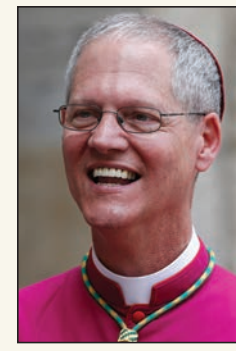




The

Criterion

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'A pastor at heart'

Archbishop Paul D. Etienne is appointed coadjutor archbishop of Seattle, page 2.

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A mother holds her baby during Ash Wednesday Mass at Jesus the Divine Word Church in Huntingtown, Md., on March 6. All mothers are honored in special ways on Mother's Day, which is on May 12 this year. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

A mother's gift of sharing faith, laughter and love shines through in readers' stories

(Editor's note: In anticipation of Mother's Day on May 12, The Criterion invited readers to share their thoughts and stories of how their mothers have lived their faith and shared their faith with their children. Here are some of our readers' favorite memories of their moms.)

First of two parts

By John Shaughnessy

While raising her three rambunctious sons, Eileen Wilkerson often felt "guilty

and ashamed" at her lack of patience with them.

During those times, Wilkerson thought of her devout Catholic mother who had 13 children and wondered, "How did she do it?!"

"To my memory, she was infinitely patient with us," says Wilkerson, a member of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood. "Thinking I must be a real failure as a mother, I phoned her."

After listening to her daughter, Doris O'Connor told Wilkerson, "Oh, honey, I

would have a hard time, too! Whenever things got the best of me, I would go up to my room, shut the door and say to the Blessed Virgin statue, 'OK Mary! You only had ONE!!' Then I might have a good cry, say a Hail Mary and go back down into the fray."

Wilkerson recalls the lessons she learned from her mother that day.

"After I stopped laughing, I thanked her. Recalling the conversation later, I realized she had taught me two things. She had reassured me that I was a

See **MOTHERS**, page 8

ICC hails 'successful legislative session' in 2019

By Victoria Arthur

With major victories in the pro-life arena and other matters of human dignity, the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) considers the recently concluded 2019 session of the General Assembly a positive one overall.

Throughout the course of the four-month session, the ICC closely tracked and promoted legislation concerning pro-life issues, religious liberty, payday lending industry practices, and parental authority with respect to education choice. From the standpoint of the Catholic Church and many other advocates for the common good, favorable developments occurred in all of these areas.

"This was a successful legislative session for the people of Indiana," said Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "The dignity of people was upheld, and the sanctity of life was promoted. These are always our guiding principles."

Two of the most significant achievements occurred late in the session with the passage of important pro-life bills. House Bill 1211 bans dismemberment abortion, an abortion method in the second trimester of pregnancy that involves tearing a live fetus apart in the uterus and extracting the unborn child piece by piece. Senate Bill 201 expands conscience protection rights beyond physicians and hospital employees to nurses, pharmacists and physician assistants, ensuring that they do not have to participate in abortion procedures if they object on moral grounds.

Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb signed both bills into law on April 24, the final day of the legislative session. As expected, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Indiana immediately challenged the dismemberment abortion law. But Mike Fichter, president and chief executive officer of Indiana Right to Life, maintains that the legislation is "on very solid constitutional ground."

See **ICC**, page 3

Faith traditions come together for 'Solidarity Vigil and Interfaith Prayer' in response to Sri Lanka bombings

By Sean Gallagher

The Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka that killed more than 250 people and damaged three hotels and three churches, two of which were Catholic, sent shock waves among believers of many faith traditions around the world on the holiest day on the Christian calendar.

Among them was Aliya Amin, executive director of the Indianapolis-based Muslim Alliance of Indiana. When 50 Muslims were killed on March 19 during shootings at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, she found solace from local interfaith gatherings in response to those attacks.

The day after the April 21 bombings in Sri Lanka, which also injured more

See **SRI LANKA**, page 9



Leaders from a variety of faith communities sit in the sanctuary of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis for an April 25 "Solidarity Vigil and Interfaith Prayer" in response to the Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Pope names Archbishop Etienne coadjutor archbishop of Seattle

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Pope Francis has named Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Anchorage, Alaska, to be coadjutor archbishop of the Archdiocese of Seattle, meaning he will assist and eventually succeed Archbishop J. Peter Sartain in leading the archdiocese.

Archbishop Etienne, who will celebrate his 60th birthday on June 15, has been in Anchorage since October 2016. Prior to that, he served as bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo., for seven years and as a priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for 17 years.



Archbishop Paul D. Etienne

Archbishop Sartain, who will turn 67 on June 6, has led the Seattle Archdiocese since 2010.

Archbishop Etienne was preparing for Holy Week on the morning of April 13, when he got a call from Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the apostolic nuncio to the United States, who told him that Pope Francis had appointed him coadjutor archbishop of the Archdiocese of Seattle.

"To say I was caught off guard would be an understatement," Archbishop Etienne told *Northwest Catholic*, magazine for the Seattle Archdiocese. "You just never expect these phone calls."

Nevertheless, he said, "My answer was immediately to say yes."

In his nearly 27 years as a priest and 10 years as a bishop, he's learned to trust in God's providence when the Holy Father asks him to take on a new responsibility, "to follow the Lord to another land."

"My life is at the service of the Church," he said. "I'm a pastor at heart."

Archbishop Etienne's appointment was announced by the nuncio on April 29. A "rite of reception" Mass—because Archbishop Sartain remains archbishop of Seattle—will be celebrated on June 7 at St. James Cathedral in Seattle.

Archbishop Sartain explained in an April 29 letter to archdiocesan Catholics that a series of spinal issues prompted him to write to Pope Francis last September requesting the appointment of a coadjutor archbishop, "with a view toward retiring much sooner than typical, because of my health."

"To say that I am delighted by the Holy Father's choice would be an understatement," Archbishop Sartain wrote. "Archbishop Etienne is a wonderful shepherd whose love for the Lord is expressed through a deep life of prayer and devotion to the sacraments, as well as contagious enthusiasm for the proclamation of the Gospel and service to those in need in the name of Jesus."

Indianapolis Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, who has known Archbishop Etienne for several years, said in a tweet: "A wonderful appointment by Pope Francis! Though realizing how the Archdiocese of Anchorage will grieve the loss of such a wonderful shepherd, I rejoice for the Archdiocese of Seattle,

Indiana native Archbishop Paul Etienne and Archbishop Peter Sartain."

As coadjutor, Archbishop Etienne will automatically become the shepherd of the archdiocese when Archbishop Sartain steps down.

"Archbishop Etienne and I will finalize the date later this year on which he will formally succeed me as Archbishop of Seattle," Archbishop Sartain said.

Archbishop Etienne said he is excited about the transition to Seattle.

"I've had great esteem for Archbishop Sartain," he said. "We've known each other since we were priests, before either one of us were ever named bishops, and he's just a great, great man. And I have no doubt that I'm inheriting a Church that's in fine shape, having been under his guidance."

Archbishop Etienne was born on June 15, 1959, in Tell City to a "very Catholic family," the second son of Paul and the late Kay Etienne.

His family's roots in southern Indiana go back generations on both sides; he knew all his grandparents, who were Catholic. One of his aunts is a Benedictine sister; a deceased uncle was a priest for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

"We just had priests and nuns and seminarians in and out of our house as regularly," he said, adding that it's "no wonder that four out of the six kids in my family chose religious vocations, and that the other two have remained as close to the Church as they have."

Two of his brothers, Bernard and Zachary, are priests of the Diocese of Evansville, Ind. His sister Nicolette is a Benedictine sister at Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove.

His own calling wasn't as clear cut. He said he initially didn't want to be a priest and spent his young adult years "fighting a call to priesthood."

After high school, he spent five years managing a local clothing store and said he had his own plan for his future: a self-made businessman, married with a big family, and raising horses and beagles.

But, he said, "God eventually started stripping away, piece by piece, my dream to replace it with his. And his dream is far better than anything I could have come up with on my own."

He attended Bellarmine College in Louisville, Ky., then the University of St. Thomas/St. John Vianney College Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., graduating with a degree in business administration.

From 1988 to 1992, he was a seminarian at the Pontifical North American College.

He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis on June 27, 1992, and returned to Rome a few years later where he earned an advanced degree in spiritual theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University.

In the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Father Etienne served as pastor of several parishes, vocations director, vice rector of Bishop Simon Brute College Seminary and as a spiritual director at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

May 3-15

May 3 – 5 p.m.

Mass and dinner at Knights of Columbus State Convention at Indianapolis Marriott East, Indianapolis

May 4 – 5 p.m.

Mass and dinner at Knights of Columbus State Convention at Indianapolis Marriott East, Indianapolis

May 6 – 3 p.m.

Blessing of new addition to Women's Care Center, Indianapolis

May 7 – 11 a.m.

College of Deans meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

May 7 – 7 p.m.

CYO volunteer Awards Ceremony and reception at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis and Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 8 – 11:30 a.m.

Legal Team meeting, Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 8 – 7 p.m.

Confirmation for youths of St. Pius X, St. John the Evangelist and St. Jude parishes, all in Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

May 9 – 8 a.m.

Judicatories meeting at Indiana Interchurch Center, Indianapolis

May 9 – 10 a.m.

Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 9 – 3:30 p.m.

Catholic Community Foundation Advisory Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 9 – 6 p.m.

Circle of Giving Mass and dinner at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 11 – 11 a.m.

Confirmation for youths of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison and St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus at St. Bartholomew Church

May 11 – 5:30 p.m.

Confirmation for youths of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, Greenwood

May 12 – 11:30 a.m.

Confirmation for youths of St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis

May 12 – 5 p.m.

Confirmation for youths of Holy Family Parish, Oldenburg

May 13 – noon

Pastoral Planning Committee meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 14 – 10:30 a.m.

Priests' Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 14 – 3:30 p.m.

Indiana Bishops' Province meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

May 15 – 9 a.m.

Indiana Catholic Conference meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

(Schedule subject to change.)

People can find peace by visiting those who suffer, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—People who feel restless or lacking inner peace will discover it when they visit those who are experiencing great difficulty, suffering, illness or persecution, Pope Francis said.

Jesus' wounds are a source of peace "because they are the sign of Jesus' enormous love" as he conquered evil, sin and death with his crucifixion and resurrection, the pope said on April 28 before praying the "Regina Coeli" with visitors gathered in St. Peter's Square.

Just as Jesus invited a doubting Thomas to touch his wounds (Jn 20:19-31), Jesus extends that same invitation to everyone today, he said.

"It is as if Jesus were saying to all of us, 'If you are not at peace, touch


my wounds,' " which are also present in the problems, difficulties, suffering, illnesses and persecution so many people experience today, the pope said.

"Are you not at peace? Go. Go on and visit someone who is the symbol of Jesus' wounds. Touch Jesus' wounds" because they are a source of his peace and mercy, he added.

Noting the day also commemorated Divine Mercy Sunday, Pope Francis said, "we all need mercy."


"Let us get close to Jesus and touch the wounds of our brothers and sisters who suffer," he said.

The pope also wished a happy Easter to Orthodox and Eastern Catholics celebrating Jesus' resurrection according to the Julian calendar. †



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Pope names Bishop Hying of Gary to head Diocese of Madison

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Pope Francis has named Bishop Donald J. Hying of Gary, Ind., as the new bishop of Madison, Wis.



Bishop Donald J. Hying

The appointment was announced on April 25 in Washington by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Vatican nuncio to the United States.

Bishop Hying, 55, is a native of Wisconsin. He was installed as the bishop of Gary on

Jan. 6, 2015. Before that, he had been an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee since 2011.

In Madison, he succeeds the late Bishop Robert C. Morlino, the diocese's fourth bishop, who died unexpectedly on Nov. 24, 2018. The 71-year-old bishop was undergoing planned medical tests when he suffered what doctors described as "a cardiac event" at St. Mary's Hospital in Madison and never recovered.

"I bring you news of great joy!" Msgr. James Bartylla, Madison's diocesan administrator, told the faithful in a statement about their new bishop. He said he announced the news of the

appointment "with honor and great pleasure."

He said the diocese was "deeply grateful" to Pope Francis for appointing Bishop Hying. "Please join us in prayer to Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for Bishop Hying and his episcopal ministry, as we look forward to his installation as the fifth bishop of Madison."

Bishop Hying will be installed on June 25 at St. Maria Goretti Church in Madison. His motto is "*Caritas Numquam Excidit*—Love Never Fails" (1 Cor 13:8).

"I am grateful and energized by this appointment made by Pope Francis to serve the Diocese of Madison and to minister to the people of God in south-central and southwestern Wisconsin," Bishop Hying said in a statement.

"My father was originally from this beautiful part of Wisconsin as part of a hardworking, farming family in Iowa and Grant counties," he continued. "Many of my relatives live here. I look forward to being part of this rich history of Catholic faith and continuing to sow the seeds of faith in this local Church as we continue to reap the bountiful harvest of my predecessor, especially by deepening our common call to missionary discipleship and to nurturing priestly vocations."

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of Indianapolis has known Bishop Hying

since 2011 when both of them attended a "new bishops" workshop in Rome.

"I was impressed with him from the beginning, and was particularly grateful when he was appointed as Bishop of Gary, becoming a member of the Province of Indianapolis," Archbishop Thompson said. "Holding nothing back as a very devoted shepherd of God's people, he has been a blessing to the Diocese of Gary as well as the Church in Indiana. His is most capable, brilliant and pastoral."

"No doubt, Bishop Hying will be a wonderful bishop for the Diocese of Madison, where the state capital is also located," he continued. "This has to be a bittersweet moment for him as he begins to grieve the process of leaving the people where he has served for these last four years and looks to getting to know the good people of his new assignment. ... Let us keep Bishop Hying and the Diocese of Gary in special prayer during this time of transition."

Donald Joseph Hying was born on Aug. 18, 1963, in West Allis, Wis., to Albert and Catherine Hying. The youngest of six sons, he attended Jesuit-run Marquette University in Milwaukee. He has a master's of divinity from St. Francis de Sales Seminary in suburban Milwaukee. He completed his class work in the doctor of ministry

program at the University of St. Mary of the Lake-Mundelein Seminary in Illinois.

Ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee on May 20, 1989, Bishop Hying served in several parishes before being named dean of formation at St. Francis de Sales Seminary. In 2007, then-Milwaukee Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan appointed him rector of the seminary; he served in the post until 2011.

On May 26, 2011, Pope Benedict XVI named then-Father Hying to be an auxiliary bishop for Milwaukee. On Nov. 24, 2014, Pope Francis appointed Bishop Hying the bishop of Gary, where he succeeded the retiring Bishop Dale J. Melczek. Bishop Hying was installed at the Cathedral of the Holy Angels in Gary on Jan. 6, 2015.

In his statement on his appointment to Madison, Bishop Hying told the Catholics of the Gary Diocese: "It has been a great joy to encounter many of you in my visits to our parishes and schools and to accompany you as we experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit's presence during our diocesan synod process."

