



The

# Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



## Twenty Something

How Grandma made her life a work of art, page 12.

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*'To be known,  
to be loved'*

As the director of the Young Adult Initiative program of Saint Meinrad's Center for Youth and Young Adult Evangelization, 29-year-old Cassie Schutzer leads an effort that hopes to create bridges between young adults and parishes across the country. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

## Leader of effort to connect young adults and parishes finds hope in encounters with Christ

By John Shaughnessy

Cassie Schutzer smiles when she thinks about the unexpected changes that happened in the lives of the four young adults.

All four were part of the Young Adult Initiative program that the 29-year-old Schutzer had planned on the grounds of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad—a weekend gathering in which young adults from across the Midwest and the South came together to learn better ways of connecting young adults to their parishes.

Schutzer had arranged a weekend filled with activities, community prayer and small-group interactions. Yet, she believes God had more personal plans for the four individuals

who were a part of the larger group last November.

By the end of the weekend, a young man and a young woman became engaged to each other. Another young man said that weekend was the first time he felt a sense of belonging. And a third young man felt drawn to consider a religious vocation.

"These moments were a confirmation that the weekend achieved what we were hoping for—creating a space for encounter with the Lord and one another," says Schutzer, the director of the Young Adult Initiative, a program of Saint Meinrad's Center for Youth and Young Adult Evangelization.

"Sometimes we spin our wheels trying to plan perfect

See **YOUNG ADULTS**, page 8

## Pope prays that Easter joy will break through gloom of sin, war, strife

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—On a bright spring morning, Pope Francis prayed that Christians would experience the joy of Easter and allow Christ's resurrection to be "the light that illumines the darkness and the gloom in which, all too often, our world finds itself enveloped."



Pope Francis

"In Jesus, the decisive passage of humanity has been made: the passage from death to life, from sin to grace,

from fear to confidence, from desolation to communion," the pope said on April 9 after celebrating the Easter morning Mass in St. Peter's Square.

In his Easter message, Pope Francis prayed for an end to the war in Ukraine and remembered Christians celebrating Easter "in particular circumstances," specifically mentioning Nicaragua, where the government has imposed restrictions on public celebrations, has deported dozens of priests and has imprisoned Bishop Rolando Álvarez of Matagalpa.

As is traditional, Pope Francis did not give a homily during the morning Mass but bowed his head and observed several minutes of silent reflection after the chanting of the Gospel in both Latin and Greek.

Marking the 38th year they have provided the Easter flowers for St. Peter's Square, Dutch flower growers sent 38,000 blooming bulbs—tulips, daffodils and hyacinths—to the Vatican. The floral gift, arranged in the square by Dutch and Vatican workers, also featured 6,000 Avalanche roses, as well as hundreds of anthurium, delphinium and chrysanthemums. Flowering azaleas, ivy and celosia completed the Easter garden set up on the steps leading to the basilica, the area around the altar and the balcony of the church.

See **EASTER**, page 2

## Archdiocesan Catholics are empowered for mission at annual chrism Mass

By Sean Gallagher

The annual archdiocesan chrism Mass brings together Catholics from across central and southern Indiana.

Lay Catholics representing most of the 125 archdiocesan parishes, members of religious communities serving in the archdiocese, as well as deacons, seminarians and priests all gathered with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson on April 4, Tuesday of Holy Week, in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis for this year's liturgy.

During the Mass, more than 150 priests serving in the archdiocese renewed their ordination promises.

See **CHRISM MASS**, page 10

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson ritually breathes into chrism oil on April 4, Tuesday of Holy Week, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass. Assisting at the Mass are transitional Deacon Jose Neri, left, and seminarian Samuel Hansen. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



# EASTER

continued from page 1

Some 45,000 people were present in the square for the morning Mass, the Vatican said, and by noon there were close to 100,000 people inside and outside the square for the pope's Easter message and blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world).

U.S. Cardinal James M. Harvey, archpriest of Rome's Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, stood alongside Pope Francis on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica for the blessing, announcing a plenary indulgence available for everyone present, listening by radio or watching on television or following with "other means of communication."

Wishing everyone a happy Easter, Pope Francis prayed that the day would mark "a passage from affliction to consolation" for all, especially "the sick and the poor, the elderly and those experiencing moments of trial and weariness."

"We are not alone: Jesus, the living one, is with us forever," he said. "Let the Church and the world rejoice, for today our hopes no longer come up against the wall of death, for the Lord has built us a bridge to life."

"Yes, brothers and sisters, at Easter the destiny of the world was changed," he said, "and on this day, which also coincides with the most probable date of Christ's resurrection, we can rejoice to celebrate, by pure grace, the most important and beautiful day of history."

Pope Francis noted how the various Gospel accounts of Easter mention Jesus' followers rushing or going in haste to share the news of his resurrection, spurred on by joy and renewed in hope.

"At Easter, then, the journey quickens and becomes a race, since humanity now

sees the goal of its journey, the meaning of its destiny, Jesus Christ, and is called to make haste to meet him, who is the hope of the world," the pope said.

He prayed that all people would "make haste to progress on a journey of reciprocal trust: trust among individuals, peoples and nations," overcoming conflicts and divisions and opening their hearts to those in need.

"Let us hasten to pursue paths of peace and fraternity," he said.

"Help the beloved Ukrainian people on their journey toward peace and shed the light of Easter upon the people of Russia," the pope prayed. "Comfort the wounded and all those who have lost loved ones because of the war, and grant that prisoners may return safe and sound to their families."

"On this day, Lord, we entrust to you the city of Jerusalem, the first witness of your resurrection," he continued, adding to his prepared text his "deep concern" about the attacks that had taken place in the Holy Land in the previous few days, leading to deaths, injuries and an increase of tensions.

The attacks, he said, make it difficult to resume "dialogue, in a climate of trust and reciprocal respect, between Israelis and Palestinians, so that peace may reign in the Holy City and in the entire region."

The pope also offered special prayers for Syria, Lebanon, Haiti, Tunisia, Congo, Myanmar and other nations experiencing hardship and unrest.

He prayed that God would "comfort refugees, deportees, political prisoners and migrants, especially those who are most vulnerable, as well as the victims of hunger, poverty and the dire effects of the drug trade, human trafficking and all other forms of slavery."

"Lord," he continued, "inspire the leaders of nations to ensure that no man



## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

April 15-23, 2023

**April 15 – 10 a.m. CST**

Diaconate ordinations at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church, St. Meinrad

**April 16 – 10 a.m.**

Disabilities Awareness Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral followed by reception at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

**April 18 – Noon**

Annual Catholic Center Employee Recognition Celebration at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, followed by lunch at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**April 18 – 5:30 p.m.**

Marian University Annual Clayton Family Circle of Honor Gala at Marian University, Indianapolis

**April 19 – 10 a.m.**

Department Heads meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**April 20 – 9:30 a.m.**

Catholic Center department gathering at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**April 20 – 3:30 p.m.**

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

**April 20 – 5:30 p.m.**

St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities Gala at Galt House, Louisville

**April 21 – 2 p.m.**

Virtual National Eucharistic Revival Congress Board meeting

**April 22 – Noon**

Indiana State Circle of the Daughters of Isabella lunch at The Seasons Lodge, Nashville

**April 23 – 12:30 p.m.**

Confirmation for youths of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Bedford; Our Lady of the Springs Parish, French Lick; and Our Lord Jesus Christ the King Parish, Paoli, at St. Vincent de Paul Church

**April 23 – 5 p.m.**

Confirmation for youths of St. John the Apostle, St. Paul Catholic Center and St. Charles Borromeo parishes, Bloomington, at St. Charles Borromeo Church

or woman may encounter discrimination and be violated in his or her dignity; that in full respect for human rights and democracy these social wounds may be healed; that the common

good of the citizenry may be pursued always and solely; and that security and the conditions needed for dialogue and peaceful coexistence may be guaranteed." †

## Open house for St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic School in Indianapolis set for April 23

### Criterion staff report

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic School, 4050 E. 38th St., in Indianapolis, is hosting an open house from noon-2 p.m. on Sunday, April 23. All families interested in enrolling their children or learning more are invited to attend. Tours will be provided in English and Spanish.

St. Andrew School will join three other Indianapolis Catholic schools in forming the archdiocesan Mother Theodore Catholic Academies (MTCA): Central Catholic School, Holy Angels School and St. Philip Neri School.

"MTCA lives the mission of the Catholic Church by teaching, serving

and forming students in the heart of Indianapolis. St. Andrew will embrace this mission," says St. Andrew principal Kacy Naab. "Daily life at St. Andrew will be wrapped in the Catholic Gospel values that will motivate students to become the best versions of themselves. Our school will be dedicated to forming the whole child: spiritually,

academically, socially and emotionally."

St. Andrew is currently enrolling students from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, according to Ronda Swartz, executive director of MTCA.

(For more information about St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic School, call 317-832-4980.) †

## La jornada de puertas abiertas de la escuela St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic School de Indianápolis se celebrará el 23 de abril

### Reportaje del personal del The Criterion

La escuela Andrew the Apostle Catholic School, ubicada en 4050 E. 38th St., en Indianápolis, organizará una jornada de puertas abiertas de 12 a 2 p.m. el domingo 23 de abril. Todas las familias interesadas en inscribir a sus hijos o en obtener más información están invitadas a asistir. Se realizarán visitas guiadas en

inglés y en español.

La escuela St. Andrew se unirá a otras tres escuelas católicas de Indianápolis para formar las academias católicas Madre Theodore (MTCA), a la que pertenecerán además Central Catholic School, Holy Angels School y St. Philip Neri School.

"MTCA vive la misión de la Iglesia Católica al enseñar, servir y

formar estudiantes en el corazón de Indianápolis. St. Andrew acogerá esta misión," afirma Kacy Naab, directora de St. Andrew. "La vida diaria en St. Andrew estará envuelta en los valores del Evangelio católico que motivarán a los alumnos a convertirse en la mejor versión de sí mismos. Nuestra escuela se dedicará a formar al niño de manera integral: en lo espiritual, lo académico,

lo social y lo emocional."

En este momento, St. Andrew recibe inscripciones de alumnos desde preescolar hasta octavo grado, según Ronda Swartz, directora ejecutiva de MTCA.

(Para obtener más información sobre St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic School, llame al 317-832-4980.) †



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# Archbishop Fabre, Kentucky governor call for prayer as Louisville mourns mass shooting ‘in the shadow of the cross’

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (OSV News)—Amid calls for prayer and praise for first responders, officials confirmed that four people were killed in an April 10 mass shooting, on Easter Monday morning, in a downtown bank in Louisville, Ky.

According to the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD), at least nine people were injured, including two officers, during the shooting at the Old National Bank, 333 E. Main St.

The shooter, identified by police as Connor Sturgeon, a 25-year old bank employee with a finance degree and no known criminal record, died at the scene after exchanging gunfire with police who arrived within three minutes of the attack’s start. Sturgeon was reportedly armed with an AR-15-style semi-automatic rifle, and livestreamed the slaughter over Instagram.

“My heart is heavy as we learn about another mass shooting, now in our own Louisville community,” Louisville Archbishop Shelton J. Fabre said in a statement provided to *The Record*, the weekly newspaper of the Archdiocese of Louisville, reminding the faithful that amid Easter joy, the cross remains. “Even with our Easter hope so recently renewed, we have been quickly reminded that we still live in the shadow of the cross, the cross of senseless violence.

“For now, please join with me in praying for those who have died and for those who have been injured and for their families,” he said. “Let us also pray for all in our community as we deal with this tragedy.”

LMPD has identified those killed in the shooting as Joshua Barrick, Thomas Elliot, Juliana Farmer and James Tutt. The victims’ ages ranged between 40 and 64 years old. Officer Nickolas Wilt, 26, who graduated from the police academy on March 31, was shot in the head and is

in critical condition, the department said.

Prayer also headlined comments made by Mayor Craig Greenberg and Gov. Andy Beshear, who appeared at a press conference near the scene soon after the incident.

The mayor, who survived a shooting in his campaign offices last year, asked the community to pray for victims of the latest shooting and to work together to prevent gun violence. He also gave thanks for the efforts of “brave and heroic first responders.”

“Without a doubt, their actions saved lives,” he said.

LMPD Deputy Chief Paul Humphrey said during the press conference that officers who arrived at the scene exchanged gunfire with the shooter. It was unclear whether law enforcement killed the suspected shooter or if death was due to a self-inflicted wound, he said, adding that the cause will be part of the investigation.

Heavy with emotion, Gov. Beshear echoed calls to prayer and praise for law enforcement, “the brave heroes of LMPD” and others who responded.

“Their efforts saved lives and put their own on the line,” he said, noting that the FBI, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Department of Homeland Security and Kentucky State Police were among those on the scene.

Gov. Beshear said the shooting affected him personally.

“This is awful. I have a very close friend that didn’t make it today and another at the hospital,” he said.

Gov. Beshear noted his attorney general’s campaign offices were located in the Old National Bank building. “When we talk about praying, I hope that we will.”

He encouraged the community to “wrap our arms around these families” affected by the shooting and urged them to seek help if needed.



Police deploy at the scene of a mass shooting near Slugger Field baseball stadium in downtown Louisville, Ky., on April, 10. A gunman opened fire at a bank in downtown Louisville that morning, killing at least four people and sending nine to the hospital before he died by gunfire at the scene, Louisville Metro Police Deputy Chief Paul Humphrey said. (OSV News photo/Michael Clevenger, USA Today Network via Reuters)

The governor also reiterated his gratitude to LMPD, which was recently rebuked by federal investigators in a review of its practices.

“We saw the very best from them today,” he said. †

## Pope Francis tells young inmates Jesus wants to save us each of us

ROME (CNS)—Jesus never abandons anyone; he has come to save, serve and accompany everyone, Pope Francis told young inmates.

