Airport to the city where her parents lived—to a reunion with her parents after five years of being separated from them, five years in which she lived with relatives.

"The caseworker sent us a picture of her with her parents at the airport," Sara says. "She called afterward to thank us and tell us she was with her family. It was sweet that she called because typically we don't have any contact with them after they're reunited. We were happy and relieved for her. She was close with her parents and talked with them often on the phone. We all just wanted for her to be with them again."

Anne Corcoran says these reunions—whether witnessing them in person or later in a photo—are deeply touching.

"They've waited so long to be back together. They just hug, and sometimes the hugs just don't end. And they're crying and crying."

She sees being a part of the entire experience as a reflection of the Catholic faith.

"It's just the heart of it. It's easy to see them as brothers and sisters, and I think that comes from our faith. A lot of them are Christian and devout. I think having that faith makes them really seem related to us in a really deep way. "There's this closeness. You just feel this connection, this bond."

(For more information about the transitional foster care program for unaccompanied refugee children, visit the website for Bethany Christian Services at www.bethany.org.) †

BLOOMINGTON

continued from page 1

Many of them gathered on March 1 at St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington to be encouraged in their ministry and to help each other be more effective in sharing the Gospel.

The annual Winter Day of Formation for Lay Ecclesial Ministers was co-sponsored by the archdiocesan offices of catechesis, youth ministry and young adult and college campus ministry.

Timothy O'Malley, director of education at the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana, gave two presentations on the Eucharist at the meeting that drew more than 80 ministry leaders from across the archdiocese.

A popular Catholic author of *Becoming Eucharistic People: The Hope and Promise of Parish Life and Real Presence: What Does It Mean and Why Does It Matter?*, O'Malley has been involved in the planning of the three-year National Eucharistic Revival in the U.S.

"The Church is where the great divine mystery of love unfolds," he said. "That's why we need a eucharistic revival."

O'Malley noted that people involved in ministry in the Church can sometimes focus a lot of attention on programs they help lead and parish and diocesan ministry offices that assist them.

"We rely on bureaucracy," he said. "We forget that it is Christ who is guiding the Church."



Melinda Rivelli, a pastoral associate at St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis, prays during a March 1 Mass at St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington.

O'Malley later reflected on how the value placed on speed and technology in contemporary culture can make sharing the Gospel challenging for the Church.

"We're slow," he said. "We don't make decisions with speed. We don't think speed wins. We think stability has value to it."

The speed at which culture runs, O'Malley said, can lead people to ignore the deeper meaning of life.

"Evangelization starts with asking the big questions," he said. "But if you move too fast, you don't have time for the big questions—or any questions. Many young people find ways to avoid the big questions—alcohol, drugs, mind-numbing engagement in an Internet world."

Secularization in culture also leads to people forgetting stories that link them and society to the past and give meaning to their lives, O'Malley noted. In contrast, the Church, he said, lives to share Christ's story and make it—and him—alive here and now.

"In telling his story, we actually encounter him," O'Malley said. "The Church isn't remembering a once upon a time story. ... Christ is active today."

And this happens most intensely, he proposed, in the Eucharist.

"You are not just experiencing a little bit of spiritual delight or devotional life [at Mass]," O'Malley said. "The God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob—the God who sent his Son into the world—that God gives himself to us. He acts here and now.

"The revival starts with us actually remembering what we're doing. At stake is a love that was given. Divine salvation unfolds at Mass."

In order to appreciate more fully what really happens at Mass, O'Malley suggested, Catholics need to slow down.

"You know what is actually needed for the eucharistic revival?" he asked his listeners. "Leisure. Stopping.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson elevates a chalice during a March 1 Mass at St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington. Concelebrating the Mass at right is Benedictine Father Simon Hermann of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

Slowing down. It's not complicated. Ask people to be together. Go to Mass."

Throughout his presentations, O'Malley reflected on the Eucharist in light of liturgical texts written some 800 years ago by St. Thomas Aquinas for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, traditionally known as *Corpus Christi*.

In one of those texts, St. Thomas described the Eucharist as a "pledge of future glory."

While the Eucharist, O'Malley noted, is a "foretaste of heaven," Catholics still live in a world that is very much not heaven. This reality can make it hard at times to fully appreciate the gift and transformative power of the Mass.

The more Catholics can become consciously aware of what Christ offers them in the Eucharist, O'Malley said, the more they can then offer to the world a different and compelling understanding of reality than what dominates contemporary culture.

"In the Eucharist, we have a proposal that our fulfillment is this: love and love unto the end," O'Malley said. "The world can be a space of love, a communion of friendship. It need not be governed by power, prestige, fame and fortune. It can be governed instead by love. We can do something about that. In fact, we have to."

Lay Catholics, he said, can enter more fully into this eucharistic reality by offering to God all that they do in their everyday lives in their participation in the Mass. This would link their life outside of Mass with the liturgy, transforming their experience of both of them.

"It is all of us offering our lives as a sacrifice of love," O'Malley said. "... That's

what the eucharistic revival is actually about."

Melissa Fronckowiak attended the meeting in Bloomington from St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville, where she leads faith formation and youth ministry efforts.

She appreciated O'Malley's love for the Eucharist, something that has been deeply planted in her own heart.

"We have so greatly increased our times for eucharistic adoration," said Fronckowiak. "I'm kind of a stickler about it. If we have Christ present on the altar, let's not promote anything else [in the parish] at that time."

Coming together with other ministry leaders from across central and southern Indiana was encouraging for her.

"It truly makes the idea of us as the body of Christ more visible," said Fronckowiak. "That love of each other and for Christ himself is more tangible and visible. It fills me with a hope that we can go back to our parishes and bring what we've learned to the people we serve."

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson celebrated Mass at St. Paul with those taking part in the meeting.

During his homily, the archbishop prayed that the ministry leaders gathered would "never tire of being witnesses as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ by means of evangelizing and catechesis, through your commitment to word, sacrament and service."

"May we draw strength and inspiration from the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ in this Eucharist, that which sustains us, the source and summit of our identity, witness and mission, as we strive to proclaim the good news of salvation." †

For agency president and foster parents, children crossing the border comes down to 'a simple question'

By John Shaughnessy

Chris Palusky knows how politically divisive and emotionally charged the whole border issue is in the United States.

At the same time, the president and chief executive officer of Bethany Christian Services tries to convince people to focus on the heart of what his organization is doing in its short-term foster care program for unaccompanied children who arrive at the Mexican-American border—a program that strives to help the children make the transition to being reunited with their parents or other family members.

"Imagine standing on a riverbank and seeing a child drowning in the river," Palusky notes on the international organization's website, www.bethany.org. "Wouldn't you immediately jump in the river to save the child? Now imagine that, after saving the first child, you see more children struggling in the river. You would question why so many children are falling into the river upstream, and whether someone is throwing them in.

"These are good and important questions, but in this hypothetical scenario, I don't think any of us would refuse to help the children in the river until our questions are answered. The immediate priority would be to make sure the children are safe.

"This is a good metaphor for the current situation with unaccompanied children at the border. For a variety of tragic reasons, there are a lot of children 'struggling in the river' right now. It is important to address the reasons why this is happening 'upstream,' but in the meantime, our first and greatest priority is helping children who are alone, in danger, and afraid. To me, it is unconscionable that the welfare of these children would be used as a pawn in political debate. They deserve better.

"The situation comes down to a simple question: Do children fleeing violence and poverty deserve a safe and loving home? From the perspective of my Christian faith, the answer is an unqualified yes. Bethany's short-term immigrant foster care program is a tangible way that you can say yes to these children."