"I have already witnessed the first fruits of this historic event and pray that the Spirit will continue to strengthen the faith at all levels—individuals, families, parishes and the entire Diocese of Gary." †

ICC

continued from page 1

Another life-affirming bill, House Bill 1547, unanimously passed both chambers of the General Assembly. Pregnant minors now will be able to consent for health care services at all stages of their pregnancy through delivery, provided that a reasonable attempt is made to contact their parents or legal guardians. Lawmakers were particularly focused on pregnant girls who have no parental support or involvement, but the ICC and other advocates worked to ensure that parents' rights were not circumvented.

"We are pleased that so many important pro-life issues were promoted and adopted, and that some negative things were stopped," Tebbe said. With regard to the latter, a bill promoting assisted reproduction and gestational surrogacy [House Bill 1369] stalled in the Senate. In addition, companion bills promoting physician-assisted suicide failed to receive a hearing in either chamber of the General Assembly.

"The ICC's focus for each session always includes upholding the dignity of human life, protecting the well-being of the family, defending the integrity and religious liberty of the Church and all Hoosiers, and protecting the vulnerable from exploitation," Tebbe continued. "For the most part, these objectives were achieved during the 2019 legislative session."

This was a long session of the General Assembly, occurring every other year. Lawmakers concluded their business five days ahead of the April 29 deadline. Although many bills were left undetermined at the close of the session, the Assembly fulfilled its primary responsibility: drafting and approving Indiana's biennial budget.

The 2019-20 budget, House Bill 1001, passed mostly along party lines. The

budget saw a significant increase for K-12 education, with many favorable provisions for non-public schools.

"School choice was protected," Tebbe said. "That is a very positive outcome for families in Indiana."

One significant change was the creation of a third tier of funding for the state's voucher program. This will provide more opportunities for families caught in the middle of the two existing income eligibility levels to send their children to the school of their choice.

Lawmakers also approved an increase in the scholarship tax credit cap, which offers individuals and corporations an opportunity to raise more funds for private school scholarships. Another change was the addition of a second-semester window to allow families to apply for vouchers later in a school year.

Catholic and other non-public schools also were included in a school safety bill, House Bill 1004, which passed both legislative chambers. Among other provisions, the bill expands and adjusts safety funding for schools and requires every school statewide to conduct one active-shooter drill within the first 90 days of the school year.

"It is important to ensure the safety of all children no matter where they are, and no matter what school they attend," Tebbe said.

Protecting the most vulnerable people from an economic standpoint also was a top priority of the ICC. A major victory was the recent defeat of Senate Bill 613, which would have dramatically expanded predatory lending in the state. However, Senate Bill 104, which would have placed severe limits on the payday loan industry, stalled earlier in the legislative session.

Another setback was the failure of Senate Bill 440, which would have modernized the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program in Indiana. The \$288 monthly payout for families in poverty to help them

temporarily through hard times has not been updated since 1988. The TANF bill, which had support from the ICC and many other advocates, unanimously passed the Senate but did not get a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee.

"As with all legislative sessions, there are disappointments," Tebbe said. "Overall, we are very pleased with the outcomes this year. But there is always more to do."

For more detailed information regarding these bills and other priority

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

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

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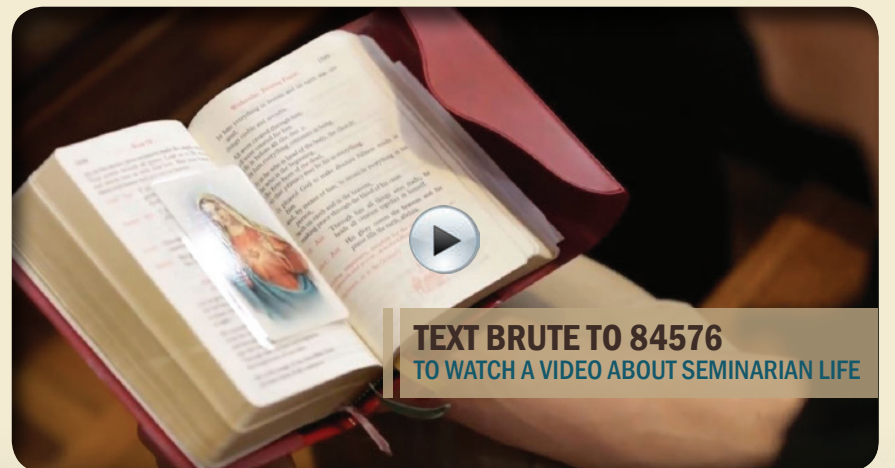
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— Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference





The Criterion

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Editorial



Bishop Nicholas A. DiMarzio of Brooklyn, N.Y., baptizes a young man on April 20 at St. John Vianney Church in New York City during a celebration of an Easter Vigil. More than 1,000 new Catholics entered full communion with the Church at vigils across the Brooklyn Diocese. (CNS photo/Ed Wilkinson, The Tablet)

It's a time to rejoice

It's a time to rejoice.

Yes, of course, it's a time to rejoice because Christ has risen from the dead and we are in the Easter season. But we want to rejoice for more prosaic reasons because we believe that the Church has a lot to rejoice about.

Just look at the number of people who were received into the full communion of the Church during this year's Easter Vigil. Numbers nationally aren't in yet, but there were reports that the numbers of those going through Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) programs were higher in some dioceses this year than last year.

In St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, 350 catechumens (those who had never been baptized) were in the RCIA program, up from 277 last year. In the Archdiocese of Chicago, more than 700 catechumens and candidates (those already validly baptized) went through the RCIA program, compared with 623 last year.

Here in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, approximately 300 catechumens and 550 candidates from other faith traditions were received into the Church. There were also nearly 150 baptized Catholics who returned to the faith and/or completed their sacraments of initiation. Many of these new Catholics are young people. This is good news for the Church.

Speaking of young people, we can also rejoice in the success of the missionaries of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) in converting some of the "nones"—those with no religious affiliation—on campuses. This is also good news.

We don't want to be Pollyannaish about this. We fully realize that some Catholics have been leaving the Church lately because of the clerical sexual-abuse scandal and its cover-up in some dioceses. That's partly why we welcome the good news; we've had far too much of the bad news.

Why are more people becoming Catholics than you might expect? And why are most of us remaining Catholics? Don't we care about the clerical sexual-abuse scandal?

Of course we do. Many of us feel betrayed. But we, and probably new Catholics, are well aware that the Church has always been composed of sinners. However, we also believe that it continues to be guided by the Holy Spirit. Besides, we know many priests who are suffering

greatly from what some of their brother priests have done.

Why would we punish ourselves because of the misdeeds of others? Why would we deny ourselves the sacraments and all the other spiritual benefits of the Church because someone else did something wrong?

Despite the scandal, our Church is strong. We know the statistics of how many people actually attend Mass weekly, but those who do find the spiritual nourishment they need. During Lent this year, there were long lines outside of confessionals as more people seem to be receiving the sacrament of penance and reconciliation, and parishes like St. John the Evangelist in downtown Indianapolis experience that throughout the year.

As for why more people than expected are becoming Catholics, each person is different. Some are doing so because their spouse is Catholic. But most others are doing so because they feel a need for a closer relationship with God. They, and longtime Catholics, can find that in the Eucharist and, in parishes fortunate enough to be able to provide it, in perpetual adoration chapels.

We might take some time, too, to rejoice in the way the Church has been spreading in other parts of the country, specifically in the South and Southwest. That's a contrast, though, with the Northeast.

In a column in *Our Sunday Visitor*, Msgr. Owen Campion wrote that new parishes are opening in the South and Southwest, getting items from parishes that are closing up north. Thus, the Archdiocese of Atlanta has grown from 40,000 Catholics in 1962 to more than 1 million today. The Diocese of Raleigh, N.C., has gone from 30,000 to 250,000 in the past 40 years.

Msgr. Campion doesn't mention any other examples, but dioceses in Texas and California have also boomed. Thus, the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston now has 1.7 million Catholics and the Diocese of Orange, Cal., has 1,175,000—38.8 percent of its population.

Msgr. Campion wrote that anti-Catholicism used to be rife in the South. Today, in Tennessee, the lieutenant governor and the mayors of Nashville, Memphis and Knoxville are all Catholics.

It's a time to rejoice.

—John F. Fink

Making Sense of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Nobody gets hurt?

A few years back, I gave a talk titled "Thinking Through the Transgender Question" at a local parish. In the audience were several individuals supporting the transgender movement. During the question-and-answer session, one of them, a young woman, raised this difficulty: "If someone wants to transition, how does that hurt anybody else? If my friend wants to be transgender, how would that harm any of us?"

Behind this line of argument, first, is the widely held notion that each of us is an isolated unit and our private choices don't affect others. Yet the old adage that no man is an island rings perennially true. Grave harms to others, in fact, follow in the wake of the radical personal decision to "switch genders."

I recently spent some time with a husband and wife who had a son struggling with depression and schizophrenia and who was convinced he was a woman. They shared with me how their son no longer spoke to any of his siblings or relatives, shutting everyone out of his life. He moved away to link up with the transgender community at his college for support, and his parents summed up his new way of thinking as the detonation of a bomb that had ravaged the whole family.

That kind of devastation has been thoroughly catalogued by those who have gone all the way through the process of transitioning, and years or decades later come to regret it.

Walt Heyer is one such individual who turned to hormones and surgeries to try to take on the appearance of a woman. Many years later, he "detransitioned," and started writing and speaking about his experiences. He has summarized the painful effects of his choices on those around him in several of his essays.

"Being transgender required destroying the identity of Walt so my female persona, Laura, would feel unshackled from

Walt's past, with all of its hurt, shame and abuse," he wrote. "It's a marvelous distraction for a while, but it isn't a permanent solution when the underlying issues remain unaddressed. Gender change is at its heart a self-destructive act. Transgenders not only annihilate their birth identity, they destroy everyone and everything in their wake: family, wife, children, brothers or sisters, and career."

Walt had been married for many years, but after transitioning, he and his wife divorced. Communication with his children ceased. He was fired from his well-paying job as an engineer and became practically destitute. Virtually all the significant relationships in his life were damaged, some irretrievably.

In his essay, Walt follows the trail of breadcrumbs in his own life to its logical conclusion.

"It occurred to me after much self-reflection that asking a surgeon to modify my appearance through a series of cosmetic procedures was simply a socially acceptable means of self-mutilation and self-destruction," he said. "Taken to the extreme, self-destruction leads to suicide."

Follow-up studies of those who undergo sex-change operations have shown that they experienced highly elevated suicide rates, even many years post-surgery, revealing yet another of the grave harms associated with transitioning that brings untold heartache to family and friends, relatives and acquaintances.

Beyond wreaking havoc in the life of patients and those around them, other damaging societal consequences arise in the wake of transitioning.

In a recent article in *Public Discourse*, Dr. Monique Robles, a pediatric critical care specialist, stresses how schools and institutions of higher learning are now "enforcing the use of preferred gender pronouns and opening bathrooms and sports teams to students of the opposite biological sex."

"Educators who refuse to comply are losing their jobs. Parents who do not agree with the trans-affirmative approach for their gender dysphoric children are

See **BIOETHICS**, page 10

Letters to the Editor

Jewish community offers condolences after church bombings in Sri Lanka

It is with a heavy heart that, on behalf of the Jewish Community Relations Council, I write to express the Jewish community's shock and sadness at the horrific terror attacks that brought such death and destruction to Christian worshippers and tourists on April 21 in Sri Lanka. We express our deepest condolences to the bereaved family members and our prayers for strength and healing to all those injured in body, mind or spirit.

We are devastated to witness such unthinkable acts of violence on any day, and recognize how much more painful

the tragedy is happening on Easter Sunday within sacred places. Our houses of worship must be safe and welcoming spaces for all.

This year, as Passover and Easter converge on the calendar, we reach out in support of our Christian brothers and sisters, and reaffirm the profound importance of Jewish-Christian community relationships.

Lindsey Mintz
Executive director
Jewish Community Relations Council
Indianapolis

Reader: Marxism-socialism-communism led to hatred of Christians in Mexico

I was surprised to see the "why" omitted from the book review for *Saints and Sinners in the Cristero War: Stories of Martyrdom from Mexico* by Msgr. James Murphy.

Why were Catholics persecuted in southern Mexico in the 1920s?

Why were priests forced to marry or face assassination by a firing squad?

Didn't it have something to do with the socialist revolution in Mexico?

Didn't the horrors in Mexico in the 1920s following that revolution closely mirror—albeit on a smaller scale—the horrors in Russia after the Russian Revolution, when churches were smashed

and Orthodox Christian priests dragged out of their beds at night and shot with a single bullet to the head, or sometimes just kicked into a mine shaft to die a slow and painful death?

It was Marxism-socialism-communism that led to this hatred of Christians and this desire to supplant the worship of God with the worship of the government.

Let's have the courage to name the evil we have been facing for more than 100 years now—and still face today. Pope John Paul II did.

Margaret Menge
Bloomington



Christ the Cornerstone

10 reasons Christians should be joyful this Easter season

“Technological society has succeeded in multiplying occasions of pleasure, yet has found it very difficult to engender joy” (Pope Francis, “The Joy of the Gospel,” #7).

This is the season of Easter joy. It is the time of year when Christians pay special attention to the heartfelt joy that is an integral part of life in Christ.

As Pope Francis observed in his apostolic exhortation, *“Evangelii Gaudium”* (“The Joy of the Gospel”), our modern culture has increased our access to pleasurable activities, many of which are perfectly legitimate. At the same time, access to more profound spiritual experiences, such as the joy of true communion with our sisters and brothers in Christ, seems more limited.

According to the Holy Father, all of us are seeking the joy that can only be found in the Good News of Jesus Christ. To find it, we must open our minds and hearts. Equally important, we must extend our arms, reaching out to others, especially the poor and vulnerable, to share with them our joy.

The eminent 20th-century Catholic philosopher Josef Pieper wrote that joy is an emotion that must be supported by some cause—a reason to be joyful. Joy does not exist in isolation from the concrete experiences of life. It springs from some external factor or reason. We Christians believe that the most profound experience of joy springs from the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here are 10 reasons why we Christians should be joyful this Easter season:

- We are alive. The gift of life has been given to us by God so that we can share in his divine life and participate in the work of creation.
- We have been set free. The death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ has liberated us from the slavery of sin and death.
- We have been baptized and given a special share in the ministry of Jesus as disciples sent to proclaim the Gospel and transform the world.
- We are not powerless. The Holy Spirit has strengthened us with his gifts. As Pope Francis tells us, the Holy Spirit is the power through which

Christ causes us to experience his closeness.

- We are not alone. The Lord has gathered us into his Church and has invited us to intimate communion with him through frequent reception of his Body and Blood in the Eucharist.

