



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



From darkness to light

Readers celebrate God's creative and healing powers in living out their faith, page 9.

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Men in Plainfield prison 'so grateful' of sacraments, time with archbishop

By Natalie Hoefer

PLAINFIELD—Jason wears the uniform of an offender serving time in a correctional facility in Plainfield. But his clothes do not define him.

"I was born and raised Catholic," said Jason, whose last name cannot be given for security purposes. "I've been here for four years. I've been to a ton of [Communion] services,

but this is the first time I've had the opportunity to actually go to Mass since I was incarcerated. It was awesome."

That opportunity came on March 26 when Archbishop Charles C. Thompson served as the principal celebrant of a Mass at the correctional facility in Plainfield. Father Sean Danda, pastor of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, concelebrated. Roughly 30 men attended the Mass, about

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Above: Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, principal celebrant of a Mass celebrated at the Plainfield Correctional Facility in Plainfield on March 26, offers a blessing to a man soon to be released from the facility. Deacon Martin "Neil" May stands at left. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

School choice, mental health expansions top ICC budget wish list

By Victoria Arthur

With an additional \$1.5 billion to work with in the final days of the 2023 legislative session, lawmakers negotiated the state's next two-year budget as the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) and



numerous allies continued to push for their key priorities.

The State Budget Agency released its updated revenue forecast 10 days before the General Assembly's official April 29 closing date, prompting legislators and advocates alike to envision the possibilities for the extra funds in the state's more than \$43 billion projected budget.

For the ICC, which has been a steady presence at the Statehouse throughout the legislative session, the budget wish list includes expanding school choice to nearly all families, bolstering conservation efforts and assisting economically vulnerable Hoosiers. The ICC also shares what many lawmakers in both chambers of the General Assembly have considered their top priority: Senate Bill 1, which



Angela Espada

would transform emergency response procedures for people experiencing a mental health crisis.

"One of the first things we want lawmakers to do is fully fund Senate Bill 1," said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "This means putting an adequate infrastructure around dealing with mental health crises, from having the appropriate people who are trained to respond to these situations, to having appropriate places to take those who are

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Laity share baptismal call to ministry, service, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The ministry of lay Catholics, whether formally instituted by the Church or simply inspired by the Holy Spirit to serve the needs of others, flows from baptism and a recognition that every Christian is called to take part in the mission of the Church, Pope Francis said.

"All ministries are an expression of the sole mission of the Church, and they are all forms of service to others," the pope said on April 22 during a meeting with members of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, which was holding its plenary assembly at the Vatican.

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Pope Francis greets Santiago Pérez de Camino Gaisse, a staff member of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, Leticia Sánchez de León and their children during an audience at the Vatican on April 22. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)



A time to celebrate! Graduates will receive their degrees in May from three Catholic colleges in central and southern Indiana

Compiled by John Shaughnessy

It's always a special day in the lives of young adults and all the people who have supported them toward this defining goal in their lives.

Once again this May, college students—and their families, friends and the educators who helped shape and guide them—will celebrate the accomplishment and the journey of earning a college degree.

Here is a glimpse of the graduation ceremonies that will take place at the three Catholic colleges in the archdiocese.

MARIAN UNIVERSITY

Marian University in Indianapolis will award degrees in three commencement ceremonies on the weekend of May 5-7.

During the commencement weekend, 715 students will earn undergraduate degrees, 158 will earn master's degrees, 13 will earn doctoral degrees in education, 26 will earn doctoral degrees in nursing, and 137 will graduate from the Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Students at Marian's Ancilla College campus in Plymouth, Ind., will receive their undergraduate degrees during a May 5 ceremony that begins at 5 p.m. in the Ancilla Domini Chapel. The commencement address will be delivered by Regina Emberton, president and chief executive officer of South Bend-Elkhart Regional Partnership. A commencement Mass will be

celebrated at 2:30 p.m. on May 5 in the chapel.

Undergraduates at Marian's Indianapolis campus will receive their degrees during a 1:30 p.m. commencement ceremony on May 6 in the arena/convocation center of Marian's Indianapolis campus.

The commencement speaker will be Joseph Donnelly, U.S. ambassador to the Vatican.

The commencement Mass will be on May 6 at 10 a.m. in the arena/convocation center of Marian's Indianapolis campus.

Graduate students and medical students will receive their degrees on May 7 during a 10 a.m. ceremony in the arena/convocation center of Marian's Indianapolis campus. The commencement speaker will be Joe Impicciche, president and chief executive officer of Ascension Health.

Each ceremony and the commencement Mass on May 6 can be viewed on marian.edu/live.

SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS COLLEGE

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods will celebrate its commencement on May 13 for 300 graduates.

There will be two commencement ceremonies—one for on-campus students receiving their bachelor's degrees, while the other will be for graduates of Woods Online and master's degree programs.

Both ceremonies will be in the college's Hamilton Arena of the Jeanne Knoerle Sports and Recreation Center.



Joe Impicciche



Regina Emberton



Joseph Donnelly



Sydney McCammon



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

May 2-10, 2023

May 2 – 11 a.m.
College of Deans meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

May 2 – 6:30 p.m.
CYO Volunteer Awards, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

May 3 – 10:30 a.m.
Priest Personnel Board meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 3 – 7 p.m.
Confirmation for youths of Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Danville; St. Ann Parish, Indianapolis; St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, Indianapolis; and St. Thomas More Parish, Mooresville, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

May 4 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 4 – 7 p.m.
Confirmation for youths of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Beech Grove, and St. Monica and St. Thomas Aquinas parishes, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

May 9 – 8 a.m.
Indiana bishops and major superiors meeting, Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis

May 9 – 3:30 p.m.
Indiana bishops' province meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 10 – 9 a.m.
Indiana Catholic Conference meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

The commencement speakers for both ceremonies are graduating students who were selected by a committee of faculty, staff and a trustee.

The commencement ceremony for on-campus students who are graduating will be at 10 a.m.

The commencement speaker will be Sydney McCammon of Sullivan, Ind. She has earned a bachelor of science degree in psychology.

The commencement ceremony for graduates of Woods Online and master's degree programs will be at 3 p.m. The commencement speaker will be Rebecca Weiner of Nashville, Ind. She has earned a master's of arts degree in art therapy.

As part of the commencement day, the college will also have a Mass at 1 p.m. in the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

Each ceremony will be livestreamed at smwc.edu.

SAINT MEINRAD SEMINARY AND SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Fifty students will earn master's degrees when Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad holds its graduation ceremony on May 13.

The ceremony will be at 11:15 a.m. Central Time in St. Bede Theater on the Saint Meinrad campus.

The commencement speaker is Archbishop Shelton J. Fabre of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky.

A commencement Mass for the graduates and their guests will be at 9 a.m. Central Time on May 13 in the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln. †

Spend time with Jesus every evening to reflect on the day, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Jesus knows how to turn every difficulty or fall into a step forward, Pope Francis said.

With Christ's love "even that which seems wearisome and unsuccessful can appear under another light," he said on April 23.

Before reciting the midday "Regina Coeli" prayer with about 30,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square, Pope Francis spoke about the day's Gospel reading, Luke 24:13-35, which describes the risen Jesus' encounter with the disciples heading to Emmaus.

Jesus appears beside the two disciples and prompts them to tell him what has happened and made them

sad. And, while they are walking, Jesus "helps them reinterpret the facts in a different way, in the light of the prophecies of the word of God," the pope said.


"Today's Gospel invites us to tell Jesus everything, sincerely, without being afraid of disturbing him—he listens—without fear of saying the wrong thing, without shame at our struggle to understand," he said.

"The Lord is happy whenever we open ourselves to him," he said. "Only in this way can he take us by the hand, accompany us and make our hearts burn again."

The pope said a good way to do this is to dedicate some time every evening to a brief examination of conscience and to reread the day with Jesus,

by "opening your heart to him, bringing to him people, choices, fears, falls and hopes—all the things that happened—to learn gradually to look at things with different eyes, with his eyes and not just our own.

"We can thus relive the experience of those two disciples," he said. "A difficult cross to embrace, the decision to forgive an offense, a missed opportunity for redress, the toil of work, the sincerity that comes at a price and the trials of family life can appear to us in a new light, the light of the crucified and Risen One, who knows how to turn every fall into a step forward." †



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Father John Fink noted for serving parishioners in tragedy and joy

By Sean Gallagher

Father John Fink, a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, died on April 17 at the Harrison Springs Health Campus in Corydon. He was 79.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 21 at St. Michael Church in Bradford where he served as pastor from 2003-13. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was the principal celebrant. Deacon John Jacobi was the homilist. Burial followed at St. Michael Cemetery in Bradford.

A priest of the archdiocese for 53 years, Father Fink served in parishes across central and southern Indiana.

Deacon Jacobi, who served with Father Fink at St. Michael, recalled that he was at his best when ministering to people who were suffering.

"Father John excelled when they needed him the most," Deacon Jacobi said. "He was known for sitting with families at the hospital. He wanted to enter into the sadness, the tragedy or the joy—wherever people were—and just be with them. It's the idea of accompaniment that Pope Francis talks about."

Having ministered with him for a decade, Deacon Jacobi reflected on where Father Fink found the strength to minister in many difficult moments in the lives of the families he served.

"It grew out of his love for the Eucharist, the way that he preached, the way that he presided at the liturgy," Deacon Jacobi said. "That was what led him out to sit with people and walk with them. The peace of Christ was with him, and he wanted to share that with others."

Joan Livingston knew that peace from the first moment that she met Father Fink after he had been appointed in 1998 as pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville.

Livingston was principal of the parish's school at the time.

"From that minute, we had a bond," Livingston said. "I always said he was like my third brother. I told him that."

"He was very interested in my kids and what they were doing. He just made you feel like you belonged."

Even after Father Fink left St. Joseph in 2003 to serve at St. Michael Parish in Bradford, he continued to reach out to Livingston and her family, assisting at the weddings of her children and being present to the family when one of Livingston's grandchildren died as an infant.

"I loved him, and my kids and grandkids loved him—everybody," Livingston said.

Deacon Jacobi seeks to emulate Father Fink in his ministry as director of religious education and coordinator of youth ministry at St. Michael Parish in Bradford and St. Bernard Parish in Frenchtown. He also serves as deacon in those parishes and at St. Joseph Parish in Crawford County.

He was discerning a call to the diaconate close to the time that Father Fink retired from active ministry in 2013.

Father Fink wrote a recommendation for him in his application for the archdiocese's deacon formation program.

"Father John was somewhat comfortable with the uncomfortableness of the Gospel," Deacon Jacobi said.

"In his preaching, he wasn't afraid to make people feel awkward a little bit. The Gospel calls us to something more, something beyond ourselves."

"That appealed to me. ... I want to be the kind of servant that I saw Father John be."

John Leo Fink was born on May 20, 1943, to Edward and Helen (Hayes) Fink in Indianapolis.

Baptized at St. Patrick Church in Indianapolis, he grew up as a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove.

Father Fink became an archdiocesan seminarian after graduating from the eighth grade at Holy Name of Jesus School.

He received his priestly formation at Bishop Bruté Latin School in Indianapolis, the archdiocese's former high school seminary; the former St. Mary College

Seminary in St. Mary, Ky.; and at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary and St. Louis University, both in St. Louis.

Father Fink was ordained a priest on May 24, 1969, by Archbishop Paul C. Schulte at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. He celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving the following day at Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove.

In his first assignment, Father Fink served from 1969-70 as associate pastor of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon.

From 1970-75, he ministered as associate pastor of the former St. Michael Parish in Madison while also serving as an instructor at Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School there.

Father Fink served for a year as associate pastor of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis from 1975-76.

In 1976, Father Fink was appointed pastor of St. Bernard Parish in Frenchtown and Our Lord Jesus Church the King Parish in Paoli, which at the time was a mission church. He served at both parishes until 1982.

From 1982-87, Father Fink ministered as the pastor of the former St. Mary and St. Michael parishes in Madison.

Father Fink served as pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany from 1987-98.

He was then appointed as administrator, then pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, serving there until 2003. In 2001, Father Fink began service as priest moderator of St. Peter Parish in Franklin County, continuing in that assignment until 2003.

In that year, he was appointed pastor of St. Michael Parish in Bradford, serving there until his retirement from active ministry in 2013.

While at St. Michael, Father Fink also ministered a second time as pastor of St. Bernard Parish in Frenchtown from 2006-13. He also served as administrator of St. Joseph Parish in Crawford County from 2006-13.

Memorial gifts may be sent to Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, 2500 Cold Spring Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46222; and to St. Michael Parish, 11400 Farmers Lane NE, Greenville, IN 47124. †



Fr. John Fink

USCCB reaffirms unwavering solidarity' with Church in Nicaragua

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—The U.S. bishops on April 20 reaffirmed their "unwavering solidarity" with Nicaragua's bishops, priests, faithful, "and all men and

women of goodwill" who are suffering "an intensification" of religious persecution by Nicaragua's government.

Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Ill., chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on International Justice

and Peace, issued the statement, which noted the government's restrictions imposed on the Catholic Church, especially during Holy Week and Easter.

Amid the crackdown on the Church by the regime of President Daniel Ortega and his wife, Rosario Murillo, who is vice president, religious processions in the streets have been banned since the beginning of Lent in February. For Holy Week, the government refused to authorize the traditional Stations of the Cross that are celebrated publicly in all dioceses throughout the country.

Bishop Malloy also called on the U.S. government "and the entire international community to continue to work for the release" of Bishop Rolando Álvarez of Matagalpa, who "languishes in prison" and has been "stripped of his citizenship."

In February, after he refused to be deported to the U.S. with more than 200 other Nicaraguan political prisoners,

Bishop Álvarez was sentenced to more than 26 years in prison after being convicted of treason, undermining national integrity and spreading false news, among other charges. Before that, he was held under house arrest for months after an August 2022 raid on his diocesan headquarters.

In addition to a ban on traditional Holy Week outdoor celebrations and processions, Bishop Malloy noted, the government has confiscated Church property and expelled clergy and women religious.

"Despite these extreme hardships, the Nicaraguan faithful, in union with their bishops and priests, have resiliently borne witness to the power of Christ's resurrection, as they attended Easter celebrations in record numbers," he said.

"May our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, patroness of the United States and Nicaragua, embrace her children during this difficult time and illumine them with the light of the risen Christ," he added.

In his Easter message, Pope Francis remembered Christians celebrating Easter "in particular circumstances," specifically mentioning Nicaragua.

In March on Capitol Hill in Washington, a U.S. House hearing examined what it called Ortega's anti-Catholic persecution and called for action, just days after the Vatican said on March 18 it had closed its embassy in Nicaragua after the country's government proposed suspending diplomatic relations.

