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September 27, 2024

Vol. LXIV, No. 44 75¢



'Revival of prayer and action' is needed to end abortion, says U.S. bishops' pro-life chair

(OSV News)—Ahead of Respect Life Month, the pro-life committee chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is urging "a revival of prayer and action" to end abortion and uphold the sanctity of human life.



Bishop Michael F. Burbidge

A statement for the October observance, written by Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Va., was released by the USCCB on Sept. 19 and posted to the website of the USCCB's Respect Life Month initiative. The effort traces its origins to 1972, just prior to the U.S. Supreme Court rulings on *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, the two 1973 decisions that broadly legalized abortion.

In his message, Bishop Burbidge stressed that "Jesus, truly present in the Eucharist, gives us the fullness of life" and "calls each of us to respect that gift of life in every human person."

The bishop pointed to the 10th National Eucharistic Congress, held during July in Indianapolis as part of the National Eucharistic Revival, the U.S. bishops' three-year effort to rekindle devotion to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

The congress and the eucharistic pilgrimages leading up to it "involved hundreds of thousands of Catholics who will never be the same," he said. "The revival continues, and is so needed, especially in our efforts to defend human life."

He quoted a 2013 address by Pope Francis to Catholic medical professionals, in which the pope said that "every child who, rather than being born, is condemned unjustly to being aborted,

See PRO-LIFE, page 8

Four archdiocesan schools receive Blue Ribbon honor for academic excellence

By Sean Gallagher and Natalie Hoefler

For more than 40 years, the U.S. Department of Education has annually recognized the academic excellence of schools across the country by naming them National Blue Ribbon Schools.

Several Catholic schools across central and southern Indiana have been honored with this title during that time.

That legacy continued this year when four schools in the archdiocese were named on Sept. 23 as National Blue Ribbon Schools. They are Roncalli High School and St. Pius X School, both in Indianapolis, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School in Greenwood and St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County.

Brian Disney, archdiocesan school superintendent, said he was "extremely excited" by the honor for the schools.

"These schools are led by outstanding leaders who

integrate the Catholic faith into all aspects of the school experience," Disney said. "The partnerships between their outstanding teachers and engaged parents support the spiritual, academic and character growth of all students."



The Blue Ribbon designation was created by the federal Department of Education in 1982. In 1986, St. Mark the Evangelist School in Indianapolis was the first archdiocesan school to receive the honor. Since then, 29 schools across central and southern Indiana have been named Blue Ribbon Schools 38 times.

Disney praised the four schools honored this year as continuing "a long trend of archdiocesan schools being recognized for excellence by the

U.S. Department of Education."

Overall this year, 16 schools in Indiana received the Blue

See BLUE RIBBON, page 9

Wearing a blue wig, Rebecca Stone, principal of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School in Greenwood, celebrates on Sept. 23 with students of the school. The celebration took place after she announced to the students that the U.S. Department of Education had named SS. Francis and Clare a National Blue Ribbon School. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Unexpected moment leads to a powerful bond between a team and a stranger

(Editor's note: With the fall sports season in full swing for Catholic high schools across the archdiocese, The Criterion invited a coach from each school to share the best part of coaching for them—and the moments this season that have brought them pride and joy. Here is the second part of a series.)

By John Shaughnessy

When Levar Johnson II scheduled the trip, he saw it as an opportunity to help his football team get better while also giving him an opportunity to connect with one of his closest friends. He never

See TEAM, page 8



As the head coach of the football team of Cardinal Ritter High School in Indianapolis, Levar Johnson II strives to bring out the best in the youths he coaches—as players and people.

(Photo by John Shaughnessy)

CEO says eucharistic congress, pilgrimage show Catholics 'are ready to make history'

(OSV News)—In the afterglow of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress, Jason Shanks senses that there's a new "way of evangelization" emerging—or re-emerging—among Catholics in



Jason Shanks

the United States. It's a way of evangelization that is "instructive and exciting," he said, in part because it is visible, drawing from the Church's traditions.

The new CEO of National Eucharistic Congress Inc.

(NEC) pointed especially to the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, which involved 30 young adult "perpetual pilgrims" crossing the country for eight weeks with the Eucharist via four routes, culminating in Indianapolis ahead of the July 17-21 congress.

