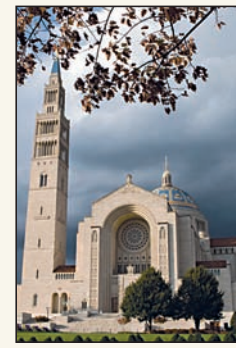




The

Criterion

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A retreat on wheels

Pilgrimage to nation's capital to include visits to holy sites, page 3.

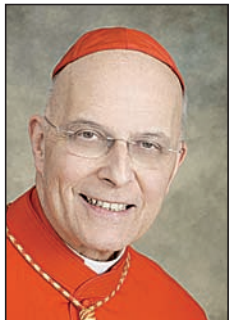
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March 26, 2010

Vol. L, No. 24 75¢

Cardinal praises expanded health care, but fears remain on abortion

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops praised new health reform legislation for expanding health care to more Americans, but said the bishops and the Catholic community will be watching closely to ensure that the new law does not expand federal funding of abortion.



Cardinal Francis E. George

“We are apprehensive as we look to the future, even as we applaud much of the increased care that will be available,” Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago told Catholic News Service on March 23, shortly after President Barack Obama signed into law

the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

See related editorial, page 4.

“So we will watch basically and try to continue to enter into conversations as a moral voice—never as a political voice. We’ve been very careful to insist upon the moral principles that everybody should be cared for and no one should be deliberately killed,” he added.

Cardinal George acknowledged in the interview that “the unity of the Church has been wounded” in various political actions and conversations surrounding the health reform debate. The USCCB opposed the Senate bill that passed the House on March 21 while some Catholic groups and members of Congress supported it.

“We are certainly concerned about division in the Church because bishops have to be the people who are concerned about its unity, about keeping people together around Christ,” he said.

“The bishops know that they don’t speak for every one of the 61 million Catholics in the country, but what we do is we speak for the Catholic faith itself,” he said. “And those who share the faith will gather around.”

The cardinal said it remained to be seen whether the executive order promised by Obama would be adequate to keep the

See HEALTH CARE, page 9

The warmth of God's arms



As the director of community and youth services at Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis, Emily Able often brings a smile and caring touch to her efforts to help homeless children and their parents build a new life of hope.

Photo by John Shaughnessy

Youth director embraces shelter's goal of changing heartbreak to hope for homeless children and parents

By John Shaughnessy

In his dreams, the boy never imagined celebrating his 10th birthday in a shelter for homeless families.

He also never dreamed how special that birthday would turn out to be.

As he woke that morning at Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis, the boy just knew how much his life had changed in the past few weeks. He and his single mother had to leave their home, their neighborhood and the friends they had known. He sensed the helplessness that his mom felt. He saw the fear in her eyes, a fear that he felt, too.

He also feared that his birthday would pass unnoticed amid all the uncertainties in their lives.

The boy didn't know an employee at the shelter—Emily Able—had seen the paperwork that showed the date of his birthday. He didn't know that she took the time to get him a birthday cake and select presents for him from an extra

supply of gifts that people had donated during the Christmas season.

“We always recognize a child’s birthday here,” says Able, the director of community and youth services at Holy Family Shelter. “When he saw the gifts and the cake, he was surprised. He said, ‘I never had a cake before.’ There were tears in his eyes.”

There are tears in her eyes as she finishes that story.

Making the connection

The stories from Holy Family Shelter tend to be emotional.

Sometimes those stories are touched by joy, including the celebration in December when the archdiocese’s new 30,000-square-foot shelter opened on the near west side in Indianapolis, providing a much larger haven of hope for homeless families, married couples, expectant mothers and single parents with children.

Too often, the stories from the shelter are touched with heartbreak, especially considering the impact of suddenly being

homeless on children.

“Our kids, even the ones who want to act tough, are affected hugely by what happens to their parents,” Able says. “They lose a home, their friend next door and the neighborhood they’re used to seeing. They’re also going through the trauma of their family being stressed. Some parents cry. Some yell. Some stay in their rooms. There’s stress, confusion and even fear for our kids. They have fear for themselves, their parents, their little siblings. They’re carrying the brunt of a lot of things they shouldn’t be carrying.”

The 28-year-old Able works to lift that burden from their minds and their lives. One of the primary ways she does it is by providing stability in their schooling.

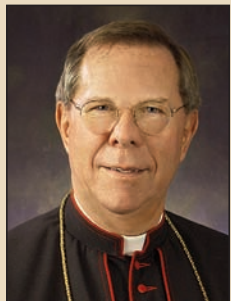
“There’s federal legislation called the McKinney Vento Act that says that every homeless child has the right to attend their school of origin,” notes Able, a 2000 graduate of Roncalli High

See HOMELESS, page 8

Archbishop Buechlein to have surgery to remove tumor

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

A recent medical checkup revealed that I have a small tumor that will need to be surgically removed.



The tumor is not related to the Hodgkin’s lymphoma that I had in 2008. My doctors believe the tumor is benign, and want to remove it as a

precautionary measure.

I am waiting for the results of further tests, but I expect to have surgery in mid- or late April.

I’ve been told I may need four to five weeks of recovery time following the surgery. I regret the interruption this may cause in my normal obligations.

I do not expect the day-to-day operations of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to be greatly affected. We are blessed to have so many dedicated and hardworking clergy, religious and parish life coordinators

as well as an excellent administrative staff. Our many ministries will continue as usual.

This is all the information I have at the moment. I would appreciate your prayers, and please know that I will continue to pray for all of you.

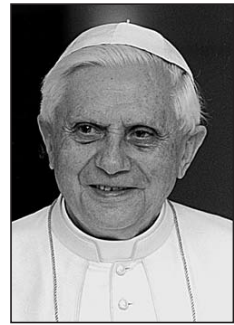
Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop Buechlein, *D*

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis
March 22, 2010

Pope apologizes to Irish abuse victims, orders Vatican investigation

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In a letter to Irish Catholics, Pope Benedict XVI personally apologized to victims of priestly sexual abuse and announced new steps to heal the wounds of the scandal, including a Vatican investigation and a year of penitential reparation.



Pope Benedict XVI

“You have suffered grievously and I am truly sorry. I know that nothing can undo the wrong you have endured. Your trust has been betrayed and your dignity has been violated,” he told victims in his letter released on March 20 at the Vatican.

The pope told priest abusers that they would answer to God for their sins. He said bishops had made serious mistakes in responding to allegations of sexual abuse, and he encouraged them to implement new Church norms against abuse and cooperate with civil authorities in such cases.

“Only decisive action carried out with complete honesty and transparency will restore the respect and good will of the Irish people toward the Church,” he said.

The 4,600-word letter was distributed at Masses across Ireland on March 20-21, and priests there prepared homilies on the text. The letter came in response to the disclosure last fall that Irish Church leaders had often protected abusive priests over the last 35 years. Similar allegations have since come to light in Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland.

Pope Benedict, who met with Irish bishops to discuss the problem in February, began his letter by saying he shared in the sense of betrayal Irish Catholics felt when they learned of these “sinful and criminal acts” and the “often inadequate response” by Church authorities in Ireland.

He said he was convinced that the Church, having adopted strict new measures against sexual abuse, was now on the right path. But the healing process for Irish Catholics will take time and requires a deeper spiritual renewal, he said.

“No one imagines that this painful situation will be resolved swiftly,” he wrote.

The pope pointed out that he had met with sex abuse victims before, and said he was ready to do so again. Many in Ireland have called for a papal meeting with those who suffered abuse at the hands of priests.

To the victims of abuse and their families, the pope offered sympathy and understanding.

He noted that many victims found that, when they had the courage to denounce the abuse, “no one would listen.” Those abused in Catholic residential institutions must have felt that there was no escape from their sufferings, he said.

“It is understandable that you find it hard to forgive or be reconciled with the Church. In her name, I openly express the shame and remorse that we all feel. At the same time, I ask you not to lose hope,” he said.

Addressing priests and religious who have abused children, the pope declared: “You betrayed the trust that was placed in you by innocent young people and their parents, and you must answer for it before almighty God and before properly constituted tribunals.”

Priest abusers, he said, have “violated the sanctity of the sacrament of Holy Orders in which Christ makes himself present in us and in our actions.” He said those who have abused should openly acknowledge their guilt, try to atone personally for what they have done and “do not despair of God’s mercy.”

The pope urged bishops to fully implement the Church’s new policies against abuse and to “continue to cooperate with the civil authorities in their area of competence.”

“It cannot be denied that some of you and your predecessors failed, at times grievously, to apply the long-established norms of canon law to the crime of child abuse. Serious mistakes were made in responding to allegations,” he said.

The pope said he had ordered an apostolic visitation, or internal Church investigation, of certain dioceses in Ireland, as well as seminaries and religious congregations. He said details would be announced later.

The step was an apparent effort to find out more precisely how and why mistakes were made in the handling of abuse cases.

The pope identified several contributing factors to clerical sex abuse, among them a “misplaced concern for the reputation of the Church” that led to a failure to apply existing penalties against abuse. He also pointed to inadequate selection of priesthood candidates, poor formation programs and a tendency in society to favor the clergy and other authority figures.

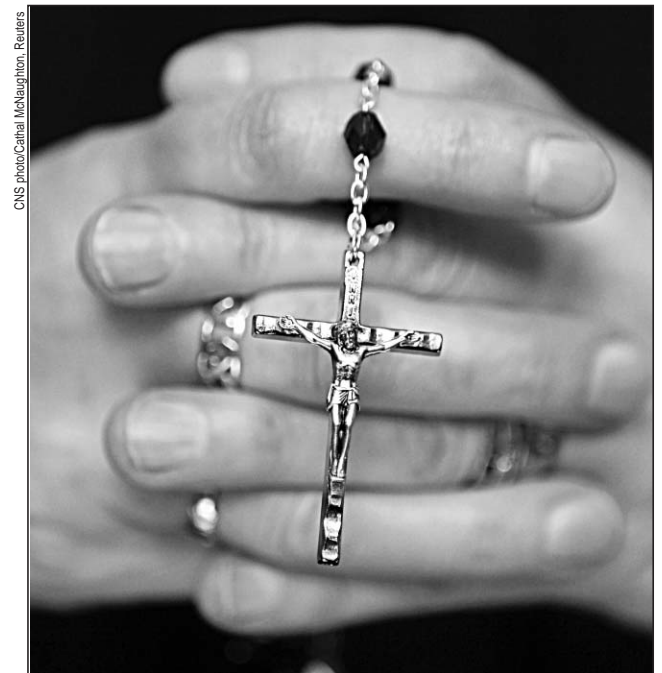
At the same time, he said priestly sexual abuse was linked to more general developments, including the secularization of Irish society and of Irish clergy and religious themselves, and misinterpretation of the Second Vatican Council.

In addition to the apostolic visitation, the pope announced two other “concrete initiatives” to help Irish bishops repair the damage in the Church:

- A yearlong period, from Easter 2010 to Easter 2011, of penitential and devotional practices with the intention of strengthening holiness and strength in the Church in Ireland.

In particular, he said, eucharistic adoration should be set up in every diocese, so that “through intense prayer before the real presence of the Lord, you can make reparation for the sins of abuse that have done so much harm,” he said.

- A nationwide “mission” to be held for all bishops,



A woman holds a rosary during Mass at a church in Armagh, Northern Ireland, on March 21. Pope Benedict XVI issued a pastoral letter to Ireland’s Catholics on March 20 apologizing to victims of priestly sexual abuse.

priests and religious, to promote a better understanding of their vocations by drawing on the expertise of preachers and retreat-givers, and by studying Vatican II documents and more recent teachings.

The pope cited Ireland’s immense past contributions to the Church, and the great sacrifices made by Irish Catholics. That sense of faith needs to be renewed, even in the face of the recent scandals, he said.

Addressing young people in Ireland, he urged them not to give up on the Church.

“We are all scandalized by the sins and failures of some of the Church’s members,” he said.

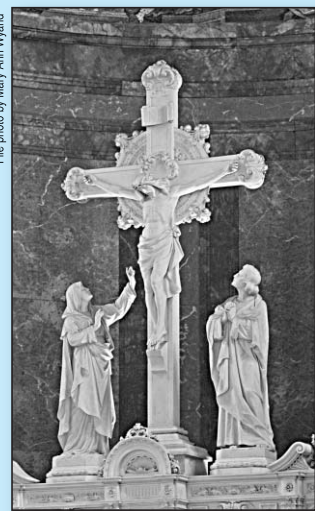
“But it is in the Church that you will find Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever,” he said.

The pope told Irish Catholics he was sending his letter “with the care of a father for his children and with the affection of a fellow Christian, scandalized and hurt by what has occurred in our beloved Church.”

He closed the letter with a prayer that said: “May our sorrow and tears, our sincere efforts to redress past wrongs, and our firm purpose of amendment bear an abundant harvest of grace.”

(The full text of the papal letter is available on the Vatican Web site by clicking on the “Letter to the Catholics of Ireland” link at www.vatican.va/phome_en.htm.) †

Holy Week liturgies set at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Saint Meinrad



Holy Week liturgies for SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis and Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad are open to the public.

Due to space constraints, *The Criterion* is only able to list these two Holy Week schedules. For information about liturgies at parishes or other religious communities, contact them individually.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

March 27—5 p.m. Vigil Mass for Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion
 March 28—10:30 a.m. Mass for Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, principal celebrant; 5 p.m. Vespers
 March 30—7 p.m. Chrism Mass, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, principal celebrant

April 1, Holy Thursday—6:30 p.m. Mass of the Lord’s Supper, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, principal celebrant; followed by eucharistic adoration at the Blessed Sacrament Chapel until 10 p.m.
 April 2, Good Friday—1 p.m. Liturgy of the Passion and Death of the Lord, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, principal celebrant; 6 p.m. Vespers
 April 3, Holy Saturday—8:30 p.m. Easter Vigil, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, principal celebrant
 April 4—10:30 a.m. Easter Sunday Mass; 5 p.m. Vespers

Saint Meinrad Archabbey

March 28—9:15 a.m. Blessing and procession with palms followed by Mass for

Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion; 5 p.m. Vespers
 April 1, Holy Thursday—5 p.m. Mass of the Lord’s Supper
 April 2, Good Friday—3 p.m. Liturgy of the Passion and Death of the Lord;
 April 3, Holy Saturday—5 p.m. Vespers;
 April 4—3 a.m. Easter Vigil Mass and Lauds; 5 p.m. Vespers
 April 5—9:30 a.m. Easter Monday Mass; 5 p.m. Vespers
 April 6—7:30 a.m. Easter Tuesday Mass; 5 p.m. Vespers

(For these schedules and the Holy Week schedule for the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, log on to www.archindy.org/lent.) †

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The Criterion

3/26/10

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Archdiocese continues efforts to help students succeed in ISTEPs, academics

By John Shaughnessy

As many Catholic school students prepare for another round of ISTEP testing in April and May, two directions have become clear concerning Indiana's standardized test for assessing students' learning in math and language arts.

First, hoping to reach its goal of having 90 percent of Indiana children pass the tests by 2012, the Indiana

Department of Public Instruction has adopted an approach similar to the one that has achieved success in Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

Secondly, the archdiocese—which already has a student passing rate of 89 percent for the two tests—will continue its efforts to increase the success of its students, maintain their high level of performance and even extend beyond it.