"Is the United States doing enough?" asked Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., a longtime Catholic lawmaker who chaired the House Foreign Affairs joint

subcommittee meeting. "Are we doing enough in Congress? Is the president doing enough? Frankly, I'm concerned."

"We all need to up our game, we all need to do more, and we need to do it immediately," he said. †



Bishop David J. Malloy

United

in the Eucharist

We were made to share HOPE.

There's no greater hope than that which we find in the Eucharist.

Help us nourish others with the word of life and the bread from heaven.

UNITED CATHOLIC APPEAL

Pope Francis' prayer intentions for May



- **For Church movements and groups—** We pray that Church movements and groups may rediscover their mission of evangelization each day, placing their own charisms at the service of needs in the world.

See Pope Francis' monthly intentions at archindy.org/popesintentions.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher*
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John F. Fink, *Editor Emeritus*

Editorial



Xavière Missionary Sister Nathalie Becquart, undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops, speaks to reporters at a news conference at the Vatican on April 20. (CNS photo/Justin McLellan)

Continental phase of synod offers seeds for future of universal Church

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) have published the final document for the Continental Stage of the 2021-2024 Synod: “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission.” The continental phase of the worldwide synod involved representatives of bishops’ conferences from all regions of the universal Church meeting to review the findings submitted following listening sessions held in individual dioceses.

For the North American Continental Stage, the United States and Canada held 12 virtual assemblies between December 2022 and January 2023: seven in English, three in Spanish, and two in French. In total, 931 delegates and 146 bishops from Canada and the United States were appointed to participate in one of these 12 assemblies to share their reflections and responses to the “Document for the Continental Stage” (DCS) issued by the Holy See’s General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops in October 2022. Those reflections were synthesized to create the final document.

Readers are encouraged to access the full text of the final document, available at usccb.org/synod.

The priorities identified by the North American writing team under the leadership of Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Doctrine, and Bishop Raymond Poisson of Saint-Jérôme-Mont-Laurier and president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, speak to issues of vital concern to the Church in North America. These issues will contribute directly to the agenda of the October 2023 gathering of the synod in Rome. They will also shape the pastoral priorities of dioceses throughout Canada and the U.S. for the foreseeable future.

The first priority in the final document concerns synodality as a leadership style, and it calls for the kind of spiritual formation that will enable pastoral leaders (both clergy and lay) to “rethink our diocesan and national ecclesial practices and/or structures in a way that truly prioritizes the synodal style.” The concept of synodality is misunderstood—even controversial—today, so it’s essential that Pope Francis’ view of the Church as a pilgrim people journeying under the guidance of the Holy Spirit be widely taught.

The second priority concerns “welcoming those who feel excluded from participation in the life of the

Church in a manner that is authentic and faithful to the Gospel and the Catholic faith.” Many people today feel strongly that “inclusion” (welcoming and serving the wounded and isolated in the world and in the Church) is an essential aspect of the mission given to us by Jesus; yet they also see that the complexity of issues involved requires discernment. Everyone is welcome, but that doesn’t mean that the Church can endorse every lifestyle or contemporary point of view.

The third priority is “co-responsibility.” This speaks to the frequently raised issue of shared decision-making and the desire for more transparency in Church governance. Co-responsibility calls for an in-depth understanding of the mission of all the baptized, with specific attention given to particular vocations, including ordained ministry, consecrated life, marriage and the dedicated single life.

The fourth priority calls for unity and communion in the Church in the midst of widespread polarization and division. There is an intense desire for peace and harmony today, especially as divisiveness and factionalism grow in intensity often due to the hate-mongering facilitated by social media. Unity comes from God, whereas division is the work of the devil.

The final priority is “a Church that goes out to the peripheries.” Echoing the familiar call of Pope Francis for Catholics to be missionary disciples who leave their comfort zones in order to “go out” to the poor and marginalized, it serves to remind dioceses throughout North America that “on our continent there is always a danger of forgetfulness of, and indifference to, those who are poor and ostracized.” This priority asks that dioceses encourage and support a more robust formation in the kind of missionary activity that is needed to carry out the Lord’s command to proclaim the good news to all.

These five priorities come as a result of attentive listening and prayerful discernment during the past two years. The issues raised—synodality, inclusion, co-responsibility, unity and missionary zeal—are vital to the Church’s ability to serve God’s people here in North America and throughout the world.

Let’s pray for the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit during the October 2023 gathering of the synod in Rome and as the findings of this four-year synodal journey are integrated into the life of the Church in the years ahead.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Archbishop Paul D. Etienne

The listening heart of Christ can heal wounds of the Church

Since Pope Francis called for a worldwide Synod on Synodality nearly two years ago, there have been many



listening sessions here and around the world to hear from as many of the baptized as possible.

People clearly appreciated being asked to share their hopes and desires for our Church. They also shared intimate stories

of the wounds that need healing, such as the fallout from the sexual abuse crisis—not only for those who were abused, but also for the broader community affected by the revelations. They spoke of divisions over the traditional Latin Mass, lack of appreciation for women in the Church, especially their exclusion from leadership roles, and racism experienced by people of color—both in society and the Church.

Many people feel unwelcome or overlooked, including those from diverse cultural and ethnic communities, the poor, those on the margins of society, the divorced and remarried and LGBTQ men, women and youths.

I have met with numerous people who have expressed deep pain as a result of wounds left by their experience within the Church.

It is not easy to hear these stories of pain and neglect. But it is an important part of the healing process for people to be heard, and for the Church not to immediately defend or try to problem-solve, but to listen in order to understand. This is a necessary first step, and we honor those who have shared their experiences.

What happens now? Do we wait for the synod to unfold, sit back and wait for the end document from the Synod of Bishops in October 2023 and 2024? No. We continue

what has begun, seeking structural change in our way of being a local Church that accompanies others well.

Because it is not easy to hear what those who are hurting have to say, all of us can ask for the grace to know better our own fears and biases, especially regarding the need to be a more inclusive Church. We must ask for the grace to see those who feel overlooked and unwelcome.

People have expressed a clear desire for the Church to be a place where people not only feel welcome, but also feel at home. This improvement can and should begin now, with local parishes. Let’s make a concerted effort to be better listeners. Our society has grown comfortable associating only with like-minded people. The culture itself is dehumanizing because it does not lend itself to relationships. We need to be intentional about building relationships within our faith community.

Patience is also needed. We have a natural desire for immediate results. Prayer is not just something with which to appease everyone after so much sharing of personal experience. Rather, it is the engine driving our ability to truly sift what we have heard—not just hearing a person’s words, but listening for what God is revealing about the Church he desires us to become.

Prayer is the heart of discernment, which opens our hearts to receive and respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Becoming a Church that listens is the long game for Pope Francis. Becoming a Church that beats with the heart of the Good Shepherd is the path to being a Church capable of healing the ecclesial wounds of all our people.

(Archbishop Paul D. Etienne, formerly a priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, was named Archbishop of Seattle on Sept. 3, 2019, by Pope Francis. Read his blog at www.archbishopetienne.com/.) †

Reflection/Effie Caldarola

O Life! O Death! O Mystery!

My friend volunteered in a program called NODA—No One Dies Alone.

It was not meant to walk the long journey through terminal illness with someone. It was, in fact, quite literal. At the hour of death, none of us should be alone.



The hospital might have a suffering patient who was living on the streets and she could not identify next

of kin. Or perhaps someone was on his deathbed and his relatives were far away. Or the loved ones he had were very few and couldn’t be at the bedside 24/7.

My friend would be called near the end and would be there for that person as they left this world. He would hold their hand, pray with them or for them. If he knew they were Catholic, he might softly say a rosary as they, often unconscious, grew closer to death. For him, it was a moving and important ministry.

But what happened, I asked, ever curious about that great mystery that lies before us. What happened at death?

“I don’t know,” he answered honestly. “All I know is that they fell into the hands of a merciful God.”

Right now, we are in the great season of Easter. We rejoice, always as St. Paul advises, while we await the feast of Pentecost.

Thoughts about death bring me to my mother. She was suffering from dementia, not eating anymore and growing weak. I was in a graduate program, and I had a weekend of intensive classes. I planned to leave my home in Alaska for the long journey to the Midwest

as soon as the weekend ended.

But my brothers sounded the alarm. The time was near. I got on a plane, but I arrived a scant few hours after her death. Seemingly not aware, she had nonetheless clung to life. My brothers wondered if she’d been waiting for me.

I regret not leaving sooner, but am consoled by the image not of Mom waiting for me, but of God waiting patiently for her.

Years before, I was a college freshman living with my aunt when Dad died. We knew he was quite ill, but we had hope. Arriving back from class on the bus, my cousin met me and we rushed to the hospital. Again, I was too late by mere minutes.

People have told me beautiful stories of death. One friend recalls walking into the room where his mother had just passed, and at the threshold being held in an intense, unforgettable sense of peace and presence.

Likewise, Jesuit Father Greg Boyle, writing of his mother’s death in *Forgive Everyone Everything*, relates how she suddenly looked up and “let out a glorious, wondrous gasp,” and died. “And no one in earshot of the sound,” he writes, “would ever fear death again.”

Death is a mystery. Jesus taught us, despite his fear in the garden, how to die well—with integrity and commitment. But he first taught us how to live, and that is our focus during this Easter season.

We’re all pilgrims, walking together on this brief sojourn. Is there anyone, a friend, a relative, who needs our forgiveness, our love, our hand? Now, while the day has not yet ended?

(Effie Caldarola is a wife, mom and grandmother who received her master’s in pastoral ministry from Seattle University.) †

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Jesus calls us to serve, lead and follow him

“Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep” (Jn 10:1-2).

In the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Easter (Jn 10:1-10), St. John the Evangelist presents Jesus in a dual role. He is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep, dying willingly for his flock. But he is also the gate by which the sheep may enter or leave in safety.

St. John tells us that the Pharisees didn't understand our Lord's imagery. Do we? Why does Jesus say that he is both the shepherd and the sheep gate?

If we listen carefully to what Jesus is saying to us, always with the help of the Holy Spirit who interprets God's word for us, we will “hear his voice” and know that we are called to follow Jesus:

Whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all

his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers. (Jn 10:2-5)

In other words, whoever enters through the gate that Christ himself is, whether clergy or lay, becomes a good shepherd (*pastor bonus*) who is authorized to speak in God's name. People will follow this servant-leader if he or she is authentic. They will not follow hypocrites who pretend to be chosen ones or who fail to speak the truth in love.

Pope Francis frequently says that pastors who are good shepherds must know when to walk alongside their sheep, when to lead them, and when to follow behind. Jesus wants us to be so close to the people we serve, the pope says, that we take on “the smell of the sheep.” This vivid image is meant to capture our attention and help us to see how much Jesus wants us to follow his example as authentic servant-leaders who “call their sheep by name” and who “lead them out” into verdant pastures.

The second reading (1 Pt 2:20-25)

describes the lengths to which our Savior went to identify with us, the flock he shepherds:

He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you had gone astray like sheep, but you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls. (1 Pt 2:24-25).

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, “the guardian of our souls” (1 Pt 2:25), who opens the sheep gate of our hearts and who leads us to become men and women for others. He is the one who “when he was insulted, he returned no insult; when he suffered, he did not threaten; instead, he handed himself over to the one who judges justly” (1 Pt 2:23). Jesus was so closely aligned with us, his people, that he refused to abandon us to our sins. Instead, he handed himself over to his Father in reparation for our sins. So closely did Jesus identify with us that he, who never sinned, took on the smell of sinners (the smell of death) and handed himself over to death for our sake.

As St. Peter tells us, “For to this

you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps” (1 Pt 2:21). To follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we must deny ourselves and serve others. We must be shepherds who open the gate for others and show them the way to life in Christ.

In the responsorial psalm for the Fourth Sunday of Easter (Ps 23), we pray:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. In verdant pastures he gives me repose; beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul. (Ps 23:1-3)

These words of consolation and hope remind us that the Lord's resurrection has redeemed us from the deadly consequence of sin and evil. Yes, sin remains—in each one of us and in the world we inhabit. But sin no longer has the last word, and death has lost its sting.

As we continue our observance of this Easter season, let's pray for the courage to follow Jesus and to lead by example all our sisters and brothers. May we enter through the gate that is Jesus Christ—the Way, the Truth, and the Life. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Jesús nos llama a seguirlo, a servirle y a liderar

“De cierto, de cierto les digo: El ladrón y el saltador es el que no entra por la puerta del redil de las ovejas, sino que trepa por otra parte. Pero el que entra por la puerta, es el pastor de las ovejas” (Jn 10:1-2).

En la lectura del Evangelio del cuarto domingo de Pascua (Jn 10:1-10), san Juan Evangelista presenta a Jesús en una doble función: por un lado, es el Buen Pastor que da la vida por sus ovejas y muere voluntariamente por su rebaño; pero por otro, es la puerta por la que las ovejas pueden entrar o salir sin correr peligro.

San Juan nos dice que los fariseos no entendían las imágenes de nuestro Señor. ¿Acaso nosotros sí? ¿Por qué dice Jesús que es a la vez el pastor y la puerta de las ovejas?

Si escuchamos con atención lo que Jesús nos dice, siempre con la ayuda del Espíritu Santo que nos interpreta la Palabra de Dios, “oiremos su voz” y sabremos que estamos llamados a seguir a Jesús:

El que entra por la puerta, es el pastor de las ovejas. A éste el portero le abre, y las ovejas oyen su voz; y él llama a las ovejas por su nombre, y las saca. Y una vez que ha sacado

a todas sus ovejas, va delante de ellas; y las ovejas lo siguen, porque conocen su voz. Pero a un extraño no lo siguen, sino que huyen de él, porque no conocen la voz de gente extraña. (Jn 10:2-5).

En otras palabras, quien entra por la puerta que es Cristo mismo, ya sea clérigo o laico, se convierte en buen pastor, autorizado a hablar en nombre de Dios. La gente seguirá a este siervo-líder si es auténtico; no seguirán a hipócritas que pretenden ser elegidos o que no dicen la verdad desde el amor.

El Papa Francisco a menudo dice que los pastores que saben hacer bien su trabajo saben cuándo caminar junto a sus ovejas, cuándo guiarlas y cuándo seguir las. El Santo Padre afirma que Jesús quiere que estemos tan cerca de la gente a la que servimos, que tomemos “el olor de las ovejas.” Esta vívida imagen busca captar nuestra atención y ayudarnos a ver cuánto desea Jesús que sigamos su ejemplo como auténticos siervos-líderes que “llaman a sus ovejas por su nombre” y que las guían a verdes praderas.