Pilgrimage-related events, such as Mass, eucharistic adoration and public processions, drew in some cases thousands of people, with the largest perhaps being the 5-mile procession in St. Paul, Minn. with crowd estimates exceeding 7,000 adorers.

"To watch the faith of the people on these pilgrimage routes as they're putting flowers down and doing little acts of devotion ... there's just something amazing about it," he said. "I firmly believe it's a part of what this organization is to go forward, that these are going to be regular happenings and occurrences."

Shanks joined National Eucharistic Congress Inc. on Aug. 1 and took the helm on Aug. 16. During the congress,

he worked behind the scenes, and could be spotted wearing a headset while coordinating logistics.

With both the pilgrimage and the congress, Shanks said he is seeing "the excitement on behalf of the clergy and the bishops.

"I feel like people are responding to their call for eucharistic revival," he said. "You saw that on the pilgrimage as you'd watch bishops hand the monstrance off to other bishops across bridges. ... I think the Church is best when we're on mission, and the pilgrimage sort of symbolizes that."

Along with the NEC's other leaders, including Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minn., its board chairman, Shanks is discerning the future of the organization. NEC formed in 2022 to plan and execute the National Eucharistic Congress and other aspects of the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year initiative of the U.S. bishops that also began that year.

While the bishops' initiative is slated to end with the feast of *Corpus Christi* in 2025, the organization expects to build on the revival's momentum beyond next year and continue to support Eucharist-centered efforts, including future national eucharistic pilgrimages and congresses.

A single-route National Eucharistic Pilgrimage is being planned for next year from Indianapolis to Los Angeles for the June 19 feast of *Corpus Christi*, and another national eucharistic congress is under consideration for 2033 or sooner, given the enthusiastic response Bishop Cozzens received when he publicly floated the idea following the congress' closing Mass. †

Schedule is set for remainder of listening sessions for pastoral planning process

Criterion staff report

Catholics from across central and southern Indiana are invited to take part in a series of listening sessions that started on Aug. 24 at St. Louis Parish in Batesville and will be part of a pastoral planning process for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The rest of the listening sessions are scheduled for the following dates:

—**October 3**—6-8 p.m., St. Ambrose Parish, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour.

—**October 5**—10 a.m.-noon, St. Benedict Parish, 111 S. Ninth St., Terre Haute.

—**October 19**—10 a.m.-noon, St. Anthony of Padua Parish, 316 N. Sherwood Ave., Clarksville.

—**October 26**—2-4 p.m. CST, St. Boniface Parish, N. State Road 545, Fulda.

—**October 30**—6:30-8:30 p.m.,

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 535 E. Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis.

—**November 6**—6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, 7575 Holliday Dr. East, Indianapolis.

The process, which is expected to take place for two years, is aimed at answering three questions: "Where are we today?"; "Where is God calling us to be?"; and "How will we get there together?"

During the pastoral planning process, Catholics in the archdiocese are invited to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide the faithful in listening to God's word and one another as all the faithful seek together to discern God's will for the Church in central and southern Indiana.

They are also encouraged to take part in the listening sessions and complete an online survey that is being prepared for the planning process. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

September 28–October 6, 2024

September 28 – 5:30 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Joan of Arc Parish, Indianapolis, at St. Joan of Arc Church

September 29 – 12:30 p.m.
White Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, followed by reception at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 1 – 10 a.m.
Catholic Center Connection at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

October 1 – 5:30 p.m.
Red Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, followed by dinner at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

October 2 – noon
United Catholic Appeal employee lunch at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

October 2 – 5:30 p.m.
The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem Annual

Bishops Mass and dinner at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis

October 3 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

October 3 – noon
Mass for the Feast of St. Theodora Guérin at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

October 3 – 6 p.m.
Pastoral Planning Listening Session at St. Ambrose Parish, Seymour

October 4 – 2 p.m.
Virtual National Eucharistic Revival Bishops Advisory Group meeting

October 5 – 10 a.m.
Pastoral Planning Listening Session at St. Benedict Parish, Terre Haute

October 5 – 5:30 p.m.
75th Parish Anniversary Mass at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, Greenwood

October 6 – 10 a.m.
Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

Novena for mental health seeks healing, awareness and action on issue

(OSV News)—The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) invites the faithful to join in a novena for mental health as part of the second year of the USCCB's ongoing National Catholic Mental Health Campaign.