- Most of us have family, friends and co-workers who know, love and respect us as individuals and as members of the family of God, and whether we realize it or not, we are all children of God.

- We are free to laugh, to sing and to enjoy the boundless beauty of God’s creation. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI once wrote that “the Book of Revelation’s vision of heaven expresses what we see by faith at Easter: the Lamb who was slain lives. Since he lives, our weeping comes to an end and is transformed into laughter.”

- We are invited to “full, conscious and active participation” in the liturgy of our Church and in the ministries of our parish, archdiocese and the Church universal.

- We are free to speak our minds and to participate actively in the community life of our neighborhoods,

our cities, our nation and our world without suffering from oppression or fear because we know that our true and lasting city is in heaven.

- We are loved immeasurably. “Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39).

Can you identify your own reasons to be joyful? We can all develop long lists of reasons to be sad and depressed. And as if that’s not enough, all we have to do is turn on the television, log onto the Internet or read a newspaper to find plenty of reasons to be miserable.

The truth is that Christ has overcome the powers of death and darkness. He is risen! He has set us free. And he has given us powerful reasons to be joyful and filled with hope.

Let us rejoice and be glad this Easter season. Let us thank God for the gifts he has given us and for the many reasons we have to be joyful—at Easter time and always! †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Diez razones por las cuales los cristianos deben estar alegres durante la temporada de la pascua

“La sociedad tecnológica ha logrado multiplicar las ocasiones de placer, pero encuentra muy difícil engendrar la alegría” (Papa Francisco, “La alegría del Evangelio,” #7).

Esta es la temporada de la alegría pascual, el momento del año en el que los cristianos prestan especial atención a la profunda alegría que forma parte integral de la vida en Cristo.

Tal como el papa Francisco señaló en su exhortación apostólica *“Evangelii Gaudium”* (“La alegría del Evangelio”), nuestra cultura moderna ha incrementado el acceso a actividades placenteras lo cual es algo perfectamente válido. Al mismo tiempo, el acceso a experiencias espirituales más profundas, tales como la alegría de la verdadera comunión con nuestros hermanos en Cristo, pareciera ser más limitado.

De acuerdo con el Santo Padre, todos buscamos esa alegría que solo se encuentra en la Buena Nueva de Jesucristo. Para encontrarla, debemos abrir nuestras mentes y corazones. Igualmente importante es que extendamos nuestros brazos para llegar a otros, especialmente a los pobres y vulnerables, para compartir con ellos nuestra alegría.

El eminente filósofo Josef Piper escribió que la alegría es una emoción que debe sustentarse en alguna causa, es decir, una razón para estar alegres. La alegría no existe de forma aislada con respecto a las experiencias concretas de la vida, sino que emana de algún factor o motivo externo. Los cristianos creemos que la experiencia de alegría más profunda se deriva de la vida, muerte y resurrección de nuestro Señor Jesucristo.

A continuación se encuentran diez razones por las cuales los cristianos debemos estar alegres durante la temporada de la pascua:

- Estamos vivos. Dios nos ha dado el don de la vida para que podamos compartir su vida divina y participar en la obra de la creación.
- Hemos sido liberados. La muerte y resurrección de nuestro Señor Jesucristo nos ha liberado de la esclavitud del pecado y de la muerte.
- Hemos sido bautizados y hemos recibido una participación especial en el ministerio de Jesús como discípulos enviados a proclamar el Evangelio y transformar el mundo.
- No somos indefensos. El Espíritu Santo nos ha fortalecido con sus dones. Tal como nos dice el papa Francisco, el Espíritu Santo es el poder a través del

cual sentimos la cercanía de Cristo.

- No estamos solos. El Señor nos ha congregado en su Iglesia y nos ha invitado a una comunión íntima con Él al recibir con frecuencia su cuerpo y su sangre en la eucaristía.

- La mayoría de nosotros tiene familiares, amigos y compañeros de trabajo que nos conocen, nos tienen cariño y nos respetan como personas y como miembros de la familia de Dios, y ya sea que nos demos cuenta de ello o no, todos somos hijos de Dios.

- Tenemos libertad para reír, cantar y disfrutar de la belleza ilimitada de la creación divina. El papa emérito Benedicto XVI escribió en una oportunidad que “la visión del cielo que ilustra el Apocalipsis expresa lo que vemos mediante la fe en la Pascua: el Cordero que venga vidas. Puesto que vive, nuestro llanto cesa y se transforma en risa.”

- Se nos invita a participar “completa, consciente y activamente” en la liturgia de nuestra Iglesia y en los ministerios de nuestra parroquia, arquidiócesis y de la Iglesia universal.

- Somos libres de expresar nuestras opiniones y de participar activamente en la vida comunitaria de nuestros barrios, nuestras ciudades, nuestro país y el mundo sin sufrir por ello

opresiones o temores porque sabemos que nuestra ciudad verdadera y eterna está en el cielo.

- Nos aman inmensamente. “Ni la muerte ni la vida, ni los ángeles ni los demonios, ni lo presente ni lo por venir, ni los poderes, ni lo alto ni lo profundo, ni cosa alguna en toda la creación, podrá apartarnos del amor que Dios nos ha manifestado en Cristo Jesús nuestro Señor” (Rom 8:38-39).

¿Qué motivos tiene usted para estar alegre? Todos podemos redactar enormes listas de motivos para estar tristes o deprimidos. Y como si fuera poco, lo único que tenemos que hacer es encender el televisor, conectarnos a Internet o leer un periódico para encontrar suficientes motivos para sentirnos mal.

La verdad es que Cristo ha superado el poder de la muerte y la oscuridad. ¡Ha resucitado! Nos ha liberado y nos ha dado poderosos motivos para sentirnos alegres y llenos de esperanza.

Alegrémonos y sintámonos contentos en esta época de Pascua. Demos gracias a Dios por los dones que nos ha dado y por los numerosos motivos que tenemos para estar alegres, en la época de la pascua ¡y siempre! †

Events Calendar

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

May 7

Mission 27 Resale, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. **Senior Discount Day**, every Tuesday, 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260.

May 11

St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **Clara and Robert Schuman—Life at Four Hands**, featuring the Minut Piano duo of Mirabella and Bogdan Minut, 7 p.m., freewill offering. Information: www.saintbartholomew.org (choose Music Ministry) or bminut@stbparish.net.

St. Pius X Parish, 7200 Sarto Dr., Indianapolis. **Deals on Wheels**, proceeds benefit the Tamarindo Foundation, but unsold bikes are donated to St. Vincent de Paul Indianapolis, 8-10 a.m. drop-off (used bikes, tricycles, pull-behind bikes and trailers and jogging strollers) 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. shop (cash or checks only), bicycle safety course, helmet giveaway, 11:30 a.m.-noon pick-up unsold items. Information:

dealsonwheels@gmail.com, 317-362-5983.

Collett Park Pavilion, 7th and Maple Ave., Terre Haute. **All-School Reunion for former St. Ann Grade School in Terre Haute**, 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m., bring your own chair, non-alcoholic beverages and a snack to share. Information: Dena (Brown) Samm, 812-449-4122, Sharon (Klotz) Clark, 812-466-5029, Joe McKee, 812-249-9021.

May 12

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass in French**, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-627-7729 or acfadi2014@gmail.com.

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Class of '63 monthly gathering**, 6 p.m. Mass, optional dinner afterward. Information: 317-408-6396.

May 14

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Monthly Taizé Prayer Service**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers,

simple music, silence. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild**, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-223-3687, vlgmimi@aol.com.

May 16

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

May 19

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Sundays at the Woods: Farm Tour**, presented by Lorrie Heber, 2-4 p.m., freewill offering, registration not required. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or spsmw.org/event.

May 20

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Serra Club Dinner Meeting**, Franciscan Sister Marj English presenting "Spiritual Direction for all the Seasons of Your Life,"

5:40 p.m. optional rosary, 6-8 p.m. dinner and speaker, \$15 member, guests free. Information: smclaughlin@holyspirit.cc, 317-748-1478.

May 21

Ironwood Golf Club, 10955 Fall Road, Fishers (Lafayette Diocese.) **Catholic Radio Indy Annual Golf Outing**, 10 a.m. registration, 11 a.m. Mass, 11:30 a.m. lunch, noon shotgun start, dinner and prizes, \$125 per person, \$450 foursome. Registration: www.catholicradioindy.org. Information: Valerie Bendel, 317-870-8400, valerie@catholicradioindy.org.

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **"Abide" Adoration Service**, sponsored by Catalyst Catholic, 7-8 p.m., every third Thurs. of the month, featuring guest speaker, praise band, silence and confessions, child care available. Information and child care reservations: Chris Rogers, chris@nadyouth.org, 812-923-8355.

May 22

The Well Community Center, 554 Pit Road, Brownsburg. **Caregiver Support Group**, sponsored by Catholic

Charities Indianapolis, 1-2:30 p.m. Information: Monica Woodsworth, 317-261-3378, mwoodsworth@archindy.org.

May 24-25

Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, 1005 W. Main St., Danville. **Women's Club Rummage Sale**, Fri. 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m., free. Information: 913-832-8472, sbliss321@gmail.com.

June 1

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville. **First Saturday Marian Devotional Prayer Group**, Mass, devotional prayers, rosary, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462.

June 4

Mission 27 Resale, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. **Senior Discount Day**, every Tuesday, 30 percent off clothing, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260.

June 5

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center,

1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

June 7

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

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday** celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mass, 5:45 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-888-2861 or info@olgreenwood.org.

St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Charismatic Renewal Praise and Mass**, praise and worship 7 p.m., Mass 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-546-7328, mkeyes@indy.rr.com. †

Retreats and Programs

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

May 17-19

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **The King of History: Finding Christ in the Past**, Benedictine Brother Stanley Wagner presenting, \$255 single, \$425 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

June 11

Oldenburg Franciscan Center,

22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Lunch and Learn: How to Navigate Alzheimer's Disease**, clinical social worker Kristin Cooley presenting, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., \$20 includes lunch. Information and registration: 812-933-6437, www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

June 14-20

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House and Retreat

Center, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **The Image as a Window to the Spiritual: An Artist's Six-Day Hands-on Workshop and Retreat**, Benedictine Brothers Martin Erspamer and Michael Moran presenting, limited space, \$695 single, \$1,045 double. Information: 812-357-6585 or mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu. †

VIPs

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to bit.ly/2M4MQms or call 317-236-1585.

Marriage ministry to host event on May 11 at Our Lady of the Greenwood, register by May 5

The Celebrate Marriage Ministry of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish will host "Celebrate Covenant Pit Stop" in the parish's Madonna Hall, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood, from 6:30-9 p.m. on May 11.

The evening will begin with dinner, followed by a presentation by Our Lady of the Greenwood associate pastor Father Anthony Hollowell.

Celebrate Marriage Ministry offers couples opportunities for Christ-centered marriage enrichment through large group,

small group and individual couple events. The cost to attend is \$20 per couple, which includes dinner.

Attendees are asked to bring food and drinks to share as follows: last names A-L, beverage; last name M-Z, dessert.

Registration is requested online by May 5 at bit.ly/2VPO1LS (case sensitive) or by calling the parish office at 317-888-2861.

For additional information, contact Tom and Marcy Renken at 317-489-1557 or email olgmarrageministry@gmail.com. †

Sisters of Providence to host Mother's Day Brunch on May 12

The Sisters of Providence will host a Mother's Day Brunch in the O'Shaughnessy Dining Room, in the Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, on May 12.

Seating times are available from 9:30 a.m.-11 a.m. and from noon-2 p.m.

The menu includes shrimp cocktail, carved prime rib, pork loin, fresh salads, sides, desserts and non-alcoholic drinks.

Reservations are not required. However,

a limited number of tickets are available for purchase online for each seating time, so early purchase is suggested.

The cost is \$24 for adults. There is a \$2 discount for those age 55 and older, military, emergency responders and teachers. The cost for children ages 4-11 is \$13, and there is no charge for children age 3 and younger.

Additional information, including a link for the advance tickets, can be found at www.spsmw.org/event/mothers-day-brunch or by calling 812-535-4285. †

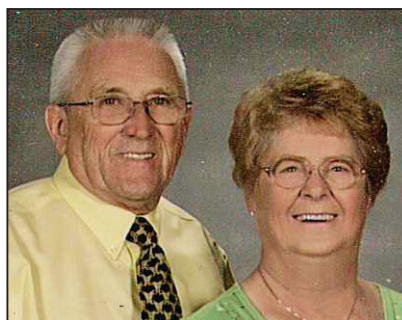


Maurice and Helen (Wilhelm) Eckstein, members of St. Maurice Parish in Napoleon, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on April 25.

The couple was married in St. Louis Church in Batesville on April 25, 1959.

They have eight children: Joan McKamey, Brenda Moster, Gena Seaton, Sharon Wietlisbach, Linda, Andy, Ric and the late Mark Eckstein.

The couple also has 21 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. †



Donald and Emma (Meiman) Bramlage, members of St. Joseph Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on May 9.

The couple was married in Holy Cross Church in Covington, Ky., on May 9, 1959.

They have five children: Donna Beyer, Susan Brock, Linda Coyne, Diane George and Father Gregory Bramlage.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

They will celebrate with a vow renewal and reception. †



William and Patricia (Enneking) Weberding, members of St. Louis Parish in Batesville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 19.

The couple was married in St. Louis Church in Batesville on April 19, 1969.

The couple has four children: Diane Redwine, Brian, Sr., Colt and Scott Weberding.

The couple has 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. †

Divorce and Beyond sessions scheduled for May 13-June 24 at Catholic Center

A six-session Divorce and Beyond support group for separated and divorced adults will take place at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, from 7-9 p.m. on Monday evenings (except Memorial Day) on May 13-June 24.

Divorce and Beyond is a Catholic peer-support group for individuals in

the process of a divorce. Discussion topics include the divorce process, self-image, stress, anger, blame, guilt, loneliness and forgiveness.

The cost of the six-week session is \$30, which includes a book.

For more information, call 317- 592-4007. To register online, go to www.archindy.org/divorce. †

Pope makes donation to help migrants traveling through Mexico

TAPACHULA, Mexico (CNS)—Pope Francis has donated \$500,000 to assist migrants attempting to travel through Mexico, but who are increasingly being impeded by Mexican officials from reaching the U.S. border.



Pope Francis

Those migrants who travel the length of Mexico are also being impeded in their attempts to apply for asylum in the

United States and remain in precarious conditions south of the border.

The donation “will be distributed among 27 projects in 16 dioceses and Mexican religious congregations that have asked for help to continue providing housing, food and basic necessities to these brothers and sisters,” the Vatican charity Peter’s Pence said in an April 27 statement.

The Vatican already approved projects overseen by seven dioceses and three religious congregations: the Scalabrinians, the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and the Hermanas Josefinas.