In central Indiana, Bethany's immigrant foster care

program works in collaboration with the Social Concerns Ministries of Catholic Charities in the archdiocese. Bethany's efforts to help unaccompanied refugee children are also supported by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Anne and Jerry Corcoran of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis are among the Catholics in the archdiocese who have opened their homes as foster parents for unaccompanied refugee children.

"They're with us for as long as it takes for their parents to prove who they are," Anne says. "The average stay is about two weeks."

She encourages anyone who may be interested in becoming a part of this program to check the website for Bethany Christian Services, adding that the organization based in Grand Rapids, Mich., provides extensive support for people who offer foster care to the children.

"You can make a safe place for these children for a while," she says. "That means a lot. It also means a lot to be able to reunite these families. It takes energy, but the reward is so huge." †

St. Thomas More members ‘know, love and serve God and neighbors’

By Natalie Hoefler

Chat with Father Jude Meril Sahayam about St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville, and it becomes obvious—from Bible studies to bereavement ministry, from health fairs to interfaith community outreach—the parishioners of the 55-year-old Morgan County faith community put into action every word of the parish’s mission: “To know, love and serve God and our neighbors.”

‘Strong in faith’ and ‘visible in the community’

One of the first things that impressed Father Sahayam when he became administrator of the parish in July 2021 was the singing.

“Every parish I go to, I listen to how people pray and sing. They pray and sing so strong here—very loud, very unified!” he said enthusiastically. “The people here are very strong in faith.”

For example, he said, the parish has four Bible study groups that meet every week. And once a month, the parish youths take on ministries at Mass, from greeting and ushering to lecturing and singing.

“There is a growing number of young families” at St. Thomas More, said Father Sahayam. “And there is strong leadership here, from staff members to committee leaders—every committee is really strong.”

Even the new ones, he said. A parish bereavement ministry began last year, providing eight sessions to help those grieving the loss of a loved one. A new round of sessions just began at the start of the Lenten season.

The Bible studies and bereavement sessions help parishioners “know, love and serve God.” But opening these and many other

ministries—including a social group for widows and a senior exercise club—to those outside the parish and from other faiths becomes a means for the faith community to “know, love and serve God and our neighbor.”

Knowing, loving and serving God and neighbor is especially evident in St. Thomas More Parish’s outreach efforts.

“We’re trying to be more visible in the community,” said Father Sahayam.

For instance, the parish is involved with Churches in Mission, an interfaith ministry in Mooresville that serves those in need in Morgan County.

The parish recently started an additional way to serve the local community.

“Last year, we held a public health fair,” Father Sahayam explained. “We offered blood draws, shots, checked bone density, cholesterol, blood pressure, sugar. There was an addictions center [represented], a booth on breast cancer. It’s a community thing we want to do annually.”

The parish’s annual fall festival, while a fun opportunity, is also a means to reach the local community.

“Catholics are a minority in Mooresville,” said Father Sahayam.

“So, we have Mass during the festival and invite everyone to come. We offer a church tour. Deacon Joe [Beauchamp] puts everything in the sanctuary—thurible, bells, hymnal, books, holy water, incense, holy oils, crucifix, chasuble—and explains all of it.”

He welcomes all to visit St. Thomas More, whether coming for the festival, joining a bereavement session or just walking the parish’s outdoor Stations of the Cross during Lent.

“The first thing I hear from visitors is, ‘You have a great community,’” Father Sahayam said. “There’s a homey feel here, a closeness. I hope many people come to experience it.”

For Mass times and ministry information, go to stm-church.org or call 317-831-4142.



Things to do from the common to the uncommon

A visit during the annual St. Thomas More festival offers a chance to see the parish—both from the ground and the sky. Hot air balloon rides are just one of the offerings at this year’s festival, set for Sept. 15 (5-10 p.m.) and Sept. 16 (3-10 p.m.). The event will also offer a magic show, raffles, bingo, food and a beer garden.

But worshipping at Mass at St. Thomas More can be part of fun-filled daytrip to Morgan County any time of year.

There are common popular activities nearby, like hiking at Morgan-Monroe State Forest in southern Morgan County (cutt.ly/MorganMonroe, 765-792-3145); taking in a round of golf at Eagle Pines Golf Club in Mooresville (eaglepines.com, 317-831-4774); or enjoying a canoe ride on the West Fork of the White River (pathfinderoutfitters.com, 812-340-0700).

Or you might try for something a little uncommon. Check out a sprint car race on the dirt track at Paragon Speedway (paragonspeedway.com); try your hand at “airsoft”—similar to paint ball—at Shot Zone in Martinsville

(shotzoneindy.com, 317-608-3893); learn about bees at Hunter’s Honey Farm in Martinsville, where you can take a tour, bottle honey, make a beeswax candle or take a hayride (huntershoneyfarm.com, 765-537-9430); or pick your own lavender and enjoy a picnic at Willowfield Lavender Farm in Mooresville (willowfieldlavender.com, willowfieldlavenderfarm@gmail.com).

Father Sahayam also recommends dining at Gray Brothers Cafeteria in Mooresville, known for their pies—20 varieties, according to its current menu (graybroscatereria.com, 317-790-2191).

He also likes The House, a Christian-based breakfast/lunch restaurant decorated with “good sayings from the Bible,” he said (houseofthemaster.com, 317-584-3790).

Wherever you eat or however you spend your day in the area, be sure to worship Christ at Mass with the members of St. Thomas More Parish.

(Mass Excursions is a feature highlighting an archdiocesan parish and local attractions, encouraging a trip to the area that includes Mass with the members of that parish.) †



Delaware bill would break seal of confession between priest and penitent

WILMINGTON, Del. (OSV News)—The Delaware General Assembly is taking aim at a basic tenet of the

Catholic Church and wants to break the seal of confession between a priest and penitent.

House Bill 74 (HB 74) would do away with the privilege between priest and penitent in a sacramental confession by requiring priests to report information relating to child abuse and neglect that is shared in a confessional.

The Diocese of Wilmington said priests are prohibited from breaking the seal of confession and are bound to keep the confidence of penitents in the sacrament of reconciliation.

“The sacrament of confession and its seal of confession is a fundamental aspect of the Church’s sacramental theology and practice. It is non-negotiable,” the diocese said in a prepared statement on March 6.

“No Catholic priest or bishop would ever break the seal of confession under any circumstances. To do so would incur an automatic excommunication that could only be pardoned by the pope himself,” it added. “It would be a clear violation of the First Amendment for the government to interfere in this most sacred and ancient practice of our faith.”

“While we support initiatives to make Delaware a safer place for minors and vulnerable adults,” the diocese continued, “HB 74 would not contribute to such efforts in any meaningful way.”

It said priests “are already mandatory reporters under Delaware’s child abuse reporting law in all circumstances” other than the sacrament of confession.

In addition, the statement said, the diocese’s “own internal policies require all clergy to report suspected incidents of child abuse to civil authorities.”

HB 74 “would not only infringe on the rights of a variety of faith communities, it would also give rise to a number of unintended consequences,” it continued.

“The Diocese of Wilmington considers the protection of the vulnerable to be one of the most important aims of public policy,” the statement said. “However, this legislation would not advance that vital objective.”

Within the next few weeks, the House Judiciary Committee could hold a hearing on HB 74. The primary sponsor of the bill is Democratic Rep. Eric Morrison.

In Vermont and Utah, state lawmakers introduced similar legislation. Two other states, Washington and Kansas, are advancing measures to require clergy to be listed as mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect. They are among a handful of states in the U.S. that do not already require this. However, the Kansas measure, introduced by Democratic Sen. Tom Holland, does not include protections for religious confessions.