After 71 percent of Indiana students passed both math and language arts assessments in the spring of 2009, the Department of Public Instruction looked for ways to improve those results in the Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress for public and private school students in grades three through eight. Part of its plan involves implementing an approach called a "growth model."

"A growth model is a statistical model that predicts how well the student should be doing to make a year's worth of academic growth from one year to the next year," said Ronald Costello, superintendent of Catholic schools for the archdiocese. "The state has adopted a model like the one we've been following for three years."

'Even the best have to get better. We educate the whole child—mind, body and spirit. Our results show we have quality teachers doing quality work with an outcome of excellent performance.'

—Annette 'Mickey' Lentz

For the growth model to work, it also requires an understanding of student achievement and establishing academic growth expectations, according to Kathy Mears, the archdiocese's assistant superintendent of Catholic schools in the areas of curriculum and learning resources.

"ISTEP scores measure proficiency—how much a student knows on a particular day," Mears said. "Our students know lots. With progress measures, however, we know how much a student has learned. This is critical. Many of our students could pass their ISTEP on their first day of school. We want to know our students have learned each year."

"Through different statistical analyses, we can now show how much our students learned in different areas, what they have not learned and how to assist them to learn."

With that statistical base, teachers and principals are able to change instruction, curriculum and lessons "to better meet the needs of our students and to insure that each child learns each year," Mears said.

"If we know which children learned most successfully, we can study what the teachers who taught those children do—and share that information with their colleagues," Mears noted.

"We can also match the gifts of various teachers to particular students. Some teachers are exemplary in meeting the needs of students who learn quickly, while others are better at teaching students who need a particular method of teaching. If we can better match



Ronald Costello



Kathy Mears



Annette "Mickey" Lentz

students to teachers, we will be more effective with our students, resulting in increased learning and achievement."

The archdiocese's approach is not just reflected in its ISTEP scores, but also its graduation rate at the high school level—98.2 percent in 2009—according to Costello.

"It ties into our graduation rates, our kids going to college [97.4 percent in 2009], and our kids being successful there," he said.

While the ISTEP scores, graduation rates and the percentage of Catholic high school graduates attending college show part of the success of Catholic schools, the quest to be even better continues, said Annette "Mickey" Lentz, executive director of Catholic education and faith formation for the archdiocese.

"Even the best have to get better," Lentz said. "We educate the whole child—mind, body and spirit. Our results show we have quality teachers doing quality work with an outcome of excellent performance."

"It amazes me what we've been able to accomplish in the past eight years in the areas of assessment, accountability and growth. It shows the commitment we have as an archdiocese to our parents and to our children in offering them the very best of a Catholic education." †

Pilgrimage to nation's capital to include visits to holy sites

By Mary Ann Wyand

The nation's capital offers a variety of memorable opportunities for tourists to enjoy historical and educational experiences in scenic and entertaining places.



Fr. John Beitans

Catholics will especially appreciate the many unique, faith-based tourism activities in Washington, D.C.

An archdiocesan pilgrimage to the District of Columbia and Virginia on May 10-14 will focus on tours of important Catholic sites and include visits to a number of historic monuments as well as museums.

Father John Beitans, the pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, will serve as the spiritual director for the pilgrimage at the request of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein.

In 1982, Archbishop Buechlein appointed Father Beitans as the archdiocese's director of activities for the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

As part of that ministry, Father Beitans attends national meetings at the basilica each year.

He enjoys showing visitors the fascinating places to go and amazing things to do in the nation's capital, and is looking forward to leading the pilgrimage.

"A pilgrimage is like a retreat on wheels," Father Beitans explained during a March 22 phone interview. "We will pray the rosary on the bus, and celebrate Mass each day in very special and unforgettable settings. As most retreats do, it has one focus—our love and respect for our Lord and also for Our Lady because we're going to visit the beautiful Shrine of the Immaculate Conception."

Washington has been called "the Vatican of the United States," he said, due to its many noteworthy Catholic locations and the headquarters of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Archdiocesan pilgrims will celebrate a eucharistic liturgy in the crypt church of the basilica, he said, then tour the national shrine dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Other pilgrimage destinations include the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center, The Catholic University of America and St. Matthew Cathedral.

Indiana is well represented at the national shrine, Father Beitans explained, because the basilica and shrine are constructed with limestone from quarries near Bedford.

The late Archbishop John F. Noll of Fort Wayne, who led the national fundraising campaign to build the Marian shrine, is another Hoosier connection.

Archbishop Noll's contributions to the construction of the shrine over many years are acknowledged with a plaque near the entrance to the crypt church.

The pilgrimage is a wonderful way to observe the Year for Priests, Father Beitans said, because many archdiocesan seminarians and priests have studied theology at The Catholic University of America adjacent to the national shrine.

The huge National Mall downtown is home to historic and educational sites that range from the U.S. Capitol, Supreme Court building and Smithsonian Museums, he said, to beautiful monuments built to honor several presidents and memorials that commemorate the sacrifices of veterans during five wars.

Washington's tourism sites represent so much of American



Archdiocesan Catholics are invited to participate in a May 10-14 pilgrimage to Washington, D.C., to tour the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception as well as other holy and historical sites in the nation's capital.

history, Father Beitans said, and are of interest to every visitor.

"From my faith perspective, I like to say that the National Mall is laid out as a cross," he explained. "The heart of the cross is the Washington Monument, which is an obelisk, and the foot of it is the U.S. Capitol. The Jefferson and Lincoln memorials are on one [side] of the cross and the White House is on the other arm."

Carolyn Noone, associate director of special events for the archdiocese, said the pilgrims will also visit the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery just across the Potomac River in Virginia.

A Washington tour guide will join the pilgrims for an afternoon of sightseeing on the National Mall, she said, and the group will enjoy an evening meal at the famous Gadsby's Tavern, a historic restaurant which was visited by presidents George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

(The May 10-14 pilgrimage includes deluxe motor coach transportation, deluxe hotel accommodations for four nights, five continental breakfasts, one lunch, three dinners, admission fees and a guided tour. The cost is \$839 per person for single occupancy hotel rooms, \$639 per person for double occupancy rooms and \$589 per person for triple occupancy rooms. For more information or to register, call Carolyn Noone at 317-236-1428 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1428, or send an e-mail to cnoone@archindy.org. The pilgrimage itinerary and registration form are posted online at www.archindy.org/pilgrimage/shrine2010.html.) †

Poet to receive University of Notre Dame's 2010 Laetare Medal

NOTRE DAME, Ind. (CNS)—Dana Gioia, poet and former chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, will receive the University of Notre Dame's 2010 Laetare Medal during the university's May 16 commencement ceremony.

"In his vocation as poet and avocation as arts administrator, Dana Gioia has given vivid witness to the mutual flourishing of faith and culture," said Holy Cross Father John Jenkins, president of Notre Dame. "By awarding him our university's highest honor, we hope both to celebrate and participate in that witness."

Gioia—the first poet to receive this honor—has published three full collections of poetry, including *Interrogations at Noon*, which won the 2002 American Book Award. He also has published eight smaller collections of poems, two opera libretti, and numerous translations of Latin, Italian and German poetry.

He writes essays and reviews for the *New Yorker* and *Atlantic* magazines, *The Washington Post Book World*, *The New York Times Book Review* and *Slate*. His 1992 book—titled *Can Poetry Matter?*—is often credited for helping revitalize the place of poetry in American public life.

From 2003 to 2009, Gioia served two terms as chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, where he worked to strengthen support for public funding of arts and arts education, champion jazz as a uniquely American art form, promote Shakespeare readings and performances nationwide, and distribute NEA grants more widely.

In a lecture in 2000, Gioia argued that art and Catholicism mutually flourish because "the Catholic, literally from birth, when he or she is baptized, is raised in a culture that understands symbols and signs. And it also trains you in understanding the relationship between the visible and the invisible. Consequently, allegory finds its greatest realization in Catholic artists like Dante."

"Laetare" is the Latin word for "rejoice," and the Laetare Medal gets its name because the winner each year is named on the fourth Sunday of Lent, called Laetare Sunday. "Laetare" is the first word of the entrance antiphon of the Mass on that day.

The medal, established in 1883, is awarded to an American Catholic for outstanding service to the Catholic Church and society. †



Rev. Msgr. Raymond T. Bosler, Founding Editor, 1915 - 1994

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., Publisher Greg A. Otolski, Associate Publisher
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Editorial

The end of health care reform does not justify immoral means

Sadness and disappointment are the prevailing emotions of many Americans this week.

We sincerely hoped for authentic health care reform that would provide universal coverage, and protect the life, dignity, conscience and health of all. What we got instead was a misguided health care reform bill and reconciliation package that fail to protect the most vulnerable members of our society and cost way too much—both morally and economically.

Prior to this week's passage of historic health care legislation, the U.S. bishops had urged members of Congress to fix the serious problems in the Senate bill passed last Christmas Eve.

In their March 20 letter to the House of Representatives, the bishops said, "Our community of faith provides health care to millions, purchases health care for tens of thousands, and addresses the failings of our health care system in our parishes, emergency rooms and shelters. This is why we as bishops continue to insist that health care reform which truly protects the life, dignity, consciences and health of all is a moral imperative and urgent national priority."

Congress did not accept the bishops' advice, which was not offered on partisan, political grounds, but on the basis of fundamental moral principles and the Church's 2,000-year-old commitment to carry on the healing ministry of Jesus.

The new legislation, which was signed by President Barack Obama on March 23, sets aside the language of the Hyde Amendment, which forbids federal funding of most abortions. In place of this statutory prohibition against taxpayer-funded abortions, some Democrat pro-life members of the House of Representatives who voted for the reform bill accepted President Obama's promise to issue an executive order that reinforces the provisions of the Hyde Amendment.

The text of the draft executive order released by the White House said its goal was to "establish an adequate enforcement mechanism to ensure that federal funds are not used for abortion services [except in cases of rape or incest, or when the life of the woman would be endangered], consistent with a long-standing federal statutory restriction that is commonly known as the Hyde Amendment."

This is not a morally acceptable solution. An executive order is not the law of the land. It can be changed with the stroke of a president's pen—without the consent of Congress or the American people. Individuals who in good conscience oppose federal funding for abortion have been betrayed by this compromise—to say nothing of the unborn children who will die if this executive order is rescinded.

Moreover, in a March 21 memo to congressional staffers, Richard Doerflinger, associate director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, said that "the statutory mandate construed by the courts would override any executive order or



U.S. House Minority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio, walks from his office after the passage of the health care reform bill in Washington on March 21.

regulation. This is the unanimous view of our legal advisers and of the experts we have consulted on abortion jurisprudence," he said. "Only a change in the law enacted by Congress, not an executive order, can begin to address this very serious problem in the legislation."

In addition to the new law's failure to protect innocent life, this historic legislation also fails to ensure universal health care coverage. As the bishops reminded members of the House of Representatives in their letter, "People should never be denied coverage because they can't afford it, because of where they live or work or because of where they come from and when they got here."

In the name of health care reform, our nation continues to deny basic health care to both legal and undocumented immigrants—threatening the health and well-being of millions of people. As the bishops have argued, "These provisions could leave immigrants and their families worse off, and also hurt the public health of our nation."

The new legislation does accomplish some of the health care goals advanced by the U.S. bishops. Over the next 10 years, the bill will extend coverage to an estimated 32 million people who would otherwise lack coverage. And small businesses may be eligible for tax credits that will help them to provide coverage for their employees. These and other provisions of the new law are welcome.

But we do not share the enthusiasm expressed by Sister Carol Keehan, a Daughter of Charity who is president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association, who praised the new legislation and said that it "represents great progress in the long effort to make health care available and affordable to everyone in the United States."

We do not believe that the end—health care for some—justifies the means—flawed legislation that fails to protect the unborn, denies coverage to immigrants, and costs more than our nation can bear.

What can be done? People who care deeply about genuine health care reform should not settle for this misguided new legislation. We should pray fervently, and work diligently, to change this flawed attempt at health care reform, and to ensure that new laws are passed that will protect the life, dignity, conscience and health of all.

—Daniel Conway

Making a Difference/Tony Magliano

The 30th anniversary of the death of a martyr, Archbishop Oscar Romero

Do you think of yourself as a prophet? It's not a question we usually entertain, is it?



After all, prophets suffer. Boldly proclaiming God's word—verbally and through example—is often uncomfortable and at times dangerous.

So, unfortunately, we rarely ponder the prophetic call given to us at baptism and confirmation to be courageous witnesses for Christ. Even some bishops can at times drift into a certain spiritual hardness-of-hearing when it comes to their prophetic role.

It appears that, for a while, even Archbishop Oscar Romero had turned down the volume of the Holy Spirit's call to boldly speak "truth to power."

In his book *Archbishop Romero: Martyr of Salvador*, Augustinian Father Placido Erdozain, a co-worker with Archbishop Romero, writes that at first the archbishop was churchy, a lover of rules.

Initially, Father Erdozain and other priests living and working with the poor were not admirers of Archbishop Romero. They saw him as being out of touch with the persecuted "*campesinos*" (i.e., land workers). But that all soon changed as Archbishop Romero became personally involved with the poor and the sad facts of their lives in El Salvador.

According to Father Erdozain, half of El Salvador's population lived on less than \$10 a month. Less than 1 percent of all landowners owned 38 percent of arable land, while the poorer 91 percent owned only 23 percent of the land.

After the murder of Jesuit Father Rutilio Grande, who had challenged the injustice of the ruling families and the brutality of the Salvadoran military toward the poor *campesinos*, Archbishop Romero radically changed.

From then on, he broke all ties with the government and positioned himself "with the people, surrounded by wolves,"

as Father Erdozain puts it.

He quotes Archbishop Romero, "I am a shepherd who, with his people, has begun to learn a beautiful and difficult truth: Our Christian faith requires that we submerge ourselves in this world. The world that the Church must serve is the world of the poor."

In a letter to President Jimmy Carter, Archbishop Romero wrote, "Political power is in the hands of unscrupulous military officers who know only how to repress the people. ... I ask you, if you truly want to defend human rights, to forbid that military aid be given to the Salvadoran government."

Carter ignored Romero's plea.

In a national radio broadcast, Romero said, "Without the support of the people, no government can be effective. ... I want to make a special appeal to soldiers, national guardsmen and policemen: Brothers, each of you is one of us. We are the same people. The *campesinos* you kill are your own brothers and sisters. ...

"In the name of God, in the name of our tormented people who have suffered so much and whose laments cry out to heaven, I beseech you, I beg you, I order you in the name of God, stop the repression!"

Shortly afterward, on March 24, 1980, Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated while celebrating Mass. The assassin's bullet went through his heart just as he was finishing the consecration: "This is the cup of my blood ... shed for you."

The bishops of El Salvador recently announced that they are preparing to write a letter to the Vatican supporting Archbishop Romero's canonization.

To the people of El Salvador, who have images of the prophetic archbishop in their churches and icons of "St. Romero" in their homes, there is no need for canonization. They already know that he intercedes for them in the presence of God!

(Tony Magliano writes for *Catholic News Service*.) †

Letters to the Editor

Let us give Lent back to God

What happened to our Lenten observance? It is six weeks long, and should be observed for six weeks.

Nowadays, we observe Ash Wednesday much like a holy day and then nothing until Holy Week.

Lent used to be a time for prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We did chores for the sick and elderly of our relatives and neighbors. The children gave up candy, movies and dances.