The donation comes as the crush of migrants arriving at the U.S. border reaches levels not seen in more than a decade. Mexico’s Catholic Church has helped the migrants with little cooperation from the various levels of government.

Priests who work on immigration matters say the federal government has yet to outline a policy or offer a proper response, while state and local governments prefer not spend money on migrants.

“Nobody wants to take charge,” said Father Javier Calvillo, director of the Ciudad Juarez migrant shelter.

The donation was made as Mexico comes under U.S. pressure and steps up its own enforcement against migrants—backpedaling from a promise made by President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador in his 2018 campaign not to “do the dirty work of any foreign government.”

In March, U.S. authorities detained 92,607 migrants, more than twice as many migrants as arrived one year earlier and

the highest monthly figure since 2007. The number of unaccompanied minors and family unit detentions has soared in the fiscal 2019 by 66 percent and 374 percent respectively, when compared to the same period one year earlier, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

“Men and women, often with young children, flee poverty and violence, hoping for a better future in the United States. But the U.S. border remains closed for them,” the Peter’s Pence statement said.

Thousands of Central Americans have traveled more than 2,500 miles in caravans from San Pedro Sula, Honduras, to the U.S. border at Tijuana, Mexico, drawing the ire of President Donald J. Trump.

“All these people were stranded, unable to enter the United States, without a home or livelihood. The Catholic Church hosts thousands of them in the shelters of dioceses or religious congregations, providing [what is] necessary to live, from housing to clothing,” the statement said.

Further complicating matters, migrants who transit Mexico and request asylum in the United States are turned away at border crossings and required to put their names on long waiting lists, a process known as metering.

This process has put enormous pressure on migrant shelters in Mexico-U.S. border cities, which are often rife with insecurity and where migrants are preyed upon by criminal gangs. A plan known as Remain in Mexico has also sent hundreds of U.S. asylum-seekers back to the Mexican side of the border, while their claims are heard in U.S. courts.

“At the northern and southern borders, these places of welcome are currently overpopulated,” said an April 27 statement from the Mexican bishops’ conference.

Shelter operators in border cities say they cannot attend to migrants arriving from the south, a flood of deportees and ever-more asylum-seekers requiring long-term shelter as they wait in Mexico to make their claims in the United States.

Additionally, “Among the residents of the towns and cities where some of these shelters are, they have started to raise strong concerns about informal campaigns



A family of Central American migrants is detained by Mexican federal police officers on April 22 in Pijijiapan, Mexico, during their journey toward the United States. (CNS photo/Jose Cabezas, Reuters)

that ‘criminalize’ migrants and impede them from being able to obtain jobs, rent an apartment or travel quietly in the streets,” the bishops’ statement said.

Churches in the Dioceses of Tapachula, which serves the path through Chiapas state that caravans have followed upon entering Mexico, previously responded with outpourings of generosity when caravans first arrived. But priests say the fatigue has set in, and fewer people pitch in.

Bishop Jaime Calderon of Tapachula told reporters on April 28 the Church would continue to support migrants, even if public opinion—often influenced by false rumors spread on social media of migrants misbehaving—wasn’t favorable.

“We have spoken here of a humanitarian crisis and we believe, in accordance with our faith, we have to help. They’re brothers,” Bishop Calderon said.

Mexican Interior Minister Olga Sanchez Cordero said on April 23 that 300,000 migrants had entered the country

in an irregular fashion over the first three months of 2019.

Mexico started offering humanitarian visas in late 2018, allowing migrants to freely transit the country and avoid crimes like kidnapping, extortion and sexual assault. But it stopped the practice due to overwhelming demand. Mexico also is no longer offering “safe conduct” passage to the throngs of migrants from Cuba, Haiti and African countries to pass through the country.

Mexican officials also have started breaking up caravans, including one in late April in Chiapas. Priests say caravans are now forming in southern Mexico rather than Central America.

“The Mexican government faces an authority crisis to deal and walk with the migrant caravans,” Bishop Calderon said. “They don’t offer them dignified and humanitarian treatment. They don’t even respect the documents they give them, which allow them free transit.” †

Pope applauds beatification of four Argentine martyrs

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis applauded the beatification of four Argentine martyrs—a bishop, two priests and a layman—who were murdered early in the country’s seven-year long “Dirty War.”

After praying the “*Regina Coeli*” prayer with pilgrims in St. Peter’s Square on April 28, the pope said the lives of Blesseds Enrique Angelelli Carletti, Carlos de Dios Murias, Gabriel Longueville and Wenceslao Pedernera are models for those “who work for a society that is more just and based on solidarity.”

“These martyrs of the faith were persecuted for the cause of justice and evangelical charity,” the pope said. “Let’s applaud the newly beatified!”

The four martyrs were beatified during an outdoor Mass in La Rioja, Argentina, on April 27 celebrated by Cardinal Angelo Becciu, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes.

In his homily, Cardinal Becciu said the four men were “faithful witnesses of the Gospel” who stood firm “in their love for Christ and his Church at the cost of suffering and the extreme sacrifice of life.”

Upon seizing power in Argentina in 1976, a military dictatorship began a swift campaign of brutal repression, including by executing political dissidents or those perceived to be left-wing sympathizers. In all, an estimated 30,000 people were killed or disappeared.

Among the first casualties in the military’s campaign were Blessed Murias, a Franciscan priest, and Blessed Longueville, a French missionary. Both men served in the Diocese of La Rioja.

According to the Argentine website

“*Nunca Mas*” (“Never Again”), a site cataloging the casualties of the “Dirty War,” several men who identified themselves as federal policemen arrested the two priests on July 18, 1976, subsequently torturing and murdering them.

A week later, Blessed Pedernera, a catechist who also spoke out in defense of poor workers, was targeted by the dictatorship’s death squad. Several men stormed his house and shot him repeatedly in front of his wife and three daughters.

As bishop of La Rioja, Blessed Angelelli, who publicly denounced the executions occurring in his diocese, met the same fate as those of his flock. After celebrating a Mass in memory of Blesseds Murias and Longueville on Aug. 4, 1976, the bishop and a priest accompanying him were forced off a road by several cars following them, causing their truck to overturn.

Upon regaining consciousness, the priest, Father Arturo Pinto, found Blessed Angelelli dead, bearing injuries consistent with blows delivered after the accident.

Cardinal Becciu praised all four men for carrying out ministries that were rooted in defending the rights and dignity of the poor within the framework of the Church’s social doctrine.

“It was a work of faith formation, of a strong religious and social commitment, anchored in the Gospel, in favor of the poorest and most exploited and carried out in the light of the newness of the Second Vatican Council,” he said. “We could define them, in a certain sense, as ‘martyrs of the conciliar decrees.’” †

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MOTHERS

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normal mother and would be just fine. She also taught me to turn to Mary in times of difficulty.”

‘I guess that Bible stuff really works’

Jim Welter will never forget the moment from his childhood when his sister ran into their house and shouted, “The wheels of the wagon are gone!”

“Several of us children hurried outside and stared in disbelief,” recalls Welter, a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. “The Red Ryder wagon was more than just our favorite toy. It was an important means by which we, as children, could reduce Mom’s workload. We used it to haul water, carry wood, and a hundred other chores around the farm.

“When something was too heavy to carry, we could always put it in the wagon and pull it. The wagon was a vital tool for us.”

As the family thought about possible suspects, Welter’s sister Dot focused on someone the children regarded as “the local delinquent.” Welter recalls Dot declaring, “J.C. was here yesterday, and I know he took the wheels.”

Welter continues, “My siblings and I immediately went in to ‘Mosaic Law mode.’ ‘Well, let’s go steal something of theirs!’ we chided in unison.

“I was about 8 years old, and I couldn’t believe Mom’s response, ‘The Bible says if someone steals your coat, give them your cloak as well! So, take the rest of the wagon and give it to Mrs. Fletcher.’

“With tears in our eyes, my brother Paul, sister Fran and I carried the remains of our precious wagon through the field, over the creek and down the road to our neighbor’s house.”

The three children shared with Mrs. Fletcher the words they had rehearsed, “J.C. has the wheels, so we’d like to give him our wagon.”

“Choking back our tears, we sat the wagon in the yard and went home,” Welter notes.

The story doesn’t end there.

“The next morning our wagon, with the wheels attached, was back in our yard!” Welter recalls. “As I waited for my turn for a ride in our restored treasure, I muttered, ‘I guess that Bible stuff really works!’”

In response, Welter says his mom whispered, “Remember that!”

That wisdom and that belief of his mother continue to guide him.

“Whether it’s remembering a prayer clearly answered, an event that turned out right, or a path that led to new growth, remembering continues to be a source of strength for me during difficult times.”

‘Prescription for a happy life’

Jean Allen of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon still follows her mother’s

“prescription for a happy life.”

“She always asked God to be with us and her family. And she always thanked him regardless of his answer. Though her heart sometimes was heavy with worry, she would always smile and laugh. She always told us to be kind and grateful for what we had.

“She told us, ‘At the start of each day, say your prayers. And at the end of the day, thank God for helping you to get through the day. And have hope. If you follow this, you cannot fail.’”

The legacy of an immigrant mother

As Mother’s Day approaches, Carol Wethington Divine thinks of her mother Olga entering the United States as an immigrant—and the difference that the Church made to her life.

“As a first generation American, she suffered the struggles that many immigrants do—of disenfranchisement and confusion of culture and identity,” notes Divine, a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis. “My mother, though, found her place in her community by being an active volunteer at [the former] Holy Trinity Church in Indianapolis.

“The various roles she played in parish life helped to encourage her in improving her self-esteem by increasing her levels of involvement. Starting by washing and ironing church linens, she was encouraged by the pastor of her church to do more. Before she knew it, she had become president of the Altar Society, chair of the Society of the Propagation of Faith, and a booth chair of the annual festival.”

Her mother’s involvement through service spread through the family.

“It is not surprising that today I am a very active member of my parish, St. Pius. Without the example set by my mother, I do not believe I would be as active as I am in my own parish life. She was an amazing woman.”

An act of mercy and love

Pamela Proctor has heard the pain in some of her friends’ voices when they talk about the difficulties they face with their mothers. That’s why she considers herself blessed to have a mother who has accepted her and her choices through the years.

One particular choice involved Proctor’s decision to enter the Catholic Church before she married, even though she was raised as an American Baptist by her mother, Jeannine Domescik.

“She not only supported my decision, she came along to some of my RCIA [Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults] classes so she could learn about the Catholic faith,” says Proctor, a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood.

“Over the years, she has been a regular viewer of EWTN [a Catholic television station], and when something would pique



Jeannine Domescik celebrated her 90th birthday in March with her daughter Pamela Proctor by her side. (Submitted photo)

her curiosity, she would write down the questions and ask me about it when we would talk. When I go to visit her, we watch EWTN and we’ll recite the rosary together with Mother Angelica.”

Her mother’s accepting attitude even led her to open her home to Proctor’s family during a hard time in their life.

“It was an act of mercy and love to have boomerang kids and grandkids living with her when she was retired and well-deserving of a little peace and quiet in her life. She would have had it no other way, and I saw her as a lifeline sent from God.”

Their closeness shows in a photo of mother and daughter smiling together on Proctor’s mom’s recent 90th birthday.

“Over a hundred friends and family came to wish her a happy birthday and celebrate her wonderful life,” Proctor notes. “I thank God for her love, influence, and her good example of faith in action.”

A comforting touch

Sometimes a child learns how special a mother is by the way her comforting touch extends beyond her family. Norbert Schott witnessed such a moment just shortly after he returned safely from serving his country during the Vietnam War.

“Mom’s dear friend of many years came to the front door to tell her his only son was killed in an infantry unit in Vietnam,” recalls Schott, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle. “Oh, the heartbreak. I have never seen a man cry so much, and in Mom’s arms. The love of God, and sympathy.”

The meaning of compassion

Mark Hummer remembers the many ways his mother has lavished love on her family through the years. Still, the truest example of her love was the care she gave her husband after he was diagnosed with cancer.

“My dad died at home on Easter Sunday morning in 2018 after an 11-year battle with cancer,” notes Hummer, a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis. “My mom was his primary caregiver for that whole period of time, showing what the real spirit and meaning of compassion is about. She has always displayed that motto of Cardinal [Joseph E.] Ritter all her life: ‘To serve and not be served.’”

Keeping a promise of faith

Charles Ringle still marvels at all the efforts his mother made to make sure her children were raised in the Catholic faith, even while she continued to live her Christianity as a Lutheran.

It all started before she was married, when she promised her Catholic husband-to-be to raise their children in his faith.

“Now the real influence came when my father died and left three Catholic children behind for my mother to raise by herself,” says Ringle, a member of St. Mary Parish in Lanesville. “Mom not only allowed us to be Catholic, she made sure we continued to practice our Catholic faith—not only by sending us off to Mass, but making sure that we were on time.

“I loved my mom and attribute my strong Catholic faith to my father’s family and the woman God called to be his wife.”

‘My faith angel’

Many mothers can be defined by the seemingly small lessons in life that they shared—and the big sacrifices that they made for their children.

Mary Hockaday of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg has been blessed by those qualities of her mother.

“My mom had nine children, and we always said grace before our meals,” Hockaday recalls. “We prayed the rosary in the evening. My mom sent all of her children to Catholic schools. We went to Mass on Sundays and holy days without fail. As she moved into her older years, she went to Mass on Sundays and some week days. She volunteered at the old Saint Francis de Sales [Parish] and at St. Malachy when she was younger.

“My mom passed away last October just two days shy of her 96th birthday. She has always been my role model of what a faithful Catholic should be. Because of her, I love my faith, attend Mass on Sundays, and embrace Holy Week. I am a member of the RCIA [Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults] team and volunteer at the Cathedral Soup Kitchen.

“My mom is and was my faith angel.”

(More stories from our readers about their mothers will be featured in our May 10 issue.) †



Doris O’Connor shares a smile with her daughter Eileen Wilkerson in this photo from 2005. (Submitted photo)

Churches have been targets in South Asia, Southeast Asia

BANGKOK (CNS)—Several experts believe the threat to churches in South and Southeast Asia has increased following the Easter bomb attacks that killed more than 250 people and injured 500 in Sri Lanka.

Churches in those regions—which have 150 million Catholics and other Christians—have been the focus of attacks in a growing number of countries in recent years, including fatal bomb attacks on churches in the Philippines and Indonesia by Islamic radicals in the past 12 months.

Authorities in Sri Lanka and Australia have confirmed the Sri Lanka attackers had links to Islamic State, which claimed credit for the attack. Militant preacher Zahran Hashim, who authorities believe died as one of the suicide attackers at the Shangri-La Hotel, has been named the founder and leader of the now banned National Thowheeth Jama'ath group responsible. DNA tests are being undertaken to confirm this.