The nine days of prayer will commence on Oct. 10, which marks the international observance of World Mental Health Day and conclude on Oct. 18, the feast of St. Luke, the evangelist and a patron of health care, who in St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians is referenced as "the beloved physician" (Col 4:14).

Each day of the novena, which opened the USCCB campaign in October 2023, focuses on a particular aspect of mental health, addressing stigma, social relationships and the impact of factors such as racism and poverty. Saints and others invoked during the novena include St. Dymphna, patron of those with mental illness; St. Martin de Porres, who experienced racial discrimination throughout his life; and Dorothy Day, a servant of God who twice attempted suicide as a young woman.

The Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time—which this year falls on Oct. 13, on the fourth day of the novena—has been designated as "Mental Health Sunday" by the USCCB, during which parishes can highlight the campaign by

integrating mental health into the homily, offering prayers or special blessings for those experiencing anguish or distress, and including a petition for mental health during the prayer of the faithful at the liturgy.

Novena materials can be found online at www.usccb.org/mental-health-novena.

The novena—which encourages participants to pray, learn about and take action about mental health issues—"is offered in solidarity with those suffering from mental health challenges as well as health care professionals, family and friends who are caring for people in need," said the USCCB on its webpage introduction to the novena. "We hope that this modest novena will move all people to discern how God is calling them to offer greater assistance to those with mental health needs."

The USCCB is encouraging Catholic dioceses to share novena information with their parishes with a special emphasis on Mental Health Sunday, Oct. 13, as it falls in the midst of the nine-day renewal effort and is an opportunity to promote and support the efforts of local mental health programs.

The "simple message" of the campaign is that "everyone who needs help should receive help," said the USCCB in a Sept. 23 press release. †



Phone Numbers:
Main office..... 317-236-1570
Advertising..... 317-236-1585
Circulation / Subscriptions ... 317-236-1425

Price: \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

Postmaster:
Send address changes to *The Criterion*,
1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June to August (*summer schedule*). Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
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Staff:
Editor: Mike Krokos
Assistant Editor: John Shaughnessy
Reporter: Sean Gallagher
Reporter: Natalie Hoefler
Graphic Designer / Online Editor: Brandon A. Evans
Executive Assistant: Ann Lewis



The Criterion (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June-Aug.

1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-236-1570
criterion@archindy.org

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
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WYD 2027 in South Korea to focus on courage, interreligious dialogue

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The first World Youth Day to be hosted in a country where Christians are a minority will seek to instill young people with the courage to share the Gospel while fostering interreligious dialogue, organizers of the event said.

World Youth Day 2027, to be hosted in Seoul, South Korea, will help young people “think about the dialogue between faith and modernity,” Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, said at a news conference on Sept. 24.

The challenges young people face today—a loss of purpose, climate change, the digital revolution and economic inequality—“will stimulate young people to make their personal contribution so that contemporary culture may be permeated and transformed by the Gospel, with its power, light and freshness,” the cardinal said.

And in Asia, a continent “receptive to the coexistence of cultures, dialogue and complementarity,” the cardinal said young pilgrims will advance “on their path of learning to become messengers of peace in the world so torn by conflict and confrontation.”

At the closing Mass for World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal—attended by an estimated 1.5 million young people—Pope Francis announced that Seoul will be the host for the next World Youth Day in 2027, following a celebration of young people at the Vatican during the Holy Year 2025.

“Thus, from the western border of Europe it will move to the Far East,” the pope said in his announcement. “This is a marvelous sign of the Church’s universality and of the dream of unity to which you bear witness.”

World Youth Day has been hosted in Asia only once before—World Youth Day

1995 was held in Manila, Philippines.

The Vatican announced on Sept. 24 the themes for the Church’s upcoming celebrations of young people, both taken from St. John’s Gospel: the Jubilee of the Youth, to be held in Rome in 2025, will have the theme “You also are my witnesses, because you have been with me” (Jn 15:27), and the theme for World Youth Day 2027 will be “Take courage! I have overcome the world” (Jn 16:33).

