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Seminarians build fraternity during annual convocation, page 9.

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Bishop Fabre: Shootings show 'all communities are affected by racism'

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Three mass shooting incidents in the United States in the span of a week are now showing that “their emotional impact is resonating, understandably, across the nation,” said Bishop Shelton J. Fabre of Houma-Thibodaux, La., chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism. “The effects of the evil and sin, we are all impacted by it.”



Bishop Shelton J. Fabre

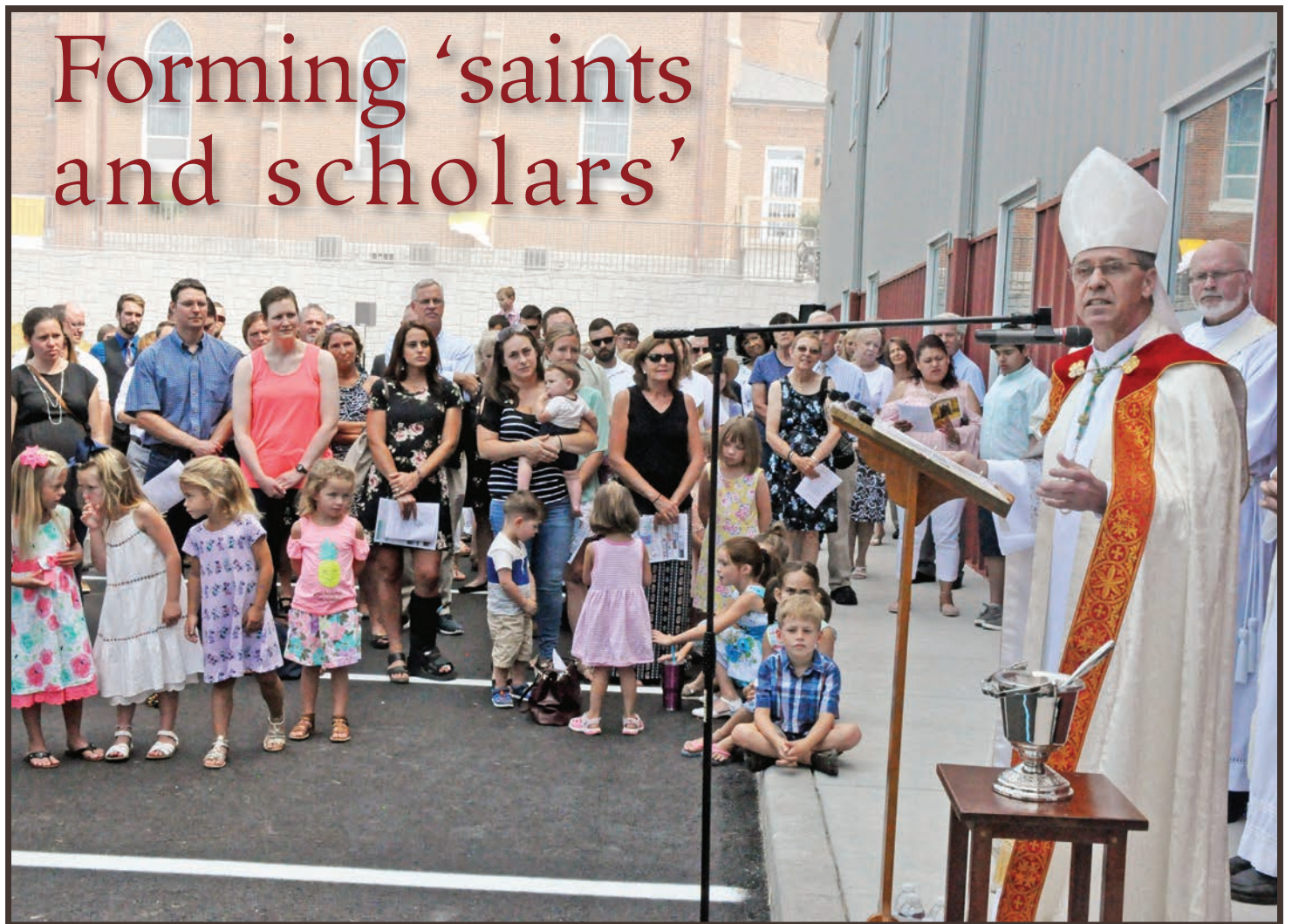
Bishop Fabre said many people think of racism as being a matter for blacks and whites, “but I think there are many, many faces to racism, so I think it resonates with the pastoral letter,” assembled by his committee and approved by the bishops last year, “when we say that this evil affects everyone, and all communities are affected by racism.”

The deadliest of the three shootings took place on Aug. 3 in El Paso, Texas, where accused gunman Patrick Crusius opened fire at a Walmart store in the city, with 22 dead and dozens more wounded. Many of the victims were Hispanic. Crusius had posted a manifesto—some called it a screed—online against an “invasion” of the United States by Hispanics.

Less than 24 hours after the El Paso shooting, a gunman shot nine people dead, including his own sister, at a nightclub in Dayton, Ohio, on Aug. 4 before police gunned him down. On July 28, a gunman killed three people at a garlic festival in Gilroy, Calif., before taking his own life. At least 15 others were injured.

The pastoral letter, “Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love—A Pastoral Letter Against Racism,” included separate sections detailing racist treatment directed at African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans.

“Many groups are still experiencing prejudice,” Hispanics among them, the **See SHOOTINGS, page 11**



Forming 'saints and scholars'

Members of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County and students at the faith community’s school listen on Aug. 4 as Archbishop Charles C. Thompson preaches during a liturgy to bless the parish’s new education center. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Parish’s new \$3 million education center continues 160-year focus of teaching the faith

By Sean Gallagher

RIPLEY COUNTY—Students returned to school on Aug. 7 at St. Nicholas School in Ripley County like their predecessors reaching back to 1861 when the school was founded as a ministry of St. Nicholas Parish.

But those who began classes last week did so in a newly constructed \$3 million education center, the latest change in the nearly 160-year history of St. Nicholas School.

Starting with a one-room log cabin, it moved into a brick structure in 1881. An addition to it was constructed in 1953,

and modular buildings arrived at the school about 20 years ago.

Hundreds of parishioners gathered on Aug. 4 with their pastor, Father Shaun Whittington, and Archbishop Charles C. Thompson to bless the biggest change in the history of the parish’s school.

Through all the changes, the mission of St. Nicholas School has remained the same. It is there, as its motto says, to “form saints and scholars.”

“Today is an incredible day,” said Father Whittington in a homily during a Mass before the blessing. “It isn’t just about the building. It’s about the mission of our Lord Jesus, the mission that we

have embraced in this community, the mission to form saints and scholars.”

During the blessing liturgy, Archbishop Thompson emphasized the mission that informs all that will happen in the new building.

“What goes on inside these walls will be the teaching of many things: math, science, geography—along with teaching the faith of our Church,” he said. “But the most important thing that will go on in this building, as well as outside of it, is how we live that faith, how we proclaim the Good News of Jesus by our own witness to a

See SCHOOL, page 8

In new interview, pope explains aim of synod, warns against nationalism

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The upcoming Synod of Bishops on the Amazon is an “urgent” gathering, not of scientists and politicians, but for the Church whose main focus in discussions will be evangelization, Pope Francis said in a new interview.

However, the importance of the Amazon region’s biodiversity and the current threats it faces also will be addressed because “together with the oceans, [the Amazon] contributes decisively to the survival of the planet. Much of the oxygen we breathe comes from there. That’s why deforestation means killing humanity,” he said.

The pope also talked about the dangers of surging nationalism and isolationist sentiments, saying, “I am worried because you hear speeches that resemble those by Hitler in 1934. ‘Us first, We... We ...’”

Such thinking, he said, “is frightening.”

The pope’s comments came in an interview posted on Aug. 9 by *Vatican Insider*, the online news supplement to the Italian newspaper *La Stampa*.

Asked about the dangers of “sovereignism” or nationalism, the pope said it represented an attitude of “isolation” and closure.

“A country must be sovereign, but not closed” inside itself, he said.

National sovereignty, he said, “must be defended, but relations with other countries, with the European community, must also be protected and promoted.”

“Sovereignism,” on the other hand, he continued, is something that goes “too far” and “always ends badly—it leads to war.”

When asked about populism, the pope

See POPE, page 8



Pope Francis is greeted by a member of an indigenous group from the Amazon region during a meeting at the Coliseo Regional Madre de Dios in Puerto Maldonado, Peru, on Jan. 19, 2018.

(CNS photo/Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters)



An extraordinary minister of holy Communion in Brooklyn, N.Y., distributes the Eucharist during Mass in this file photo. A new Pew study about the level of Catholic belief in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist showed that a majority of Catholics in the U.S. do not believe that the bread and wine used at Mass become the body and blood of Christ. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Pew survey shows majority of Catholics don't believe in 'Real Presence'

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A new study about the level of Catholic belief in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist showed that a majority of Catholics in the U.S. do not believe that the bread and wine used at Mass become the body and blood of Christ.

The report drew a strong rebuke from Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron of Los Angeles, who posted on Aug. 6 on Twitter: "It's hard to describe how angry I feel after reading what the latest @pewresearch study reveals about understanding of the Eucharist among Catholics. This should be a wake-up call to all of us in the Church."



Bishop Robert E. Barron

In a video that accompanied the post, Bishop Barron's anger is not directed at Pew, but inward. "I'm blaming myself, bishops, priests and anybody" responsible for transmitting the faith, he said. "We're all guilty."

He added, "It's been a massive

failure of the Church carrying on its own tradition."

The Pew study, issued on Aug. 5, showed that 69 percent of all self-identified Catholics said they believed the bread and wine used at Mass are not Jesus, but instead "symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ." The other 31 percent believed in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, known as transubstantiation.

"Most Catholics who believe that the bread and wine are symbolic do not know that the Church holds that transubstantiation occurs," said Gregory Smith, associate director of research at Pew Research Center in Washington. "Overall, 43 percent of Catholics believe that the bread and wine are symbolic and also that this reflects the position of the Church.

"Still, one in five Catholics—22 percent—reject the idea of transubstantiation, even though they know

about the Church's teaching," Smith said.

The numbers who believe in transubstantiation are higher among Catholics who go to Mass at least once a week, but are hardly overwhelming. About five of every eight churchgoing Catholics believe in the Church's teaching of transubstantiation.

Split among the 37 percent who don't believe that the Communion bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Christ are 23 percent who don't know what the Church's teaching is, and 14 percent who know the Church's teaching but don't believe it, Smith said.

According to Pew's figures, a majority in all age groups believe the bread and wine used at Mass to be symbolic, and the majority grows larger as the age group grows younger. Catholics with a high school education or less are less likely to believe in transubstantiation, Hispanic Catholics believe in it less than whites, and women believe in it less than men.

Bishop Barron sounded astounded by the findings. "Any Catholic worth his or her salt knows this is a central teaching," he said in the video. "It's a basic tenet of Catholicism."

He said some are bound to react, "Oh, well, who cares? As long as they're committed to the poor, or committed to social justice. Isn't that important?" But Bishop Barron called that "a reduction of religion to morality, which is repugnant to Catholicism."

He cited a list of saints and holy people—among them Dorothy Day, St. Katharine Drexel, Jacques Maritain and St. Vincent de Paul—whom he said had "a profound understanding and love for the Eucharist," and said if someone asked them, "Isn't the Eucharist a nice symbol of Jesus?", "you'd have open rebellion.

"You take away the central teachings of our Church at the doctrinal level, and trust me, you will take away our commitment to the poor," Bishop Barron said. "It belongs together as a whole."

(The full Pew study can be found online at pewrsr.ch/31sP7em.) †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

August 18 – 29, 2019

August 18 – 4 p.m.

Mass for 200th anniversary of the Dedication of the Basilica of St. Joseph Proto-Cathedral in Bardstown, Ky.

August 21 – 10 a.m.

Department heads meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

August 22 – 10 a.m.

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

August 22 – 3:30 p.m.

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

August 24 – 5:30 p.m.

Confirmation for youths of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish at St. Luke the Evangelist Church, Indianapolis

August 25 – 9:30 a.m.

Mass to celebrate the new school year at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, Indianapolis

August 25 – 2 p.m.

Confirmation for youths of Annunciation Parish in Brazil; St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle; St. Mary-of-the-Woods Parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods; and St. Benedict, St. Patrick and St. Margaret Mary parishes, all in Terre Haute, at Annunciation Church

August 27 – 1 p.m.

Council of Priests meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

August 27 – 6 p.m.

Catholic Radio Indy Annual Dinner at Northside Knights of Columbus, Indianapolis

August 29 – 8 a.m.

Catholic Business Network Breakfast, Primo's Banquet Hall, Indianapolis

(Schedule subject to change.)

Cardinal Tobin: Pope's letter reminds priests Christ's 'joy, hope' are constantly 'born anew'

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, N.J., praised Pope Francis for his Aug. 4 letter to priests in which the pontiff expressed "gratitude to all those priests who faithfully and generously spend their lives in the service of others."

The pope acknowledged the shame and frustration felt by priests who are discouraged by the actions of fellow clergy members who betrayed the trust of their flock through sexual abuse and abuse of conscience and power.

"The Holy Father's letter to all priests is a most welcome gift, coming, as it does, at a particularly difficult time for the Church," Cardinal Tobin said in an Aug. 7 statement as chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

In his letter, which commemorated the 160th anniversary of the death of St. John Mary Vianney, patron saint of parish priests, Pope Francis also shared his concern that many priests "feel themselves attacked and blamed for crimes they did not commit."

"Amid the pain, ugliness and anger, it is possible for the Church, and especially those who are priests, to fall into despair—the opposite of hope," the cardinal said.

"Instead, the Holy Father reminds us that we must never lose sight of those 'luminous moments when we experienced the Lord's call to devote our lives to his service.'"

He added, "That sort of memory recalls the many moments of gratitude and encouragement offered to us from the Lord and from others."

Saying he was speaking as a priest and a bishop, Cardinal Tobin thanked the pope for his "wonderful letter to us."

"While working to protect all of God's people, especially the innocent and vulnerable, from the evil of the abuse of power, we should not become blind to how the joy and hope of Christ 'are constantly born anew,'" he added.

(Pope Francis' letter to priests can be read in its entirety in English at bit.ly/2Kn5dz6 and in Spanish at bit.ly/31gvmqb.) †

Official Appointments

Effective Immediately

Rev. Juan José Valdes, administrator of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis, incardinated into the Archdiocese of Indianapolis from the Archdiocese of Guadalajara, Mexico, and appointed pastor of St. Anthony Parish.

Very Rev. Joseph M. Feltz, V.F., pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in New Albany and Dean of the New Albany Deanery, reappointed Dean of the New Albany Deanery for a one-year term while remaining pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish.

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



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Bishops of Mississippi condemn ICE raid, roundup of workers

JACKSON, Miss. (CNS)—Mississippi’s Catholic bishops joined with the state’s Episcopal, Methodist and Lutheran bishops in condemning the Trump administration’s Aug. 7 raid on seven food processing plants in the state to round up workers living in the country illegally.