The whole family attended Lenten devotions, especially the Way of the Cross. Families gathered together each evening to pray the rosary and other

prayers. What happened to the expression, "The family who prays together stays together?"

This Lent, it seems the focal point is the fish fries each Friday. We have very little mention of what Lent is all about.

We are at a point in time when our country needs prayer now more than ever. Why not, as we are preparing for Easter, say some extra prayers for our country?

We have all year to party, socialize and attend sporting events. Why can't we give at least the six weeks of Lent back to God?

Al Scheller
Elizabethtown

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper's commitment to "the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God" (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

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. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

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). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

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

Send letters to: "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.



SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

Crucifixes embrace a Christian realism about life, death and resurrection

During Holy Week, we contemplate the tortured face of Jesus as he hangs on the criminal's cross outside the city walls. It is the scene of humiliation and degradation—a double humiliation of death as a criminal and banishment outside the walls of the sacred city.

The late Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin once described a photograph from a book he had been given on the Holocaust.

“Two men face one another. One is a Nazi soldier. The other a Jewish civilian. ... The soldier's mouth looks as if it is just about to break into a grin. He seems to be enjoying what he is doing. By contrast, the Jewish civilian's face is contorted, twisted, as if he is about to weep. There is great pain, grief, agony, embarrassment in his countenance. In his right hand, the soldier holds a pair of scissors—not a weapon. He is cutting off the beard and earlocks of the Jewish believer. The caption under the photo reads, ‘Shearing off or plucking out beard and earlocks of Orthodox Jews in front of jeering crowds was a favorite pastime in occupied Poland.’”

The late cardinal asked, “Why does that picture remain in my mind? On the surface, it is far more benign than the pictures of emaciated bodies lying strewn in a huge mass grave. ... Why does it stand out? Because it is so close to being ordinary. Because it is not so horrendous as to be totally alien to our own experience. Because it is within the realm

of our own possibilities of cruelty” (Bernardin, *The Journey to Peace: Reflections on Faith, Embracing Suffering, and Finding New Life*, pp. 97-98).

Cardinal Bernardin made the point that, as we look at this scene, we realize that we are, at our worst moments, capable of this kind of heartless ridicule. A person can transform the simple act that barbers perform every day into an act of humiliating desecration. There is a smirk on one face, and deep pain, humiliation and loss on the other.

This week, as we contemplate the tortured face of Jesus on the Cross, we do well to probe our capacity to harm others.

No, we would not crucify Christ. We would not kill another person. But we could mock another person. We could humiliate another person. Children can bully each other on the playground. Adults can tell jokes that mock another person's faith or race or status in society. This week, we do well to pray in reparation for our sins and the sins of the world, which continue the humiliation of Jesus.

It is difficult to stand at the foot of the Cross. We don't like to look at ugliness. We don't feel comfortable in the presence of another person's suffering. It is particularly difficult to stand at the foot of the Cross because we have been party to inflicting such suffering on Jesus, who hangs on the Cross.

In another reflection, the late Cardinal Bernardin remarked that standing

at the foot of the Cross is a difficult place to be for every generation, especially our own.

As we stand there, “we are immediately struck by Jesus' extreme suffering on our behalf. In an age like our own, marked in part by the quest for instant relief from suffering, it takes special courage and determination to stand on Calvary. But standing at the foot of the Cross teaches us something very profound. What ultimately counts is that we say yes to what God requires of us, no matter how costly it may be” (Ibid. p. 117).

Perhaps that is why our Church clings to the tradition of displaying the cross in our churches with the image of the body of Jesus on it. We need and we want to be reminded that a real human person stretched out his arms on the Cross and suffered deeply because he loves us.

Our crucifixes embrace a Christian realism about life and death and resurrection, and they strike a chord in our human experience. The love of Christ calls for our love in response. On Good Friday afternoon, as we kiss the wood of the Cross, may we dig deep into our hearts and renew our own love for Christ, especially as we encounter him in our neighbor.

It was humiliating for Jesus, a Jew, a member of the chosen people, to be executed outside the walls of the sacred city. The banishment was the ultimate degradation. Yet can we not look on that banishment as breaking open the walls that separate peoples?

By his victory over death, Jesus would bring down the walls that separate neighbors. For, as Jesus taught us, everyone is our neighbor.

In our Good Friday service, the celebrant will lead us in solemn prayers for all peoples, for all our neighbors in our human family.

Let's pray humbly and with repentant, generous hearts. †

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein's prayer list? You may mail it to him at:

Archbishop Buechlein's
Prayer List
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for March

Youth: that they may be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit so that they can truly discern their role in the Church, especially God's call to priesthood and religious life.

Los crucifijos acogen el realismo cristiano sobre la vida, la muerte y la resurrección

En la Semana Santa contemplamos el rostro torturado de Jesús mientras cuelga en la cruz de un criminal, fuera de los muros de la ciudad. Es la escena de la humillación y la degradación, una doble deshonra: morir como un criminal y el destierro fuera de los muros de la ciudad sagrada.

El difunto cardenal Joseph L. Bernardin describió en una oportunidad una fotografía de un libro que le fue entregado durante el Holocausto.

“Dos hombres se miran. Uno es un soldado nazi. El otro es un vil judío. [...] La boca del soldado parece a punto de esbozar una risa burlona. Por su expresión, se diría que está disfrutando lo que hace. En contraposición, el rostro del vil judío está desfigurado, desencajado, como si estuviera a punto de romper en llanto. En su semblante se aprecia un enorme dolor, aflicción, agonía y vergüenza. En su mano derecha el soldado blande unas tijeras, no un arma. Está cortándole la barba y los tirabuzones al fiel judío. La leyenda de la foto reza: ‘Cortar o arrancar la barba y los tirabuzones de los judíos ortodoxos frente a turbas burlonas era el pasatiempo favorito de la Polonia ocupada.’”

El difunto Cardenal preguntaba: “¿Por qué conservo en la memoria esta fotografía? Al menos en apariencia es mucho menos pífida que las fotos de cuerpos enflaquecidos que yacen desparramados en enormes fosas comunes. [...] ¿Por qué llama la atención? Porque está muy próximo a ser algo común. Porque no es tan horrible que se conierte en algo ajeno a nuestra propia experiencia. Porque se encuentra dentro del reino de nuestras propias posibilidades de crueldad”

(Bernardin, *The Journey to Peace: Reflections on Faith, Embracing Suffering, and Finding New Life [El camino a la paz: reflexiones sobre la fe, aceptar el sufrimiento y el encuentro de la nueva vida]*, pp. 97-98).

El cardenal Bernardin puntualizó que, mientras observamos esta escena nos damos cuenta de que en nuestros peores momentos somos capaces de ridiculizar despiadadamente. Una persona puede transformar la simple acción que los barberos llevan a cabo todos los días en un humillante acto de profanación. En un rostro se aprecia una sonrisa afectada; en el otro hay un profundo dolor, humillación y pérdida.

Esta semana, mientras contemplamos el rostro torturado de Jesús en la cruz, convendría que reflexionáramos sobre nuestra capacidad para herir a los demás.

No, no crucificaríamos a Cristo. No mataríamos a otra persona. A no podríamos burlarnos de otra persona. Podríamos humillar a otra persona. Los niños pueden amedrentarse entre sí en el parque. Los adultos pueden contar chistes que se burlan de la fe o la raza de otros, o bien de su estatus en la sociedad. Esta semana resulta oportuno que recemos para resarcir nuestros pecados y los del mundo que continúa humillando a Jesús.

Es difícil pararse al pie de la cruz. No nos gusta enfrentarnos a cosas desagradables. No nos sentimos cómodos en presencia del sufrimiento ajeno. Resulta especialmente difícil pararnos al pie de la cruz porque hemos tenido parte de culpa en el sufrimiento de Jesús quien cuelga en la cruz.

En otra reflexión el difunto cardenal

Bernardin señaló que pararse al pie de la cruz es algo difícil para todas las generaciones, especialmente la nuestra.

Al encontramos allí “inmediatamente nos asalta el sufrimiento extremo que padece Jesús por nuestra causa. En una época como la nuestra, marcada en parte por la búsqueda del alivio instantáneo del dolor, pararnos en el Calvario exige un valor y una determinación especiales. Pero estar al pie de la cruz nos enseña algo muy profundo: al final lo que cuenta es que aceptamos lo que Dios nos pide, sin importar el costo” (Ibid. p. 117).

Quizás sea por ello que nuestra Iglesia se aferra a la tradición de exhibir en los templos el crucifijo con la imagen del cuerpo de Jesús en ella. Deseamos y necesitamos recordar que una persona humana extendió sus brazos sobre la cruz y sufrió profundamente debido a su amor por nosotros.

Nuestros crucifijos contienen un realismo cristiano sobre la vida y la resurrección y tocan una fibra sensible en nuestra experiencia humana. El amor de Cristo exige nuestro amor como respuesta. ¿Que podamos escudriñar en nuestros corazones y renovar nuestro amor por Cristo, especialmente cuando lo encontramos en el prójimo, durante la tarde del Viernes Santo, mientras besamos el madero de la cruz!

Para Jesús, un judío, miembro del

pueblo elegido, resultó humillante ser ejecutado a las afueras de los muros de la ciudad sagrada. El destierro era la deshonra más grande. No obstante, ¿acaso no podríamos ver ese destierro como el derribamiento de los muros que separan a los pueblos?

Mediante su victoria sobre la muerte Jesús derribó los muros que separan al prójimo. Porque, como Jesús nos enseñó, todo el mundo es nuestro prójimo.

En la Misa del Viernes Santo, el oficiante nos guiará en oraciones solemnes para todos los pueblos, para todo el prójimo de nuestra familia humana.

Recemos con humildad y con corazones arrepentidos y generosos. †

¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a:

Lista de oración del Arzobispo
Buechlein
Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa,
Language Training Center, Indianapolis.

Las intenciones vocacionales del Arzobispo Buechlein para marzo

Los jóvenes: que ellos acepten el ánimo del Espíritu Santo, para que puedan discernir su papel en la Iglesia, especialmente la llamada de Dios a hacerse sacerdote y entrar en una vida religiosa.

Events Calendar

March 26

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild, rummage sale,** 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 317-885-5098 or beaglered@aol.com.

St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, gymnasium, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Lenten fish fry,** 5:30-8 p.m. Information: 317-257-4297.

Holy Trinity Parish, Bockhold Hall, 902 N. Holmes Ave., Indianapolis. **Fish fry,** 5:30-7:30 p.m., Stations of the Cross, 6 p.m. Information: 317-495-3019.

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 N. Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Rosary, 6 p.m., Mass, 6:30 p.m., Stations of the Cross, Benediction,** 7 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508 or

marivelli@aol.com.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Parish Hall, 1125 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Lenten fish fry,** 5-7 p.m., \$6 adults, \$3 children. Information: 317-638-5551.

St. Michael Parish, 11400 Farmers Lane, N.E., Bradford. **Lenten fish fry,** 4:30-7 p.m. Information: 812-364-6173.

St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **Lenten reflection, Stations of the Cross, service and concert,** 6 p.m. Information: 812-379-9353, ext. 237, or bminut_stb@yahoo.com.

March 26-28

Saint Mary-of-the Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Sisters of Providence, "Come**

and See Weekend-Faith without Action is Dead," for young Catholic women interested in exploring a calling to religious life. Information: 812-535-2895 or bkuper@spsmw.org.

March 27

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Indianapolis. **"Shop INNSpired Spring-Stravaganza,"** 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Altar Society, rummage sale,** 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454, ext. 2.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Knights of**

Columbus Council, Santo Rosario Council #14449, "Lenten Knight of Reflection" for men, 6-10 p.m. Information: 317-636-4478.

March 28

Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg. St. Mary Parish, North Vernon, youth ministry dramatization of **"The Living Way of the Cross,"** 2 p.m. Information: 812-346-3604.

MKVS, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center, Rexville, located on 925 South, .8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles. Mass, noon, on **third Sunday holy hour and pitch-in,** groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

March 31

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Lenten organ concert,** Jay Mermoud, organist, 11:30 a.m. Information: 317-635-2021.

April 2

Calvary Cemetery, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Stations of the Cross,** Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, and Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus, noon. Information: 317-574-8898.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery, 9001 N. Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Stations of the Cross,** Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, and Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898.

St. Mary Church, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. Youth ministry dramatization of **"The Living Way of the Cross,"** 1 p.m. Information: 812-346-3604.

St. Mary Church, 415 E. 8th St., New Albany. **Via Crucis, bilingual outdoor Way of the Cross,** 7 p.m. Information: 502-494-3264.

St. Rita Church, 8709 Preston Highway, Louisville, Ky. **Via Crucis, bilingual outdoor Way of the Cross,** 5 p.m. Information: 502-494-3264.

April 3

Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Twister Circle, Oldenburg. **Alumni Association, Easter Egg Hunt,** 10 a.m. Information: 812-933-0737. †

Retreats and Programs

March 27

East Central High School, Performing Arts Center, St. Leon. **"Setting the Captives Free," one-day conference,** Father Thomas Euteneuer, president of Human Life International; Father Greg Bramlage, Father Dan Wilder, Deacon Ralph Poyo and Dr. Richard Meyer, presenters, 8 a.m.-6 p.m., \$40 per person/couple, lunch \$8, registration after March 18 is \$50 with no lunch available. Information: 812-623-8007 or www.HealingThroughThePowerofJesusChrist.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Parenthood-Living the Sacraments at Home,"** Jeanne Hunt, presenter, 9-11:30 a.m., \$15 per person. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

March 30-April 1

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Holy Week Silent Non-Guided Days and Night of Reflection,"** Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

March 31-April 4

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Holy Week Retreat-Christ Has Died, Christ Is Risen,"** Benedictine Father Vincent Tobin, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 1-4

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"A Triduum Retreat-Experiencing a Silent Monastic Holy Week."** Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

April 9-11

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Royal Sacrifice-Queen Esther's Redeeming Role,"** Benedictine Father Noël Mueller, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 12

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Men's Night at the 'Burg,"** Father Carl Hawver, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m., free-will offering. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

April 13

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Food and Faith Series-Salads and Scriptures,"** Franciscan Sister Miriam Kaeser, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

April 16-18

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis. **"Art and Spirit,"** Franciscan Brother Bob Baxter and staff, presenters. Information: 812-923-8817.

April 18

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Pre Cana Conference," marriage preparation program,** \$40 per couple. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Youth Night at the 'Burg,"** Franciscan Sister Clare Teixeira, presenter, 6:30-8 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

April 20

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove.