“If we listened to these [lessons] from Jesus, life would be so wonderful because we would rush to help one another instead of ripping off each other, taking advantage of each other like wise guys teach us,” he said in his homily during Mass at Rome’s Casal del Marmo prison for minors.

Helping others and lending a hand are “human, universal gestures, but they come from a noble heart. And Jesus today with this celebration wants to teach us this: nobility of the heart,” he said during the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord’s Supper on April 6.

Pope Francis presided over the Mass and washed the feet of 12 young people of different nationalities, ethnicities and faiths, including a Muslim and two women, who are housed at the juvenile detention facility. The pope’s master of liturgical ceremonies, Msgr. Diego Giovanni Ravelli, was the main celebrant at the liturgy.

During the rite of the foot washing, the pope stood and moved before the 12 inmates who were seated on a raised

platform, like other years, so the pope did not have to kneel or stoop to gently wash, dry and kiss each foot.

The ceremony of washing another’s feet “is not something folkloric,” he said. It is a gesture that shows “how we are to be with one another.”

The pope talked about the worry or fear of not being worthy of such a gesture since “each of us can say, ‘But if the pope knew the things I have inside me. ...’ But Jesus knows about it, and he loves us as we are, and he washes the feet of each one of us.

“Jesus is never frightened by our weaknesses, he is never frightened because he has already paid [for our sins],” Pope Francis said. “He only wants to accompany us, he wants to take us by the hand so that life will not be so hard for us.”

It is hard to see so many people in the world taking advantage of others, to see how many people are trapped in a situation with no way out, to see so many injustices and broken families, he said.

If anyone has avoided serious hardship, it is not because they are better than others, he said, “it’s because of God’s grace!”

“Every one of us can slip, each one

of us. And this awareness, this certainty that each one of us can slip is what gives us the ‘dignity’—listen to this word—the ‘dignity’ of being sinners,” the pope told

the inmates. “And Jesus wants us that way and that’s why he wanted to wash our feet and say, ‘I have come to save you, to serve you.’” †

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# The Criterion

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## Editorial

# A true Christian cannot be anti-Semitic

*Let us pray also for the Jewish people, to whom the Lord our God spoke first, that he may grant them to advance in love of his name and in faithfulness to his covenant. (Good Friday Prayer)*

There has been a disturbing rise in anti-Semitism in the United States and in Europe in recent years. Racist, anti-Semitic attitudes and actions have caused the Jewish community to once again fear that their safety and welfare are threatened by those who believe that Jews are either inferior or that they are somehow conspiring against the rest of humanity.

Such attitudes and actions are profoundly anti-Christian as well as anti-Semitic. They have no place in the lives of Catholics or members of other Christian denominations, and they should be condemned by all people of good will.

According to a November 2022 statement by the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs:

*The rising trend of anti-Semitic incidents has become even more painful in light of the Church's relationship to the Jewish tradition and our connections to the Jewish people in dialogue and friendship.*

The Catholic Church's relationship with the Jewish people has a troubled history during the past 2,000 years. As recently as the Second World War, some historians have said, Pope Pius XII, who was pope from 1939 to 1958, stayed silent during the Holocaust and didn't do enough to save lives. His defenders say he used quiet diplomacy and encouraged convents and other religious institutes to hide Jews. Regardless of how the Church's role is perceived in this most shameful period of human history, there is no question that the former understanding of how Jews and Christians are related to one another needed to change radically.

Today, the Church unequivocally condemns the unspeakable evil perpetrated by the Nazis and all who were complicit in their crimes against humanity. All recent popes—from Pope St. John XXIII to Pope Francis—have worked tirelessly to change the way we Catholics relate to our Jewish sisters and brothers.

As noted in the USCCB statement referenced above, which quotes from the Second Vatican Council's teaching on the relationship between Christians and Jews in the declaration, "Nostra Aetate":

*Beginning with the leadership of St. Paul VI, who guided the drafting and approval of Nostra Aetate through the Second Vatican Council and continuing without interruption to the present day with Pope Francis, the Catholic Church has continually fostered and recommended "that mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues" ("Nostra Aetate," #4)*

Early in his papacy, Pope Francis addressed members of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, calling them "dear elder brothers and sisters" and saluting them with the Hebrew greeting, "Shalom,"



**Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., offers a closing prayer at a Jewish-Catholic interfaith prayer service on Nov. 20, 2019, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Fort Wayne. Standing beside the bishop is Rabbi Paula Jayne Winnig, clergy leader of Congregation Achduth Vesholom in Fort Wayne and co-leader of the service. (OSV News photo/CNS file, Kevin Kilbane, Today's Catholic)**

which means "peace." In his address, the Holy Father referred to the "Nostra Aetate" declaration saying:

*In that Council text, the Church recognizes that "the beginnings of its faith and election are to be found in the patriarchs, Moses and prophets." And, with regard to the Jews, the Council recalls the teaching of St. Paul, who wrote "the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable" and who also firmly condemned hatred, persecution and all forms of anti-Semitism. Due to our common roots, a Christian cannot be anti-Semitic!*

*The fundamental principles expressed by the declaration have marked the path of greater awareness and mutual understanding trodden these last decades by Jews and Catholics, a path which my predecessors have strongly encouraged, both by very significant gestures and by the publication of a series of documents to deepen the thinking about theological bases of the relations between Jews and Christians. It is a journey for which we must surely give thanks to God.*

Due to our "common roots," Pope Francis declared, "a Christian cannot be anti-Semitic!" Anti-Semitism is profoundly un-Christian. It destroys the fundamental principles underlying our mutual dignity as people made in the image and likeness of God and called to love God and our neighbor wholeheartedly and without exception. We are right to pray for our Jewish sisters and brothers each year on Good Friday. This prayer, which has its own complicated history, acknowledges that God spoke first to the Jewish people, and it asks that the Lord will "grant them to advance in love of his name and in faithfulness to his covenant."

May our Church's prayer be heard and answered in the reverent and respectful attitudes and actions of Christians everywhere.

—Daniel Conway

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

## A new intergenerational covenant

Among the important issues involving the dignity of human life, abortion is of prime importance—but it is not the only pro-life issue.



As Little Sisters, we are deeply concerned about the "other end" of the pro-life spectrum—the care of the sick, the elderly and the dying.

In his landmark 1995 encyclical, "Evangelium Vitae," Pope John Paul II wrote: "Neglect of the elderly or their outright rejection are intolerable. Their presence in the family, or at least their closeness to the family in cases where limited living space or other reasons make this impossible, is of fundamental importance in creating a climate of mutual interaction and enriching communication between the different age-groups. It is therefore important to preserve, or to re-establish where it has been lost, a sort of 'covenant' between generations" (#94).

Today our society is very far from Pope John Paul II's vision.

Pope Francis often speaks of the "throwaway culture" to describe the neglect and abandonment of those considered useless, particularly the very young and the very old. His concept of the throwaway culture aligns with what John Paul II termed the culture of death.

I am convinced that the scarcity of religious vocations, including vocations to our congregation, is related to this culture of death. A decrease in the number of young women joining our community may also be related to the fact that many young people today grow up far from their elders, without roots, as the pope often says.

From Little Sisters who share their vocation stories, it is evident that a close and loving relationship with grandparents or other family elders is often the spark that lights the flame of a vocation at the service of the elderly.

For several years now, the Little Sisters have also been grappling with the same workforce issues faced by other providers of senior care.

In the aftermath of the pandemic, 99% of U.S. nursing homes and 96% of assisted living communities are dealing with staffing shortages. More than 300 nursing homes in the U.S. closed during the pandemic, and two-thirds of the remaining nursing homes are at risk of closing.

Today more than 800,000 needy older adults and people with disabilities are languishing on Medicaid-funded state waiting lists without caregivers to provide needed services. By 2030, 3.5 million new workers will be needed in long-term care services just to keep pace with our rapidly aging population. Without dramatic changes, thousands of older adults and their families will lose access to quality care, creating fertile ground for the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia.

I share these frightening statistics not to be a prophet of doom, but to issue a call to prayer and action!

There are many things we can do today to nurture a covenant between generations and a more caring culture.

If you are a young person, open your heart to the seniors in your life, and to the possibility that God is calling you to a career or a vocation of service to the elderly.

Don't be afraid to contact the Little Sisters! Our life shared with the elderly, lived in the spirit of the Beatitudes, is a beautiful, joy-filled life!

Pray that young people will be drawn to careers in geriatrics/gerontology ... and even better, to life-long vocations at the service of the elderly!

Create opportunities for intergenerational encounters and encourage youths to explore a caring profession, or a priestly or religious vocation!

Affirm life by helping the seniors you

See GUEST, page 9

**Be Our Guest/Sherry Foushee**

## April is Safe Haven Awareness Month

The month of April has a special meaning to the National Safe Haven Alliance (NSHA), which is a non-profit working to promote the existence of Safe Baby Haven Laws across the country. April is known as Safe Haven Awareness Month in all 50 states, as well as Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico.

The Safe Haven Law has saved 4,776 newborns since the first law was created in 1999 in Texas. Because of the growing number of infant deaths due to infanticide and newborn abandonment, this law that provides a safe alternative to save newborns and help their mothers passed in every state within 10 years.

The law that was enacted in Indiana in 2001 states that a mother in crisis who is unable or unwilling to care for her newborn can safely and anonymously hand her unharmed baby (30 days or younger) to a Safe Haven provider at a hospital, staffed fire station or law enforcement facility, or call 911 for Emergency Medical Services to respond to a location for surrender. Infants must be handed to staff at the stated location.

The National Safe Haven Alliance always provides assistance to all mothers/parents and infants in need of support. When faced with an unexpected or crisis pregnancy situation, a mother can feel frightened and alone. Our team is available 24/7 to work alongside this mother and provide support and safe options.

In many of these cases, mothers are considering surrendering their infants due to a lack of family support, socioeconomic challenges, inadequate

daycare options or temporary challenges making ends meet. Our goal is to walk with a mother hand-in-hand to provide the support she so desperately needs while supporting her choice to parent her infant with compassion, empathy and kindness in mind.

With support of donors, NSHA is able to assist these mothers in need, while possibly keeping mothers and infants together at times. Through our three-tiered communication model (parenting, adoption and Safe Haven), our team creates a safe and open dialogue that is required when facing a crisis. During this communication process, NSHA will work with the mother to meet her immediate needs by researching the support available in her community.

Please help us celebrate the lives of special newborns saved as we continue our mission. Spreading awareness of this life-saving law is so very necessary to make sure that those in crisis know they have a source of support and help.

We at National Safe Haven Alliance will continue this life saving mission until there is no need.

*(Sherry Foushee is a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus and is the Indiana representative for National Safe Haven Alliance. Mothers in need can call or text 888-510-2229, where a crisis response team is available for confidential help 24/7 to provide safe options for her and her baby. For more information on NSHA, go to [www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org](http://www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org).) †*

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



# Christ the Cornerstone

## God's mercy and compassion are everlasting

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time" (1 Pt 1:3-5).*

The Second Sunday of Easter is called Divine Mercy Sunday because the joy which we celebrate during the Easter season inspires us to reflect on the "great mercy" God has given us through the resurrection of his only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. God's mercy is a major theme in sacred Scripture. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament speak of the ways in which God loves and forgives his people—even, or especially, when we don't deserve it.

Israel's confidence in God's mercy is affirmed in the responsorial psalm (Ps 118) for Divine Mercy Sunday:

*Let the house of Israel say,  
"His mercy endures forever."  
Let the house of Aaron say,  
"His mercy endures forever."*

*Let those who fear the Lord say,  
"His mercy endures forever." (Ps 118:2-4)*

In this psalm, we are invited to be glad and rejoice because "the stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone" and because God's mercy is "wonderful in our eyes." (Ps 118:22-23)

A powerful testimony to God's love and forgiveness is presented to us in the second reading for Divine Mercy Sunday (1 Pt 1:3-9). Here we learn that God's great mercy has given us "a new birth to a living hope" (1 Pt 1:3).

As illustrated in the familiar parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32), our loving Father is always waiting for us with open arms in spite of our selfishness and sin. His mercy is boundless, and even when we have squandered the gifts God has given us, St. Peter tells us that God still provides us with an "inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading" (1 Pt 1:4). Nothing that we do can destroy what God's great mercy has "kept in heaven for you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time" (1 Pt 1:5).

There is a tendency on the part of some people to focus on the wrath

of God. The true God is kind and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in mercy. Indeed, as we pray in Psalm 118: *Let those who fear the Lord say, "His mercy endures forever." (Ps 118:4)*

But what about God's justice? Will God not hold us accountable for our sinful attitudes and actions? Yes, God is both merciful and just. The Scriptures and the Creed both attest to the fact that Christ will return on the Last Day "to judge the living and the dead."

But before the Last Judgment, which will not be arbitrary or unfair in any way, we are given every conceivable opportunity to repent, ask God's forgiveness and strive to change our ways with the help of God's grace.

And even when we prove over and over again by our actions and our hardness of heart that we are not worthy of God's unconditional love, God is merciful. As St. Peter says, our inheritance is "kept safe for us in heaven" (1 Pt 1:4) so that the full extent of God's love for us will only be revealed "in the final time" (1 Pt 1:5).

St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, who died in 1938 and was canonized a saint by Pope St. John Paul II in 2000, was

a Polish sister of Our Lady of Mercy whose mystical visions of Jesus inspired the Divine Mercy devotion. She wrote in her diary that "[God's] goodness no one has fathomed, no one can measure. His compassion is untold. Every soul that approaches him experiences this."