La segunda lectura (1 Pt 2:20-25) describe todo lo que hizo nuestro Salvador para identificarse con

nosotros, el rebaño que pastorea:

Él mismo llevó en su cuerpo nuestros pecados al madero, para que nosotros, muertos ya al pecado, vivamos para la justicia. Por sus heridas fueron ustedes sanados. Porque ustedes eran como ovejas descarriadas, pero ahora se han vuelto al Pastor que cuida de sus vidas. (1 Pt 2:24-25)

Jesús es el Buen Pastor, el que cuida de nuestras vidas (1 Pt 2:25), que abre la puerta de las ovejas de nuestro corazón y nos lleva a convertirnos en hombres y mujeres para los demás. Es el que “cuando lo maldecían, no respondía con maldición; cuando sufría, no amenazaba, sino que remitía su causa al que juzga con justicia” (1 Pt 2:23). Jesús estaba tan unido a nosotros, su pueblo, que se negó a abandonarnos a nuestros pecados. En cambio, se entregó a su Padre para expiar nuestros pecados. Jesús se identificó tanto con nosotros que Él, que nunca pecó, tomó el olor de los pecadores (el olor de la muerte) y se entregó a la muerte por nosotros.

Como nos dice san Pedro: “Y ustedes fueron llamados para esto. Porque también Cristo sufrió por nosotros, con lo que nos dio un

ejemplo para que sigamos sus pasos” (1 Pt 2:21). Para seguir las huellas de Jesús, debemos negarnos a nosotros mismos y servir a los demás. Debemos ser pastores que abren la puerta a los demás y les muestran el camino de la vida en Cristo.

En el salmo responsorial del cuarto domingo de Pascua (Sal 23), rezamos:

El Señor es mi pastor, nada me faltará. En lugares de verdes pastos me hace descansar; junto a aguas de reposo me conduce. Él restaura mi alma; me guía por senderos de justicia por amor de Su nombre. (Sal 23:1-3)

Estas palabras de consuelo y esperanza nos recuerdan que la resurrección del Señor nos ha redimido de la consecuencia mortal del pecado y del mal. Sí, el pecado permanece, en cada uno de nosotros y en el mundo que habitamos; pero el pecado ya no tiene la última palabra, y la muerte ha perdido su poder.

Mientras seguimos celebrando este tiempo de Pascua, recemos para tener el valor de seguir a Jesús y dar ejemplo a todos nuestros hermanos y hermanas. Que entremos por la puerta que es Jesucristo, el Camino, la Verdad y la Vida. †

Events Calendar

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

April 28-May 28

RISE UP! Daily 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 e-mail, text "Riseup" to 84576, free. Information: 812-576-4302, clairkeck.asp@gmail.com.

May-August

Marian University, 3200 Cold Spring Rd., Indianapolis. **Summer Youth Camps**, Innovation Through Engineering, Missionary Disciples Institute, theatre, Launch Your Future 21st Century Scholars, SYO Summer Music, athletic camps; age levels, registration deadlines and fees vary. Information: 317-955-6102, camps@marian.edu, cutt.ly/mariancamps23.

May 3

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

May 5

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m.,

optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, www.womenscarecenter.org.

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

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

May 5-6

White Violet Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Spring Plant Sale**, Fri. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-3 p.m., organically grown vegetables, flowers, herbs, cut flowers. Information: 812-535-2930 or wvc@spsmw.org.

May 6

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

8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Motorcycle Blessing and BBQ**, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., blessing and prayers for motorcyclists' safety, free admission, food available for purchase, register by May 1. Registration, information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org, spsmw.org/events.

May 9

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

May 13

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **St. Vincent de Paul Stuff A Truck**, 9-11 a.m., accepting clothing, household goods, linens, furniture, bicycles, helmets locks and backpacks. List of items most needed: cutt.ly/ItemsNeeded. Information: dsweeney@svdpindy.org.

May 13, 14

St. Louis Church, 13 E. St. Louis Pl., Batesville. **Bruté Weekend**, Sat. 5:30 p.m., Sun. 6:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m., Masses celebrated by Father Daniel Bedel, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary spiritual director, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501, esanders@archindy.org.

May 14

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.

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, O'Shaughnessy Dining Room, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Mother's Day Brunch**, reservations only with three seating sessions: 9:30 a.m., 11:45 a.m. and 2 p.m., prices (excluding drinks and tax): \$39.99 adults, \$38.99 ages 62 and older, \$19.99 ages 5-11, ages 4 and younger free. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Information, registration: 630-776-0811, Brunch.SistersofProvidence.org, justin.hickman@cafebonappetit.com.

May 15

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 or 317-236-1474.

May 17

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

May 18

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

May 19

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Indiana Canine Assistant Network, Inc. President Jillian M. Ashton presenting "All Dogs Go to Heaven: How About Us?" rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4

p.m. on May 16. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

St. Francis Xavier Parish, 101 N. Ferguson St., Henryville. **Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., fried fish, shrimp, fries, coleslaw, dessert table, dine in, carry out, \$12 dinners, \$8 fish sandwich, \$8 8 pieces shrimp. Information: 812-294-4682, stfrancissecretary@northclarkcountycatholic.org.

May 20, 21

St. Augustine Church, 315 E. Chestnut St., Jeffersonville. **Bruté Weekend**, Sat. 4 p.m., Sun. 8:30 a.m., Masses celebrated by Father Daniel Bedel, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary spiritual director, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501, esanders@archindy.org.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 1840 E. Eighth St., Jeffersonville. **Bruté Weekend**, Sat. 5:45 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m., Masses celebrated by Father Daniel Bedel, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary spiritual director, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501 or esanders@archindy.org. †

Retreats and Programs

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

May 12

Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **Migratory Birds at the Mount**, 6-9 p.m., dinner, presentation by Dwight Chamberlain of the Raptor Center at Hardy Lake, guided birdwatching hike, \$30 ages 13 and older, \$20 ages 12 and younger. Registration required: cutt.ly/msf-birds, 812-923-8817.

May 13

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **A Day with Mary**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Judy Ribar facilitator, registration required, \$75. Information: retreatcommunications@mounstfrancis.org or 812-923-8817.

Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **May Pilgrimage: Come Holy Spirit**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen presenting, meet in chapel, wear comfortable walking shoes, bring hat, water bottle and lunch, \$25. Registration required: mounstfrancis.org/pilgrimages, 812-923-8817.

May 19-21

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Contemplative Christianity: God's Call to Holiness**, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, \$300 single, \$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius**, 6:30 p.m. Fri.-11 a.m. Sun., Franciscans of the Immaculata Father Ignatius Manfredonia facilitating, \$241 per adult, includes meals and accommodations. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, or motheroftheredeemer.com.

May 20

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **"Laudato Si'" Spirituality: Challenges and Opportunities**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Carolyn Cromer facilitating, \$30, \$45 CEU. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

May 25

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Peace and Nature Garden Walk**, 7-8:30 p.m., Benedictine Sister Angela Jarboe presenting, free will contribution. Registration: www.benedictinn.org/programs. Information: benedictinn@benedictinn.org, 317-788-7581.

June 3

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 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 May 31. Information, registration: 812-535-2952, jfrost@spsmw.org, spsmw.org/events.

June 5, 12

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **The Chosen Season 3: Discussion and Dinner Series**, 5:30-8:30 p.m., first of eight Monday sessions, episode viewing and discussion, \$16 per session or eight sessions for \$115, includes dinner, popcorn and refreshments. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

June 7

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40, includes private room for the day and lunch; spiritual direction available for additional \$30, must be scheduled in advance. Information, registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

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. †

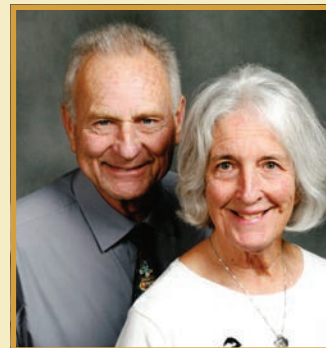
Wedding Anniversaries

GORDON AND JANIS (PAGE) BECKER, members of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on May 5.

The couple was married in St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on May 5, 1973.

They have two children: Joseph and Matthew Becker.

The couple also has five grandchildren. †



JAMES AND PAMELA (LUEDEMAN) KNOTH, members of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on April 28.

The couple was married in Christ the King Church in Indianapolis on April 28, 1973.

They have four children: Michelle Harker, James, Jr., Joe and Paul Knoth.

The couple also has six grandchildren. †



JERRY AND ROXANNE (BECRAFT) SCHEIDLER, members of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on April 28.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Greensburg on April 28, 1973.

They have four children: Christy Karl, Kathie Wells, Jon and Matt Scheidler.

The couple also has nine grandchildren. †



MARK AND SUSAN (RHEIN) SWANSON, members of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on May 5.

The couple was married in St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis on May 5, 1973.

They have three children: Erin Kelsch, Brienne Schaller and Kristen Sweeney.

The couple also has six grandchildren. †



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

Catechesis for Discipleship Award honors witnesses to Christ

Criterion staff report

The Catechesis for Discipleship Award is an annual honor given to one catechist from each of our 126 parishes by the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis. Pastors, parish life coordinators and parish catechetical leaders are asked to identify a catechist who excels at teaching the faith and witnessing to the life-changing power of a disciple relationship with Jesus—lived in full communion with his body, the holy Catholic Church.

Following is a list of honorees by deanery as selected by parish leaders throughout central and southern Indiana:

Batesville Deanery

- Teresa Geis, St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Decatur County
- Renee Jackson, St. Nicholas Parish, Ripley County
- Tammy Jones, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Shelby County
- Lisa Meier, St. Michael Parish, Brookville
- Terri Meyer, All Saints Parish, Dearborn County
- Pam Pettit, St. Peter Parish, Franklin County
- Patricia Simon, St. Maurice Parish, Napoleon

Bloomington Deanery

- Bonnie Hicks, St. Agnes Parish, Nashville
- Kathy Scarlett, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Bedford
- Theresa Spears, St. Martin of Tours Parish, Martinsville

Connersville Deanery

- Lisa Goecke, St. Bridget Parish, Liberty

Indianapolis East Deanery

- Alejandro De Los Santos, St. Mary Parish, Indianapolis
- Maria Gonzalez, Holy Spirit Parish, Indianapolis
- Domoni Rouse, St. Rita Parish, Indianapolis
- Michelle Zeiler, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish, Indianapolis

Indianapolis North Deanery

- Christine Douglas, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Indianapolis

- Beth, Grabhorn, Christ the King Parish, Indianapolis
- Autumn Henderson, St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, Indianapolis
- Dorothy Henehan, St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Indianapolis
- Jennifer and Eric Lis, St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis
- Lucia Sanches, St. Lawrence Parish, Indianapolis

Indianapolis South Deanery

- Connor Cross, St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis
- Annette Galindo, St. Barnabas Parish, Indianapolis
- Bruce Ryman, Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

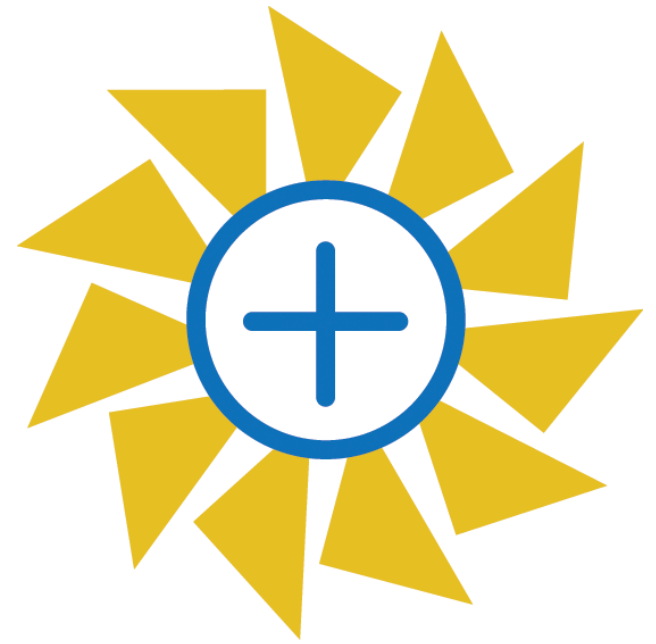
- Fidelis Betiku, St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Indianapolis
- Rebecca Bratt, Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Danville
- Angelica Cortes, St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, Indianapolis
- Brian Disney, St. Thomas More Parish, Mooresville
- Barbara Hiskes, St. Malachy Parish, Brownsburg
- Gretchen Horne, Holy Angels Parish, Indianapolis
- Maria Pimentel-Gannon, St. Monica Parish, Indianapolis

New Albany Deanery

- Terra Coomer, St. Michael Parish, Bradford
- Jo Harshe, St. Bernard Parish, Frenchtown
- Peggy Koetter, St. John the Baptist Parish, Starlight
- Joe Lynch, St. John Paul II Parish, Sellersburg
- Suzanne McConnell, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Jeffersonville
- Alexis Pittenger, Holy Family Parish, New Albany
- Joe Proctor, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, New Albany
- Jessica Sarver, St. Michael Parish, Charlestown
- Cheryl Sauffer, St. Augustine Parish, Jeffersonville
- Emily Tischendorf, St. Francis Xavier Parish, Henryville

Seymour Deanery

- Alfonso Chavez, Holy Trinity Parish, Edinburgh



- Josmary Ortiz, St. Ambrose Parish, Seymour
- Karen Russell, American Martyrs Parish, Scottsburg
- Denise Sowder, St. Patrick Parish, Salem

Tell City Deanery

- Janet Damin, St. Paul Parish, Tell City

Terre Haute Deanery

- Mary Antonette Dugat, St. Margaret Mary Parish, Terre Haute
- Amy Miranda, St. Joseph University Parish, Terre Haute
- Shayna Tews, Annunciation Parish, Brazil

Please continue praying for catechists and your parish catechetical leader.