"Woman Talk-Women of Wisdom," session three of five, "Style and Color-Updating Your Wardrobe," Jeanne Weber Rush, owner of The Secret Ingredient clothing stores, presenter, 6:30-9 p.m., \$25 per person includes dinner. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Date Night-The Five Love Languages,"** Father Jim Farrell, presenter, 6-9:30 p.m., \$40 per couple includes light dinner. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

April 22

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Sixth annual Caregivers Day-Wisdom for Living with Illness,"** 8:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$50 per person includes lunch. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

April 22-25

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Love on the Job," retreat for administrative staff,** Benedictine Fathers Noël Mueller and Jeremy King, presenters. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 23-25

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend."** Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

April 25

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Coffee Talk-My Children Don't Go to Church,"** Jeanne Hunt, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-noon. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

April 28

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Thomas Merton Seminar-Bridges to Contemplative Living: Writing Yourself into the Book of Life,"** session one of four, Benedictine Sister Julie Sewell, presenter, 6:30-9 p.m., \$65.95 per person includes simple supper and book. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Morning for Moms,"** 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., \$30 per person includes breakfast and lunch. Child care is provided, but space is limited. Contact Cheryl McSweeney for child care at 317-545-7681, ext. 15, or cmcsweeney@archindy.org. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Where the Darkness Meets the Light-A Metamorphosis of Spiritual Growth,"** evening of reflection, Anne Ryder, presenter, registration and breakfast, 9:15-9:45 a.m., program, 9:45 a.m., \$35 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

April 29

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Come Away and Rest Awhile,"** 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$25 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

April 30-May 2

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Monastic Practices-Drawing Everyday Wisdom from the Monastic Life,"** Benedictine Brother John Mark Falkenhain, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu. †



St. Patrick's Day parade

Father Glenn O'Connor was honored as the 2010 Irish Citizen of the Year during the St. Patrick's Day parade in Indianapolis on March 17. Father O'Connor is the pastor of St. Ann Parish and St. Joseph Parish, both in Indianapolis. He is also the Catholic chaplain at Indianapolis International Airport. Father Noah Casey, the pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, was honored with the 2010 Hibernian President's Award on March 14.



Birthline donation

Margaret Foust and Paul Donahue present a \$254 donation in support of Birthline, an archdiocesan pro-life ministry, to Birthline volunteer Sue Beaver at the St. Joseph Knights of Columbus Council #5290 Hall in Indianapolis on Feb. 12. Two truckloads of baby clothes, diapers and other baby supplies were also donated. Foust leads the council's Ladies Auxiliary, and Donahue is the grand knight of the council. The funds were collected at the auxiliary's annual Baby Shower pro-life fundraising event.

Young adults discerning vocation must listen for God's voice, priest says

By Mary Ann Wyand

Begin each day with prayer, Father Patrick Beidelman advised a group of young adults who are discerning their vocation in life.

Then the vice rector of the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis and archdiocesan director of liturgy thanked the 14 young adults for giving so much of their time to Jesus in meaningful and life-giving ways during a Lenten day of reflection on vocations to the priesthood and religious life on Feb. 26 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis.

"Deciding to be here ... is a gift to the Lord," he said. "I think it pleases the Lord that we're here. Thank you for coming and having an openness to reflect on faith and to worship our Lord, but also to receive his mercy and grace, which is so fitting and appropriate during this Lenten season."

Whatever vocation that God is calling you to accept and pursue in life, Father Beidelman said, "the best way we can start our day is by beginning it in acknowledgement of God's Providence and blessing in our lives, and a real hope to share everything of the day ... as an offering to God in service of our Lord."

The day of reflection featured the celebration of Mass, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction at the St. Augustine Home Chapel as well as vocation talks by Father Beidelman, seminarian David Marcotte from St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, and three Little Sisters of the Poor—Sister Judith Meredith, the superior, and Sisters Elizabeth Kleibusch and Marie Cecilia Fausto.

"The goal of Lent leads us to a fuller experience of the mystery of God's love for us," Father Beidelman said. "As we approach the season of Easter, we need to keep that goal in mind. We are being called to a fuller life—a life of deeper freedom, deeper peace and ultimately a deeper experience of God's love. ... So we are joyful because the Lord gives us ways to do that. He helps us to step ... into picking

up his rhythm, his ways, his will in our lives. My hope and my prayer today is that if you are searching, if you are seeking to know the will of God more fully in your life, that this day might be a point of clarity for you."

Discerning a vocation to the priesthood, religious life, marriage or single life requires listening for God's voice in our daily life experiences, he said. "It's good for us to be around holy people, ... and to sit in the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. ... Our vocational journeys are very personal. We are people who need to connect with God at the very deepest level of who we are so that we might hear his voice speaking to us."

The holy Scriptures assure us that "God knows us better than we know ourselves," Father Beidelman said, "which is why it's good for us to talk to him because we can come to know and to be our truest and best selves in our dialogue and communication with him. God knows each of us by name, and can speak to us personally in our hearts about what his dreams are for us."

When people give themselves over to God, Father Beidelman said, they can begin to discover deep peace, joy and happiness in life.

"I had to find my way," he said, "and that ultimately came with uncovering who I was and what my gifts were—what God had given me to share with the world to build up his kingdom here on Earth."

"When I started learning about who I was, what I liked to do and what made me happy," he said, "I began to realize that I liked being in front of people. I liked serving in positions of leadership. I liked prayer. I liked serving [and] being with people. I liked the feeling that I was a part of something much larger, just beyond what I could individually do. All of these were sign posts along the road that helped me begin to realize that maybe a vocation to the priesthood might fit for me."

"That sense of belonging, and that desire to serve and make a difference in people's lives," he said, "began to really lead me to giving God a chance to speak in my heart, to say my name, and to call me

to a life of service and love in ministry in the Church. ... That's a gift. That's a grace. [But] it isn't like that for everybody because our journeys and our ways of uncovering God's dreams for us are very personal."

When we discern what God's dreams are for us and say yes to the Lord, Father Beidelman said, we receive so much goodness in return.

"It's like God opened a fire hydrant of grace, mercy and blessing," he said, "and we're overwhelmed ... with the Lord's presence, his peace, his consolation, his guidance, his wisdom. ... I think a lot of people would say that when they discern whatever their call is—to the single life, to the married life, to priesthood or to consecrated life—many people would say when they pick up on what that dream is that ultimately God opens the flood gates of his love and his presence."

"If you are searching [for your vocation]," he said, "my prayer is that you can get to that place where the flood gates are opening on you. ... So put yourself around holy things. Be in holy situations with holy people. It will rub off on you. ... Give God a chance ... so that he might use you to build up God's kingdom on Earth. ... The Lord is calling you in a powerful way to be the best disciple of Christ that you can be."

"... I don't think there is any way that

we can do that other than having a little bit of silence in our days," Father Beidelman said, "... so the Lord can come to us and speak to us in our hearts." †



Father Patrick Beidelman, vice rector of the Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis and director of liturgy for the archdiocese, tells a group of young adults discerning their vocations in life that he is "grateful every day for having been loved by our Lord into this dream that he has for me, and open to the future, whatever it might be for me." Father Beidelman was the keynote speaker for a Lenten day of reflection on vocations to the priesthood and religious life on Feb. 26 at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis.

Brazil bishops launch campaign to distribute 1 million Bibles to poor

SAO PAULO, Brazil (CNS)—The bishops of Brazil launched a campaign to distribute 1 million Bibles to the country's poorest Catholic families.

The effort calls for individual families to receive a kit containing a Bible, a Children's Bible, a copy of the catechism book *I Believe* and a booklet to guide the reader through the Bible.

Sonia Minder, campaign coordinator, explained that the distribution will focus first in the Amazon and the northeast regions of the country where the concentration of poor people is highest.

"Our target is to hand out the kits to those who are unable to afford to buy the [Bible]," she said. "We are also focusing on those people and families who have strayed from our religion."

Parishes and community groups will determine who receives the kits. Their requests will funnel through local diocesan offices, which will forward them to the bishops' conference.

The Church is relying on private donations and partnerships with advertising agencies and transportation companies to promote and deliver the kits. †

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HOMELESS

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School in Indianapolis. "School districts have the obligation to provide the transportation to their school."

Able makes those transportation connections with the school districts. She also serves as an advocate for parents in discussions with teachers and school administrators.

"Emily has a very good ability to listen to the families' concerns and needs, and act in the best interests of their kids," says Bill Bickel, the archdiocese's director for crisis relief and shelter services for Catholic Charities Indianapolis. "She has exceptional communication with the families about the importance of their children's education."

It's one part of the children's lives that can be an anchor, Able says.

"These families are going through so much turmoil, and the kids' lives have been thrown into the air," she says. "To be able to go to their school gives them a feeling of consistency. Maybe they've made a connection with a teacher or a lunch lady. To still get to see that face can make a difference. It's powerful."

So is the story she shares about a mother and her daughter.

The bonds between a parent and child

That story started in a parenting class that Able teaches at Holy Family Shelter.

One of the main goals of the class is to promote strong, healthy relationships between parents and their children. At one point, she asked the parents how they encourage positive behavior from their children. Their answers surprised her.

"They said they corrected them when they do something wrong," Able recalls.

"The idea of praising a child for good behavior was a foreign concept. It made me think that a lot of the young mothers hadn't gotten that as a child. I asked them to try that—to search for the one thing that their child is doing right. We met a couple days later, and there was this one mom I'll never forget. She broke down in tears about how her child got so excited that her mom finally saw something good in her.

"The mother saw how her daughter felt some sense of pride, and she saw how her daughter strived to get more positive feedback from her. Sometimes it's those little seeds we can teach."

Able credits her compassion for homeless families to the "seeds" that her mother planted in her as a child.

Her mother, Kathy Able, always told Emily, her brother and her sister how much they were blessed as a family. Kathy Able's way of thanking God for those

blessings was to do service projects with her children, especially efforts that provided food and clothing for people in need.

"She said, 'This is our faith,'" Emily says. "She raised us to give back."

The warmth of God's arms

Her mother feels blessed by how those seeds have flowered in her daughter's life.

"I couldn't be more proud of her," Kathy Able says. "I got a small taste of what she does on Christmas Eve. The shelter had a group come in for the families who were there. Someone in the group told the families that Jesus was homeless for a while, that he was born in a stable. All the kids got gifts. Then all the parents got blankets. They emphasized to the parents that the blankets had been specially handmade for

break, too."

The combination of special activities and willing volunteers is constantly needed and appreciated at Holy Family Shelter, especially since the new, expanded facility opened in mid-December on the near west side of Indianapolis.

"We need more groups to come in and host children's activities," Able says. "They can be as creative as they want—dance nights, movie nights, anything they want to teach or share."

Volunteers are also needed for child care so parents can search for housing, apply for a job or take a class at the shelter that helps them find employment or improve their parenting skills.

"We also have a need for groups to come in and do special projects that involve cleaning and painting," Able says. "And we need volunteers that can help at the front desk or in

organizing and sorting items in our donation room."

The shelter is also in need of donations that range from school uniforms to food items for the three meals that are served each day at the facility. Cereals, fresh fruit and powdered drinks are staples that always need to be replenished.

"Holy Family Shelter is blessed to have this new building," Able says. "Because of the space we have now, there's so much more we can do for our families and so many ways we can impact their lives. We need whatever help people can give to make a difference to these families."

(To learn more about Holy Family Shelter and its volunteer opportunities, call Emily Able at 317-635-7830, ext. 19, send an e-mail to eable@holyfamilyshester.net or log on to www.holyfamilyshester.net.) †

'The mother saw how her daughter felt some sense of pride, and she saw how her daughter strived to get more positive feedback from her. Sometimes it's those little seeds we can teach.'

—Emily Able



Emily Able poses by a mural at Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis. During the summer of 2009, children who participated in the shelter's summer camp helped design and paint the mural with the assistance of artists from the Indianapolis Art Center. The mural reflects the children's hopes and dreams for the future—moving into a new home, being connected with their extended family and being reunited with pets they had to give up when their families became homeless.

Volunteers needed to fill many roles at new Holy Family Shelter

By John Shaughnessy

On one night, it can be the simple pleasure of watching a movie and digging into a bag of popcorn.

On another night, it can be the fun of making a few outlandish moves during an exercise class or working with glue and sparkles while creating an arts-and-crafts project.

In all the situations, it's mainly the opportunity to just be a child in that moment, free from the stress and hardship of being part of a family whose life has been turned upside down by homelessness.

"We get a lot of volunteers that host children's activities here," says Emily Able, the director of community and youth services at the archdiocese's Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis. "For those two hours, it allows the kids to be kids. It relieves the stress they're going through, and it gives the parents a

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Catholic reaction to health care vote is mixed

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholic groups had mixed reactions to the passage of health reform legislation in Congress and the pending presidential executive order on taxpayer-funded abortion.

The House approved the Senate-passed health reform bill by a 219-212 vote late on March 21, then voted 220-211 in favor of a package of legislative fixes which had to go to the Senate for approval.

Mercy Sister Mary Ann Walsh, director of media relations for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the bishops “want health care reform” and “pray that President [Barack] Obama’s promise that this bill will not fund elective abortions will be kept.”

In their last public comment before the House votes, the heads of the USCCB’s pro-life, migration and domestic policy committees said the health reform legislation still fell short in the areas of abortion funding, conscience protections and treatment of immigrants, and they urged House members to vote against it.

“After a year of divisive political combat, members of the House are told that they can advance health care reform only by adopting the Senate legislation as is, including these fundamental flaws,” said their March 20 letter. “The House leadership is ignoring the pleas of pro-life members for essential changes in the legislation. Apparently, they will not even try to address the serious problems on abortion funding, conscience protection and fair treatment of immigrants.”

Sister Carol Keehan, a Daughter of Charity who is president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association, said that “while not perfect, the reform law significantly expands coverage, especially to low-income and vulnerable populations, and is a tremendous step toward protecting human dignity and promoting the common good.”

Sister Carol said the bill, which President Barack Obama signed into law on March 23, “represents great progress in the long effort to make health care available and

affordable to everyone in the United States.”

Not all members of the Catholic Health Association, however, agreed with Sister Carol’s praise of the health care reform bill.

Sisters of St. Francis Health Services Inc., which operates 11 hospitals in Indiana and two hospitals in Illinois, including St. Francis Hospital and Health Centers in Beech Grove, Indianapolis and Mooresville, expressed its opposition to the bill in a full-page advertisement in the March 21 issue of *The Indianapolis Star*.

“Our Catholic voice aligns us with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops [USCCB] in continuing our opposition to President [Barack] Obama’s health care reform bill,” the advertisement read.

Father Frank Pavone, national director of Priests for Life, said passage of the legislation showed that “you can’t pass the right kind of laws without the right lawmakers in office.

“America has spoken to its lawmakers about their concerns. The lawmakers have spoken back. Now it’s our move again,” he added. “This law will be challenged in many ways. And it’s time to prepare for November’s elections so that the changes the American people see fit to make can be made.”

Much of the post-vote analysis focused on whether an executive order promised by President Barack Obama in an eleventh-hour deal to obtain the votes of Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Mich., and other pro-life House Democrats would achieve its stated purpose of ensuring that no federal funds be spent on abortion under the health reform plan.

Morna Murray, president of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, said the bill would “maintain long-standing

HEALTH CARE

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status quo on federal funding of abortion.

“The president’s executive order puts in some administrative protections that we are very grateful for, but an administrative order doesn’t substitute for a statute,” he said.

Asked whether he expected Church agencies to face difficulties related to abortion in the health reform law, the cardinal said, “We’ll see how that plays out in the courts.”

“I suspect that there will be court challenges to Catholic medical practice,” he added.

U.S. bishops urge vigilance to keep abortion funding out of health reform

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Here is the text of a statement from the U.S. bishops on health reform signed into law on March 23 by President Barack Obama:

“For nearly a century, the Catholic bishops of the United States have called for reform of our health care system so that all may have access to the care that recognizes and affirms their human dignity. Christian discipleship means “working to ensure that all people have access to what makes them fully human and fosters their human dignity” (*U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults*, p. 454). Included among those elements is the provision of necessary and appropriate health care.

“For too long, this question has gone unaddressed in our country. Often, while many had access to excellent medical treatment, millions of others, including expectant mothers, struggling families or those with serious medical or physical problems, were left unable to afford the care they needed.