Far from being an angry, vengeful tyrant, God is merciful beyond measure. God wants only what is good for us and for his creation. We may succeed in offending God by our words and actions, by the things we have done and those we have failed to do, but in spite of everything, our God waits for us. He stands ready to forgive us and welcome us home.

Throughout this Easter season, and especially on Divine Mercy Sunday, let's thank God for his inexhaustible love and forgiveness. With the psalmist, let us pray:

*I was hard pressed and was falling,  
but the Lord helped me.  
My strength and my courage is the Lord,  
and he has been my savior.  
The joyful shout of victory  
in the tents of the just. (Ps 118:13-15)*

And let's forgive others as we ask our loving Father to forgive us. †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## La misericordia y la compasión de Dios son eternas

*"Bendito sea el Dios y Padre de nuestro Señor Jesucristo, que por su gran misericordia y mediante la resurrección de Jesucristo nos ha hecho nacer de nuevo a una esperanza viva, para que recibamos una herencia incorruptible, incontaminada e imperecedera. Esta herencia les está reservada en los cielos a ustedes, que por medio de la fe son protegidos por el poder de Dios, para que alcancen la salvación, lista ya para manifestarse cuando llegue el momento final" (1 Pe 1:3-5).*

El segundo domingo de Pascua se llama Domingo de la Divina Misericordia porque la alegría que celebramos durante el tiempo pascual nos inspira a reflexionar sobre la "gran misericordia" que Dios nos ha concedido mediante la resurrección de su Hijo único, Jesucristo, nuestro Señor. La misericordia de Dios es un tema importante en la Sagrada Escritura. Tanto el Antiguo como el Nuevo Testamento hablan del modo en que Dios ama y perdona a su pueblo, incluso—o quizá especialmente—cuando no lo merecemos.

La confianza de Israel en la misericordia de Dios se afirma en el Salmo Responsorial (Sal 118) del Domingo de la Divina Misericordia:

*Que lo diga ahora Israel:  
"¡Su misericordia permanece para siempre!"*

*Que lo digan los descendientes de Aarón:*

*"¡Su misericordia permanece para siempre!"*

*Que lo digan los temerosos del Señor:*

*"¡Su misericordia permanece para siempre!" (Sal 118:2-4)*

En este salmo, se nos invita a alegrarnos y a regocijarnos porque "La piedra que desecharon los edificadores ha llegado a ser la piedra angular" y porque la misericordia de Dios es "maravillosa a nuestros ojos." (Sal 118:22-23)

En la segunda lectura del Domingo de la Divina Misericordia (1 Pe 1:3-9) se nos presenta un poderoso testimonio del amor y el perdón de Dios, mediante el cual descubrimos que por la gran misericordia de Dios se "nos ha hecho nacer de nuevo a una esperanza viva" (1 Pe 1:3).

Como ilustra la conocida parábola del Hijo Pródigo (Lc 15:11-32), nuestro Padre amoroso siempre nos espera con los brazos abiertos a pesar de nuestro egoísmo y pecado. Su misericordia no tiene límites, e incluso cuando hemos malgastado los dones que Dios nos ha concedido, san Pedro nos dice que Dios nos sigue proporcionando "una herencia incorruptible, incontaminada e imperecedera" (1 Pe 1:4). Nada de lo que hagamos puede destruir lo que la gran misericordia de Dios tiene "reservada en los cielos a ustedes, que por medio de la fe son protegidos por el poder de Dios, para que alcancen la salvación, lista ya para

manifestarse cuando llegue el momento final" (1 Pe 1:5).

Algunas personas tienden a centrarse en la ira de Dios, Pero el Dios verdadero es bondadoso y compasivo, lento a la cólera y rico en misericordia. En efecto, como rezamos en el Salmo 118: *Que lo digan los temerosos del Señor: "¡Su misericordia permanece para siempre!" (Sal 118:4)*

Pero, ¿y la justicia de Dios? ¿Acaso Dios no nos responsabilizará por nuestras actitudes y acciones pecaminosas? Sí, Dios es justo y misericordioso. Tanto las Escrituras como el Credo dan fe de que Cristo volverá en el Día Final "para juzgar a vivos y muertos."

Pero antes del Juicio Final, que no será arbitrario ni injusto en modo alguno, se nos dan todas las oportunidades imaginables para arrepentirnos, pedir perdón a Dios y esforzarnos por enderezar nuestros caminos con la ayuda de la gracia de Dios.

E incluso cuando demostramos una y otra vez mediante nuestras acciones y nuestra dureza de corazón que "no somos dignos" del amor incondicional de Dios, Él es misericordioso. Como dice san Pedro, nuestra herencia "está reservada en los cielos" (1 Pe 1:4), de modo que la plenitud del amor de Dios por nosotros sólo se revelará en el "momento final" (1 Pe 1:5).

Santa María Faustina Kowalska, fallecida en 1938 y canonizada santa

por el Papa Juan Pablo II en 2000, fue una hermana polaca de Nuestra Señora de la Merced cuyas visiones místicas de Jesús inspiraron la devoción a la Divina Misericordia. Escribió en su diario que "[la bondad de Dios] nadie la ha comprendido, nadie puede medirla. Su compasión es indecible. Cada alma que se acerca a él experimenta esto."

Lejos de ser un tirano iracundo y vengativo, la misericordia de Dios es inmensurable. Dios quiere únicamente aquello que es bueno para nosotros y para su creación. Podemos llegar a ofender a Dios con nuestras palabras y acciones, con las cosas que hemos hecho y las que hemos dejado de hacer, pero a pesar de todo, nuestro Dios nos espera, y está dispuesto a perdonarnos y a darnos la bienvenida a casa.

A lo largo de este tiempo pascual, y especialmente en el Domingo de la Divina Misericordia, demos gracias a Dios por su amor y su perdón inagotables. Junto con el salmista, oremos:

*Me empujan con violencia, para hacerme caer, pero el Señor me sostendrá.  
El Señor es mi fuerza, y a él dedico mi canto porque en él he hallado salvación.  
En el campamento de los hombres justos se oyen gritos jubilosos de victoria. (Sal 118:13-15)*

Y perdonemos a los demás como pedimos a nuestro Padre amoroso que nos perdone a nosotros. †



# 'A great moment' as TANF update passes Indiana House

By Victoria Arthur

Advocates for the poor in Indiana witnessed the culmination of 10 years of tireless efforts as a bill bolstering a key program for the neediest Hoosiers cleared the House of Representatives for the first time.



Senate Bill 265, the latest attempt to update the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program in Indiana, was awaiting Gov. Eric Holcomb's signature at press time and promising the first meaningful change to this lifeline for the poorest of the poor in more than three decades.

"This legislation has passed some major hurdles, and it's closer than it has ever been in getting over the finish line," said Angela Espada, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. "We welcome this long-overdue expansion of the TANF program in our state—a program that has benefited only a fraction of the most vulnerable people in Indiana through the years because of various barriers that this bill is designed to overcome."



Angela Espada

TANF is a federal government program that provides block grants to the states to administer temporary cash assistance payments, along with job training and other services for families in deepest poverty. But too many Hoosier families have faced obstacles in receiving that help because of outdated state guidelines.

Senate Bill 265, which expands TANF eligibility guidelines and increases the amount of the monthly cash payout that qualifying families receive, passed the House of Representatives on April 4 by a resounding 93-4 vote. This marked the first time legislation aimed at modernizing TANF had reached the House floor.

Among those anxiously observing from the gallery that day was Jessica Fraser, who has spent the last decade advocating for TANF reform. Although she had recently left her role as director of the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute, nothing could keep her from the Statehouse for this pivotal event.

Fraser described sitting near another longtime

advocate, Emily Weikert Bryant, executive director of Feeding Indiana's Hungry, and reacting to the close-to-unanimous vote.

"She held my hand, and I cried," said Fraser, a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis. "It was a great moment. Even though I'd left my previous role, I knew I had to be there because so many of us worked so hard for so long for this moment. This is going to be a life-changing development for so many of our most vulnerable families."

Indiana's current eligibility level for TANF is the fourth-lowest in the United States, behind Louisiana, Arkansas and Alabama. This is because Indiana set its income requirements to qualify for TANF in the mid-1990s, when welfare reform was signed into law by then-President Bill Clinton. Those eligibility guidelines have not been adjusted for inflation since then.

Today in Indiana, to be eligible for TANF a family can earn no more than 16 percent of the federal poverty rate, which stands at slightly more than \$23,000 for a family of three. That means that a family earning a mere \$400 a month would not qualify for the program currently.

Under Senate Bill 265, authored by Sen. Jon Ford (R-Terre Haute), the eligibility level for TANF would jump from 16 percent of the federal poverty rate to 50 percent by the end of 2027.

"This bill will expand the eligibility for thousands of Hoosier families in need and offer a way out of poverty," said Ford, who has brought forth legislation to modernize TANF since 2019. "Along with financial assistance, TANF provides job training, child care and transportation so that many of the hurdles folks face when looking for higher-paying jobs are eliminated."

The second major component of Senate Bill 265 is a long sought-after increase to the monthly cash payout that families receive, which has not been updated since 1988. For a family of three, that would mean a jump from the \$288 set 35 years ago to \$513 a month.

Fraser, who said "the stars just aligned" this year for TANF reform, praised longtime legislative champions, including Ford as well as Rep. Ed Clere (R-New Albany), the sponsor of Senate Bill 265 in the House.

This year, as in prior legislative sessions, the TANF bill

sailed through the Senate and then unanimously passed its starting point in the House: the Family, Children and Human Affairs committee.

The next stop was the House Ways and Means committee, where TANF reform legislation had never received a hearing—until this time. On March 30, the committee heard Ford's bill and passed it on a 20-1 vote, sending it to the House floor five days later.

"This legislation is all about helping vulnerable people," said Clere, himself a member of the House Ways and Means committee and a longtime collaborator with Ford on TANF-related legislation.



Rep. Ed Clere

"We are talking about Hoosiers for whom a sudden hardship can be devastating and lead to a cascade of other events that not only impact their participation in the workforce but also the stability of their families and the well-being of their children."

Clere, who attends Holy Family Parish in New Albany, offered an amendment to the bill to automatically extend TANF eligibility to women who are pregnant with their first child. Under current law, only pregnant women who have at least one other child qualify for TANF.

The lawmaker praised Fraser for her advocacy, and both thanked ICC leaders past and present for their role in bringing TANF reform efforts to this pivotal point.

"The Indiana Catholic Conference has always been a huge supporter of this legislation and helped shepherd it, along with the entire team of advocates who have worked on this issue for so many years," Fraser said. "I offer my sincerest thanks to [former ICC executive director] Glenn Tebbe, Angela Espada and [associate director] Alexander Mingus for everything they've done to bring us to this moment."

To follow priority legislation of the ICC, visit [www.indianacc.org](http://www.indianacc.org). This website includes access to ICAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church's position on key issues. Those who sign up for ICAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus [Little Flower] Parish in Indianapolis, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

## Members of St. Peter Parish in Franklin County 'always willing to lend a hand'

By Natalie Hoefler

In the early 1830s, German immigrants settled in Franklin County on Indiana's southeastern border. Among them were Catholic families who carved out farms from the land in Highland Township—families with surnames like Bauer, Fussner, Geis, Ripberger, Ripperger and Weiler.

In 1838, they completed a small, log church. Residing within the vast boundary of what was then the Diocese of Vincennes, the church was blessed the Servant of God Simon Bruté, the diocese's first bishop. He named the parish St. Peter.

### 'A very close-knit group'

The church is still "really out in the country, mostly farmland," says Father Vincent Lampert, the parish's pastor. "It's a unique parish, because it only has about 150 families," several of them still bearing the surnames of the founders.

"Family" is the word that best describes the faith community, he says.

"Being a small parish, it's a very close-knit group. People always check in with the shut-ins to let them know they're not forgotten. Whether it's outreach to shut-ins or the sick or those in need, everyone is always willing to pitch in and lend a helping hand."

The same "pitch in" attitude is true of caring for the parish, says Father Lampert. With a small staff shared with St. Michael Parish in Brookville, much of the work at St. Peter "is done by volunteers who have great ownership" of the parish, its grounds and its 170-year-old church building.



But the faith community is not closed in on itself, he notes. Parishioners support a food pantry in nearby Sunman, and "for years" the parish has supported a parish in Kentucky's Appalachian region, "collecting toys, donating food, helping them any way we can," says Father Lampert.

The best time to visit the rural parish is during its annual Labor Day Picnic, marking its 103rd anniversary this year.

"We have people come from all over—Cincinnati, southeastern Indiana," he says. In line with the parish's "family" feel, Father Lampert calls the annual picnic "really more like a family gathering."

The parish fundraising event offers children's games and raffles, including a raffle for \$28,000.

But most people come for the food, where "fried chicken is king," he says.

The parish sits along the culinary "Chicken Trail" of southeastern Indiana. It's a real thing, even written about in a June 2019 article of the *New York Times*.

"You can usually find fried chicken from Connersville down to Lawrenceburg every day of the week," says Father Lampert. "Parishes, restaurants, VFWs [Veterans of Foreign Wars], small town taverns—somebody is always frying chickens."

Whether there for the Labor Day Picnic or some other time, be sure to stop in historic St. Peter Church, built in 1853.

"A few years ago, we had the entire inside of the church repainted," says Father Lampert. "This summer, we're doing external work on the church."

Feel free to stop in and pray anytime—literally.

"Because it's such a small town and the people take ownership," he says, "the church is always open for anyone who wants to pray or just visit."