Such raids “only serve to ... cause the unacceptable suffering of thousands of children and their parents, and create widespread panic in our communities,” the religious leaders said in an Aug. 9 statement quoting Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), from a July letter he sent to President Donald J. Trump.

“We, the undersigned, condemn such an approach, which, as he [Cardinal DiNardo] rightly states, ‘has created a climate of fear in our parishes and communities across the United States.’ ” they said.

Signing the statement were Catholic Bishops Joseph R. Kopacz of Jackson and Louis F. Kihneman III of Biloxi; Episcopal Bishop Brian R. Seage of Mississippi; Bishop James E. Swanson Sr. of the Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church; and Bishop H. Julian Gordy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America’s Southeastern Synod.

In what is the biggest sweep in a decade, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrested and detained nearly 680 people. About 300 were released that evening; another 380 people remained in custody.

“These are not new laws, nor is the enforcement of them new,” ICE’s acting director, Matt Albence, said in a statement on Aug. 7. “The arrests today were the result of a yearlong criminal investigation. And the arrests and warrants that were executed today are just another step in that investigation.”

He said the employers could be charged with knowingly hiring workers who are in the county illegally and will be probed for tax, document and wage fraud.

Investigators told *The New York Post* daily newspaper that six of the seven processing plants were “willfully and unlawfully employing illegal aliens”; many of the workers used false names and had fake Social Security numbers, according to the newspaper.

On NBC’s “Meet the Press” on Aug. 11, Albence acknowledged the timing of the sweep “was unfortunate,” coming just days after the mass shooting in El Paso, Texas, where the alleged shooter said he was targeting Hispanics.

In their joint statement, the Mississippi

bishops wrote: “To say that immigration reform is a contentious and complex topic would be an understatement.

“As Christians, within any disagreement we should all be held together by our baptismal promises. Our baptism, regardless of denomination, calls us to unity in Jesus Christ,” they said. “We are his body and, therefore, called to act in love as a unified community for our churches and for the common good of our local communities and nation.”

They also said their churches stand ready to assist immigrants with their immediate needs following the ICE raid.

“We can stand in solidarity to provide solace, material assistance, and strength for the separated and traumatized children, parents and families,” the bishops said. “Of course, we are committed to a just and compassionate reform to our nation’s immigration system, but there is an urgent and critical need at this time to avoid a worsening crisis.”

Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Jackson was directly assisting families and also was accepting donations for its outreach at catholiccharitiesjackson.org.

In other reaction to the ICE sweep in Mississippi, Lawrence E. Couch, director of the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, called the enforcement actions “outrageous” and “out of order in this land of freedom and welcome.”

He called on the Trump administration to release all the workers.

“The United States government is becoming increasingly heavy-handed in its tactics and is becoming increasingly less recognizable to its citizens and all peoples around the world,” Couch said. “Why has the current administration declared war on our neighbors who are helping to put food on our tables?”

He called the ICE raid “part of a malicious campaign to paint immigrants as criminals and rapists who have ‘invaded’ our country.”

The workers who were arrested “had no criminal record,” he said. “Many have lived and worked in the United States for several years. This action has created a catastrophe for the families and is spreading fear throughout the immigrant community. Children were left homeless and traumatized by having their parents torn from them. It is unknown if some children remain alone.”

Instead of arresting “these hardworking people [who] have lived and worked in our country for many years, raised their families, and contributed their talents and resources to our communities,” Couch added, they should be given a path to citizenship.



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers look after executing search warrants and making arrests on Aug. 7 at an agricultural processing facility in Canton, Miss. Mississippi’s Catholic bishops joined with the state’s Episcopal, Methodist and Lutheran bishops in condemning the Trump administration’s ICE raid on seven food processing plants in the state to round up workers living in the country illegally. (CNS photo/Immigration and Customs Enforcement handout via Reuters)

Other Catholic agencies offering help to the families in need in Mississippi after the arrest of their breadwinner include Chicago-based Catholic Extension, which announced on Aug. 8 it would send help immediately, but also would begin fundraising through its “Holy Family Fund,” bit.ly/2ZEO7mK.

Catholic Extension is the leading national supporter of missionary work in poor and remote parts of the United States. The Jackson diocese, one of the poorest in the country, has long been supported by the organization, including some of its parishes in towns where the raids took place. †

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Editorial



Cuban migrants wait outside the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance in Tapachula, Mexico, on June 14. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, more than 70 million people are displaced worldwide. (CNS photo/Jose Cabezas, Reuters)

When we disagree with the Church

Is it OK for Catholics to disagree with what the Catholic Church teaches? How much of what the Church teaches must we accept?

It's quite clear that Catholics are affected by the values of our secular society. Most of those values are good, but often they are misguided.

Ruben Navarette is a columnist whose columns are syndicated in secular newspapers, including *The Indianapolis Star*. In his column that appeared in the July 21 issue of the *Star*, he lamented the results of a Pew Research Center poll that showed that more of the "religiously unaffiliated" said that our nation has a duty to welcome strangers than do Christians.

And, he said, "As a Catholic, the response from my tribe is heartbreaking" because only 50 percent of Catholics polled recognized a responsibility to accept refugees and 45 percent did not.

Yes, 45 percent of the Catholics polled somehow think that it's OK not to welcome the stranger. How can that be?

We cannot understand how any followers of Christ can possibly think it's OK to turn away refugees. Welcoming and caring for the stranger and alien is one of the most preached commandments in the Bible. It's one of the things we are going to be judged on, along with feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and those in prison. Jesus said very clearly that those who do not do that "will go off to eternal punishment" (Mt 25:46).

Navarette was right when he wrote, "The Bible is clear about how we ought to treat the stranger. There is no spin, hedging, mincing of words. This isn't some nonbinding resolution that is open to interpretation. For people of faith, this is the word of God." He quoted four Bible passages, but he could have quoted more than 100 others.

Christ's message was really very simple. He said that it was summed up as love of God and love of neighbor, and everyone is our neighbor. There is no "Yes, but ..." in any Catholic teaching about this.

But it's not only what the Church teaches about welcoming the stranger and the alien with which many Catholics disagree. Another Pew Research Center poll showed that 61 percent of those

who identified themselves as Catholics support civil marriage between people of the same sex." The Church, and all Scripture, teach that any true marriage was designed by God as between one man and one woman.

God created man and woman as complementary and ordered them to be fruitful and multiply. Marriage, therefore, "is ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1601).

We don't need polls for us to know that many Catholics disagree with other teachings of the Church, including the use of contraceptives, sexual activities outside of marriage, cohabitation before or instead of marriage, *in vitro* fertilization, and various other things that the Catholic Church condemns but our society accepts.

So what about Catholics who disagree with the Church?

There is a hierarchy of dogmas in the Church. Catholics must believe the doctrines in the Nicene Creed and those that have been declared infallibly, such as the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption. Then they must accept other teachings of the Church that are contained in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

When Catholics are so affected by our secular culture that they don't accept what the Church teaches, we believe that they at least have an obligation to learn why the Church teaches what it does. This is similar to what the Church teaches about following one's conscience. While we must always obey our conscience, we're also obliged to have a well-formed conscience.

Unfortunately, today many Catholics have grown up without receiving a good religious education. Many simply don't know what the Church teaches and why it teaches it. Therefore, we suggest that those who disagree with the Church's teachings check the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* or the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* to learn why the Church teaches what it does.

Of course, every Catholic family should also have a Catholic Bible to learn what Jesus taught. We must conform our minds to his.

—John F. Fink

Letters to the Editor

Epidemic of shootings must remind us we 'are our brother's keeper'

This is in response to Mike Krokos' editorial in the Aug. 9 issue of *The Criterion* about gun violence and mass shootings.

We can no longer afford to treat these as isolated incidents that are completely unpredictable and random and therefore unactionable: we have an epidemic. It's so much an epidemic that the evening news nowadays simply includes a shooting along with its other nightly news items, before moving on to sports and weather.

Just as we are unable to come together as a country on health care, immigration and global warming, we are in gridlock over gun control. We can only offer up "thoughts and prayers" in response to another shooting, and hope these shootings will somehow stop on their own.

But there are some things we can do now, at the local level, that do not involve politics. We can be a friend to the lonely

and outcast. We can visit them and try to get them re-engaged in life: we can certainly invite them to church.

If they have immediate needs, we can try to help or point them to help. As a default, we ought to at least make authorities aware of threatening Facebook posts. And certainly, merchants who see a person buying up guns and ammunition in bulk should contact the police.

Going increasingly to "open carry" is I think the wrong answer, and could quickly turn our school and malls into "Wild West" shows where the new buzzword is "Draw!"

There is a better way to handle this, and it involves love. In the end, "love conquers all."

And by the way, yes, we really are our brother's keeper.

**Sonny Shanks
Corydon**

There are parallels between mass shootings, tragedy of abortion, reader says

"Assault on the nation," the headline reads. More innocent people—attending a garlic festival in Gilroy Calif.; doing back-to-school shopping at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas; having a drink with friends at a nightclub in Dayton, Ohio—killed. The perpetrators take aim with assault weapons, pull the trigger and destroy life—just like they did at the Aurora movie theater in Colorado, the Pulse night club in Orlando, and Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut.

What is the root of this evil in our country? Where does this disrespect for human life originate?

Is it remotely possible for us to look at our acceptance of abortion—the intentional ending of a human life as a solution to an unwanted, unplanned or feared pregnancy—as a factor? Can we allow ourselves to acknowledge the reality of a tiny person, with unique DNA and a God-given right to life, being cut apart by a medical instrument, burned with chemical solution, destroyed by powerful suction, and that this violence against another human being is actually protected by our laws?

Do we justify our neglect to protect life by figuring that this child might have been abused or neglected anyway, may have been poor, may have had

a disability? Would we justify any shooter's selection of his victims based of any of the above?

We rightly mourn the tragic and senseless violence of a domestic terrorist with a high-powered rifle in his hand, slaughtering ordinary Americans. Yet somehow, we cannot bring ourselves to admit a parallel with the taking of innocent life in the womb.

Instead, we light up, in pink, the One World Trade Center in New York City to celebrate that victory of unlimited abortion, which we prefer to call "women's rights."

It's strange to think that every one of us able to watch, read and contemplate the horror of recent mass shootings was given the gift of life by our mothers. Let's use that privilege to stand up against violence that results in the death of innocent Americans, both in the womb and in our towns and cities.

Let's be honest with ourselves and not allow either the National Abortion Rights Action League or the National Rifle Association to defend their weapons of choice in assaults against our fellow human beings.

**E. Adele Schluge
Indianapolis**

Letters Policy

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

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.



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

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Christ the Cornerstone

The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ

“The Church is the visible plan of God’s love for humanity because God desires that the whole human race may become one People of God, form one Body of Christ, and be built up into one temple of the Holy Spirit” (Pope St. Paul VI).

During these final weeks of summer, this column is exploring the reasons for staying in the Church proposed by Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron to Catholics “who feel, understandably, demoralized, scandalized, angry beyond words, and ready to quit.”

Last week’s discussion about his book, *Letter to a Suffering Church: A Bishop Speaks on the Sexual Abuse Scandal*, was on the Church’s unique role as an institution that speaks about God—not just on the weekends at Mass, but in every circumstance that concerns the life and dignity of human persons. We speak of God when talking about marriage and family life, immigration, poverty, addiction, health care, education and sexuality.” This column is focused on the identity and mission of the Church as the sacrament of Christ’s continuing presence and activity in the world.

Christians believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate. We profess him in the

creed as “God from God, light from light, true God from true God.” We acknowledge him to be the savior of the human race. “Through Jesus’ perfect humanity,” Bishop Barron writes, “God ‘salves’ or heals a broken humanity—and how wonderfully this is exemplified in Jesus’ mighty acts of restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, mobility to the crippled, and life to the dead.” In spite of the fact that Jesus is constantly rejected by those he came to redeem, his saving love and mercy remain our only hope, the source of our happiness and peace.

The Church is not simply a place where we encounter Jesus on weekends. It’s not just an organization or society where followers of Jesus gather to convey his message and carry on his work. We believe that the Church *is* Jesus Christ. As Bishop Barron says, “It is an organism, not an organization. Those who have been grafted on to Jesus Christ are the eyes, ears, hands, feet and heart through which Jesus continues his properly subversive and re-creative work in the world.”

To describe this “organism” which is the Church, we use language first introduced by St. Paul that speaks of Christ as the *head* of the body (Col 1:18), and of baptized Christians

as *members* of this body united with Christ, who is the head of the body and the source of spiritual growth for all members (Col 1:24). Throughout the history of the Church, this concept—Christ as the head and we as the members united with him as one body—has been developed into both a source of profound teaching and an invitation to full, conscious and active participation in all that the Church is and does.

Why should we stay even when we are “demoralized, scandalized, angry beyond words, and ready to quit”? Because leaving the Church would be like abandoning Jesus. It would mean walking away from our responsibility, as members of his body, to participate intimately in his redemptive work. It would be like rejecting our own families—only worse, because in disassociating ourselves from the Mystical Body of Christ, we refuse the nourishment, strength and hope that comes from our intimate union with Christ, the head of the body.

Bishop Barron does not minimize the effects of recent scandals. The history of the Church shows repeatedly that even those who are called to be ambassadors of Christ, including popes, bishops, priests and religious, can abuse

their sacred responsibilities and inflict deep wounds on the Body of Christ. There is no excuse for this. There is only repentance, renewal and the healing power of God’s mercy.

But if we truly understand what the Church is, and who we are as members of the one Body of Christ, the idea of leaving the Church (for what? or for whom?) becomes totally unacceptable. As Bishop Barron writes:

“There is simply never a good reason to leave the Church. Never. Good reasons to criticize Church people? Plenty. Legitimate reasons to be angry with corruption, stupidity, careerism, cruelty, greed, and sexual misconduct on the part of leaders of the Church? You bet. But grounds for turning away from the grace of Christ in which eternal life is found? No. Never, under any circumstances.”

And yet, the sad statistics show that many of our sisters and brothers have left us—some in a fit of anger, others simply drifting away. We have no right to criticize them.

On the contrary, we must pray for them and take every available opportunity to welcome them back as full-fledged members of Christ’s body, the Church. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

La Iglesia es el Cuerpo Místico de Cristo

“La Iglesia es el plan visible del amor de Dios por la humanidad porque Dios desea que toda la raza humana se convierta en un solo Pueblo de Dios, forme un solo Cuerpo de Cristo y se erija en un solo templo del Espíritu Santo” (Papa san Juan Paulo VI).

Durante estas últimas semanas del verano exploramos en esta columna las razones para permanecer en la Iglesia que propone el obispo auxiliar de Los Angeles Robert E. Barron a los católicos “que, comprensiblemente, se sienten desmoralizados, escandalizados, sumamente enojados y que también quieren renunciar.”