Indiana law designates clergy as mandatory reporters, but does not require them to disclose information shared in confession.

On March 3, Bishop Christopher J. Coyne of Burlington, Vt., testified at a state Senate Judiciary Committee hearing that the Church opposes an effort by lawmakers to remove an exemption from Vermont’s child abuse and neglect reporting laws that currently protects priests from having to violate the seal of confession if a penitent confesses to child abuse or neglect.

“A priest faces excommunication if he discloses the communication made to him during confession,” Bishop Coyne said. “And the sacramental seal of confession is the worldwide law of the Catholic Church, not just the [statewide] Diocese of Burlington, Vermont.” †

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SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are at the heart of the Christian faith

By OSV News

The three traditional pillars of Lent are prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

The grace of God, coming to us through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, prepares us to celebrate Christ's marvelous resurrection at Easter, and how we share his resurrected life in the life of the Church.

—Pray daily

The act of praying, especially the prayer Jesus taught us, expresses our humility and dependence on God.

Jesus shows us how to pray in the Gospels when he hands on the words of the Lord's Prayer. He encourages us to address God as Father—literally, *Abba*, or "Dad." Jesus invites us to enter into a relationship with God.

In order to sustain this relationship, he gives us words to communicate with God. When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we acknowledge our own struggle with striving to live according to God's will. We also confess our humble dependence on God, noting that even our "daily bread" comes from him.

Lent is a time to devote ourselves to prayer in a more intentional way. Set aside time every day to pray. Remember to pray for the gift of an increased spiritual life, for all of the catechumens who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil and for the humility to serve others as Jesus did.

—The practice of fasting

Fasting is more than simply developing self-control around food. Spiritual fasting reminds us of our hunger for God.

The Lenten pillar of fasting is one of the most ancient practices in Lent. The early Church celebrated the Paschal fast—abstaining from food for two days before the Easter Vigil.

The Second Vatican Council, in "*Sacrosanctum Concilium*" ("Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy"), called us to renew the observance of this tradition:

"Let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be celebrated everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection may be attained with uplifted and clear mind" (#110).

Fasting and abstinence help us overcome the temptations to selfishness that can come from an oversized ego.



A Palestinian Catholic kneels in prayer during an Ash Wednesday Mass in the Church of St. Catherine in Bethlehem, West Bank, on Feb. 22. Prayer is a principal spiritual practice for Catholics during the season of Lent. (OSV News photo/Debbie Hill)

Quick facts on fasting and abstinence:

—Fasting means eating only one normal-sized meal and two small meals, with no snacks.

—Abstinence means eating no meat. Milk, eggs and fish are fine.

—Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of both abstinence and fasting.

—Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence.

—Those 14 and older are required to abstain from meat on abstinence days.

—Those 18-59 are required to fast. Those with special medical conditions that prevent fasting are excluded.

—Ash Wednesday is 46 days before Easter, but Lent is considered 40 days long, because Sundays are not counted as days of Lent. The reason? Fasting was considered inappropriate on Sunday, the day commemorating the resurrection of Jesus.

—Give alms

The giving of alms can be traced back to before the time of Jesus.

Jesus taught his disciples about the importance of almsgiving when they saw the rich giving large amounts of money to the treasury of the temple in Jerusalem and a widow giving a very small amount.

Jesus showed his disciples that it was the widow who gave the better



A young volunteer displays food prepared for dinners served at a Friday evening fish fry at Sweetest Heart of Mary Church in Detroit. Fasting and abstaining from meat on Fridays are historic Lenten spiritual practices for Catholics. (CNS photo/Jim West)

share because she gave out of her daily living expenses, out of her poverty, while the rich gave simply from their surplus (Lk 21:1-4).

This Gospel passage reminds us that sharing our blessings is not optional for Catholic Christians. Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral to the Christian way of life.

Jesus reflected on all of these practices in a passage from the Sermon on the Mount that is proclaimed at Mass on Ash Wednesday (Mt 6:1-6, 16-18).

The words of our Lord and the 2,000-year history of the Church show us that prayer, fasting and almsgiving are at the heart of what it means to live as a disciple of Christ at all times and places in our world.

These practices are at the heart of our Lenten journey. But with the help of God's grace, we can make them a part of our life of faith the whole year through. †



Michelle Belden, left, Kassie Carman, Meg Leising, Chiara Schilten and Peyton Jones, all students at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, assemble meals on March 11, 2020, for people in need through an initiative organized by Cross Catholic Outreach. Helping people in need through almsgiving is a central spiritual practice of Catholics during Lent. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Ken Ogorek

Let's welcome those who struggle to belong at our parishes

A friend of mine who's passionate about serving folks with disabilities recently suggested a way of having an eye-opening experience at any parish. "Every now and then," says my friend, "stand as far back as possible before, during and after Mass.



"Like, back-of-the-narthex kind of back. And just watch.

Watch who struggles just to get through the doors. Watch who struggles to hear or see. Watch who appears flustered or embarrassed because her or his child is making loud noises beyond the typical little-kid-in-church noises.

"Watch who's the object of no small amount of staring because her or his disability is very noticeable; he or she doesn't look like the usual, typical parishioner. Notice who, quite possibly, might not always feel welcome or included at Mass or in parish life generally speaking.

"Watch to see who might be struggling to belong."

You can't judge a book by its cover

Granted, we're not mind-readers. Just because a person appears to be struggling or might not fit in with the overall group

doesn't mean that she or he is consciously suffering because of a predicament, or that each and every person surrounding her or him is uncomfortable with how he or she looks, behaves, sounds etc.—and that the discomfort of surrounding worshipers is sensed by the person in question in a way that brings sadness, self-consciousness, discomfort, etc.

But our empathetic intuition is often reliable. Folks with disabilities often struggle—physically, mentally and emotionally—in ways that many of us don't.

Who's not at the table?

For every person with a noticeable disability who shows up at Mass, it's possible if not probable that at least one other parishioner whose life includes a disability (directly or that of a family member) shies away from attending. It's perceived as too hard, too awkward, too uncomfortable.

And while perceptions are subjective, a kernel of truth can be present in these thoughts and feelings of persons with disabilities. Sometimes belonging to a parish community is harder than it should be.

So what can I do?

Awareness and acknowledgement of disabilities is where inclusion and welcoming can start, helping folks

understand that disabilities of various sorts are far more prevalent in our faith communities than many people realize.

You can reach out to fellow parishioners who you know have a disability of some sort, offering to meet them at Mass. You can work with parish leaders such that parishioners hear a consistent message: "Odds are you know at least one fellow parishioner with a disability. Please be in communication with her or him such that any barriers or hesitancy about joining us for worship can be surmounted—together."

A feather in our cap

Most dioceses don't even have a part-time staff member who focuses on including persons with disabilities in the life of our Church, let alone a full-time disabilities ministry coordinator such as our archdiocese supports.

Here in our archdiocese, Jennifer Bryans recently started as Disabilities Ministry Coordinator in our catechetical office, and she would love to hear from you so that together we can collaborate toward a more welcoming parish for persons with disabilities. She can be reached at jbryans@archindy.org.

(Ken Ogorek is catechetical director within the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization. He can be reached at kogorek@archindy.org.) †

Guest Column/Christina Eberle

'What should I let my kids read?': Guiding our young readers

When people discover I have a master's degree in children's literature, they tend to corner me with one impossible question:

"What books should I let my kids read?"