Archbishop Peter Chung Soon-Taick of Seoul said that World Youth Day pilgrims will become “courageous missionaries inspired to live out the joy of the Gospel they have found.”

World Youth Day 2027 “will be more than just a large gathering,” he said at the Vatican news conference. “It will be a meaningful journey where young people, united with Jesus Christ, reflect on and discuss the modern challenges and injustices they face.”

However, “Korea stands in a unique context distinct from previous World Youth Day hosts,” said Seoul Auxiliary Bishop Paul Kyung Sang Lee, coordinator of World Youth Day 2027, since the country is “characterized by the harmonious coexistence of diverse religious traditions.

“Within this environment, the Catholic Church of Korea has steadfastly embodied the Christian virtues of forgiveness and sharing, fostering these values in society while coexisting peacefully with other faiths,” he said.

According to the Pew Research Center, 52% of South Koreans have no religious affiliation, 32% are Christian and 14% are Buddhist. Vatican statistics say Catholics make up 11.3% of South Korea’s population of 51.6 million people.

Archbishop Chung said the preparatory process “will definitely have concrete plans to include people from different



A young man from South Korea waves his country’s flag before Pope Francis arrives for the closing Mass of World Youth Day (WYD) at Tejo Park in Lisbon, Portugal, on Aug. 6, 2023. At the end of Mass, the pope announced the next WYD will be held in Seoul, South Korea, in 2027. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

religious backgrounds, including those who have no religion, so that they can come together and join us during our preparatory process.”

During World Youth Day 2023, a number of interreligious events were offered to participants, such as guided tours of mosques and Hindu temples in Lisbon.

Cardinal Farrell said that Pope Francis wanted to select Seoul as the host for World Youth Day 2027 because “the pope wants to break out to the whole world.

“There’s too much conflict, there’s too much division among us all, and the Holy Father would like to bring us into

dialogue with each other,” he said. “Not to convert people, but to prove and to show that we can all live together respecting each other’s beliefs, respecting the authentic culture of each place.”

Despite South Korea’s geographic distance from countries with large Catholic populations, the cardinal said the number of the attendees at World Youth Day 2023 was nearly double the number estimated by organizers.

“I believe there will be a similar surge of visitors and young people to World Youth Day in Seoul,” he said. “It may be very far, but it’s not far in today’s world.” †



Tom McNulty
BROKER/ATTORNEY
317.507.0688 • mcnultyre@gmail.com

Patrick McNulty
BROKER

Brian Candlish
BROKER

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

Editorial

Do you have time to bring a touch of hope and healing to a broken world?

Searching for a reason to participate in this fall's 40 Days for Life campaign?

Look no further than the ballot initiatives related to abortion this November going before voters in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New York, Nevada and South Dakota.

Some residents in these states want to join Vermont, California, Michigan and Ohio, which have enshrined abortion as a right in their state constitutions.

Sadly, we should not be surprised by what has transpired since the U.S. Supreme Court, in its 2022 *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, overturned the Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision which legalized abortion on demand nationwide. *Dobbs* returned abortion laws to state legislatures, but some argue the Court overstepped its bounds.

Thus, the efforts to protect the unborn and their mothers continue. It will not end until

we can convince the uninformed and those with hardened hearts that abortion is unthinkable, that every child is a gift from God and that women deserve better than abortion. Our work is far from over.

That is a primary reason 40 Days for Life campaigns are still necessary, not only in the United States but across the globe.

40 Days for Life is an international effort that seeks to end abortion through peaceful prayer vigils, and to raise community awareness of the consequences of abortion.

A campaign of prayer, fasting and peaceful activism, a nationwide 40 Days for Life has been held in the spring and fall since 2007 with the purpose of turning hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life and bringing an end to abortion. This year's fall campaign is being held from Sept. 25-Nov. 3.

During the campaigns, individuals and groups pray during one-hour time slots around the world. The initiative offers us a unique opportunity to plant seeds of faith, hope and love where the unborn and their mothers are concerned, and it is a powerful example having people across the globe pray in unison for the unborn and their mothers. It provides an opportunity for the Lord to do his work through us and convert hearts.