El análisis de la semana pasada de su libro titulado *Carta a una Iglesia que sufre: un obispo habla sobre la crisis de abusos sexuales*, trató acerca de la función exclusiva de la Iglesia como institución que habla sobre Dios “no solamente el fin de semana en la misa, sino en todas las circunstancias que atañen a la vida y la dignidad de las personas. Hablamos de Dios cuando hacemos referencia al matrimonio y la vida familiar, a inmigración, a la pobreza, la adicción, la salud, la educación y la sexualidad.” Esta columna se centra en la identidad y la misión de la Iglesia como sacramento de la presencia y la actividad continua de Dios en el mundo.

Los cristianos creemos que Jesucristo

es Dios encarnado; lo profesamos en el Credo al decir “Dios de Dios, luz de luz, Dios verdadero de Dios verdadero.” Lo reconocemos como el salvador de la raza humana. “A través de la humanidad perfecta de Jesús— escribe el obispo Barron—Dios ‘salva’ o sana a la humanidad quebrantada; las grandes obras de Jesús ejemplifican esto maravillosamente cuando devuelve la vista a los ciegos, el oído a los sordos, la movilidad a los paralíticos, cuando devuelve a la vida a los muertos.” Pese al hecho de que Jesús sufre el rechazo sistemático de aquellos a quienes vino a salvar, su amor y su misericordia salvadora continúan siendo nuestra única esperanza, la fuente de nuestra felicidad y paz.

La Iglesia no es simplemente un lugar donde encontramos a Jesús el fin de semana, ni una organización o una sociedad donde los seguidores de Jesús se reúnen para transmitir su mensaje y llevar adelante su obra. Creemos que la Iglesia es Jesucristo. Tal como lo expresa el obispo Barron “se trata de un organismo, y no de una organización. Quienes se han arraigado a Jesucristo son ahora sus ojos, sus oídos, sus manos, sus pies y su corazón, a través de los cuales Jesús sigue realizando su obra propiamente subversiva y recreadora en el mundo.”

Para describir este “organismo” que es la Iglesia, utilizamos un lenguaje que

introdujo inicialmente san Pablo quien habla de Cristo como la *cabeza* del cuerpo (Col 1:18), y de los cristianos bautizados como *partes* de este cuerpo unidas a Cristo, quien es la cabeza del cuerpo y la fuente del crecimiento espiritual de todas sus partes (Col 1:24). A lo largo de la historia de la Iglesia este concepto de Cristo como la cabeza y nosotros como las extremidades unidos con él en un solo cuerpo, se ha convertido en una fuente de profundas enseñanzas y una invitación a participar plena, consciente y activamente en todo lo que la Iglesia es y hace.

¿Por qué debemos permanecer aunque estemos “desmoralizados, escandalizados, sumamente enojados y [listos para] renunciar?” Porque dejar la Iglesia sería como abandonar a Jesús; significaría alejarnos de nuestra responsabilidad como parte de su cuerpo, de participar íntimamente de su obra redentora. Sería como rechazar a nuestra propia familia, pero incluso peor: porque al disociarnos del Cuerpo Místico de Cristo nos negamos el alimento, la fortaleza y la esperanza que provienen de nuestra unión íntima con él, la cabeza del cuerpo.

El obispo Barron no minimiza los efectos de los escándalos recientes. La historia de la Iglesia muestra repetidamente que incluso aquellos llamados a ser embajadores de Cristo, incluidos los papas, obispos, sacerdotes y religiosos, pueden abusar de sus

responsabilidades sagradas e infligir profundas heridas al Cuerpo de Cristo. No hay excusa para esto. Solo existe el arrepentimiento, la renovación y el poder sanador de la misericordia de Dios.

Pero si realmente entendemos lo que es la Iglesia y quiénes somos como parte del Cuerpo de Cristo, la idea de dejar la Iglesia (¿por qué y por quién?) se torna totalmente inaceptable. Tal como escribe el obispo Barron:

“Nunca hay una buena razón para abandonar la Iglesia. Nunca. ¿Hay acaso buenas razones para criticar a la gente de la Iglesia? Muchísimas. ¿Hay acaso razones legítimas para irritarse ante la corrupción, la estupidez, la ambición, la crueldad, la avaricia y la mala conducta sexual por parte de los líderes de la Iglesia? Evidentemente. Pero ¿hay alguna razón para darle la espalda a la gracia de Cristo, en quien encontramos la vida eterna? No. Nunca, bajo ninguna circunstancia.”

Y sin embargo, tristemente las estadísticas muestran que muchos de nuestros hermanos nos han abandonado, algunos en un raptó de ira, otros simplemente se han apartado paulatinamente. No tenemos derecho a criticarlos, al contrario: debemos rezar por ellos y aprovechar cada oportunidad que se nos presente para recibirlos de vuelta como integrantes plenos del cuerpo de Cristo, la Iglesia. †

Events Calendar

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

August 20

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 Tues. 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.

August 21

Knights of Columbus Mater Dei Council #437, McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis. **Theology on Tap**, sponsored by the archdiocesan Young Adult and College Campus Ministry, doors open 6:15 p.m., 7 p.m. presentation followed by social time, all faiths welcome, free admission and parking, food and drink available for purchase. Information: indycatholic.org, 317-261-3373.

August 22-24

St. Ann Parish, 6350 S. Mooresville Road, Indianapolis. **Parish Festival**,

Thurs. 5-10 p.m., Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. 5-11:30 p.m., rides, food, family games. Information: 317-821-2909.

August 23

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild**, Fall Rummage Sale, 43" television raffle, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 317-223-3687, vlgmimi@aol.com.

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, 14598 Oak Ridge Road, Carmel (Lafayette diocese). Two events featuring psychologist, author and Catholic speaker Dr. Greg Botarro: **Lunch and Learn**, student-oriented mindfulness, noon-1:30 p.m., for Catholic school administrators and counselors regardless of diocese, lunch included, no cost, registration requested by Aug. 20 at mercifulhelpcenter.org; **"Smartphones, Kids and Anxiety: Should We Panic?"** 7-8:30 p.m., all invited, no charge, registration not required. Information on both events: mercifulhelpcenter.org, 317-663-4039, ext. 3171.

August 24

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish Social Hall, 10655 Haverstick Road, Carmel (Lafayette diocese). **Trustful Surrender: A Seminar on Catholic Mindfulness**, featuring psychologist, author and Catholic speaker Dr. Greg Botarro, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., \$15 includes lunch, all invited, registration requested by Aug. 20. Registration and information: mercifulhelpcenter.org, 317-663-4039, ext. 3171.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 5692 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Neighborhood 5K Run/Walk** 9 a.m., \$20 entry fee. **Fall Festival** 4-11 p.m., local music, children's games, restaurant food vendors, beer and wine, \$2 admission. Information: 317-257-2266.

August 24-25

St. Mary Parish, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **On Eagles Wings 5K Walk/Run** Sat. 9 a.m. (register online

www.oneagleswings5K.com). **Festival**, Sat. 5:30-11 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat.: only adults age 21 and older admitted, pork chop meal and sandwiches with sides, live music by Nuttin' Fancy 7-11 p.m., beer garden, casino games, raffles, auction items; Sun.: family day, fried chicken and pork bar-b-que dinners served 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m., bake sale, kids' games, inflatables, casino games, concessions, quilt raffles, bingo and live music by Keith Swinney Band noon-4 p.m. Information: 812-663-8427.

August 25

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Golden Jubilee Mass**, Msgr. William F. Stumpf, vicar general, presiding, 2 p.m., followed by reception at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center across from cathedral. Registration required by Aug. 19: www.archindy.org/marriageandfamily, click on Events Calendar. Information: Keri Carroll, kcarroll@archindy.org, 317-236-1521. St. Joseph Church,

August 27

St. Christopher Parish, Damascus Room, 5301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. **Scripture Study: Comparative Reading of Matthew and Luke**, 10 Tuesdays through Nov. 12 (except Oct. 15 and 22), resuming in mid-January for 10 sessions, 7 p.m.-8:45 p.m., \$50 per 10 sessions payable in increments, registration requested. Registration and information: Lois Jansen, mlj986@gmail.com, 317-241-9169.

August 30-31, Sept. 1

St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Fall Festival**, Fri. and Sat. 5-11 p.m., Sun. 3:30-11 p.m., American and Vietnamese food, lasagna, rides, children's tent, black jack, beer garden, Texas poker contest Sun. Information: 317-244-9002.

August 30-31, Sept. 1-2

Sacred Heart Parish, gymnasium, 558 Nebeker St., Clinton. **Spaghetti Fest**, Fri. 4-9 p.m., Sat. and Sun. 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Mon. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., sauce prepared by Knights of

Columbus #9441, air-conditioned dining, handicapped accessible, adults \$8, children 12 and under \$5, craft booths, free parking. Information: 765-832-8468.

August 29

Primo Banquet Hall & Conference Center, 2615 National Ave., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Network 12th Annual Inspirational Insights**, 7:30 a.m. registration and continental breakfast, 8:30-11 a.m. program, Spirit of Community and Catholic Person of the Year award, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and president and CEO of Franciscan Health Dr. James Callaghan keynotes. Reservations and agenda: www.indycbn.org, click Events. Information: info@indycbn.org.

September 1

St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Decatur County, St. John the Evangelist Campus, 9995 E. Base Road, Greensburg. **Church Picnic**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Fireside Inn fried chicken, roast beef dinners, mock turtle soup, games and booths. Information: 812-934-2880. †

Retreats and Programs

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

August 31

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Music at the Mount**, featuring Todd Hildreth Trio, outdoors by the lake, 6-8 p.m., bring lawn chairs or a blanket, beer, wine, cheese, and fruit trays available for purchase. Information: 812-923-8817.

September 4

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Marian Consecration Program: 33 Days to Morning Glory**, free program to guide small group in Marian consecration, seven weeks (Sept. 9, 16, 23, 30, Oct. 7 and 13), 7-8 p.m. Information: Kristine Meyer, 317-545-7681, kmeyer@archindy.org.

September 9

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Mondays at the Mount**, (Sept. 16, 23, 30), 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m., learn about Scripture, saints and liturgical seasons. Information: www.mountsaintfrancis.org, 812-923-8817. †

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.



Joe and Elizabeth (Meunier) Park, members of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 14. The couple was married in St. Pius V Church in Troy on June 14, 1969. They have three children: Aaron, Jeremy and Travis Park. The couple also has 11 grandchildren. †



Ron and JoEllen (Noone) Eckstein, members of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 2. The couple was married in Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove on Aug. 2, 1969. They have four children: Marie Dawson, Brian, Craig and Keith Eckstein. The couple also has 12 grandchildren. †



William and Sandra (Holt) Kurker celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 12. The couple was married in a con-celebrated wedding at North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis on April 12, 1969. William is a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, and Sandra is a member of North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis. They have one son, Sean Kurker. †



Living legends in Catholic education

Dan and Beth Elsener smile as they hold the Living Legends Award they received from the Indiana Historical Society (IHS) at a banquet on July 25. Each year, IHS gives the award to Hoosiers who have made significant local, statewide and national accomplishments in a variety of areas and disciplines. The Elseners, members of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, received the award for their nearly 45 years of promoting Catholic education. After working in several positions with increasing responsibility in K-12 education in Nebraska, Dan moved with Beth and their children to Indianapolis for his new role as head of the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education in 1992. In 2001, he became president of Marian College in Indianapolis. Under Dan's leadership, and with Beth's help and support, the Catholic institution switched from a college to a university, grew from 1,000 to 4,449 students (as of 2019), launched a College of Osteopathic Medicine and the nationally recognized Klipsch Educators College, and developed and expanded several new athletic, undergraduate and graduate programs. (Photo courtesy of Indiana Historical Society)

Sisters of Providence in Terre Haute to host golf scramble on Sept. 27

The Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, are hosting their 14th annual Hole-y-One Golf Scramble at Hulman Links Golf Course, 900 Chamberlain St., in Terre Haute, on Sept. 27. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. followed by lunch at 11 a.m. and a noon tee time. The awards ceremony

with prizes will begin at 4:30 p.m. The cost is \$125 for a single player or \$500 for a foursome. Teams can be male, female or mixed. Sponsorships are available for \$400. Registration is required by Sept. 20 online at golf.sistersofprovidence.org or by calling 812-535-2817. For more information, e-mail zpies@spsmw.org. †

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events/submission, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Cindy Clark, or by fax at 317-236-1593.

Marian apparition claims not endorsed by diocese, local bishop

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, said claims that Bishop Michael F. Olson has confirmed local sightings and messages of Mary are “not true.”

“These claims of apparitions and messages are not verified or endorsed by the Church, and in no way are the claims true that the Mystical Rose is a ministry of the Diocese of Fort Worth or of St. Mark” Parish, said the Aug. 8 statement.

It also added: “Bishop Olson does not encourage anyone to offer credence or support for these claimed apparitions.”

A website about the reported apparitions, made by the visionary and others, claimed the first sighting of Mary was in 2017 in the adoration chapel at St. Mark Catholic Church in Argyle, hence the name Our Lady Mystical Rose of Argyle. Subsequent appearances—said to have occurred on the 30th of each month from July to December—were in the church’s outdoor courtyard.

The initial seven messages are said to have focused on the sanctity of life. In February of this year, the visionary claimed to have received warning messages from Mary about a cleansing

of the Church and a “removal of bad shepherds who had taken the place of true shepherds.”

The website said these messages and oral and written accounts of what happened were given to the Fort Worth Diocese.

While the diocese did not give its blessing to these reports, the statement does note “true apparitions” of Mary throughout history.

“While from time to time apparitions do occur [Our Lady of Lourdes, Fatima, Tepeyac] ... all true apparitions are simply an appeal to obey the command of Christ: Repent and believe in the Gospel,” it said, referring to Marian apparitions approved by the Church that took place in Lourdes, France, in 1858, Fatima, Portugal, in 1917, and the Hill of Tepeyac in Mexico City (Our Lady of Guadalupe) in 1531.

The statement also cautioned that one should “assess claims of apparitions and miracles with prudence, always presuming the goodwill of anyone making such a claim but with due regard for the integrity of the Catholic faith.”

Today, nearly 40 years after the initial reports of apparitions of Mary in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina,

the Church has not recognized the authenticity of these claims.

This May, the pope lifted the ban on official pilgrimages to the site, but an interim director of the Vatican press office said care must be taken to ensure the pilgrimages are not “interpreted as an authentication of well-known events, which still require examination by the Church.”

And in early August, senior Vatican representatives joined the first officially approved Church festival at Medjugorje.

The pope’s apostolic visitor to Medjugorje, Archbishop Henryk Hosier, retired archbishop of Warsaw, Poland, told KAI, Poland’s Catholic information agency, in



Bishop Michael F. Olson of Fort Worth, Texas, leads morning prayer on Sept. 21, 2018, during the Fifth National Encuentro, or V Encuentro, in Grapevine, Texas. A statement from the Diocese of Fort Worth said claims that Bishop Olson has confirmed alleged apparitions of Mary in Texas are not true. It said the bishop “does not encourage anyone to offer credence or support for these claimed apparitions.”

(CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

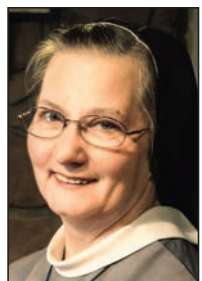
August that the Holy See’s position on the apparitions there has two aspects: “the pastoral aspect, which is fully accepted, and the doctrinal aspect, meaning study of the apparitions.” †

New sessions added to archdiocesan event on evangelization and catechesis

By Natalie Hoefer

Three new sessions have been added to the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization’s annual Gathering of Disciples event at Roncalli High School, 3300 Prague Road, in Indianapolis, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on Sept. 7.

The yearly event provides formation and training for those in parish and school ministry—for example, catechists, school teachers, liturgical ministers, parish evangelization teams and those interested in evangelization.



Sr. Johanna Paruch, F.S.G.M.

The theme for this year’s Gathering of Disciples is “Beauty, Goodness and Truth: Drawn to Discipleship.” The keynote speaker is St. Francis of the Martyr George Sister Johanna Paruch, associate professor of theology at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio.

The keynote address, “How Beauty Evangelizes and Draws Us to Discipleship—by God’s Grace,” will be presented in English and translated for Spanish speakers. Breakout sessions, however, will be offered in both languages.

The three new sessions added to the roster focus on music during Mass, the Church environment during different liturgical seasons, and the importance of

retreats. They will be offered in English with Spanish translation available.

In the “Dressing the Church: Environments for the Liturgical Seasons” session, participants will be challenged to revisit what the Church asks of this ministry and to enhance those things that enrich worship. The presentation will consider best practices, and the broad types and experiences of archdiocesan parishes. Dan McAfee, director of the Office of Worship in the Archdiocese of Detroit, will lead the workshop, which will take place in two sessions, before and after lunch.

In a panel discussion for liturgical ministers titled “Music in the Sacred Liturgy,” liturgical musicians will explore broad principles of sacred music, especially considering its connection to truth, beauty and goodness. Archdiocesan director of music Andrew Motyka will moderate a panel comprised of music directors from the archdiocese and draw upon their experiences in music ministry. Special attention will be given

to challenges in music ministry, such as how to handle transitions, how to choose appropriate music to the liturgy, and how to draw the faithful into full participation through song.

The third newly added session is titled “Widening the Lens: The Importance of Retreat Ministry for Continuing Spiritual

Formation.” Because retreats offer a different approach to process and integrate what is learned about the faith in parishes and in daily life, retreat ministry is an essential part of growing in relationship with God. This session will discuss the variety of programs and retreats available in the archdiocese.

Georgene Beiriger and Cheryl McSweeney, director and associate director, respectively, of Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis, will offer the session in English. Sara Castillo, campus minister for Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, will lead the session in Spanish.

Other breakout sessions in English include:

- “Lesson Planning with Scripture;”
- “Using Art in Lesson Planning: a Practical Workshop for Catechists;”
- “Starting (or Jump-Starting) Your Parish Evangelization Team;”

Additional breakout sessions in

Spanish include:

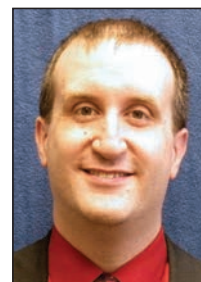
- “Lesson Planning with Scripture;”
- “‘That’s Just Your Opinion’: Teaching about Truth and Goodness in a Relativistic Society;”
- “‘10 Things a Disciple of Jesus Does’: an Evangelization Resource.”

The day will end with a panel of local Catholic artists discussing how their medium draws them closer to God. The panel will include a poet, fiction writer, painter, musician and dramatist.

The cost, which includes light morning refreshments and lunch, is \$30 for those in Indianapolis deaneries, and \$25 for all others. Participants do not need to pay in advance, as the cost will be assessed to parishes.

Registration is required by Sept. 6. For more information or to register, go to bit.ly/2YWNpQr (case sensitive).

For questions, e-mail catechesis@archindy.org. †



Andrew Motyka

to truth, beauty and goodness. Archdiocesan director of music Andrew Motyka will moderate a panel comprised of music directors from the archdiocese and draw upon their experiences in music ministry. Special attention will be given

St. Catherine of Siena Enochsburg

82nd Annual Church Picnic Sunday, September 1, 2019

(The Sunday of Labor Day Weekend)

“Famous Fireside Inn Fried Chicken” or Tender Roast Beef Dinners

Dinner served 11:00am-3:00pm EST

Adults - \$12.00; Children 12 & under - \$5.00

Additional Items from 3:00-5:00pm

Mock Turtle Soup, Pies, Sandwiches and more!

Carry Outs available all day Beer Garden from Noon-5pm

Games! Raffles! Basket Booth! Country Store!

Come and Join the Fun!!!

St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Parish
9995 E. Base Rd., Greensburg IN 47240

Take New Point Exit 143 off I-74,
Go North on County Road 850 E for 1/2 mile,
Turn Right on Base Road, Go 2 miles

Lic. # 150003

JOIN US FOR OUR UPCOMING EVENTS



CBN
CATHOLIC BUSINESS NETWORK

This faith-based group of Catholic professionals strive to be a community example of high ethics, integrity, and honesty in business practices.

INSPIRATIONAL INSIGHTS • Thursday, Aug. 29 / 8:30-11 a.m.
Primo South - 2615 National Avenue

Be encouraged and moved by the speakers and awardees at this high-spirited event. This is a great opportunity to network with local business leaders in the Catholic community - all while benefiting Catholic education. For attendee/sponsor information: contact b.brown@office3sixty.com

MASS FOR COMMERCE and the Common Good • Thursday, Sept. 12 / 5:30 p.m. Mass
Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral

Being a Catholic business person in the secular world is not always easy. This is an opportunity for the Catholic business community to give thanks for God’s continued providence. Join us for Mass and a gathering at Iaria’s Restaurant (317 College Avenue) after for fellowship and networking. All Catholics in the workplace welcome. Contact: kpohovey@archindy.org

For more information, visit: www.indycbn.org

Promoting Catholic values in the workplace and supporting Catholic education

SCHOOL

continued from page 1

relationship with him, an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ.”

The joy that members of St. Nicholas Parish experienced during the blessing of their new education center was the fruit of nearly two decades of dreams, plans, stewardship and hard work.

The late Msgr. Bernard Schmitz, St. Nicholas’ pastor in 2000, proposed to his parishioners in February of that year the construction of a new school building.

At the time, parishioner Andy Hudepohl had been married for about a year and a half and was looking forward to sending any children with which he and his wife Angie might be blessed to the school in the years to come.

Nearly 20 years later, he has had two children graduate from St. Nicholas School and two more who are currently students there.

“It’s awesome,” he said on the day of the blessing. “It’s so good to see. This building will be used for what matters to God. Without God, we wouldn’t have had it. It’s amazing to see.”

After the blessing liturgy, the education center was open for tours. Those who walked its halls viewed its nine classrooms, a space used both as a library and music room and a space that will serve as both a science, technology, engineering and mathematics laboratory and art room. It is a huge change from the 1881 building, demolished over the summer, that continued to be used until the end of the last academic year.

Sherri Kirschner, St. Nicholas School’s principal, saw the large crowd on hand for the blessing as a sign of the parish’s support for the school.

“This community is all about Catholic education,” she said. “The number of people who have come out to volunteer to make this happen has been amazing to me. It’s amazing how much this community has come together to make this happen today.”

Most of the funds were raised for the new education center in 2017 as part of phase one of St. Nicholas Parish’s Heritage Project. Phase two will involve fundraising for and construction of a \$2.8 million building that will feature a new gymnasium, cafeteria and meeting rooms.

St. Nicholas seventh-grader Leanne Ludwig has heard about the dreams of the new education center all her life. So, she was overflowing with joy on the day when it was blessed.

“This school building was like a star way out in the universe for the past 20 years,” Leanne said. “But in the past



Father Shaun Whittington, right, ceremonially cuts a ribbon on Aug. 4 to open the new education center of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County. Looking on are Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan vicar general, left, Deacon Michael Shumway of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky., and Archbishop Charles C. Thompson. Father Whittington is the pastor of St. Nicholas Parish. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

couple of years, it’s been like a shooting star. It’s just completely changed the campus. God has answered so many prayers. It’s been such a blessing to be a part of it.”

Seeing so many of her fellow parishioners contribute to its construction has affected her faith.

“I’ve spent more time praying about [the school],” Leanne said. “It really means a lot that all these people really cared so much about this and what’s going to happen in the school building. I’m so excited to be taught my faith in there and grow in my faith here.”

Leanne’s parents were both students at St. Nicholas School and are glad to have their daughter and two other children enrolled there.

“St. Nicholas makes you feel part of a family,” said Christy Ludwig, Leanne’s mother. “They teach the faith. And every day, they practice the faith. That’s what’s important. They talk about Jesus all the time. What goes on inside the walls is amazing.”

Much more will happen inside the new education center than the teaching of St. Nicholas School students. The parish’s many ministries will also utilize it. That is a primary reason the building was called an education center rather than a school.

That impressed archdiocesan school superintendent Gina Fleming, who attended the blessing liturgy with Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan vicar general, and archdiocesan chancellor



Elizabeth Vollmer, center, and Kindra Maple, right, stand at the entrance to their classrooms on Aug. 4 in the new education center at St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County as Archbishop Charles C. Thompson blesses the facility. Assisting Archbishop Thompson is Deacon Michael Shumway of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky. Vollmer and Maple respectively are the eighth- and seventh-grade teachers at St. Nicholas School. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Annette “Mickey” Lentz.

Fleming also took note of the fact that a rural parish with less than 500 households took on a construction project that often only happens in much larger faith communities in suburban or urban areas.

“What this community has proven is that, with God’s grace and the determination of his people, so many amazing things can

happen,” said Fleming. “The inspiration that this community has provided in terms of growth of ministry is one that can be replicated anywhere with God’s grace and the fortitude of the people.”

(For more information about St. Nicholas Parish and its Heritage Project, go to stnicholas-sunman.org/heritage-project.) †

POPE

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said it was one thing for people to be able to express their concerns, but quite another “to impose a populist attitude on the people.”

“The people are sovereign,” with their own way of thinking, feeling, judging and expressing themselves, he said, “while populism leads to forms of sovereignty. That suffix, ‘-ism,’ is never good.”

Asked about “the right path to take when it comes to migrants,” the pope said, “First and foremost, never neglect the most important right of all: the right to life.”

“Immigrants come above all to escape from war or hunger, from the Middle East and Africa,” he said.

When it comes to war, “we must make an effort and fight for peace” as well as invest in Africa in ways that help the people there “resolve their problems and thus stop the migration flows.”

Concerning immigrants already in one’s home country, certain “criteria must be followed,” he said.

“First, to receive, which is also a Christian, Gospel duty. Doors should be opened, not closed. Second, to accompany. Third, to promote. Fourth, to integrate” the newcomers in the host communities, he said.

“At the same time, governments must

think and act prudently, which is a virtue of government. Those in charge are called to think about how many migrants can be taken in.”

If that threshold is reached, “the situation can be resolved through dialogue with other countries” because some countries need people, especially for working in agriculture or for reviving their economy and breathing new life into “half-empty towns” because of low birthrates, he said.

When asked why he convened a synod on the Amazon, Pope Francis said, “It is the ‘child’ of ‘Laudato si’.” Those who have not read it will never understand the Synod on the Amazon. ‘Laudato si’ is not a green encyclical, it is a social encyclical, which is based on a ‘green’ reality, the safeguarding of creation.”

Among the environmental issues the pope is concerned about, the one that “has shocked me the most,” he said, is the way resources are increasingly being consumed faster than they can be regenerated.

“It’s very serious. It’s a global emergency,” he said, highlighting that “Earth Overshoot Day” fell this year on July 29—the day when resource consumption goes into “debt” because the annual demand on nature exceeds what the earth can regenerate in that year.

The seriousness of the problem means “ours will be an urgent synod. But beware: a synod is not a meeting

of scientists or politicians. It is not a parliament; it is something else,” he said.

The synod “is born” from the Church “and will have an evangelizing mission and dimension. It will be a work of communion guided by the Holy Spirit,” the pope said.

Pope Francis was asked whether the possibility of ordaining older, married men to minister in remote areas would be one of the main topics of discussion. The pope replied, “Absolutely not. It is simply one number” in the working document.

The 45-page working document, which serves as a guide for discussions, contains 146 numbered items, outlining various topics.

One sub-item in a list of suggestions for ways to create appropriate and needed ministries said, “Affirming that celibacy is a gift for the Church, it is requested that, for the most remote areas of the region, the possibility of priestly ordination be studied for older people, preferably indigenous, respected and accepted by their community, even if they have an existing and stable family, in order to ensure availability of the sacraments that accompany and sustain the Christian life.”

When it comes to the main purpose and aim of the synod, Pope Francis said, “the important thing will be the ministries of evangelization and the different ways of evangelizing.”

In a question regarding ecological concerns and what stands in the way of

safeguarding the Amazon, the pope said, “The threat to the lives of the people and the land derives from the economic and political interests of society’s dominant sectors.”

When asked what policymakers should do, the pope said they should rid themselves of all complicit and corrupt practices.

“They must take concrete responsibility, for example on the issue of open-cast mines, which are poisoning water and causing so many diseases. Then there is the issue of fertilizers,” he added.

When asked what he feared most concerning the planet, he said, “The disappearance of biodiversity, new deadly diseases” and the kind of loss and “devastation of nature that can lead to the death of humanity.”

He praised the increased awareness and movements among young people, such as Greta Thunberg, the Swedish teenager whose #FridaysForFuture campaign asks students to hold a strike to demand swift action on climate change. Pope Francis had met the 16-year-old environmental activist at a weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square in April.

The pope said the big and small things people can do each day “does have an impact” because change relies on real, concrete action. Also, people engaging in more environmentally responsible behavior “creates and spreads the culture of not polluting creation.” †

Seminarians build fraternity during annual convocation

By Sean Gallagher

There has been a brotherhood among priests in the Church from its earliest days. In recent years, that fraternity has been encouraged more actively in part to help priests have the mutual support they need once they are ordained and enter into ministry.

The annual convocation of archdiocesan seminarians is an important way of building up this brotherhood before these possible future priests are ordained. It takes place shortly before the seminarians return to the two seminaries where they are enrolled: Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis and Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

This year's convocation took place on Aug. 5-7 at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. During that time, the seminarians had meetings, prayed together, shared meals and took part in recreation.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson met with the seminarians on Aug. 5 and was the principal celebrant of a Mass for the convocation that day.

"This is the future leadership of our Church," he said in an interview after the Mass. "They're quality guys who are taking their vocations very seriously. They're showing great courage and humility while discerning a call to the priesthood, to serve the people of God in central and southern Indiana.

"It's important that we accompany them and walk with them in this formation and education journey."

He especially appreciates the willingness of the 25 archdiocesan seminarians from across central and southern Indiana to enter into priestly



Archdiocesan vocations director Father Eric Augenstein watches his bowling ball roll down a lane on Aug. 6 at Action Duckpin Bowl in Indianapolis. He and seminarians had fun bowling together as part of the annual convocation for archdiocesan seminarians.