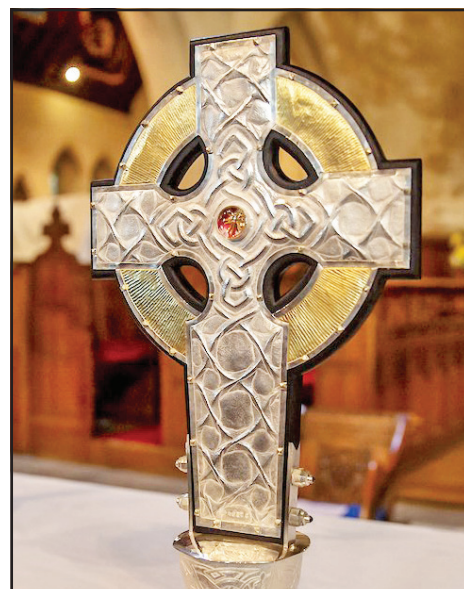
Is God calling you to teach the faith to your fellow parishioners? Make an appointment with your parish catechetical leader today to discuss your role in fulfilling the great commission of our Lord Jesus: "Go and make disciples!" †

Vatican sends relic of true cross to Britain's King Charles

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As Britain's King Charles III walks on May 6 into Westminster Abbey for his coronation, he will walk behind a processional cross containing a relic of Christ's cross given to the king by Pope Francis.

"The fragments of the relic of the true cross were donated by the Holy See in early April, through the apostolic nunciature, to His Majesty King Charles III, supreme governor of the Church of England, as an ecumenical gesture on the occasion of the centenary of the Anglican Church in Wales," Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, said on April 20.

A Vatican official said the two fragments in the coronation cross came from a relic preserved in the Lipsanoteca



The top of the processional cross that will be used at the coronation of King Charles III in May is seen on the altar of an Anglican parish in Llandudno, Wales, on April 19. Relics of Christ's cross, a gift from Pope Francis, are under glass in the center of the processional cross. (CNS photo/Dave Custance, courtesy of the Church in Wales)

Room of the Vatican Museums.

The fragments now are under glass in the center of the coronation cross, which is made of recycled silver bullion.

Anglican Archbishop Andrew John of Wales blessed the cross during a service on April 19.

The Anglican Church in Wales, which refers to the cross as the Cross of Wales, said it is inscribed on the back with words, in Welsh, from the last sermon of St. David, a sixth-century bishop and patron saint of Wales: "Be joyful. Keep the faith. Do the little things."

King Charles has given the cross to the Christians of Wales, and after the coronation it will be shared by the Anglican and Catholic churches there.

"With a sense of deep joy, we embrace this cross, kindly given by King Charles, and containing a relic of the true cross, generously gifted by the Holy See," said Catholic Archbishop Mark O'Toole of Cardiff in a statement published on the Church in Wales website.

The cross "is not only a sign of the deep Christian roots of our nation but will, I am sure, encourage us all to model our lives on the love given by our Savior, Jesus Christ," Archbishop O'Toole said.

Chris Trott, the British ambassador to the Holy See, said on Twitter that "we are deeply moved and grateful to Pope Francis for this extraordinary gift."

The gift of the relic, he said, reflects the strength of the relationship between the Holy See and Great Britain, a "relationship that developed over the course of the reign of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth, who met five popes!"

Msgr. Ervin Lengyel, secretary of the Vatican nunciature in London, tweeted: "In a significant ecumenical gesture, the Cross of Wales will incorporate a relic of the true cross, the personal gift of Pope Francis to His Majesty the King to mark the coronation." †

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PRISON

continued from page 1

two-thirds of whom were Catholic.

Many leaned forward, elbows on knees, listening with rapt attention during the homily. One clutched a rosary through the entirety of the Mass. Another, soon to be released, eagerly stepped forward for a special blessing from the archbishop.

Grace continued to flow after the eucharistic feast. Most of the Catholic men hurried to form a line after Mass when it was announced that Father Danda would offer the sacrament of reconciliation.

"It means so much," said Jason of the opportunity to receive the sacraments. "It definitely is a big weight off my shoulders."

'They take their faith seriously'

More than sacramental grace flowed during Archbishop Thompson's visit. It was also a time of evangelization, catechesis and education as he spent the hour before Mass sharing reflections on the prodigal son parable and the story of Christ's encounter with the woman at the well, followed by time for questions.

"He put [the Scriptures] into a better perspective," said Danny, a Baptist. "He told the stories, but he made it really interesting, like telling a story to your child. I was really impressed by everything he said."

Archbishop Thompson was impressed, too, by the questions the men asked, which ranged from biblical interpretation to Church hierarchy and teaching, to how best to prepare for Easter.

"They asked powerful questions," the archbishop noted. "They have Bible studies here, and it was clear to me that they really knew a lot about the Scriptures themselves. The word obviously means something to them—they take it seriously, and they take their faith seriously."

'You will see the glory of God'

Archbishop Thompson delved further into Scripture during his homily, discussing that Sunday's Gospel reading of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.

He recalled Jesus asking for Lazarus' tomb to be opened and being told there will be a stench.

"But Jesus calls him out anyway and says, 'Unbind him' " (Jn 11:44), the archbishop noted. "In our lives, we may have moments where we feel bound or things aren't smelling too good, and we can feel dead or close



Men incarcerated at the Plainfield Correctional Facility in Plainfield listen attentively as Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, principal celebrant of a Mass offered at the Plainfield Correctional Facility in Plainfield on March 26, delivers a homily. Deacon Martin "Neil" May, left, assisted at the Mass. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

to death—psychologically, emotionally, spiritually, physically, whatever it might be.

"But Jesus has the power to call us out of it, to untie us, to set us free, to offer a new beginning. ... There's nothing beyond the scope of God's mercy, God's power to save, to heal, to redeem."

In those moments of crisis, he continued, each of us is asked the same question Christ asked Martha in the Gospel reading: "Do you believe?" (Jn 11:26)

To those who dare to answer "yes," said Archbishop Thompson, Christ will repeat what he told Martha: "You will see the glory of God" (Jn 11:40).

"For us Catholics, the Eucharist is a glimpse" of that glory, he explained. "The very body, blood, soul and divinity of God, Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is given to us in the Eucharist."

He went on to note that the first and second readings referred to the "Spirit of God dwelling in us" (Ez 37:14, Rom 8:11). It is that same Spirit given in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and reconciliation, he said.

"In these sacraments, that Spirit comes upon us and dwells within us," he added. "The life of God in us, even

here on Earth, so that we may have something the world cannot provide: eternal life, eternal peace, eternal joy in the kingdom of heaven, free from all anxieties, from all worries, from all woundedness, from all brokenness, from all chaos—if we keep our eyes fixed on Christ and look to no other to be saved.

"He is the resurrection and the life. There is no other."

'It shows he cares'

Others came from outside the prison walls to attend the Mass. Among them were women from the prison ministry at St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, the parish in whose boundaries the correctional facility is located.

"It's incredible that they got to be with [the archbishop] and spend time with him and have

him spend so much time answering their questions," said Karen Burkhardt, a member of the parish's prison ministry team. "It shows he cares for them and that he feels that they're part of his archdiocese."

Burkhardt and others from the prison ministry regularly visit the offenders at the Plainfield Correctional Facility and the neighboring Heritage Trails Correctional Facility. She said they come for Communion services, discuss Sunday Scripture readings, lead Bible studies, offer guided meditations and pray with the men.

Archbishop Thompson lauded the volunteers in an interview with *The Criterion* after the Mass.

"The men were talking with me about all the different people that come here on behalf of the Church," he commented. "One said, 'You know, the loneliness that you experience is powerful here. [The volunteers] bring this message of love and that we're not alone.'"

Volunteers visit at each of the eight state prisons and one federal prison located in the archdiocese, and priests offer Mass and reconciliation at six of those facilities, said Deacon John Cord, coordinator of the archdiocesan Corrections Ministry.

But the two Plainfield facilities and one in Branchville currently have no priest available to offer the sacraments.

"The need for priests [at the three prisons] is huge," said Deacon Cord. "We're looking to get a priest to go in on a more regular basis."

'These are people in need of healing'

Archbishop Thompson recognized the need for those in prison to receive the sacraments and the grace they bring.

"They're here in the archdiocese, and these are people in need of healing," he said. "They need peace and need God's grace."

"It's important to bring Christ to all people, including those on the margins and peripheries of society—to bring Christ to them and to witness Christ in them."

The men at the Plainfield Correctional Facility "were grateful for the opportunity to go to Mass," Deacon Cord said. "And they were especially thankful that Father [Danda] was able to hear confessions. As far as I can tell, that was first time in five years a priest has been there for confession."

The ministerial visit on March 26 was "very important to them," Deacon Cord added. "They really crave that kind of interaction. After Mass, men were just thanking us. They were so appreciative."

Jason was among the grateful.

"I'm looking forward to renewing my faith more," he said. "This [opportunity] definitely helped me do that."

(To volunteer in prison ministry, check with your parish office to see if a ministry already exists. If not, contact Deacon John Cord at jcord@archindy.org.) †



A rosary encircles the hands of a man incarcerated at the Plainfield Correctional Facility in Plainfield as he receives Communion from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during a Mass at the facility on March 26.

POPE

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Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the dicastery, said by focusing on "laity and ministry in a synodal Church," members of the dicastery discussed ways "to promote a readiness for service that stems from the many gifts and charisms that the Holy Spirit arouses in the people of God, and which give rise to various ministries for the benefit of the women and men of our time."

"In particular, we discussed the challenges of those experiencing marital crises of all kinds, which involve the consequent short-circuiting of the transmission of the faith," he said. "Today there is a greater need than ever, in the area of family ministry, for a specific

ministry, for an authentic closeness and witness on the part of married couples at the service of families for the pastoral care of those experiencing crises and problems of all kinds."

While all ministry in the Church—lay or ordained—begins from the call of baptism, Pope Francis said that in the specific area of a Catholic couple's service to other couples in need, ministry has its "sacramental foundation in marriage" as well.

When most Catholics hear the phrase "lay ministries," they think of those formally instituted, like lector, acolyte and catechist, the pope said. "These ministries are characterized by a public intervention of the Church—a specific act of institution—and a certain visibility. They are connected with ordained ministry, because they involve various forms of

participation in the task" of the priest, even though they do not require ordination.

But, he said, "the instituted ministries do not represent the full extent of the ministeriality of the Church, which is broader and, ever since the first Christian communities, regards all the faithful."

Many of those other ministries, he said, while not requiring a formal institution by the Church, are, nevertheless, inspired by the Holy Spirit for the good of the Church and the world.

"First, a charism appears, inspired by the Spirit; then, the Church acknowledges this charism as a useful service to the community; finally, in a third moment, it is introduced and a specific ministry spreads," he said.

Laypeople participate in "the prophetic and regal function of Christ" when, for

example, they minister to the poor or to migrants, he said.

"In these areas of charity, many services can arise that take the form of genuine ministries," he said. "It is a broad space of commitment for those who wish to live in a practical way, in relation to others, the closeness of Jesus that they have often experienced firsthand. The ministry thus becomes not only a simple social commitment, but also something beautiful and personal, a true Christian witness."

However, no form of ministry must ever become "self-referential," he said. "I get angry when I see lay ministers who—pardon the expression—are 'puffed up' by their ministry."

"At times, you see laypeople and they seem to be default priests," the pope said. "Please, clean up this problem." †

From darkness to light

Readers celebrate God's creative and healing powers in living out their faith

(Editor's note: The Criterion has invited our readers to share a favorite Bible verse or a favorite quote that helps remind them of God's presence in their lives and/or helps center them in their relationships with other people. Here is part four of their responses.)

By John Shaughnessy

Bill Greenwald often finds the presence of God in nature, which is why he has always been drawn to the wisdom expressed in Job 12:7-10.

It's a passage that notes, "But ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the Earth and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being."

As he considers that passage, Greenwald says, "I have found the book of Job to be very unique, in that God tested Job's faith time after time, yet Job never gave up. To me, it also reflects on what Mother Nature teaches us about life."

In a hike through the woods, the member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis finds an "escape from the noise and the clutter of living in a city," immersing himself in the peace and the beauty of God's creation.

Greenwald has also found that peace and beauty in the darkest places of the

world—literally—as he has explored the depths of caves for about 50 years.

"Overcoming your fear of the dark, tight places and heights can be very challenging," he says, noting that Indiana has five commercial caves and about 2,700 "wild" caves. "Like Job, it takes a lot of faith in yourself and your gear to explore some of the Earth's longer and deeper caves."

"Now that I am in my late 70's and slowing down a bit, I like to share my life experiences with my children and grandchildren and especially with the younger people I meet."

One of the experiences he shares is about a caving friend who saw God's light at all levels of the world and in all parts of our lives.

"Tim loved to get out his telescope and explore and talk about all the stars in the night sky," Greenwald says. "Tim would say that it is the same in the caves."

"There are stars and formations everywhere hidden in the dark. All we have to do is go in there and light them up."

God's touch of love and hope

Dave Stuhldreher knew that his friend was going through one of the toughest, most heartbreaking times in life—a divorce.

Besides listening to his friend and being there for him, the member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis also wanted his friend to know that God was there for him. So he



Bill Greenwald of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis has explored the depths of caves for about 50 years, finding God's light in all levels of the world. (Submitted photo)

shared a Bible verse—Jeremiah 29:11—that has always brought him comfort:

"For I know the plans I have for you. Plans to prosper you and not harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future."

"I told my friend that it gives me great hope, even when I'm going through a tough time. That God does have a plan for me, and given his great love for me, I have no doubt it will be a much better plan than I could ever imagine."

"This verse really helped my friend."

Walking in the way of Christ

In her desire to have a deeper relationship with Jesus, Jennifer Haught feels a close connection to one of the people Christ healed.

That healing is from the story shared in John 5:2-9.

It's the story of the crippled man who had been lying for years by a pool of water that was supposed to heal people. On one of the countless days when the man hoped someone would put him in the pool at the

supposedly right time of healing, Jesus approached him with the offer of a life-changing gift, asking, "Do you want to be well?" (John 5:6) After the man shared his struggles, Jesus told him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk" (Jn 5:8).

As John's Gospel notes, "Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked" (Jn 5:9).

That's the way Haught felt when Jesus touched her life with his healing power.

"I was 38 when I was baptized, so I identify with the man lying by the pool, ill for so many years and then finally healed by Jesus," says Haught, a member of Mary Queen of Peace Parish in Danville. "But the forgiveness and new life I received in baptism was only the beginning."

"The passage also always reminds me that the healing comes with a command to rise and walk. Every day, regardless of any successes and failures of the day before, I have to get up again and strive to walk in the way of Christ." †



'I was 38 when I was baptized, so I identify with the man lying by the pool, ill for so many years and then finally healed by Jesus. But the forgiveness and new life I received in baptism was only the beginning.'

—Jennifer Haught

ICC

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in severe distress and in need of help. They are deserving of dignity and the right kind of care, but too often they end up in our county jails instead of places equipped to treat them properly."

Backed by Gov. Eric Holcomb 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.

Espada pointed to studies that have shown that Indiana would need upwards of \$130 million to effectively implement Senate Bill 1. However, only \$35 million had been allocated for the initiative before the final budget negotiations.

