



The

Criterion

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Christmas 'tree-ts' to behold

Catholic agencies and entities are represented in this year's "Festival of Trees," page 7.

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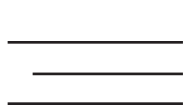
The smiles and the flamingo-designed bowling shirts that connect teammates Emily Mastronicola, left, Jeffrey Brown, Rachel Gilman, Kyle Ginty and Mike O'Connell are striking examples of the fun and joy that marked the IndyCatholic's young adult bowling league this fall. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Alley-Lujahs! Young adult bowling league rolls a strike for faith, fun and friendship

By John Shaughnessy

No matter how you frame it, the one thing that strikes you first about IndyCatholic's bowling league is the joy that the young adults get from being part of it—a joy that is reflected in many of the fun names they have chosen for their teams:

Spare Us, O Lord
Can't Believe It's Not Gutter



Split Happens
We've Been Framed
The Rolly Sacraments
Who You Calling Pinhead?
Bowling in the Deep

Living on a Spare
Ten Pin Commandments
Alley-Lujahs

The list goes on, as does the fun of sharing an evening of friendship and bowling among 30 teams—involving 179 young adults—at Woodland Bowl in Indianapolis.

"I'm not a great bowler, but I'm here meeting new people," said Nick Susemichel, a 23-year-old graduate of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis who earned his master's degree in civil engineering from Purdue University last spring.



See **BOWLING**, page 8

Christ the King triumphs over evil with the power of love, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—While world events can seem chaotic, violent and out of control, Christians can be certain that "everything is ultimately subject to the judgment of Christ, the just and merciful king," Pope Francis said at Mass.



Pope Francis

"Those who destroy people, who make wars, what will their faces look like when they come before the Lord? 'Why did you make that war? Why did you kill?' [God will ask]. And they, how will they reply?" the pope said on Nov. 24, the feast of Christ the King.

The Mass in St. Peter's Basilica also marked the local celebration of World Youth Day (WYD). Fifteen young people from Portugal, where the international celebration of WYD was held in 2023, and 15 from South Korea, where the global gathering for WYD will be held in 2027, joined the pope for the liturgy.

Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, the Vatican office that organizes the youth gatherings, was the main celebrant at the Mass.

At the end of the liturgy, before the Portuguese young adults passed the WYD cross and Marian icon to their peers from South Korea, Pope Francis offered a special prayer that the symbols would be a source of consolation and strength for young people living in situations of war and violence.

The pope prayed that wherever the cross and icon are taken "may there be a growth in certainty about the invincible love of God and fraternity among people."

In his homily, Pope Francis said that passing the symbols on "is an invitation to all of us to live out the Gospel and take it to every part of the world, without stopping, without being discouraged,

See **POPE**, page 3

Music bonds a little girl with a mentor who gave voice to her life and her faith

(The Criterion has invited our readers to share a special thank you for someone who has influenced their lives in a positive and powerful way. Here is the third part of a continuing series.)

By John Shaughnessy

One of the best gifts we can receive in life is when someone leads us to something we love to do. Jody Wyss-Treadwell experienced that influence as a child, during a time when her health was severely challenged. "Sixty plus years ago, I was diagnosed with asthma," recalls Wyss-Treadwell, a member of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis. "My mom always slept with one eye open at night, waiting for me to take my next breath. Inhalers and medicine were not an option yet. "Mom asked the pediatrician what could be done to help me. His response was, 'Certainly not physical activity because that's what makes her asthma flare up. She needs something to help strengthen her lungs.' "



Jody Wyss-Treadwell

That prescription led the then-5-year-old girl to a woman who would have a lasting impact on her life, her health and her faith.

"On a warm summer day, Mom and I visited Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove and met Benedictine Sister Margaret Schafer," Wyss-Treadwell recalls. "Mom explained the problem to Sister Margaret—and that I needed something to help strengthen my lungs. So, Sister Margaret and I embarked upon a multi-decades journey of vocal music and elocution lessons."

The lessons included having her take deep breaths and holding them for increasing amounts of time. "Now whether or not this is a medical explanation of how to correct asthma in a child remains to be seen, but it helped me tremendously."

Just as valuable, the vocal music training led Wyss-Treadwell toward a passion that has enriched her life in many ways ever since.

"I became a lifelong musician and teacher of music education,

See **MUSIC**, page 8



A woman prays with a rosary during eucharistic adoration following the opening Mass of the National Prayer Vigil for Life on Jan. 19, 2023, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

Bishops announce Prayer Vigil for Life to take place on Jan. 23-24

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—The annual Prayer Vigil for Life will take place on Jan. 23-24, 2025, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) announced on Nov. 22.



Bishop Daniel E. Thomas

The event is hosted each January by the USCCB Pro-Life Secretariat, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington and The Catholic University of America's Office of Campus Ministry. It takes place on the eve

of the March for Life, an annual protest of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, which was overturned in 2022.

The 52nd National March for Life will take place on Jan. 24, 2025.

"I enthusiastically invite Catholics from all around the country to join me in person or virtually, in praying for an end to abortion and building up a culture of life," said Bishop Daniel E. Thomas of Toledo, Ohio, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, in the USCCB's statement announcing the dates.

Since the high court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision in 2022 overturned nearly a half-century of its own precedent that held abortion to be a constitutional right, individual states have moved to either restrict abortion or expand access to it.

"Together, we must pray to change hearts and build a culture of life as we advocate for the most vulnerable," Bishop Thomas said. "I look forward to opening our vigil with holy Mass together with many other bishops, hundreds of priests, consecrated religious, seminarians and many thousands of pilgrims."

At the vigil, the Jan. 23 opening Mass will take place in the basilica's Great Upper Church from 5-7 p.m., with Bishop Thomas as the principal celebrant and homilist. A eucharistic procession and the National Holy Hour for Life will follow the Mass. The vigil's closing Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Robert J. Brennan of Brooklyn, N.Y.

The event will be broadcast on Catholic networks and livestreamed on the basilica's website at www.nationalshrine.org/mass. More information about the schedule can be found on the USCCB's website www.usccb.org, and more information about on-site attendance at the basilica is at its website. †

Dec. 9 to mark Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, still holy day of obligation

The Church ordinarily celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Dec. 8. But because that day falls on a Sunday in Advent this year, the feast will instead be observed on the following day, Dec. 9.

In the United States, the obligation to attend Mass on some holy days is dispensed if those feasts fall on Saturday or Monday. Because the Immaculate

Conception is the patronal feast of the United States, the obligation to attend Mass on that feast remains regardless of the day of the week on which it is observed.

Therefore, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, celebrated this year on Dec. 9, remains a holy day of obligation for Catholics in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

December 2-9, 2024

<p>December 2 – 3 p.m. Virtual meeting of U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis</p> <p>December 3 – noon Mass for the feast of St. Francis Xavier at SS Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 3 – 2:30 p.m. Legal Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 4 – 10:30 a.m. High School Senior Mass at St. Malachy Church, Brownsburg</p> <p>December 5 – 10 a.m. Clergy Advent Day of Prayer at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 5 – 5:30 p.m. Mass for Little Sisters of the Poor</p>	<p>Christmas Celebration at Ritz Charles, Carmel, Ind.</p> <p>December 7 – 7 p.m. Mass for the Second Sunday of Advent at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral followed by reception for feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 8 – noon 75th Anniversary Mass for St. Lawrence Parish at St. Lawrence Church, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 9 – 10 a.m. Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception Mass at Marian University, Bishop Chartrand Memorial Chapel, Indianapolis</p> <p>December 9 – noon Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p>
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Official Appointments

Effective Immediately

Deacon Nathan Schallert, permanent deacon of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, appointed permanent deacon at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood.

Deacon Paul Fisherkeller, permanent deacon of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis, granted permission to retire from active ministry.

Rev. Hla (Luigi) Shwe, Diocese of Loikaw, Myanmar, appointed parochial vicar of St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis.

Effective Dec. 31, 2024

Deacon Steven Hodges, permanent deacon of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, granted permission to retire from active ministry.

Effective Jan. 8, 2025

Rev. Eric Augenstein, pastor of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish,

Indianapolis, reappointed pastor of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, Indianapolis, for a period of six years, while remaining director of seminarians for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.


Rev. Msgr. Joseph Schaedel, administrator of St. Luke the Evangelist the Parish, Indianapolis, granted permission to retire from active ministry.

Rev. Joseph Moriarty appointed pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis, for a period of six years.

Effective Jan. 15, 2025

Rev. Joseph Feltz, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, New Albany, reappointed pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, New Albany, for a period of six years.

(These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.) †



Pope's prayer intentions for December

- For pilgrims of hope**—We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.



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Joy, gratitude at news of Acutis and Frassati canonization dates

PHILADELPHIA (OSV News)—News that canonization dates have been set for Blessed Carlo Acutis and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, who have become popular patrons for teens and young adults, is being met with joy and gratitude by a number of Catholics in the U.S.

Pope Francis announced on Nov. 20 that he will elevate Acutis and Frassati to sainthood in 2025 when the Church will mark a jubilee year. Acutis will be canonized on April 27, during the April 25-27 Jubilee for Adolescents in Rome. Frassati's canonization will follow amid the July 28-Aug. 3 Jubilee of Young People in Rome.

"This news ushers in great celebration for the universal Church and especially for young Catholics," said Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez of Philadelphia in a Nov. 20 statement. "Both of these saintly young men reflect the call for today's youth and young adults to live out their Catholic faith with courage, compassion and divine love."

"What a wonderful gift to the Church militant both of these new saints will be," Christine Wohar, president of FrassatiUSA—a Nashville-based nonprofit dedicated to promoting Frassati's canonization, in collaboration with the Associazione Pier Giorgio Frassati in Rome—told OSV News in a Nov. 20 e-mail.

Wohar, whose organization is planning a pilgrimage to the canonization, said that the canonizations are timely.

"Our culture so desperately needs Catholic models of courage, devotion to the Eucharist and Our Lady, true manhood and fidelity to the Church," she said.

Father Francesco Maria D'Amico, pastor of St. William Parish in Philadelphia who served as interpreter and guide for Acutis' mother Antonia during her U.S. speaking tour in 2023, also sees these saints as particularly relevant.

"God is the Lord of history, and I think that nowadays, he sees youth being attacked by different ideologies, by secularization, by the false promises of technology," he said. "So I think that God, by raising these two youth[s] and young adults as saints, is showing fatherly concern ... because they [youth and young adults] are the future of the world."

Born 90 years apart, Frassati and Acutis both lived brief but faith-filled lives that saw them devoted to Christ, particularly in the Eucharist, and to those around them.

Dubbed the "Man of the Eight Beatitudes" by St. John Paul II, Frassati—born in Turin in 1901 to an influential family—began receiving daily Communion at a young age, while serving the poor through the St. Vincent de Paul Society and evangelizing his friends.

A lay Dominican, Frassati also participated in demonstrations to defend his faith against the Communist and Fascist parties in Italy. His passion for outdoor activities such as mountaineering has made him a patron

of athletes. Frassati died in 1925 at age 24, having contracted polio, which doctors speculated he may have contracted from serving the sick. Pope St. John Paul II beatified Frassati in 1990.

Almost a century later, Acutis in many ways mirrored his predecessor's qualities. The sunny-faced teen—who was born in London in 1991 and grew up in Milan—displayed an early attraction to the spiritual life, reciting the rosary and attending Mass daily, serving as a catechist, volunteering at a parish soup kitchen and tutoring children with their homework. At the same time, Acutis was known for his enthusiasm for typical teenage interests, such as video games, pets, soccer and music.

Acutis died of leukemia in 2006 at age 15, having lived a brief life of extraordinary holiness that was marked by a profound devotion to Christ and the Eucharist. His desire to foster awareness of the Blessed Sacrament, along with his computer skills, led him to create a database of eucharistic miracles throughout the world. Pope Francis beatified him in 2020.

Michael Norton, president of the Malvern Retreat Center in Malvern, Pa.—home to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Blessed Carlo Acutis Shrine and Center for Eucharistic Encounter—told OSV News he has seen firsthand how Acutis offers a relatable vision for holiness to kids and young adults.

"Students are absolutely fascinated and drawn to Carlo," Norton told OSV News on Nov. 20. "It's like, 'Wow, he looks like me. I'm just like him. ... He lived in our lifetime.' He talks their language—he's a computer programmer, he played soccer. And so the kids are really drawn to him."

Similarly, Frassati has had a profound effect on students at a high school in Texas named in his honor.

"For us, this is yet another special grace upon our community, which has really been under the intercession of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati," said Tim Lienhard, director of enrollment, marketing and communications at Frassati Catholic High School in Spring, Texas.