Archdiocesan seminarians John Geis, left, and Charlie Wessel share strategies during a duckpin bowling session on Aug. 6 at Action Duckpin Bowl in Indianapolis. The bowling session was part of the annual convocation for archdiocesan seminarians. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

formation during a difficult time for the Church.

"If we look back at the history of the Church, it's sometimes in those challenging moments that people stepped up," Archbishop Thompson said. "Moments of challenge can cause people to discern, think about their faith and think about how their lives are meant to respond to the challenges. People are discerning and seeds are planted, but it sometimes takes challenges to bring that awareness and a willingness to act on that call forward."

New seminarian Sam Strohmier was a bit anxious at the start of the convocation. The gathering was the first event as a seminarian for Strohmier, a member of St. Michael Parish in Brookville who will be a freshman at Bishop Bruté and the nearby Marian University.

"I'm looking forward to it, but I'm a little nervous," he said about his upcoming first year in seminary. "I just want to make sure that this is what God's calling me to.

"The fellowship is very nice. It feels like that they're all there for me. I'm no longer by myself."

Six year ago, seminarian Matthew Perronie was in Strohmier's position, a



Seminarians Michael Clawson, left, Liam Hosty, James "JJ" Huber and Kris Garlitch kneel in prayer during an Aug. 5 Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. The Mass took place during an annual convocation for archdiocesan seminarians.

nervous new seminarian attending his first convocation. With several years of priestly formation under his belt, including spending time this summer learning Spanish and Hispanic culture in Cuernavaca, Mexico, he enjoys the convocation.

"It's an opportunity to just relax," said Perronie, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg who is entering his second year of formation at Saint Meinrad. "When we're in seminary, we've got the pressures of school work and other things we're working on. But I can come here and just relax and enjoy their company. It's awesome to have that experience."

Knowing he is closer to priestly life and ministry now than he was when he started six years ago, Perronie recognizes the importance of fraternity among his fellow future priests.

"We need those times to get away together and have this community because one day, God willing, as a priest in a parish I'm going to need time to reconnect with my brother priests and

take that time to refresh and rejuvenate with them," he said.

Archdiocesan vocations director Father Eric Augenstein took a break on Aug. 6 from sharing in duckpin bowling with the seminarians to reflect on the fun of the convocation—and its importance.

"A lot of fraternity is built in casual settings, over a meal or a game of some kind," Father Augenstein said. "So this is just an opportunity for us to just be with one another and not have any purpose or agenda other than just spending time with each other and getting to know each other. It builds good community.

"To see them grow in fraternity and get to know each other and spend time with each other makes for stronger seminary communities and a stronger presbyterate one day."

(To learn more about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.) †



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson blesses five new seminarians for the Church in central and southern Indiana during an Aug. 5 Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. The Mass took place during an annual convocation for archdiocesan seminarians.

Faith was there ‘in darkest moments,’ says priest after shooting

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In upcoming days, Father Fabian Marquez plans to attend 17 funerals. He will officiate one and attend the other 16, including one in Chihuahua City in Mexico.

He is connected to all of them—for people who died in the Aug. 3 mass shooting at an El Paso, Texas, Walmart—because he was there when members of each of these 17 families heard the news that their loved one died in the gunfire. In all, 22 people just going about a normal routine that day were killed by a 21-year-old who may face hate crime charges in addition to capital murder charges.

These families waited hours—into the night and then into the next day—to find out about their missing family members at the MacArthur Elementary-Intermediate School in El Paso, which was set up as a reunification center.

Father Marquez, pastor of *El Buen Pastor Catholic Mission* (Church of the Good Shepherd) in Sparks, Texas, said the priests in the El Paso Diocese were urged by Bishop Mark J. Seitz “to be present” to the community.

He first went to the local hospital and then to the reunification center where he stayed from 1 p.m. on Aug. 3 until about 5:30 p.m. the next day. Some slept during the night in the school building, but mostly they just waited, anxious to hear about friends or family members.

Father Marquez didn’t sleep. He said the initial crowd thinned as people were gradually reunited with their families, but by the next morning, those who remained were tired, frustrated and growing more fearful.

At 10 a.m. the next day when the tensions and emotions were high for those who had not received news, he suggested that the group, several of whom were Catholic, have 30 minutes of prayer together, especially since it was a time when many people across the city would be at their respective churches.

When they prayed, joined by some of the police officers who were at the center, he told them the moment was akin to when the Apostles were hiding after Jesus’ crucifixion.

“They were hurt, just like we are, and he showed up and said, ‘peace be with you,’” the priest said he told the group, stressing: “We need peace now in our community. ... We need peace to change this tragedy.”

He said everyone hugged each other, which they hadn’t done in their almost 24 hours together, and he said that peace was a visible sign of the power of prayer and of faith which in turn helped them cope with tragic news they would later receive.



A man pays his respects on Aug. 8 at a memorial five days after a mass shooting on Aug. 3 at a Walmart store in El Paso, Texas. (CNS photo/Callaghan O'Hare, Reuters)

“It was emotionally hard and heartbreaking” to tell families news they didn’t want to hear, but Father Marquez felt it was important to be there to “minister to those suffering most.”

“In the darkest moments, our faith was with them; it’s what we do as Christians,” he told Catholic News Service (CNS) on Aug. 7.

When Father Marquez finally left the reunification center, he went home and then to an interfaith prayer service before finally returning home after midnight to catch up on a little sleep.

The priest, born and raised in El Paso, said no one from his parish died in the shooting but many of his parishioners knew the youngest person killed in the Walmart shooting: Javier Amir Rodriguez, a 15-year-old avid soccer player from a Catholic family who was just about to start his sophomore year at Horizon High School

in El Paso.

Rodriguez was at Walmart that day with his uncle about to get things for school. The two were standing in line at a bank inside the store when the gunman opened fire. Rodriguez’s uncle was shot in the foot and is in stable condition.

In the days since the shooting, Father Marquez has been meeting with families and helping to plan funerals and memorials. When he spoke to CNS, he was at the site of the memorial at the El Paso shopping center to pray and be with people.

“There is a lot of pain, hurt, tears from early in the morning until night,” he said. He said people have left rosaries and prayer cards and are ministering to others and crying with each other.

“Our community needs to be strong together,” he said, before adding: “We will be strong because God is with us.” †

Vocation, mission of ‘people of God’ is focus of consultation’s statement

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation has released a new agreed statement titled “The Vocation and Mission

of the People of God: ‘A Chosen Race, a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation.’”

The consultation is co-chaired by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, archbishop of Newark, N.J., and Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Methodios of Boston.

The document issued on Aug. 6 was finalized at the most recent meeting of the consultation, which took place in late May of this year at the St. Methodios Faith and Heritage Center in Contoocook, N.H.

It says: “The members of the North American Orthodox-Catholic Consultation want first to affirm the vocation and ministry of each member of the Church:



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin

a vocation and a ministry rooted in Christ’s call, first given through baptism and chrismation [a term used in Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Churches for ‘confirmation’], and lived out through the relationships, responsibilities and obligations each of us encounters in daily life, in family, Church and society.”

“More than five years in the making, this new text is an example of a different approach to ecumenical dialogue,” according to a news release from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). “Instead of addressing together an issue that has prevented full communion between the Churches, here the Catholic and Orthodox theologians examine together challenges that affect both Churches, in this case the role of the laity in the two traditions and the problem of clericalism.”

“In both our Churches in recent decades,” says the document, “there have been continuing discussions about the proper role of the laity in worship, administration and witness.”

The Second Vatican Council in its 1963 “Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy” (“*Sacrosanctum Concilium*”), it says, expressed the Catholic Church’s desire “that all believers be brought to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is required by the nature of the liturgy itself and to which the Christian people ... have, in virtue of baptism, a right and a duty.”

“We recognize that both of our Churches have often been affected by a strong emphasis on the vocation and ministry of the clergy, even to the neglect of the ministry of the laity,” it continues. “A layperson has frequently been assumed ... simply to be one who is not ordained. ... This perspective appears to neglect the proper, wider vocation of every Christian disciple, as that is rooted in Christ’s call and in baptism.”

The consultation’s members, it says, “have come, therefore, to recognize the need to articulate together a common perspective on the people of God and the vocation and ministry of laypersons and the ordained within it, especially in light of contemporary challenges both in the Church and in society.”

It notes that from the consultation’s beginning in 1965, “lay theologians, both women and men, have been full and active participants.”

“We gratefully affirm their contributions, and believe that our North American consultation can take a

distinctive part in this important discussion. It is in that spirit that we respectfully submit this statement to our Churches,” it says.

The document emphasizes “the sacrament of baptism is the foundation of the vocation and ministry of every Christian, clergy and laity alike, so the people of God together constitute a single community.”

Some members have received a special role of leadership within the community, it notes, but all members have received specific charisms that are to be exercised for the building up of the whole body.

The ordained clergy are set apart from the body of believers but are not above or separate from that body, the document says, which is most clearly “in the celebration of the Eucharist,” where the diversity of gifts and roles is made clear in the gathered community’s single act of praise.

“Our focus in thinking about the Church, and in celebrating its reality, must be on the unity of the people of God that is grounded in our common baptism,” it says, “and on a corresponding understanding of the diversity of roles and charisms within that radically unified people.”

The document concludes: “‘There is one body and one Spirit,’ St. Paul reminds us, ‘just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift’ [Eph 4.4-7]. Enlivened by those particular gifts of God, may we continue to seek ways toward the unity in Christ of which Paul speaks.”

The North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation is sponsored jointly by the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, the USCCB Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Since it was established, the consultation has issued some 30 agreed statements on various topics.

Like most such agreed statements, this new text does not speak officially for either Church. “However, it has been drafted by a highly competent group of theologians from both traditions and submitted to all the members of both Churches for their prayerful reflection and discussion,” said a USCCB news release.

(The full text of the statement can be found at bit.ly/2YD6Z9r.) †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

- Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
- CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church
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For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2** 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
carlahill@archindy.org

Faith leaders ask end to hate speech, urge gun control

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The bells at the Cathedral Guadalupe in the Diocese of Dallas rang 31 times on the night of Aug. 7 for those killed in the mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, as hundreds of people gathered inside the cathedral to pray for the victims, survivors and their families.



Bishop Edward J. Burns

Dallas Bishop Edward J. Burns was the main celebrant of the evening bilingual Mass. “These tragic shootings have caused great pain and sadness not only in the communities in which they occurred, but also for people of goodwill around the country,”

Bishop Burns said in announcing the special Mass.

Special liturgies, prayer services and other memorials have taken place at houses of worship across the country since the Aug. 3 and 4 shootings in Texas and Ohio that left 31 dead and dozens more injured.

In addition to statements from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), El Paso Bishop Mark J. Seitz and Cincinnati Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr issued immediately after the shootings, reaction to the tragedies have poured forth from other faith leaders across the country.

Many of these statements express sorrow and ask prayers for the victims and their families, decry the rise of “racism and white nationalism” and call for “common-sense gun control.”

Here are excerpts of some statements:

• **General Council of the Adrian Dominican Sisters in Adrian, Mich.:** “We weep with and pray for the families of the latest victims of murderous rampages in our country—this time in El Paso and Dayton. We cry out in anguish at the ‘normalization’ of gun violence that claims the lives of hundreds of victims each year and at the racial hatred and white nationalism that is fueling horrific acts of domestic terrorism. This ‘new normal’ is not normal. It goes against the grain of every value of decency and goodness we claim as a nation and strive for as people of faith, as brothers and sisters created in the image and likeness of our one God. We insist on commonsense gun control. There is no place in our streets, our schools, our homes for AK-47 assault rifles; gun owners, like vehicle owners, should be licensed; gun safety measures should be implemented and regulated. We insist on concrete measures to expunge the scourge of white nationalism that poses such a real and present threat to our brothers and sisters of color and is so toxic to our nation, assaulting the very fabric of our union.”

• **Sisters of Providence and Sisters of St. Dominic of Tacoma, Wash.:** “Today we raise our voices together as religious

congregations of Catholic women to say enough is enough. Our congregations are called to lift up people who are poor and vulnerable, advocate for the marginalized and rejected, and care for the victims and the voiceless. We serve our neighbors in need through social justice ministries and compassionate presence. The recent mass shootings and rampant rage and division that has overpowered the nation represents a most egregious injustice—the disrespect of and failure to protect our most precious gift of life—and demands changes to our national gun policy and our national culture. ... Let us call on our provident God to move each one of us to action so we can help put an end to this senseless violence. Everyone is a child of God, equal in the eyes of God, and should be equal in our eyes as well. The path to peace begins here.”

• **Boston Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley:** “Our nation was founded on the principle that all people are entitled to ‘life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.’ We implore our elected leaders to rise above ideological differences and work together to address the serious issues facing our country by enacting meaningful and effective policies to end the violence. This includes keeping firearms, particularly assault weapons, out of the hands of those who would use them to inflict devastating harm on our communities. We must address inadequate mental health care in this country. Finally, we must work towards a more civil and just society that rejects all forms of violence and hatred in our country. The fabric of our national conscience is at risk.”

• **Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia:** “The shock of the wanton violence and massacres calls us to conversion. The gun culture, violence on screens and personal morality, in general, in our country—all need conversion. The complex factors which stand behind the hate, racism, rejection of immigrants, the compulsions and addictions, the mental illness and escalating aggression do not have one common social denominator—other than a spiritual and moral one—the rejection of God, a lack of love for neighbor. The free-for-all in our popular culture, the use of guns as toys or instruments of revenge, the lack of respect for the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death is all in a continuum. So is the vulgar political discourse. I am afraid it will get worse before it gets better. Unless we have a change of heart. Unless we address the root causes. Unfortunately, many political and social leaders are taking us in the wrong direction. Pray, be humble and do the right thing always and everywhere. That is the best we can do, that is the example of our Lord in the face of injustice and violence.”

• **Leadership Conference of Women Religious:** “What we are witnessing today is being called stochastic terrorism—the use of mass public communication, usually



Dallas Bishop Edward J. Burns leads eucharistic adoration at the Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe on Aug. 7 as 31 lit candles represent the victims of the El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, mass shootings on Aug. 3-4. (CNS photo/Jenna Teter, The Texas Catholic)

against a particular individual or group, which incites or inspires acts of terrorism which are statistically probable but happen seemingly at random. The demonization of groups through mass media has been shown to result in violent acts because some who hear this speech interpret it as promoting targeted violence. We insist that society be protected from such acts of terrorism. We are called to confront rhetoric that stokes racism and hatred of anyone perceived to be ‘different’ than we are. We are all responsible for monitoring our own language and actions and calling attention when the language and actions of others cross the line. We implore all legislative bodies to pass legislation that effectively prevents gun violence. We call for the passage of laws that ban assault weapons, require universal background checks for all gun sales, provide funding for gun violence prevention research, and makes the trafficking in weapons a federal crime.”