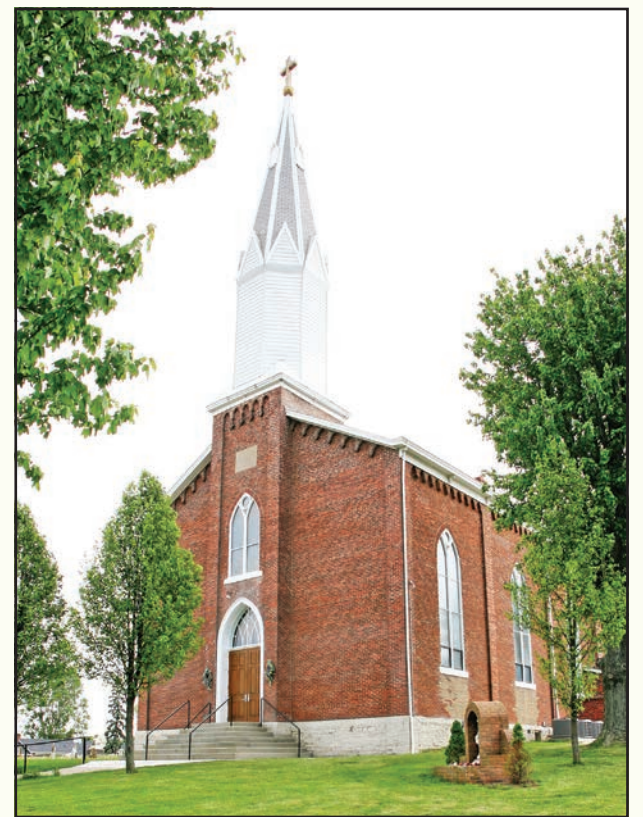
### Water, reindeer—and 'a trail you hike with your face'

If Labor Day doesn't fit your schedule for visiting St. Peter Parish, there are other reasons to visit the area year round.

Come see—or even paddle in—"Indiana's Largest Canoe Race" at Brookville's CanoeFest, held this year on June 24. In addition to enjoying vendors and live music, visitors can watch a championship race, and amateurs from the young to the young at heart can participate in 3-mile races on the Whitewater River. Of course, fried chicken is available. For more information, go to [brookvillecanoecest.com](http://brookvillecanoecest.com) or e-mail [brookvillecanoecest@yahoo.com](mailto:brookvillecanoecest@yahoo.com).

If you prefer your water to be wider than a river, check out Brookville Lake. The area offers opportunities for camping, fishing, boating, swimming and 25 miles of hiking trails—but you'll have to bring your own fried chicken. For more information, go to [cutt.ly/BrookvilleLake](http://cutt.ly/BrookvilleLake).

Looking to winter, you can worship with the members of St. Peter at the beginning or end of a family fun-day selecting a Christmas tree and encountering reindeer at Whitetail Acres in Brookville, just 15 minutes north of the parish. Whitetail Acres, which has one of only two reindeer farms in the state, offers these activities for several weeks in November and



December. For more information, go to [whitetailacrestreefarm.com](http://whitetailacrestreefarm.com) or call 765-647-6812.

And about that fried chicken trail of southeastern Indiana. You can find a map at [cutt.ly/ChickenTrail](http://cutt.ly/ChickenTrail). The link takes you to a blog post on a site called "Hiking Illustrated." As the author—who simply goes by Andrew—notes, "Yeah, this is a hiking website, but ... think of the [Chicken Trail] as a trail you hike with your face."

(*Mass Excursions* is a feature highlighting an archdiocesan parish and local attractions, encouraging a trip to the area that includes Mass with the members of that parish.) †

# YOUNG ADULTS

continued from page 1

events, but when we keep the Lord at the center and simply focus on knowing, loving and serving him as a community, he will show up and work in our lives.”

## ‘Young adults are looking for the same things that anyone hungers for’

Schutzer has no doubt that God will be in the midst of the next semi-annual gathering of the Young Adult Initiative, which will be at Saint Meinrad on April 28-30. She also believes that, while young adults have overwhelmingly strayed from organized religion of all faiths and denominations, the blessings of a life in relationship with God are exactly what this 18- to 39-year-old age group is longing for in their lives.

“I think young adults are looking for the same things that anyone hungers for—to be known and to be loved,” Schutzer says. “Young adults are looking for meaningful relationships, to be a part of a community where they are valued, to make a difference in the world, and to have space where they can wrestle with important questions and issues in their life without being unfairly or prematurely judged.

“At the core, they’re really searching for God. They’re searching for meaning and purpose.”

Helping young adults create a meaningful relationship with God and living it within the community of a Catholic parish are two of the main goals of the Young Adult Initiative—a program whose second phase is being funded through a \$1.25 million grant from the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Schutzer notes that the first phase of the initiative determined that the best way to draw young adults into a connection with God and a parish is through “consistent and patient relationship-building.”

“Young adults are all over the spectrum as far as their state in life, their knowledge of the faith, their expression of faith,” she says. “It will take some measure of patience on our part to listen to the stories of young people, to build these relationships. But we have seen the fruit that comes from investing in young people in this way.

“We are participating in the Lord’s work of conversion and making disciples, not just planning events and looking to increase the number of people who attend.”

The second phase of the initiative will last five years and involves 10 parishes in Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee. Its primary goals will include helping the parishes in the program to develop long-term ministry that’s focused on outreach, accompaniment and discipleship of young adults—and then sharing what works best with parishes in their dioceses and across the country. No archdiocesan parish is a part of this phase.

“My hope is that our partner parishes will have thriving, lasting, young-adult ministry in their parishes at the end of phase two,” Schutzer says. “My other hope is that Saint Meinrad can be a place that accompanies the wider U.S. Catholic Church in walking with young adults on their faith journey.”

Schutzer views her own faith journey as reflecting that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to helping young adults find their way to a relationship with God and a connection with a parish.

At the same time, her experience shows just how life-changing a relationship with Christ can be for a young adult.

## ‘The Lord wanted to have a personal relationship with me’

Schutzer grew up in North Carolina, the oldest of four children of her Catholic mother and her Jewish father.

“All the kids were raised Catholic in our family,” she says. “We were definitely Sunday Mass, youth ministry, pray-before-meal Catholics, but I think it took me until after college [at the University of North Carolina] to discover that the Lord wanted to have a personal relationship with me.

“In college, I started attending the Newman Center to make friends and find a community. I felt a lot of imposter syndrome while at the Newman Center. I would look at the faith of my peers and wonder how they could be so far ahead of me. I started to imitate the faith that I saw, and along the way, I learned a lot about Catholicism and about different



As he gives a tour of the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad, Benedictine Brother John Mark Falkenhain shares a moment of joy with some of the participants in the Young Adult Initiative gathering in November of 2022. The participants include Cassie Schutzer, left, director of the initiative, Therese McGinnis, Jon Harter, Marti Frank, Veronica Hernandez and Claire Reinert. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

expressions of faith. But I think I made the ultimate decision to practice my faith about four years after college.”

That embrace of her Catholic faith didn’t come quickly for the 2015 graduate.

“I spent the years right after graduation—ironically enough—working for a Catholic parish, but not practicing my faith and not believing in much of anything outside of myself and my friend group. I hit a point where I felt hopeless and decided that things needed to change.

“This is the time in my life that I call my ‘reversion’ to faith because I really did start to explore Catholicism as if for the first time. I found a lot of support in my faith community, in my friendships, and in my growing relationship with the Lord.”

Schutzer finds comparisons to her faith journey in the Gospel story of the Prodigal Son.

“Early in my life, I was the older son who took for granted the treasures of the Church that were always surrounding me. Then, later on, there were times when I was the rebellious younger son, running away from my father and my

faith because I wanted to chase after other things in life that I deemed more important or exciting. The Lord always welcomed me home in these moments. Now, I am striving more and more to be like the father, but the two sons still live on in my heart.”

Like the young adults she is trying to help parishes connect with, Schutzer lives the same challenges of faith that her peers face. She shares their struggles. She also offers them a path to peace and harmony in their life—in a relationship with God.

She knows the journey isn’t always easy.

“Directing the Young Adult Initiative has reminded me how crucial it is to grow in my own relationship with the Lord,” she says. “I can talk all day long about how important it is to model our faith and to form relationships with young adults and to be a community of prayer, but if I’m not practicing these things and growing myself, I am nothing more than a clashing gong, as St. Paul says to the Corinthians.

“I am on that lifelong journey of conversion and conforming myself to the heart of the Father.” †

## The challenge to connect young adults and parishes is high, so is the hope

By John Shaughnessy

The statistics are both hopeful and sobering about young adult Catholics, based upon a study called, “Faith and Spiritual Life of Catholics in the United States.”

A measure of good news is that, “Overall, 60% of Catholic young adults, ages 18 to 35, in the United States indicated that they participate in a faith-related group,” noted the 2021 study that was done by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) based at Georgetown University in Washington.

The sobering news is that attending Mass and being part of a parish aren’t usually part of the faith lives of young adult Catholics, according to the study of 2,214 Catholics in the 18-35 age group.

Conducted in the summer of 2020, the study led to these statistics: 13% of Catholic young adults attended Mass at least once a week while 21% attended Mass at least once a month, 31% attended Mass a few times a year and 36% rarely or never attended Mass.

“The biggest surprise is how boldly young adult Catholics are participating in their faith life outside the parish,” said Mark Gray, one of the co-authors of the study, told Catholic News Service in 2021.

“Most research and commentary outside of data collection is that young adults are so inactive. In one way, that’s right. They’re disconnected from their parish ... but they’re finding ways to practice [their faith] in groups.”

Against that backdrop, the Young Adult Initiative at Saint Meinrad’s Center for Youth and Young Adult Evangelization at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad has been working with select parishes across the Midwest and the South with the goal to help parishes across the country engage, welcome and embrace young adults into their faith community.

## ‘A lot of energy’ and questions

The first phase of that effort has been completed, leading to a 180-page report from the Young Adult Initiative. As the director of the initiative, 29-year-old Cassie Schutzer summed up what she considers some of the main insights about young adults from that report.

“There are so many good insights, but I think it’s best summed up in the fact that young adult ministry is not a one-size-fits-all program, but instead it’s about consistent and patient relationship-building.

“It will take some measure of patience on our part to listen to the stories of young people, to build these relationships, but we have seen the fruit that comes from investing in young people in this way.”

The second phase of the initiative—which began in 2022—is a five-year effort that is being funded by a \$1.25 million grant from the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Schutzer says the major goals for this phase include helping the parishes in the initiative to “create a sustainable, long-term young adult ministry in their

parishes” that focuses on outreach, accompaniment and discipleship.

Another main goal, she says, involves forming “our future priests for ministering with young adults and for leading young-adult-friendly parishes.”

Her hope is then to share the successful approaches with parishes across the country through a guide and other resources.

In the beginning stages of the second phase, Schutzer has seen some of the realities mentioned in “Faith and Spiritual Life of Catholics in the United States.”

“With young adult Catholics, we’re seeing a lot of young people who are really interested in exploring their faith for the first time or re-exploring the faith they grew up with. But they don’t feel they got a whole lot of catechesis in it or whatever the case may be.

“So, there’s a lot of energy around it. But as far as the questions and the exploration, a lot of that is happening outside the parish buildings. It’s happening in homes or more community spaces—coffee shops, places like that. I think if our parishes were able to have these conversations with young people and provide those spaces where they feel they belong in the parish, I think it could really revitalize a lot of our aging parishes.”

## Reasons for hope

Despite the challenges, Schutzer views bridging that gap between young adults and parishes with hope.

She gets that hope from the enthusiasm and commitment of the

leaders of the 10 parishes involved in the initiative. She also gets that hope from young adult Catholics who she believes are searching for purpose and meaning in their lives, searching for God.

“They don’t yet see that they can find it in our parishes. Some of what we need to be doing is helping young people connect to community, and it’s also helping the community to be ready for them, to welcome them and accept them.

“There’s not one program that’s going to do all this, but there are definitely themes we see. Having young people be leaders. Giving them opportunities. Mentoring them. Helping them feel like they belong in parishes. Personal invitations. Personal relationships. These are common themes we see.”

This second phase of the initiative is planned as a five-year effort, reflecting the “patience and persistence” that Schutzer believes is needed to bridge the gap between young adult Catholics and parishes.

She believes the effort is worthwhile because so is its ultimate goal.

“It’s everyone growing together with the goal in mind of growing toward the Lord and growing more faithful as his disciples.”

(For anyone interested in accessing the 180-page report on the first phase of Saint Meinrad’s Young Adult Initiative, visit the website, [www.saintmeinrad.org/phase-1-report](http://www.saintmeinrad.org/phase-1-report). A copy of the report can be downloaded for free. A hard copy of the report can be ordered online and is available for \$8—the cost of shipping it.) †



# Straight from the heart: Readers share how God's strength, voice guide them

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

By John Shaughnessy

Looking back to a time when she was a teenager, Sandi Patel admits she wasn't completely thrilled by the assignment she was given.

In her preparation to receive the sacrament of confirmation, Patel was instructed to find a Scripture verse that was meaningful to her.

"As I flipped through the Bible with some ambivalence, I came upon Philippians 4:13: *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*



Sandi Patel

Little did I know that that seemingly random encounter with Christ through his word would become a cherished Scripture verse, and true to its words, my strength."

A member of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, Patel has called upon that strength from Christ at every point of her life since she chose that verse.

"In high school, it got me through the challenging situations of teenage life. In college, it calmed my nerves before a music performance. As a young adult, it gave me courage to meet my husband's parents for the first time. As a young bride, it helped me figure out how to deal with two different ways of managing a household.

"As a teacher, it reminded me to be patient with my students who weren't getting it. As a mom, it cautioned me that the young stages of life pass by quickly, so take a deep breath and love. As a daughter, it eased my broken heart as I cared for my father in his final days on this side of heaven. As a professional, it carried me through some very difficult situations when people behaved in ways that were far less than kind.