Lienhard told OSV News on Nov. 20 that the school



Blesseds Carlo Acutis, left, and Pier Giorgio Frassati are pictured in a combination photo. Both are scheduled to be canonized in 2025. (OSV News photo/courtesy Sainthood Cause of Carlo Acutis and CNS files)

has "really felt his spirit on our community, and you see that through our growth. We've grown from 46 students in our beginning year, 2013, to 350 today, and we continue to grow."

The school is planning to send some 20 students to Italy during spring break in March 2025 for a pilgrimage that will trace some key places in Frassati's life, Lienhard said.

Actor Jeromy Darling, who played Frassati in a 2021 play of the same name at Open Window Theatre in Minnesota's Twin Cities, told OSV News that encountering the saint-to-be through pre-production research had a profound effect on him.

"It changed my life completely," said Darling, who as a convert to Catholicism said Frassati's bold witness to the faith was personally inspiring as the actor navigated rejection experienced for his decision to become Catholic. "He's an enormous, enormous part of my life," Darling said. "He's one of my best friends. I talk to him every day."

Many Catholics have been inspired by an Italian phrase Frassati wrote on a well-known photo of him mountaineering: "*Verso L'Alto*," which means "to the heights."

"As [Blessed] Frassati reaches his ultimate summit, we pray he will guide each of us on our journey to the top," said Wohar. "We also share in the joy of all those with a devotion to Blessed Carlo Acutis who likewise offers great inspiration to today's youth." †

POPE

continued from page 1

getting up after every fall and never ceasing to hope."

Urging the young people to keep their gaze "fixed on Jesus, on his cross and on Mary, our mother," the pope told them that Mary is the one who, "in moments of difficulty, is at the foot of our crosses to help us because she is our mother, our mom."

Frequently adding to his prepared homily, the pope encouraged the young people to never be ashamed of who they are and what they believe, but to follow Jesus'

example of love, self-giving and service.

"God loves you just as you are," the pope told them. "Before him, the innocence of your dreams is worth more than success and fame—it's worth more—and the sincerity of your intentions are worth more than worldly approval.

"Do not settle for being 'stars for a day' on social media or in any other context," he added. "You are called to shine in a wider sky" and to do so through concrete acts of love and caring.

"In heaven, the infinite love of the Father is reflected in our countless little lights," Pope Francis said. "His love is revealed in us through the faithful

affection between spouses, the innocent joy of children, the enthusiasm of young people, caring for the elderly, the generosity of consecrated persons, the charity shown toward the poor and the honesty upheld in work environments.

"No approval you receive can save the world or make you happy," he continued. "Only the free gift of love can bring us happiness."

The Gospel reading for the day was St. John's account of Pilate questioning Jesus about being a king and about his kingdom.

Addressing people gathered in St. Peter's Square for the recitation of the

Angelus prayer after Mass, the pope told them that, in Pilate's world, "the strong triumph over the weak, the rich over the poor, the violent over the meek—a world which we know well, unfortunately."

Affirming that Christ is king, Christians recognize that "his kingdom is not of this world. Jesus' world, indeed, is the new world, the eternal world, which God prepares for all by giving his life for our salvation."

Jesus "redeems creation ruined by evil with the power of love; with the power of divine love Jesus saves creation because Jesus liberates, Jesus forgives, Jesus brings peace and justice," the pope said. †



Young people from Portugal prepare to hand the World Youth Day cross to their peers from South Korea, which will host the international celebration in 2027, at the end of a Mass with Pope Francis in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Nov. 24. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

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Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher* Mike Krokos, *Editor*

Editorial



A crowd of holiday shoppers is seen in a file photo at Macy's department store in New York City. (OSV News photo/Mike Segar, Reuters)

Black Friday sends the wrong message about the Christmas season

The day after Thanksgiving is known as Black Friday.

It's a day when retail stores offer deep discounts, and many holiday shoppers seek to outdo one another in the hunt for bargains. Some say that the origin of the name, which has been popular since the 1960s, is based on the fact that retail sales finally start to become profitable ("in the black") at this point in the year. Others point to the chaos caused by large crowds and heavy traffic, which often results in a stressful experience for merchants, shoppers and security personnel.

To say that Black Friday inaugurates the Christmas season is sad. This is a secular occasion if there ever was one. Black Friday celebrates materialism, greed and selfishness. Therefore, it sends all the wrong messages about this holy time of year.

Advent is a time of self-denial and patient expectation. Black Friday is the ultimate expression of impatience and acquisitiveness. Christmas, which follows Advent's four weeks of hope-filled waiting, is the season of generous self-giving. It is the very opposite of the materialism and secularism of today's black "festival."

It would be a mistake to mark Black Friday as another secular holiday like Memorial Day or Labor Day or even Thanksgiving Day. Those holidays, and many others spread throughout the calendar year, celebrate positive values in our society. Respect for those who have died in service to our country, honoring the hard work of those who labor on our behalf and giving thanks for the blessings we have received are virtuous activities. "Shop till you drop" is not (or should not be) an American value—as much as we appreciate the economic freedoms and material benefits that we enjoy as a nation.

In the Gospel, Jesus teaches us to resist the temptation to make false idols out of material things. Jesus admonishes us to seek first the kingdom of God, which is a spiritual treasure, and everything else we need will be given to us (Mt 6:33).

Christians do not despise material things. We use them, enjoy them and recognize their value as being of secondary importance, while we strive always to keep first things first,

especially the love of God and neighbor. To the extent that Black Friday encourages us to focus all our attention on material things, it directly contradicts what is (or should be) of primary importance to us.

This editorial calls attention to one day out of the year, but the problems of materialism, consumerism and greed are everyday problems for us sinful human beings. We have come to believe that our deepest desires for happiness, peace and prosperity can be satisfied by things that are not capable of fulfilling our spiritual needs. "You can't buy happiness or love," we say, but we are constantly tempted to buy our way into heaven on Earth. "You can't take it with you," we tell ourselves even as will fill our homes and storage units with excess stuff.

If only we would take Jesus at his word, and seek God's love and mercy first and foremost, we would not feel the need to surround ourselves with things. If only we could do what the "rich young man" in the Gospels (Mt 19:16-30, Mk 10:17-31, Lk 18:18-30) could *not* do, namely sell everything, give it to the poor and follow Jesus, we would know what it means to experience perfect joy. Unfortunately, like the young man, we too often "go away sad" because our hearts are all wrapped up in our possessions.

Most of us are not called to a life of radical poverty. We need our money and material things to live and work "in the world," to support our families and to serve others—especially the poor and vulnerable. The Lord doesn't ask most of us to live heroic lives. He asks us to live in ways that demonstrate that we have our values in proper order. First comes our love for God and neighbor. Everything else flows from our commitment to "seek first" the spiritual gifts that come from God alone.

Let's make the day after Thanksgiving a multi-colored Friday, a day for giving and sharing all God's gifts. Let's begin the Advent and Christmas seasons with confidence that everything we need will be given to us if we let go of our dependence on material possessions and let God fill our hearts with love.

—Daniel Conway

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

The scourge of loneliness and the 'culture of connection'

Loneliness.

The subject comes up quite often in the media, especially during the holiday season, that "most wonderful time of the year."



Recently, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy released a study identifying loneliness as a growing public health epidemic.

Titled "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation," the study's report asserts that even before the COVID-19 pandemic, about half of U.S. adults reported experiencing measurable levels of loneliness. The physical consequences of this loneliness are serious—isolation increases the risk of premature death almost as much as smoking and obesity.

"Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation" identifies six "pillars of change" needed to combat loneliness.

Murthy hopes these concepts will guide future social and health policy at every level.

The sixth of these pillars, cultivating a culture of connection, is something we can all work on.

Murthy observes that food is central to building a culture of connection. "When we gather with others around food, we not only feed our bodies but also nourish our spirits," he wrote.

Murthy has published a practical guidebook titled *Recipes for Connection, Inspiring Social Connection One Bite at a Time*.

One of the book's "inspirations for gathering" is most appropriate as we prepare for Thanksgiving and Christmas. "Gratitude acts as a powerful glue, a reminder of love and kindness that brings us closer to our friends, family and community. It feels good to show appreciation—for you and the person receiving your thanks. Who's someone you would like to thank?"

This is a very meaningful question as we prepare for Thanksgiving.

We might also ask ourselves if we are aware of someone who is especially lonely and in need of attention and affection as the holidays approach, even if we may not feel naturally drawn to them.

If someone like this comes to mind, don't delay! Give them a call and suggest getting together for a meal or a cup of coffee.

Food can serve as a powerful force for forging deeper connections. Through the rituals of cooking and eating, we feed our friendships, creating lasting memories one bite at a time.

Hopefully, our commitment to practicing this ministry of presence will

extend well beyond the Christmas season. Knowing how to walk with and listen to others mirrors Pope Francis' aspiration for the Church.

Listening is more than hearing, the pope has said. "It is reciprocal listening in which everyone has something to learn."

Through a shared meal with someone older and more experienced than yourself, you might even learn how to be a better cook!

Pope Francis' vision is inspiring. For him, synodality's goal is to "plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope ... and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands."

Although the Synod on Synodality is over, the Jubilee Year of Hope beginning in December picks up where it left off, encouraging us to reach out to others while at the same time helping ourselves.

As we read in the Vatican's decree on

the Jubilee indulgence, "In a special way 'during the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind' (*Spes non confundit*, #10). ... The faithful, following the example and mandate of Christ, are encouraged to carry out works of charity or mercy more frequently, especially in the service of those brothers and sisters who are burdened by various needs."

Such works of charity can help us to obtain the Jubilee indulgence, releasing us from the consequences of sin.

We ourselves thus benefit spiritually when we visit our brothers and sisters in need or difficulty, "in a sense making a pilgrimage to Christ present in them" [Mt 25:34-36].

I love this phrase because it reminds me of the words of St. Jeanne Jugan, our foundress, "Never forget that the

poor are our Lord. ... It is Jesus whom you care for in them."

"Belonging isn't just a nice bonus—it's a human necessity," Murthy wrote in *Recipes for Connection*.

I think Pope Francis, and Jesus Christ himself—who came among us in his incarnation to convince us how much he loves us—would concur.

So, let's pull out our favorite recipes, or order a culinary favorite from Grub Hub, invite some friends or neighbors over and allow hope to flourish as we weave dreams together!

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

Isolation increases the risk of premature death almost as much as smoking and obesity. "Belonging isn't just a nice bonus—it's a human necessity."

—U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and

content (including spelling and grammar).

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

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

As we give thanks, we also wait in hope for Jesus' coming

Today is the day after Thanksgiving and two days before the first Sunday of Advent. We are concluding what many call "Gratitude Month" and initiating the Advent and Christmas seasons. This is truly a time of thanksgiving, hope and joy.

Yesterday we joined our fellow Americans in expressing our appreciation for all the abundant gifts that God has bestowed on our nation.

In giving thanks, we acknowledged our responsibility for sharing these precious gifts with others, especially our sisters and brothers who are poor, homeless, unemployed and/or suffering from other forms of impoverishment (mental, physical and spiritual).

We are a blessed people—in spite of all our faults—and in offering thanks and praise to almighty God, we must commit ourselves to working together for justice, equality and peace here at home and throughout the world.

Gratitude prepares us for hope. Unless we can appreciate the good things in our lives, it is impossible to be truly hopeful. Without thanksgiving, the world is a dark and dangerous place. If we are always angry and resentful

(even when we have good reason to be unhappy with the things that cause us grief and anguish), we cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Hope must be based on something tangible—on the good we experience even in the worst of times. That's why we celebrate the holy cross, an instrument of torture that has been transformed from a literal "dead end" into a bridge to new and everlasting life.

The season of Advent is a time of preparation. Its focus is on waiting in joyful hope for the coming again of the One promised from the beginning of human history. Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, came to us more than 2,000 years ago to save us from the horrors of sin and death. He comes daily in the sacrament of the holy Eucharist and is really present to us, and in us, as we receive his body and blood and as we worship him in the Blessed Sacrament. And still, we wait eagerly for yet another coming at the end of time.

Advent celebrates all of these manifestations of the Lord's coming among us—past, present and future. It inspires in us a profound sense of thanksgiving (which is what "eucharist"

means). But it also gives us a genuine sense of the hope that allows us to endure the sufferings and trials of the present with confidence in the joy that is to come.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote about the two great figures who dominate the Scripture readings during the season of Advent. Mary, the mother of Jesus, and John the Baptist, the last great prophet and forerunner of the Messiah, teach us by their words and example what it means to be patient, humble, pure and wholly obedient to God's will. They are true Advent figures, signs of hope in a world threatened by despair.

It is fascinating to note that the Gospel readings for Thanksgiving Day (Thursday of the 34th Week in Ordinary Time) and the First Sunday of Advent both contain the same passage from St. Luke:

"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on Earth. Nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power

and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand" (Lk 21:25-28).

Jesus is telling his disciples, and all of us, to be people of hope who stand erect and raise our heads because we believe with unshakable faith that our redemption is at hand. This is the culmination of thanksgiving, hope and joy that we celebrate during this most holy time of year.