These are primarily loving, caring parents with the best of intentions. They've been hearing, however, that most of today's popular Young Adult (YA) novels include immoral



characters, inappropriate situations or gratuitous vice, and they are looking for some Catholic literary guru to pronounce the "safe" YA titles that won't corrupt young readers through subtle seductions.

As a parent and an author, I do sympathize, and I am quick to point out that some Catholic-specific YA literature resources do exist. The Catholic Writer's Guild has its YA "seal of approval" list; more than a dozen curated blogs (such as Catholic Teen Books) likewise have indie titles to recommend; and, of course, Our Sunday Visitor has options for young readers, too.

Parents should be warned, however, that—without discrediting those resources—such exclusively Catholic options will never fully address their concerns, nor best serve the children who will, inevitably, become adults. Preventing them from choosing books on their own may then prove to have been a grave disservice to their growth, maturity and judgment.

Instead of asking which books we should permit our children to read, parents would do well to wonder: "How can I help my kids better discern what to read, themselves?"

When I was a teenager, one of the best things my dad ever did for me was to read the same books I'd brought home and then discuss them with me. He'd listen to my thoughts and share his own, casually pointing out what he found good and bad, positive and pernicious. He was curious before he was critical and, in this way, he subtly validated my ability to choose books while also teaching me to hone my standards.

My dad would never disparage my preferences outright, only critiquing stories after he'd read them and never belittling my own thoughts. As a prolific and more experienced reader, he helped me to interpret the subtler elements that I didn't yet have the maturity to decipher on my own. I knew how to read—of course—but my father taught me how to see what I was reading, in fullness.

When parents are too quick to negatively judge a book based solely on form, not content, children aren't being taught to judge rightly or well. Worse, when we dismiss our reader's preferences outright, we too may miss out on something that shines with the beauty, goodness and truth we want them to encounter.

I know a parent who rejected Kelly Barnhill's fantasy novel, *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*, because the back cover copy mentioned magic and therefore could only be a gateway to the occult. (Tolkien and Lewis sob from their graves!) Another parent frowned upon Gene Luen Yang's graphic novels, *Boxers and Saints*, believing them to be "low art" that mocked the Catholic Church—the tragic irony being that Barnhill and Lang are both faithful Catholics and award-winning authors. They're quite brilliant at presenting timeless Gospel truths in richly poetic ways, but—much like Jesus' parables—the truth is folded within the

See EBERLE, page 15

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

Good Friday prayers are filled with God's hope for salvation

Good Friday is three weeks away.

The Good Friday Service is a unique liturgy. There are four "movements" if you will: Liturgy of the Word, Intercessions, Adoration of the Cross and Communion.



Let's focus on the second movement.

There are 10 intercessions. Each begins with a call to prayer by a deacon, lector or cantor. After silence (with kneeling if possible), all rise and the presiding priest or bishop prays the actual prayer.

These intercessions originated in Rome during the early centuries of the Church and have endured.

Intercessions one through four focus upon all those in communion with Rome: the Church, pope, faithful and catechumens.

Good Friday essentially celebrates Jesus' triumph on the cross. The Resurrection culminates the paschal mystery. The resultant gift of salvation was and is universal.

It is in this context that we pray intercessions five through eight. How does the Church pray that others share in the gift of salvation?

Without quoting in entirety the full text of each of the remaining intercessions, let's consider the basic thrust of each in the words of the Church at prayer.

Prayer for Christian Unity. The invitation: "... for all our brothers and sisters who believe in Christ, that our God and Lord may be pleased, as they live the truth, to gather them together and keep them in his one Church."

The prayer: "... that those whom one baptism has consecrated may be joined together by integrity of faith and united in the bond of charity."

Prayer for the Jewish People. The invitation: "... that [God] may grant them to advance in love of his name and in faithfulness to his covenant."

The prayer: "... God, who bestowed your promises on Abraham and his descendants, graciously hear the prayers of

your Church, that the people you first made your own may attain the fullness of redemption."

Prayer for Those Who Do Not Believe in Christ. The invitation: "... that, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, they, too, may enter on the way of salvation."

The prayer: "... God, grant to those who do not confess Christ that, by walking before you with a sincere heart, they may find the truth and that we ourselves, being constant in mutual love and striving to understand more fully the mystery of your life, may be made more perfect witnesses to your love in the world."

Prayer for Those Who Do Not Believe in God. The invitation: "... that, following what is right in sincerity of heart, they may find the way to God himself."

The prayer: "... God, who created all people to seek you always by desiring you and, by finding you, come to rest, grant, that ... all may recognize the signs of your fatherly love and the witness of the good works done by those who believe in you, and so in gladness confess you, the one true God and Father of our human race."

My, I do love these prayers! They are so filled with hope and the fulfillment of God's design for salvation.

Part of that design is benign mystery. This mystery unfolds through many agents.

God is active in each prayer. The Church proclaims its longing for all to find a way to salvation. All who are fully a part of the Church are responsible for revealing Christ and God by our prayer and witness.

Once again, the reciprocal "law of prayer is the law of belief"—an ancient principle in the Church—is on display.

May our lived belief help to bring about that for which we pray.

A blessed Holy Week and Happy Easter!

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

Guest Column/Joel Stepanek

At the consecration, my kids had something to say to Jesus

When you bring young children to Mass your heart rate goes up, your blood pressure rises, and sometimes you find yourself in fight or flight mode from the moment the opening



hymn sounds until you hear the words "Go in peace." Even if your parish has gone to great lengths to make families feel welcome

(as mine has), there is always a spike of anxiety when your little one starts to

make noise.

With the babies, there is babbling or crying. Sometimes there is an unmistakable noise signaling an imminent diaper change, and these things are not unexpected. But with older kids, the game changes. They can talk.

For me, nothing is more unnerving than the over-loud chatter of my 4-year old during Mass.

So, imagine how flustered I was when both our 4- and 5-year-olds started talking during the elevation—that beautiful moment when the priest holds up the consecrated Eucharist and everyone

bows in reverent silence. It's a moment of profound silence, when many silently acknowledge, "My Lord and my God."

And then there were my kids. Talking. Loudly. At first, I didn't even realize what they'd said; I'd simply heard their voices and registered "volume." I anticipated in dread the looks I'd be getting from the people around me. You know the looks. But when I turned to apologize, I was surprised.

One woman had tears in her eyes. Another man smiled and nodded in a childlike and almost giddy way. Another

See STEPANEK, page 15

Fourth Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 19, 2023

- 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a
- Ephesians 5:8-14
- John 9:1-41

Drawing from the first word, in Latin, in the Entrance Antiphon for this weekend's liturgy, this Sunday long has been called "Laetare Sunday." *Laetare* means "to rejoice." The Church rejoices that, despite the drabness of Lent, the glory of Christ shines forth. Despite the ugly world, the beauty of the Lord is radiant.



The first reading for this weekend is taken from the First Book of Samuel. An ancient prophet and therefore God's representative and spokesman, Samuel selected, at God's direction, the young David to be king of Israel. To signify this appointment, Samuel anointed David with oil.

Anointings always have marked persons for special jobs or to strengthen them in certain circumstances, as if the mark of the oil on the flesh is indelible and the oil infuses the person with grace.

All Catholics are anointed when they are baptized and confirmed. Priests and bishops are anointed in their ordinations. Faithful people in bad health are anointed in the sacrament of the anointing of the sick to strengthen them and reinforce their spiritual constitution in their trials.

In May at his coronation, Britain's King Charles III will be anointed, a hand-me-down from the days when England was Roman Catholic.