"Yes, Philippians 4:13 is on repeat in my mind. I lean into it nearly every day. It's not a slogan, like 'just do it.' It's my very dearest friend, Jesus, calling me to his heart, holding me and loving me with strength beyond measure. All I need to do is ask."

## Extra wisdom for comfort and patience

Joan Ayer relies upon her favorite Bible verse when she needs to comfort people during a dark time in their lives.

It also serves her well when she needs to have patience with someone.

The words of extra wisdom for her come from Psalm 19:14, "May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my

heart be accepted in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

"I started saying this silently when a family member was going through a divorce," says Ayer, a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis. "It's also quite helpful when chatting with people who love to argue."

## Matters of the heart

Tom Yost describes himself as a "heart" person.

"I think with my heart. I speak from my heart. I feel with the heart. I act from the heart. It can be emotional and exhausting."



Tom Yost

Yost is so in tune with matters of the heart that he knows that word is mentioned 572 times in the Bible. So when it comes to sharing a favorite Bible verse or a favorite quote, Yost goes right to the heart of the matter.

"One of my favorite verses is a responsorial psalm that is sung at various times throughout the liturgical year," says Yost, a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. "The verse is, 'If today you hear God's voice, harden not your hearts' (Ps 95:7-8).

"Another of my favorite verses is from the prophet Ezekiel 36:26—'I [the Lord God] will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your

bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts.'"

Yost has relied upon God's voice, care and generosity in times of both heartbreak and joy.

"I know the sadness, isolation, loneliness, anger, fear and hopelessness of a hardened, stony heart," he notes. "It has great difficulty hearing God's voice which is the voice of love, peace, mercy and forgiveness. It is a restless, unsatisfied and lost heart. It is an aching heart not really knowing what it aches for—until it hears and surrenders to God's voice.

"I know the freedom and beauty and joy of a natural heart, too. A heart that returns to the mercy and love of God over and over again. A heart that forgives and seeks forgiveness. A heart that is open and vulnerable and willing to risk itself for the sake of truth and love. A heart that treasures people and relationships over things and possessions. The heart that God created for us, not the one we created for ourselves."

Yost turns to one other heart-related Bible verse for the foundation of his life and his faith.

"When Jesus is asked in Matthew 22:37 what is the greatest commandment he replies, 'You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, and with all your mind.'

"He leads off with the 'heart.' Not a heart of stone, but a natural heart. I want a 'natural' heart, and God wants to give it to me. What about you?" †

# Judge issues Good Friday ruling suspending FDA approval of abortion pill

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—A federal judge in Texas ruled on April 7 to suspend the approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of a medication abortion pill, additionally granting a seven-day pause for his ruling before it would go into effect to allow the federal government to appeal and seek emergency relief.

The Good Friday ruling comes amid a lawsuit by a coalition of pro-life opponents of the drug mifepristone, the first of two drugs used in a medication, or chemical, abortion. The groups are seeking for the FDA's approval of the drug to be revoked, arguing the federal agency violated its own congressionally-mandated safety standard in approving the drug more than two decades ago.

U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk's ruling marks the most significant abortion-related court ruling since the Supreme Court issued its *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision last year which overturned prior rulings by the high court that interpreted the Constitution as containing a right to abortion.

"The Court does not second-guess FDA's decision-making lightly," Kacsmaryk wrote in his ruling. "But here, FDA acquiesced on its legitimate safety concerns—in violation of its statutory duty—based on plainly unsound reasoning and studies that did not support its conclusions."

The American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, plaintiffs in the lawsuit challenging mifepristone, said in an April 7 statement "today's ruling in the US District Court for the Northern District of Texas is a victory for all our patients."

"The FDA began a pattern of prioritizing the interests of the abortion industry over the health and safety of our nation's women and girls 23 years ago by illegally and recklessly approving dangerous drugs for use in chemical abortions, and then continuing to remove safeguards for women," the statement said. "Today's ruling places women's welfare back at the forefront of the conversation on this issue. Our patients deserve excellent health care and fully informed consent; this decision helps ensure they receive that."

Jeanne Mancini, president of the national March for Life, called the ruling "a major step forward for women and girls whose health and safety have been jeopardized

for decades by the FDA's rushed, flawed and politicized approval of these dangerous drugs."

Marc Tuttle, executive director of Right to Life of Indianapolis, lauded the ruling, saying that it "sends a powerful message."

"Pregnancy is not an illness, and this ruling acknowledges that fact," Tuttle said. "This drug was approved via an emergency process to treat life-threatening illness. Pregnancy is a condition that requires care for the mother and baby to ensure the health of each. But it is not illness."

"We are pleased with the court's decision, which underscores the need to protect pregnant mothers and their babies from unlawful bureaucratic agendas that are harmful to both."

The Catholic Church teaches that all human life is sacred and must be respected from conception to natural death, and as such opposes direct abortion as an act of violence that takes the life of the unborn child.

Alexis McGill Johnson, president and CEO of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America said in an April 7 statement that Kacsmaryk's ruling "blocking the FDA's approval of mifepristone is an outrage and exposes the weaponization of our judicial system to further restrict abortion nationwide."

McGill Johnson argued that while "access to mifepristone remains safe" for the time being, "we should all be enraged that one judge can unilaterally reject medical evidence and overrule the FDA's approval of a medication that has been safely and effectively used for more than two decades."

If Kacsmaryk's ruling goes into effect after the seven-day pause, it would issue a nationwide injunction on the sale of mifepristone, as requested by the plaintiffs, which would affect even U.S. states where abortion is legal and the drug is permitted under state law. However, the federal government indicated it will appeal the ruling.

Shortly after Kacsmaryk issued his ruling, another federal judge in Washington, Thomas Rice, ruled the opposite, blocking the FDA from "altering the status quo" on the drug and stating the FDA must keep medication abortion drugs available.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals is expected to consider the conflict between the two judge's rulings within the seven-day window of Kacsmaryk's order.

In a statement, Attorney General Merrick Garland said the Justice Department "strongly disagrees" with

Kacsmaryk's ruling, and "will be appealing the court's decision and seeking a stay pending appeal."

"Today's decision overturns the FDA's expert judgment, rendered over two decades ago, that mifepristone is safe and effective," Garland said. "The department will continue to defend the FDA's decision."

Garland added the department would also review Rice's ruling and is "committed to protecting Americans' access to legal reproductive care."

Even if mifepristone is pulled from shelves, another drug used in combination for medication abortions, called misoprostol, would still be available. Misoprostol is sometimes prescribed by doctors for early miscarriage, and the FDA has not approved the drug for inducing an abortion on its own.

In January, the FDA eased restrictions on the sale of mifepristone, permitting its sale at retail pharmacies for the first time. The decision followed the U.S. Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision last year that struck down its previous 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, after which states moved to restrict or broaden abortion access.

"The FDA-approved Mifeprex [mifepristone] more than 20 years ago based on a thorough and comprehensive review of the scientific evidence presented and determined that it was safe and effective for its indicated use," the agency said on its website.

Proponents of the use of mifepristone for abortion argue the court should keep the FDA regulations in place.

On its website as of March 24, the FDA states that mifepristone "is safe when used as indicated and directed" through 10 weeks gestation. The agency's adverse reaction guidelines for the drug state that "serious and sometimes fatal infections and bleeding occur very rarely."

But opponents of mifepristone say those risks are more common and more dangerous than proponents of the drug say.

"Major international studies show chemical abortion carries four times the risk for many severe, even life-threatening, complications as compared to surgical abortion," Mancini said. "This action by the court will save lives and ensure that the health and safety of women and girls is not compromised for the sake of advancing a pro-abortion political agenda." †

(The Criterion staff contributed to this article.) †

## GUEST

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know to pursue what is most meaningful to them. Spend time with the elders in your family; volunteer in a home for the elderly. Show esteem and support to those who work in caring professions

and thank them for their service.

Defy death by voting against assisted suicide and euthanasia and by helping others to understand the inherent evil of these acts.

Support initiatives and policies in favor of increased compensation, benefits and incentives for aging services professionals.

Support immigration reform to make it easier for qualified caregivers to enter the workforce in our country.

Support reform of restrictive long-term care regulations and inadequate financing.

Two years ago, Pope Francis instituted a day honoring grandparents and the elderly, to be celebrated each year on the fourth Sunday of July. It is my dream that this day

will evolve to the point where the streets of our major cities are filled with families and people of all ages joyfully celebrating the covenant between generations.

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

# CHRISM MASS

continued from page 1

Archbishop Thompson blessed oils used in sacraments and in the dedication of altars and churches. And parish representatives received those oils to take back for use in their faith communities.

Amid these unique moments in the life of the Church, all those worshipping in the cathedral during the chrism Mass were still gathered before its altar to celebrate the Eucharist in the midst of the first year of the National Eucharistic Revival.

Father Matthew Perronie experienced this year's chrism Mass for the first time as a priest, having been ordained last June.

It was a clear reminder to him of the importance of the Eucharist to the Church in central and southern Indiana.

"The Eucharist unites us," said Father Perronie, parochial vicar of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, in comments after the Mass. "Looking out today, I saw this person that I encountered in this place and that person in that place. And here we were all together. What brought us together was the Eucharist."

He appreciated renewing his ordination promises alongside the priests serving in the archdiocese.

"It brought me back to the day of my ordination," Father Perronie said. "And here were all of these priests who have been around for many more years than I have. But I'm here now renewing—united with them—the commitment that I made less than a year ago."

Transitional Deacon Jack Wright, a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond, assisted at the liturgy and witnessed all those priests renewing the same ordination promises that he will make on June 3 when he and transitional Deacon Jose Neri will be ordained priests.

"It reminded me that we don't just make the promises one time and then forget about them," Deacon Wright said. "We renew them every year. And we just don't renew them by ourselves. We come together with all of the other priests in the archdiocese in front of the archbishop and renew them together."

In his homily during the Mass, Archbishop Thompson spoke about the importance of this unity among all the faithful.

"We proclaim the good news of salvation in [Christ] as the way, the truth and the life," he said. "To proclaim ourselves, making our egos and agenda the focal point, is



Transitional Deacon Jack Wright gives blessed oils to Karla Hudacek, a pastoral associate at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, on April 4 during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

to discredit discipleship and betray the mission.

"We are only credible if we are united in the mind and heart of the Church. And our Church has two wonderful ways of doing that. One is the synodal process that Pope Francis has brought to the universal Church. The other is our National Eucharistic Revival. Two means by which we can grow in unity. ... We must embrace both."

The unity at the chrism Mass was seen amid great diversity. Catholics—lay, religious and ordained—from around the world who have come to live in central and southern Indiana took part in the liturgy.

"It's like a holy family coming together," said Louise Rohrig, a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood. "It's so holy. It feels like you're getting nearer and nearer to Jesus all the time."

Benedictine Novice Angel Romero attended the chrism Mass from Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, where he is in the initial year of his religious formation. He came to St. Meinrad from his native Mexico and was happy to see Catholics from around the world at the liturgy.

"It's part of the richness of the Catholic Church," said Novice Angel. "Many people from many cultures have come to the archdiocese and for this celebration. The Catholic faith is universal."

Sitting not far away from him was Megan Gehrich, youth minister for St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, who received blessed oils for her faith community.

Born and raised in the archdiocese, Gehrich was impressed by worshipping with fellow Catholics from around the world at the Mass.



Father Thomas Schliessmann, left, Father Douglas Hunter and Father Guy Roberts raise their hands in prayer on April 4 during the eucharistic prayer of the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass.



Benedictine Sister Jeana Visel proclaims the first reading during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass on April 4 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and more than 150 priests serving in central and southern Indiana process on April 4 into SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass.

"One of my favorite things about being a Catholic is that, at any hour of the day, there's someone celebrating Mass in all countries," Gehrich said. "Seeing that represented here is very special."

Sarah Heard, a student at Marian University in Indianapolis who worshiped at the chrism Mass, echoed Gehrich's sentiments.

"It reminds me of the one faith that we celebrate," said Heard. "We all come from different parishes [and countries], but it's the same Mass that we're celebrating and the same faith. Us worshipping together is really cool."

Heard and her fellow Marian student attending the Mass, Nick Vander Pluym, are San Damiano

Scholars and are considering serving in the Church in the future. Others at the Mass, like Gehrich, are lay ministers in parishes across central and southern Indiana.

Pam Deveyary came to the cathedral from Prince of Peace Parish in Madison where she leads liturgical music. For her, the chrism Mass was a valued respite during a very busy Holy Week.

"Because I'm music director, I'm involved in all the [liturgies of Holy Week] in my home parish," said Deveyary, who noted that she has been coming to the chrism Mass for more than 40 years. "But for this one, I come and enjoy. I just sit and enjoy everything. It's a gift to myself."

Referring to the oils blessed during the liturgy, Archbishop Thompson reflected in his homily on how all members of the Church have an integral role in carrying out its mission of evangelization.

"Through the sacred oils—chrism, catechumen and the infirmed—we are anointed in [Christ] to carry on his mission to the world," he said. "In doing so, we allow ourselves to be instruments through which the world is transformed rather than allowing the world to get the best of us."

Benedictine Sister Jeana Visel helps prepare lay Catholics for ministry in the Church as director of graduate theology programs at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

"We are one Church," she said. "It's not just the priests who are anointed. It's the whole people of God in our baptism, confirmation and Eucharist. We're anointed as priest, prophet and king. That's all of us together at some level."

As a member of the archdiocesan eucharistic revival planning team, Sister Jeana was happy to take part in such a special Mass.

She spoke of how the Eucharist empowers all Catholics to share in the ministry of Christ and the Church, something highlighted at the end of the Mass.

"We are sent forth to be the body of Christ where we are and serve," Sister Jeana said. "What a great mission. What a great diversity of callings, even as we are in unity as one body of Christ."