“Radical Islamic groups, some affiliated with larger extremist networks, have been quietly gaining influence in an arc of countries extending from the Maldives to the Philippines archipelago, and the threat they pose can no longer be ignored,” Brahma Chellaney, professor of strategic studies at the New Delhi-based Centre for Policy Research, wrote for his widely distributed Project Syndicate column.

“In fact, the grisly Sri Lankan bombings are a reminder that Asia—not the Middle East—is the region most afflicted by terrorist violence.”

The prognosis comes as the so-called Islamic State has splintered and gone back underground following the defeat of its caliphates in Iraq and Syria as well as the continued operation of other terrorist groups linked to al-Qaeda in the region.

“In the wake of the Sri Lanka attacks,

Indonesia needs to be particularly alert to the increased role of pro-ISIS women; possibly enhanced attraction of churches as targets; and the possibility of someone with international jihad experience entering the country,” said Sidney Jones, director of the Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis and Conflict. The group published a report on the Ongoing Problem of pro-ISIS cells in Indonesia on April 29.

Jones said that while authorities in Indonesia, the world’s most populous Muslim country, appeared to have the terrorist threat reasonably under control, it was possible for some groups to slip through the cracks as they had done in the May 2018 deadly church bombings at Surabaya.

But she added that it was “hard to think of any government in the region that would be as lax as Sri Lanka. Southeast Asian governments with large Muslim populations are particularly vigilant; China, of course, is turning Xinjiang into a technological state-of-the-art detention center for Uighurs.”

Jones told Catholic News Service (CNS) she believed that “the added significance of churches is just for pro-ISIS groups, not al-Qaeda. They’ve been recirculating the ideological justification that appeared in a number of ISIS magazines in recent years.”

Church services were canceled across Sri Lanka the weekend of April 28, and churches were closed indefinitely as a precautionary measure. On April 26, Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith of Colombo told reporters that Church officials had seen a leaked security document describing Roman Catholic and other churches as major targets.

“We don’t want repetitions,” Cardinal Ranjith said.

But on April 28, people in Colombo prayed outside St. Anthony’s Shrine, one of the attacked churches that suffered



Young people light candles near the closed door of a church in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on April 28 during a vigil in memory of the victims of a string of suicide bomb attacks across the island on Easter. (CNS photo/Thomas Peter, Reuters)

significant damage. Authorities also tried to persuade Muslims to refrain from traditional Friday prayer services on April 26, but some were open and, like all religious sites in Sri Lanka, are now subject to heavy security.

On April 29, the Sri Lankan authorities banned the burqa, a Muslim female face covering, a move it has been mulling since the attacks. Such a move has not prevented ongoing attacks in other nations, such as France, where it has been instituted.

“We now have info that there are about 140 people in Sri Lanka linked to the Islamic State. We can and we will eradicate all of them very soon,” President Maithripala Sirisena said.

Chellaney noted that Muslim militants who had returned from fighting for Islamic State and other groups in Syria and other part of the Middle East are present in a range of Asian counties “from

the Philippines and Indonesia to the Maldives and Uzbekistan.”

He likened the current situation to that of three decades ago when Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda leaders emerged after cutting their teeth in the U.S.-backed war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

“This new generation of jihadi veterans could haunt the security of Asia, the Middle East and the West for years to come,” he said.

Still, Jones said that while she could not “speculate on the role of returnees, in Indonesia, the biggest danger is from those who never left, not those coming back.”

She believes the biggest danger will come, like in Sri Lanka, from small groups. “These groups by and large come together with little vetting, training, indoctrination, weapons or experience. What they have in unlimited quantities is zeal and a desire for recognition.” †

SRI LANKA

continued from page 1

than 500 people, she began organizing a similar gathering that took place on April 25 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

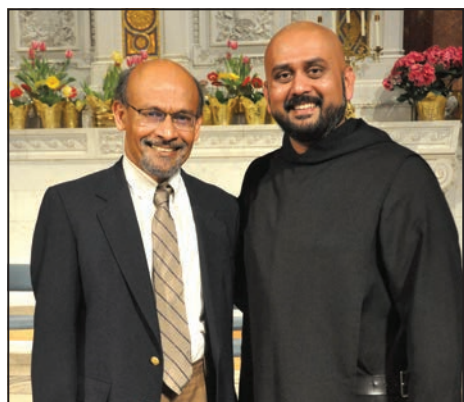
The “Solidarity Vigil and Interfaith Prayer” event, co-sponsored by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Indianapolis-based Center for Interfaith Cooperation and the Muslim Alliance of Indiana, drew leaders in the city of the Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish and Muslim communities.

Amin said after the vigil service that she appreciated “hearing the speakers from different backgrounds and faiths having the same underlying message emphasizes that common thread of humanity that we all have.”

“Knowing that we have that common thread helps us heal,” she said.

Father Rick Ginther, director of the archdiocesan Office of Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs, read a letter from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson at the start of the vigil service.

“With persons of all faith traditions, we reaffirm our conviction for the sacredness of life and dignity of every person,” noted Archbishop Thompson in the letter.



Ravi Nalim, left, and Benedictine Father Peduru Fonseka pose in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on April 25 after a “Solidarity Vigil and Interfaith Prayer” in response to the Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka. Nalim, who is Muslim, and Father Peduru are both natives of Sri Lanka.

“While we grieve the loss of all those lives that have been wounded or destroyed by violence and injustice, we rejoice in the Easter proclamation of salvation that has been won for us in the risen Lord, Jesus Christ.”

Afterward, Father Ginther expressed his appreciation for the support shown to local Catholics by members of other faith communities in the wake of the bombings that killed so many Catholics in Sri Lanka.

“The outpouring of solidarity in respect for places of worship and worshipers in those places was more poignant given the circumstances,” he said. “I feel much more connected now to the pain, anxiety and need for vigilance so many others have felt for centuries.”

The vigil service also drew two Sri Lankans who live in central and southern Indiana—one a Muslim and one a Benedictine priest.

Ravi Nalim, a Sri Lankan Muslim, teaches engineering at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. “Devastated” by the attacks, which were carried out by members of a Sri Lankan militant group with ties to the Islamic State, Nalim was filled with emotion as he spoke at the vigil service.

“I would not be where I am today without the love of learning and serving that my parents imparted to me,” said Nalim. “And they in turn learned that love from the Catholic nuns and priests at whose feet they were educated, at St. Aloysius School in Galle and St. Scholastica’s in Kandy.”

He later reflected on a passage from the Quran, the sacred book of Islam, about the future day of resurrection and judgment. Referring to the practice of female infanticide at the time of the start of Islam in the seventh century, the passage wonders “for what sin” was such an infant girl slain.

Racked with emotion, Nalim said, “As we reel from the scale and surprise of the tragedy in Sri Lanka, we can ask only from you, almighty God: for what sin were *they* slain, oh God, who had come to your houses only to seek and to teach your love. For what sin were *they* slain, who had come as tourists from distant lands to share a love for different



Habibe Ali, left, Carolyn Saahir, both members of the Nur Allah Islamic Center in Indianapolis, and retired Father Joseph Rautenberg attend a “Solidarity Vigil and Interfaith Prayer” service on April 25 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

cultures and places. And for what sin were *they* slain, who had come to work and hospitably serve the traveler and wayfarer?”

Nalim ended his reflection with a heartfelt prayer.

“O almighty God, we ask that you make us the means of checking intolerance and violence wherever it arises,” he said. “We ask for your wisdom to seek complete and swift and reasoned justice, and to never turn against the innocent. We ask that you keep in your eternal care the souls that have departed, that you heal the wounded, and that you comfort the grieving and the orphaned. Amen.”

Listening to Nalim’s reflection was Benedictine Father Peduru Fonseka, a native of Sri Lanka and a member of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, who drove some three hours to attend the vigil service.

“A part of me needed this moment for my own healing,” said Father Peduru, who is sacramental minister of Resurrection Parish in Evansville, in the Evansville Diocese, after the vigil service. “It was encouraging to see who was present today on short notice.”

Learning about the attacks in his home country had made celebrating Easter Sunday Mass a challenge.

“To get up there to the altar and look back at the community, to see all the little children and young families dressed up to celebrate Easter, and then to think of home and what happened was very hard,” said Father Peduru.

Both Nalim and Father Peduru found the attacks particularly difficult in part because both were raised in Sri Lanka to respect people of other faiths.

“Whenever we celebrated a holiday, we always shared with our neighbors,” Nalim said. “Almost everywhere we lived, most of our neighbors were not Muslim. But we still felt at home. We felt closely connected with our Buddhist, Christian and Hindu neighbors, and all others.”

He said he raised his own children in the U.S. in the same way by having his family participate in interfaith events.

“My family has gained so much from really recapturing the very multi-faith environment in which I grew up in Sri Lanka,” Nalim said. “To experience that again in Indianapolis with different faith communities, that has tremendous value for us.”

“There’s a unity in the diversity of our religions,” added Father Peduru. “If there’s one thing that’s going on, it’s love and peace.” †

Catholic bishops condemn Poway synagogue shooting

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholic bishops from around the U.S. were quick to condemn the April 27 attack on a Jewish community gathered at a synagogue near San Diego, which left one person dead and three others injured.

“Our country should be better than this; our world should be beyond such acts of hatred and anti-Semitism,” said Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in an April 28 statement. “This attack joins an all too long list of attacks against innocent people, people of all faiths, who only want to gather and to pray. It is a contradiction, a perverting of their teachings to believe that Christianity, Judaism or Islam would condone such violence.”

News reports say members of the synagogue Chabad of Poway were gathered to mark the last day of Passover, a Jewish holiday celebrated for eight days, commemorating the deliverance of the ancient Hebrews from slavery in Egypt, when shots rang shortly before noon.

One of them ended up fatally striking 60-year-old Lori Gilbert Kaye as well as injuring the rabbi and an 8-year-old girl, among others. Initial reports say the gunman’s weapon then jammed and the assailant left, but not before being shot at by a security guard who was inside the house of worship. Authorities later said John Earnest, 19, was arrested and is suspected of the attack. So far, he has been charged with one count of murder and three counts of attempted murder.

“Unfortunately, both in the past and today, too many preach such hatred in the name of God. This cannot

be abided; it must end,” Cardinal DiNardo said.

San Diego Bishop Robert W. McElroy asked in a letter addressed to priests in the San Diego Diocese to pray at Sunday Masses on April 28 for the victims of the shooting.

“I know that you join in my profound sadness and outrage that violence born of hatred against people of faith has once again rent our nation, this time within our own diocese. I would ask you to include a prayer for the Jewish community and the Chabad victims in your petitions at Sunday Masses,” he wrote.

The bishop suggested using the following petition: “For the victims of the Chabad shootings and their families; for the Jewish community, our elder brothers in faith, who are once again subjected to the evil of anti-Semitic hatred and violence, this time in our own diocese; and for our world, so consumed by anger and division, that we might understand that the gift of peace you give in today’s Gospel is a command for us to love every man and woman in the human family; we pray to the Lord.”

Other messages expressing condolences followed.

“For the second time in a week, we received news of



A candlelight vigil is held on April 27 at Rancho Bernardo Community Presbyterian Church for victims of a shooting incident at the Congregation Chabad synagogue in Poway, Calif., near San Diego. In response to the shooting, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston and president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said in an April 28 statement: “Our country should be better than this; our world should be beyond such acts of hatred and anti-Semitism.” (CNS photo/John Gastaldo, Reuters)

an act of senseless violence against people at prayer. This time, the victims were our Jewish brothers and sisters, gathered to mark the deliverance of their people from bondage,” said Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, on April 27, the day of the tragedy. †

Prayer lifts up those struggling with alcoholism, says Byzantine priest

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS)—Numerous organizations, both private and public, seek to help those who struggle with substance abuse through programming and support services, but Father Bryan Eyman has committed to a different approach: prayer.

Confident in the power of Jesus to satisfy every thirst, Father Eyman has been offering prayers for people struggling with alcoholism for the past 20 years.

Once a month, he celebrates an Eastern Christian Marian prayer service—an akathist—dedicated to the Mother of God, the Inexhaustible Cup, Healer of Alcoholics, at St. Athanasius the Great Byzantine Catholic Church in Indianapolis, where he is pastor. The parish is part of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma, Ohio. The most recent service was on April 24.

April was Alcohol Awareness Month and, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 74 percent of the 19.7 million Americans who battle substance abuse are alcoholics. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism also reports that about 88,000 people die of alcohol-related causes in the United States each year, making it the third-leading cause of preventable death in the country, after tobacco and poor nutrition.

With the situation as grave as it is, the Church has an important role to play in ministering to this marginalized group, said Father Eyman.

The Eastern Catholic priest attributes his commitment to prayer for the healing of alcoholics to his mother, Margaret Kelly Eyman.

“She was an employee in one of the first alcohol treatment centers in the world,” he said.

His mother worked with Sister of Charity of St. Augustine Mary Ignatia Gavin at Rosary Hall Solarium at St. Vincent Charity Medical Center in Cleveland. Sister Mary Ignatia, along with Dr. Bob Smith, founded Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The nun was a family friend, and Father Eyman recalled being an altar server at her funeral.

In 1988, while he was pastor at St. John the Baptist

Byzantine Catholic Church in Minneapolis, Father Eyman began in this area of ministry by being available for people in the fourth and fifth steps of AA’s 12-step recovery program. These two steps consist of members telling another person about their addiction and seeking to make amends for the harm they might have caused, he said. He noted then, as now, the shortage of priests to help Catholics in the AA program.

Father Eyman continued in this capacity with AA when he was transferred to St. Andrew Byzantine Catholic Parish, now Holy Transfiguration Byzantine Catholic Parish, in Mentor-on-the-Lake, Ohio. There, he also welcomed a local AA group that was seeking a larger meeting space.

In the late 1990s, his ministry with alcoholics took an unexpected and more prayerful turn. It was the advent of the Internet, and one of his first online searches produced a Russian icon of the Theotokos, the Inexhaustible Cup, Healer of Alcoholics. It came with the akathist prayer service that was translated from Russian into English.

He read about the miraculous healing associated with the icon. In late 19th-century Russia, a severe alcoholic, debilitated by his addiction, had a dream in which he was instructed to go to a particular monastery and ask for this icon. Upon praying before it, he was healed of his alcoholism, after which many other alcoholics were healed before the icon. This particular monastery was closed under communism, and a family hid the icon for safekeeping. The icon re-emerged after communism, and the prayer service linked with this devotion restarted.

Moved by this story and sensing a call to action, Father Eyman began praying the akathist at St. Andrew Parish in 1999, before the AA meetings, and AA members were invited to participate.

He continued the prayer service when he was assigned to St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Marblehead, Ohio, and then at St. Athanasius the Great, where he serves currently. Prayer services are held usually on the third Wednesday of each month, unless there is a scheduling conflict.