“As Catholic bishops, we have expressed our support for efforts to address this national and societal shortcoming. We have spoken for the poorest and most defenseless among us. Many elements of the health care reform measure signed into law by the

Cardinal George also rejected claims by some that the USCCB had allied itself in the health reform debate with groups that were primarily interested in advancing the Republican agenda.

“I really don’t think that’s true,” he said. “The principles are twofold—everybody taken care of, nobody killed. And I think that moral voice, while it doesn’t correspond politically to either party, has been consistent.”

Also on March 23, the USCCB released a statement by Cardinal George on health reform that was endorsed by the bishops’ 32-member Administrative Committee (see full statement below).

The statement noted that the bishops’ conference has worked for nearly a century

to achieve “reform of our health care system so that all may have access to the care that recognizes and affirms their human dignity.”

“As Catholic bishops, we have expressed our support for efforts to address this national and societal shortcoming,” it added. “Many elements of the health care reform measure signed into law by the president address these concerns and so help to fulfill the duty that we have to each other for the common good.

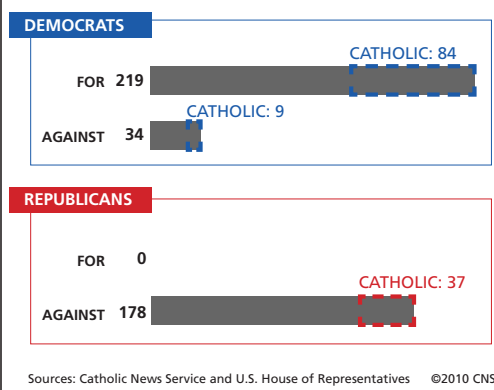
“Nevertheless, for whatever good this law achieves or intends, we as Catholic bishops have opposed its passage because there is compelling evidence that it would expand the role of the federal government in funding and facilitating abortion and plans that cover abortion. The statute appropriates billions of dollars in new funding without explicitly prohibiting the use of these funds for abortion, and it provides federal subsidies for health plans covering elective abortions.

“Its failure to preserve the legal status quo that has regulated the government’s relation to abortion, as did the original bill adopted by the House of Representatives last November, could undermine what has been the law of our land for decades and threatens the consensus of the majority of Americans: that federal funds not be used for abortions or plans that cover abortions.

“Stranger still, the statute forces all those who choose federally subsidized plans that cover abortion to pay for other peoples’

House Votes

Catholic Democrats comprised 84 of the 219 total votes in favor of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.



restrictions on federal funding of abortions” and the executive order would “provide additional valuable assurances on these funding restrictions.”

But in a March 21 memo to congressional staffers, Richard Doerflinger, associate director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, said that “the statutory mandate construed by the courts would override any executive order or regulation.”

“This is the unanimous view of our legal advisers and of the experts we have consulted on abortion jurisprudence,” he said. “Only a change in the law enacted by Congress, not an executive order, can begin to address this very serious problem in the legislation.”

The National Right to Life Committee said the promised executive order “was issued for political effect,” and “does not correct any of the serious pro-abortion provisions in the bill.

“The president cannot amend a bill by issuing an order, and the federal courts will enforce what the law says,” it said. †

to achieve “reform of our health care system so that all may have access to the care that recognizes and affirms their human dignity.”

“As Catholic bishops, we have expressed our support for efforts to address this national and societal shortcoming,” it added. “Many elements of the health care reform measure signed into law by the president address these concerns and so help to fulfill the duty that we have to each other for the common good.

“Nevertheless, for whatever good this law achieves or intends, we as Catholic bishops have opposed its passage because there is compelling evidence that it would expand the role of the federal government in funding and facilitating abortion and plans to cover abortion,” it said. †

abortions with their own funds. If this new law is intended to prevent people from being complicit in the abortions of others, it is at war with itself.

“We share fully the admirable intention of President Obama expressed in his pending executive order, where he states, ‘It is necessary to establish an adequate enforcement mechanism to ensure that federal funds are not used for abortion services.’ However, the fact that an executive order is necessary to clarify the legislation points to deficiencies in the statute itself. We do not understand how an executive order, no matter how well intentioned, can substitute for statutory provisions.

“The statute is also profoundly flawed because it has failed to include necessary language to provide essential conscience protections [both within and beyond the abortion context]. As well, many immigrant workers and their families could be left worse off since they will not be allowed to purchase health coverage in the new exchanges to be created, even if they use their own money.

“Many in Congress and the administration, as well as individuals and groups in the Catholic community, have repeatedly insisted that there is no federal funding for

Catholic hospitals have contrasting views on bill

By Sean Gallagher

Two Catholic health care providers in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, who are members of the Catholic Health Association, had contrasting reactions to the March 21 passage of historic health care reform legislation.

The Sisters of St. Francis Health Services Inc. (SSFHS), which operates hospitals in Illinois and Indiana, including St. Francis Hospital and Health Centers in Beech Grove, Indianapolis and Mooresville, issued a statement opposing the legislation on March 22.

The statement cited the bill’s allowance of federal funding of abortion in its opposition to the bill.

“SSFHS will continue to voice opposition to this bill, and all other legislation that subsidizes abortion,” the statement read.

“President [Barack] Obama campaigned on a pro-abortion platform, and continues to use his office to further the pro-abortion cause,” the statement continued. “The president’s promise to issue an executive order to prohibit health care reform funds from being used to cover abortions does not carry the strength of a legislative act, and can be withdrawn at any time without legislative approval.”

The statement also expressed regret that “Congressman [Bart] Stupak and his backers gave in to the immense pressure from the White House opting to trust a man who was elected on a pro-abortion platform to protect the rights of the unborn.”

In contrast, St. Vincent Health spokesman Johnny Smith praised the health care reform bill passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama on March 23.

“At St. Vincent Health, we’ve been a longtime advocate for 100 percent access and 100 percent coverage for all Americans,” Smith said. “And, with the legislation passing, it’s going to ensure that 32 million people, who were previously uninsured, will now be able to obtain meaningful coverage at an affordable price.

“We understand that the legislation is not perfect. But it is a step in the right direction to truly being able to increase access and increase coverage for Americans.”

St. Vincent Health operates 17 hospitals and other health care ministries in 45 counties in central Indiana. It is also a member of Ascension Health, the nation’s largest not-for-profit and Catholic health care system. †

abortion in this statute and that strong conscience protection has been assured. Analyses that are being published separately show this not to be the case, which is why we oppose it in its current form. We and many others will follow the government’s implementation of health care reform and will work to ensure that Congress and the administration live up to the claims that have contributed to its passage. We believe, finally, that new legislation to address its deficiencies will almost certainly be required.

“As bishops, we wish to recognize the principled actions of the pro-life members of Congress from both parties, in the House and the Senate, who have worked courageously to create legislation that respects the principles outlined above. They have often been vilified and have worked against great odds.

“As bishops of the Catholic Church, we speak in the name of the Church and for the Catholic faith itself. The Catholic faith is not a partisan agenda, and we take this opportunity to recommit ourselves to working for health care which truly and fully safeguards the life, dignity, conscience and health of all, from the child in the womb to those in their last days on Earth.” †

Immigration reform advocates march for change in Washington

WASHINGTON (CNS)—By bus from across the country and on foot from across town, an estimated 200,000 people flocked to the National Mall on March 21 to press Congress and the president—with signs, banners, T-shirts, chants and prayers—to make good on promises to fix the immigration system.

U.S. citizens, legal immigrants and some who admitted they are in the country illegally covered a six-block stretch of the Mall to make their case for reforming a system that keeps families apart, limits students' education prospects and causes millions of people to exist "in the shadows" because they lack legal papers.

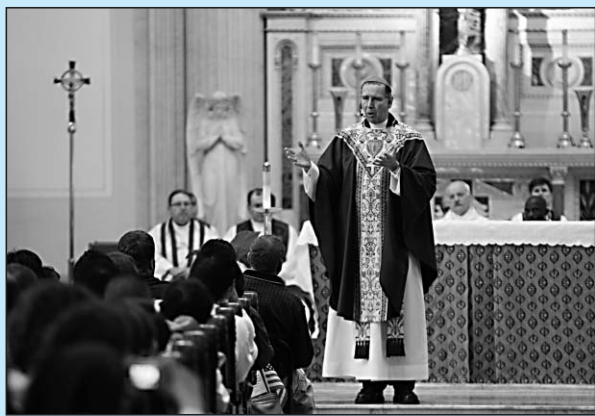
Before marching three miles past the Capitol to RFK Stadium, where their buses waited, the exuberant, hopeful crowd waved flags and signs as dozens of speakers took to the stage to tell their personal immigration stories. Other speakers pledged the support of their congregations, unions and human rights groups.

A videotaped message of support from

President Barack Obama brought a hush to the crowd, turning to cheers as he pledged "to do everything in my power to forge a bipartisan consensus this year on this important issue. You know as well as I do that this won't be easy, and it won't happen overnight. But if we work together—across ethnic, state and party lines—we can build a future worthy of our history as a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws."

A few blocks from the Capitol at St. Aloysius Church shortly before the rally, Los Angeles Cardinal Roger M. Mahony spent 30 minutes greeting people arriving for a special Mass. In a homily that invoked the late labor leader Cesar Chavez, with whom the cardinal worked for many years for farmworkers' rights, he noted that after the events at the Capitol that day it would be time for immigration reform to take the political stage.

In a phone interview with Catholic News Service the next morning, Cardinal Mahony said passage by the House of a health care reform bill hours after the rally "is helpful to immigration reform efforts," given the current political climate.



Los Angeles Cardinal Roger M. Mahony addresses immigrants and immigrant advocates during his homily at a special Mass on March 21 in Washington. Catholics from around the nation attended the liturgy at St. Aloysius Church before joining tens of thousands of people at the "March for America" immigration reform rally on the National Mall.

"The president made a very firm commitment during the campaign and again recently that immigration reform is one of his top priorities," the cardinal said. Now that a health care bill will help millions of uninsured people receive affordable medical care, he added, it's time for the government to address the millions of people who are living in the shadows because they lack legal immigration status.

"This is unfinished business," Cardinal Mahony said, adding that bringing those immigrants into the system for paying taxes and tapping into assorted public services will



People rally at a demonstration for comprehensive immigration reform on March 21 on the National Mall in Washington. The event, which drew immigrants and immigrant advocates from around the nation, was led by a mix of faith groups. Cardinal Roger M. Mahony, archbishop of Los Angeles, addressed the crowd for the Catholic Church.

help the U.S. economic recovery.

Among the crowd on the Mall estimated by organizers at 200,000 people, Jose described his motivation for making a 15-hour bus ride with Holy Cross and St. Cecilia's parishes in Clearwater and St. Petersburg, Fla.

A U.S. citizen who was born in Mexico, Jose explained that his wife lacks legal immigration status. He lives in constant fear that she will be arrested and deported before the current years-long process it would take to get her legal residency status.

They have three young U.S. citizen children. While he works 13- to 14-hour days to support the family, his wife manages the household, gets the children to and from school, doctors and other activities, he said.

But next year, a change in Florida law will require her to show proof of legal immigration status to renew her driver's

license. Lacking that license, the family's way of life will have to change in order to adapt.

Of bigger concern to Jose, who asked that his last name not be used, is that "I'm afraid, every moment, that she will get arrested and taken away from me and our children."

He doesn't believe that either he or his wife can safely return to their native Mexico, mostly because of the pervasive violent crime in his home state of Zacatecas and her state of Michoacan.

"My family there already is threatened because the criminals know they receive help from me," Jose said. Were he to go back, he would be an immediate target, he believes.

"She has so much heart," Jose said, describing his wife and how lost he and his children would be if she were deported. "She's a wonderful mother." †

Pope earmarks Holy Thursday collection for rebuilding Haiti's major seminary

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI has decided the collection taken up at his Holy Thursday evening Mass will be used to help rebuild Haiti's major seminary in Port-au-Prince. The seminary was reduced to rubble by the magnitude 7 quake that struck on Jan. 12.

Each year, the pope chooses where to send the collection taken up during the Mass of the Lord's Supper at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the cathedral of the Diocese of Rome.

Pope Benedict's decision to use the collection from the Mass on April 1 to

support the rebuilding effort of the Catholic Church in Haiti was announced by the Vatican on March 22.

Each year, the pope also asks a different person to write the meditations read during his Good Friday celebration of the Way of the Cross in Rome's Colosseum.

According to Passionist Father Ciro Benedettini, vice director of the Vatican press office, the meditations for the April 2 service were written by Cardinal Camillo Ruini, former president of the Italian bishops' conference and former vicar of Rome.

The Vatican also confirmed the pope would celebrate the usual slate of Holy Week and Easter liturgies: Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square on March 28; the chism Mass in the morning on April 1 in St. Peter's Basilica; the Mass of the Lord's Supper that

evening; on Good Friday, April 2, the afternoon liturgy of the Lord's Passion in St. Peter's Basilica, followed by the nighttime Way of the Cross; the Easter Vigil on April 3 in St. Peter's Basilica; and Easter morning Mass on April 4 in St. Peter's Square. †

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Presented by our director

Fr. Jim Farrell

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

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The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman.

The presentation will include explanations of how these love languages are spoken in God's relationship with us and in our relationship with each other, especially in marriage.

All engaged and married couples are invited to join us!

The evening begins with registration and check in at 6:00 pm and a light dinner at 6:30 pm followed by the program.

We will conclude by 9:30 pm.

Cost is \$40 per couple.

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Lent and Easter bring Christians closer to God's love

By Jim Schellman

A few years ago, I lost my father. This was the first in an expected series of deaths of those who are close to me.

One day I presume I will be a source of that same experience for others that I love.

No one can journey to the threshold of death with a beloved family member or friend without confronting that horrible, natural question of whether this is all, whether this is the end.

Even for those enlightened by Christian belief, the possibility still haunts us because faith has to do with things unseen, a life promised but yet to come.

We journey toward that new life together. That is why the fires of faith are first lit and then fanned within a community of faith, the Church.

Lent and Easter bring us to the center point of this great mystery—the fact of real and bloody death, an execution in fact, and the faith-filled vision that love will not be denied or extinguished by death, that those we love continue, as does their love for us, that love reigns supreme and will have the final word.

These two seasons make up the great 90 days in which we go there, into that mystery, together and in the company of Christ. This we understand as the journey toward baptism and into baptismal living, a form of life that always holds together the two mysteries of death and life.

Lent begins with our Lord being drawn by the Spirit into the desert for 40 days following his baptism by John. The community of the Church follows him there in our great 40-day Lenten retreat as we prepare our newcomers, our catechumens who are now elect, for baptism, and prepare ourselves to renew our baptismal covenant alongside them.

We simplify our lives and strive to walk more consciously with the Lord through prayer. We experience hunger through fasting, our weakness and our simple humanity. We are opened by the Spirit to the physical and spiritual hungers of others, and learn new ways to offer them both kinds of bread through almsgiving.

As we newly experience these central communal disciplines, we immerse those preparing for baptism in them with us.

Lent makes the transition to Easter during the three days of the Easter Triduum. The liturgies of

Holy Thursday and Good Friday have no concluding rite. The community is not sent forth. We simply depart.

These three holiest of Christian days form one continuous act of worship that holds in vital tension the whole central mystery of human life redeemed in Christ—a voluntary, salvific death and a things-will-never-be-the-same resurrection.

What is the central act of the three days in which the community of faith proclaims this seminal mystery?