• **Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Leadership Team:** “It is impossible to ignore the sickening, racist motives of the El Paso shooter. This horrific violence was fueled by racist rhetoric, irresponsible gun laws and dehumanizing policies toward immigrants. We must, as a people, name it, and we must defy it. We must stand strong together to condemn the white supremacist ideology that motivated the shooter and that has poisoned the soul of our nation. We must further stand together to condemn the inflammatory, hateful speech voiced almost daily by public figures—including the president of the United States—speech that does nothing but fan the flames of violence. We agree with those who say we need to address the mental health problems that drive some to commit violence with guns. But let us not also be ignorant to the fact

that for far too long, weapons designed for war have been far too easily accessible to civilians. ... Let us demand that, at a minimum, our legislators enact gun safety laws like H.R. 8, a bipartisan measure that calls for strict background checks for those purchasing guns. ... We, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, believe that we must all be actively working toward a culture that promotes peace and non-violence rather than one that glorifies violence and hate.”

• **Catholic Charities USA:** “Hate and violence have no place in our society. It is abhorrent that some victims were targeted simply because they were perceived to be immigrants. As an organization committed to helping vulnerable people, Catholic Charities USA stands in solidarity with others committed to overcoming painful divisions that lead to such disregard for human life. We join other leaders and people of good will in calling our elected officials to take immediate action to address the scourge of gun violence and xenophobia. We pray for the victims and their families, for the first responders and for healing in our suffering communities.”

• **The Rev. Jennifer Butler, CEO Faith in Public Life:** “On the seventh anniversary of the attack on the Sikh temple at Oak Creek [Wisconsin], which killed six people, we mourn continued mass murder in El Paso and Dayton. People are being murdered by weapons of war because of their race, their religion or simply being in the wrong place. President [Donald J.] Trump must stop his rhetoric, which incites violence, and prioritize investigating white supremacist terrorism. The Senate must pass H.R. 8, which would amend federal gun laws to require background checks for all gun sales. Only these concrete steps toward repentance will start to heal our nation.” †

SHOOTINGS

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pastoral says. “Hispanics have been referred to by countless derogatory names, have encountered negative assumptions made about them because of their ethnicity, have suffered discrimination in applying for college, for housing, and in registering to vote.”

It adds, “Many people of Hispanic heritage come from families that were in this land long before the borders changed.”

The pastoral notes, “Participating in or fostering organizations that are built on racist ideology—for instance, neo-Nazi movements and the Ku Klux Klan—is also sinful; they corrupt individuals and corrode communities. None of these organizations have a place in a just society.”

In addressing racism, “to press forward without fear means ‘to walk humbly with God’ in rebuilding our relationships,

healing our communities, and working to shape our policies and institutions toward the good of all, as missionary disciples,” the pastoral says.

Asked about the prevalence of guns in American society, Bishop Fabre said, “I am a bishop in Louisiana,” adding with a chuckle, “where hunting is a sportsman’s paradise,” but “I don’t understand assault weapons. The [U.S.] bishops have stood against assault weapons, banning all assault weapons. They don’t have any hunting purpose. They just have one purpose. That is to kill.”

“I know people who hunt,” Bishop Fabre said, “but I don’t know anyone who uses an assault weapon.”

Two days before the El Paso shooting, Bishop Fabre and two other U.S. bishops issued a joint statement chiding the “divisive and disrespectful” language of President Donald J. Trump’s denigration of Baltimore—where Bishop Fabre had conducted a listening session in May on

racism in the Church—in a series of tweets that others had condemned as racist.

“Social media is used to fire things off without reflection or without conversation. I don’t necessarily like that, and I think most people would say they don’t like that,” Bishop Fabre said in an Aug. 7 telephone interview with Catholic News Service.

“I don’t think Twitter is the best way to fire off things, 134 characters or whatever it is, that deserve substantive ongoing discussions and conversation,” Bishop Fabre said. “I would hate to limit interaction on very important conversations. It has its place, but I am a believer in conversation and dialogue, and that takes time.”

Referring again to the Baltimore listening session—one in an ongoing series of listening sessions that started before the pastoral letter was approved—Bishop Fabre said those who have shared their experiences of

racism and listened to those stories are “building bridges” to counteract racism. “We have many, many challenges and many, many struggles, but I don’t think that hope is lifted up enough,” he added.

“I think that healing can continue from the encounter that has begun in the listening session. That is where I see hope myself,” he added. “I have seen it, I have experienced it, and I just know that there are people who are doing wonderful things out there who aren’t getting recognition for what they’ve accomplished.

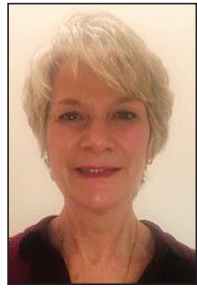
“If we have the kind of substantive discussions and encounters that we need to have,” Bishop Fabre said, “headlines that we see today will be a thing of the past.”

(The full text of the U.S. bishops’ pastoral on racism can be found online at bit.ly/2YUCbjE.) †

Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Teresa Venatta

Spiritual direction and the traditions of listening

Author Rachael Naomi Remen said, "Listening creates a holy silence. When you listen generously to people, they can hear truth in themselves, often for the first time. And in the silence of listening, you can know yourself in everyone. ... Listening is the oldest and perhaps the most powerful tool of healing."



As a spiritual director, this resonates with me. The ministry of spiritual direction is that of honoring a directee's life story in the "holy silence" of listening.

Through the loving accompaniment of a spiritual director, the directee can find the safe space to connect their unique journey with God's love and mercy.

The basic premise of spiritual direction is universal. However, there are several traditions that carve out certain niches in this ministry. The following are two noted traditions.

In the Benedictine tradition, a theological vision is rooted in the *Rule of St. Benedict*, and hospitality is viewed as a form of prayer and worship. The practice of hospitality in spiritual direction opens both the director and the directee up to receive God in unexpected ways when the director welcomes the directee as Christ.

When we let down the barriers of our

souls, an opening is created where God can enter. Exploring the call to continual conversion in our lives is part of the spiritual direction relationship—freeing the directee to be authentic and fully alive in embracing life as it is given.

We are fortunate to have two spiritual direction internship programs within our archdiocese to form spiritual directors in the Benedictine tradition (the Benedict Inn in Beech Grove and Saint Meinrad School of Theology in St. Meinrad). Most of our archdiocesan spiritual directors were formed in the Benedictine tradition.

In the Ignatian tradition, a theological vision is rooted in the spiritual exercises and is fundamentally optimistic. It affirms the world, but is also acutely aware to the problem of evil.

The exercises are a compilation of meditations, prayers and contemplative practices developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola to help people deepen their relationship with God—traditionally accompanied by a trained spiritual director.

Ignatian spiritual direction is a flexible partnership of mutual respect and openness. It is a space to uncover and explore the directee's deepest desires with the understanding that our most profound desires are shaped by the Holy Spirit and point toward new choices for spiritual growth and service.

Often the exercises are used in a time of personal discernment. They introduce

methods for identifying inner movements or stirrings, and provide space to reflect on where they come from and where they are leading.

Often Ignatian spirituality is summed up in the phrase, "Finding God in all things." Interestingly, this isn't found in Ignatius' writings but is something one of the early Jesuits recounted the saint saying.

Spiritual direction in the exercises is an opportunity for the directee to reflect on their life—to see where God is, as every moment is an invitation to experience God. We are also fortunate to have spiritual directors in the archdiocese who are formed in leading the spiritual exercises.

In both of these traditions, there is an understanding that something deep, mysterious and sacred is taking place in our lives right where we are. The more attentive we can become, the more we will see and hear it.

Spiritual direction provides the reflective space to discover and uncover God's presence in our lives. If spiritual direction has been something that you would like to explore, reach out and we will help you discern your options.

(Teresa Venatta is a spiritual director and discernment companion with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. She can be reached at spiritualdirection@archindy.org.) †

Amid the Fray/Greg Erlandson

A news junkie hits the beach

I know it's not just me.

More and more people are telling me that they just can't take the news anymore.



Like me, they find it overwhelmingly depressing. It raises our blood pressure. It leaves us discontented. It makes us feel hopeless.

A recent German study of news coverage

concluded that news organizations are more likely to repeat or pass along negative news than positive news. They must be doing this because it attracts an audience, but more than a few of us seem to be saying "enough is enough." The chronicle of disasters, offenses, tragedies, outrages and impending crises is sapping our spirits. The occasional heartwarming anecdote only serves to make the rest of the news even darker.

On the face of it, it seems almost masochistic to keep going back to the gloomy news well day after day. Yet with smartphone in hand and 24/7 cable, it feels irresponsible not to. Until we stop.

In my case, my decision to fast from daily morbid chronicles and "breaking news" was inspired by a family vacation and my children. Seeing something that maybe I wasn't, they all requested that I throttle back from the newspapers and radio and TV that were part of my daily news consumption. Not to mention my day job! I stopped social media too, since much of that is regurgitation of, or commentary on, various news events, or venomous bile masquerading as commentary.

I confess it was a bit hard at first, and I fell off the wagon a few times, sneaking a peek at my smartphone in the bathroom or checking in with Twitter. Pitiful, I know. But for the most part, I stuck to my mid-summer Lenten resolve.

And my reward for this sacrifice from headlines was some delightfully focused time with my kids and assorted significant others. I traded prose for poetry, and what a treat it was!

We had agreed to plant ourselves on a beach—an unusually stationary vacation plan for us. Every day we trotted down to the sand, tried to bodysurf some limp Atlantic Ocean waves, read books and played games. We all took turns cooking meals—one of the perks of having grown children—and we rediscovered a great blessing: How much we delighted in being together.

What we most enjoyed, I think, was doing nothing that would typically be classified as productive.

Europeans seem to get this. They generally have more vacation time than Americans, and they use it all, unlike us workaholic Yankees. We Americans act as if we are all indispensable or are afraid to confirm that we are not.

Europeans see vacations not as a luxury but as a right. I wonder if we see vacations as a temptation.

I'm just as American as the next guy, but this summer, doing nothing more ambitious than building a sandcastle seemed just about perfect. Watching an osprey circle overhead, catching the silvery flash of mullets leaping out of the water in a salt marsh, tracking a crab scuttling across hot sand or just listening to the rhythmic beat of the waves—it was all soul restoring.

The news never stopped, of course. Nor did the e-mails. Instead of digging sandcastles, now I'm digging out.

But I am grateful for the blessings of family, and I am trying to hold on to one important lesson I learned this summer. We spend so much time laboring and worrying, calculating and maneuvering that we can forget to just listen. Watch. Savor. And give thanks.

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

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

'Festival of Faiths' allows us to embrace diversity in our midst

It's good to be back from my July hiatus from this column! It's always good to have a "sabbath rest"!



The "Festival of Faiths" is coming again. The seventh annual celebration will be held on Sunday, Sept. 22, on the Veterans' Memorial Plaza in Indianapolis.

It begins at 1 p.m. and goes until 5 p.m. For the past six years, folks have allowed themselves an encounter with the religious diversity in central Indiana.

It is one thing to encounter it. It is another to embrace religious diversity.

"Embracing Religious Diversity" is the theme of this year's festival. But what is "embracing"?

One way to respond to this question is: How does our own religion respond to, and relate to, other religions? This would be our denominational response.

Another way to respond to this question would be more personal: How do we celebrate the diverse religious landscape in central Indiana?

As Roman Catholics, we have a checkered history in embracing in friendship other religions. Our history is littered with examples of intolerance, even violence.

This changed dramatically at the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). Spurred on by the "signs of the times," the Church saw World War II as a tipping point for humanity. Too many people died because of ethnic and religious hatreds. This was not the way of Christ.

Through the lens of the Gospel, St. Paul's writings and Old Testament texts, biblical scholars came to propose updated interpretations.

This led to a greater taking to heart the notion "that all may be one" (Jn 17:21), such as recognizing the faith of Abraham as a common foundation for Jews, Christians and Muslims, and the faith of the Canaanite woman—a non-Jew—begging Jesus to cure her daughter of a demon (Mt 15:21-28), to cite just a few examples.

From the council came four important documents to guide the Church in embracing religious diversity. They include:

- Nov. 21, 1964: "Decree on Ecumenism" ("*Unitatis Redintegratio*"), and the "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church" ("*Lumen Gentium*");
- Oct. 28, 1965: "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church with Non-Christian Religions" ("*Nostrae Aetate*");
- Dec. 7, 1965: "Declaration on Religious Freedom" ("*Dignitatis Humanae*").

These documents made it abundantly clear that the Church sees a relation between it and all people seeking God through faith.

If related, then we are to seek out that which is common to us in religious observance and its expression in daily living. We are to see the truth held therein. We are to build relationships, and we are to rejoice in this.

This is not a denial of humanity's salvation in Christ Jesus, and not a step which would have all religions equated or rolled into one (a notion known as "syncretism"). It is a seeking of the Spirit and where the Spirit blows. We are to rejoice in this.

Embracing the reality of religious diversity should not threaten our faith. It should help us to grow in our faith, even as we learn, ponder, admire and question the faith expressed in the diversity of religions which share our common home.

Come to the Veterans' Memorial Plaza for the Festival of Faiths. Visit the archdiocese's booths. See how the universal Church embraces diversity. And allow yourself to celebrate the diversity in our midst.

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

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

Reality checks help us live a more prudent and orderly life

"I have observed Satan falling like lightning from the sky" (Lk 10:18).

Jesus instructed the Twelve: "Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves" (Mt 10:16).



Avoiding being like Satan, who was expelled from heaven because of pride, and reminding the Twelve that they will be

vulnerable sheep are two of Christ's reality checks found in the New Testament. Just when we think discipleship is glorious, along comes one of Christ's zingers aimed at bringing his Apostles down to earth.

At first sight, Christ's reality checks seem frightful and cautionary: Do not

become proud or you will fall like Satan; being a shepherd is fraught with dangers. What deeper meaning is found in these reality checks? St. Thomas Aquinas gives us a profound understanding of them in his treatises on love and wisdom.

Among the qualities of love cited by St. Aquinas is fraternal correction, which at first look doesn't seem to fit with love's more heart-uplifting qualities such as mercy, peace, joy and beneficence.

And yet the goal of fraternal correction is extremely heartening: to help us live a more prudent, wise and orderly life. St. Isidore states that folly is the opposite of wisdom. Interestingly, "folly" is derived from the Old French word "*folie*," meaning madness or stupidity. Folly stops us from understanding the causes of the good life that advance our life for the better.

Christ's reality checks are not meant to frighten his disciples. Rather, they are meant to make them wise and prudent and are inspired by his love for them. Like a wise father who has a very good grasp of reality's pros and cons and who out of love for his children desires the best for their future, so too, is this Christ's love.

As I reflect on the fraternal correction I have received during my life and the times they brought me down to earth, I wonder about the degree of fraternal correction being practiced today in homes, schools, churches and businesses.

Fraternal correction is difficult to practice or to receive. And yet when it is offered, it gives us a shot of wisdom needed to enjoy a more orderly life.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, August 18, 2019

- Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10
- Hebrews 12:1-4
- Luke 12:49-53

The Book of Jeremiah is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend.

Jeremiah is regarded as one of the more important prophets.