Attendance varies from month to month, from four people to 25 people, but swells to about 100 for the prayer service that marks the feast of the icon, on May 5, he said. The service includes praying for people struggling with alcoholism by name. Requests from people to include their loved ones continue to grow, he said.

“We get names from all over, and we only use first names,” Father Eyman said. “For me, it’s not a matter of the number but the commitment to prayer to benefit people

we may never meet. We just try to be faithful in doing it, with confidence that Christ will bring about the healing, if we are open to it,” through the intercession of Mary.

Father Eyman said some people have received complete healing from the prayer service.

“In at least four cases, they have lost the craving for alcohol,” he said. Others, even from different religions, have found the prayer “very moving and encouraging as they walked through the steps” of AA and began to seek healing from alcoholism from the Mother of God.

Father Eyman said the spiritual component to recovering from addiction “is very important for people to connect with, especially in the Catholic tradition, [where] there is forgiveness.”

“When we repent and decide to change and pour that reality out to another person, that’s when healing can begin,” he said.

“Our spiritual life and sacramental life as Catholics can be tied in with our physical well-being and [we can] help people make that connection and see that inner dependency,” he said. “It’s basically people in need of God.”

Father Eyman said he would encourage more priests to pray the service in their parishes. The impact of alcohol abuse on individuals and families is grave, and “it runs the gamut,” from “prayerful priests to outright atheists,” he said.

(To submit the names of people in need of such prayer, e-mail Father Eyman at sabcc@indy.rr.com.) †



Father Bryan Eyman poses with the icon of the Theotokos, the Inexhaustible Cup, Healer of Alcoholics, at St. Athanasius the Great Byzantine Catholic Parish in Indianapolis on April 11 where prayers of healing are offered for those struggling with alcoholism. (CNS photo/Father John Russell via Horizons)

REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

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

317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
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BIOETHICS

continued from page 4

faced with legal consequences,” she said. “In the sports arena, biological males identifying as transgender are competing in women’s events with an unfair biological advantage. Biological females who claim to be male are allowed the unfair advantage of competing while taking testosterone, which is considered ‘doping’ in any other circumstance.”

Coming to the conclusion that “no one gets hurt” whenever someone transitions is simply naive, contradicted by the facts on the ground and by the tortuous lives of those pursuing this misguided “solution” to their gender confusion. They, along with their families and broader society, clearly deserve better.

Instead of propping up a fictitious and harmful understanding of human masculinity and femininity, we owe it to those struggling with gender dysphoria to address compassionately their underlying mental health concerns. Through evidence-based therapies, including appropriate psychiatric and interpersonal outreach and counseling, we hope to bring healing, preserve family unity, and help sustain important, lifelong friendships.

That’s what those struggling with their gender dysphoria deserve and all those who love them desire.

(Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience at Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.) †

Bishops' conferences support ministry of local Church leaders

By Catholic News Service

Msgr. J. Brian Bransfield, a priest of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, serves as general secretary of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

He recently spoke with Catholic News Service about the nature and roles of bishops' conferences. The following is an edited version of that interview.

Q. What is a bishops' conference and what role does it have?

A. A bishops' conference is the assembly of the bishops of a particular region or country. In the United States it would be the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

All the diocesan bishops, the auxiliary bishops and the eparchs (leaders in Eastern Catholic Churches) all come together and form the USCCB. It's an assembly of bishops that carries out certain pastoral functions on behalf of the faithful of their region—things that only can be accomplished on a national level, they can't just be accomplished on a regional or local level.

Q. When in Church history did bishops' conferences start?

A. We could speak about implicit and explicit bishops' conferences. Implicitly we go all the way back to the New Testament when the Apostles gathered around Jesus. Throughout history, the Church has identified the need to organize that gathering.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops was officially organized 101 years ago.

Q. What authority does a bishops' conference have? Does a bishops' conference supersede the authority of a bishop in his own diocese?

A. The authority given to the Church, entrusted especially to our Holy Father, goes back to Matthew 16 and John 21—"You are Peter, and upon this rock I will found my Church" (Mt 16:18). The pope then sends a bishop to each particular diocese.

When the bishops come together in a region, it has a collegial authority. It's a fraternity, a brotherhood, that comes together for certain pastoral functions.

Q. What does a bishops' conference do on a daily basis, or year to year?

A. The bishops' conference staff comes together to work under the authority of the bishops who have founded certain priorities or goals. The long-range goals are found in the name of their various committees: human life and dignity, cultural diversity, migration, pro-life, clergy, consecrated life, vocations, laity, marriage, family life and youth.

That's really what a bishops' conference does on a daily basis. It organizes that work so that the bishops in each region—15 regions, across 197 jurisdictions in the United States—have resources to teach the faithful.

Q. How often do the bishops meet, and what do they do at those meetings?

A. The bishops meet twice a year. The president convenes them twice a year as the body of bishops in June and in November. That's the full authority of the bishops' conference for those days when they're joined together.

When they meet, they go over their strategic plan, what they have set across all those areas I just mentioned. They take



Bishop Edward K. Braxton of Belleville, Ill., speaks from the floor at the fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore on Nov. 13, 2018. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

the fruit from their chairmen, their brother bishops, from their committees who have put their strategic plan into action and they see it as action items and they say this is what we're going to address.

They also address very immediate circumstances as we saw last June with migration, the children at the border, separated children, so as to work very directly and immediately for the least of these, those who are suffering.

Q. Can you describe a recent pastoral letter issued by the USCCB and how the conference worked to compose and vote on it?

A. Most recently, it was the pastoral letter against racism. The conference came together across committees as a priority item. It worked across various sectors of the conference so that every part of the elected leadership could weigh in, consulted with outside organizations, with laypeople, men and women religious, to come together to look at this terrible scourge in our history, in our country—the sin of racism.

The bishops worked for a period of time on that, looked at various drafts, had a chance to amend the draft so that they could bring it into the exact place that they wanted it so it could address everyone at various levels in society, call us all to a deeper spirit of repentance and renewal, but also produce other resources from it and allow people to go forth and preach, to

teach, to use that as hinge point, [a] basis point to make the message their own.

That's the purpose of a pastoral letter—to highlight a key, essential teaching that is indispensable for our times and to write it in our hearts so it becomes a principle within us.

Q. What do you think are some common misconceptions about bishops' conferences?

A. Part of the misconception might be to think that we have ultimate authority



The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) building is seen in Washington on May 8, 2017. The staff of the USCCB work to support the ministry of bishops in their dioceses. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

over everything about the Church. A bishops' conference is a convening, it's an assembly of the bishops who come together in unity to work as a college, a collegial authority, under the pope and in union with the pope to address the signs of the times. That's really the key message.

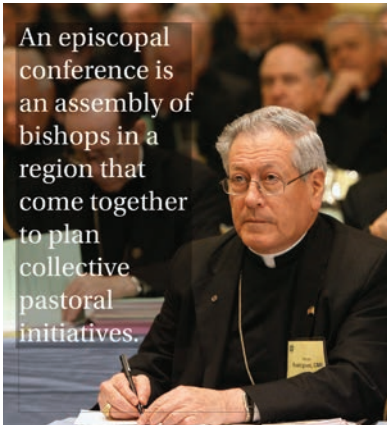
I think sometimes people, when they write in or contact us, might wish we had more immediate, local authority, that we could make this or that particular thing happen in a diocese or

a parish—that's really not the bishops' conference.

We give resources, principles, we produce a wide range of materials and messages that the bishops can then make their own and apply them locally. We're not to replace the work of the local bishop; we're meant to enhance it and assist it.

(Msgr. J. Brian Bransfield is the general secretary for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.) †

An episcopal conference is an assembly of bishops in a region that come together to plan collective pastoral initiatives.



Amid the Fray/Greg Erlandson

A must-read letter in the inbox of every young Catholic

Attention Catholic young people, by which I mean everyone under 30: Pope Francis has written you a letter.



Called "Christ Is Alive," it is a historic document in that it isn't just a letter about young people. It is to young people. Whether you are in high school or in college or in your 20s and trying to figure out what comes next, this letter, also called an apostolic exhortation, is for you.

And because Pope Francis is first and foremost a pastor, this letter has practical advice for the Church—its priests and teachers and youth ministers—about young people, and practical advice for young people as they make their way into the world.

The letter was written to follow up on last year's two gatherings: The first consisted of young people who gathered at the pope's request to reflect on the Church, on their vocations as Christians, on their own needs and questions. The second was a gathering of bishops to contemplate the same issues.

For the pope, this topic is not about some distant tomorrow when the young will have matured and be running the world. "We cannot just say that young

people are the future of our world. They are its present," he wrote. "Even now, they are helping to enrich it."

The pope has a great deal to say about the clergy sexual abuse crisis, about sexuality and intimacy, about today's digital environment and its attractions and dangers.

But I think what is most valuable is that he empathizes with and speaks directly to where many young people are at in their lives. Most especially, he talks about God's love and how important it is to see God not as a scolder or a tyrant, but as a friend who wants what is best for us.

"*Ti voglio bene*," is how Italians say, "I love you." It translates literally as "I want good for you." "*Ti voglio bene*," God says to us.

The pope understands first of all that identity is important. He quotes approvingly the words of Carlo Acutis, a young Italian who may be on his way to sainthood after dying of leukemia at 15. "Everyone is born as an original," Carlo once said. "But many people end up dying as photocopies." Be yourself, not a copy of everyone else in our consumer society.

The pope understands the importance of community for all of us. Young adults long for real community that encourages the best in them. He warns against the isolation that makes it difficult to fight the snares of the devil and the selfishness of the world.

"Whenever you are united, you have marvelous strength," he writes. He quotes an African proverb: "If you want to go fast, walk by yourself. If you want to go far, walk with others."

Perhaps the best part of the letter is on discernment and decision-making.

He identifies that which often freezes young people: "Fear of the definitive" that "generates a kind of paralysis of decision-making." That can be true in choosing a college or a major or a career. "Keep following your hopes and dreams," he encourages, "but be careful about one temptation that can hold us back. It is anxiety."

Finally, the pope urges all who are young, in age or in spirit, to "make a ruckus!"

"Don't confuse happiness with an armchair or live your life behind a screen," he implores.

"Dear young people, please, do not be bystanders in life. Get involved" in struggles for the common good, for the poor, in the "revolution of charity and service."

It's a letter that all who are young in spirit should take to heart.

(Greg Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholicnews.com.) †

For The Journey/Effie Calderola

Wendell Berry and the Gospel outdoors

I grew up on a Midwestern farm, the old-fashioned kind that had pigs, chickens, milk cows, feral cats in the



hay loft and coyotes howling in the night.

My mother butchered chickens in the yard. The meaning of the expression "like a chicken with its head cut off" has never been lost on me.

Because of this, I've always appreciated the agrarian images of Scripture. The sower, the good seed, the seed lost at the side of the road—these were good images. And God as a mother hen guarding her young? Perfect.

But not everyone grows up on a farm, especially today in our increasingly urbanized culture.

Does that mean the Gospel can't speak as evocatively to those who catch the metro every morning or live in a huge apartment building surrounded by concrete?

Not at all. However, according to the poet and essayist Wendell Berry, we'd all benefit from taking Scripture, or Gospel images, outside, whether to the backyard, the beach, a nearby park or especially a ramble through a wilderness trail.

"I don't think it is enough appreciated how much an outdoor book the Bible is," said Berry, in his book *The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays*.

Scripture, he says, "is best read outdoors ... and the farther outdoors, the better."

Many people who do not describe themselves as religious say they find God in nature, and those of us who are believers often find a heightened sense of the transcendent there. This is where we find our "thin place"—the place where we feel the boundaries that separate us from God slipping away. We need to encourage this.

"Outdoors we are confronted everywhere with wonders," Berry writes.

Consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, Jesus told us, when he was trying to allay our constant worrying. And how many times do the Gospels bring us to the seaside, where Jesus knew when to put the net out for a good catch?

Most memorable images of Jesus take place outside, actually. The ones indoors can sometimes seem stifling. When the house is so crowded that men have to remove tiles to lower their friend for Jesus' help, you want to scream at everyone to move outside.

One summer, I spent many early mornings on my patio with coffee and a copy of Jesuit Father James Martin's book, *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*. I am a speedy reader, but I tried to read this book slowly and savor it.

Father Martin walks the reader through Scripture readings as he relays his own contemporary travel through those same spots in the Holy Land, making you feel you are actually there.

I could imagine myself at the Lake of Gennesaret, looking for the caves from which the Gerasene demoniac emerged to taunt Jesus.

The solitude of my patio, the busy chattering of birds all around me, the rabbit who came so close to me, in my stillness, that I could almost reach out and touch him—all of these heightened my sense that I was in a "thin space"—a place where I was not far from the same Jesus who cured the demoniac.

Nature makes us realize the majesty of creation and deepens our connection to its Creator. In his essay, Berry terms "a very small miracle" the turning of water into wine.

"We forget," he says, "the greater and still continuing miracle by which water [with soil and sunlight] is turned into grapes."

A greater appreciation of life's extraordinary miracles awaits us this summer when we head outdoors.

(Effie Calderola writes for Catholic News Service.) †

It's All Good/Patti Lamb

Gift of reconciliation reminds us of God's unconditional love

A few weeks ago, just before Easter, I attended a parish penance service. But I almost talked myself out of it.



Before the service, I started generating excuses about why I shouldn't go. The laundry room floor was covered with dirty clothes needing my attention, including my son's track jersey for the next day's

meet. The grocery store was also on my list because I had no bread or bananas for the kids' lunches. An important e-mail in my "inbox" warranted a thoughtful response to my son's guidance counselor about course selections for next year.

I continued coming up with excuses. While it's one of the greatest sacraments and an amazing opportunity to receive grace and mercy, I don't go to confession as often as I should.

I think it's because I don't want to face the reality of my sinfulness and the accompanying shame. It's humbling and embarrassing.

It's easier to fold laundry and stand in line at Kroger than stopping to reflect on the parts of me that are in need of repair and repentance.

But this time, I headed to church.

To my surprise, 11 priests were there. Since we're currently without a pastor, priests from around the diocese graciously made the trek to Plainfield.

I circled around the church until I found a priest I didn't recognize. I stood in his line.

My turn came, and I sat in the chair, blathering, avoiding eye contact.

I talked about how I've failed (repeatedly) at being a good wife and mother. I gave examples, using words like "momzilla" and "wifezilla."

I must have paused because he sort of leaned in and said, "Can you do something for me?"

"Yes, Father," I replied.

In my head, I was thinking this: "Here it comes: Penance with a capital 'P.' A thousand rosaries are in my future."

I braced myself for a punitive penance and a lecture about how I need to make better decisions.

"Go and do something fun with your family," he advised.

"Enjoy your family because it's a gift from God," he continued.

That was my penance. He absolved me, telling me to go in peace and that God loves me.