David was and remains special for Jews. He was the great king who united and empowered the nation, but his ultimate duty was to tighten the bond between God and the people.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians provides the second reading. This reading admonishes the Christian people of Ephesus, in the first century one of the major seaports, commercial centers and pagan shrines of the Roman Empire.

Drawing upon the imagery of light and darkness, Paul links light with righteousness and darkness with sin, calling upon the Christian Ephesians to live in the light.

St. John's Gospel furnishes the last reading. Central to the story is the Lord's meeting with a man blind since birth. The Lord gives the man sight. To understand this story, it is necessary to realize how Jews at the time of Jesus looked upon physical difficulties.

Unaware of the scientific explanations for blindness and other problems that people of this age have come to see as obvious, the ancient Jews believed such terrible physical challenges came about because of sin. After all, original sin ushered death itself into the world. In this thinking, sin also upset the good order of nature, hence disease.

Thus, the question came. Was this man's blindness the consequence of his own sin or a sin of his parents?

Searching for an answer, the Pharisees questioned the man. The Pharisees are shown as obstinate and smug. By contrast, the blind man is humble and sincere. He has faith in God and in Jesus.

An added element, surely of special interest to the early generations of Christians who suffered persecution, was that the Pharisees expelled the man from their synagogue. The righteous often suffer from the ill will of others.

Reflection

The Gospel story recalls a miracle. It also is a study in contrasts. On the one side is the man born blind whom Jesus healed. The other side is that of the Pharisees, spiritually blinded by their self-satisfaction, their confidence in their own knowledge and in their own high estimates of themselves.

We must apply these contrasts to ourselves. We may not be very evil, foolishly pompous or boastful as were the Pharisees. Still, we downplay our limitations. Our exaggerated judgments of ourselves trick us again and again and again.

This keeps us in the dark. Lent is the time to face facts. We must recognize our need for God. We must turn to God. He alone is light.

The wonder of this is that God will receive us, love us, forgive us and give us light to see reality.

The light of God awaits us in Christ. Rejoice! †

Daily Readings

Monday, March 20

St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary
2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16
Psalm 89:2-5, 27, 29
Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22
Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a
or Luke 2:41-51a

Psalm 106:19-23
John 5:31-47

Friday, March 24

Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22
Psalm 34:17-21, 33
John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Saturday, March 25

The Annunciation of the Lord
Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10
Psalm 40:7-11
Hebrews 10:4-10
Luke 1:26-38

Sunday, March 26

Fifth Sunday of Lent
Ezekiel 37:12-14
Psalm 130:1-8
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45
or John 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Penitential practices throughout the year held Christ in his suffering

While answering a question about vegetarians and vegans during Lent, you mentioned the requirement for



continuing a penance on Fridays, even if not abstaining from meat. Can you explain this? My understanding is that our penance helps us remember Good Friday every week, to draw us closer to our Lord.

Our obligation to do some form of penance on Friday is identified in canon 1250 in the *Code of Canon Law*, which tells us that the "penitential days and times in the universal Church are every Friday of the whole year and the season of Lent."

The preceding canon 1249 gives us a definition of "penitential days" as days "on which the Christian faithful devote themselves in a special way to prayer, perform works of piety and charity, and deny themselves by fulfilling their own obligations more faithfully and especially by observing fast and abstinence." And as canon 1249 puts it, the faithful have special days of penance "in order for all to be united among themselves by some common observance."

You are correct that Fridays have a penitential character because of Good

Friday. Because Friday is the day on which Jesus offered his life for us on the cross, every Friday is an especially suitable time to draw closer to the mystery of his passion and death.

By practicing self-denial in spiritually healthy and appropriate ways—whether that be forgoing a favorite food, sharing our resources with the needy or taking time out of our daily lives for prayer—we recall and imitate Jesus' own self-denial in how he "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave," and "humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:7-8).

Traditionally, a penitential self-denial (traditionally referred to as "mortification" in many classic older works of spirituality) was also understood as an aid to personal growth in holiness.

We know that muscles grow stronger through exercise. In a similar way, a habit of making small sacrifices when the stakes are relatively low can prepare us to choose the right thing in more serious situations. In other words, those who are spiritually "in shape" through the spiritual training of regular penances and the practice of self-denial are spiritually stronger and thus better able to resist temptations as they arise.

In terms of specifics, canon law further tells us that "abstinence from meat, or from some other food as determined by the episcopal conference, is to be observed on all Fridays, unless a solemnity should fall on a Friday" (#1251), and that local bishop's conferences also have the power to "determine more precisely the observance of fast and abstinence as well as substitute other forms of penance, especially works of charity and exercises of piety, in whole or in part, for abstinence and fast."

In the United States in 1966, our own bishop's conference issued a "Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence," which reiterated the requirement for Catholics in the United States to abstain from meat on Fridays during Lent. But this same document—noting that "changing circumstances, including economic, dietary and social elements, have made some of our people feel that the renunciation of the eating of meat is not always and for everyone the most effective means of practicing penance"—formally permitted Catholics to "substitute other penitential observances" on Fridays outside Lent.

It is worth noting, though, that the document did urge Catholics to freely choose to continue the tradition of year-round Friday abstinence from meat, even though less strictly required.

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

My Journey to God

It's a **place** I feel calm,
that's designated for You and me.
I am comforted by Your peace,
in a **place** that's chaos free.

Blessed to be here with You,
feeling the embrace of Your presence.
Safe to be my true self,
unguarded, honest, and with no pretense.

I know You're pleased I'm here.
I sense Your nearness to me.
Quietly praying or sharing my thoughts,
You open my eyes to see.

I often reach out to others,
trying to encourage them to come.
Sharing personal experiences of my visits,
hoping it'll make a difference to some.

Spending time in the Adoration Chapel,
is a special **place** for me.

A **place** to be with You.
A **place** I choose to be.

Adoration Chapel, a Place

By Stephanie J. Jackson



(Stephanie J. Jackson is a member of St. Vincent DePaul Parish in Bedford. Photo: An altar server, left, Father Jonathan Meyer and Deacon Robert Decker pray before the Blessed Sacrament during the opening of the new adoration chapel at St. John the Baptist Church in Dover, a campus of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, on March 1, 2017. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

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.

ARNOLD IV, Gordon L., 40, St. Louis, Batesville, March 2. Son of Diane Arnold. Nephew of several.

BOURNE, Linda, 78, St. Mary, New Albany, Feb. 26. Wife of James Bourne. Mother of Amy and Ted Bourne and Chris, Matthew and Scot Hunt. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of one.

CLARK, Charles R., 80, St. Mary, Lanesville, March 2. Husband of Rosemary Clark. Father of Christine Thompson, Victoria Kinnaird, Teresa, Steven and Michael Clark. Brother of Victoria Logsdon. Grandfather of eight.

DOUGLAS, Amy, 87, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, Feb. 24. Mother of Michael and Robert Douglas, Jr. Sister of Rose.

FANELLI, Isabella A., 62, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Feb. 24. Mother of Maxwell Jakubowicz. Daughter of Elizabeth Johnson. Sister

of Susan Heustis, Beth Tuchfarber, Billy, Joe, John and Mike Johnson. Grandmother of three.

GIBBS, Casey J., 86, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Feb. 26. Husband of Phyllis Gibbs. Father of Holly Gibbs Goodman, Elizabeth Sams, Joseph and Patrick Gibbs. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of 21.

GINDLING, Esther, 87, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, March 4. Mother of Sherryl Broderick, Sandy Hipp, Daniel, Jr., and David Gindling. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 13.