(To view a gallery of photos from the archdiocesan chrism Mass, visit [www.CriterionOnline.com](http://www.CriterionOnline.com).) †

# SIMPLY CATHOLIC



The Leon family prays around the dinner table in their home in Detroit. In our increasingly technologically-dominated culture, it's important for people to make deliberate choices to take time away from digital devices. Meals shared with other people can be an important time to do this. (OSV photo/courtesy Archdiocese of Detroit)

## Too much time online can hinder relationships with God, others

(OSV News)—How much time is too much time online?

It's a question facing all of us in the 21st century, as technology becomes more and more integrated into our lives. How do we balance work, shopping, reading, communicating—all the ways that we use technology—with a desire to be intentionally present in our daily lives?

In 2000, just as the Internet was becoming ubiquitous, the Pontifical Council for Social Communications seemed to sense the coming struggle and the challenges it would bring.

In a document on ethics in communications, it addressed the fragile relationship between nature and modernity by reminding us: "Depending on how they use media, people can grow in sympathy and compassion or become isolated in a narcissistic, self-referential world of stimuli with near-narcotic effects."

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches us that we're made to live in communion with God and with one another (#45, #959). It is not a bad thing to desire connection.

The key is to discern whether our technology use helps us deepen our relationship with God and those whom we encounter day to day. If it helps us connect with people, inform our convictions, defend the voiceless, proclaim our beliefs or aid in our worship of God, we are using the

capabilities presented to us for good.

If it becomes a distraction from God's plan—if we turn to it in moments of temptation and loneliness, searching for relationship from an online source instead of God, the ultimate source—we are letting ourselves be used by technology.

If you've been overconnected for too long, your first steps to reset your use of technology can be painful. You might feel like the world will stop spinning if you can't reply to every e-mail within 10 minutes or check your most recent social media notification.

After a few weeks of a new routine, however, you may be surprised at how little you've "missed" and how much "found time" you recover for the things and the people that are truly important in your life.

### Warning signs of technology overuse

How can you tell if your use of technology is throwing your life off-kilter? Consider some of the following warning signs:

- You have fewer deep, close relationships with people than you used to (even if you're in contact with more people than ever before).
- You often feel resentful when family, work or social commitments interrupt time spent on the web.
- You frequently text or check your phone during

meals or when other people are present—including during Mass, family celebrations, or other occasions that are traditionally times of worshipping God or bonding with the people around us.

—You spend far more time online for "fun" than you do in prayer or meditation.

If more than a couple of the previous statements sound familiar, your Internet and social media use is probably throwing your life out of balance. It's a good idea to seek out moments for "unplugged" silence throughout your routine or re-center yourself through brief retreats from your ordinary environment—perhaps going outdoors into nature or stopping by church for a visit.

### Finding balance: Some practical tips

Changing our technology use is easier said than done—but creating any new habit is a matter of small steps. Here are several suggestions to get you started:

—Track your time. Write down each day the amount of time you spend online and the activities in which you spend it or use provided smartphone data to track your use on that device.

Just as studies show that people lose weight more easily when they keep a journal of all the food they eat, keeping a journal of how you spend your online time can be an eye-opener.

—Designate "offline times" and be open about them. For example, put away your smartphone when you are at your child's soccer practice or during family meals. To avoid potential tension with people who want you to be "on" constantly, tell your friends, family and co-workers about your goal to get a better balance in your life; you may even inspire them to try something similar.

—Shut down your computer and other devices each night. Not only does this send a signal that it's time to disconnect for the day, but the time it takes everything to boot up in the morning gives you a moment to collect yourself and plan how to use your time online to its best advantage.

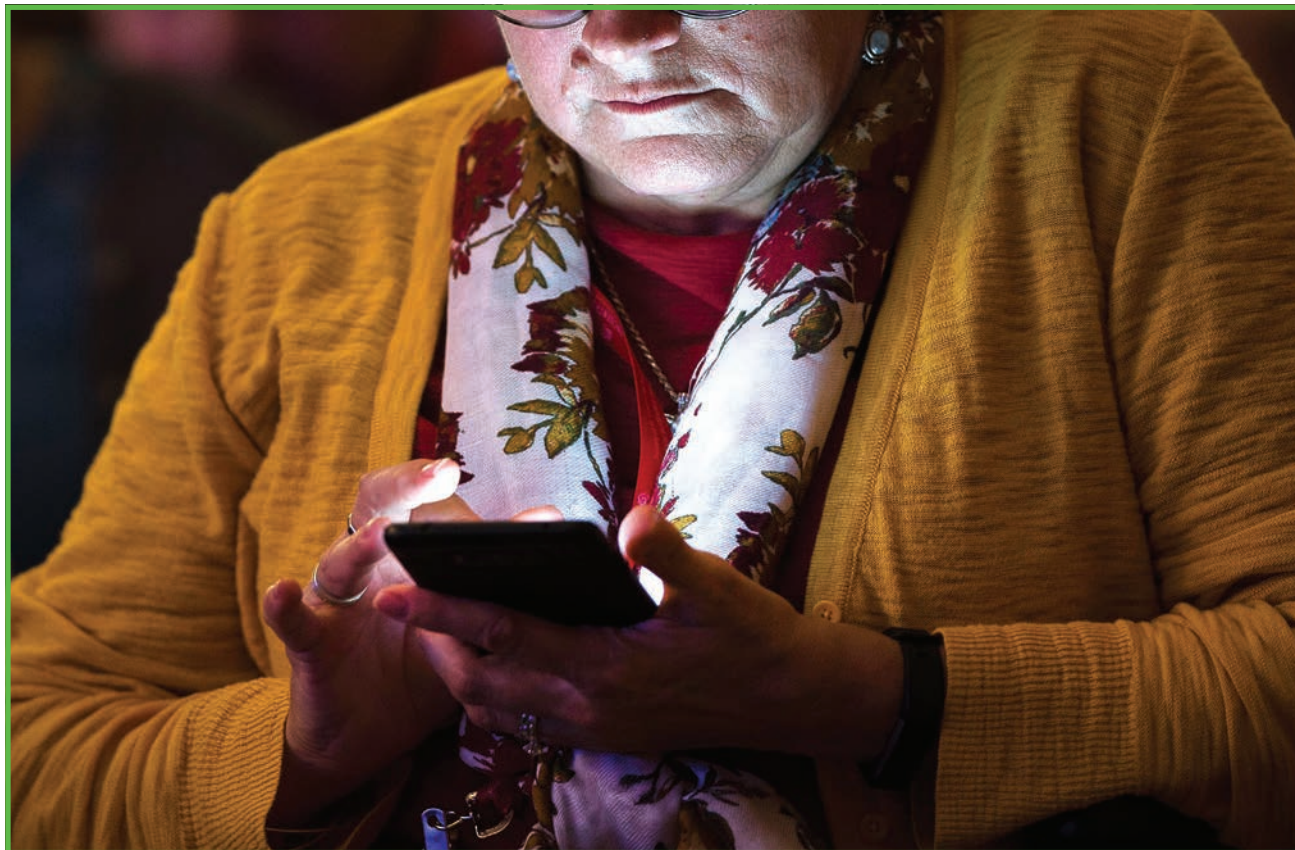
—Contact your friends the old-fashioned way. Make an effort to regularly call, write a letter or visit your friends and family. Your relationships will benefit from the personal touch.

—Include time spent on your phone or other devices in your examination of conscience.

At the end of each day and before you receive the sacrament of penance, take a moment to ask yourself: Have I been using technology to deepen my relationships with God and others, or to avoid them? Has my time online caused me to neglect anything or anyone that I should be paying attention to?

With the help of God's grace, which is always available to us, we can be mindful of the warning signs of being too connected to our devices and use a variety of means to establish a more healthy use of them.

Then our phones, tablets and computers can help us deepen our relationships with God and with others. †



A woman is pictured in a file photo using a smartphone. Use of such digital devices have the potential both to enhance our relationship with God and other people and to distract us from them. (OSV News photo/CNS file, Tyler Orsburn)

Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

## Harnessing the spirituality of procrastination

I'm a champion procrastinator from way back when. Throughout schooling and into my professional career, I tend to put off big projects until the last minute, telling myself I work better under pressure. I have validated this approach time and again when waiting until a deadline has produced my best work. But I'm also left with a feeling of negativity as I beat myself up over being a procrastinator in the first place.

I know well the tell-tale signs of procrastination. I just need a minute (which turns into many minutes) to check my e-mail. I'm suddenly very hungry so I better grab a snack. Let me reorganize my project priorities list and bargain for more time to complete the assignment.

Wanting to understand the pros and cons of procrastination, I read quite a few articles on the topic. Depending on the author, procrastination can have negative consequences such as breeding self-doubt, causing stress or poor results. Other authors

extol the benefits of procrastination such as "going with the flow," allowing time to process and unleashing your creativity.

I learned a few important things about my procrastination. To understand why I procrastinate, I needed to look deeper at the root cause. While some may simply be lazy or they fear the project because of lack of knowledge, I determined my root cause is perfectionism. I want to get it right—whether it be a project, writing an article or making a decision. I put things off because of a fear of failure.

However, I also learned that my procrastination has evolved. While in college, I most often would pull "all-nighters" having procrastinated to the very last minute because I simply didn't want to do the work, or I had more important things I'd rather be doing.

Today, my procrastination is more intentional. I still wait until projects are about due, but I factor in a little breathing room such as writing this column *two* days before the deadline. And I am purposeful in waiting until near the end to do a project so that I have ample time to mull it over. Articles have enlightened me that this is known as "managed delay" as

opposed to procrastination.

As I procrastinated writing this column to ponder procrastination, I came to the conclusion that I reap benefits from procrastinating. It definitely allows me the time to think through solutions, to percolate ideas longer and to involve God.

Taking the time to approach a project or decision makes room for God in the process. Putting off a project until closer to the deadline allows me maximum time to pray for guidance and to allow God to inspire my best work according to his will.

For example, if I have a month to complete a project, I will have an ongoing, open dialogue with God about my approach. Sometimes, it develops into a better thought-out solution. Other times, God helps me see that my whole hypothesis is ill-conceived, and he sends me in a completely different and better direction.

As I shift my perception, I have to ask myself, am I procrastinating? Or am I procrastinating well?

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †



Twenty Something/

Christina Capecchi

## How Grandma made her life a work of art

Two parts reverence, one part mischief. That's how I'd sum up my grandma, whose name—Elinor Marcella—captures her mix of poise and playfulness.



She raised five kids with a kind of 1950s ease: neck bows and neatly coiffed hair, family dinners and at-home haircuts, playing Bud & Travis on the record player and zipping around town in a Ford LTD station wagon.

Grandma died recently—two days shy of her 90th birthday—and we are left to distill her remarkable life, turning memories in our minds, scanning slides frozen in time. It's 1972 and she's standing at Glacier National Park, a gold scarf tied around her dark hair. It's 1992 and she's playing Solitaire in the porch, greeting all who come and go. It's 2022 and she's in the party room of the condo, cooing over her newest great-grandbaby.

There was always a twinkle in her eye—a spark of recognition, a sense of fun. She wanted kids to be kids. Her own inner child was alive and well; up until her final weeks, she'd request a corner piece of cake covered in frosting.

You could count on Grandma to be your cheerleader. She saw your special gifts and believed in them.

She never sought the spotlight, but preferred her supporting role—keeping books for her husband's business, keeping house, keeping it all together. She never sang the melody, but always found a harmony, enhancing the other singers.

She took certain fundamentals seriously—her Catholic faith, the sacrament of reconciliation, marriage, education—but wasn't afraid to take her own approach on all the less crucial stuff. Reverence and mischief.

Her OB-GYN was strict about weight gain, so she'd schedule her appointments for first thing in the morning and then indulge in a hot fudge sundae on the way home. In her 70s and 80s, when she'd meet girlfriends for lunch, they'd ditch the main course and cut straight to dessert.

Grandma deferred to Grandpa but quietly wielded influence, calling to mind the quote in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*: "the man is the head [of the house], but the woman is the neck, and she can turn the head any way she wants."

Grandpa preferred to drink 2% milk, but skim milk seemed healthier and cost less in the '60s, so Grandma poured skim milk into 2% cartons. The head doesn't always realize when the neck subtly turns.

Her love of beauty led her to become an artist in her own right—the kind of quiet, resourceful one who makes a house a home, who makes memories and makes gifts: embroidering personalized shirts for her children, sketching their portraits, crafting whimsical Christmas cards, painting porcelain dolls for each granddaughter in the color of their birthstones.

Those twinkling eyes never missed flashes of beauty. She'd relish a sunset or a pair of earrings or a beautifully wrapped gift, setting it on display for days before opening it and occasionally re-wrapping it afterward.

In her final days, I gave her an early Easter gift wrapped in watercolor florals. She was near death and speaking very little, but she admired it as only Grandma could.

Her Easter came early this year, skipping the second half of Lent and cutting straight to dessert, her heavenly home.

The rest of us honor her memory when we slow down and soak up the beauty in our midst, sensing—if not fully grasping—that it points us to God.

Grandma lived out the words from

See CAPECCHI, page 15

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

## Handling stress can lead to a healthy, positive life

Stress Awareness Month has been recognized every April since 1992, but with the challenges during the past couple of years it now seems particularly important.

Learning to cope with our stress and finding healthy ways to deal with these situations can go a long way in living a healthy and positive life.



We all experience stress—yet we may experience it in very different ways. Because of this, there is no single definition for stress, but the most common explanation is a physical, mental or emotional strain or tension.

Stress is a reaction to a situation where a person feels anxious or threatened. Learning healthy ways to cope and getting the proper care and support can help reduce stressful feelings and symptoms.