The first reading next Sunday from the Book of Jeremiah recalls these prophetic words: "The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah. In those days, in that time, I will raise up for David a just shoot; he shall do what is right and just in the land. In those days, Judah shall be safe, and Jerusalem shall dwell secure" (Jer 33:14-16).

The trials and tribulations symbolized in sacred Scripture by ominous signs in the heavens and on Earth are not a cause to give up. Rather, they challenge us to increase our hope both in Jesus' presence and in his future coming.

Christ is coming again. Let us await this blessed hope with gratitude and joy. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Mientras damos gracias, también esperamos con esperanza la venida de Jesús

Hoy es el día después de Acción de Gracias y dos días antes del primer domingo de Adviento. Estamos concluyendo lo que muchos llaman el "mes de la gratitud" e iniciando las temporadas de Adviento y Navidad. Este es verdaderamente un tiempo de agradecimiento, esperanza y alegría.

Ayer nos unimos a nuestros compatriotas estadounidenses para dar las gracias por todos los abundantes dones que Dios ha concedido a nuestro país. Al hacerlo, reconocimos nuestra responsabilidad de compartir estos preciosos dones con los demás, especialmente con nuestras hermanas y hermanos pobres, sin hogar, desempleados o que sufren otras formas de empobrecimiento (mental, físico y espiritual).

Somos un pueblo bendecido—aun a pesar de todos nuestros defectos—y al ofrecer gracias y alabanzas a Dios todopoderoso, debemos comprometernos a trabajar juntos por la justicia, la igualdad y la paz aquí en casa y en todo el mundo.

La gratitud nos prepara para la esperanza. A menos que podamos apreciar las cosas buenas de la vida, es imposible tener verdadera esperanza. Sin el agradecimiento, el mundo sería un lugar oscuro y peligroso. Si siempre estamos enojados y resentidos (incluso

cuando tenemos buenas razones para estar descontentos con aquello que nos causa pena y angustia), no podremos ver la luz al final del túnel.

La esperanza debe basarse en algo tangible: en el bien que experimentamos incluso en los peores momentos. Por eso celebramos la Santa Cruz, un instrumento de tortura que se ha pasado de ser un símbolo del final para transformarse en un puente hacia una vida nueva y eterna.

El Adviento es un tiempo de preparación que se centra en aguardar con gozosa esperanza la venida del prometido desde el principio de la historia de la humanidad. Jesús, el Hijo de Dios encarnado, vino a nosotros hace más de 2,000 años para salvarnos de los horrores del pecado y la muerte. Todos los días acude a nuestro encuentro en el sacramento de la sagrada Eucaristía donde está realmente presente para nosotros, y en nosotros, cuando recibimos su cuerpo y su sangre y cuando le adoramos en el Santísimo Sacramento. Y aun así, esperamos con impaciencia otra venida al final de los tiempos.

El Adviento celebra todas estas manifestaciones de la venida del Señor entre nosotros: pasadas, presentes y futuras. Nos inspira un profundo sentido de agradecimiento (que es lo que significa la palabra «eucaristía»), así como también de esperanza que nos

permite soportar los sufrimientos y las pruebas del presente con confianza en la alegría que está por llegar.

El papa Benedicto XVI escribió sobre las dos grandes figuras que dominan las lecturas de las Escrituras durante el tiempo de Adviento. María, la madre de Jesús, y Juan el Bautista, el último gran profeta y precursor del Mesías, nos enseñan con sus palabras y su ejemplo lo que significa ser paciente, humilde, puro y totalmente obediente a la voluntad de Dios. Son verdaderas figuras del Adviento, signos de esperanza en un mundo amenazado por la desesperación.

Resulta fascinante observar que las lecturas del Evangelio del Día de Acción de Gracias (jueves de la 34.ª semana del tiempo ordinario) y del primer domingo de Adviento contienen ambas el mismo pasaje de san Lucas:

Tal como nos dice el Evangelio según san Lucas de este domingo: *"Habrá señales en el sol, en la luna y en las estrellas. Las naciones de la tierra serán presa de confusión y terror a causa del bramido del mar y el ímpetu de su oleaje. Los habitantes de todo el mundo desfallecerán de miedo y ansiedad por todo lo que se les viene encima, pues hasta las fuerzas celestes se estremecerán. Entonces se verá llegar al Hijo del hombre en una nube con gran poder y gloria. Cuando todo esto*

comience a suceder, cobren aliento y levanten la cabeza, porque la liberación ya está cerca" (Lc 21:25-28).

Jesús les está diciendo a sus discípulos, y a todos nosotros, que seamos personas de esperanza que nos mantenemos erguidos y levantamos la cabeza porque creemos con fe inquebrantable que nuestra redención está cerca. Es la culminación del agradecimiento, la esperanza y la alegría que celebramos durante esta época tan sagrada del año.

La primera lectura del próximo domingo del Libro de Jeremías recuerda estas palabras proféticas: "Ya llegan días—oráculo del Señor—en que cumpliré lo que anuncié sobre Israel y Judá. En aquellos días y en aquel tiempo le brotará a David un vástago legítimo que impondrá en el país la justicia y el derecho. En aquellos días Judá quedará a salvo y Jerusalén podrá vivir confiada, y la llamarán el Señor es nuestra justicia" (Jer 33:14-16).

Las pruebas y tribulaciones simbolizadas en las Sagradas Escrituras por signos ominosos en los cielos y en la Tierra no son motivo para rendirse. Más bien, nos desafían a aumentar nuestra esperanza tanto en la presencia de Jesús como en su futura venida.

Cristo viene de nuevo. Esperemos esta Bendita Esperanza con agradecimiento y alegría. †

Events Calendar

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

December 4

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

Marian University Marian Hall Theatre, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Free Advent Concert**, 6:30-8 p.m., featuring Catholic composer John Angotti, contemporary renditions of traditional Advent and Christmas carols, light refreshments to follow, penance service following from 8-9 p.m. Information: jgarcia@marian.edu.

December 6

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, 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 6 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**, 11:40 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Young Adult Catholics First Friday Adoration**, 7-7:15 p.m. social in rectory, 7:15-7:30 p.m. reflection in Blessed Sacrament Chapel, 7:30-8:30 p.m. eucharistic adoration and confession in chapel, 8:30-9 p.m. social in rectory, free. Information: 317-592-4006, emastronicola@archindy.org, indycatholic.org.

The Village Dove, 6935 Lake Plaza Dr., Indianapolis. **Book Signing and Shopping Event**, 5:30-7:30 p.m., *Breaking the Bread: A Biblical Devotional for Catholics*, co-author and executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Evangelizing Catechesis

Ken Ogorek signing, books available for purchase, free coffee and snacks, raffle to support Catholic Charities. Information: 317-845-5487.

December 7

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, confession 8-8:30 a.m. followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

Virtual Prayer with the Sisters of Providence, 7-7:45 p.m., for single women ages 18-42, prayer and sharing on topic of anger. Information, registration: events.sistersofprovidence.org, 361-500-9505, jluna@spsmw.org.

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 535 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. **SPREAD Advent Retreat**, 1-5:30 p.m., for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, includes 4:30 p.m. Mass. Information: 317-236-1448, jbyrans@archindy.org.

December 8

St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. **Retreat for**

Youths ages 12-25 / Retaite pour les Jeunes 12-25 ans, 3-4:30 p.m., spiritual retreat in French and English for youths of the archdiocesan Francophone community, reconciliation available 4:30-5 p.m. followed by Mass in French, free. Information: 317-319-7027, rvermett@iu.edu.

St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. **Mass in French / Messe en français**, 5 p.m. / 18h, coordinated by ACFADI (*Apostolat des Catholiques Francophones de l'Archidiocèse d'Indianapolis*), second Sunday of each month / *le deuxième dimanche de chaque mois*. Information: acfadi2014@gmail.com, rvermett@iu.edu.

Marian University, Norman Center Room 222, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **People of Peace OFS Monthly Meeting**, 12:30-3 p.m., explore Franciscan spirituality with lay Franciscans, free. Information: 317-762-6259, popofindy@gmail.com.

December 9

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Madonna Hall, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Confraternity of Christian**

Mothers, 6 p.m. Mass followed by meeting, for all Catholic women, free. Information: 217-638-7433, paulabeechler@gmail.com.

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

December 10

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, 812-535-2952.

December 15

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Stations of the Nativity**, 2-3 p.m., Father Keith Hosey leads outdoor stations from Annunciation through Flight into Egypt, will move to chapel for inclement weather, free. Information: 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

December 15-23

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Simbang Gabi Christmas Novena of Masses**, 6 p.m., a Filipino tradition. Information: mariasolito@yahoo.com.

December 18

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

Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Providence Hall Dining Room, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Memory Café**, 2-3:30 p.m., third Wednesday of each month, for people with early-to-moderate memory loss and their caregivers, beverages and snacks provided, free. Information, registration: events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2873, memorycafe@spsmw.org.

December 19

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

Retreats and Programs

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

December 13-15

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Benedictine Spirituality as Lived in Marriage**, for married couples, Deacon Rich and Cherie Zoldak presenting, \$425 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

December 14

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Advent Family Day: Preparing Your Heart and Home for Christmas**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Judy Ribar facilitating, includes lunch, retreat materials, arts and crafts materials, \$75 per family. Information, registration: retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org, 812-923-8817, tinyurl.com/adventfamily24.

December 20

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$80 with spiritual direction. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

December 21

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Advent Mindfulness Retreat: Cultivating Peace Within**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind presenting, \$30, \$45 with CEUs. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgosf.com, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

December 22

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Coffee Talks—Divine Presence: Mary's Journey**, 10:45 a.m.-noon, Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind presenting, online option available, freewill donation. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgosf.com, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

December 27-29

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Young Adult Retreat**, 5 p.m. Fri. (vespers)-1 p.m. Sun. (lunch), for young adults ages 18-39, quiet day of reflection with spiritual direction available, includes overnight accommodations and meals, \$50 single room. Registration: 812-357-6501, yae@saintmeinrad.edu.

2025

January 9

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$45, includes room, lunch, Mass and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stay available for additional \$32, dinner additional \$11. Registration: archindy.org/fatima-events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

January 10

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$80 with spiritual direction. Information,

registration: 812-933-6437, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

January 11

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Grieving into Love**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., chaplain and counselor Richard Brendan presenting, \$30. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgosf.com, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

January 17-19

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **TOBIT Marriage Preparation Weekend**, 7 p.m. Fri.-11:45 a.m. Sun., \$330 per couple, separate rooms, includes meals and materials. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Silence, Solitude and the Presence of God**, 5 p.m. Fri.-10 a.m. Sun., Franciscan Friar of the Immaculate Gabriel Cortes facilitating, \$241 for single, \$302.90 double, \$368 triple, \$433.12 quadruple, includes four meals and room for two nights, commuters \$50.70 includes lunch and dinner on Sat. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Making "Soma" from "Sarx:" The**

Transformative Power of the Gospel, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

January 25

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **St. Paul's Conversion and Ours: An Experience of Metanoia**,

9 a.m.-3 p.m. CT, Jane Feliz Rush presenting, includes lunch, \$75. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats. †

Wedding Anniversaries

LARRY AND VIRGINIA (JANSEN) PARSONS, members of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Nov. 28.

The couple was married in St. Patrick Church in Kokomo, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette), on Nov. 28, 1959.

They have eight children: Karen Dilsheimer, Kathy Koenig, Joanna Price, Bill, Bob, Jim, Larry and Tony Parsons.

The couple also has 25 grandchildren and 19 grandchildren.

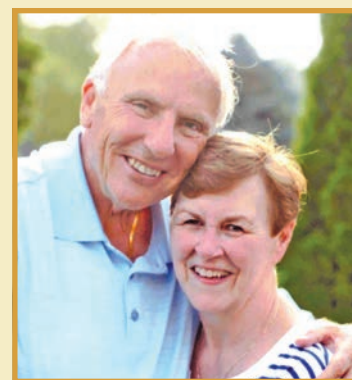


THOMAS AND BECKA (BALDWIN) EGOLD, members of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Nov. 8.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Indianapolis on Nov. 8, 1969.

They have four children: Dana Broadhurst, Natalie Fox, Tim and Tom Egold II.

The couple also has 11 grandchildren.



JEFFREY AND MARY (SCHNIEDERS) O'BRIEN, members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 30.

The couple was married in Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Indianapolis on Nov. 30, 1974.

They have three children: Sheila Roberts, Bridget Young and Dan O'Brien.

The couple also has nine 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.

Christmas 'tree-ts' to behold

By Natalie Hoefler

Several Catholic agencies and entities are represented in this year's "Festival of Trees" at the Indiana Historical Society's Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center in Indianapolis.