GOFFINET, Bill, 83, St. Paul, Tell City, March 1. Husband of Dolores Goffinet. Father of Amy Kehl, Adam, Chris and David Goffinet. Brother of Jean Thomas, Carroll and Joe Goffinet. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of two.

GRONEFELD, Catherine (Decker), 90, All Saints Parish, Dearborn County, Feb. 15. Mother of Linda Bedel, Brenda Collier, Debbie Miller, Deacon Bob, Jim, John, Larry and Ron Decker. Sister of Janice Wagner. Grandmother of 24. Great-grandmother of 51. Great-great-grandmother of one. (correction)

HARPENAU, Juanita M. (Waterbury), 75, St. Pius V, Troy, March 1. Wife of Jerry Harpenau. Mother of Lisa Wade and Kevin Harpenau. Sister of Tammy Hahus, Mike Waterbury, David and Gary Zuelly. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of two.

HASKAMP, Bertha L., 88, St. Catherine of Siena, Decatur County, March 1. Mother of Theresa Dury, Karen Poplawski, Doug and Edward Haskamp. Sister of Albert Daeger. Grandmother of 11.

Providence Sister Rosemary Borntager served in Catholic education for 40 years

Providence Sister Rosemary Borntager (previously Sister Rose Cecile), a member of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, died on March 6 at Mother Theodore Hall on the campus of her religious community's motherhouse. She was 90.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 16 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the

motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Rosemary was born on Nov. 23, 1932, in Chicago. She entered the Sisters of Providence on July 22, 1950, and professed final vows on Jan. 23, 1958.

Sister Rosemary earned a bachelor's degree in art at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, a master's degree in fine arts at The Catholic University of America in

Washington, and a master's degree in educational administration at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill.

During her 72 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Rosemary ministered in Catholic education for 40 years in California, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, North Carolina and Washington, D.C. This ministry included serving from 1980 until her retirement from education in 1993 as the assistant superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Joliet, Ill.

Sister Rosemary then returned to the motherhouse to serve for periods in the community's archives, administration, business office, medical records and at Linden Leaf Gifts. In 2021, she dedicated herself entirely to prayer.

In the archdiocese, Sister Rosemary, in addition to ministering at the motherhouse, served at Our Lady of the Greenwood School in Greenwood from 1956-57.

She is survived by Servite Father Conrad Borntager of Chicago.

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. †

Praying for peace in Ukraine



Family members, some wearing traditional Ukrainian dress, participate in an ecumenical prayer service for peace in Ukraine on March 7 in the Crypt Church of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. (OSV News photo/Mihoko Owada, Catholic Standard)

MCDONALD, Adam, 88, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Feb. 23. Husband of Vera McDonald. Father of Sandy Hart, Christine and Sharon McDonald. Brother of Chrissy, Maggie, Mary, Alexander and Davey. Grandfather of five.

MCINTYRE, Larry, 74, St. Mary, New Albany, March 1. Husband of Patricia McIntyre. Father of Amanda Feeler, Shawn Hanifen and Keith McIntyre. Brother of Danny, Denny, Doug, Phil and Randy McIntyre. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of two.

MCAHON, Jr., Robert L., 65, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Feb. 21. Father of Emily McMahon. Brother of Kelle Hall, Jeff, Larry and Pat McMahon. Grandfather of one.

MEIER, Thomas W., 89, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Feb. 27. Father of Donna Roller, Vicki Yoder, Stacey and Michael Meier. Brother of Paul Meier. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of seven.

MILLS, Greg, 57, St. Mary, New Albany, Feb. 25. Father of Cassandra Mendlik, Thess and Ian Mills. Son of Martin and Martha Mills. Brother of Lisa and Glen Mills. Grandfather of 12.

MOSGROVE, John, 93, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Feb. 25. Husband of Shirley Mosgrove. Father of Kay Currens. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of eight.

NETH, Margaret M., 74, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Dec. 1. Mother of Kathleen Rader and Michael Neth. Sister of Barb Connell.

RUSSELL, Edmond L., 76, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, Jan. 12. Husband of Nancy Russell. Father of Nancy Curd, Kathy Ramsay and Charles Russell. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of three.

SNYDER, Charles E., 91, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Feb. 25. Husband of Mary Ann Snyder. Father of Betty Jean Freeland, Brian, Clay, Laird, Michael and Samuel Snyder. Stepfather of Jama Maeza, Douglas, Eric, Patrick and Paul Welsh. Brother of Paul Snyder. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather, step-grandfather and step-great-grandfather of several.

WILZ, Susan (Stark), 89, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Feb. 25. Mother of Margaret Bunke, Catherine Patterson, Jennie Sobocki, Mary Zabriskie, Dr. James, Dr. John and Stark Wilz. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of 11. †

Franciscan Sister Mary Jean Sora taught music, served as a liturgical musician

Franciscan Sister Mary Jean Sora died on Dec. 26, 2022, at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 97.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 4 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Mary Jean was born on May 4, 1925, in Middletown, Ohio. She joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 8, 1942, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1948. Sister Mary Jean earned a bachelor's degree in music at Marian University in Indianapolis and completed advanced studies in piano at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati.

During 80 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Mary Jean ministered in Catholic schools and parish liturgical music for 68 years in Indiana, Missouri and Ohio. Beyond serving in schools and parishes, she organized bands that played at the opening day of the Cincinnati Reds and for visits to the city by President John F. Kennedy and Bob Hope. She retired to the motherhouse in 2013.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Jean served at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Indianapolis from 1949-51 and at the former St. Mary School in New Albany from 1955-58.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †

Franciscan Sister Carmela Whitton served in Catholic schools and parishes

Franciscan Sister Carmela Whitton died on Feb. 26 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 90.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 6 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Carmela was born on Feb. 3, 1933, in Cincinnati. She joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Feb. 2, 1952, and professed final vows in on Aug. 12, 1957. Sister Carmela earned a bachelor's degree at Marian University in Indianapolis and a master's degree at the University of St. Mary in Leavenworth, Kan.

During 71 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Carmela ministered

in Catholic education for 23 years in Indiana and Ohio. She later served in parish ministry in Michigan and Ohio and served on the community's General Council at the motherhouse from 1982-86. In 2009, she retired from ministry to live at the motherhouse.

In the archdiocese, Sister Carmela served in Indianapolis at the former St. Bernadette School from 1953-62 and at St. Mark the Evangelist School from 1967-73. She also ministered at the former Sacred Heart School in Clinton from 1962-63 and St. Lawrence School in Lawrenceburg from 1963-65.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †

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:

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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

Vatican accepts 'positio' in Mother Mary Lange's sainthood cause

ARBUTUS, Md. (OSV News)—The canonization cause of Mother Mary Lange, founder of the world's first sustained women's religious community for Black women, has taken a step forward.



Mother Mary Lange

Sister Rita Michelle Proctor, superior general of the Baltimore-based Oblate Sisters of Providence, said her religious community received a Feb. 27 e-mail from the Vatican informing the sisters that it has approved the "positio"—the documentation on the life of Mother Lange, which includes both the theological and historical record of her life.

Sister Rita Michelle made the announcement on March 5 at her religious community's motherhouse in Arbutus, just outside Baltimore, during the annual conferral of the Mother Lange Awards honoring local Catholics active in the Black Catholic community.

More than 300 people broke into applause and cheers at the news.

"I don't want you to go and say Sister Rita Michelle has just gone and proclaimed Sister Mother Lange a saint," the superior general said, noting that the sisters have long considered their founder a saint in their hearts.