I keep getting it wrong and thinking God is keeping track of my offenses. I imagine his disappointment when I keep screwing up. I'm learning that God doesn't keep a tally card of our missteps. But when we come to him with truly contrite hearts, he forgives us and delights in our transformation.

He understands our human frailty, and we please him when we seek him.

I can't put my finger on the source, but my mom once told me a story about a young girl who claimed to talk to God. Word of her supposed dialogue with God spread and quickly escalated to the bishop.

The clever bishop told the girl, "Go ask God what the worst sin I ever committed was, then come whisper it to me," he instructed. He knew that if the little girl really talked to God, she would come

See GOOD, page 16

Living Well/Maureen Pratt

L'Arche communities focus on people, authentic relationships

Mary Ruppert was a high school student, soaking up ideas and possibilities to discern what seemed to "fit" for her life ahead when she first encountered L'Arche, an international federation of communities where people with and without intellectual disabilities live and work alongside one another.



"My religion teacher was dating a L'Arche assistant," said Ruppert, 35. "She invited him to speak with our class. I'd been thinking of doing service work after college graduation, and [L'Arche] sounded very interesting."

The word "arche" is French for "ark." Founded in France in 1964 by Canadian theologian and philosopher Jean Vanier, L'Arche communities are, said Vanier, based on "friendship and the communion of hearts, which allows us all to grow."

From Catholic roots, L'Arche has inspired people from many other faiths

and Christian denominations to form communities on five continents in 38 countries, including 17 communities in the United States.

Ruppert had the opportunity to experience L'Arche firsthand during a college spring break service trip. She anticipated doing manual work, similar to the projects her classmates would do, and was eager to accomplish something tangible, like reroofing a house or cleaning a neighborhood.

"I was an overachiever and always trying to prove to myself that I had some worth," said Ruppert. "I thought, 'If I get good grades, I'll be good.' In a service project, I thought, 'If I can help other people, that'll prove I'm a good person.'"

But at L'Arche, Ruppert discovered that the "work" was not about things, but about people.

"It was completely transformational," said Ruppert. "At L'Arche, they gave us a retreat for a week! We came in and maybe organized a closet. But we mostly hung out with people, ate dinner together and talked about the epicenter of L'Arche: It's not what you do, it's just that you exist, how you relate to one another and

how important it is to not be able to do everything. That interdependence is a gift."

An experience at the end of her service week reinforced this lesson.

"The community was helping to facilitate a prayer service," said Ruppert. "We met at the church. At the end of a long hallway was a very big, very tall man with an intellectual disability who was part of the community. When we walked through the door, his face lit up like the sun. He was waving like he didn't have arms enough to wave. All we had done was walk in the door!"

"It hit me," said Ruppert. "I cannot prove I'm good through anything I do. I am good because I exist."

Eventually, Ruppert lived as an assistant with L'Arche USA in Washington, D.C. In her day-to-day activities, she realized the profound service L'Arche's presence provides beyond the walls of its homes.

"In L'Arche, I was helping people with personal caregiving, taking people to the doctor or the bank," said Ruppert. "But oh, man, I came up to things I needed help with, in the super-wounded place inside of me. It's not about being the

See LIVING, page 16

Third Sunday of Easter/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 5, 2019

- Acts of Apostles 5:27-32, 40b-41
- Revelation 5:11-14
- John 21:1-19

Again this weekend, the Church presents as its first reading for Mass in Eastertime a passage from the Acts of the Apostles.



The mere writing of Acts is a lesson. It is actually a continuation of St. Luke's Gospel. Its underlying lesson is that the salvation achieved by the Lord Jesus did not end with the Ascension. The

presence of Jesus in the world did not end with the Ascension. The risen Lord, ascended into heaven before the eyes of the Apostles, lives and acts through the Church, a community of visible structure, with specific functions.

This reading reports a conflict between the Sanhedrin, led by the high priest, and the Apostles. The Sanhedrin was the official ruling council of Judaism at the time of Jesus. Its agenda was primarily religious, but its authority touched virtually every aspect of life. Again, and important to note, Peter is the spokesman for all the Apostles. He was their leader.

Ordered to cease preaching about Jesus, the Apostles boldly reaffirmed their intention to continue. No earthly power could deflect them in fulfilling their commission from the Lord. Speaking for the group, Peter offered a capsulized story of the life and mission of Christ.

The Book of Revelation is the source of the second reading. Probably no other book of the New Testament and few in the Old Testament perennially leave readers in wonder as does Revelation.

(Revelation is not the more ancient, nor literarily precise, term. The older and better term is Apocalypse. However, most English-speaking biblical scholars have adopted the better-known name of Revelation.)

Revelation is clear. Again and again, it refers to Jesus as the sinless lamb of God, the title used by John the Baptist for the Lord. It insists that Christians stand with one foot on Earth and the other in heaven,

for they stand in and with Christ, Son of God and also son of Mary, a woman.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last reading. It is a resurrection narrative, wondrous and consoling. Jesus, risen from death, appears to the Apostles as they are fishing on the Sea of Galilee, although not catching anything. At dawn, recalling the time of the resurrection, Jesus comes into their midst. He tells them exactly where to cast their nets. They obey, and a huge catch comes. The Beloved Disciple recognizes Jesus, but Peter is central to the story. He rushes to Jesus.

Then, at a meal, Jesus asks Peter if he really loves him. It is a question put to Peter three times, with three affirmative responses. In ancient Jewish symbolism, three represented what was complete, final and absolute. To each answer, Jesus commissions Peter to love and serve his flock. His commission is exact, final and unqualified. It sent Peter to continue the Lord's work.

Reflection

It would be difficult indeed to find three readings from the New Testament that individually are so beautiful and expressive in teaching such marvelous lessons of how salvation unfolds.

Setting the stage is the reading from Revelation. Disciples live with one foot on Earth, but the other in heaven. Nowhere else is this reality better seen than in the Eucharist.

The combination of Acts with Luke's Gospel reminds us that the salvation accomplished by Christ continues. So it was with the early Christians around the Apostles. It is with us still with the Apostle's successors in the Church. The trial before the Sanhedrin recalls Peter's fervor beside the sea, when Peter saw the risen Jesus and professed his love for him.

After the betrayal, healed by Christ's divine forgiveness, Peter was worthy of his calling. We can follow him. We, too, can be healed. No matter our past, we can be saved. †

Daily Readings

Monday, May 6

Acts 6:8-15
Psalm 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30
John 6:22-29

Tuesday, May 7

Acts 7:51-8:1a
Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6ab, 7b, 8a, 17, 21ab
John 6:30-35

Wednesday, May 8

Acts 8:1b-8
Psalm 66:1-3a, 4-7a
John 6:35-40

Thursday, May 9

Acts 8:26-40
Psalm 66:8-9, 16-17, 20
John 6:44-51

Friday, May 10

St. Damian de Veuster, priest
Acts 9:1-20
Psalm 117:1b-2
John 6:52-59

Saturday, May 11

Acts 9:31-42
Psalm 116:12-17
John 6:60-69

Sunday, May 12

Fourth Sunday of Easter
Acts 13:14, 43-52
Psalm 100:1-2, 3, 5
Revelation 7:9, 14b-17
John 10:27-30

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Church remains silent on authenticity of alleged Medjugorje apparitions

Q What is the Catholic Church's position on Medjugorje? There is a parishioner who says that the Blessed Mother has a daily message for us. (Ohio)



A As of this date, there has been no official determination by the Church as to the authenticity of the alleged Marian

apparitions to which you refer. In 1981, six young people claimed that Mary was appearing to them at Medjugorje in the former Yugoslavia. Since then, a number of Church commissions have studied the veracity of those claims, but no formal and definitive conclusion has yet been issued by the Vatican.

A report published in 2017 by the website *Vatican Insider* said that the commission established some years ago by now-retired Pope Benedict XVI had voted to accept the first seven appearances of Mary in 1981 as authentic, but had expressed doubt about the more than 40,000 apparitions that have allegedly happened since then.

Three of the six original visionaries say that Mary still appears to them with messages each day, while the other three say that they see her now only once a year.

In 2017, on a flight returning to Rome from Fatima, Portugal, Pope Francis, while seeming to be open to the legitimacy of the original Medjugorje visions, cast some doubt on their continuance. "I prefer Our Lady to be a mother, our mother," the pope told the journalists, "and not a telegraph operator who sends out a message every day at a certain time."

Meanwhile, though, more than two million pilgrims come to Medjugorje each year to visit the site of the purported visions, and clearly their faith is deepened. In May 2018, Pope Francis appointed a retired Polish archbishop as his personal envoy to Medjugorje to see that the pastoral needs of these pilgrims are served, including the hundreds each day who seek the sacrament of penance.

On that 2017 flight from Fatima, Pope Francis had noted that countless pilgrims to Medjugorje are converted. "For this there is no magic wand," said the pope. "This spiritual-pastoral fact cannot be denied."

Q My husband and I are both Catholic. We had separated for four years (he

had borne a child outside of our marriage), but we reconciled earlier this year and have forgiven each other.

My question is this: What is required for us to begin again receiving the Eucharist? We had both stopped receiving. I have gone to confession myself, but I still don't feel free to receive the body and blood of Christ. Please advise. (Location of origin withheld)

A I thank God for the reconciliation of your marriage and for your willingness to forgive. As for holy Communion, you yourself are able to receive right now—especially since you have been to the sacrament of penance recently. Perhaps, though, you would feel more comfortable if you spoke to a priest outside of the sacrament of penance; he could assure you that you are in God's good graces and ready to receive the Eucharist.

Know that the Eucharist, as sublime a gift as it is, is not meant as a reward for perfect people. Instead, it is food for the journey, nourishment for those struggling every day to do what God wants.

Your husband—if he has not done so already—should of course go to confession before receiving Communion.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †

My Journey to God

Our Lady, Our Queen

By Bianca Vandebos

A virgin, a lady, a queen.
She has a beauty
A grace so serene.
To God she has a duty.

What is her name?
Her name is Mary.
She is full of grace.
She has such kindness in her face.

Mother of Jesus,
Mother of us all.
She prays for us sinners
Even at the hour of our death.

Mary is a virgin
As well as a queen,
That I know for certain,
Very loving and gentle.

Mary so humble,
Pray that I am like you
So pride can't make me stumble.



(Bianca Vandebos is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. A depiction of Our Lady of Fatima appearing to the three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal, in 1917, adorns the grounds of Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. The feast commemorating the apparition is celebrated every year on May 13.) (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. "Poems should be no longer than 25 lines (including lines between stanzas if applicable) of either 44 characters (including spaces) to allow room for a staff-selected photo, or 79 characters (including spaces) if no photo is desired." Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367 or e-mail to nhoefer@archindy.org. †

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.

CHAFFEE, Jeffrey L., 56, St. Anthony, Morris, April 19. Husband of Diane Chaffee. Father of Heather Reese, Jason Rowlett and Brandon Chaffee. Son of Patricia Chaffee. Brother of Lindy, Kevin, Kyle and Tim Chaffee. Grandfather of seven.

COUGHLAN, Nelson L., 77, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, April 17. Husband of Judith Coughlan. Father of Janice Sanders and Jayne Stone. Grandfather of four.

CRAWFORD GESWEIN, Edna L., 87, St. Mary, New Albany, April 8. Mother of Joyce Mehling and Virginia Renn. Aunt, great-aunt and great-great aunt of several.

DRURY, Paul E., 84, St. Mary, Navilleton, April 23. Husband of Lois Drury. Father of Paula Moore, Mary and Missy Drury. Brother of Anna Lee Bray and Regina Portman. Grandfather of one. Step-grandfather of two.

GEHRING, Cheryl, 66, Holy Family, Oldenburg, April 4. Wife of Thomas Gehring. Mother of Christina Merritt and David Gehring. Sister of Barbara Burns, Pat Koral and Carol Gehring. Grandmother of four. (correction)

GUZICKI, Stella D., 98, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, March 24. Wife of Eugene Guzicki. Mother of Carol Kelton and Gary Guzicki. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of seven.

HARTMAN, Paul W., 80, St. Louis, Batesville, April 20. Father of Melanie Hartwell. Stepfather of Gary Nobbe. Brother of Irene McCann and Stella Wulfbeck. Grandfather of two.

KING, Jeane, 80, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, April 13. Wife of



Philippines earthquake

Debris surrounds the badly damaged Santa Catalina de Alejandria Church on April 22 following a magnitude 6.1 earthquake in Porac, Philippines. The Archdiocese of San Fernando announced that all historic churches were closed to the public after the quake. A second quake hit central Philippines the following day. (CNS photo/Eloisa Lopez, Reuters)

Frank King. Mother of Tom King. Sister of Bill Christley. Grandmother of one.

MELTZER, Ronald L., 63, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, April 14. Brother of Sharon Rounds, Gary and James Meltzer. Uncle of several.

MEYER, Ruth A., 80, Holy Family, Oldenburg, April 22. Mother of Denise Hartman, Debra Krieger, Darlene and Doug Meyer. Sister of Kenny Moeller. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of eight.

MICHAEL, Anthony, Jr., 73, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, April 18. Husband of Elaine Michael. Father of Karen Newman and Kelli Michael. Brother of Patricia Welch. Grandfather of one.

MORAN, Marydel, 73, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, April 12. Wife of Lee Moran. Mother of Joellen and Keven Ayres, Julie Brown and Marc Moran. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of five.

NAVILLE, Deborah J., 64, St. Mary, Navilleton, April 16. Wife of Gerald Naville, Sr. Mother of Bethany Custis, Daniel, Gerald, Jr., and Matthew

Naville. Daughter of Mary Lucille Missi. Sister of Lisa Huber, Donnie, Pat, Rick and Tim Missi. Grandmother of 15.

POPCHEFF, Connie J. (Dinn), 67, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, April 17. Wife of Ed Popcheff. Mother of Matthew and Robert Dinn. Sister of Cathy Meinert, Carolyn Polomchak and Cindy Rubino. Grandmother of five.

SCHOENTRUP, John W., 83, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, April 8. Husband of Judith Schoentrup. Father of John Schoentrup. Grandfather of two.

STIENEKER, John R., 77, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, April 14. Husband of Karen Stieneker. Father of Laura Stieneker-Taylor and Troy Stieneker. Brother of Catherine Creel, Joseph and Phillip Stieneker. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of one.

WALTER, Anthony J., 94, Holy Family, New Albany, April 13. Father of Margaret Grace and Linda Jennings. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of 17. Great-great-grandfather of three.

WARNER, Nancy (Degitz), 89, SS. Francis and Clare of

Assisi, Greenwood, April 8. Mother of Michelle, Larry, Mike, Tim and Tom Warner. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of three.

WEIR, Xavier I., 16, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, April 8. Son of Bobby Weir and Michelle Raines. Brother of Ania Raines and Dillon Weir. Grandson of Cindy Neely, Dianna Raines and Joseph Noriega. Uncle of two.