The event, which runs through Jan. 4, features 85 trees sponsored and decorated by individuals, families, companies and organizations from throughout the state. Among the organizations sponsoring a tree are the Catholic Business Exchange, Mother Theodore Catholic Academies and Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, all in

Indianapolis, pictured below at the history center on Nov. 14.

Other Catholic-related entities with a sponsored tree include Ascension St. Vincent, Cathedral High School and Marian University, all in Indianapolis. Use or mention the code FOTBR when purchasing tickets online or in person to

receive \$5 off the regular \$20 adult general admission cost. Note that general adult admission tickets purchased online are already discounted \$2, so the final cost after entering the FOTBR code will be \$15.

For more information, history center hours or to purchase advance tickets online, go to www.indianahistory.org. †



The *Criterion* staff couldn't help being partial to the Catholic Business Exchange's contribution to the Indiana Historical Society's Festival of Trees in Indianapolis. The tree features *paper-mache* ornaments constructed with pages from past issues of *The Criterion*. The Nativity-themed tree was designed and the ornaments created by Sarah Ward, a member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis. "An angel holds the star of Bethlehem, and there are seven horns representing the announcement of Christ's birth," she explained. "We included *The Criterion* orbs or ornaments because, going along with celebrating the news of Christ's birth, *The Criterion* is how the Catholics [of the archdiocese] get their news." (Submitted photo by Sarah Ward)



Mother Theodore Catholic Academies' tree used "Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)" as its theme. The ornaments were made by students of the academies' three Indianapolis inner-city Catholic schools—Central Catholic, Holy Angels and St. Philip Neri. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis sponsored this tree decked in peaceful shades of blue and white, with a message noting the retreat house is "a place to be with God, where you can experience the peace and love of Christmas throughout the year." (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



A past *Criterion* page displaying an image of the Nativity was used to create a *paper-mache* ornament that sits below the Catholic Business Exchange's tree. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

BOWLING

continued from page 1

“I definitely like the fact that we all have something in common with our Catholic faith. It’s important to me to be with people who have the same values as me. And it’s really neat to build on that with all the different personalities that are around here. It’s just a lot of great people. Everyone has their own story.”

One of the best stories from the league is the friendship that has developed between Thomas Robbins and Andrew Moster—and where it’s about to take Robbins.

‘I never wanted to leap forward like this’

Even though he isn’t Catholic, Robbins joined the IndyCatholic bowling league eight years ago, seeing it as a way to meet new people and make friends.

He found great ones in Moster and Moster’s wife, Natalie—a friendship that evolved as Robbins and Moster played on different teams, competed fiercely against each other, and then decided to team up together. The fact that they both enjoy doing karaoke sealed the friendship.

As Robbins grew closer to Andrew and Natalie, he found himself “wanting to know more about the Catholic faith.” And with that faith being important in their lives and their marriage, Andrew and Natalie wanted to be there for Robbins as he began his journey to move closer to God.

The couple suggested the idea to him about taking part in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA), toward being received into the full communion of the Church at Easter in 2025.

“I went over to Andrew’s and Natalie’s one night for a beer, just to hang out,” Robbins recalled as the sound of pins crashed in the background. “They asked me how I felt about [faith]. I had dabbled in it before, wanting to understand the Catholic faith. But I never wanted to leap forward like this and jump in with both

feet.”

Robbins made the leap, but only after he made sure that Andrew—his teammate on Spare Us, O Lord—was along for the jump.

“It’s been nice that Andrew wanted to be that sponsor for me and learn the faith a little bit stronger for himself. He knows me really well. He knows that I needed that kind of support to do that and get through it.”

Robbins also benefitted from hearing the perspective of Father Rick Nagel, the pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, where Robbins is taking OCIA classes.

“One thing that Father said on our first week was that different things lead people to God and church. He said, ‘In some cases, it’s love.’” recalled Robbins, who is 34. “And that’s what this is. I love Andrew and Natalie. They’re my closest friends of all time.

“I do believe in God, and I believe that Jesus is king. This whole thing is me trying to go along on my journey and trying to find God. And one of the main reasons I chose this community is because the entire time I’ve been here, everyone has been so welcoming. Everybody has been easy to talk to, supportive and friendly. Because of that, I felt going forward was the right thing to do.”

As Robbins excused himself to take his turn on the lane, Moster stepped into the conversation, sharing what it means to him to accompany his friend on this journey.

“I love it,” said Moster, who is 37 and a member of St. Louis de Montfort Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. “It’s a great opportunity to grow in the faith for him. My wife and I are big Catholics. It’s exciting to see him grow and become Catholic himself. And being born and raised Catholic, it’s good for me to have the opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith too.”

‘I met some of my best friends in this’

The sound of bowling balls crashing into pins echoed through the alley as Ellyn Comer talked about the impact that IndyCatholic and its bowling league has had on her since she began playing three years ago.

“I just like meeting new people,” said Comer, a team member of We’ve Been Framed. “I met some of my best friends in this group in 2021. We’ve gone through people getting married and babies being born. It’s just good to meet young adults from different parishes.”

She especially appreciates how the friendships have influenced her faith.



After moving from South Bend, Ind., to Indianapolis, Sophia Agostino, left, joined IndyCatholic’s young adult bowling league to meet new friends, and she has found one in her teammate, Ellyn Comer.



More than great friends and bowling teammates, Andrew Moster, left, is serving as the sponsor for Thomas Robbins who is taking part in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults to be received into the full communion of the Church at Easter in 2025. (Photos by John Shaughnessy)

“When I first joined bowling three years ago, the team pushed me in my faith,” said Comer, who is 30 and a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg. “I had never been to adoration before.

“There are so many young adults here that you get so many different perspectives on life. We all have the same Catholic belief, but we’re at different stages of our faith. When I first met some people, they intimidated me, but now they’re the people I look up to. They’re so nice, and they’ve taught me so much. I try to pass that along now to the new people on my team. It’s my turn.”

Comer looked around the bowling alley filled with young adults who have found a home in IndyCatholic, part of the effort of the archdiocese’s young adult and college campus ministry.

“It’s also a good way for people who are new to Indianapolis to meet young adult Catholics,” she said. “Sometimes, it’s hard in a parish. If there’s not a young adult community in your parish, this is a good outlet.”

Sophia Agostino has embraced that outlet. Originally from the northern Indiana community of South Bend, Agostino graduated in 2023 from Butler University in Indianapolis, where she earned a master’s degree in accounting.

“I stayed here locally after I graduated,” she said. “I’ve been part of IndyCatholic since this summer. I love meeting new people and getting to talk with them. I like the commonality of being Catholic and getting to meet other people who have the same values as me. It’s been really awesome.”

The bowling league also provided another purpose for her.

“It pushes me outside my comfort zone because I’m very much an introvert,” she said. “It really pushes me to meet people. I like the camaraderie.”

‘The ultimate hope’

The six weeks of the bowling league ended on Nov. 19, but its coordinator sees its impact as staying powerful in terms of friendship and faith.

“The intramurals are just a launching

pad for community,” said Emily Mastronicola, who coordinates events and volunteers for the archdiocese’s young adult and college campus ministry. “That’s something I really stressed in the team captains’ guide this year. We always ask the questions, ‘What was your first experience of community? Who was the first person you met? Who was the first person who remembered your name?’”

“We wanted the captains to remember that moment of feeling what it means to be known, to be accepted and be remembered. When they’re in that hospitable mindset, they’re able to create an environment for the new people on their team. ... They are intentional in welcoming them home into their team, their parish and into the Church.”

She saw the blessings of that approach in one of the teams that first came together in the intramural volleyball league in the spring.

“They went on to create their own Bible study over the summer, and then they came back to the bowling league as a team,” Mastronicola said. “That shows the power of what you can do with six people on your team. It doesn’t have to stop when the season ends. It can keep going. ‘Hey, let’s get a beer on a Friday night,’ or ‘Hey, we should have a team dinner’ or ‘Hey, how can I pray for you this Advent season?’”

The hope is that the relationships that are built on the team can lead eventually to a deeper relationship with Christ.

“Christ ultimately desires to have a relationship with us,” she said. “I think sometimes it takes maybe an advocate like the Holy Spirit or someone who is a living model of a relationship with Christ to set that example for us.”

Her face beams as she thinks back on the joy and the fun of the season—and her hope for everyone who shared in that joy and fun.

“The ultimate hope is that they know there is a place for them on Tuesday nights in a bowling league, but there’s also a place for them in a pew on Sunday and ultimately a place for them at the eucharistic feast in heaven.”

(For more information on IndyCatholic, visit IndyCatholic.org.) †

MUSIC

continued from page 1

a published author and composer of music for children,” she says. “Sister Margaret instilled in me a love of music and a love for the religious sisters, especially the Sisters of St. Benedict.”

Wyss-Treadwell notes that every voice lesson began with a prayer, sometimes to St. Cecilia, a patron saint of musicians, and “other saints that were held deep in Sister Margaret’s heart.

“Looking back, I think about a quarter of the music lesson was devoted to prayer,” she says. “She gave me strength to be the best musician I could be as well as the best person I could be. She drenched all of her students in the love of making music. For, in her words and St. Augustine’s, ‘Music is twice praying.’”

Wyss-Treadwell also remembers one of Sister Margaret’s traits that still makes her laugh.

“She drenched us in holy water before every

performance or music contest. I learned never to wear *moiré* for a concert or contest again after a water-spotting disaster!”

Sister Margaret’s propensity for using holy water leads to another story that fills Wyss-Treadwell with delight.



Sister Margaret Schafer

Before a concert at one of the schools where she taught, Sister Margaret felt the students needed an extra outpouring of divine intervention, so she sprayed the band chairs with so much holy water that the parish priest thought there was a leak in the roof when he saw the chairs. Sister Margaret’s confession stopped

him from making his planned call to a roofing company.

One of Wyss-Treadwell’s favorite personal memories occurred when Sister Margaret made a trip to Cincinnati to be there for her recital in her senior year in college.

“It was a long road and journey that we took together from that little 5-year-old child to the young adult I had become, heading off to teach music to children,” Wyss-Treadwell recalls. “She was my inspiration, she was my mentor, and she was my best friend.

“I only hoped that after 45 years of teaching music, I was half the caring, nurturing educator for my students that Sister Margaret had been to me and the hundreds of other children she taught music to. For those many years, I am thankful that I was the beneficiary of her love and inspiration.

“I am sure she is in heaven leading the cherub choir.” †

Monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey mark significant anniversaries

Criterion staff report

Three Benedictine monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad celebrated major anniversaries of profession of vows of religious life this year, while one celebrated a major anniversary of his priesthood ordination.

60-year jubilarian

Benedictine Father Raymond Studzinski was born in Detroit. He made his first profession of vows on Aug. 15, 1964. Ordained a priest in 1969, he earned a master's degree in religious studies at Indiana University in Bloomington and a doctorate in historical theology at Fordham University in New York.

Father Raymond served on the faculty of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology from 1973-77 and then served as a chaplain in Colorado for two years.

In 1981, he began teaching at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., where he currently serves as an associate professor of spirituality. He is the author of two books and several journal articles.

50-year jubilarians

Benedictine Father Bede Cisco was born in Indianapolis, where he was baptized at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish and was a 1969 graduate of the Latin School of Indianapolis, the former archdiocesan high school seminary.

He made his first profession of vows at Saint Meinrad on Aug. 24, 1974. Ordained a priest in 1978, he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the former Saint Meinrad College, a master's degree in divinity at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology and a master's degree and doctorate in education at Columbia University in New York. Father Bede later earned a certificate in spiritual direction from the Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis.

He served in the administration and on the faculty of Saint Meinrad College from 1979-82 and 1987-98. At Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, he ministered in its administration and faculty from 1986-92, 1999-2006, 2008-11 and from 2013-21.

Father Bede played a central role in the formation of the members of the first class of permanent deacons in the history of the archdiocese, who were ordained in 2008. He served as the first director of deacon formation for the archdiocese, ministering in that position from

2003-11. He also served as the first director of deacons in the archdiocese, ministering in that position from 2008-11.

Father Bede currently serves as prior, second in leadership of the archabbey and as a spiritual director in the seminary. He is the co-author of *Lay Ministers and Their Spiritual Practices*.

Benedictine Father Jonathan Fassero, a native of Mishawaka, Ind., made his first profession of vows at Saint Meinrad on Aug. 24, 1974. Ordained a priest in 1978, he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy at Saint Meinrad College, a master's degree in divinity from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology and a master's degree in religious studies at Indiana University.

Father Jonathan served in the administration of Saint Meinrad College from 1978-97 and in Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology from 1978-85.