Mother Lange established St. Frances Academy in Baltimore in 1828 to educate Black children in an era of slavery.

Mother Lange's *positio* will go to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints for review, Sister Rita Michelle said. She went on to explain that, after its review, the dicastery may send it to Pope Francis, who could then declare Mother Lange "Venerable."

"Venerable" is a declaration of a sainthood candidate's heroic virtues. Next would come beatification, after which she would be called "Blessed." The third step is canonization. In general, the last two steps require a miracle attributed to the intercession of the sainthood candidate and verified by the Church.

Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori said he was excited to hear the news about the latest development in Mother Lange's cause.

"With each step forward, more people learn about the life and legacy of our beloved Mother Lange," he said. "She unlocked educational opportunities for children in Baltimore and beyond during her lifetime—and that impact continues today. The Oblate Sisters have worked very hard to help bring about this key development. Along with so many others, we are delighted."

The uplifting news was just one highlight of the annual awards ceremony that the good works parishioners from traditionally Black parishes in the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

The program also included singing performances, opening remarks and a prayer by Auxiliary Bishop Bruce A. Lewandowski, a historic portrayal and presentation on Mother Mary Lange by Catholic storyteller Janice Curtis Greene, as well as formal public recognition for award recipients.

"God spoke to me and told me that I could make a difference," said Greene, speaking in character as Mother Lange. "And I wanted to be a powerful woman of God—something I had hoped for and prayed for my entire life."

Those honored with Mother Lange Awards were applauded as they were introduced. More than 40 parishioners from a dozen parishes received the awards for leadership and service. Youths were among the award recipients.

In his remarks, Bishop Lewandowski recalled the

service of Redemptorist Father Thaddeus Anwander, who is considered by the Oblate Sisters of Providence to be the second founder of their order.

Faced with the order's dissolution in its early days, Father Thaddeus went to the archbishop of Baltimore to plead their case. When the archbishop told him no one in Baltimore wanted "colored" sisters, he persisted anyway—prostrating himself before his superior.

"At that point, [Archbishop Samuel] Eccleston was ashamed, because a priest got on his knees and begged to be a servant of the women he was intending to dismiss—holy women, women in the service of God's people in the Church," Bishop Lewandowski said.

The bishop concluded his remarks by leading the audience in a simple prayer to Divine Providence.

"Providence did. Providence can. And Providence will," he prayed. "Let that be our prayer today."

Mother Lange is one of six African American Catholics who are candidates for sainthood. The others are: Julia Greeley, who after her emancipation from enslavement joined the Secular Franciscan Order and promoted devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; Sister Thea Bowman, a Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, who was a noted educator and evangelist; Father Augustus Tolton, the first publicly known Black Catholic priest in the United States; Sister Henriette Delille, who founded the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family; and Pierre Toussaint, a formerly enslaved philanthropist who supported many Catholic charitable works.

Mother Lange, Greeley and Sister Thea all have the title "Servant of God," bestowed when a sainthood cause is officially opened. The latter three in the list have been given the title "Venerable." †

STEPANEK

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fought back tears and buried his head into his hands, returning to deeper prayer. A teenager quietly said, "Whoa, that's cool."

Suddenly, it sunk in, what my children had said. As the priest held up the host, both of them had said, "I love you, Jesus!"

They were loud enough for people around us to hear, and sincere enough for hearts to be convicted of a profound reality affirmed from the mouths of children. We hear the priest say, "This is my body," and "This is my blood," but overfamiliarity can render us disconnected

from those words and the reality they pronounce.

But in that moment, my children reminded all of us of who we were there for and what that God-man—Jesus Christ—was offering us: a gift of love, a gift of his body, blood, soul and divinity.

Too often, we parents are so busy trying to keep our kids focused, or wrangling 6-month olds, that we adults get distracted; our minds wander and we lose sight of the love poured out for us at Mass. We flub our responses to that love. This is why Jesus desires revival for us; he wants us to fall in love again. He wants us, with childlike faith and full hearts, to be with him, and to welcome him in the Blessed Sacrament and say, "I love you, Jesus."

After Mass, I learned that my wife had taught our children that simple prayer, so they could begin to learn the lifelong lessons: that the Eucharist is not merely a symbol but truly "is" Jesus Christ, and that in the Blessed Sacrament Jesus initiates a dialogue. When the priest holds up the consecrated host, there is Jesus saying to us, "I love you." My children, learning to speak to Christ, responded in the very best way by saying, "I love you" in return.

My blood pressure lowered that day, and I was convicted of my need for a savior, and to fall in love again. I was convicted by my own children who, by the grace of God, were loud at Mass instead of quiet. I was convicted by those

around me who encountered the Lord in a new way that day.

It was a moment of revival and, if we can remain childlike in our faith, I believe the Eucharistic Revival moving across our country—including the National Eucharistic Congress taking place in Indianapolis on July 17-21, 2024—will occasion many more like it—becoming something transformative for our families, parishes and our world.

(Joel Stepanek is chief mission officer for the National Eucharistic Congress Inc. and is responsible for guiding the teams that empower and energize the grassroots efforts of the Eucharistic Revival.) †

EBERLE

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storytelling: you must unwrap the prose before you can receive it.

So, my advice to concerned parents is

to take a breath, and then take a page out of my dad's book: read along with your young readers. If you haven't the time for that, you can still encourage them to discuss what they're reading. What's it about? Who's their favorite character and why? How do they think the story

will end? A parent's genuine interest will mean the world to them, and their passion and questions will be met with insight and guidance. This is how we leave the door open for future conversations where, in time, our young readers will know how to recognize wheat from chaff.

(Christina Eberle earned her Master of Arts in children's literature in 2010. Her young adult fantasy novel, *Brio* [published under her pen name "Chris Cross" in February 2022], is available on Amazon.) †


Classified Directory

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HOLY CROSS/ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY, 2446 S. Meridian St. Indianapolis. Two plots, lot 322 spaces 1 and 2, section B. \$2000 each, prefer to sell together. Cemetery is sold out. Call or text 810-252-4482.

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Little Flower Parish, a vibrant faith community of almost 1,000 households on the Eastside of Indianapolis, is seeking a part-time (approx. 20 hrs. per week) Director of Music Ministry to lead a well-developed liturgical ministry.

Responsibilities include:

- Providing for music at three Masses per weekend, including personal direction and/or performance for at least two Masses.
- Recruiting and supervising volunteer musicians.
- Directing adult and youth choirs.
- Training cantors.
- Assisting with liturgical music for school liturgies.

This dynamic person of faith should have a Bachelor's Degree in music or equivalent experience, a strong knowledge of Roman Catholic liturgy, and proficiency in keyboard and choral direction. Salary commensurate with education and experience.

E-mail cover letter, résumé, and references, to musicdirectorsearch@littleflowerparish.org.

Employment

Data Entry Specialist

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Data Entry Specialist in the Office of Stewardship and Development at their office in downtown Indianapolis. The Data Entry Specialist will accurately record constituent file updates in our database, assist with the securities and gift entry process, maintain an up-to-date secure filing system, complete gift research, and be assigned special projects as needed. This position plays an integral part in ensuring timely and accurate entry of data into our database records.

Desired skills:

- High proficiency in using appropriate computer software; Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word and Raiser's Edge database management software are desired.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, working well with a team as well as independently while interacting effectively and compassionately with donors and staff in representing the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.
- Outstanding telephone etiquette and commitment to customer service.
- Associates Degree or equivalent in a related area. Bachelor's degree is preferred.
- Experience in nonprofit fundraising and accounting organizations is preferred.
- Database experience including data entry.