"If you've got an additional \$1.5 billion now, maybe you should think about fully funding the \$130 million for this critical effort that can save and improve lives," Espada said.

Another key priority for the ICC and its allies

is expanding school choice to as many families as possible across Indiana. While the Indiana House of Representatives included a robust plan for doing so in its budget proposal, the Senate stripped all school choice-related measures in its version of the budget, leaving the path uncertain as final negotiations were underway this week.

The Senate's actions "lit a fire" among advocates for school choice, according to John Elcesser, executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association (INPEA), which represents the state's more than 400 non-public schools, including Indiana's 175 Catholic schools. He pointed to rallies held across the state and the active engagement of school administrators and families in contacting Senate lawmakers to have their voices heard.

"There are a number of states that within the last couple of years have passed universal choice legislation," Elcesser said. "Indiana historically has been a leader in school choice, but the Senate's version of the budget certainly didn't reflect continuing in that kind of leadership mode from a national perspective."

"With the state's revenue projections \$1.5 billion over what was anticipated, we're hoping that will propel some compromise on the budget that reflects the strong support for school choice in Indiana."

Espada shared that hope.

"It's important for all families to be able to decide what school is best for their child," said Espada, who noted that her daughter thrived at both private and public schools. "Finances shouldn't stand in the way of families seeking what they feel is going to be the best educational environment for their child and his or her unique circumstances."

As this year's legislative session neared the finish line, the ICC continued advocating for other key priorities, including funding

for conservation efforts. In his State of the State address earlier this year, Holcomb called for \$25 million to build on Indiana's growing conservation initiatives with partners like The Nature Conservancy "so that even more Hoosiers and our guests can enjoy Indiana's great outdoors."

But going into the week, there was no budget allocation for that—nor for expanding Indiana's trail system, which the governor had also proposed.

"There are both human and environmental benefits to the common good in supporting these efforts," said Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC. "This is not an extraordinary amount of funding for something that can have such a huge impact. From 2019 to 2020, trail usage in Indiana's state parks increased by 92%, so there clearly is demand."

During this legislative session, the ICC had also supported a measure that would offer greater tax relief for low- to moderate-income Hoosiers. House Bill 1290 proposed a number of changes to Indiana's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), including better aligning the state tax credit with the federal one, eliminating the current marriage penalty and extending credits for larger families, including those with foster children.

The bill, which the ICC considered a strong pro-family policy, passed the House unanimously but stalled in the Senate. Espada said she would like to see the issue revisited in the final days of the session.

"The Earned Income Tax Credit is something that would benefit so many people in our state," Espada said. "Every little bit helps, especially during a time when there has been record inflation. We hope that lawmakers will look at this and decide that they should give this additional relief to Hoosiers."

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.) †



'There are a number of states that within the last couple of years have passed universal choice legislation. Indiana historically has been a leader in school choice, but the Senate's version of the budget certainly didn't reflect continuing in that kind of leadership mode from a national perspective.'

—John Elcesser, executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association

St. Vincent de Paul Society and Bread for the World join to fight hunger

By Natalie Hoefer

Two organizations in the archdiocese recently joined forces to combat hunger.

One is the Society of St. Vincent de Paul-Indianapolis Archdiocesan Council, Inc. (SVdP), which, among other efforts, addresses hunger through food pantries.

The other is Bread for the World, a national Christian organization seeking to eradicate hunger in America in part through an annual letter-writing campaign to federal congressional leaders advocating for federally-funded food programs.

The idea of a partnership started with Steve Gillman, a volunteer for both



Steve Gillman

organizations. "Seeing the desire of the St. Vincent de Paul Society to do advocacy for the hungry, and seeing that Bread for the World is already doing that—instead of [SVdP] reinventing the wheel, why not partner with someone who already has that as their mission?" explains Gillman, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.

"I always get excited about St. Vincent de Paul food drives—that's good stuff," he says. "But food pantries only help one-sixth of those in need."

The other five-sixths are taken care of by government programs, he says, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Women/Infants/Children food program, free and reduced price lunches and more.

He formed a partnership plan and presented it to the SVdP council board. The idea was twofold: to have SVdP parish conferences offer Bread for the

World's existing educational and training programs in parishes to educate and raise awareness about the issue of hunger in the U.S., and to have conferences promote parish participation in Bread for the World's "Offering of Letters" letter-writing campaign.

The board approved the plan.

For 'our neighbors who have no voice'

SVdP president Paul Ainslie is excited about the potential of the partnership.

"We're supposed to be advocates for the poor," he said of the non-profit organization. "Feeding is good, but if we don't speak out for those who have little or no voice, we're not doing all we can."

"To meet that purpose of St. Vincent de Paul, it's necessary to advocate for social justice for those things that matter to our neighbors who have no voice. That's what Bread for the World is all about. They're an advocacy voice, and that's something that's hard to get started."

David Miner, a leader of Bread for the World in Indiana, is hopeful for the partnership, too.

The member of Central Christian Church in Indianapolis says Bread for the World "was founded by Catholics and Protestants together" as an ecumenical effort partnering with other Christian faith traditions.



Members from St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, including Andra Liepa, third from left in the front row, pose for a photo after attending a Bread for the World educational program at the parish on April 15, a fruit of the new partnership between Bread for the World and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul-Indianapolis Archdiocesan Council, Inc. (Submitted photo by Steve Gillman)

Miner says the Indiana leadership team "realized we don't have nearly as much Catholic partnership as one might expect, given the size of the Church."

"St. Vincent de Paul—which is in the trenches with people every day—they very much appreciate the importance of changing the system and speaking up for the hungry. But it wasn't convenient for them because they're more into direct services. Advocacy is what Bread for the World does, and we're able to help them do something they wanted to do."

About 15 parish SVdP conferences have agreed to participate in the partnership so far, says Gillman.

'A lot of people who go to bed hungry'

A vision of what the partnership in action could look like at the parish level is currently underway at St. Monica.

As a member of the parish's SVdP conference, Gillman is "contacting all of the parish ministries to encourage their members to write letters" through Bread for the World's annual letter-writing campaign, he says. "We'll also put notices in the bulletin and [parish] newsletter and share information through the school and Sunday school."

He also helped arrange for and promote a two-hour educational program by a Bread for the World team at the parish on April 15.

"It was a program educating people on poverty, what the current situation is and how we are called to act to address poverty," says parishioner Andra Liepa, who attended the session.

"We're the richest country in the world, but we still have a lot of people who go to bed hungry each night. The statistics in Indiana are pretty much the same as the national [statistics], so it hits very close to home."

Currently, one in nine people face food insecurity in Indiana, according to feedingamerica.org. The United States Department of Agriculture reports that 10.2% of households in America faced hunger at some point in 2021.

"If those people get food assistance through government programs, it frees up money for other basic needs," Liepa notes.

Miner adds that "this is a particularly important year" for people to advocate to their legislators for support of federal food programs "because the Farm Bill is up for reauthorization, and that includes all of the nutrition programs as well as some intervention programs."

By contacting legislators through Bread for the World's letter-writing campaign, says Liepa, "We're really trying to use our voice as citizens, as people who are represented by these legislators, to make sure that they know that we think the Farm Bill is very important and should be re-authorized."

'Changing the system we have in place'

Writing letters to those in Congress "can seem daunting," says Miner. But through Bread for the World's process "it takes about 10 minutes," he notes.



Members of St. Louis Parish in Pinecrest, Fla., participate in Bread for the World's annual Offering of Letters letter-writing campaign in 2020 advocating for federally funded food programs to help feed the hungry. (Photo courtesy of Bread for the World)

For in-person parish letter-writing campaigns, "They pre-print a standard form so you don't have to recopy the bill number, and they leave a big space to then customize the letter," he explains.

"We know form letters are largely disregarded by legislators, whereas a personal letter or phone call has way more impact."

"The blank part [of the letter] is the personal part—why I care about this issue, how [hunger has] impacted my family and so on. It's not like 'I'm a deep expert.' It's just 'why I'm concerned.'"

The letter writing is not just for adults, Liepa adds.

"Kids can draw pictures on what does it mean to have enough food or to be hungry or not hungry," she says. "It's something school kids or classes can do."

The letter-writing campaign typically runs in the spring through May 31, says Miner.

"But if a person or a parish can't do it in that time frame, it's OK to write in the summer or fall," he adds. A sample, modifiable letter can be found and printed from the Bread for the World website. The document includes a page with tips for the letter-writer and links to look up the person's legislator and contact information.

Gillman has high hopes for the SVdP/Bread for the World partnership.

"Ultimately," he says, "I hope it helps those dealing with hunger and living in poverty by changing the system we have in place."

(For more information about the partnership or Bread for the World's letter-writing campaign, contact Steve Gillman at Gillman.s.c@gmail.com or 317-370-4974. For more information on Bread for the World or the Farm Bill, go to bread.com.) †

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SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Although difficult, changes in parish life can lead to spiritual growth

(OSV News)—Whether we want to admit it or not, life is full of changes.

Some changes are easy, fun and helpful: trying a different hairstyle, buying a new car, learning a new skill, landing a new job.

Some changes challenge us—losing weight or quitting smoking—or transform us, like letting go of a grudge or adjusting our attitudes from negative to positive.

But one kind of change that many people can find difficult to accept is change in their parish. Large or small, changes in a parish can upset our spiritual and emotional equilibrium.

Maybe the current pastor is leaving. Maybe the church is undergoing renovations. Maybe Mass times are changing. Maybe the new music director is introducing new hymns. Maybe someone made a new rule or set up a different way of doing things. Maybe your parish is linking or clustering with other faith communities. Or maybe you've received the heartbreaking news that your parish will close—probably the hardest change of all to accept.

We normally “roll with the punches” when life sends us change, but changes in our parish affect us more deeply. We turn to the Church for comfort and stability when our lives are in turmoil. So, when the turmoil happens within our parish family, we can feel as if we've lost an anchor. None of us wants to lose the familiar. We fear the unknown, the areas outside of our spiritual and emotional comfort zone.

We often realize after the fact that change—as much as we may dislike it—can actually lead to spiritual growth. The question is how to work through the change to find that spiritual benefit.

Understanding change

Change involves letting go, moving through a transition and eventually adjusting to some new reality—emotional steps that are not unlike the grieving process.

Our initial reaction to a proposed change can be sharply negative. We may think the worst, wondering how something like this could happen.

As planning for the change begins, we begin to wonder how we might be affected by the change. We may feel angry or betrayed. We may try to think of ways to stop the change from happening. When the change actually takes place, our emotions shift again. We may have a sense of loss, experience a crisis of faith or lose heart.

Dealing with change

While it is important to recognize the emotions associated with change, no matter what we say or do, we're not likely to be able to stop it. So, rather than walk away from, fight or complain about the change, we might want to take a different approach: asking questions and listening to the answers with an open mind.



Maria Moreaux kneels in prayer in St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, N.Y. Prayer can be a helpful way for Catholics to cope with changes in their parishes and experience spiritual growth in them. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz, Long Island Catholic)

Why is the change necessary? When will it happen? How will it be implemented? What good things are expected from it? What new opportunities might it bring?

The answers to these questions might, in turn, bring about a shift in our perspective. What if I believed this change was good? How would a positive attitude affect my behavior? What can I do that's positive?

Change for the better: How to take positive action

—**Get involved**—When it became clear that a change in Mass schedule was needed, one parish asked everyone to vote on several options. The change was made in favor of the majority.

—**Incorporate the past into the present**—When a music minister found out that people were upset about the new music, he agreed to include an old favorite in every Mass.

—**Let go of the old**—Whether it's a change in pastor, a church remodeling, or a parish closing, many parishes plan a final Mass with a coffee social or reception to mark the passing from the old to the new. It allows people to talk about the past and how they plan to adjust in the future.

—**Preserve the past**—It's not uncommon when closing, merging, remodeling or constructing a new church for parishes to incorporate statues, stained-glass windows and other reminders of the past into future plans.

—**Make memories**—Create a memory book with photos and stories. The book can be kept in the parish library, posted on the parish website or reproduced so families can have a copy or given as a gift to the former pastor.

The spiritual side of change

Change awakens our trust in divine providence. St. Paul assures us that “all things work for good for those who love God” (Rom 8:28). Can we trust that God will make everything right? Can we believe that something good can come from this?

In times of change, we need to remember to ask not for what we want, but what God wants for us. Like Jesus, we may ask God to stop this from happening (Mt 26:39). But we must finish the prayer as Jesus did, by saying, “My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done” (Mt 26:42).

The fascinating thing about being open to God's will is that it allows the Holy Spirit to lead us in directions we would never have chosen for ourselves. We meet new people, learn something new or experience something unexpected.

Thus, change becomes our personal re-enactment of the paschal mystery. The hard reality is that, like Jesus, we must die to our former life before we can be raised to new life.

Praying through change

Prayer is the key that unlocks our resistance to change. Prayer shifts the burden of change into God's hands. It eases discomfort, erases fears and helps us see from a different perspective.

Prayer opens our minds, hearts and souls. Prayer gives God the opportunity to fill us with deep inner peace. It is a gift of grace from a loving God.

Through the miracle of grace, prayer changes our lives and touches the lives of people around us. Prayer instills in us an appreciation for the good things change brings and gratitude for the good things God continues to do for us. †



Worshippers fill St. Mary Church in Greensburg for its Aug. 13, 2016, dedication Mass. The new worship space incorporated various elements, including its stained-glass windows, from the Batesville Deanery faith community's previous church. (Criterion file photo by Sean Gallagher)

Corrections Corner/Deacon John Cord

Mission of Corrections Ministry continues to evolve

The original vision for the archdiocesan Corrections Ministry was created by Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin in 2015.



The vision included: working directly with the incarcerated; creating a system to help those returning to society to successfully re-integrate; assisting the families of the incarcerated while they were away in prison; and creating educational

information to be used in helping people involved in this ministry.

Archbishop Tobin also asked if some of the empty buildings owned by the archdiocese could be re-purposed into transitional housing or recovery housing.

The committee created to guide the ministry focused mostly on education for the past few years and had not progressed in the other areas.

Immediately after I started in this position in January, we held a Corrections Committee team meeting. We reviewed the original goals for the committee and reflected on our progress. The team realized that we had not grown a significant amount in the remaining areas.

We decided that we needed to know exactly who was involved in corrections ministries across the archdiocese before we could create an action plan to address

future growth. We created a survey and sent it out to all 126 parishes and to more than 450 individuals.

There are 39 jails in the archdiocese, including county jails, eight state correctional facilities and the federal prison in Terre Haute. From this survey, we learned that about 80 lay volunteers, 14 deacons and six priests regularly visit 14 of the 39 jails.