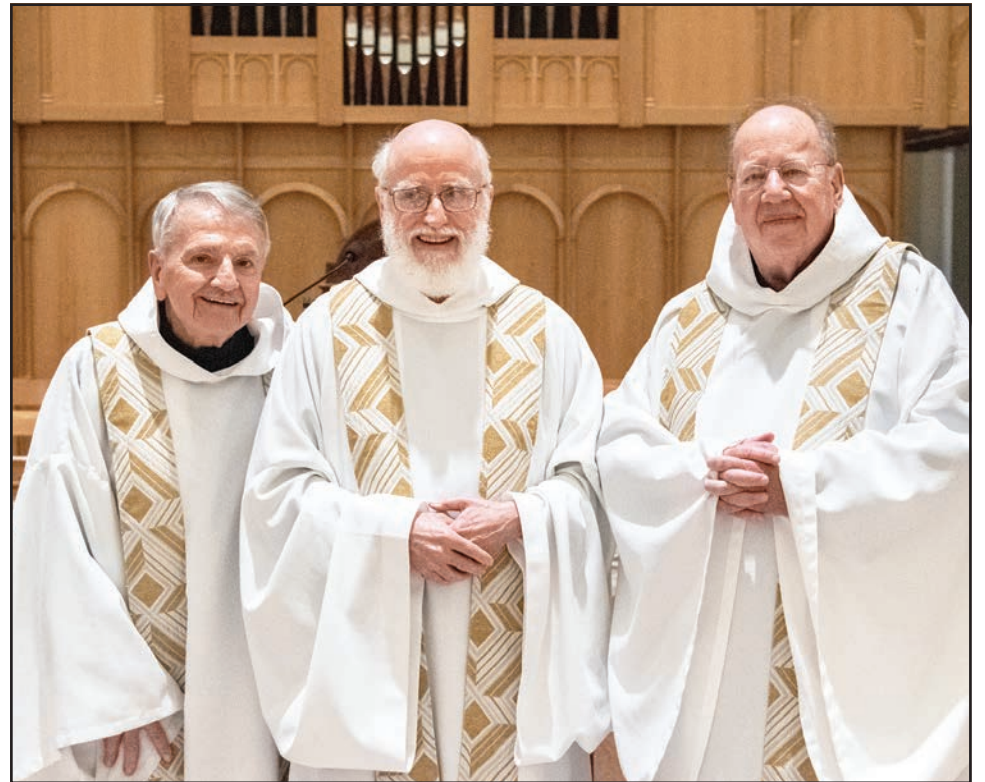
He currently serves as associate director of spiritual formation and director of diocesan relations at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.

He also serves as associate director of spiritual formation at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, where he has ministered since 2009.

Benedictine Father Pius Klein was born in Aurora and was baptized at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish there.

He made his first profession of vows at Saint Meinrad on April 19, 1959, and was ordained a priest on March 31, 1974.

Father Pius worked in the monastery's tailor shop and its infirmary until he was assigned to Saint Meinrad's



Benedictine Father Raymond Studzinski, left, Benedictine Father Bede Cisco and Benedictine Father Jonathan Fassero, who pose in the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad, marked this year significant anniversaries of their profession of vows. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

priory in Huaraz, Peru. He ministered there from 1964-84 except for a period when he returned to the monastery for priesthood formation.

In Peru, Father Pius ministered as a teacher, seminary disciplinarian and school principal, superior of the priory and as pastor of a parish in Lima.

Returning to the monastery in 1985, he served in the Evansville, Ind., diocese as a chaplain to the Benedictine Sisters of Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., director of food services in the monastery and pastor of St. Mary Parish in Huntingburg, Ind., from 1987-2008. †



Fr. Pius Klein, O.S.B.

Benedictine sisters celebrate anniversaries of religious life

Criterion staff report

In 2024, three Benedictine sisters of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove celebrated significant milestones in religious life.

75-year jubilarian

Benedictine Sister Bernardine Ludwig marked the 75th anniversary of her profession of vows as a religious.

Born in Tell City where she grew up as a member of St. Paul Parish, she made her first profession of vows at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., in the Diocese of Evansville, Ind., on June 10, 1949.

Sister Bernardine earned a bachelor's degree in education at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, a master's degree in education at Spalding University in Louisville, Ky., and certificates in social services and activities at the University of Indianapolis.

She is a founding member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, arriving from Monastery Immaculate Conception in 1960. Our Lady of Grace became an independent community in 1961.

In the archdiocese, Sister Bernardine served at the former St. Paul School in Tell City from 1959-63 and 1967-69, the former St. Joseph School in Clark County from 1963-65, St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis from

1965-67, the former St. Mark School in Perry County from 1969-70, Perry Central School in Perry County from 1970-72 and Christ the King School in Indianapolis from 1972-87.

At the former St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove (now Envive of Beech Grove), she ministered in health care, social services, activities and community service from 1987-2009.

While retired from active ministry since 2009, Sister Bernardine continues in outreach to the poor, tutoring and making crafts and cards.

60-year jubilarians

Sister Antoinette Purcell marked the 60th anniversary of her profession of vows as a religious.

Born in Clarksville where she grew up as a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Sister Antoinette made her first profession of vows on June 3, 1964, at Our Lady of Grace Monastery.

She earned a bachelor's degree in education and theology at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, Ind., a master's degree in education at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., and a master's degree in pastoral studies at Loyola University Chicago in Chicago.

In the archdiocese, Sister Antoinette served at St. Joseph School in Corydon from 1967-72, and in Indianapolis at St. Pius X School from 1972-77

and Holy Spirit Parish from 1977-81. She ministered at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford from 1981-82 and at the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education from 1982-92.

She began service at Our Lady of Grace and at the former Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in various positions starting in 1993. Sister Antoinette continues to minister to the community's Benedictine oblates, a ministry that she began in 1993.

Sister Mary Mark Bartoo marked the 60th anniversary of her profession of vows as a religious.

Born in Ligonier, Ind., Sister Mary Mark made her first profession of vows on June 3, 1964, at Our Lady of Grace Monastery.

She earned a bachelor's degree in health and physical education at Manchester College in North Manchester, Ind., and a master's degree in physical education at Indiana University in Bloomington.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Mark served at the former Our Lady of Grace Academy in Beech Grove from 1961-63, at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County from 1965-66, and at the former St. Mary School in New Albany from 1987-90.

She ministered as maintenance coordinator at the former Our Lady of Grace Academy in the 1970's and 1980's and at the St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove (now Envive of Beech Grove) from 1986-87 and 1990-2015 when she retired from ministry. †



Sr. Bernardine Ludwig, O.S.B.



Sr. Antoinette Purcell, O.S.B.



Sr. Mary Mark Bartoo, O.S.B.

Pope: Schools should be centers of formation, not 'achievement factories'

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Culture and education must go hand-in-hand to form students into agents of social change driven by hope, Pope Francis said.

"There is no need for educational models that are mere 'achievement factories' without a cultural plan that enables the formation of people capable of helping the world turn over a new leaf by eradicating inequality, endemic poverty and exclusion," he told participants in a plenary assembly of the Dicastery for Culture and Education.

The meeting on Nov. 21 marked the first plenary assembly of the dicastery since it was formed in 2022 by combining the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Pontifical Council for Culture. The assembly focused on the theme, "Let Us Cross to the Other Shore."

Pope Francis explained that he joined the culture and education departments of the Holy See into one dicastery not for economic efficiency, but to inspire dialogue and innovation between the

two branches of the Church.

"The world does not need sleepwalking repeaters of the status quo," he said, "but new choreographers, interpreters of the potential within humans, new social poets."

Pope Francis said that schools, universities and cultural centers must teach people "to desire, to stay thirsty, to have dreams," rather than to "passively accept" the current state of the world.

While noting the record number of

students currently enrolled in schools, Pope Francis condemned the stark disparity between them and the 250 million children and young people who lack access to education.

"It is a moral imperative to change this situation, because cultural genocides do not happen only due to the destruction of heritage," he said. "It is cultural genocide when we steal the future from children, when we do not offer them conditions to become what they could be." †

Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Advent begins this year on Dec. 1. Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Advent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

Dec. 3, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
 Dec. 3, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
 Dec. 3, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
 Dec. 6, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Martin Church of All Saints Parish, Dearborn County
 Dec. 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
 Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
 Dec. 11, 6-8 p.m. at St. Maurice, Napoleon
 Dec. 12, 6-8 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Millhousen
 Dec. 17, 6:30 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Church of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Decatur County
 Dec. 17, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
 Dec. 18, 6-8 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
 Dec. 18, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
 Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
 Dec. 20, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora
 Dec. 20, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville

Bloomington Deanery

Dec. 11, 6-9 p.m. for St. Charles Borromeo, St. John the Apostle and St. Paul Catholic Center, all in Bloomington, at St. Paul Catholic Center
 Dec. 17, 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
 Dec. 18, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer
 Dec. 19, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
 Dec. 19, 6-7 p.m. for St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, and St. Mary, Mitchell, at St. Martin of Tours

Connersville Deanery

Dec. 5, 6-7 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville
 Dec. 11, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel, Connersville
 Dec. 13, 5:30-6:30 p.m. at Holy Family Church of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery

Dec. 4, 7 p.m. for St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) and Our Lady of Lourdes at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus
 Dec. 5, 7-9 p.m. at St. Mary
 Dec. 11, 6 p.m. at St. Rita
 Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at Holy Spirit
Additional opportunity for reconciliation on:
 Dec. 9, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, no appointment needed

Indianapolis North Deanery

Dec. 15, 2 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary
 Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence
 Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Luke the Evangelist

Indianapolis South Deanery

Dec. 5, 5 p.m. at St. Ann
 Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m. at St. Barnabas
 Dec. 11, 7 p.m. for St. Jude, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ and St. Mark the Evangelist parishes, at St. Jude
 Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. for Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, and Good Shepherd, at Holy Name of Jesus
 Dec. 21, 8:30 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

Dec. 3, 7 p.m. for St. Gabriel the Archangel and St. Monica at St. Monica.

New Albany Deanery

Dec. 3, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
 Dec. 3, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany
 Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
 Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. at St. John Paul II, Sellersburg
 Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
 Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
 Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
 Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
 Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
 Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier, Henryville



A priest hears a confession on July 17 in the Indiana Convention Center during the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

Seymour Deanery

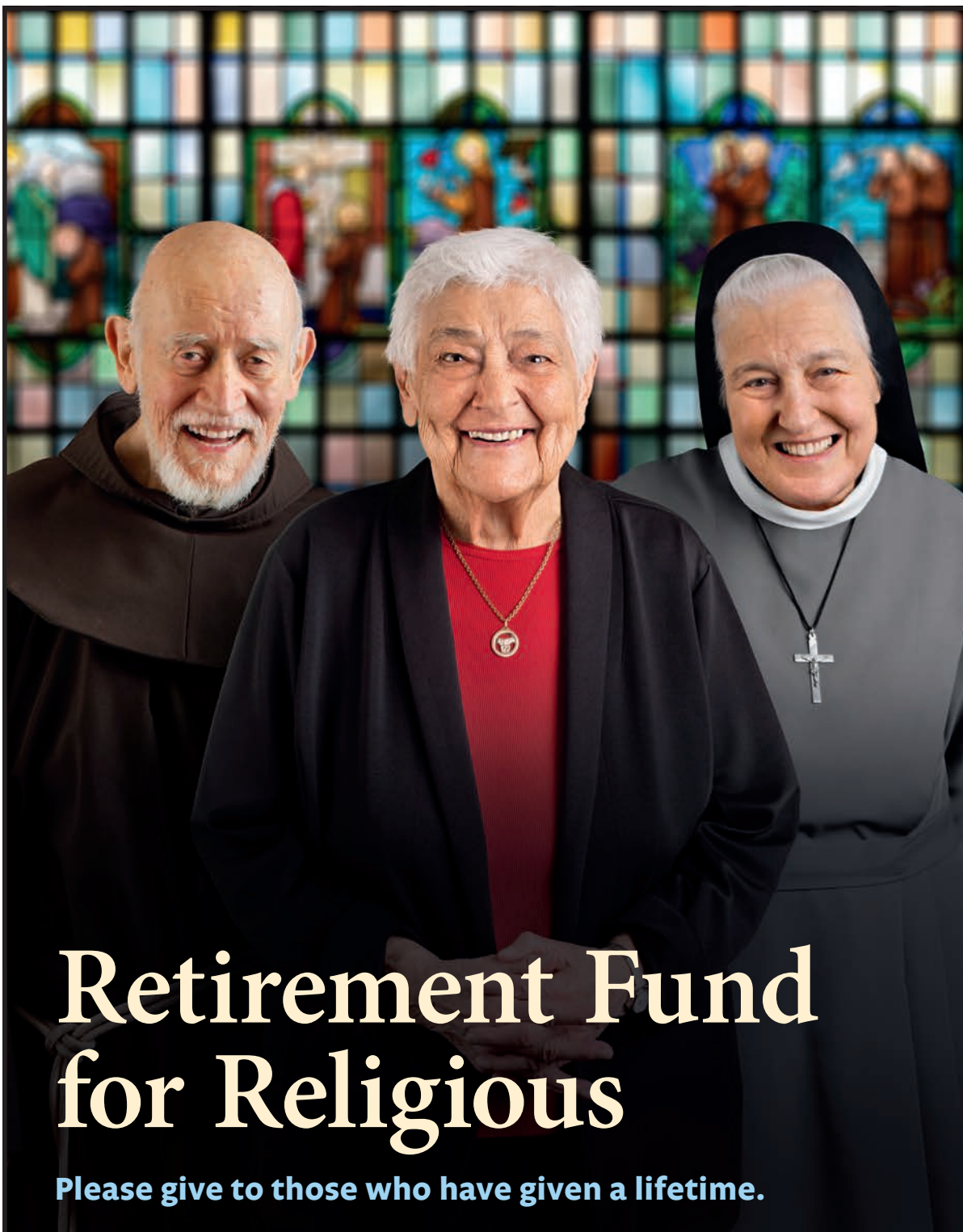
Dec. 4, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus
 Dec. 8, 9:30 a.m. at St. Patrick, Salem
 Dec. 8, 2 p.m. at American Martyrs, Scottsburg
 Dec. 10, 6 p.m. for Prince of Peace, Madison, and Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, at Prince of Peace
 Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Ambrose, Seymour
 Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at Holy Trinity, Edinburgh

Tell City Deanery

Dec. 15, 2 p.m. CT at St. Paul, Tell City
 Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. CT at St. Boniface, Fulda

Terre Haute Deanery

Dec. 18, 6 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
Recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Terre Haute Deanery are as follows:
 Saturdays 4-5:30 p.m. at St. Benedict
 Thursdays 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Saturdays 3:30-5 p.m. at St. Joseph University Church. †



Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

Our aging religious need your help.