Along with Isaiah and Ezekiel, Jeremiah is traditionally identified as a "major prophet."

Jeremiah was active as a prophet during the reign of King Josiah of Judah, or between 640 and 609 BC, some 2,600 years ago.

Generally, Josiah was seen as a good and upright king, loyal to God.

It is good to remember that kingship in the eyes of the devout ancient Hebrews was not a matter primarily of governing the country politically, or of conducting foreign affairs, or of commanding the military.

Instead, for the faithful, the king's responsibility, regardless of the person who was wearing the crown at any given time, was to see that the law of God was obeyed and that the people of the kingdom were aware and attentive to the covenant with God.

Very often, this expectation meant that prophets placed themselves in conflict with the powerful.

Jeremiah in this reading is certainly involving himself in controversy. He made enemies. Not everyone appreciated his demands for fidelity, above all else, to religious obligations. Indeed, enemies gathered to plot his death.

Despite the personal risk, however, ignoring the scheming of his enemies, Jeremiah spoke with utter determination that God deserved obedience. The covenant had to be honored.

The Epistle to the Hebrews provides the second reading.

Written for a Jewish audience, eloquent and even majestically so with strong references to Hebrew history and symbols, this epistle splendidly proclaims the Lord Jesus to be the Redeemer, the Lamb of God and the High Priest.

This passage from the epistle says that Jesus was shameless even when dying the ignoble death of crucifixion. Regardless of

the insults and scorn of others, Jesus rose to sit at the right hand of the Father in glory.

For its last reading on this weekend, the Church offers us a passage from St. Luke's Gospel.

Always in reading the Gospels, it is important to note that they were written not at the time of Jesus, but decades later. This Gospel, for instance, was probably written 40 years after Jesus' ascension to heaven.

By the time this Gospel was composed, hostility against Christians already was beginning to form in the Roman Empire. This hostility erupted into a full-fledged persecution. Even without legal persecution, the Christian ethic stood utterly opposite the prevailing culture. It was Christianity versus the culture.

The evangelist had to record in writing words spoken by Jesus to apply to conditions important to his audience.

This being the case, it is easy to see why the Gospel in this reading quotes Jesus as predicting that peace would not inevitably occur on Earth. Conflict was inevitable, as the attraction to sin was inevitable.

Humans have never automatically submitted themselves to God. The Lord's prediction was frank and direct.

Life for Christians would not be easy. Christians must be prepared to withstand many pressures to turn away from Christ.

Reflection

The Church is always inviting us to follow the Lord. Indeed, its most magnificent liturgical moments are in Holy Week when it tells us so brilliantly of the Lord's love for us, given in the Eucharist and on Calvary and of the Lord's identity as Son of God, affirmed by the resurrection.

Nevertheless, in inviting us to discipleship, the Church never leads us down a primrose path. It is honest.

It is straightforward in these readings. Following Christ may often require us to swim against the tide. Pushing us the other way will be the setting in which we live, people whom we love, or ourselves.

As with Jeremiah and Christ, we must withstand all that is contrary to God. †

Daily Readings

Monday, August 19

St. John Eudes, priest
Judges 2:11-19
Psalm 106:34-37, 39-30, 43ab-44
Matthew 19:16-22

Tuesday, August 20

St. Bernard, abbot and doctor of the Church
Judges 6:11-24a
Psalm 85:9, 11-14
Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday, August 21

St. Pius X, pope
Judges 9:6-15
Psalm 21:2-7
Matthew 20:1-16

Thursday, August 22

The Queenship of Mary
Judges 11:29-39a
Psalm 40:5, 7-10
Matthew 22:1-14

Friday, August 23

St. Rose of Lima, virgin
Ruth 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22
Psalm 146:5-10
Matthew 22:34-40

Saturday, August 24

St. Bartholomew, Apostle
Revelation 21:9b-14
Psalm 145:10-13ab, 17-18
John 1:45-51

Sunday, August 25

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 66:18-21
Psalm 117:1-2
Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13
Luke 13:22-30

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

While having reverence for Christ, Muslims deny his divinity

Q The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, quoting the document "*Lumen Gentium*" from the Second Vatican Council, says: "The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind's judge on the last day" (#841).



Does this imply that Muslims and Catholics have the same fundamental belief in Jesus as the Son of God, second person of the blessed Trinity and redeemer of the human race? As I recall, Muslims do not believe that Jesus died on the cross. (Iowa)

A Jesus is mentioned some 25 times in the Quran, the central religious text of Islam, with ample accounts of his birth and miracles. He is regarded by Muslims as the son of man, born of a virgin, a prophet sent by God with a privileged role and a special message for the human race.

So Christians and Muslims do have some common ideas about Jesus, but there are also stark and fundamental differences. To start with, Muslims do not accept that Christ was divine. He was instead, in their minds, a man created in time, neither Savior nor Son of God and certainly not "consubstantial with the Father." In fact, the Quran asks, "How could he [Allah] have a son?" (6:101). Muslims do not believe in original sin and therefore would see no need of a redeemer.

Moreover, as our writer points out, Muslims don't believe that Jesus died on the cross. For them, the cross was thought not to be fitting for someone like Christ, and so they teach that Jesus was spared a natural death and was instead assumed into heaven to return on the day of judgment.

Q Earlier this year, I saw a person at Mass take the host and proceed to dip it into the consecrated wine before consuming it. Is this acceptable? I had never seen it before. (Virginia)

A No. What you saw is not permissible—unless the one receiving Communion happened to be a priest concelebrating the Mass. The "General Instruction of the *Roman Missal*," which includes the Church's norms for the celebration of the Eucharist, does not allow for what you witnessed, which is called "intinction," but limits self-communicating to priest-concelebrants.

The directions for intinction for others indicates that "each communicant, holding a Communion plate under the mouth, approaches the priest. ... The priest takes a host, intincts it partly in the chalice and, showing it, says the body and blood of Christ," before placing the host in the communicant's mouth (#287).

The priests who are concelebrating, however, are permitted to dip the host into the precious blood and, holding a purificator under the mouth, self-communicate (#249). All of this is premised, of course, on the Church's reverence for the Eucharist, taking care that drops of the precious blood not be spilled.

In a 2002 document titled "Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds," the U.S. bishops highlighted this caution saying, "The communicant, including the extraordinary minister, is never allowed to self-communicate, even by means of intinction. Communion under either form, bread or wine, must always be given by an ordinary or extraordinary minister of holy Communion" (#50).

It should be noted that intinction is a rare practice in most parishes outside Eastern Catholic Churches.

(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

A Gift on the Feast of the Assumption

By Natalie Hoefler

I know a woman who has long had a devotion to the Blessed Mother. Time and again she sought Mary's intercession while raising her children, managing the budget and coping with everyday life.

And time and again she placed her prayers and trust in the lap of Mother Mary as her husband suffered through several bouts of cancer. Persistently through the years, she offered rosaries, tears and pleas to Our Lady of Love.

His final bout with cancer lasted seven long journeys around the sun. Not one of those days passed without her fingers sliding slowly, patiently over her rosary beads as she entrusted all to the Queen of Heaven. Her husband joined her as his conditioned worsened.

The woman, too, became physically worn and emotionally weary from the agony of seeing her husband suffer. He could not even smile at her during his

final year—his condition robbed him of the use of those facial muscles. It was late at night on Aug. 14 when the woman begged Mary Most Holy in prayer. "Please, Mary," she implored. "End my husband's misery. Tomorrow is the feast of your Assumption. Please take him with you to heaven." Then she fell asleep.

When she awoke after midnight on Aug. 15, she rose and walked to her husband's bedroom. She was astonished at what she saw. Her husband's face was alight and vibrant with joy, his eyes wide open and glistening. And he wore a broad, full-tooth smile that had been physically impossible for the last year.

His pain had left him, as had his soul. She knew then that Mary had given them a most profound gift: On the feast of her glorious Assumption, the Mother of Mercy cradled in her arms the love of this woman's life, carrying him with her on her glory-bound rise to Heaven.

(Natalie Hoefler is a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis and is a reporter for The Criterion.)

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.

FATH, Barbara G., 88, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Aug. 2. Mother of Donna Miller, Denise Quinnette, Kevin, Kyle, Scott and Steve Fath. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of 10.

FOOR, Robert G., 96, St. Joseph, Rockville, July 23. Father of Joan, Christopher, Douglas, John, Robert and Thomas. Grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather of several.

GAITHER, Donna J. (Cattin), 87, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Aug. 3. Mother of Cheryl, Donald, John, Michael, Thomas and William. Sister of Kay Martin. Stepsister of Gary and Terry Cattin. Grandmother of 22. Great-grandmother of 22.

GREENWOOD, Herman E., 77, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, July 24. Husband of Yolanda Greenwood. Father of Deanna Garner, Jason, Mark and Matthew Greenwood. Grandfather of four.

HUFFINE, Brian J., 55, Christ the King, Indianapolis, July 28. Husband of Cheryl Huffine. Father of Abbie Freytag, Lauren Rainwater and Holly Huffine. Brother of Laurie and Sally Breen, Amy Lezon, Joe, Matt, Nick, Rich and Steve Huffine. Grandfather of one.

JOHNSON, Pamela (Salvatore), 77, Christ the King, Indianapolis, May 31. Wife of Douglas Johnson. Mother of Genene Murphy. Sister of Flora Wilsker. Grandmother of two.

MUELLER, Pamala A., 73, Holy Cross, Indianapolis, July 23. Mother of Greta Johnson and Olin Tygum. Sister of Wanda Lekies and Carla Soderberg. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of two. Step-grandmother of seven.

PANGALLO, Jan M., 55, St. Jude, Indianapolis, July 29. Mother of Alyssa Barnekow and Jenna Johnson. Daughter of Judy List. Sister of Julie Warweg, Jeff and Jim List. Grandmother of four.

ROCCHIO, Sharon S., 69, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), July 16. Wife of Pasquale Rocchio. Mother of Anna Tait, Francesco, Michael and Nicholas Rocchio. Sister of Jill Ellis and Charlene Schmidt. Grandmother of eight.

SARTINI, Eugene A., 88, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, Aug. 3. Father of Toni Sartini Schmidt, Gino, Jr., Joe and Nick Sartini. Stepfather of Shelly and Billy. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of eight.

SCHULTZ, Alvin J., 85, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, July 31. Father of Marie Marks and James Schultz. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of three.

SWEETANA, Andrew, Jr., 89, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, July 31. Husband of Constance Sweetana. Father of Susan Armstead, Andrea McCampbell and Stephanie Sweetana. Brother of Stanley Sweetana.

TEMPEL, Jerome, 67, St. Paul, Tell City, July 27. Husband of Linda Tempel. Father of Dawn Kelley, Carrie and Jeremy Tempel. Brother of Sherri Wigginton, Dan, Greg, Pat and Terry Tempel. Grandfather of six.



The beauty of God's creation

A butterfly lands on a xenia flower in a garden in rural Decatur County on Aug. 3. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

ZINSER, James A., 84, All Saints, Dearborn County, July 30. Husband of Marlene Zinser. Father of Marilyn Hountz, Luann Konradi, Daniel and Ronald Zinser. Brother of Joyce Rush and Bob Zinser. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of three. †

Franciscan Sister Mary Ann Miles served as an organist, in music education for decades

Franciscan Sister Mary Ann Miles, formerly Sister Hobart, died on Aug. 5 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 92.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 8 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Mary Ann was born on April 29, 1927, in Cincinnati. She entered the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 8, 1945, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1951. Sister Mary Ann earned a bachelor's degree in music at Marian University in Indianapolis and a master's degree in music at the Jordan College of Music at Butler University, also in Indianapolis.

During 74 years as a Sister of St. Francis,

Sister Mary Ann ministered as a music educator for 50 years in Catholic schools in Indiana and Ohio. She also served as an organist in her various assignments and at the motherhouse for 65 years.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Ann served at St. Louis School in Batesville from 1947-50, and in Indianapolis at the former Holy Trinity School from 1954-59 and at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School from 1959-63. She ministered at the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg from 1968-73 and 1982-97. She served as a communications clerk at the motherhouse from 1991-2012, at which time she retired from ministry.

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

Helen Staublin, 89, mother of Father Daniel Staublin, died on Aug. 5

Helen R. (Kocher) Staublin, the mother of Father Daniel Staublin, pastor of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour, died on Aug. 5 at IU Health Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. She was 89.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 12 at St. Ambrose Church in Seymour. Burial followed St. Ambrose Cemetery in Seymour.

Staublin was born on Jan. 2, 1930, in Harrison, the daughter of Fred and Rose Kocher. At the time of her death, she was a member of St. Ambrose Parish. Previously, she

was a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.

Staublin is survived by her husband William Staublin; her children Nancy Morgan of Glasgow, Ky., Jenny O'Bryan of Mason, Ohio, Julie Settle of Columbus, Father Daniel Staublin, David Staublin of Elizabethtown and Tony Staublin of Scipio, Ind.; nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Ambrose Parish, 325 S. Chestnut Street, Seymour, IN 47274-2329. †

Providence Sister Barbara Ann Zeller began ministries for the elderly in New Albany Deanery

Providence Sister Barbara Ann Zeller, formerly Sister Dorothy Jean, died on Aug. 1 at a convent in Georgetown. She was 73.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 6 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Barbara Ann was born on Sept. 18, 1945, in Evansville, Ind. She entered the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Sept. 12, 1963, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1974.

Sister Barbara Ann earned a bachelor's degree at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods and a master's degree at North Texas State University in Denton, Texas.

During her 56 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Barbara Ann ministered briefly in Catholic education before dedicating herself to ministry to the elderly.

In the archdiocese, she served at her community's motherhouse as director of retirement from 1971-75, the administrator of its infirmary in 1976, and director of gerontology and executive director of Maryvale

Apartments, subsidized housing near the motherhouse, from 1979-81. Sister Barbara Ann ministered as an administrative assistant for archdiocesan social ministries from 1976-78.

Beginning in 1982, Sister Barbara Ann served as administrator of Providence Retirement Home in New Albany. That ministry continued until 1994. A year later, she founded Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries, which began as a home for foster children. It later expanded to include an array of ministries in nearby Georgetown: the Villas of Guerin Woods, a retirement facility, subsidized housing at the Meadows of Guerin and Guerin Woods, a reunification program for mothers and children. She was serving as the president and CEO of Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries at the time of her death.

Sister Barbara is survived by two sisters, Marilyn Lankford of Evansville and Pam Reine of Indianapolis, and a brother, Bruce Zeller of Carmel, Ind.

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. †

Rita Fritsch, 95, mother of Father Michael Fritsch, died on Aug. 6

Rita (Deal) Fritsch, the mother of Father Michael Fritsch, pastor of Mary, Queen of Peace Parish in Danville, died on Aug. 6 at Union Hospital in Terre Haute. She was 95.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Aug. 10 at Annunciation Church in Brazil. Burial followed at Clearview Cemetery, also in Brazil.