While we might be aware of the connection between the stress in our lives and our emotions, it's not always easy to identify the connection between stress and our physical well-being. When we experience headaches, back pain, heartburn or even a cold that just won't go away, it's natural to look for physical answers for these physical problems. However, stress can sometimes be the culprit.

Our bodies are prepared to handle some stress since it is an inevitable part of life. We all generally deal with some stress regularly, whether it's stress at work or school, stress in our families or other relationships, stress caused by societal events or circumstances, or stress related to finances. However, long-term or chronic stress can take a serious toll on our bodies, from our immune system to our cardiovascular system.

When the stress response is triggered, stress hormones, including cortisol and adrenaline, are released to prepare our bodies to survive the threat (even in stressful situations that are not life-threatening). Our hearts beat faster, our blood pressure rises, and we start to breathe faster so that our bodies are able to fight, flee or freeze. Usually, our bodies come back down to

normal after the threat or stressor has passed. However, when we are dealing with chronic stress, our response remains activated along with the physiological processes that are intended to help our bodies survive. This has consequences on the body.

Chronic stress is associated with physical health symptoms across the body's systems. In the musculoskeletal system, chronic muscle tension caused by chronic stress is associated with tension and migraine headaches as well as chronic back pain.

In the cardiovascular system, due to the frequent release of stress hormones in the body and the subsequent increase in one's heart rate and blood pressure, chronic stress puts a person at an increased risk for hypertension, heart attack and stroke.

Chronic stress impacts the body's immune system by increasing inflammation and the risk of rheumatic (autoimmune) diseases while decreasing the body's ability to fight off infection and cancer cells. In the gastrointestinal system, chronic stress can cause gut discomfort and bloating to be felt more easily. Changes in diet due to stress, including eating more or consuming more alcohol or tobacco, can lead to other gastrointestinal issues, such as heartburn, diarrhea or constipation. This list could go on, as the impact of chronic stress can be widespread throughout the body.

Whether or not you suffer from any chronic physical or mental health condition, it is worth addressing the stress you face in life. The effects of stress build up through time and can lead to physical and mental health conditions that may sneak up on us.

In addition, stress can become overwhelming fast. But when we learn coping strategies and stress-relieving activities that work for us, not only do we become better equipped to deal with stress as it arises, but we also help protect our bodies and minds from the harmful effects of chronic stress.

(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. You can contact him at [dbethuram@archindy.org](mailto:dbethuram@archindy.org).) †

Faith at Home/Laura Kelly Fanucci

## Pandemic reminds us, even at home, God is with us

Remember when we said we'd never take the Eucharist for granted again? When we had to watch Mass online or from cars in the church parking lot? When every part of parish life—from faith formation



classes to Bible studies to doughnuts on Sundays—changed overnight?

Three years ago, the pandemic was just beginning. The world was shutting down. The vast majority of daily life suddenly centered around home.

As each of us grappled with seismic changes in society, an unexpected ripple effect was that the domestic Church became the primary expression of faith for most Catholics. No longer could we gather for regular celebrations of the

Eucharist in person, but we could join in prayer with the universal Church from our kitchens, bedrooms and living rooms.

Do we remember how we promised we'd never forget?

The third anniversary of the pandemic lockdowns invites us to spend time praying through what this time brought to our lives, families and faith. Since home was where we spent most of 2020's intense months, praying at home can help us continue to navigate a changed world.

To remember what Catholicism teaches about the domestic Church, it helps to return to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: "In our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living, radiant faith. For this reason the Second Vatican Council, using an ancient expression, calls the family the 'ecclesia domestica' " (#1656).

Long before "COVID" or "quarantine" entered our daily discourse, we were called to remember that the Church is not limited to the four walls of a holy building. Any time and place we gather as family can be a domestic Church, too.

How was your own domestic Church changed by the pandemic?

You might have spent every waking moment of 2020 or 2021 with your family, or you may have experienced deep isolation, wishing you could gather with children or grandchildren like before. You might have missed important celebrations: weddings, graduations, anniversaries, funerals or births. You may have been so overwhelmed by virtual work and distance learning, divisions in churches and communities or anxieties about the future that you found it nearly impossible to pray.

Or you might have found that regular

See FANUCCI, page 15

Divine Mercy Sunday/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, April 16, 2023

- Acts 2:42-47
- 1 Peter 1:3-9
- John 20:19-31

With deep faith and faith-filled excitement, the Church continues the celebration of the Lord's resurrection and final victory over death and sin at Easter begun a week and a day ago.

As is the case in almost every Mass of this season, the first reading this weekend comes from the Acts of the Apostles. Acts originally was seen as a continuation of St. Luke's Gospel, and these books should be considered as being in sequence.

Together they tell an uninterrupted story of salvation in Jesus, from Jesus' conception in the womb of Mary to a time years after his ascension.

This weekend's reading reveals to us what life was like in the time shortly following the ascension. The first Christians, many of whom likely knew Jesus, reverently followed the Apostles. They were a vibrant living community, eagerly caring for the needy, praying and "breaking the bread," a term referring to the Eucharist in the early Church (Acts 2:46). St. Peter clearly was the chief of the Apostles.

Most importantly, Jesus still lived and acted through the Apostles and in the Church. The sick were cured. The deaf heard. The blind saw. No one was beyond the Apostles' concern.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church offers us a passage from the First Epistle of Peter.

Obvious and inspiring in this reading is the first Christians' intense love for and faith in the Lord. It was a faith that was often challenged. The culture in which Christianity was born and grew in almost every respect either rejected the ideals of the Gospel or held them in contempt.

Many of the first Christians died as martyrs because they so steadfastly held to what Jesus had taught. St. Stephen and all but one of the Apostles themselves died as witnesses to the Gospel.

St. John's Gospel provides the last reading. It is one of the most beloved and familiar of the Resurrection narratives.

In this reading is the story of the reluctance of the Apostle Thomas to accept that Jesus indeed had risen from the tomb. Then, as all recall, Jesus dramatically appeared on the scene. He invited Thomas to believe. In awe and the uttermost faith, Thomas declared that Jesus not only is his teacher, but that indeed he is God.

The Lord then conferred upon the Apostles that most divine of powers, the authority to judge what is sinful and to forgive sin.

## Reflection

In two days, the people in Israel and for Jews everywhere will remember the millions who died in Adolf Hitler's savage persecution of Jews.

Evil in the world has been and still is overwhelming. Violence and hatred in this country. Nicaragua. Ukraine. Blatant immorality.

These historic and current evils provide half of the picture of human existence. The other side shows how beautiful is life when the risen Christ reigns and is acknowledged.

This we celebrate on Divine Mercy Sunday. God sent the Lord Jesus to us in mercy. Christ redeemed us. He strengthens us. He shows us how to live. He leads us away from evil.

Christ's victory over evil has been demonstrated so many times in history. He has never failed.

The Apostles and their successors brought Christ to their contemporaries. Their successors in the bishops bring him to our world today. They connect us with Jesus. They still act through the Church, so vivid in early Christianity.

As differences among themselves unsettle Catholics today, these readings tell us to gather around Peter and the Apostles. Be strong of faith. In the end, all will be good.

Trust in the Lord, as the martyrs trusted. His truth will prevail. †



## Daily Readings

### Monday, April 17

Acts 4:23-31  
Psalm 2:1-9  
John 3:1-8

### Tuesday, April 18

Acts 4:32-37  
Psalm 93:1-2, 5  
John 3:7b-15

### Wednesday, April 19

Acts 5:17-26  
Psalm 34:2-9  
John 3:16-21

### Thursday, April 20

Acts 5:27-33  
Psalm 34:2, 9, 17-20  
John 3:31-36

### Friday, April 21

St. Anselm, bishop and doctor of the Church  
Acts 5:34-42  
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14  
John 6:1-15

### Saturday, April 22

Acts 6:1-7  
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19  
John 6:16-21

### Sunday, April 23

Third Sunday of Easter  
Acts 2:14, 22-33  
Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-11  
1 Peter 1:17-21  
Luke 24:13-35

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

## Apostles' authority to forgive sins continues through apostolic succession

**Q**A Protestant minister (formerly a Catholic) said that the Church's authority to grant absolution in confession



expired upon Christ's death. What authority does the Catholic Church rely on that requires confession to a priest?

**A** God is all-powerful and can extend his grace even beyond what he has promised. But

when we confess our sins to a priest in the sacrament of penance, we can know with confidence that our sins are forgiven, because of Jesus' own words.

In the Gospels, Jesus tells us that he intends to share his authority to forgive sins with the 12 Apostles. This is perhaps stated most directly toward the end of St. John's Gospel, when Jesus tells the Apostles: "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (Jn 20:23).

With respect to the minister's assertion, one interesting thing about this passage is that the promise comes from Jesus after he had already died.

John 20 recounts some of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances, one of which was his sudden apparition to many of

the Apostles (notably minus Thomas, whose absence sets the stage for his later confession of faith) as they were gathered in hiding behind locked doors. This is the first instance when the risen Jesus sends the Apostles on mission, telling them: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (Jn 20:21). Clearly, part of this mission was the forgiveness of sins.

Catholics believe in apostolic succession, meaning that the power and authority Jesus gave to his original Apostles—including the sacramental power and authority to forgive sins—were in turn handed down by the Apostles to their successors though the centuries right up to our present-day bishops and the priests who assist them in their ministry.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, alluding to the above-mentioned passages from the Gospel of John, describes the succession like this: "Thus the risen Christ, by giving the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, entrusted to them his power of sanctifying: they became sacramental signs of Christ. By the power of the same Holy Spirit, they entrusted this power to their successors. This 'apostolic succession' structures the whole liturgical life of the Church and is itself sacramental, handed on by the sacrament of holy orders" (#1087).

So, far from this authority expiring with Jesus' death, it might be more accurate to say that the Church's authority to forgive sins only began after Jesus died and rose from the dead.

This might prompt the question of when exactly the Church first came into being. Jesus does refer to his Church—albeit in a future tense—during his time of active ministry, when he says to the Apostle Simon Peter: "... you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it" (Mt 16:18).

He follows by mentioning again the authority to loosen or to bind sins when he notes the role Peter would hold as the earthly leader of the Church: "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on Earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on Earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt 16:19).

Traditionally, we call the feast of Pentecost the birthday of the Church. But there is also a beautiful theme running throughout the theological writings of an early Father of how the Church was born from Christ's wounded side. As the catechism puts it, referencing St. Ambrose: "As Eve was formed from the sleeping Adam's side, so the Church was born from the pierced heart of Christ hanging dead on the cross" (#766).

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

## My Journey to God Passing the Light

By Sandy Bierly

Lord, fill me with Your radiant light,  
And keep it burning ever bright.  
Bringing warmth and grace to all I meet,  
As I journey through this day.

Keep this light burning bright,  
May it be the light of life,  
In my home, parish, and community,  
As I journey toward eternity.

(Sandy Bierly is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. Photo: A child holds a candle during an interfaith service at the Anglican Cathedral Church of St. Peter in Bradford, England, on Feb. 24, marking the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. (OSV News photo/Molly Darlington, Reuters)



# 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.

**CALIFF, Elizabeth A.**, 58, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, March 23. Wife of Chuck Califf. Mother of Clara, Libby, Charlie and Sam Califf. Sister of Cathy Hume, Laura Morgan, Chris, Mark, Mike and Paul DiBenedetto.

**CORD, Betty**, 92, St. John the Baptist, Osgood, March 27. Mother of Marita Mergenthal, David and Mike Cord. Sister of Carolyn Smith, Dolores Spoonmore, Dorothy and Joe Winkel.

**ELSON, Robert**, 82, Christ the King, Indianapolis, April 1. Husband of Peggy Elson. Father of Christine Barkley, Colleen Bill, Debbie, Emily, Mary Claire, Brad, Brian and David Elson. Brother of Peggy Clerget, Cynthia Knobbe, Jane Usab, Kevin, Michael and Timothy Elson. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of four.

**FISHER, Charlene M. (Skillman)**, 82, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, March 8. Mother of Ruth Ingram, Kelley and Mark Fisher. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of one.

**GALLO, Mary Ann**, 92, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, April 3. Wife of Albert Gallo. Mother of Elaine Pesto, Debbie, Greg and Mark Gallo. Sister of Elizabeth Bartholomew. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of 12.

**HERBERT, Barbara L.**, 89, St. Mary, Rushville, March 30. Mother of Lisa Flannery, Larry, Mark and Rick Herbert. Sister of Emily Mason. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 22. Great-great-grandmother of one.

**JENT, Edna**, 71, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, March 14. Wife of Samuel Jent. Mother of

# Statue vandalized



Archbishop Grzegorz Rys of Łódź, Poland, starts Palm Sunday Mass on April 2 in front of the Cathedral of St. Stanislaw Kostka where a statue of St. John Paul II was vandalized the night before. Marches and vigils remembering St. John Paul II were organized across the country on April 2 for the 18th anniversary of the Polish pope's death. (OSV News photo/courtesy Archdiocese of Łódź, Poland)

Sherry Mollette and David Woods. Sister of Brenda Jude, Rebecca Mullins, Barbara Ann Poff, Bill, Gary, Roger and Walter Damron. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of six.

**KLEIN, Rosella C. (Andres)**, 88, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, March 26. Mother of Diane Bush, Debbie Canada and David Klein. Sister of Bernard and Henry Andres. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of six.

**KULWICKI, Margie Jean (Stager)**, 94, St. Mary of the Knobs, Floyd County, April 1. Mother of Bruce, Dale and Steve Kulwicki. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of nine.

**LOI, Fern P.**, 96, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 27. Mother of Peggy Morris, Pamela Taylor and Sandra Townsend. Sister of Wanda Davis. Grandmother of

seven. Great-grandmother of 12. Great-great-grandmother of seven.