Like those pictured, more than 24,000 senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests have dedicated their lives to service—praying, teaching, and caring for those in need—usually for little to no pay. Today, their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings for their support. Your donation is crucial and can help bridge this gap, providing critical support for their essential care, medicine, and daily needs. Please give back to those who have given a lifetime.

Please donate at your local parish, December 7-8, or by mail at:

Archdiocese of Indianapolis
 Mission Office
 1400 North Meridian Street
 Indianapolis IN 46202

Make check payable to Mission Office with Religious Retirement on the memo line.

retiredreligious.org

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

St. Joseph can help believers prepare for the coming of Christ

By Father Michael Ackerman

(OSV News)—Socrates, in Plato’s *Apology*, famously stated that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” This axiom is certainly applicable to the spiritual life, and it is very relevant to one of our greatest patrons—St. Joseph.

It is worthwhile to examine the lessons St. Joseph has taught us and consider how we can carry these into the great season of Advent.

A well-known American comic once said that “it’s the quiet ones you have to watch out for.” Now, I am confident that he was not referring to St. Joseph when he said this. However, when we reflect upon the life of St. Joseph, we really know nothing about him. St. Joseph is as stealthy as an international spy. There is no recorded dialogue from him in the Scriptures and no substantial *curriculum vitae* of record. He would be an excellent case for “Unsolved Mysteries” or the “X-Files.”

However, the silence of St. Joseph teaches us volumes. Pope Benedict XVI, in an *Angelus* address from Dec. 18, 2005, had this to say about St. Joseph’s taciturn demeanor: “St. Joseph’s silence does not express an inner emptiness, but on the contrary, the fullness of the faith he bears in his heart and which guides his every thought and action.”

Silence of God

The first lesson of St. Joseph for Advent then is to enter into the silence of God, which is teeming with grace, intimacy and unconditional love. Joseph was not silent because he had nothing to say. He was silent instead because he wanted to listen to and follow God completely.

Pope Francis, in his apostolic letter “*Patris Corde*” (“With a Father’s Heart”), writes about the silence of St. Joseph. “His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust” (#7).

Perhaps this Advent, we, too, can spend time in silent prayer, in quiet contemplation before the Blessed Sacrament or meditating on the words of Scripture in the recesses of our heart as did St. Joseph. Doing so does not bear futility, but instead, fertility and joyful anticipation of Christ’s coming into the world.

Service and self-denial

The second lesson that St. Joseph teaches us is one rooted in service and self-denial. Pope St. John Paul II in his 1989 apostolic exhortation “*Redemptoris Custos*” (“Guardian of the Redeemer”) writes this about St. Joseph: “His fatherhood is expressed concretely in ‘his having made his life a service, a sacrifice to the mystery of the incarnation and the redemptive mission connected with it; in having used the legal authority which was his over the Holy Family in order to make a total gift of self, of his life and work’” (#8).

St. Joseph did not allow his own passions or selfish wants and desires to dictate his actions. Instead, Joseph was docile and receptive to the will of God. His preparation for the coming of Christ was not filled with shopping, fighting

with relatives and baking cookies. Instead, he invites you and me to be disciples who serve others first, not ourselves.

Now, this can take a variety of forms. We can volunteer our time at church or in our communities assisting at food pantries, homeless shelters or rescue missions. We can assist those around us who are struggling right now financially, emotionally and especially spiritually. We can do this either in person or through charitable organizations.

Or we can make visits to those who are homebound, in hospitals, in nursing homes or who are unable to celebrate the birth of Christ with family and friends for a variety of reasons. There is no “correct” way to serve, but the desire to do so must be rooted in Joseph’s desire to serve God alone.

Simplicity

Third, St. Joseph teaches us a lesson of simplicity. The world in which we live is overly complex. We are so enamored with gadgets, technology, fashion and entertainment that we often miss what is essential. That is not the world of St. Joseph.

Pope Benedict, in an *Angelus* address from March 19, 2006, says this about Joseph’s simplicity: “His greatness, like Mary’s, stands out even more because his mission was carried out in the humility and hiddenness of the house of Nazareth. Moreover, God himself, in the person of his incarnate Son, chose this way and style of life—humility and hiddenness—in his earthly existence.”

St. Joseph was not out to make a name for himself. He was no social media influencer. Instead, the *raison d’être* for his life was to remain humble before God.

St. Joseph invites us during Advent to slow down and to appreciate the people, blessings and encounters with God taking place in our lives. Presents, decorating and entering the wild world of retail are probably not the best ways to prepare for Christ. Instead, spending time with our loved ones, sharing faith and experiences, or even making a personal retreat is of benefit in keeping things simple.

However, there is another thing that simplicity does: It allows us to increase our trust and dependence upon God.



A depiction of St. Joseph is seen in a stained-glass window in the chapel of St. Joseph’s College in Patchogue, N.Y., in this 2020 photo. Meditating and seeking to live out the qualities of the life and personality of St. Joseph can help Catholics prepare during Advent for the coming of Christ at Christmas. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

In “*Patris Corde*,” Pope Francis writes about the “creative courage” of St. Joseph. “God finds a way to save us,” he writes, “provided we show the same creative courage as the carpenter of Nazareth, who was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in divine providence” (#5). St. Joseph, because he was not distracted by the trappings of culture, was able to have fortitude in God’s plan because of his simple trust in a God who loved him. This same trust is accessible to us if we keep it simple.

Sacrifice

Finally, St. Joseph teaches you and me the value of sacrifice. Sacrifice is necessary for all of us in our vocations. Any parent, spouse, priest or religious knows the value and necessity of this. In his book *The Mystery of Joseph*, Dominican Father Marie-Dominique Philippe wrote of St. Joseph’s suffering:

“There is no doubt that the sword of sorrow penetrates Mary’s heart the most deeply, but it pierces Joseph’s heart as well. In their common suffering, in their shared sadness and anguish, Joseph and Mary come to know a new degree of intimacy; together they bear the first fruits of Jesus’ apostolic life.”

St. Joseph invites you and me in the struggles of life to unite our pain to the cross of Christ. Suffering is always a mystery, but it is not devoid of meaning. The more that we unite our pain and struggles to Christ, the more that we draw into the infinite love, mercy and forgiveness of God.

Joseph in denying his own objectives, wants and desires makes his will one with God. We are also called, like him, to unite and sacrifice. This can be done through charitable giving, fasting, increased prayer or giving things away we do not need. Regardless, sacrifice is crucial to ready the way for Christ.

This Advent presents an opportunity to increase our desire to emulate this great saint so loved by our Lady and our Savior. Silence, service, simplicity and sacrifice can at times be hard pills to swallow. But they do lead us closer to Christ and salvation. May the anticipated joy of Advent lead all of us to a deeper love of the Christ Child through the intercession of St. Joseph.

(Father Michael Ackerman is a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.) †



The Nativity scene is revealed and Christmas tree is lighted in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Dec. 9, 2023. The crèche is a reproduction of the scene in Greccio, Italy, where St. Francis of Assisi staged the first Nativity scene in 1223. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Watch and wait for Christ's coming in Advent with the innocence of children

Watching and waiting are at the heart of the season of Advent that the Church enters into this Sunday.

These are days of preparation for more than just the celebration of Christ's first coming at Christmas, though. The Church also invites us to return in our hearts and minds to the stance to which our Lord called us in the Gospels, attentively preparing for his return again in glory:



"Watch. ... You do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow or in

the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!' " (Mk 13:35-37).

We parents can see such watchfulness at this time of year in our young children who wait with great expectation for the gifts they hope to receive at Christmas, the time off they'll have from school and the chance to have fun and celebrate with family and friends.

Parents who have long lost the innocence of their children and can feel burdened by the many daily duties of caring for their family might find such eager waiting in their children a persistent unwelcome reminder of all the preparations they have to do to make Christmas special for their little ones.

But, with the help of God's grace, we parents can be drawn back closer to the watchful stance Christ calls us to through the witness given by our children's excited awaiting for Christmas.

While we can certainly fulfill Christ's call to us to prepare for his return by simply being faithful in doing God's will in the often little and sometimes big things in our daily lives, it might be good for us to have a more conscious watchfulness for our Lord coming into our lives.

That can be the case for us being open to him coming among us here and now in the people we're called to serve: our children and other relatives, neighbors, co-workers and people on the margins of society.

But there's something spiritually healthy in having a yearning, like the Israelites of old, for the coming of the Messiah in glory.

The absence of such a desire can suggest that we're

too attached to the things of this world. As good as this world can be—and God created it as good—always remember that our destiny in heaven infinitely transcends it.

Maybe our children's yearning in these days before Christmas for something that they've been dreaming of, for something that they do not have, cannot get for themselves and can only receive as a gift can be a friendly reminder to us adults.

It can be an invitation to allow God's grace to renew in us something of the innocence we've lost and to nurture in our hearts a conscious desire to see Christ return in all his glory.

As this yearning in our hearts is renewed, we are called to nurture it in the hearts of our children. For while their watching and waiting for their Christmas gifts can be a means for us to grow in grace, we don't want them to become too attached to this world like we might have become through the years.

Our joy at Christmas can grow beyond our dreams if we families, both parents and children alike, watch and wait together for the coming of Christ during this Advent season. †

Corrections Ministries/Deacon John Cord

New Jail Reinvestment Advisory Council mandate aims to help those in crisis

It seems like many government programs are not efficient or effective. The state of Indiana, however, has created something that is actually working.

Recently the state mandated that every county create a Jail Reinvestment Advisory Council (JRAC). The goal is to improve our law enforcement, judicial systems and health care as it relates to those with mental illness and addictions who find themselves in a crisis situation.



About a year ago, I was asked to sit on the newly forming JRAC team in Seymour for Jackson County. There are representatives from every law enforcement department, county jail, fire, EMS, judges, prosecutors, public defenders and many health organizations, including the hospital, mental health providers and clergy. At first, this group seemed to be resistant, thinking "here we go—another worthless meeting."

But we quickly gelled under the direction of a very well-trained person from the state.

The first order of business was to create and train a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) and to make it available to every first responder in the county. The goal of the CIT is to retrain these folks to respond to a person with a mental health or addiction crisis with compassion instead of force.

Normally, a police officer is trained to 1) ask the person to comply; 2) tell the person to comply; and 3) force the person to comply. However, many people in crisis simply don't understand or don't have the capacity to comply. The CIT training teaches a different method—to de-escalate with compassion and empathy. So far, we have trained about 20% of our first responders. We are starting to see a change in the attitudes of all of these folks as they find new ways to help instead of brutally confining someone.

The second order of business was to create a Sequential Intercept Map (SIM). The purpose of this exercise is to understand the current process for a person in crisis, from the moment someone calls 911 to the time they are stabilized and back home on their own and many months beyond.

We recently held a two-day SIM training. There were more than 70 representatives. We systematically walked through every step. The dispatchers told exactly what they do when they receive a 911 call from a family member about the person in crisis. They talked about who they currently dispatch—EMS, sheriff or police.

The police explained exactly how they normally handle the situation—both before CIT training and after being trained. We learned how they decide where to take to the person. It might be to a jail, to the hospital or to a crisis intervention center. We heard how each of these folks handle the person while in their care and what happens after they move them to the next agency. If the person committed a crime and needs to be detained, we heard from the jail about how they work with a person in crisis.