It is nothing less than the plunging of new believers into the dying and rising of Jesus Christ through the waters of baptism. In that same central baptismal liturgy, all of us then renew our baptismal commitment to Christian discipleship.

This is a discipleship that does not deny suffering and death, but stares it in the face, in the strength of Christ, and declares that love has won and we will live forever in that love, beginning in these waters.

By baptism, we are plunged into the dying and rising of our Lord (Rom 6:3-11). We share in that great mystery and are offered its full grace in the living out of our lives. In this way, our dying has already happened in baptism—dying to a world that lives for itself, not for God and others.

Our physical death will only be the final act of that dying begun in these waters. But the dying is part of the rising, the coming up from those waters with fresh heart and hands—the heart and hands of Christ still loving and feeding a hungry, longing world.

This real, sacramental experience is the very rhythm of our lives through baptism. Lent and Easter plunge us anew into that deep and mysterious rhythm, simplify us to see once again a Lord who longs to transform us into that new garden place where tears and suffering and, yes, death simply have no space to call their own.

The resurrection of the Lord is the centerpiece of this great hope!

Isn't this the full force of St. Paul's heartfelt cry to the Corinthians?

"If the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is in vain" (1 Cor 15:16-17).

(Jim Schellman is executive director of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate.) †

Photo by Mary Ann Wyard



During Lent, St. Philip Neri parishioners in Indianapolis brought their family crucifixes and crosses to church to display around the tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament. Their crucifixes and crosses represent a variety of cultures. A mural depicting St. Philip Neri, the patron saint of youth, decorates the wall above the tabernacle.

The cross deepens meaning of God's love

By Carole Norris Greene

The sermons of the early Church focused as much on Jesus' crucifixion as on his glorious resurrection.

This was because—without Christ's death on the cross—his resurrection would not have had ramifications for sinners.

In St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, the Apostle writes, "Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. ... Christ ... lives for God. Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as [being] dead to sin and living for

God in Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:3-4, 9-11).

In his Letter to the Galatians, St. Paul emphasizes, "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal 6:14).

Therefore, our deepest desire, St. Paul explains in his Letter to the Philippians, should be "to know [Jesus] and the power of his resurrection and [the] sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death" so that we, too, can be resurrected from the dead (Phil 3:10-11).

While we celebrate the Resurrection, we must also remember that it's the cross which deepens its meaning for Christians.

(Carole Norris Greene is the associate editor of Faith Alive!) †

Discussion Point

Prayer and service are gifts for God

This Week's Question

If you could present a gift to God in thanksgiving for Jesus taking your place on the cross, what would it be?

"I would offer the space of silence in which I could express my gratitude." (Marion Danforth, Cary, N.C.)

"I couldn't give my life. But in my personal life, I can go to the eucharistic chapel to spend time with him to show that I love him and appreciate all he has done for me. I spend more time there during Lent." (Toni Pearson, Torrance, Calif.)

"By helping a person I normally wouldn't help. For instance, I know a woman who needs a ride to church, but she is [difficult to get along with]. ... I could offer

her a ride." (Agnes Walter, New Smyrna Beach, Fla.)

"My wife and I always say the Miraculous Medal novena before and after any health issues in the family. To us, the novena is a way to say thank you for individual gifts like good health news as well as for the great sacrifice that God made for us on the cross." (Thomas Hayes, Euclid, Ohio)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: As a priest, what is one kind of support that you especially appreciate receiving from your bishop?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to cgreene@catholicnews.com or write to *Faith Alive!* at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. †



Photo by Mary Ann Wyard

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Psalms of confidence and thanksgiving

(Seventh in a series of columns)

Many of the psalms of lament that I wrote about the past two weeks include sentiments of gratitude to, and confidence in, God. Psalm 25 is an example of that, mixing fervent pleas with phrases of confidence in God.

Some psalms, though, express only those sentiments without cries of lament. Psalm 23 is an example of that. It's probably the psalm most Christians know best because it is often prayed at funerals and other occasions when people are looking for consolation.

"The Lord is my shepherd," it begins, "there is nothing I lack." The image of God as a good shepherd tending his sheep is common in both the Old and New Testaments.

The prophet Ezekiel said, "Thus says the Lord God: I myself will look after and tend my sheep. As a shepherd tends his flock

when he finds himself among his scattered sheep, so will I tend my sheep" (Ez 34:11-12). The passage continues for four more verses.

Jesus compared himself to a good shepherd: "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (Jn 10:11). That passage continues for seven more verses.

Sentiments expressed in the psalm include, "You guide me along the right path," "Even when I walk through a dark valley, I fear no harm for you are at my side," and, "Only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life."

Psalm 91 is another great psalm of confidence in God. In the first column in this series, I noted that St. Thomas More wrote an extended commentary on it. The Church assigns that psalm for night prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours for Sundays and the octaves of both Christmas and Easter, and recommends that it be prayed by anyone who wants to pray night prayer from memory.

This psalm includes the verses, "God commands the angels to guard you in all

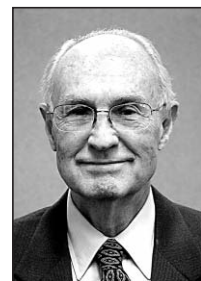
your ways. With their hands they shall support you, lest you strike your foot against a stone." These were the words the devil used when he tempted Jesus in the desert (see Mt 4:6 and Lk 4:10-11).

Other psalms of confidence include 11, 16, 62, 121 and 131.

Individual psalms of thanksgiving include 9-10 (a single psalm in two parts), 30, 32, 34, 41, 92, 116 and 138. They express gratitude to God for his protection and favors granted. The favors are usually spelled out, but sometimes they anticipate the blessing the psalmist is sure to come.

The Church assigns Psalm 118 to daytime prayer on the first and third Sundays in the four-week cycle. Psalm 23 replaces it on the second and fourth Sundays. Psalm 118 is a thanksgiving psalm that was used in a victory procession of the king and people into the Temple.

During a battle, the psalmist was surrounded by enemies, he says, but "in the Lord's name I crushed them." Then a dialogue follows between the priests and the psalmist before the priests impart their blessing and the psalmist sings in gratitude. †



Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Thinking about God's kind of friendship

Someone once gave us a plaque that read, "Friends are the family you choose for yourself."



Naturally, the giver was a dear friend of ours and we certainly understood the sentiment she expressed. Friends are such an important part of belonging to the family of God.

Christ in his humanity demonstrated this fondness for friends when he visited Martha, Mary and Lazarus and dined with others. He felt such human grief and sympathy when his friend Lazarus died that he miraculously raised him from the dead.

He even performed a miracle in the name of friendship "before his time had come" at the wedding in Cana. His mother, sensing the host's embarrassment upon running out of wine, asked her son to do something about it, and he did. Now, that's a real friend for you!

We seem to have an inborn desire to enjoy the company of others.

Babies play separately, but take obvious comfort in being side-by-side while doing it. Later, they begin to interact, first with siblings and later with kids in the wider

world. School, sports, extended family gatherings and other occasions provide further experience as they grow, and eventually they find themselves a part of a circle of compatible friends.

Teenagers tend to think friends are more important than family, especially more than mom or dad. They will listen to their pals' opinions and ignore, or defy, their parents' advice. Then they are amazed, upon reaching their 20s, to discover how wise their parents are and what good friends they have become to them.

The parent/child relationship is naturally centered on direction by parents, and the acceptance of parental authority by children. It's not a relationship of equals, which always makes me suspicious of people who say they are "friends" with their kids. It's only in adulthood that both parties realize that the old dynamic has changed into real friendship—which is when Mom finally stops telling her son to wear a coat because it's cold out.

Sometimes friends we made early on last for life. I have kindergarten pals whom I see only occasionally, but when I do we never feel less intimate or suffer an awkward moment. True friendship lasts forever. Of course, that's because friendship is founded upon love, and we all know that true love lasts forever.

Friendship is based on mutual trust and loyalty and, like love, can sometimes be stubbornly unrealistic. That's when we realize a friend has betrayed us or that they are not the person we thought they were.

Perhaps the guy we loved to party with in our teenage years never seems to grow up so we just don't have much in common anymore. Or maybe the colleague whose success we admired turns out to be doing something illegal. Whatever it is, it's always a surprise and a disappointment when a friend lets us down.

Imagine how bad Jesus must have felt when he knew Judas would betray him. Here was a disciple, a friend who had shared good times and bad, not only turning him in, but also damning himself by his own action. But Jesus was a good friend and may have forgiven him, as he forgave Peter for denying him three times.

We can learn friendship from the example of God, who eternally listens to, shares with, helps, inspires, stands by, and forgives us.

And we can try to do the same for our friends here on Earth.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Emmaus Walk/Debra Tomaselli

My old, faded minivan and the temptations of Lent

It's Lent, and gosh, I can tell. I want a new car.

Not just any car. I want something shiny brand new, sleek and stylish. Why can't I drive a fancy vehicle like my co-workers? Why not a stately SUV or a graceful sedan with a youthful odometer?

Instead, I enter the parking lot in my lumbering minivan, whose headlights look like bad cataracts. The paint is faded and there

is a small dent from when I backed into a mailbox years ago. Telltale containers of motor oil line pockets inside the door as it needs oil about as often as gas.

When we first purchased the van, I was a stay-at-home mom and minivans were the rage. Sara, our youngest, was so excited about the new vehicle that she would spend hours standing between the seats with a sparkle in her eyes. We drove cheerleading teams, transported lacrosse equipment and chauffeured classmates to it.

Through the years, we moved our kids in and out of dorms and transferred furniture into new apartments with it. Whenever we

considered trading it in, another need arose and we clung to the mini van.

But enough is enough. When this tough economy pushed me into the business world, my minivan looked like an oddity in the office parking lot, sandwiched between shiny SUV's and sporty passenger vehicles. But the option of trading it is gone—at least

for now. Our crippled income and ongoing expenses can't handle it.

That's where Lent comes in.

Normally, it doesn't bother me that I am driving a dinosaur of a vehicle. I choose part-time work so I can continue to write, and I would rather continue writing than drive a shiny new vehicle. In fact, I am convinced that is what God wants me to do—at least for today.

I can't imagine life if I couldn't reach people through the written word.

So when thoughts of "poor me" arise, I fight them off. I pray to keep my sights on God's vision for my life. I read my Bible often and am convinced that the "enemy" resides in my own thoughts—if I allow

negative notions in.

I focus on the eternal good, not my temporal existence. I believe that God won't give me anything that I can't handle. I am struggling to learn all that I'm meant to learn from this experience. And I choose to remain thankful. After all, it could be worse. I could have nothing to drive.

But it's Lent. The devil is dangling the carrot just like he did to Jesus in the desert.

"Give up your writing and find more profitable work, and you can have a pretty new car. You'll earn the respect of your peers. You'll feel more important."

It's a battle that goes on inside my head, but there's no doubt where my heart lies.

So while I might want to complain for a moment, really, I'm over it. Thank you, Lord, for faded minivans.

(Debra Tomaselli lives in Altamonte Springs, Fla. Her column appears in several diocesan newspapers. Her e-mail address is dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Pray on Palm Sunday to be faithful, not fickle

I've heard many times in Palm Sunday homilies and reflected many times in prayer about how fickle the crowds were that acclaimed Jesus in his triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

One day they cheered him. And less than a week later, they jeered him and called for him to be crucified.

It's good for us to imaginatively and prayerfully place ourselves in the crowd on that first Palm Sunday.

How would we have reacted? Would we have joined in the chorus of "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord"? (Lk 19:38). When things turned out for the worse for Christ, would we have remained faithful to him when everyone else turned away?

Meditating on the fickleness of humanity, however, doesn't require that we go back in our hearts and minds 2,000 years through time.

I see such inconstancy most every day in my life with my young sons. When it's almost time to get ready for bed and they are busy playing, I'll tell them, "In five minutes, it's pajama time." They'll dutifully say, "Yes, Daddy." I'll even ask them to repeat that to me just to make sure that they were really listening.

Then, five minutes later when I tell them to stop playing and put on their pajamas, they will often protest loudly and put off bed time as long as possible.

Now I shouldn't be too hard on my boys. For we adults, and myself in particular, can be very fickle, too.

I try to take time to pray for half an hour early each morning. There have been countless times when I've told God that I want to avoid various faults in the day to come—wasting time, losing my patience, etc. And then when the temptations to give in to these faults inevitably come along, I'll so often easily give in to them.

To one degree or another, each of us lives the fickleness of Palm Sunday every day.

At the same time, we are all also given the grace to be faithful like Christ was on that same Palm Sunday and throughout Holy Week.

He knew in advance the pain and sorrow that his suffering and death were to bring to him. And even though in the Garden of Gethsemane he prayed that this chalice might pass him by, our Lord ultimately said, "Thy will be done."

Jesus was left all alone by his slumbering Apostles when he made that prayer.

When we are faced with the same agony in small ways each day of whether or not to resist or give in to temptation, we can't pray Christ's prayer on our own.

Left to our own devices, we will fail in our attempts to imitate Christ's faithfulness. We will be as fickle as that crowd in Jerusalem.

But if we consciously stay in Christ's presence during the ins and outs of our everyday lives, he will be there right by our side to help us with his grace.

He'll help us to be faithful like him, to say a firm "No" to sin and an ultimately joyful "Yes" to our daily crosses that, in faith, we know will lead us to the endless happiness of eternal life.

It's especially important for parents to take seriously this daily struggle to be faithful and not fickle.

Our children learn from us in so many ways.

When, through Christ's help, we grow in faithfulness, we'll help them to become more like him too, even when it's pajama time. †



Palm Sunday/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 28, 2010

- *At blessing of the Palms*
- Luke 19:28-40
- *In the Liturgy of the Word*
- Isaiah 50:4-7
- Philippians 2:6-11
- Luke 22:14-23:56

We are beginning Holy Week with the Palm Sunday liturgies, coming to the fulfillment of the Lenten season and drawing us face to face to the ultimate reality of salvation—that Jesus, the Son of God, died to reconcile us with the Father and then forever opened for us the gates to heaven by the Resurrection.



Palm Sunday, of course, recalls the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, which for the Evangelist Luke was the utter apex of the entire ministry of the Lord.

In general, Luke's Gospel sees Jesus as the embodiment of God's mercy, literally God in human flesh, the son of Mary, a Jewish woman.

Jesus seeks out the wayward and the despondent. Everything leads to the fulfillment of reconciling sinners with God. Thus, everything occurs on the way to Jerusalem, which Jesus visits once, and on this one visit Jesus is sacrificed on Calvary and then rises again.

For Catholics, the depth of meaning of this event is brilliantly conveyed in the majesty and drama of the liturgy.

As the palms are blessed and then ideally all the people in the congregation process with the palms, the Church offers us a reading from the Gospel of Luke.

This reading recalls the plans for the arrival of Jesus as well as his arrival in Jerusalem.

An element of inevitability, of Providence, surrounds the event. Jesus tells the Pharisees who object to it all that even if the disciples were silent, the very stones would shout the Good News of salvation in Christ.

Later, in the first reading, the Church presents the third of the four "Songs of the Suffering Servant" from the third section of the Book of Isaiah.

Scholars debate the identity of this servant. Was he a prophet? The author? A collective

symbol for the people of Israel?

In any case, Christians have always seen in these songs the image of the innocent, constantly loyal servant of God, the Lord Jesus.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians provides the second reading.