Of those 14 facilities, we do have lay people going into all eight of the state prisons and the federal prison on a regular basis.

In terms of priests, we learned that we have priests going into the federal prison and five of the state prisons regularly to celebrate Mass and hear confessions.

However, we have two state prisons where no priest has visited to hear confessions in 5-7 years. That number of state prisons was three, until Archbishop Charles C. Thompson's March 26 offering of Mass at the Plainfield Correctional Facility in March, with assistance from Deacon Martin "Neil" May of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield and Father Sean Danda of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg concelebrating the Mass and hearing confessions afterward. About 30 offenders attended the Mass. (See related article on page 1.)

Archbishop Thompson was also able to celebrate Mass on March 18 at the Putnamville Correctional Facility in Putnamville. Father John Hollowell of

Annunciation Parish in Brazil and St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle concelebrated the Mass, and Deacon Thomas Hosty of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis assisted. About 54 offenders attended the Mass. Father Hollowell stayed afterward to hear confessions.

We also learned from the survey that we do not have anyone who is helping people re-enter society in a systematic way, and we do not have anyone who is regularly working with the families of the incarcerated.

The committee is now working on a comprehensive plan for a re-entry model. We are hoping to launch a pilot program in partnership with the Indiana Department of Corrections this year. If this program is successful, we will need many volunteers as we expand across the archdiocese. Volunteers will be needed as case workers and mentors to work with men and women as they come back home.

If you feel called to corrections ministry, whether it be going into a jail or prison or working with those who are re-entering society, or working with the families of the incarcerated, please reach out to me.

(Deacon John Cord is the coordinator of Corrections Ministry for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. To volunteer in prison ministry, check with your parish office to see if a ministry already exists. If not, contact Deacon Cord at jcord@archindy.org.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Stories of ancestors are like the Bible of our families

Through the years, my boys have often asked me to tell them stories of the things I did when I was their age in the 1970s and 1980s. I've also shared with them stories about my dad growing up in



the 1940s and 1950s and my paternal grandfather (their great-grandfather) as he came of age about a century ago.

My youngest son Colin doesn't care if he's heard a story for the first time or the 100th. His older

brothers were the same.

There's something very human in desiring to hear such stories from the past. They point to an innate awareness in us that we are not alone but very much connected to others, including those who died long before we were born. They're a human longing for what we Catholics call the communion of the saints.

My sons have a real communion with my grandpa, Victor Gallagher, who died in 1989, 12 years before my wife Cindy and I were married and 13 years before our oldest son Michael was born.

The kinship they feel with him comes tangibly through them hearing so many stories that show forth his personality, his hard work as a farmer, the love he showed for his family and, most especially, for God and the Church.

This mental picture of Grandpa is taking on more flesh for them after we discovered in a box at home a handful of notebooks in which he kept a daily diary in the last decade of his life. The box came into our possession after my dad died about a year ago.

These diaries weren't deeply private affairs, but just short accounts of what Grandpa did from day to day—when he got up, what he had for breakfast, things he did during the day, scores of sports events he watched on TV, etc.

Grandpa had a stroke in 1973 that lessened his short-term memory, although his long-term memory remained sharp. His diary may have been an aid for him to remember what happened recently.

I knew of those diaries when I was a young boy and loved reading them. It made me feel like I was living right next to Grandpa all the time. Reading them now 33 years after he died renews my love for him and my admiration of his simple and steadfast holiness.

The Acts of the Apostles, which is a source of readings at Mass throughout the Easter season, is like the daily diary of the early Church.

When you hear passages from this book proclaimed at Mass or when prayerfully reading it on your own, let your heart and mind enter into the stories presented to you of the Apostles and those brought to faith in Christ through their preaching and witness.

When you do this, no matter how many times you may have heard these stories before, God's grace can build a strong spiritual kinship in you with these first believers from 2,000 years ago.

Then that grace will empower you to imitate—in whatever small or sometimes big way—the example of faith and loving sacrifice of the earliest Christians shared with us in Acts.

Seeing Acts in this way can be an invitation to look on the stories of our parents, grandparents and ancestors further in a new light. Grace can open our eyes to see deep meaning in the everyday witnesses of faith of our deceased loved ones.

God will work through this communion of the saints in our own families to draw us here and now closer to him, the Church and, ultimately, to the great reunion of our family of faith in heaven. †

Hispanic Ministry/Felix Navarrete

Jesus' resurrection is a sign of our true freedom

Alleluia! Christ is risen! Both are common phrases in this paschal time that Christians live. The experience of the risen becomes a cause of joy—joy manifested not only in the liturgy, but in the daily life of each of us whose hope is eternal life.



The Resurrection is also manifested in nature, in the sprouting of the trees and the blossoming of the fruits that paint our landscapes with beautiful colors, accompanied by a fresh dawn and the song of the creatures that inspired St. Francis of Assisi so much—even to the point of considering those beings as his brothers.

The fact that Christ has risen invites us to a process of personal renewal, where we have once again been set truly free, free from the yoke of the slavery of sin and from an eternal death sentence. Our freedom has been paid by a high cost; now it is up to us how to manage said freedom.

There is a modern phrase that says "Feel free to be" Although the context is full of positivity, the living out of the phrase could define the path for true freedom or lead us to a life of endless and excessive actions that take us more into slavery disguised as freedom. St. Augustine said, "Love God and do what you want." Although it offers a similar context and invite us to act freely, his statement prefaces a condition

See HISPANIC, page 14

Ministerio Hispano/Felix Navarrete

La resurrección de Jesús es un signo de nuestra verdadera libertad

¡Aleluya! Cristo resucitó! Las dos son frases muy comunes en este tiempo Pascual que vivimos los cristianos, la experiencia del resucitado se convierte en una causa de



júbilo y gozo manifestado no solamente en la liturgia sino en la vida cotidiana de cada uno de nosotros cuya esperanza es la vida eterna, la resurrección también se ve manifestada en la naturaleza, en el retoñar de los árboles y el florecer de los frutos que pintan nuestros paisajes de hermosos colores, acompañados de un fresco amanecer y el cántico de las criaturas que tanto inspiró a san Francisco de Asís, a tal punto de considerar a tales seres como hermanos suyos.

En realidad, el hecho de que Cristo haya resucitado nos invita a un proceso de renovación personal, en donde hemos vuelto a ser verdaderamente libres, liberados del yugo de la esclavitud del pecado y de una condena de muerte eterna, nuestra libertad ha sido pagada a un alto costo, ahora depende de nosotros como administrar dicha libertad.

Hay una frase muy moderna en nuestros tiempos que reza algo así "Siéntete libre de ser ..." Si bien el contexto está lleno de positivismo, el complemento de la frase podría definir el paso para una verdadera libertad o para una vida de interminables y desmedidas acciones que no nos llevarán más que a una esclavitud disfrazada de libertad. San Agustín citó "Ama a Dios y haz lo que quieras," si bien ambas tienen un contexto parecido y nos invitan a actuar libremente, la segunda antepone una condición que marca por completo una diferencia vital en nuestra búsqueda de la felicidad.

Amar a Dios además de ser nuestro primer mandamiento, involucra una cadena de acciones que generan muchas otras virtudes; es amando a Dios que renunciamos al orgullo y conocemos la humildad, es amando a Dios que nuestro egocentrismo se transforma en bien común, es amando a Dios que nuestra avaricia se convierte en obras de misericordia,

en fin, a medida que le amamos, nos parecemos más a Él, y nuestra verdadera humanidad se refleja, no como el mundo quiere que la reflejemos, sino como Dios lo pensó desde el momento de nuestra concepción.

Los seres humanos poseemos la capacidad de sentir, pensar y actuar de acuerdo con nuestro sano juicio e intelecto, y eso nos hace ser más humanos, y por ende más inteligentes que el resto de la creación, no obstante, en muchas ocasiones nuestras capacidades se ven empañadas por el orgullo y una sobre autoestima, desarrollando en una crisis de valores a nivel personal, afectando por ende a nuestro prójimo más cercano e inculcando antivalores en nuestro núcleo familiar.

San Francisco de Asís, entendió muy bien el concepto de libertad que nos propone San Agustín, el decidió amar a Dios y tomó sus decisiones, renunció a las comodidades de su familia, vendió sus posesiones para darle a los pobres y se adentró en una vida de pobreza y servicio hacia los demás, Francisco en realidad, resucitó con Cristo desde ese momento, transformándose por completo, liberándose de sus yugos y viviendo en plena y completa libertad material y espiritual.

A diferencia de Francisco, el pueblo de Israel luego de haber sido liberado de una esclavitud de cuatrocientos años y de haber celebrado la pascua, vagaron por el desierto cuarenta años más antes de entrar a la tierra prometida, por no haber escuchado la voz de Dios y renegar de las pruebas que atravesaban en el camino.

Jesús nos enseña que la victoria sobre nuestros instintos es lo que llamamos una verdadera libertad. La pascua en la que nos encontramos en estos días es una anticipación de lo que será nuestro encuentro con Dios, somos libres por la sangre de Cristo para hacer de nuestras vidas un nuevo capítulo, la forma en la que quieras escribirlo la decides tú. ¡Felices Pascuas!

(Felix Navarrete es el coordinador del Ministerio Hispano en el Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis.) †

Fourth Sunday of Easter/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, April 30, 2023

- Acts 2:14a, 36-41
- 1 Peter 2:20b-25
- John 10:1-10

Readings at Mass from the Acts of the Apostles frequently occur during the Easter season. They clearly give an overview of life in the earliest days of the Church and demonstrate the special place among the early Christians of the Apostles and St. Peter as their clear leader.



Acts always shows Peter—and only Peter—speaking on behalf of the Apostles. Such is the case in this weekend's first reading. Peter preaches. His sermon goes to the heart of the Gospel message. Jesus is Lord, the Savior. Christ came among humans as human, but also as God's own Son. He died. He rose. He reconciled humanity with almighty God.

Humans have an option. They can accept Jesus as Lord and follow the Gospel, or they can reject Jesus.

The author of Acts, traditionally believed also to have been the author of St. Luke's Gospel, dates the sermon. It was preached on Pentecost, a Jewish holiday. Jewish holidays celebrated God in relation with humans, especially with the Hebrew people.

At Pentecost, Jews celebrated their relationship with God. God initiated this relationship. It brought to the Jews his constant and uninterrupted mercy. So, the Jews rejoiced in their special relationship with God.

The First Epistle of St. Peter provides the second reading. Jesus died on the cross to link humanity forever and without qualification with God. Individuals affirm this reconciliation for themselves by freely accepting Jesus as Lord and by living as the Lord's true disciples.

St. John's Gospel provides the last reading. It explores a theme that was among the Lord's favorites, and that always has been beloved by Christians, namely the theme of the Good Shepherd.

Today in this country, this imagery

may not be so revealing. Many Americans live in urban settings far from rural settings where sheep are raised. Shepherding is not that often a livelihood in America. But at the time of Jesus in the Holy Land, everyone would have been familiar with shepherds and sheep.

The nature of sheep is important. They are docile and quiet, vulnerable to predators such as wolves. They need their shepherds. Also, young sheep or lambs were the preferred animals for sacrifice in the temple because lambs were gentle and innocent. The meat of lambs was ritually prepared for the Passover meal.

Sheep may wander. The shepherd does not tie them to himself. He leads them, but they can turn away from him.

The Gospel's message is clear. All humans are apt to stray into danger, as sheep stray when they drift away from the shepherd.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, leading us to pastures rich with nutrition, protecting us from the predators that prowl in search of us, predators that literally kill us by succeeding in tempting us to sin.

Reflection

Several weeks have passed since Easter, but the Church still rejoices in the risen Lord. He lives! Giving us words once preached by Peter, it calls us to repent, to turn away from sin and to turn to the only source of life, the Lord Jesus.

Preparing us for this message, the Church frankly reminds us of who and what we are. We are as vulnerable as sheep. Predators lurk on every side, waiting to assail us. The devil is the most vicious and crafty of these predators. The devil draws us to sin. Sin brings death.

Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He leads us to the nourishment that we need for spiritual health. He guides us to the eternal pasture of heaven.

The essence of this weekend's message is clear and simple. We need the Lord. Otherwise, we shall die. We have a choice: follow the Lord or go our own way, just as sheep may wander. But if we turn from Jesus, we flirt with disaster. †

Daily Readings

Monday, May 1

St. Joseph the Worker
Acts 11:1-18
Psalm 42:2-3; 43:3-4
John 10:11-18

Tuesday, May 2

St. Athanasius, bishop and doctor of the Church
Acts 11:19-26
Psalm 87:1-7
John 10:22-30

Wednesday, May 3

St. Philip, Apostle
St. James, Apostle
1 Corinthians 15:1-8
Psalm 19:2-5
John 14:6-14

Thursday, May 4

Acts 13:13-25
Psalm 89:2-3, 21-22, 25, 27
John 13:16-20

Friday, May 5

Acts 13:26-33
Psalm 2:6-11
John 14:1-6

Saturday, May 6

Acts 13:44-52
Psalm 98:1-4
John 14:7-14

Sunday, May 7

Fifth Sunday of Easter
Acts 6:1-7
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19
1 Peter 2:4-9
John 14:1-12

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Prenuptial agreement can be evidence that a marriage is sacramentally invalid

QA friend is in a relationship where his fiancée won't sign a prenuptial agreement because she thinks it would make the marriage invalid. It could be grounds for annulment. "For richer and for poorer," etc. What is the canonical opinion here? (Australia)



AWhen we speak about a prenuptial agreement, or a "prenup," generally we're talking about a secular civil law agreement made prior to a marriage, one that details how the individual spouses' resources are to be shared or not shared.

Although laws can vary slightly within the United States, for the most part the presumption is that the spouses combine their resources upon marrying, meaning if the parties were to divorce, one spouse might be legally entitled to property that originally belonged entirely to the other.

Since, as Catholics, we believe that marriage is for life, obviously the Church does not recommend having a prenuptial agreement, which seems like a pre-plan

for an eventual divorce.

However, by itself a prenuptial agreement is not grounds for a declaration of nullity from a Church marriage tribunal, and having a prenuptial agreement does not automatically make a marriage invalid.

In fact, there can be some entirely legitimate reasons why a couple might have a prenuptial agreement. For example, if an older widowed couple marries, they might have a prenuptial agreement in place to ensure that their respective children receive

their proper inheritances. A prenuptial agreement might also be helpful in clarifying exactly who owns what in a multi-generational family farm or business, especially one in which multiple siblings have a stake.