The judicial people explained their role in prosecution and sentencing. We again heard from the corrections systems. And finally, we heard what happens and where they go after being released back into the community.

During the second day, we talked about gaps and failures in the current system and how we could all work together to improve it to be more compassionate. We all agreed that people need help instead of time in jail. We formed several committees to work on these improvements.

I have never seen so many people from so many agencies work together almost perfectly. There was no shouting or arguing. We all worked for the common good of the person in need.

If Jesus would have been in the room those two days, I am sure he would have been pleased to hear and see these folks living out his sermon from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 25. They were truly compassionate about helping those most in need at their absolute worst hour. I could hear Jesus telling them, "Well done, my good and faithful servants" (Mt 25:23).

(Deacon John Cord is the coordinator of Corrections Ministry for the archdiocese. For more information on supporting the office's re-entry ministry, contact Deacon Cord at 317-432-6604 or e-mail jcord@archindy.org.) †

It Is Good/Elizabeth Scalia

Family and friends, the 2024 election and Thanksgiving: let gratitude be our attitude

Beyond my usual list of things to be grateful for—mercy, family, reasonable health, employment, the elders still among us and the children all around—I am



particularly thankful that none of our family members will be segregating themselves by ideologies, or indulging their pique over recent elections, by absenting themselves from the table until all the other people recant their votes.

Politically, our family is all over the place. Some voted for Kamala Harris for president and some voted for Donald Trump. Votes were cast from this family

for Jill Stein, Claudia De la Cruz and (not for the first time) a pal's mother, her name written in on a ballot.

Having listened to friends whose families have splintered or friendships have become strained over politics, I acknowledge that our gang's willingness to be peaceable (and glad to gather in this busy season) is yet another thing for which I give thanks.

It's something I've wondered about these past weeks: How does the family manage to discuss politics each election cycle, express their very different viewpoints, yet remain together?

First, I've come to realize that it's a diplomatic and conscious thing. We don't avoid the combustible subjects. If a headline or subject happens to come up organically in discussion, people offer their thoughts, sometimes with a slap on the table, for emphasis.

But there is also usually offered a kind of shrug to go with the opinions, one that is not dismissive but

rather humble; it's a shrug admitting that all of us are impressionable, influenced by our own histories, our social sets, our echo chambers and individual temperaments. Most importantly, it allows that each of us is actually entitled to our thoughts, and that within them we are very likely getting at least one thing wrong, so we're all in this together.

It's an important thing, that election season shrug; it gives the family enough air to keep breathing and to recall that throughout the year we love and value each other; we know the "good" of each other—the steadfast trustworthiness that we honor and prize all year long and have no desire to surrender to passing spells of hectoring hyperbole propelled by the noisiest of ideologues.

The shrug also helps us to remember that good people may disagree and still be good people, and that most of us are doing the best we can, by such light as we are given. And that God is not done with any of us yet, not even the politicians we hate and he (confoundingly!) still loves.

None of us can predict or understand what God permits in any given season, or why. Thus, we are tied up in boundless mystery—far beyond our preferred illusions of catastrophe or world peace. We know that, whatever any election's outcome, we will necessarily become like Mary in the upper room, watching and waiting to see what happens next.

Lately, in my *lectio divina*, I have been lingering over the Gospel of Matthew, where Jesus reminds us, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven" (Mt 18:10).

It's had me pondering the question, "Who, exactly, are the little ones?" In light of the Church's yet-to-be-formally-and-fully-atoned-for abuses, it is easy to define them as children, or the most trusting and vulnerable of adults. They include also the poor, the homeless, the lonely and marginalized.

Amid them, too, are the rejected—especially those who become even littler, even more in need of their God-beholding angels, when they've been cast aside by their very blood for becoming over-enthralled by the dubious theatricals of contemporary politics.

Further in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus warns that if we are unwilling to show mercy to others, "Also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart" (Mt 18:35).

Mercy is a delicate thing. It mustn't be taken for granted, nor immovably or maliciously withheld, lest we make ourselves newly accountable (yes, vulnerable) to God's justice.

But offering mercy also makes us a trifle vulnerable, too, doesn't it? To say, "I'm not holding it against you," after familial contretemps, means (in part) that one is committing to a way of more respectful acceptance and peace.

And the way of acceptance and peace, it increasingly seems to me, requires understanding that in these unsettled times, so fraught with old problems and new questions, we are each of us, in our own ways, "the little ones" who must not be despised.

(Elizabeth Scalia is editor at large for OSV. Follow her on X [formerly known as Twitter] @the anchoress.) †

First Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, December 1, 2024

- Jeremiah 33:14-16
- 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2
- Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

This weekend begins the Church's year. Advent is usually seen simply as a time to prepare for the feast of Christmas, and in the current American culture, a tempered, penitential season seems out of order.



Actually, the season is for us a new beginning. Advent summons us to consider the coming of Jesus into our own

hearts. It calls us to prepare ourselves for the final coming of Jesus at the end of time.

Christmas symbolizes these additional occasions of the Lord's arrival into our hearts. Advent is a penitential season. With the help of God's grace, we must focus upon Jesus, uprooting our tendencies and vices that separate us from God.

Jeremiah is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. His theme, as it was the theme of all the prophets, was that God's people could expect no peace or joy in their lives until they wholeheartedly returned to God.

In this reading, the prophet notes the sad state of affairs for God's people. Misery is their lot. Sin has produced this unhappy situation.

Always merciful, good and protective, God will send into their midst a Savior, a descendant of King David. This Savior will bring justice.

St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians supplies the next reading. It is an appeal to the Christians of Thessalonica (now the Greek city of Saloniki) to love each other. This love will signify inwardly following the Lord. Paul ends his message by earnestly exhorting the Christian Thessalonians to live their lives in a way pleasing to God.

St. Luke's Gospel gives this weekend's liturgy its third reading. It is forthright, even stark, as is typical of Luke's Gospel. Quoting Jesus, it states that suddenly and overwhelmingly will come signs in the sky in the sun, moon and stars. Nations

will be in anguish. The seas will roar. People will die of fright.

Amid all this great drama, Jesus will come in might and in glory. The Lord's arrival will be an occasion to rejoice. He will bring final redemption.

All actively anticipate the Lord's coming by praying and sacrifice.

This Gospel was written when, for Christians, the world was a difficult place to be. Certainly, the culture was against them. The political authority was also turning against them. With Jesus, truly devoted followers prevailed.

Reflection

Christmas, in cultures around the world, is soft and lovely. It is the acclamation of life itself, and of redemption, even as it recalls the earthly birth of the Son of God to Mary in Bethlehem. But Advent is somber.

In much of the United States, days are cold. Nights are long. It almost is as if nature itself tells us that life can be less than delightful. This is reality.

The Church uses Advent to teach us a lesson. Earthly life will end. It always changes.

As St. Luke's Gospel so bluntly says, as Advent says, Christ one day will confront us all. It may be a personal meeting. It will be at the end of time, in some manner yet unknown, but about which the Scriptures offer such colorful hints.

It will be for us a great day, if we have followed the Lord in our own lives. Jeremiah looks to such a day of salvation and victory.

On that day, good will stand starkly opposite evil. Victory will come if we chose the side of right and of God, even when days are cold and nights are long. We need strength to choose what is good. Evil is powerful. It lures us to death.

God will strengthen us, but we must ask for this strength. Our request must be sincere, honest and uncompromised to be authentic.

Advent reminds us God's love and light warm and brighten our hearts, whatever the season. †

Daily Readings

Monday, December 2

Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalm 122:1-9
Matthew 8:5-11

Tuesday, December 3

St. Francis Xavier, priest
Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17
Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday, December 4

St. John Damascene, priest and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 25:6-10a
Psalm 23:1-6
Matthew 15:29-37

Thursday, December 5

Isaiah 26:1-6
Psalm 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a
Matthew 7:21, 24-27

Friday, December 6

St. Nicholas, bishop
Isaiah 29:17-24
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14
Matthew 9:27-31

Saturday, December 7

St. Ambrose, bishop and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26
Psalm 147:1-6
Matthew 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8

Sunday, December 8

Second Sunday of Advent
Baruch 5:1-9
Psalm 126:1-6
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
Luke 3:1-6

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Is the feast of the Immaculate Conception a holy day of obligation this year?

Q Is Dec. 9 a day of obligation? Is this rule new? Is it just for America? (New York)



A Normally, Dec. 9 is not a holy day of obligation, but it is this year in the United States due to a quirk of the calendar.

For some background, Canon 1246 of the *Code of Canon Law* tells

us that "the Lord's Day, on which the paschal mystery is celebrated, is by apostolic tradition to be observed in the universal Church as the primary holy day of obligation"—that is, a day where the faithful are obligated to attend Mass. "In the same way, the following holy days are to be observed: the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Epiphany, the Ascension of Christ, the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, the feast of Mary the Mother of God, her Immaculate Conception, her Assumption, the feast of St. Joseph, the feast of the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul, and the feast of All Saints."

But the same canon goes on to add: "However, the episcopal conference may, with the prior approval of the Apostolic See, suppress certain holy days of obligation."

This means that the actual holy days of obligation a Catholic are required to observe essentially depends on where they live, since the local bishops' conference is empowered to edit the universal list of obligations to better account for the pastoral needs of the people in their region.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) "complementary norms" (i.e., the list of Church laws specific to the United States which the *Code of Canon Law* empowers bishops' conferences to

make) tells us that American Catholics, in a departure from the universal law, are not obligated to observe the feasts of St. Joseph or SS. Peter and Paul as holy days of obligation.

Where things can get a little bit confusing is how the USCCB complementary norms also indicate: "Whenever January 1, the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, or August 15, the solemnity of the Assumption, or November 1, the solemnity of All Saints, falls on a Saturday or on a Monday, the precept to attend Mass is abrogated."

This means that for these specific feast days, if and only if they fall on a Saturday or Monday in a given year, then the faithful already fulfill their obligation by attending Mass as usual on the neighboring Sunday.

Note that the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, as the patronal feast of the United States, is not included in this list of "holy days of occasional non-obligation." Even if the Immaculate Conception falls on a Saturday or Monday, the faithful of the United States are obliged to attend Mass that day even if they have already gone to Sunday Mass the day before or after.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is generally not considered a "movable feast." That is, in contrast to a holy day like Easter where the actual calendar date changes from year to year, the Immaculate Conception is tied to the specific date of Dec. 8.

But this year, Dec. 8 falls on the second Sunday of Advent. Since the Sundays during special seasons such as Advent and Lent have a particular importance in our liturgical year, they take precedence over other feast days. The solution for competing solemnities is to transfer the liturgical celebration of the non-Sunday holy day to the first subsequent available date. Thus, in the year 2024, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated in our liturgy on Monday, Dec. 9.

There was some question among canon lawyers as to whether the obligation to attend Mass transferred along with the liturgical observance of the holy day, but the Holy See recently clarified that it indeed does. However, because there is still some widespread misunderstanding on this point, some dioceses in the United States are dispensing their faithful from the obligation. (*Editor's note: In the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Dec. 9 will be a holy day of obligation this year.*)

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

My Journey to God

Advent Promise

By Benedictine Sister Susan Lindstrom

All the earth in
Darkness clothed, each soul a
Vessel
Emptied, awaiting
Nativity,
Trembling in awe
Pondering in stillness
Reflecting in silence
Open to
Mystery,
Incarnate Word
Shattering complacency,
Empowering life!

(Benedictine Sister Susan Lindstrom is a member of Our Lady of Grace monastery of the Sisters of St. Benedict in Beech Grove. Photo: The final candle awaits to be lit on an Advent wreath at St. Agnes Church in Arlington, Va., on Dec. 21, 2023.) (OSV News file photo/Ann M. Aughterton, Arlington Catholic Herald)



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.