Scholars think that the reading is an ancient Christian hymn, used in early liturgies. Its eloquence magnificently reveals intense faith.

As the last reading, the Church dramatically offers a reading of St. Luke's Passion Narrative.

To enhance the occasion, the congregation most often becomes involved.

Each Gospel contains a highly detailed and lengthy account of the trial and execution of Jesus. Each Gospel has its own perspective as each evangelist had his own insights into what happened on the first Good Friday.

By contrast, people usually are obtuse and often devious, even vicious. Still, the love of God will not be thwarted. Salvation will come because it is God's will that salvation will come.

Reflection

No biblical reading is as powerful and overwhelming as are the four Passion Narratives in the successive Gospels. St. Luke's Passion Narrative is no exception.

The crown of the Palm Sunday Liturgy of the Word is the moving, solemn proclamation of the Passion of Jesus as understood by St. Luke.

At the blessing of the palms, the Church prepares us, again employing Luke's Gospel, for this proclamation.

Recalling the entry into Jerusalem by Jesus, the Church presents the Lord as resolute. Salvation was God's will, the product of God's love for us. Some people cooperated, but some did not because they were burdened by ignorance or pride.

The readings from Third-Isaiah and Philippians focus our minds upon Jesus. He is Lord!

Finally, magnificently, St. Luke's Passion Narrative tells us of the depth of the Lord's giving of self. This is the message—God loves us with a perfect, uncompromising, unending love.

Sin flaws us. It can doom us. We need God. And God responds by satisfying our need for true life. The key, hopefully refined during Lent, is for us to love God in return. †

Daily Readings

Monday, March 29

Isaiah 42:1-7
Psalm 27:1-3, 13-14
John 12:1-11

Tuesday, March 30

Isaiah 49:1-6
Psalm 71:1-4a, 5ab-6b, 15, 17
John 13:21-33, 36-38
Mass of Chrism
Isaiah 61:1-3a, 6a, 8b-9
Psalm 89:21-22, 25, 27
Revelation 1:5-8
Luke 4:16-21

Wednesday, March 31

Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34
Matthew 26:14-25

Thursday, April 1

Holy Thursday
Holy Thursday evening
Mass of the Lord's Supper
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14
Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-15

Friday, April 2

Good Friday
Celebration of the Lord's Passion
Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1-19:42

Saturday, April 3

Holy Saturday
Holy Saturday night
The Easter Vigil
Genesis 1:1-2:2
or Genesis 1:1, 26-31a
Psalm 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12-14, 24, 35
or Psalm 33:4-7, 12-13, 20, 22
Genesis 22:1-18
or Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18
Psalm 16:5, 8-11
Exodus 14:15-15:1
(Response) Exodus 15:1-6, 17-18
Isaiah 54:5-14
Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-12, 13
Isaiah 55:1-11
(Response) Isaiah 12:2-3, 4-6
Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4
Psalm 19:8-11
Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28
Psalms 42:3, 5; 43:3-4
or, when baptism is celebrated,
Isaiah 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6
or Psalm 51:12-15, 18-19
Romans 6:3-11
Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Luke 24:1-12

Sunday, April 3

Easter Sunday
The Resurrection of the Lord
Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Colossians 3:1-4
or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
John 20:1-9
or Luke 24:1-12
or, at an afternoon or evening Mass,
Luke 24:13-35

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

In matters of life and death, we are all beggars at the door of God's mercy

QA friend committed suicide recently after years of treatment for depression. She received a Catholic burial.



Are such people forgiven? What about people who kill themselves who have no history of mental or psychological issues?

I always believed that forgiveness was not possible if a person committed suicide.

What is the Church's stance on suicide? (Iowa)

AMuch of the Catholic Church's stance about suicide is expressed in the fact that your friend—very properly—had a Catholic funeral liturgy celebrated for her after her death.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reflects our teaching today when it says that we each have responsibility for our own lives, but we should not despair of the salvation of persons who take their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God has ways of providing for them spiritually, and the Church always holds them—as it does all the departed—in its prayers (#2283).

Catholic understanding of the subject is reflected also in its funeral policies. Canon law lists those who are to be deprived of Catholic burial. Among these are "manifest sinners for whom ecclesiastical funeral rites cannot be granted without public scandal" (#1184).

Insofar as they are covered at all, people who commit suicide would be part of that group. But are such people really open public "sinners" whose Christian burial would give scandal?

Particularly today, with our much better understanding of the factors that determine

human behavior, bishops and other pastors generally believe just the opposite.

The scandal would be if a Christian burial were refused. We are aware of how limited is our understanding of what really was happening spiritually and morally with the deceased person, and perhaps even more aware of the need for compassionate and loving care for those left behind.

Taking one's life is a serious matter. But how much was the individual capable of reflection on what he or she was doing? How much true consent of the will was there?

I have had the sad experience of dealing with suicide many times in my 56 years as a priest. Circumstances surrounding these deaths gave strong hints to everyone who knew them that the deceased were hampered mentally or emotionally—often to a severe degree—at the time of death.

Sometimes those hints are overt—with erratic behavior pointing to some crippling psychological dysfunction.

Sometimes they are less obvious—when such a self-destructive action contradicts every experience with that person. There is no evidence of any plan or reflection beforehand. To all appearances, something inside the person "just snapped" and likely we will never know what that might have been.

In celebrating a Christian burial, we make no judgment about that individual's relationship with God. As it does for all of us, whoever we are, the Church, with and in Christ, asks God's mercy on the one who has died and on those who have been hurt by that death.

What happened after the death of your friend, therefore, was strictly in accord with good Catholic practice. It is a vivid reminder that whatever the circumstances of our life and death, we are all beggars at the door of God's mercy. †

My Journey to God

The Prodigal Father

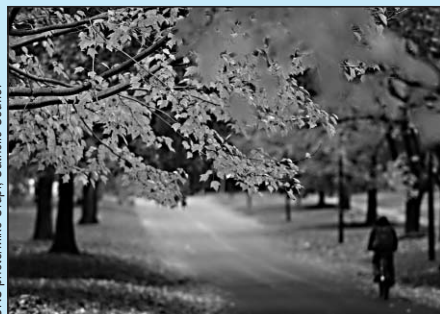
The old man lowered his head to conceal the tears ready to fall as he lingered at the gate watching his youngest hurry away.

Oh, the excitement in the youth nearly sparked the same in him, but the sadness of absence soon smothered it.

The long days, void of his child, drew him each twilight and dusk to scan the road's length in never ending hope.

Many moons later, as he was habitually checking, his saddened eyes were quickly wiped to assure him of his view.

Yes! It was his boy! Fearing nothing,



CNS photo/Mike Crupi, Catholic Courier

longing full-hearted, he ran to his son's embrace, picking him up unashamedly.

Both talking at once, the father drowned all with a sweep of prodigality: "My son is alive!"

By Sister Norma Gettelfinger, O.S.B.

(Benedictine Sister Norma Gettelfinger is a member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. Her poem was inspired by the Parable of the Prodigal Son from the Gospel of Luke, which is recounted in Lk 15:11-32. A cyclist makes his way past trees that line Seneca Parkway in Rochester, N.Y., on Oct. 29, 2009.)

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.

AEMMER, Anthony W., 62, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 11. Husband of Carol (Marks) Aemmer. Father of Michelle Miles, Laura Toler, Mark and Matt Bennett, Holly, Mark and Tony Aemmer. Brother of Donna Condra, Marggie Kannapel, Cathy Lou Sowders, Pat Stone, Richard and Robert Aemmer. Grandfather of 12.

BARLOW, Michael S., 58, St. Mary, North Vernon, March 2. Husband of Mary (Leach) Barlow. Father of Ben Barlow. Brother of Mary Jo Bender, Kate Nicolai, John and Robert Barlow II.

BROWN, Michael D., 53, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis, March 1. Son of Joseph and Mabel (Seats) Brown. Brother of Desiree Randle, Kym Brown-Wharton, Cheryl Brown-Wright, Dallas and Keith Brown.

COMPTON, Rosemary R., 83, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, March 6. Mother of Stacy Cowan, Diana Daugherty, Robin McIntire and Daniel Compton. Sister of Phillip

Gallagher. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of 15.

DAUGHERTY, Thelma, 94, St. Andrew, Richmond, March 14. Mother of James Daugherty. Sister of Patricia Krasnowski. Grandmother of two.

GENSHEIMER, Raymond, 75, St. Paul, New Alsace, Jan. 15. Husband of Mildred Gensheimer. Father of Paula Mathewson. Grandfather of two.

GUTZWILLER, Ralph H., 95, St. Peter, Franklin County, March 7. Husband of Eleanor Gutzwiller. Father of Diane Gramman, Sharon Simmermeyer, Nita and Edward Gutzwiller. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of 14.

HARPE, Charles S., 92, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, March 8. Husband of Eileen (Danahey) Harpe. Father of Ann Crawford, Charleen Cross, Cathy MacDonald and C. David Harpe. Brother of Mary Agnes Roberts. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of two.

JOHNSON, Dennis Lee, 47, St. Paul the Apostle, Greencastle, March 6. Father of Jerry Grimes. Son of David and Joyce (Duncan) Johnson. Brother of Pam Bowman, Angie Halton, David, Greg and Keith Johnson.

JOHNSON, Shirley A., 76, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, March 1. Mother of Joy Dorsey, David Harris and Jim Turpin. Grandmother of four.

LEPORE, R. Raymond, 85, St. Charles Borromeo,

Bloomington, March 5. Father of Maryann Cameranesi, Catherine Imus, Janice Lepore-Jentleson, Jeffrey and Raymond Lepore. Grandfather of 10.

O'BOYLE, Karen Sue, 51, Annunciation, Brazil, March 8. Mother of Casey, John, Patrick and Thomas O'Boyle. Sister of Rexanne Laue.

OWEN, Mary E. (Boesing), 87, St. John the Baptist, Starlight, March 9. Mother of Mary Blair, Bette Buechler, Bernie, Nelson III and Thomas Owen. Sister of Annette Chamberlain, Blanche Finn, Marty Renn, Margaret Stubblefield, Colette Zumstein and Joe Boesing. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of 15.

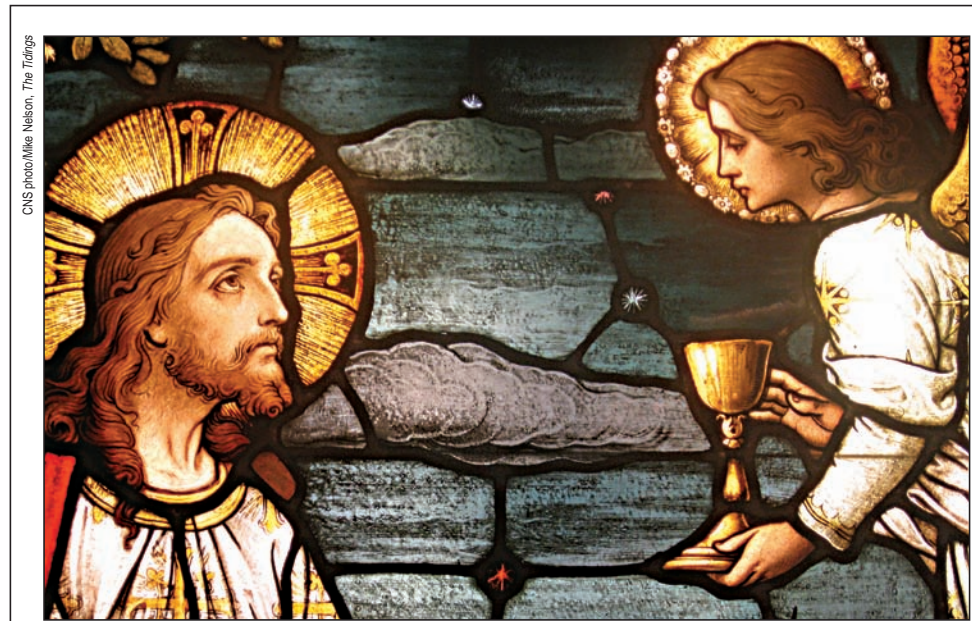
PRICE, Chester, Sr., 78, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 14. Father of Cynthia, Chester Jr., Douglas and Martin Price. Brother of Evelyn Arnett, Lillian Gresk, Bernie Price and Donald Przybyla. Grandfather of five.

RAMEY-LOW, Bonnie, 67, St. Mary, North Vernon, March 2. Wife of Walter Low. Mother of Rebecca, Christopher and Stephen Ramey. Stepmother of Steven and Tom Low. Grandmother of seven. Step-grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of one. Step-great-grandmother of four.

THOMAS, W. Golden Rule, 102, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, March 2. Aunt of several.

VEERKAMP, John E., 82, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Feb. 26. Husband of Rita (Wilmer) Veerkamp. Father of Karen Crowe, Susan Veerkamp and Mary Ann Wentzel. Grandfather of two.

VOEGELE, Lawrence N., 90, St. Louis, Batesville, Feb. 22. Husband of Alta Rose Voegele.



In the garden

Jesus and an angel are depicted in the Garden of Gethsemane in this stained-glass window at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles.

Father of Carol Baker, Janet Meer, Nancy Metz, Linda Riggs and Ron Voegele. Brother of Clare Irrgang, Ruth Simmermeyer and Tony Voegele. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of seven.

VOIGNIER, Cathern, 95, St. Paul, Sellersburg, Feb. 17. Mother of Delight, Charles, Jerry, Joe and Tom Voignier. Grandmother of 23. Great-grandmother of 37.

WALLMAN, Wanda M., 96, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, March 1. Mother of Gerald, Lawrence, R. Joseph, Richard and Thomas Wallman. Sister of Alvina Mannix. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of seven.

WARD, Charles R., 72, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, Jan. 17. Husband of Patricia (Caylor) Ward. Father of Mary Marks, Jacqueline Nieble, David, John and Michael Ward. Brother of Barbara McClure and Joseph Ward. Grandfather of five.

WEBER, James R., 69, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Feb. 28. Husband of Beverly Weber. Father of Abigail Weber-Shunnarah and Stephen Weber. Grandfather of three.

WEISS, Aloisia P., 80, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Feb. 24. Wife of Albert Weiss. Mother of Patricia Schenkel, Catherine and William Weiss. Sister of Elizabeth Schoelch, Hermann and Dr. Lothar Schwarz. Grandmother of seven.

WILHELM, Alberta L., 86, St. Louis, Batesville, March 5. Mother of Linda Horner. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of five.

WILHELM, Raymond, 73, St. Joseph, St. Leon, Feb. 18. Father of Rebecca Callahan, Ray Jr., Rick and Rod Wilhelm. Brother of Alma Hoffman, Rita Gesell and Alvina Meyer. Grandfather of three.