Still, if a divorced couple with a prenuptial agreement were to present their case before a diocesan marriage tribunal, the exact terms and circumstances of the agreement can often be of great interest to the tribunal judges. Even if a prenuptial agreement is not a direct cause of nullity, it can be a "symptom" of a larger (and invalidating) problem within the union.

An example is the ground of partial simulation, "*contra bonum sacramenti*," often translated into English as "against the good of permanence." This describes a situation where one of the spouses, even if they outwardly promised a lifelong marital commitment at the altar, always intended to allow themselves the possibility of leaving the union. (See canon 1101, 1.)

Similarly, but less commonly, one or both spouses might have been genuinely mistaken about the fundamental nature of marriage as a permanent union in such a way that they never intended to enter into an unbreakable life-long bond. (See canon 1099.)

A prenuptial agreement which was clearly intended to facilitate an easy civil divorce could be a convincing piece of supporting evidence for grounds such as these.

Additionally, it could also happen that someone might attempt to marry in a contingent way, for instance by saying: "I will marry you, but for only as long as you remain fit and attractive" or, "I will only consider myself married to you if we are able to have a big family." In canon law, this is called "marriage subject to a future condition," and such attempted marriages are always invalid. (See canon 1102, 1.) If the future condition in question was spelled out in a civil prenuptial agreement, this would indeed be a very strong sign of the nullity of the marriage.

Ultimately, just because something doesn't automatically make a potential marriage invalid doesn't mean it's the best thing for fostering a healthy marital relationship. If one party is proposing a prenuptial agreement and the other is uncomfortable with this, it's important to have a pastoral conversation about everyone's feelings, expectations and intentions.

(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.) †

Mother General visits Indianapolis



In an April 15 visit to the Little Sisters of the Poor's St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis, Mother General Maria Auxiliadora del Monte, a native of Spain and the worldwide superior of the Little Sisters of the Poor, greets Catherine Matarazzo, a resident of the home. Mother General Maria visited the St. Augustine Home while on a trip to the U.S. to visit nursing homes and retirement facilities operated by the order. (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.

ADAMS, George R., 79, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, April 6. Husband of Patricia Adams. Father of Steve Adams. Grandfather of four.

BELL, Michael, 51, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, April 5. Husband of Artina Bell. Brother of Angela Reed, Juliana Wilson and John Bell. Uncle of several.

BOWMAN, Charlene E., 79, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, April 12. Mother of Caroline Reeves. Sister of David Wolker. Grandmother of two.

CARSON, Phyllis A., 85, All Saints Parish, Dearborn County, April 11. Mother of Julie Kern, Janna Stonebraker, James and John Carson. Sister of Ruth Back and Darlene

Phillips. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of nine.

CLARK, Dorothy A., 74, St. Jude, Indianapolis, April 8. Mother of Denise Shank, Dana and David Clark. Sister of Kathleen Babinski, Tracey Campbell, Paula McAfee, Margaret Rodenhiser and Albert Johnson. Grandmother of four.

ECKERT, Judy D., 57, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, April 10. Wife of Mike Eckert. Mother of Emily and Benjamin Eckert. Daughter of Ben Hurst. Sister of Brad, Brian and Scott Hurst.

FLYNN, Stephen V., 57, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 30. Husband of Shannon Flynn. Father of Brigid and Patrick Flynn. Brother of Sue Hambrick, Sharon Smith, Mary, Dan, David, John and Matt Flynn. Uncle of several.

GEIS, Carolyn, 87, St. Gabriel, Connersville, March 30. Mother of Mary Godar, Janet Miller, Audrey Snyder, Donna Templeton and Jerome Geis. Sister of Joseph Cook. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of six.

HOLIDAY, Steven K., 61, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, April 11. Husband of Nancy Holiday. Father of Christina Smith and Jeffrey Holiday. Brother of Sarah Holiday, Jami Snawder, and Shannon, Brad and Jeff Hinton. Grandfather of two.

KELLY, Barbara, 64, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, April 9. Sister of Bill, Bob and Tom Levell. Aunt of several.

KERR, John R., 97, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, April 14. Father of Paula, Brian and Christopher Kerr.

Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of five.

MARTIN GASPAR, Domingo A., infant, St. Ambrose, Seymour, April 2. Son of Pascual Martin and Apolonia Gaspar. Brother of Maria J., Maria M. and Daisey Gaspar.

PEAK, Jr., Louis L., 65, St. Mary, New Albany, April 3. Father of Eileen Javed, Marie and Matthew Peak. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of one.

PLUCHAR, Charles, 92, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, April 11. Husband of Joan Pluchar. Father of Rosanne Eichholtz, Theresa Langsenkamp, Michael and Tom Pluchar. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of seven.

POZEK, Janko, 88, St. Jude, Indianapolis, April 13. Husband of Josefina Pozek. Father of Katrina Matthews and Angi Sullivan. Brother of Mayda and Slavica Pozek. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of three.

ROBERTS, Kenneth W., 73, Immaculate Conception, Millhousen, April 13. Husband of Mary Roberts. Father of Michelle Brogan and Cynthia Roberts. Brother of Charles and James Roberts. Grandfather of two.

ROEHLING, Sandra, 77, St. Jude, Indianapolis, April 12. Wife of Edward Roehling. Mother of Melissa McGrath, Kris, Dennis and Jerry Roehling. Sister of Ginny Powers and Mike Harms. Grandmother of 16.

VOGEL, Jim, 41, St. Ambrose, Seymour, April 2. Son of Joyce Vogel. Brother of Jennifer and Matthew Vogel. Grandson of Patricia Stout. †

St. Joseph the Worker



A statue of St. Joseph and Jesus as a young child stands in the Shrine of St. Joseph in Spencer County. Located along the banks of the Anderson River, the shrine belongs to Saint Meinrad Archabbey in nearby St. Meinrad. The shrine was dedicated in 1949. Its wooden statue was carved by Benedictine Brother Herman Zwirger, a monk of Saint Meinrad. The Church celebrates the memorial of St. Joseph the Worker on May 1. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Franciscan Sister Rachel Lindenmaier ministered in Catholic schools for 33 years

Franciscan Sister Rachel Mary Lindenmaier, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg, died on April 7 at Christ Hospital in Cincinnati. She was 86.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 13 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Rachel was born on June 20, 1936, in Indianapolis. While growing up there, she attended St. Roch School, the former Sacred Heart of Jesus School and the former St. John Academy.

Sister Rachel joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 8, 1955, and professed final vows in on Aug. 12, 1961. She earned a bachelor's degree in education at Marian University in Indianapolis.

During 67 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Rachel ministered in Catholic education and other educational

settings for 33 years in Indiana and Ohio. Her ministry also included domestic work for the elderly, media ministry with *St. Anthony Messenger* in Cincinnati, promoting vocations with the Franciscans of the St. John the Baptist Province in Cincinnati and as a housekeeping supervisor at the motherhouse.

In the archdiocese, Sister Rachel served at St. Gabriel School in Connersville from 1959-64, St. Lawrence School in Lawrenceburg from 1970-71, the former Sacred Heart School in Clinton from 1975-76, and in Indianapolis at the former St. Rita School from 1976-80 and at St. Christopher School from 1980-84.

She is survived by her twin sister, Franciscan Sister Evelyn Lindenmaier of Oldenburg, and a brother, Norbert Lindenmaier of Indianapolis.

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

Franciscan Sister Sharon Sheridan served in Catholic schools and family life ministry

Franciscan Sister Sharon Sheridan, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg, died at the motherhouse on March 28. She was 91.

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

Sister Sharon was born on Nov. 13, 1931, in Indianapolis, where she grew up as a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish.

Sister Sharon joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 8, 1950, and professed final vows in on Aug. 12, 1956. She earned a bachelor's degree in education at Marian

University in Indianapolis and a master's degree in educational administration at St. Louis University in St. Louis.

She served in Catholic schools in Indiana, Missouri and Ohio and in family life ministry in Michigan and West Virginia.

In the archdiocese, Sister Sharon served in archdiocesan offices from 1972-76, at St. Louis School in Batesville from 1977-81, at St. Monica School and at Marian University, both in Indianapolis, from 1983-84, and again at Marian University from 2000-04 and 2008-09.

She is survived by a sister, Connie Lane.

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:

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

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

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

1 Ethics Point
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810

2 Victim Assistance Coordinator, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410

317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

HISPANIC

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that completely makes a vital difference in our pursuit of happiness.

Loving God, in addition to being the first commandment, involves a chain of actions that generate many other virtues; it is by loving God that we renounce pride and know humility; it is by loving God that our egocentrism becomes a common good; it is by loving God that our greed becomes works of mercy. Finally, to the extent that we love him, we are more like him, and our true humanity is reflected, not as the world wants us to reflect it, but as God intended from the moment of our conception.

Human beings have the ability to feel, think and act in accord with sound judgment and intellect and that make us more human and therefore more intelligent than the rest of creation. However, on many occasions, our capabilities are tarnished by pride and excessive self-esteem, developed in a crisis of values on a personal level, therefore, affecting our closest neighbor and instilling anti-values in our family.

St. Francis of Assisi understood very well the concept of freedom that St. Augustine proposed. He decided to love God in making his decisions, gave up the comforts of his family, sold his possessions to give to the poor and entered a life of poverty and service to others. Francis actually rose with Christ from that moment, transforming himself completely, freeing himself from his yokes and living in full and complete material and spiritual freedom.

Unlike St. Francis, the people of Israel, after being freed from a slavery of 400 years and having celebrated the Passover, wandered through the desert for 40 more years before entering the promised land because they did not listen to the voice of God and renounced the tests they went through on the way.

Jesus teaches us that the victory over our instincts is what we call true freedom. The Easter season in which we find ourselves is an anticipation of what our encounter with God will be like. We are free by the blood of Christ to begin a new chapter of our lives. The way you author it is up to you. Happy Easter!

(Felix Navarette is archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic Ministry.) †

Investing with Faith/Kimberly Pohovey

Blending charitable gifts allows donors to make a greater impact

If you've ever played an instrument or sung in a group, you know that good music doesn't just happen. It takes



hard work to keep everybody together and maintain the balance between parts just right. And even if all the singers have beautiful solo voices, they must learn to listen to each other to

produce a sound that blends their individual talents into a choir. A similar approach can help people reach their financial, tax, estate planning and charitable giving goals.

"Blended gifts" allow donors to reach meaningful charitable and life goals without depleting any single source of their wealth. Simply put, a blended gift allows a donor to make a gift today for current needs, as well as a planned gift for the future.

Usually, a smaller immediate cash gift is combined with a gift of stock,

retirement funds or life insurance designated to be given later through a bequest, trust or another planned gift vehicle. In this way, resources that may be needed in the future can be designated for charity but kept available during the life of the donor or other beneficiary.

The benefits of blended gifts are numerous. Giving in more than one way increases the overall impact of your giving while preserving your wealth for your own needs and those of your family.

For those who need an additional source of income

Setting up a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder unitrust can provide ongoing income to you along with support for the causes you care about. What goes into an annuity or trust isn't limited to cash. So, it's possible to conserve more liquid assets while being as generous as you want to be.

For those who already give monetary gifts

A blended approach to giving means a donor can make modest monetary

gifts now and put a plan into place that will benefit the mission of the Church in a more significant way later, when funds are no longer needed. Charitable bequests, annuities or trusts can help you take advantage of tax benefits now and keep more of what you have saved for the things that are most important to you.

For those who have already implemented a planned gift

If you've included charitable initiatives in your will or created another planned gift, you can begin to see the impact of your generosity today by adding outright gifts of cash, securities or perhaps a gift from your IRA or donor-advised fund. But there are also potential benefits of doing so for you. A monetary gift may help you benefit from an income tax deduction. Giving stock or other appreciated investments to qualified charitable initiatives means you'll avoid capital gains taxes. A gift of stock or other investments can lower both income and capital gains tax liability.

There are many ways to give—both

now and in the future. Blended gifts use a variety of vehicles to create a strategy for giving that combines the strengths each one offers. And that can be beautiful music indeed, especially for those in need.

If you are exploring ways to make a significant gift to the Church's mission in central and southern Indiana today and tomorrow, or would like to consider how a blended gift might help you give more than you thought possible, contact the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation at 317-236-1568 or ccf@archindy.org. We're here to help.

(Kimberly Pohovey is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese. Tax or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice. Always consult with your legal, tax or financial advisors before implementing any gift plan. If you would like to learn more about including your parish in your estate plans, please contact us any time. We exist to exclusively serve you and your parish in planned giving.) †

Supreme Court blocks lower court's restrictions on abortion pill, leaving drug on the market during litigation

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—The U.S. Supreme Court said on April 21 it would block a lower court's restrictions on the abortion drug mifepristone, leaving it on the market while litigation over the drug proceeds.

The Supreme Court froze a lower court's ruling to stay the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) approval of the drug. The Justice Department and Danco Laboratories, a pharmaceutical company that manufactures the abortion pill mifepristone, previously asked the U.S. Supreme Court to intervene in the case after an appeals court allowed portions of the ruling by U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk in Texas to take effect.

The order was a 7-2 vote, with Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito publicly dissenting.

A coalition of pro-life opponents of mifepristone, the first of two drugs used in a medication or chemical abortion, had filed suit in an effort to revoke the FDA's approval of the drug, arguing the government violated its own safety standards when it first approved the drug in 2000. However, proponents argued mifepristone poses statistically little risk to women using it for abortion early in pregnancy, and claim the drug is being singled out for political reasons. The Supreme Court's decision maintains the *status quo* while the case plays out.

In an April 21 statement, President Joe Biden said he would continue "to stand

by FDA's evidence-based approval of mifepristone, and my administration will continue to defend FDA's independent, expert authority to review, approve and regulate a wide range of prescription drugs.

"The stakes could not be higher for women across America. I will continue to fight politically-driven attacks on women's health," Biden said. "But let's be clear—the American people must continue to use their vote as their voice, and elect a Congress who will pass a law restoring the protections of *Roe v. Wade*."

Erik Baptist, senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom, which represented the groups challenging the FDA's approval of mifepristone, said in a statement that, "As is common practice, the Supreme Court has decided to maintain the *status quo* that existed prior to our lawsuit while our challenge to the FDA's illegal approval of chemical abortion drugs and its removal of critical safeguards for those drugs moves forward.

"Our case seeking to put women's health above politics continues on an expedited basis in the lower courts," Baptist said. "The FDA must answer for the damage it has caused to the health of countless women and girls and the rule of law by failing to study how dangerous the chemical abortion drug regimen is and unlawfully removing every meaningful safeguard, even allowing for mail-order abortions. We look forward to a final

outcome in this case that will hold the FDA accountable."