- BECKMAN, Ron**, 69, St. Mary, Lanesville, Nov. 7. Husband of Karen Beckman. Father of Sara and Joseph Beckman. Brother of Carol Eversman and Deborah Ludwig. Grandfather of two.
- BENNETT, Stephen**, 87, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 13. Husband of Kathleen Bennett. Father of Deborah Boiteau, Julie Carmel, Carolyn and Michelle Carnes and Stephen Bennett. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of nine.
- BOREM, Mark D.**, 52, St. Mary, Rushville, Nov. 5. Brother of Ann Holland. Uncle and great-uncle of several.
- FLEMING, Mary K.**, 86, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, April 29. Sister of Michael and Dr. John P. Fleming. Aunt of several.
- HEIDELBERGER, Daniel W.**, 66, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Oct. 1. Brother of Linda Johnston, Darlene

- Lime, Harry, John and Stephen Heidelberg. Uncle of several.
- KASH, Kimberly A.**, 56, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Nov. 11. Wife of Rick Kash. Mother of Allison Haire, Brooke, Morgan and Ryan Kash. Daughter of Richard and Mary Lonneman. Sister of Brian, Christopher, Stephen and Tim Lonneman. Grandmother of one.
- LEWEN, Mona C.**, 73, St. Mary, New Albany, Nov. 6. Wife of Robert Lewen, Jr. Mother of Liz, Douglas, Dustin and Greg Lewen. Sister of Rhonda Eckbert, Joe, John, Orthodox Archbishop Mark and Pat Maymon. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of four.
- MAIER, David C.**, 53, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 3. Husband of Jennifer Maier. Father of Samantha, Alan, Ben and Drew Maier. Son of Carl and Debbie Maier. Brother of Jason and Michael Maier.
- MANSMANN, Lois M.**, 89, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Nov. 12. Mother of Patti Freiburger, Don and Doug Mansmann. Sister of George Miller. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of one.
- MEUNIER, Helen M.**, 99, Annunciation, Brazil, Nov. 7. Mother of Helen, Bernie and Chris Meunier. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of one.
- PIKE, Andrew**, 45, Annunciation, Brazil, Oct. 31. Son of Cynthia Pike. Brother of Becky Glines, Stephanie Joy and Danny Pike. Uncle of several.
- RANOCHAK, Catherine**, 99, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Nov. 5. Mother of Patty Beckler, Kathy Mogelson, Chris Nartker, Jim Patte, David and Kevin Ranochak. Sister

A youthful prayer



Attendees pray on Nov. 16 during the National Catholic Youth Conference in Long Beach, Calif. More than 3,000 young people attended the Nov. 14-16 event. (OSV News photo/Victor Aleman, Angelus News)

- of Rita. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 13.
- SECRET, Harry**, 87, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute, Nov. 16. Husband of Rosaline Secret. Father of Robbin Haase, Laura Herrell, David and Eric Lindsay, and Eric and Gregory Secret. Grandfather and great-grandfather of several.
- SHIRCLIFF, Brenda**, 76, St. Joseph, Corydon, Nov. 13. Mother of Jetta Lilpop,

- Ella Logsdon, Rebecca and Carl Shircliff. Sister of Sara Deatrick, Barbara Robson, Dale and Tim Babcock. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of five.
- SNYDER, Patricia C.**, 91, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Nov. 12. Mother of Theresa Love, Brian, Daniel, Michael and Timothy Snyder. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 15. Great-great-grandmother of three.

- SPRENGER, John D.**, 94, St. Ambrose, Seymour, Nov. 11. Husband of Irene Sprenger. Father of Karen Sprenger Surface.
- THARP, Sharon M.**, 68, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Nov. 15. Mother of Kelly Franklin, Ann and Michael Tharp. Daughter of Lawrence and Cathryn Farley. Sister of Karen Tinkler, Bruce and Lawrence Farley, Jr. Grandmother of two.

- WILCOX, Christine**, 73, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 16. Wife of Al Wilcox. Mother of Tricia Wells and Bill Wilcox. Daughter of Jean Skrentny. Sister of Sharon Kauth, Lauren Vaverka, David and Michael Skrentny. Grandmother of four.
- WILLIAMS, Mary Jo**, 81, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Nov. 16. Mother of Angie and Jeff Williams. Grandmother of two. †

Pope Francis approves simplified rites for papal funeral and burial

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis, who will celebrate his 88th birthday in December, has approved simplified liturgical rites for the death of a pontiff.

His body will rest in a zinc-lined wooden casket, according to the new rites. Recent popes had been buried inside a cypress wood coffin surrounded by another coffin made of lead, which was then covered by a third wooden coffin.

Vatican News carried a story on Nov. 20 about the second edition of the “*Ordo Exsequiarum Romani Pontificis*” (“Funeral Rites of the Roman Pontiff”). The book updates the rites originally approved by St. John Paul II in 1998, technically published in 2000, but released only when St. John Paul died in 2005. Modified versions of the rites were used after Pope Benedict XVI died on Dec. 31, 2022.

Archbishop Diego Ravelli, master of papal liturgical ceremonies, told Vatican News the revised edition was

needed, “first of all because Pope Francis asked, as he himself stated on several occasions, to simplify and adapt some of the rites so that the celebration of the bishop of Rome’s funeral would better express the Church’s faith in the risen Christ.”

And, he said, the revised rites highlight “even more that the Roman pontiff’s funeral is that of a shepherd and disciple of Christ and not of a powerful man of this world.”

Pope Francis approved the new rites on April 29 and received the first printed copy of the book on Nov. 4, Vatican News reported.

The new rites maintain the practice of having the deceased pope’s body placed in St. Peter’s Basilica for public viewing and prayer before the funeral. However, instead of lying on a catafalque, that is, a kind of decorated platform, the body will be placed inside the coffin which will remain open until the night before the funeral, the Vatican News article said.

The rites still are divided into three “stations” based on the place they occur: “at home, in the Vatican basilica and at the burial place.” However, instead of ritually verifying the death of the pope in his bedroom, the new rite specifies that it take place in his private chapel and that he be placed inside the coffin before being carried into St. Peter’s Basilica.

Vatican News reported the book also includes “the necessary indications for possible burial in a place other than the Vatican basilica.” Pope Francis said in an interview a year ago that he plans on being buried at Rome’s Basilica of St. Mary Major.

Much of the revision has to do with updated language in the prayers and Scripture readings to match revised translations of the Mass prayers, Lectionary and Bible in Latin and in Italian, Archbishop Ravelli said. And more saints, including all of the popes who have been canonized, are included in the Litany of Saints chanted as the body of the deceased pope is carried in procession from his private chapel into St. Peter’s Basilica.

The revised rites still call for memorial Masses to be celebrated at the Vatican for nine days after his funeral.

Archbishop Ravelli said the rites give precise indications for celebrating the funeral and burial of “a disciple of Christ chosen as successor of Peter.” †



Pope Francis touches the casket of Pope Benedict XVI at the conclusion of his funeral Mass in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Jan. 5, 2023. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

According to statistics, 50% of marriages end in divorce.

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Feb 14-16, 2025

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- 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

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REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

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

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

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

Investing with Faith/Marty Kaiser

Charitable giving strategies: from the simple to the complex

Charitable giving is done for many reasons. It can be a way to provide help to those less fortunate, to support a ministry we feel passionate about or to honor a loved one.



Whatever the motivation, the U.S. tax code encourages these gifts. And while giving is not about saving on taxes, there are many ways to make your charitable dollars go further by using the tax code to your benefit. Below, I'll briefly outline a few of the ways to give and possible tax implications, from the simplest to more complex strategies.

—**Cash gifts.** The easiest, quickest way to give is by check, credit card or debit card. You can possibly get an income tax deduction for this gift if you itemize on your federal tax return. (However, after the minimum deduction amount for charitable contributions was increased in 2018, most people now use the federal standard deduction.) Some charitable contributions can result in a tax credit on Indiana tax returns.

—**Donating appreciated assets.** Even if you do not itemize on your federal tax return, giving an appreciated asset like a stock directly to a charity may provide a tax benefit, like avoiding capital gains tax. If you do itemize, the fully appreciated amount of the gift is deductible.

—**Qualified charitable distributions (QCDs).** After age 70½, you can make QCDs directly from your traditional (pre-tax) IRA. For 2024, the QCD limit is \$105,000. These distributions are not included in your taxable income. If you are taking required minimum distributions (RMDs), QCDs count toward your distribution requirement.

—**Naming a charity as beneficiary of your traditional IRA or annuity.** When you name a charity as the beneficiary of your taxable retirement account, the assets in the account will pass directly to the charity upon your death, avoiding income tax on the distribution.

—**Donor advised funds.** Setting up a donor advised fund is a great way to set aside funds for future charitable giving. To save on taxes, make a large tax-deductible contribution to the donor

advised fund and then give the funds to charities through time. The fund grows tax-free and can be invested for growth. Note: the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation (CCF) offers Catholic donor advised funds.

—**Creating an endowment at a community foundation (like the CCF).** An endowment is a permanent fund established to support charitable causes. When you create an endowment, you donate a specific amount of money to the foundation, and the foundation invests the funds and uses the earnings to support your designated charitable purposes.

—**Naming a charity in your will.** Naming a charity in your will is a straightforward way to make a bequest after your death. You can choose a specific amount or percentage of your estate to be donated to your chosen charity.

—**Advanced techniques.** A charitable remainder trust is a legal arrangement that allows you to make a gift to a charity while retaining a lifetime income stream, while a charitable lead trust is a legal arrangement where you transfer assets to a trust and the trust pays a fixed or variable income stream to a charity for a specified period. After

the term ends, the remaining assets are distributed to your beneficiaries.

These are all wonderful ways to give to the important charitable causes in your life, like your favorite parish, school or archdiocesan ministry. You can make a significant impact while maximizing the benefits of your generosity.

Whether you are looking for a simple, straightforward approach or a more complex technique to optimize your tax savings, there is a giving strategy that is right for you. If you would like to know more about using one of these techniques, please reach out to the Catholic Community Foundation.

(Marty Kaiser, a parishioner at St. Paul Parish in Tell City, is the senior executive vice president and financial advisory group manager at Springs Valley Bank & Trust in southwestern Indiana. He serves on both his parish council as well as the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation Professional Advisory Group. This article is not intended as tax or legal advice. CCF can be reached at 317-236-1482 or ccf@archindy.org.) †

Laity, women do not rank last in the Church, pope says at general audience

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—There are no second-class Christians, Pope Francis said. The laity, including women, and the clergy all have special gifts to edify the Church in unity and holiness.

“The laity are not in last place. No. The laity are not a kind of external collaborator or the clergy’s ‘auxiliary troops.’ No! They have their own charisms and gifts with which to contribute to the mission of the Church,” the pope said on Nov. 20 at his general audience in St. Peter’s Square.

Continuing a series of talks on the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, Pope Francis looked at

how the Holy Spirit builds up the body of Christ through the outpouring of charismatic gifts.

The Holy Spirit “distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts, he makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church,” he said, quoting from the Second Vatican Council’s “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church” (“*Lumen Gentium*”).

A charism is “the gift given for the common good, to be useful for everyone. It is not, in other words, destined principally and ordinarily for the sanctification of the

person. No. It is intended, however, for the service of the community,” Pope Francis said.

“Secondly, the charism is the gift given to one or to some in particular, not to everyone in the same way, and this is what distinguishes it from sanctifying grace, from the theological virtues and from the sacraments, which instead are the same and common to all,” he said.

The definition of a charism is also part of what Pope Benedict XVI described in “the process of true renewal, which often took unexpected forms in living movements and made almost tangible the inexhaustible vitality of the holy Church.” †

Classified Directory

Construction

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PH: 317-787-4638
danshearhu@gmail.com

Dan Shea, RHU
Long time Parishioner of St John the Evangelist
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Employment

Maintenance Technician

This full-time, hourly, position is responsible for the maintenance of several buildings.

Duties include:

- Completing repairs, preventative maintenance and maintenance tasks on buildings and grounds.
- Responding, in a timely manner, to internal equipment repair needs.
- A verifiable background in building maintenance.
- A working knowledge of all building systems and components.
- The ability to evaluate and repair existing equipment.
- The ability to work with contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers.
- An ability to work with the Archdiocesan staff.
- Basic computer skills.
- Good organizational and communication skills.

If you are interested in this position, please send your resume to:
dherbertz@archindy.org.

TRIBUNAL ADVOCATE

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a Canonical Advocate for the Metropolitan Tribunal office located in the Bishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center. The Advocate is responsible for assisting persons who are seeking to establish their freedom to marry in the Catholic Church or to clarify their marital status in accordance with Canon Law.

The qualified candidate must have at least a bachelor’s degree (a degree in Canon Law is preferred). Two years of legal and/or pastoral experience or other relevant life experience is preferred. The qualified candidate must also be a Catholic in good standing, have a general understanding and acceptance of the Church’s teachings regarding marriage, have excellent verbal and written communication skills, strong organizational skills, and computer knowledge.

The position is an opportunity to work directly in Church ministry that serves people’s human and spiritual needs. To obtain a description of the Advocate position and an employment application, please contact: Mrs. Kay Summers, Associate Director of the Tribunal, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202 or by e-mail: ksummers@archindy.org. Applications will be accepted through January 1, 2025.

Benefits

Full-time employees may participate in a benefits program that includes: Comprehensive Health plan; Paid Parental Leave; Employer contributed HSA for medical plan participants; FSA and Dependent Care FSA; Dental Insurance; Paid Vacation, Sick, and Personal Days; Life and Disability Insurance; and 403(b) matching.



2024

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- Office of Catholic Schools
- Clergy retirement
- Seminarian education
- Retired priests support
- Catholic Charities
- Mother Theodore Catholic Academies

Questions: Contact Dana at 317-236-1591.

www.archindy.org/UCA



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Questions: Contact Val at 317-236-1426.

www.i4qed.org/donate



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