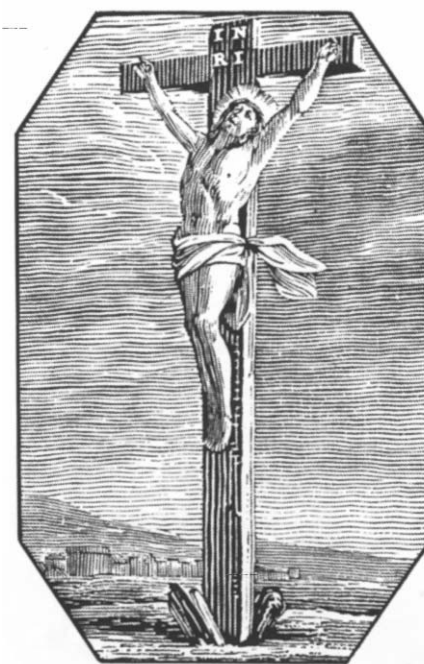
WOODARD, Melvin James, 81, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, March 11. Husband of Celia (Hettinger) Woodard. Father of Denise Reisinger, Gwen, Mike and Russell Woodard. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of one. †



You are cordially invited to pray

The Stations of the Cross at two locations:

Good Friday • April 2, 2010 • 12:00 PM
CALVARY CEMETERY
 435 W. Troy • Indianapolis
 (317) 784-4439



Good Friday • April 2, 2010 • 2:00 PM
OUR LADY OF PEACE CEMETERY
 9001 Haverstick Road • Indianapolis

(One block west of Keystone and one block north of 86th street)
 (317) 574-8898

Walk with Msgr. Joseph Schaedel, Vicar General, and the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus as they pray the Stations of the Cross.



ALL ARE WELCOME!

Pope will beatify Cardinal Newman in England during September visit

LONDON (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI will preside at the beatification ceremony of Cardinal John Henry Newman in Coventry, England, during a four-day visit to the United Kingdom on Sept. 16-19, British Catholic leaders said.

The step is an unusual one because under Pope Benedict's own rules, a beatification is to be performed by a cardinal in the diocese where the candidate for sainthood died.

Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster, president of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, told a March 16 press conference in London that to see Cardinal Newman "declared 'blessed'—a step toward sainthood—will be a very, very important moment."

"Cardinal John Henry Newman is a figure of great literary culture, a poet and a pastor," he said. "He is a towering figure in English history over the last 200 years."

"Pope Benedict has a particular attentiveness to the writings of Cardinal Newman," the archbishop added. "He is making an exception to his own rules to do this. ... This will be the first beatification he has carried out as pope."

Cardinal Newman was an Anglican cleric who founded the Oxford Movement to bring the Anglican Church back to its Catholic roots. He became Catholic at the age of 44 after a succession of clashes with Anglican bishops, and was made a cardinal by Pope Leo XIII. He died in Birmingham in 1890 at age 89.

His beatification was announced in July after the Vatican declared that the inexplicable healing of Deacon Jack Sullivan of Marshfield, Mass., from a crippling spinal condition was the result of Cardinal Newman's intercession.

The announcement of Pope Benedict's decision to beatify Cardinal Newman himself was welcomed by Father Richard Duffield, provost of the Birmingham Oratory, the community the cardinal founded in the 19th century, and postulator of the cause for the cardinal's sainthood.

"The Holy Father's lifelong devotion to Newman has made a profound contribution to understanding the depth and significance of our founder's legacy," he said in a March 16 statement. "His

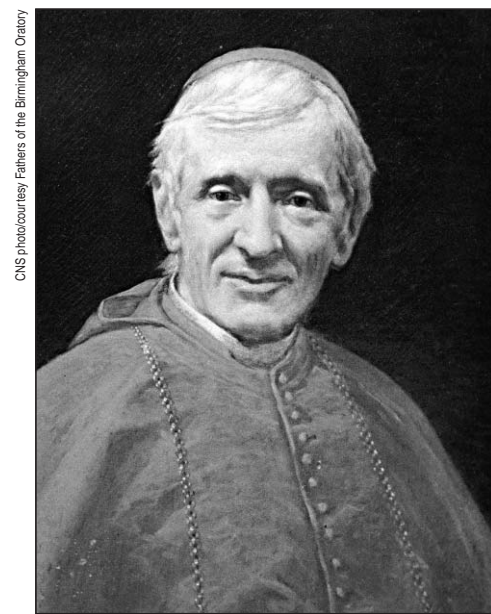
decision to beatify Newman in person confers a unique blessing upon the English oratories and all who have drawn inspiration from Newman's life and work."

Prior to the press conference, the papal visit was announced by Buckingham Palace, which said the pope will fly to Scotland to be welcomed by Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, at the Palace of Holyrood House.

During his visit, the pope will address an audience in Westminster Hall, London, the site of the trials of such Catholic martyrs as St. Thomas More and St. Edmund Campion.

Other key events will include a public Mass in Bellahouston Park in Glasgow, Scotland, and a prayer vigil in London. The pope will visit Anglican Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace in London, and pray with other Church leaders at Westminster Abbey.

The exact details of the pope's itinerary will be released at a later date. †



Cardinal John Henry Newman, who was one of the great intellectual minds of the Catholic Church in the 19th century, is seen in a portrait in a church in Rome. Pope Benedict XVI will preside at the beatification ceremony of Cardinal Newman in Coventry, England, during a four-day visit to the United Kingdom on Sept. 16-19.

Archdiocesan parishes schedule final communal Lenten penance services

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

The schedule is also posted on *The Criterion Online* at www.CriterionOnline.com.

Batesville Deanery
March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg

Indianapolis South Deanery
March 29, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

New Albany Deanery
March 28, 4 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany

Seymour Deanery
March 29, 6:30 p.m. for St. Mary, North Vernon; St. Anne, Jennings County; and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County †

Lenten activities available online

Be sure to visit *The Criterion's* Lenten Web page at www.archindy.org/lent.

The page consists of links to daily readings, a Lenten column by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, a full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features. †

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Employment



ARCHDIOCESE
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The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

PRINCIPAL

Elementary School Ministry

Saints Francis and Clare School Ministry

Saints Francis and Clare School Ministry in the Center Grove area of Greenwood invites qualified applicants to apply for the position of principal. Our school opened 4 years ago and will include grades Pre-K through 5th grade for the 2010-2011 school year. Our new construction will be completed in August of this year and provide the state of the art facilities to eventually accommodate 450 students in grades Pre-k through 8th.

If you believe you are qualified to build on the foundation of our School Ministry that has been put into place, please send your résumé to:

Mr. Rob Rash
Office of Catholic Education
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: indyoc@archindy.org

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Employment



ARCHDIOCESE
OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

PRINCIPAL

St. Malachy Parish School

St. Malachy Parish School, Brownsburg, Indiana is seeking a strong leader to serve as principal for the 2010-2011 school year. St. Malachy is a faith based community located on the Indianapolis west side, fourteen miles from downtown Indianapolis. The school, serving 428 Kindergarten-Eighth grade students, is blessed to have an exceptional teaching staff with strong support from the pastor, generous support from parents, and parish.

Applicant must foster a strong Catholic identity, possess strong leadership and interpersonal skills, and have a passion for academic excellence, faith development and student achievement. The successful candidate will assume responsibility for the administration of our school including leadership for faculty, managing finances, and communicating effectively with parents, parish and community.

Candidates must be a practicing Roman Catholic.

For more information and submission of completed application, contact:

Mr. Rob Rash
Office of Catholic Education
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
E-mail: indyoc@archindy.org

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Employment

Campus Ministry Position Open

Campus Minister

St. Joseph University Parish

St. Joseph University Parish, serving the campuses of Indiana State University and Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, has a full-time position open for a Pastoral Associate for Campus Ministry (Campus Minister). The position requires 2-3 years experience in campus ministry with a Master's degree and CCMA certification preferred. Proficiency in working in a team-oriented environment and creativity in marshalling the diverse resources of a parish community to aid in the campus ministry effort is expected. See a detailed job description at www.stjoeup.org. Salary and comprehensive benefits package commensurate with experience (12 month contract).

Send résumé, letter of application and contact information for three references to:

Rev. Richard Kaley, OFM Conv.
St. Joseph University Parish
113 S. 5th Street
Terre Haute, IN 47807
(pastor@stjoeup.org)

Application deadline:
April 15 or until a suitable candidate is selected.

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Grades 9-12

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- *Commitment to maintain strong Catholic identity
- *Eligible for Indiana Administrative License

Employment begins July 1, 2010

For more information and application, contact:

Catholic Schools Office
915 South Clinton Street
Fort Wayne, IN

Tel: 260-422-4611 Fax: 260-426-3077

Applications available online at
www.diocesefwsb.org/cso

Completed application deadline: 4/8/2010



Shelbyville parish honors its priests at Year for Priests event

By Sean Gallagher

SHELBYVILLE—A recent Saturday evening Mass at St. Joseph Church in Shelbyville was a bit different than most liturgies celebrated throughout the year at the Batesville Deanery parish.

Yes, the church was filled with hundreds of worshippers, who sang with gusto. And the Eucharist was celebrated.

But March 6 was also a night for the members of St. Joseph Parish to show their appreciation for the priests who serve there during this Year for Priests.

The hundreds of people who filled the pews all wore buttons that read in English or Spanish, “We love our priests.”

Father Christopher Craig, the pastor of St. Joseph Parish, usually celebrates the Saturday evening Mass by himself.

But on this occasion, he was joined by concelebrants that included retired Franciscan Father Leon Reuter, a son of the parish who is in residence at St. Joseph, and Franciscan Father Tom Fox, who assists in Hispanic ministry there.

Following the Mass, a spaghetti dinner was held in the priests’ honor with approximately 300 people filling the parish’s cafeteria.

“It’s very humbling because we’re used to serving others rather than being served,” Father Craig said. “I’ve really appreciated this being the Year for Priests. Every year, I feel more and more renewed as a priest. It’s a life that I’ve fully embraced. I can’t imagine me doing anything else.”

During the dinner, children representing St. Joseph Parish’s school and religious education program gave gifts to the three priests.

Also on display were photos and information about the 12 resident pastors that the parish has had since 1886.

St. Joseph parishioner Loretta Eckstein, 81, helped put the display together.

“I kind of enjoyed it because I got to look at pictures that I hadn’t looked at for a long time,” Eckstein said. “I remembered all the things that I could remember about all of the priests over the years. It’s



A basket holds buttons in English and Spanish which demonstrate the appreciation that members of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville have for their priests.



With extraordinary ministers of holy Communion standing beside the altar, Franciscan Father Tom Fox, left, Father Christopher Craig and Franciscan Father Leon Reuter hold the Eucharist shortly before Communion is distributed during a March 6 Mass at St. Joseph Church in Shelbyville. The three priests, who minister at St. Joseph Parish, were honored during a Year for Priests event sponsored by the parish.

wonderful to see them get together like this because it’s been a long time since we’ve let the priests know how much we love them.”

Eckstein has been a member of the parish for 75 years, and has assisted in music ministry there since she was in the seventh grade. As a result, she has worked closely with the many priests who have ministered at St. Joseph since the 1940s.

“They are a big part of my life, a big part,” Eckstein said. “... I’ve loved my association over the years with all of the priests. They’ve been wonderful, marvelous.”

It has only been during the last decade that a Hispanic ministry outreach has started at St. Joseph Parish. Father Tom has celebrated Mass in Spanish there for the past five years. He expects to end his ministry at the parish later this year.

He praised the evening to honor the priests of the parish.

“I really appreciate it,” Father Tom said. “I think it’s a very good thing for the parish to do. We have to certainly raise the awareness about vocations to the priesthood. ... I really am very happy with the participation of the Spanish-speaking community in this event. They’re saying something to me about my years here.”

Father Leon, who often celebrates Mass

at the parish when Father Craig is away, said he enjoys being in retirement at the parish and appreciates how the members of the parish value his presence.

“It’s very comfortable, very nice. I love it,” he said. “I always knew that I was appreciated here.”

Leigh Ann Mills, St. Joseph Parish’s business manager, helped organize the Year for Priests event and was pleased by how many people attended.

“It gives me goose bumps,” she said. “I think it says a lot—that we are really, truly blessed that we have the priests that we have.”

Eckstein said she hopes the event and the appreciation the parish has for its priests might plant seeds for future priestly vocations.

“I hope that, at some point in time, there will be some young person from this parish



Father Christopher Craig, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, receives gifts from first-grader Dakota Sosbe, left, and sixth-grader Makayla Schacht, both participants in St. Joseph’s religious education program, during a Year for Priests event on March 6 at the Batesville Deanery parish.

who looks up to our priests in the present as mentors and says, ‘I think I want to become a priest.’”

For his part, Father Craig hopes to show the people he serves how fulfilling the priesthood is.

“I hope, more than anything else, that people come to understand that the priesthood is an excellent life,” he said.

“It’s a beautiful life to live for those that are called to that particular vocation.” †

New study finds Latinos who leave their churches are choosing no faith

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A new analysis of religious identification data finds that, contrary to popular belief, U.S. Latinos are not leaving behind Catholicism for Protestant congregations, but instead are becoming more secularized, affiliating themselves with no faith at all.

A study released on March 16 by the Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture at Trinity College, a secular liberal arts school in Hartford, Conn., reported that although Latinos remain predominantly Catholic, those who have left the Church since 1990 have shifted more than expected toward secularism as they become more Americanized.

It also reported on shifts of the Latino population away from the Northeast and to Southern states, and from urban to suburban communities, among other information.

The study compared changes in the Latino population’s responses to questions about faith between 1990 and 2008. The analysis of the American Religious Identification Survey of 2008 echoes many of the findings of previous studies

of Latinos and their faith, such as that the influx of Latino immigrants continues to be a factor in maintaining the size of the Catholic population in the United States.

“Over the 18-year period, the influx of 9 million Latino Catholics accounted for most of the 11 million additions to the U.S. Catholic population and, as a result, Latinos comprised 32 percent of all U.S. Catholics in 2008 compared to 20 percent in 1990,” it said. Among Latinos, 66 percent in 1990 said they were Catholic, compared to 60 percent in 2008.

The study by Juhem Navarro-Rivera, a research fellow, and professors Barry Kosmin and Ariela Keysar noted that just as in the general U.S. population, Latinos became less identified with Christianity between 1990 and 2008, down from 91 percent to 82 percent. Those who said they identify with no faith grew from 6 percent in 1990 to 12 percent in 2008, the researchers found.

While some faiths, particularly Jehovah’s Witnesses and Seventh-day Adventists, nearly tripled in the number of Latino adherents, and Pentecostals doubled in number, the percentage of Latinos who belong to those faiths declined.

Referring to the percentage of Latinos who belong to a particular faith as “market share,” the study noted that the ratio of Catholics to other Christians remained the same over the 18-year period.

“The widespread assumption that non-Catholic Christian traditions are gaining ground among U.S. Latinos is not supported,” it said. “Obviously, this ratio is affected by the preferences of new immigrants, who remain overwhelmingly Catholic. Other non-Christian religions, comprising a wide range of groups, also lost market share.”

The report also found that a significantly larger portion of Latinos were living in suburban areas in 2008 than in 1990. The percentage of Latinos in urban areas declined from 76 percent to 70 percent, while the percentage in suburban settings increased from 12 percent to 20 percent. The percentage living in rural areas changed only slightly, from 12 percent in 1990 to 10 percent in 2008.

Taking into account their increased numbers in the population, in real numbers



Ada Santiago prays at Corpus Christi Church in Rochester, N.Y., in 2007. A new analysis of religious identification data finds that U.S. Latinos are becoming more secularized, affiliating themselves with no faith at all.

that translated to an increase in suburban Latinos from nearly 1.8 million in 1990 to more than 6 million in 2008.

The report was based on 2008 telephone interviews of 54,461 adults, 3,169 of whom identified themselves as Hispanic. The 1990 data came from a sample of 113,713 adults, of whom 4,868 identified themselves as Hispanic. The margin of error for the Hispanic sample of the study is plus or minus 1.7 percent. †