In an April 22 statement, Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Va., chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, called the Supreme Court's interim order "a tremendous disappointment, both for the loss of innocent preborn life from chemical abortion, and for the danger that chemical abortion poses to women.

"It is wrong to allow the FDA's greatly diminished health and safety standards for mifepristone to remain in place," the bishop said. "The FDA acted unlawfully when it first approved—and later relaxed safety requirements for prescribing and dispensing the drug. It is our hope and prayer that the Court will eventually overturn the FDA's improper actions."

Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life of America, said in a statement that it is "a tragedy that the Supreme Court is allowing chemical abortion pills to stay on the market without the health and safety standards put in place in 2000 to protect women from injury, infertility, death and abusers who use the drugs on mothers without their knowledge or consent."

Hawkins argued that weakened medical standards "favor abortion industry interests."

A federal appeals court on April 12 blocked portions of Kacsmaryk's ruling suspending the FDA's approval of mifepristone, ruling that the drug can remain on the market, but under more strict regulations while amid a legal challenge to that approval.

"The district court countermanded a scientific judgment FDA has maintained across five administrations; nullified the approval of a drug that has been safely used by millions of Americans over more than two decades; and upset reliance interests in a healthcare system that depends on the availability of mifepristone as an alternative to

surgical abortion for women who choose to lawfully terminate their early pregnancies," the Justice Department wrote in its filing with the high court.

A three-judge panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed on April 12 to temporarily block Kacsmaryk's Good Friday ruling that suspended the FDA's approval of mifepristone.

However, the appeals court, in its 2-1 decision, also permitted other portions of that ruling to take effect, rolling back FDA rules revised in 2016 and 2021 on a drug the agency originally approved in 2000. Those rules permitted mifepristone's usage up to 10 weeks of pregnancy rather than the original seven weeks, and permitted its distribution by mail.

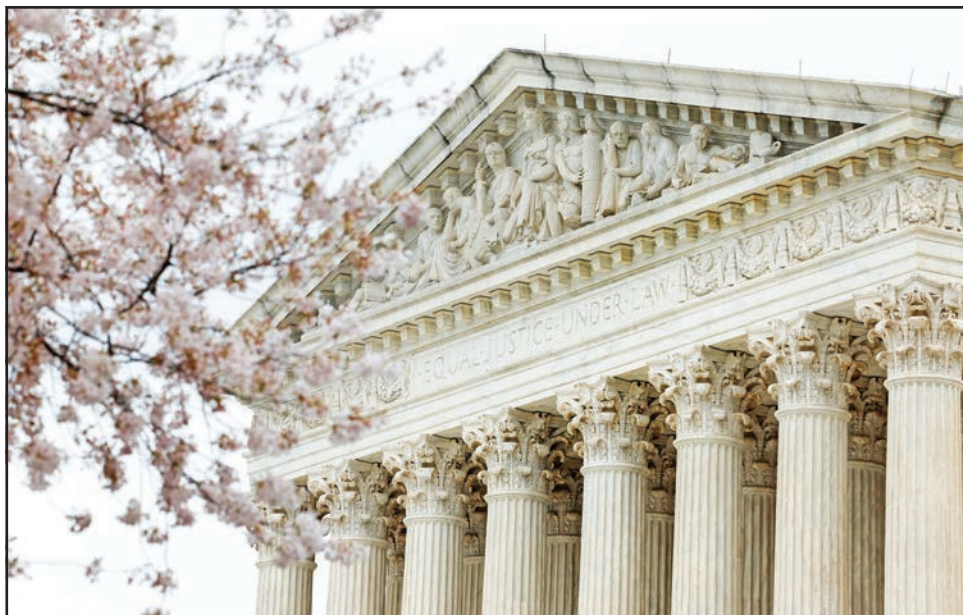
On April 19, GenBioPro, which makes the generic version of mifepristone, sued the FDA in an attempt to block it from complying if the courts ultimately pull the drug off the market, adding another layer to the legal battle over the drug's use.

Separate state lawsuits may also impact whether the drug remains on the market as well, as Washington state seeks to block the Texas ruling. GenBioPro has also sued West Virginia over its ban on mifepristone, arguing it violates the commerce clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Responding to the Supreme Court's April 21 decision, Bishop Burbidge's statement said, "Abortion is never the answer for a difficult or unintended pregnancy, as it always ends one life and risks another. Meaningful compassion for both mothers and children is needed.

"We will continue to advocate for policies that put women and families first, serve women in need, and pray for the day when ending the lives of preborn children will become unthinkable," he added.

With the Supreme Court's decision, this case returns to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which is scheduled to hear arguments on May 17. †



The U.S. Supreme Court building is seen in Washington on March 27. On April 21, the U.S. Supreme Court blocked a lower court's stay of FDA approval of a drug used in medication abortions. Mifepristone remains on the market while litigation over the drug proceeds. (OSV News photo/Evelyn Hockstein, Reuters)

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Progress made protecting minors, but adults remain vulnerable to abuse

(OSV News)—The Catholic Church in the U.S. has made progress during the past two decades in confronting sexual abuse against minors within the Church, but has only begun to address the vulnerability of adults to sexual abuse by clergy, religious and lay leaders, experts told OSV News.

“We’ve accomplished a tremendous amount in the area of [creating] safe environments,” said Suzanne Healy, chairwoman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) National Review Board, a lay-led group that advises the bishops on preventing sexual abuse of minors.

At the same time, “there’s still a lot more work to be done” in extending safeguards to adults, said Healy, a licensed marriage and family therapist who served as the victim assistance coordinator for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles from 2007 to 2016.

At present, two key documents lay out broad protocols for the response of the Catholic Church in the U.S. to sexual abuse by its clergy, religious and other pastoral leaders.

In 2002, as a number of clerical abuse scandals emerged, the U.S. Catholic bishops implemented the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.” The document—commonly called the Dallas Charter—lays out a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. The charter also includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of abuse.

A year after the charter’s most recent revision in 2018, Pope Francis issued the motu proprio “*Vox Estis Lux Mundi*” (“You are the light of the world”), outlining global legal procedures for how the Church should deal with clergy sexual abuse, including procedures for investigating bishops.

The document, implemented for a three-year experimental period beginning on June 1, 2019, included the term “vulnerable person,” defined as “any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offense.”

On March 25, Pope Francis published an updated version with the specific term “vulnerable adults,” without altering the previous definition. The revised text also was broadened to include investigations of leaders of Vatican-recognized international Catholic lay associations and movements.

Protecting vulnerable adults represents “a new frontier” for the Catholic Church, said Deacon Bernard Nojadera, executive director of the USCCB’s Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection.

“The landscape is continually changing,” he told OSV News. “You’re looking at issues such as power differentials among adults, the relationships of those who are in positions of authority, the responsibilities for creating boundaries so that relationships that develop are healthy and holy.”

Pastoral counseling and spiritual direction are particular areas of concern where adults are vulnerable, explained Deacon Nojadera.

Counseling professionals are aware of the potential for human weaknesses on both sides to derail appropriate interactions—a dynamic known as “transference and countertransference,” Deacon

Nojadera explained—with client and counselor at risk of projecting unmet needs upon each other. However, Deacon Nojadera stressed, “The counselor or director needs to set that boundary, regardless of the vulnerable adult.”

In the U.S., professional counselors and therapists face criminal and civil penalties for sexualizing a relationship with a patient; increasingly state jurisdictions are updating laws to explicitly include clergy as well.

In January 2018, then-Father Jacob Bertrand of the Diocese of San Diego was convicted under a Minnesota state law of sexually abusing a woman who placed herself in his spiritual care.

According to *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, Bertrand’s “holy conversations” led to a sexual relationship he told his victim was “the second holiest sacrifice next to Jesus and Mary on Calvary.”

Many Church jurisdictions have yet to adopt the standard set by Archbishop Charles Scicluna, a key figure in the Church’s fight against clergy sexual abuse, for the Maltese Ecclesiastical Province. The archbishop of Malta also is adjunct secretary of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Those 2014 directives make clear that sexual contact or sexualized behavior between a “pastoral functionary” (including any bishop, cleric, religious or lay person) and adults in a pastoral relationship “is considered to be always abusive, whether with or without consent.”

Similar to the Minnesota law, the 2014 Maltese directives recognize the clergy are responsible for maintaining boundaries in their pastoral relationships, and prohibit a defense alleging the sexual relationship was consensual.

Reporting and information sharing regarding allegations of the sexual abuse of adults within the Church remains inconsistent and often murky, said Kathy Kane, editor of *Catholics4Change*, which describes itself as an “accountability blog” focusing on child protection issues in the Catholic Church.

Sara Larson, executive director of AWAKE Milwaukee, an independent nonprofit that supports those who have experienced sexual abuse within the Catholic Church, made a similar point.

“We know there have been a number of investigations under the ‘Vos Estis’ norms, but there is still very little transparency about even which investigations are ongoing, and what the results of the completed ones are,” she told OSV News. “The reality is that there’s been some positive progress in terms of accountability for bishops, but we still have a system where we’re asking bishops to police other bishops, specifically those who are located close to them and often have personal relationships with them. That’s a system that in itself lacks the kind of transparency and accountability we need.”

“I have heard anecdotally of cases where priests ... who are facing allegations of abuse of adults are removed with a false explanation given to their parishes for their absence,” added Larson. “They’re simply put on ‘medical leave’ or moved to another parish with no explanation.”

Both Larson and Kane cited instances where priests under investigation for alleged sexual abuse of adults have continued in ministry with a public character. Larson pointed to concerns over Jesuit Father Marko Rupnik, accused of abusing women



A child is pictured drawing during a therapy session in this file photo. (OSV News photo/Dylan Martinez, Reuters)

religious but reported by Italian media in March to have concelebrated a Mass in Rome that, though ostensibly private, was nonetheless open to the public.

Kane noted the case of former Philadelphia priest Kevin McGoldrick, now a defendant, along with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, in an April 18 civil lawsuit filed by “Jane Doe,” who claims McGoldrick abused and raped her during his tenure as a chaplain at Aquinas College in Nashville, Tenn.

Even after Doe advised the Archdiocese of Philadelphia of the alleged abuse, McGoldrick—a singer-songwriter—appeared at a family music festival in the Diocese of Duluth, Minn.

“When you have a man onstage headlining a music festival, singing the ‘Sesame Street’ theme song while he’s under investigation for the alleged assault of a college student, how is this progress?” asked Kane.

A national database tracking reports of abuse investigations and their outcomes in the Catholic Church throughout the U.S. could help dioceses and other Catholic entities be aware of red flags about clergy, religious or lay leaders from outside their jurisdiction, particularly those who may have responsibilities or roles in multiple organizations.

Mike McDonnell, communications manager for SNAP (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests), told OSV News that a national database would greatly enhance transparency while improving protections for both minors and adults.

“A national database hosted by the USCCB, with oversight by a third party, would absolutely be a great tool,” he said.

“Each diocese would then have the opportunity to say, ‘We cannot take this cleric or professional, because we see there were reports of concerns in the home diocese.’”

Preventing and addressing abuse, while ensuring the healing and affirmation of survivors, is a task for all Catholics, said the National Review Board’s Healy.

“This is not just for the bishops or the people working in the diocese,” she said. “The whole Church needs to be open to this work, helping to create and adhere to policies, saying something when you see something amiss, and helping survivors to heal by believing, affirming and accompanying them.” †

Silence, prayer and tradition of faith nurture Black vocations, religious says

(OSV News)—Black Catholic religious vocations emerge from a long tradition of faith, nurtured by silence and prayer within the life of



Venerable Augustus Tolton

the Church, said a religious sister at an event dedicated to those vocations.

“I stand on the shoulders of giants. ... Vocations grow; they don’t just happen,” said Sister Mary Francis Bard, a member of the Sisters of the Holy Family, in an April 23 reflection

for the National Day of Prayer for Black Vocations.

The online gathering was sponsored by the National Black Catholic Seminarians Association (NBCSA), which established the observance in 2010. Founded in 1970, the nonprofit NBCSA, an affiliate of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, supports Black Catholic seminarians preparing for priesthood and religious life in the U.S.

The day of prayer is annually held on the Sunday closest to the ordination anniversary of Venerable Augustus Tolton (1854-1897), a former slave who became the first known Black Catholic priest from the United States. Rejected by Catholic seminaries in the U.S. because of his race, Tolton entered formation at the Pontifical Collegium Urbanum de Propaganda Fide in Rome, and was ordained there in 1886 at St. John Lateran Basilica. He returned to the U.S. to serve in Chicago.

Father Tolton’s parents, both Catholic, were instrumental in fostering his faith—particularly his mother, Martha Jane, who was left to raise Tolton and his siblings after his father died while serving in the Union Army during the Civil War.

“[Religious vocations] come from families,” said Sister Mary Francis, the first woman religious invited to address the annual prayer gathering. “Nobody has a perfect family, but [vocations] come from families.”

In addition, vocations derive “from vibrant parishes and dynamic schools, colleges and universities,” said Sister Mary

Francis, who serves at the New Orleans motherhouse of the Sisters of the Holy Family, a historically Black religious community.

“All vocations are born out of prayer,” she said, including the “prayers from a mother or a blessed grandmother and even a trusted friend—a simple, cherished prayer that we remain faithful to our God and faithful to our Church.”

Both “sacred Scripture and the lives of the saints confirm that God calls all kinds of people” to religious life, regardless of skin color, she stressed.

“I refuse to believe God does not call people that look like me,” said Sister Mary Francis, who is Black. She said she had encountered individuals in religious life who “didn’t know any African American nuns or African American priests or sisters or brothers.”

According to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University in Washington, only 4% of the ordination class of 2022 in the U.S. were Black, African or African American. A CARA study from 2021 estimated just 4% of women and

men entering religious life in the U.S. since 2005 were Black or African, with the majority—82%—having been born overseas.

Sister Mary Francis is considered to be the only living person from her native Kentucky area to enter a historically Black religious community. Her congregation was founded by Venerable Henriette Delille (1813-1862), a free woman of color who was born and raised in New Orleans.

Discerning a religious vocation requires a willingness to cultivate stillness and a humble openness to hearing from God, said Sister Mary Francis.

“You hear God in the quiet,” she said, describing how her own recognition of a call came amid an extended vacation to the African nation of Cameroon.

“I was in a cocoa field, being a typical ‘First World’ woman complaining about nothing,” she admitted. “And you know what God told me? You’re not getting married. ... You’re going to serve your people and you’re going to serve my people. And I’m going to show you that I will be enough.” †