WENNING, Ralph, 88, St. Louis, Batesville, April 8. Husband of Rosemary Wenning. Father of Jackie Fitzgerald, Connie Grider, Mary Kay Mollaun, Brenda Moorman and Kim Wenning. Brother of Marlene Camarota, Don, Eugene and Jim Wenning. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of four.

WITTRY, Wayne W., 85, St. Mark the Evangelist,

Indianapolis, April 12. Father of Toni Steinmeyer, Jan, Darren and Lance Wittry. Brother of Lynne Halloran. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of one.

ZONKEL, Julieta (Brabante), 78, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, April 15. Mother of Mary Rose Pitman, Christine and Joe Zonkel. Sister of Alicia Dayao. Grandmother of five. †

Providence Sister Mary Jo Stewart ministered in education and health care

Providence Sister Mary Jo Stewart, formerly Sister Joseph Maureen, died on April 20 at Lourdes Hall at the motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. She was 91.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 26 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Mary Johann Stewart was born on Sept. 25, 1927, in Terre Haute, where she grew up as a member of the former St. Ann Parish. Sister Mary Jo entered the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Jan. 8, 1945, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1952.

She earned a bachelor's degree at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, and a licensed practical nursing degree from Indiana Vocational Technical School.

During her 74 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Mary Jo ministered as an educator for 25 years in schools in California, Illinois and Indiana. She later served as a licensed practical nurse for 23 years in California and at the motherhouse. Sister Mary Jo also ministered in health care for 15 years in Mississippi.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Jo served at the former St. Patrick School in Indianapolis from 1967-68, at St. Mary School (now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School) in Richmond from 1968-70, and at Providence Health Care at the motherhouse from 1973-78 and 1981-86.

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

Franciscan Sister Mary Stella Gampfer served as an educator for 56 years

Franciscan Sister Mary Stella Gampfer died on April 12 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 81.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 16 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Carolyn Rose Gampfer was born on Feb. 25, 1938, in Covington, Ky. She entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Nov. 21, 1956, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1962.

Sister Mary Stella earned a bachelor's degree at Marian University in Indianapolis and a master's degree in English at the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana.

During 62 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Mary Stella ministered as

an educator for 56 years in Catholic schools in Indiana and Ohio.

In the archdiocese, she served as the directress of the aspirancy program at the motherhouse from 1967-71 while also teaching English and history to postulants and novices. Beginning in 1974, Sister Mary Stella began ministry in the English department at Marian University. In addition to teaching courses on writing and literature, she moderated the university's literary anthology, *Fioretti*. She retired to the motherhouse in 2015.

Sister Mary Stella is survived by three brothers, David, Joseph and Terrance Gampfer, all of Ohio.

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

Franciscan Sister Ruth Ann Wirtz served as a music educator for 67 years

Franciscan Sister Ruth Ann Wirtz died on April 21 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 95.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 26 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Dolores Wirtz was born on Oct. 8, 1923, in Princeton, Ind. She entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Aug. 15, 1941, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1947.

Sister Ruth Ann earned a bachelor's degree in music at Marian University in Indianapolis and a master's degree in music at Butler University, also in Indianapolis.

During her 78 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Ruth Ann

ministered as an educator for 67 years in Catholic schools and parishes in Indiana and Ohio, at times also serving as an organist in the parishes to which she was assigned.

In the archdiocese, she ministered at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Indianapolis from 1946-49, St. Andrew School (now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School) in Richmond from 1949-50, and at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School from 1952-59. Beginning in 1959, Sister Ruth Ann served on the music faculty of Marian University, retiring as an associate professor of music in 2011.

She is survived by a brother, Edward Wirtz of Florida.

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

Society of St. Vincent de Paul celebrates new Bloomington location

By Katie Rutter

Special to *The Criterion*

BLOOMINGTON—When the Monroe County branch of an international organization began 26 years ago, volunteers were operating out of a family garage.

By contrast, the Bloomington Society of St. Vincent de Paul now occupies a warehouse that boasts 9,500 square feet. Members gathered on April 11 for a blessing and ribbon cutting at its new location.

“I think the Holy Spirit is in this room right now, and he’s very happy with us, with all of you—you’re to be congratulated,” John Ryan said during the ceremony. Ryan is president of the Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Council, which helps to connect the societies throughout the archdiocese.

“We’re so proud of what you do here and what you accomplish here. It is simply remarkable,” he said.

The Bloomington council served about 3,400 people in need last year. The group offers financial assistance for essentials like utilities, medicine, vehicle repairs and rent payments. They also collect furniture donations, which are brought to the warehouse and then distributed to clients free of charge.

Many of the clients, individuals and families alike are attempting to establish a new life after experiencing homelessness. Others are struggling to pay their rent and cannot replace worn-out items or purchase beds for their children.

“Having furniture gives a sense of home,” explained Scott Alber, a member of St. Paul Catholic Center who is president of the Bloomington council. “They have more self-esteem.”

Last year, the group distributed more than 4,800 pieces of furniture.

Their former headquarters measured 7,500 square feet, and volunteers said they were bursting at the seams. Several members recalled that they had to stack couches on top of one another for lack of space.

The new warehouse could easily hold a major league baseball diamond with room to spare. The space includes a small office and an indoor loading dock for trucks.

The largest room, where clients arrive every Saturday to select their own furniture, was filled on April 11 with dozens of chairs, couches, bookshelves, kitchen tables and mattresses of all sizes. A second large room contained stoves and refrigerators, along with about 30 washers and dryers.

“There was a study done in St. Louis that found that kids were not going to school because they did not have clean clothes, so we started a washer [and] dryer program,” explained Alber.

The group purchases used machines, but their supply still falls short of the demand. About 50 families are currently on a waiting list.

“There’s more poverty here than you realize,” Alber said.

This society serves Bloomington and the surrounding Monroe County, where about 20 percent of the estimated 147,000 residents are considered to be in poverty, according to 2018 statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau.

When a client asks the society for help, volunteers schedule a visit to their home, or, if the person is homeless, the members meet him or her at a restaurant and pay for the meal. They assess the client’s needs, provide a list of community resources, and help the person make a plan of action to fill their needs.

Volunteers recounted that often a person will begin in a panic and gradually calm down as they realize that help is available.

“It’s not to make them feel ashamed or afraid or humiliated, and sometimes [they feel] all three,” explained Jo Gilbertson, the secretary of the society and a member



Volunteers and supporters cheer as John Ryan, president of the Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Council, uses a large pair of scissors to cut a ribbon in celebration of the opening of the new warehouse location of the Bloomington Society of St. Vincent de Paul on April 11. The society recently upgraded to this 9,500 square foot building after operating in a location with 7,500 square feet. (Photos by Katie Rutter)

of St. Paul Catholic Center.

“It’s going to them and hearing their story and assisting in any way we can,” she said.

If clients need furniture, they are invited to come to the warehouse. Here, they select their own items which can then be delivered to their residence by volunteers. The limit is five pieces per visit—with a table and chairs counting as one piece—or as much as can be packed in a pickup truck.

When the load is large, volunteers often get creative to make everything fit.

“We look like the Beverly Hillbillies,” laughed Ed Dolan, a volunteer and member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington. He shared photographs of his pickup stacked with furniture to almost double its height.

About 70 people volunteer with the society regularly, which has no paid employees. On April 11, about four dozen volunteers and other supporters gathered to celebrate the new location. Prayers were said aloud and a member read the Gospel passage where Jesus exclaims, “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mt 25:40).

Deacon Ronald Reimer of St. Paul Catholic Center then zig-zagged through rows of furniture to sprinkle holy water around the building.

Finally, the group gathered around a loading dock and cheered as Ryan cut a blue ribbon to mark the official opening of the new space.

Members of the Bloomington Society of St. Vincent de Paul vow to keep going strong. They hope that the new warehouse will help them continue to impact lives across Monroe County.

Alber recalled a moment that proved to him the value of their furniture outreach. He was at the grocery store when a worker noticed his St. Vincent de Paul shirt and stopped to speak with him.

“She said, ‘I want to thank you. When I first came to Bloomington, I had nothing, and I came and you gave me furniture, and you helped me get my life started,’” Alber recalled her telling him. “‘It was St. Vincent de Paul that helped me get my feet back on the ground.’”

The new warehouse is located at 1999 Packing House Road in Bloomington. Donations can be made directly at the warehouse or a pickup can be coordinated through its website, www.svdpbloomington.org.

(Katie Rutter is a freelance writer and member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington.) †



Deacon Ronald Reimer of the St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington walks past donated furniture as he blesses the new warehouse location of the Bloomington Society of St. Vincent de Paul on April 11.



Ed Dolan, center, a volunteer with the Bloomington Society of St. Vincent de Paul, laughs with fellow volunteers John Simon, left, and Ruth Simon, during a gathering to celebrate the society's new warehouse on April 11.



Washers and dryers line the walls of the new warehouse operated by the Bloomington Society of St. Vincent de Paul on April 11. The society provides laundry machines to needy families with school-aged children because a study showed lack of clean clothes negatively impacts school attendance.

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Sacraments celebrated in Salem

In this photo from June 1, 1979, a group of children who had recently received several sacraments along with their sponsors gather in front of St. Patrick Church in Salem. The group includes children who participated in the sacrament of penance for the first time, received their first Communion and those who received the sacrament of confirmation. St. Patrick Parish was founded in 1942 but moved into the church building shown here in 1975.

(Would you like to comment on or share information about this photo? Contact archdiocesan archivist Julie Motyka at 800-382-9836, ext. 1538; 317-236-1538; or by e-mail at jmotyka@archindy.org.)

GOOD

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back with the right answer.

A few weeks later, the girl returned to the bishop. He leaned over and asked for the answer to his question.

She whispered, "He said that he cannot remember."

The bishop teared up.

"Also, he loves you," she added.

We're blessed to be made by a Creator who loves us beyond what we can comprehend. And no sin will separate us from him if we seek his mercy.

(Editor's note: The story Patti Lamb relayed is in reference to St. Faustina Kowalska. Lamb, a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

LIVING

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strongest, about the goal of total independence. Vulnerability is where real relationships come from."

Now manager of donor relations for L'Arche USA, Ruppert said, "In our society, loneliness and isolation are growing problems for everyone, particularly for

people with intellectual disabilities. L'Arche is a sign that it is possible for people to belong, a sign of hope that we can be real with each other about our gifts, our strengths, and about the places where we need help.

"I don't know who I'd be without L'Arche."

(Maureen Pratt writes for Catholic News Service. Her website is www.maureenpratt.com.) †

Arizona bishop says 'love of Christ' compels him to proclaim Gospel of life

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Preservation of the family, marriage and the unborn were the main themes of the annual National Catholic Prayer Breakfast at the Marriott Marquis hotel in Washington on April 23.

"Faith in the crucified and risen Christ shields us from two cold and deadly sins: arrogant presumption and cynical despair," said Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix, a keynote speaker, "neither of which are appropriate in a Christian leader. The enemy of our souls does not care which we prefer."

Bishop Olmsted, who is a consultant to the pro-life committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the matter of legal abortion has defined his ministry, since he was ordained a priest in Lincoln, Neb., in 1973, the year of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision, which legalized abortion on demand.

"It is my pastoral duty to proclaim the Gospel of life and the protection in law of the most vulnerable among us. The love of Christ compels me."

Bishop Olmsted also recalled the words of St. John Paul II at a Mass on the National Mall in October 1979: "We will stand up and proclaim that no one ever has the authority to destroy unborn life."

Speaking of the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, recently blocked by House Democrats, Bishop Olmsted asked, "Where does blatant disregard for a child's life come from? From hardened hearts. A child demands love, and love costs."

"Any rejection of bodiliness," he added, "will immediately target two beautiful but demanding and sometimes inconvenient realities: marriage and the human child." Marriage, he said, "stands now in the way of the gender ideology. We Christians will stand for the reality of marriage today in our homes and the public square, even when facing persecution today."

A rapidly lowering birth rate in the United States, he said, means that the warning about contraception in St. Paul VI's 1968 encyclical, "*Humanae Vitae*," has come true, and "the disaster invited by theologians, bishops, priests and laity who protested Paul VI's prophetic letter is upon us," with sexual pleasure separated from procreation. "Enough!"

"Christians are called not to complacency, but to greatness, to have hearts great enough to be filled with God," Bishop Olmsted concluded.

Mick Mulvaney, the acting White House chief of staff and director of the Office of Management and Budget, spoke briefly about President Donald J. Trump's commitment to religious liberty.

"The president has allowed us Christians, of all denominations, to



Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix speaks on April 23 during the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast in Washington. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

be very vocal about their faith and to prioritize our faith," he said. "Over the past two-and-a-half years, I think you can see the principles of our faith being manifested." Trump has addressed the annual March for Life rally via a video hookup the past two years.

"I can assure you," Mulvaney added, that he has sat in the Oval Office many times when Trump has admonished foreign leaders and diplomats in saying, "You're not doing enough to take care of the Christians in your country," or has praised them with "thank you for taking care of the Christians in your country."

"I won't lie to you, that that's pretty powerful stuff. To be able to be there, to be part of that, has been very invigorating," said Mulvaney, a member of Opus Dei and a graduate of Georgetown University.

"I'm comfortable as a Catholic, even though I'm working for a president who is not Catholic, that the principles of our faith are alive and well and well respected in this administration and driving many of our policies," he added.

The 1,400 attendees gave a standing ovation to Ted and Julie Sandmann, parents of Nick Sandmann, the Covington (Kentucky) Catholic High School student who was thrown into the center of a national spotlight in January when videos of him and his classmates interacting with Native Americans and others near Washington's Lincoln Memorial went viral.

Also garnering a loud ovation was Abby Johnson, the pro-life activist who operates And Then There Were None, a ministry to former abortion clinic workers, who was recently portrayed in the film drama *Unplanned*, which proved to be successful at the box office.

"The critics, they thought we'd make 40 bucks, and we're sitting on \$17 million right now," she said. The film, which cost \$6 million to make, is her story as a former director of a Planned Parenthood clinic who eventually rejected abortion to join the pro-life movement.

"I'm waking up every day getting e-mails from people who told me they walked into the film pro-choice and walked out pro-life. This is why we decided to do *Unplanned*—for the conversion of hearts."

Also speaking were Sister Bethany Madonna, vocations director of the Sisters of Life, and Curtis Martin, the founder and CEO of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students.

The breakfast has been held annually since 2004. The event was established in 2004 in response to St. John Paul's call for a new evangelization. George W. Bush is the only president to address the gathering, doing so from 2005 to 2008. Vice President Mike Pence addressed the breakfast in 2017. †



Sister Bethany Madonna, vocations director of the Sisters of Life, speaks on April 23 during the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast in Washington. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

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