**MARTINI, Dennis P.**, 76, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Sept. 13, 2022. Father of Kevin and Tracy Martini. Brother of Leo and Ralph Martini. Grandfather of two.

**NEAFUS, Barbara L.**, 89, St. Joseph, Corydon, April 4. Mother of Jimmy, Sr., and Kevin Neafus. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of four. Great-great-grandmother of seven.

**NICCU, Charles**, 79, St. Mary, Rushville, March 30. Husband of Jane Niccum. Father of Cheryl Mahon, Jennifer Tanksley, Eric and Mark Niccum. Brother of Frank, Jerry and Paul Niccum.

Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of four.

**NOBBE, Betty Ann**, 83, St. Mary, Greensburg, April 2. Sister of Marlene Meyer, Susan Munson, Delores Young, Herman, Leon, Robert and Walter Nobbe. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

**PULLEY, Norma Jane**, 87, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 25. Mother of Susan Cooper, Lisa Hunter, Chrissy McKinley and Jerry George. Sister of Marge Hill and Lawrence Hess, Jr. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of 10.

**SHEA, John R.**, 92, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 17. Uncle of several.

**SPENCER, Michael J.**, 40, St. Bartholomew, Columbus,

March 26. Husband of Graciela Gonzalez. Father of Anna and Aaron Spencer. Son of Nydia Spencer.

**SWOAPE, Mary L. (Walz)**, 70, St. John the Apostle, Bloomington, March 22. Mother of Mayra Villella, Rachel and Mason Swoape. Sister of Trish Becker, Victoria Walz, Hadassah Wilkinson and Joe Walz. Grandmother of six.

**WAGONER, Mary B.**, 89, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, Feb. 20. Wife of Philip Wagoner. Mother of Mary, Cliff, Mike, Philip and Tucker Wagoner. Sister of Kathy Gogola, Beth Groves, Ed and Friz Bloemker. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of six.

**WELLER, Genevieve**, 92, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, March 30. Mother of Rhonda, Jeffrey and Robert Weller. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 18.

**WENNING, Lucille**, 95, St. Mary, Greensburg, March 27. Mother of Diane Saler, Mark and Stephen Wenning. Sister of Roselyn Senft. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of four.

**YOUNG, Phyllis M. (McCarty)**, 93, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, March 12. Mother of Monica Jones, Julie White, Patricia, Michael, Noah and Philip Young. Sister of Mary Stralka. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of four. †

## Kansas Legislature approves 'born alive' bill with veto-proof majority; awaits governor

(OSV News)—Kansas lawmakers approved a “born-alive infants protection act” on April 4, sending the legislation to Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly’s desk with a veto-proof majority. The bill aims to protect infants born alive, regardless of whether the intent was to abort them, and marks the first abortion-related legislation passed in the state since Kansas voters rejected an effort to strip abortion protections from their state constitution last year.

The Kansas House voted 86 to 36 to pass the bill, HB 2313, which would require physicians to provide medical care to infants “born alive” as the result of a botched abortion procedure appropriate to their gestational age, and to report data to the state about any such incidents. The Kansas bill also would apply to instances where doctors induce labor to deliver an unborn child that is not expected to survive outside the womb.

“A supermajority of Kansas legislators heard the testimonies of abortion attempt survivors and doctors and responded with compassion,” Danielle Underwood, director of communications for Kansans for Life, said in a statement. “The bill now heads to the governor’s desk where she can sign it into law, allow it to become law without her signature, or veto it. What will Gov. Laura Kelly do next?”

Kelly previously vetoed a born alive bill in 2019, but the new born alive bill passed both the state’s House and

Senate with more than the two-thirds majority necessary to override a veto.

Critics of the bill say the legislation could come between patients and their doctors about difficult medical decisions, with some arguing such instances of infants surviving abortions rarely to never occur.

“This bill is absolutely unnecessary,” Democratic Sen. Pat Pettey of Kansas City said during a debate on the bill in March. “This bill will traumatize mothers who desperately want to be mothers, who already are dealing with the [most] heart-breaking moments of loss imaginable.”

Proponents of born alive bills argue that such instances do occur, pointing to cases like that of Philadelphia abortionist Dr. Kermit Gosnell, who was convicted in 2013 of first-degree murder for cutting the spinal cords of multiple babies delivered alive in his abortion clinic, as well as the involuntary manslaughter of an adult patient, performing abortions beyond Pennsylvania’s limit of 24 weeks, among other charges.

Underwood argued that Kansans “must hold our elected leaders accountable to recognize these babies exist and deserve equal care.”

“Kansans for Life calls on all who believe that no baby should be left to die alone on a cold, steel table to urge Gov. Laura Kelly to quickly sign the Kansas Born Alive Infants Protection Act into law,” Underwood said. †

### Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

For more information, please log on to [www.archindy.org/layministry](http://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](http://www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com) or 888-393-6810
- 2 Victim Assistance Coordinator, Archdiocese of Indianapolis**  
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410  
**317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548**  
[victimassistance@archindy.org](mailto:victimassistance@archindy.org)

# Mooresville parish, Knights host dinner in support of vocations

By Sean Gallagher

MOORESVILLE—Father Joseph Moriarty, rector of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, was glad to bring 15 of the young adult men in priestly formation at the seminary to a March 27 dinner in support of vocations at St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville.

“It’s tremendously encouraging,” Father Moriarty said. For him, the dinner was a sign that vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life are “in a deep level of the hearts” of St. Thomas More’s parishioners.

“They allow their faith, what they believe about vocations, to issue forth in action,” Father Moriarty said. “This dinner is a sign of that action.”

Parishioners also attended the dinner, many of them bringing their children, something Father Moriarty appreciated.

“They can look and say, ‘These aren’t people I only hear about or read about in Sunday school class. These are people I get to visit with,’” he said.

The dinner was organized by Saint Thomas More Knights of Columbus Council 7431 at St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville.

Larry Janeczek, a member of the council and of the parish, noted that the dinner took place two days before the anniversary of the founding of the Knights of Columbus, which was started in 1882 by Blessed Michael McGivney, a diocesan priest at the time in Connecticut.

“Being founded by a parish priest defines a main reason why the Knights are committed to supporting and helping with vocations so strongly,” said Janeczek.

Donnie Miller, a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond and the vocations chairman for the Indiana State Council of the Knights of Columbus, was in Mooresville for the dinner.

“It’s great,” he said. “We’re always trying to encourage vocations. I enjoy coming to these events and seeing what each council is trying to do to support vocations. We need to encourage as many young men as we can to become priests.”

Several of the seminarians from Bishop Bruté spoke at the dinner, sharing with attendees how they came to know God’s call to the priesthood in their lives.

Seminarian Randy Schneider, a member of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, was one of them. Growing up in southeastern Indiana, he knew little of St. Thomas More Parish before visiting it last year for its vocation dinner.

Meeting parishioners who are supporting him without any previous outward



Seminarians from Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, accompanied by Father Joseph Moriarty, the seminary’s rector, pose with members of Saint Thomas More Knights of Columbus Council 7431 after a March 27 dinner to support vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life at St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville. The Knights organized the dinner. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

connection to him impressed Schneider.

“It’s humbling in a way to know that they’re praying for me and willing to put on this dinner for us to show their support,” he said. “It inspires loyalty in me to the archdiocese. I can see more of the people that I’m learning to serve.”

Schneider also feels bolstered in his formation and discernment by the support of the Knights of Columbus.

“Knowing of their origins with Father Michael McGivney and knowing the history of their support for priests is awesome,” he said. “The Knights from my parish and the area around it are very supportive. They’re like surrogate fathers in a lot of ways.”

Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director, spoke at the dinner.

“The power of a ‘yes’ doesn’t just transform one young man’s life,” he said. “It transforms a whole parish. It transforms the whole world, and it effects eternal salvation. So just join me in thanking our seminarians and in praying for them every day.”

“What you seminarians are doing is heroic. Souls depend on it. The fact that



Seminarian Nathan Thompson, a member of St. Ann Parish in Jennings County, speaks about his call to the priesthood during a March 27 dinner at St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville. Thompson is in formation at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

(Photo by Sean Gallagher)

you are laying down your life for Jesus and the salvation of souls matters. That’s why we have this dinner.”

(For information on a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit [HearGodsCall.com](http://HearGodsCall.com).) †

## FANUCCI

continued from page 12

routines of prayer amid the chaos kept you going.

No matter what you experienced, God’s promise to remain constant and faithful holds true. Christ has stayed with us, never abandoning us even as the world turned upside down.

In thanksgiving to our faithful God, we can commit ourselves to deepening our domestic churches as we seek to strengthen our parishes. One simple step we can take is to keep praying at home.

Set a special time and place for daily prayer where you live. Let yourself enjoy the physical presence of sacramentals like candles, rosaries, holy water or prayer cards that remind you of God’s presence at home. Place a crucifix, icon or holy artwork on your wall to remind all who

enter that this is a place of prayer.

Let your prayer at home encompass those beyond your walls, too. Pray for your parish, community and leaders. Pray for all who still cannot receive the sacraments regularly. Pray for those who have not returned to church after the pandemic. Pray for new members who might still be trying to feel at home.

May we never forget the days when every prayer was uttered within our own walls.

May we give thanks each time we gather now, for the grace of worshipping together in person.

Most of all, may we never take the gift of the Eucharist for granted. May we savor every second of the sacraments and Scriptures we get to receive. May we stick to our promise never to forget.

(Laura Kelly Fanucci is an author, speaker and founder of *Mothering Spirit*, an online gathering place on parenting and spirituality.) †

## CAPECCHI

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St. John Paul II’s letter to artists, who wrote that “all men and women are entrusted with the task of crafting their

own life: in a sense, they are to make of it a work of art, a masterpiece.”

She painted nine decades with such vibrance and joy. Masterpiece, indeed.

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †

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### Employment

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This dynamic person of faith should have a Bachelor’s Degree in music or equivalent experience, a strong knowledge of Roman Catholic liturgy, and proficiency in keyboard and choral direction. Salary commensurate with education and experience.

E-mail cover letter, résumé, and references, to [musicdirectorsearch@littleflowerparish.org](mailto:musicdirectorsearch@littleflowerparish.org).

# Pope Francis tells priests: Be agents of harmony, not division

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Priests “anointed” by the Holy Spirit should be authentic agents of harmony rather than “instruments of division,” Pope Francis said.

Celebrating the chrisms Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica on April 6, the pope addressed his homily to about 1,800 concelebrating priests in the basilica on what he called “the birthday of the priesthood,” the institution of the Eucharist that is celebrated on Holy Thursday.

Building harmony is not only a way of improving the Church or being polite, Pope Francis told them, but “an intrinsic demand of the life of the Spirit.”

“If others see in us people who are dissatisfied and discontented, who criticize and point fingers, where else will they find harmony?” asked the pope. “How many people fail to approach us, or keep at a distance, because in the Church they feel unwelcomed and unloved, regarded with suspicion and judged?”

“In God’s name, let us be welcoming and forgiving, always,” he said.

Pope Francis presided over the chrisms Mass, named after the oils blessed during the liturgy, but the principal concelebrants at the altar were Cardinals Angelo De Donatis, the pope’s vicar for Rome; Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals; Leonardo Sandri, vice dean; Francis Arinze, the third-ranking cardinal; and Auxiliary Bishop Baldassare Reina of Rome.

After the homily, the priests renewed the promises made to their bishop at their ordination. Deacons then wheeled large silver urns down the center aisle of St. Peter’s Basilica to receive the pope’s blessing. The oils will be distributed to Rome parishes and used for the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, ordination and the anointing of the sick in the coming year.

Following tradition, Pope Francis breathed on the chrisms oil to symbolize the infusion of the Holy Spirit, though he did not stand over the urn as in past years—the massive container was brought to his chair, and he remained seated as he continues to experience knee pain.

While thousands of laypeople were in attendance, Pope Francis discussed the problems priests and

bishops face in their vocations and encouraged them to look to the Holy Spirit to embrace their calling in times of doubt.

“Sooner or later, we all experience disappointment, frustration and our own weakness; our ideals seem to recede in the face of reality, a certain force of habit takes over, and difficulties that once seemed unimaginable appear to challenge our fidelity,” said the pope.

In this “watershed” moment, he said, priests may either “drift toward mediocrity and settle for a dreary routine” or be reinvigorated by the Holy Spirit.

“Priestly maturity comes from the Holy Spirit,” he said. “Our priesthood does not grow by quick fixes but an overflow of grace.”

Setting aside his prepared text, Pope Francis shared that he was thinking of priests “in crisis, who are disoriented and don’t know how to take back up the way of the anointment of the Spirit.”

“To these brothers, I am thinking of you, and I simply say, ‘have courage,’ the Lord is greater than your weaknesses, than your sins. Entrust yourself to the Lord,” the pope said. “A double life won’t help you, nor will tossing everything out the window. Look ahead and let yourself be caressed by the anointing of the Holy Spirit.”

Welcoming the Spirit into one’s life “happens when we admit the reality of our own weakness,” he said.

Priests, he said, should be honest and ask themselves, “Does my fulfillment depend on my abilities, my position, the compliments I receive, my promotions, the respect of my superiors or coworkers, the comforts with which I surround myself? Or on the anointing that spreads its fragrance everywhere in my life?”

Spiritual life becomes “liberating and joyful once we are no longer concerned to save appearances and make quick fixes,” said the pope.

He ended his homily with two “simple and important words” for the priests: “Thank you.”

“Thank you for your ministry, which often is carried out with great effort and little recognition,” he said, before praying that they would be “apostles of harmony.” †



Pope Francis breathes on chrisms oil, a gesture symbolizing the infusion of the Holy Spirit, as he celebrates the chrisms Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on April 6. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

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