Competitive benefits package offered. Four-day work week to facilitate Work-Life Balance (35 hours = full time).

To apply, send resume, cover letter and three references to kpohovey@archindy.org.

The bond between parents and high school athletes shows in the journey of a state champion

By John Shaughnessy

The tears were different this time.

This time, they were tears of joy.

In his first three years of competing in high school, Bryce Lowery was devastated as he left the finals of the Indiana High School Athletic Association's wrestling state championships.

After losing in the state finals each of those years—including last year when it was his only defeat of the entire season—Bryce slumped toward a back hallway where he broke down crying, knowing his dream of becoming a state champion had slipped from his grasp.

Those memories haunted the senior at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis as he prepared to walk on the mat for this year's state championship match of the 152-pound weight class on Feb. 18 at Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis.

"I ended up losing in the quarterfinals last year," Bryce recalled. "It was a heartbreaking loss in the last 30 seconds. I felt I let myself down and my coaches down. I never wanted to feel like that again."

Bryce succeeded in avoiding that feeling this year, winning his state championship match to complete a perfect 43-0 record for the season.

Leaving the mat, he celebrated with his coach, Shaun Richardson, and some of his teammates before he rushed into the stands to rejoice with his family. There were hugs with his father, Nathan Lowery, and his older brothers, Blaze and Brayden. Then there was a special hug with the one person who has been his endless source of support through all the highs and lows of his wrestling career so far—his mother, Heather Haseman.

"There weren't very many words. I could tell she had been crying," Bryce said. "I knew she was proud of me. And she knew I was grateful for everything that she did for me these past seven years."

The stories of high school athletes across the archdiocese are overwhelmingly intertwined with the stories of the parents who have supported

their sons and daughters at every turn. And that's been especially true for Bryce in relation to his mom.

"She did everything she could to make sure I'm in the position I am today," he said a few days after the state finals. "She drove me anywhere I needed to be at any time I needed to be there. She made every single one of my meals—breakfast, lunch and dinner—this year. Everyone always teased me about how my mom made my food, but it's just because she wanted to make sure that I was putting the best food in my body at all times."

Even more, Bryce remembers the times before high school when he didn't want to go to practice, when he wasn't sure he wanted to continue the sport.

"She would make me go, no matter what," he said, his words touched with love and gratitude.

His gratitude also extends to the sport of wrestling, and all the highs and lows he has experienced in the past seven years of making it a part of his life.

"I'm grateful for the ups and downs of it all," he said. "There were points where I didn't know if I was going to continue the sport. It's a grueling, mentally-taxing sport. There's a lot more than just going out there and wrestling. I'm just grateful that even stuff I didn't want to go through, I'm glad I did it all."

Beyond becoming a state champion, there's been another defining part of the past year for Bryce regarding his sport.

"I found my love for wrestling again this year," he said. "I figured out that you don't have to kill yourself to get better at the sport. I figured out there could be a method to what you do and how you do it



Bryce Lowery of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis shows his joy after winning a state championship in wrestling on Feb. 18 at Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

that doesn't have to be horrible."

His renewed love for wrestling has led him to receive a scholarship to continue the sport next year at Indiana University in Bloomington. Still, wrestling hasn't been the only defining part of his past seven years. It's also been a time when his life has been changed by his experiences at Roncalli and previously at St. Roch School in Indianapolis.

"I wasn't raised Catholic," he said. "I've always believed in God, but I wasn't raised Catholic. I got baptized in the seventh grade. I liked going to Mass. I liked all the people who were Catholic. All the people I met who were Catholic were really strong and well-grounded. And I wanted to be part of something like that."

"I've loved every second I've had in Catholic schools. Roncalli is the best place for me. I love everybody here. I like the participation and the *want* for everyone to do well from every teacher and student. It's just helped me with everything."

Bryce has had a similar positive impact on his teammates, said Richardson, in his second year of coaching at Roncalli.

"It's awesome when you have Bryce and other kids on the team who do really

well, because then kids can see that you have to have high expectations or you're not going to be successful," Richardson says. "Bryce had goals, and he was willing to do the extra things to reach those goals. It's just great having someone to set that example for other kids."

Near the end of the conversation with Bryce, his thoughts returned to the feeling of winning a state championship, and to thoughts of his mom.

"When you lose, you think, 'I'm never going to win it,'" he said. "But when you finally do it, it doesn't seem real at first. It took me a second to realize what I did."

"All the practices I didn't want to go to, all the practices my mom drove me to, those were the ones that helped me win that match. I just want to give a big shout-out to my mom."

(If any high school student has a special story of the way a parent has influenced their high school sports career or other extracurricular activity, please share your story with John Shaughnessy at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.) †

Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

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

Batesville Deanery

March 17, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville
March 17, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora

March 21, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg

March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville

March 22, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County

March 28, 6-8 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood

March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Catherine of Siena, St. John Campus, in Decatur County

March 29, 6:15 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County

March 29, 6-8 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Millhousen

March 30, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville

Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Batesville Deanery are as follows:

Wednesdays 5-6 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan

Fridays 6-7 p.m. at St. Nicholas, Ripley County

Saturdays 4-5 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Milan

Before and after weekend Masses at St. Maurice, Napoleon

Half-hour before daily Masses at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, and St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright

Bloomington Deanery

March 22, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer

March 28, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Mitchell, and St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, at St. Vincent de Paul

March 29, 6 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville

April 5, 6 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo, St. John the Apostle and St. Paul Catholic Center, all in Bloomington, at St. Paul Catholic Center

Connersville Deanery

March 19, 11 a.m. at St. Anne, New Castle

March 26, 1 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City

March 31, 5:30 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Anne Seton, Holy Family Campus, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery

Recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the East Deanery are as follows:

Sundays 9 a.m. (except Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday) at Our Lady of Lourdes

Indianapolis North Deanery

March 20, 6:30 p.m. at St. Luke the Evangelist

March 21, 6:30 p.m. at St. Pius X

Indianapolis South Deanery

March 18, 8:30 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood

March 22, 7 p.m. for St. Jude and St. Mark the Evangelist at St. Mark the Evangelist

March 24, 6:30-7:30 p.m. for St. Ann and St. Thomas More, Mooresville (Indianapolis West Deanery), at St. Ann

Indianapolis West Deanery

March 22, 7 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg

March 23, 7 p.m. for St. Michael the Archangel and St. Monica at St. Michael the Archangel

March 24, 6:30-7:30 p.m. for St. Ann (Indianapolis South Deanery) and St. Thomas More, Mooresville, at St. Ann

March 29, 7 p.m. at Holy Angels

Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the West Deanery are as follows:

Wednesdays 6-7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville

Fridays 3:30-4:30 p.m. at St. Christopher and

5:30-6:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel

Saturdays 4-6 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel

New Albany Deanery

March 22, 7 p.m. in English and Spanish at St. Mary, New Albany

March 22, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany

March 23, 6:30 p.m. at St. John Paul II, Sellersburg

March 27, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton

March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville

March 29, 7 p.m. in English and Spanish at St. Michael, Charlestown

March 30, 6:30 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier, Henryville

Terre Haute Deanery

March 22, 6:30 p.m. for St. Joseph, Rockville, and Sacred Heart, Clinton, at Sacred Heart

March 23, 7 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute

April 1, 10-11 a.m. at Annunciation, Brazil

April 2, noon-3 p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle

Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Terre Haute Deanery are as follows:

Thursdays 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Joseph University, Terre Haute

Saturdays 3:30-4:30 p.m. at St. Joseph University, Terre Haute †