Fritsch was born on Nov. 28, 1923, in Brazil. A lifelong member of Annunciation Parish, she was a 1942 graduate of Brazil High School. Fritsch worked in Indianapolis for the Indiana State Highway Department, the national headquarters of the American Legion

and the Indiana Department of Forestry.

It was in her work as secretary in the last of these jobs that she met her future husband, Lee Fritsch. The two were married on Jan. 23, 1954, and eventually had two children, their sons Donald Fritsch of Brazil, and Father Fritsch, both of whom survive. Lee Fritsch died on April 29, 2003.

Fritsch enjoyed going out dancing with her husband and cooking, especially holiday treats and candies she offered to family and friends. She and her late sister, Providence Sister Dorothy Deal, loved traveling as a pair, taking more than 30 trips together. †

Vatican officials among Church leaders at Medjugorje youth festival

WARSAW, Poland (CNS)—Senior Vatican representatives joined the first officially approved Church festival at Medjugorje, three months after Catholic pilgrimages to the site in Bosnia-Herzegovina were authorized by the pope.

“We are called to share the difficulties of our contemporaries, and we have a responsibility to care for them,” Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for New Evangelization, told 60,000 young people from 97 countries on Aug. 5.

“For something to happen, we have to offer something: our poverty, our misery, our borders, our contradictions. But God will change all that because God works miracles,” he said during the final evening of Mladifest, or Youth Festival.

Cardinal Angelo De Donatis, papal vicar of the Rome Diocese, formally opened the event on Aug. 2. Fourteen archbishops and bishops and about 700 Catholic priests joined the festivities, which concluded on Aug. 6.

Meanwhile, the pope’s apostolic visitor to Medjugorje, Archbishop Henryk Hoser, who presided over the festival on Aug. 3, said the hilltop shrine had become “a place of meeting and knowing,” adding that “the secret of Medjugorje” was “an invisible reality, but intense and very present.”

More than 40,000 apparitions have been claimed over 38 years at Medjugorje, where six teenagers reported first seeing an apparition of Mary on June 24, 1981, while herding sheep.

Some of the visionaries say Mary still appears to them daily with messages at the town, which was largely untouched by the 1992 to 1995 civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In May 2018, Pope Francis named Archbishop Hoser as apostolic visitor after a papal commission recommended that Medjugorje, which attracts up to 3 million



The sun sets behind a statue of Mary on Apparition Hill in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, in this Feb. 26, 2011, file photo. Senior Vatican representatives joined dozens of bishops and hundreds of priests at the first officially approved Church youth festival at the site on Aug. 2-6, three months after Catholic pilgrimages were authorized by the pope. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

visitors annually, be designated a pontifical shrine with Vatican oversight.

A ban on pilgrimages organized by Catholic dioceses and parishes was lifted under a papal decree on May 12, making possible the five-day festival.

Archbishop Jose Rodriguez Carballo, secretary of the Congregation for Institutions of Consecrated Life, said in an Aug. 2 address that the young pilgrims were “in deep unity” with the pope and grateful to him for “opening up the possibility of coming to pray here.”

Radio Medjugorje reported on Aug. 5 that parts of the festival had been watched

via the Internet by more than 2.8 million people worldwide.

Speaking at an Aug. 2 press conference, Archbishop Hoser said the pope had “opened a great door to enter Medjugorje” with his May decree, adding that he was “personally and intimately convinced” the Marian center offered “a model for new evangelization.”

He said Medjugorje should be seen as “a living, dynamic reality,” with more than 700 vocations so far recorded there, adding that the center’s importance was summed up “by the people coming here, praying here, being transformed here

and returning to their countries with the Gospel spirit they breathed here.”

“The Holy See’s position has crystallized clearly and has two aspects: the pastoral aspect, which is fully accepted, and the doctrinal aspect, meaning study of the apparitions,” he told KAI, Poland’s Catholic information agency.

“The fact apparitions are still continuing is the main obstacle to a final ruling, since it’s hard to decide on something which hasn’t finished. For now, the question of recognizing the authenticity of the apparitions remains in the hands of the Secretariat of State.” †

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Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality Business Manager

Seeking a part-time candidate for a business manager. Applicants must be experienced in all areas of accounting, bookkeeping, financial analysis, payroll processing and will supervise one direct report. The candidate should be proficient in Microsoft excel and word, and the Sage Accounting program. This candidate should have an BS in accounting and MBA or equivalent and 5+ years of experience. A good communicator is a plus as he/she will report directly to the Director of Retreats. Please send resume to:

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality

Attn. Br. Randy Kin OFM Conv.

101 St. Anthony Drive, Mt. St. Francis, IN 47146

Or email to: retreatdir@mountsaintfrancis.org

Attn: Br. Randy Kin OFM, Conv.

Employment

Director, Major Giving and Planned Gifts

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Director of Major Giving and Planned Gifts to oversee and execute a fundraising strategy focused on growing major gifts and planned gifts for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and its parishes, schools and agencies.

While managing a personal portfolio of donors, the Director will also lead a team of individuals who are committed to growing donor engagement and securing financial resources for ministry needs.

Applicants should be professed and practicing Roman Catholics with a deep appreciation for and understanding of the Catholic faith and a passion for supporting the ministry of the Church through endowments and planned giving. Excellent oral and written communications skills, including the ability to interact effectively with current and prospective donors as a representative of the archdiocese are essential. In addition, strong organizational ability, and project management skills are required. The position also requires the ability to lead others effectively and act in accordance with the code of ethics promulgated by the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

A master’s degree, CFRE, or equivalent experience in not-for-profit management, business administration, philanthropy or related field is preferred. At least five years of professional experience in positions of significant responsibility within the Church or other service-oriented institutions, preferably involving fundraising, endowments, and planned giving is required. Prior experience with Blackbaud Razor’s Edge management software is preferred.

Please e-mail cover letter, resumé, and list of references, in confidence, to:

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Bishop Chatard High School Coordinator of Special Events & Alumni Relations

The coordinator of special events and alumni relations for Bishop Chatard High School advances the mission of the school through developing relationships with all alumni and facilitating the production of all special events. As a collaborative member of the advancement team at Bishop Chatard, the coordinator of special events & alumni relations will be responsible for the organization, implementation and execution of all appropriate logistics for Bishop Chatard fundraising and alumni-related events, including the Annual Fund dinner and Chatard-a-Bratton. The coordinator of special events and alumni relations, in collaboration with the advancement team, will be responsible for the organization, implementation and execution of the school’s alumni program, including but not limited to, working with the high school’s alumni board, basketball league, class reunion chairs and submitting information for the institution’s monthly alumni newsletter.

Desired qualifications:

The ideal candidate will have a college degree, be a practicing Catholic, have at least three years of experience working with alumni and/or special events, be an alumnus/alumna of Bishop Chatard, be proficient in basic Mac software platforms, possess outstanding relationship building and communication skills, and have experience in database management.

To apply:

Interested candidates are asked to submit a resumé, cover letter and references by September 3 to Director of Development Margaret Ruffing. Professional information may be emailed to mruffing@bishopchatard.org or mailed to Margaret Ruffing, Bishop Chatard High School, 5885 Crittenden Ave., Indianapolis IN 46220. Visit www.BishopChatard.org/about/employment to view the full job description.



Cornerstone laid in Yorkville

A cornerstone is laid for the new St. Martin Church in Yorkville in this photo from 1914. The parish school (now closed), with its bell tower, can be seen in the background. The former St. Martin Parish was founded in 1850 and is now part of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County. The church, which was constructed more than a century ago, is still in use.

(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.)

Science project sparked Colorado girl's water plan for town in Kenya

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In 2014, a science project sparked the compassion of a 10-year-old girl from Colorado. So, she set out on a walk that would change the lives of an entire town of people in Kenya.

From that auspicious day in 2014 to the present, Jennifer Stuckenschneider, partnering with Unbound, raised more than \$16,000 to build pumps and sanitary outhouses and latrines in Kenya, Honduras, India and Uganda.

Jennifer was in the midst of a Catholic school science project studying microorganisms through a microscope, when the thought popped into her head. She wondered about her Unbound pen pal, Rose, who lived in Kenya. She knew Rose had to walk a long way from her home to collect water for her whole family.

Jennifer wondered if Rose's water was clean, or contaminated with the microorganisms that she was seeing through her microscope.

Once her imagination was ignited, Jennifer couldn't stop thinking about Rose and her water. She wondered how it would feel to carry water long distances.

So, she tried it out. Filling up an empty milk carton, Jennifer began toting it

around town with her, provoking all sorts of questions and the itching curiosity of her fellow 10-year-olds. They absolutely had to try it too.

In that moment, Walking for Water was born. Four hundred people attended that first walk in September of 2014, and Jennifer raised enough money to install a pump for Rose and her family.

"I thank Jennifer for bringing us water so that I save on time after school. I do my washing and I have enough time for my studies," Rose said. "I would also request her to visit us, for me to see her."

Rose, now 12, is studying to be a surgeon one day.

But Jennifer discovered in her continued correspondence with Rose, that the Walk for Water didn't help just her pen pal.

Rose's mother, Rebecca Kagendi, said that other people from their village who were not able to walk 5 kilometers to the nearest well also used Rose's water.

"They wrote this one letter when they talked about how it helped the people in the community as well," Jennifer told Catholic News Service, "and I wanted to help more people."

Then, Jennifer's philanthropic endeavors began on a large scale. Now 16, Jennifer partners with Unbound and raised \$3,200 to build 32 water tanks in Honduras.

The next year she raised \$5,000, which Unbound used to build latrines in Kampala, Uganda, and last year she continued to raise funds and put three wells and a fan in a school in India.

Most of the money comes from donations and T-shirt and water bottle sales, which Jennifer, a budding artist, designs herself. Jennifer still holds a Walk for Water every September at Colorado Mesa University to raise awareness for the cause. Mesa Catholic campus ministry helps sponsor the event.

Founded by lay Catholics, Unbound is based in Kansas City, Kan., and serves the world's poor through a sponsorship program.

(To donate, visit Jennifer's website: <https://stuck101.wixsite.com/walkforwater>. More information about Unbound can be found at www.unbound.org.) †



Rose lives in rural north-central Kenya and is part of the Unbound project in Meru. From 2014 to the present, Jennifer Stuckenschneider of Colorado, partnering with Unbound, raised more than \$16,000 to build pumps and sanitary outhouses and latrines in Kenya, Honduras, India and Uganda.

(CNS photo/Nickson Ateku, courtesy Unbound)



Pope Francis greets children who rode in the popemobile during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on June 26. The Wednesday general audience offers the pope the opportunity to help people understand the fundamental teachings and beliefs of the Catholic faith. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Pope's general audience talks cover fundamentals of Catholic faith

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Wednesday general audience offers the pope the opportunity to help people understand the fundamental teachings and beliefs of the Catholic faith.

Usually given in a clear and simple style, each catechesis is often part of a longer series of talks dedicated to a major theme, which together form a deep, detailed overview of basic tenets or can offer a more analytical commentary and examination of Catholic teaching.

After a monthlong hiatus for the summer, Pope Francis returned with his weekly reflections on Aug. 7, marking his 280th catechesis in his six years as pope.

Following the tradition of his predecessors, Pope Francis has used the weekly gathering to get back to basics.

In fact, he continued a yearlong series started by Pope Benedict XVI on core Catholic beliefs for the Year of Faith just as Pope Benedict similarly continued the series St. John Paul II had begun before his death on the Psalms and Canticles of Vespers.

The Wednesday general audience talk represents "an important weekly appointment" and, together with the pope's other reflections before the Sunday *Angelus* or in his daily homilies, "they represent the spiritual heart of his Petrine ministry," Vatican News said on Aug. 6.

It suggested people go back and read or listen to the complete texts, utilizing official Vatican sources at w2.vatican.va or www.youtube.com/user/vatican, in order to know "what Francis says, beyond certain media adaptations that only amplify certain subjects."

Elected just before Holy Week, Pope Francis dedicated his first catechesis in 2013 to Jesus' journey from the cross to his resurrection, and how following Jesus means having to "come out of ourselves in order to go to meet others, to go towards the outskirts of existence, to be the first to take a step toward our brothers and our sisters" just as God did "to come among us."

Right after, the pope picked up where the retired pope left off with catechesis for the Year of Faith, with multiple series on the Creed and the nature and mystery of the Church.

In 2014, he continued his reflections for the Year of Faith with a series on the sacraments, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and again, on the nature of the Church, recalling Pope Benedict's description of the Church "as an ecclesial 'we'" because there is no "do it yourself" or "free agents" who only worry about their own relationship with Jesus "outside the communion and mediation of the Church. These are dangerous and harmful temptations," Pope Francis said.

With a synod of bishops on the family in 2014 and in 2016, the pope dedicated 33 talks during 2015 with a catechesis on the family. Introducing the series at his general audience on Dec. 10, 2014, he said no speech at the synod "called into question the fundamental truths of the sacrament of marriage, namely:

indissolubility, unity, fidelity and openness to life." His audience talks also reflected on God's plan for families and the real challenges they face.

He introduced a new series of 38 talks on mercy in 2016 for the Year of Mercy and, during Advent, ushered in a lengthy series on the nature of Christian hope that continued into 2017.

Christians are powerful witnesses to hope "each time we take the side of the least and of the marginalized, or do not respond to evil with evil, but rather with forgiveness, without vengeance, forgiving and blessing—each time we do this—we shine forth as living and bright signs of hope, thus becoming instruments of solace and of peace, according to God's heart. Thus, let us go forth with kindness, meekness, being amiable and doing good, even to those who do not love us or who hurt us," he said on April 5, 2017.

On Nov. 8, 2017, he began a series of talks on the Mass, saying it was "fundamental that we Christians clearly understand the value and significance of the Holy Mass, in order to live ever more fully our relationship with God."

"Although we are the ones who stand in procession to receive Communion," he said in his catechesis on March 21, 2018, "in reality it is Christ who comes toward us to assimilate us in him. There is an encounter with Jesus! To nourish oneself of the Eucharist means to allow oneself to be changed by what we receive."

"As it unites us to Christ, tearing us away from our selfishness, Communion opens us and unites us to all those who are a single thing in him. This is the wonder of Communion: we become what we receive!" he said.

The Easter season of 2018 saw the start of a series of reflections returning to the sacraments, but focusing specifically on baptism and confirmation.

This was followed in June by the start of a series on the Ten Commandments and Jesus' reminder that he has come "not to abolish [the law or the prophets] but to fulfil them" (Mt 5:17).

During Advent in 2018, Pope Francis started a series on the Lord's Prayer, saying "even if we may have been praying for many years, we still have to learn! Man's prayer, this yearning which arises so naturally from his soul, is perhaps one of the deepest mysteries of the universe."

On May 29, 2019, he began his reflections on the Acts of the Apostles, saying it speaks about the journey of the Gospel in the world, showing "the marvelous bond between the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, who inaugurates the time of evangelization."

The week before his last general audience on June 26, 2019, Pope Francis referred to Pope Benedict, as he often does, saying "The Spirit works through divine attraction: God captivates us with his love and thus engages us, in order to move history and set in motion the processes through which new life seeps in." †