The statistics confirm our witness across the globe is working: since 2007, 24,853 babies have been saved, 155 abortion centers have been closed, and 263 abortion workers have quit their jobs.

In the archdiocese, North Vernon joins Indianapolis this fall as a municipality in central and southern Indiana hosting a 40 Days for Life campaign.

The campaign will take place in North Vernon near the CVS and Walgreen's stores at 14 N. State St. Both pharmacies provide and sell the drugs used in chemical abortions, which is now the most common form of abortion.

"Our goal is to create public awareness that these corporations sell these dangerous and deadly drugs. The goal is to advocate for CVS and Walgreens to drop these products immediately," explained Tim O'Donnell, who is overseeing the North Vernon campaign. "We will be participating at 40 Days for Life in that location to prayerfully and peacefully draw attention to the issue and get the community involved.

"We have information to hand out on the risks of these abortion drugs, how to contact CVS and Walgreens corporate headquarters to voice our concerns," he continued, "and [share] information about pregnancy resources in our area."

To sign up for one or more hours, go to www.40daysforlife.com/en/northvernon.

For more information, contact O'Donnell at 317-372-0040 or idiptionsapere@att.net.

As in years past, the campaign in Indianapolis will take place in front of the Planned Parenthood facility at 8590 Georgetown Road. Parking is available along Georgetown Road; do not park in the Women's Care Center parking lot or at the industrial complex across from the Planned Parenthood facility.

The Indianapolis campaign had an opening event in front of the facility in Indianapolis on Sept. 25, with guest speaker Benjamin Ice, regional director of Students for Life of America.

The Indiana Knights of Columbus will hold a 12-hour overnight vigil in front of the Planned Parenthood facility starting at 6 p.m. on Oct. 4. All are welcome to join for a few minutes, an hour or more.

To sign up for one or more hours during the Indianapolis campaign, go to www.40daysforlife.com/en/indianapolis.

For additional information, contact Robert Burton at 40daysforlife.indy@gmail.com.

To find other 40 Days for Life campaigns outside of the archdiocese, go to www.40daysforlife.com and select "Locations."

If you cannot commit to taking part in 40 Days for Life, consider making time to pray for the success of the campaign.

Our faith implores us to be voices for the voiceless.

May the Gospel message of hope, healing, forgiveness and love we share bring light where there is darkness in our broken world.

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/Fr. Patrick Briscoe, O.P.

Padre Pio is beloved, but most people misunderstand why

When I think about the saints most beloved by modern Catholics, Padre Pio tops the list. His weathered face and



brown Capuchin habit are iconic. His remarkable personal story, his strong-willed personality and the intensity of his spiritual life are absolutely captivating. But here's the thing: I think most people get the reason this saint is

beloved entirely wrong.

At first glance, Padre Pio's life is one of mystery and miracle. "I can certainly say that Padre Pio is one of us, and yet so different," writes Capuchin Father John Aurilia in *Dearest Soul* (OSV, 2024), a new book about Padre Pio.

Father John knew Padre Pio well, having served as his secretary in 1967. The stories shared in the book are legendary: bilocation, the reading of souls, the stigmata and countless miracles of healing. For many, these remarkable events are what make him stand out. But the key to why people love Padre Pio is at once much simpler and more mysterious.

One of the things I most admire about Padre Pio is his extraordinary devotion to the sacrament of confession. For decades, he spent hours each day hearing confessions, often up to 10 or 12 hours

at a time. The sheer number of penitents who flocked to him was staggering.

Father John shares in his book that one day, his brother Capuchins asked Padre Pio why everyone went to him for confession. The saint replied, "They think I am deaf."

Padre Pio had a keen awareness of sin, and most importantly, as Father John puts it, "He was abrupt and tough with some people and compassionate and gentle with others." He knew when to strike a blow with tough love and when to anoint with mercy. And that's where so many Catholics—penitents and confessors alike—often go wrong.

We live in a time when Catholics are often reluctant to confess their sins, where guilt is downplayed and the very concept of sin is widely rejected. And yet, the sacrament of confession remains one of the most potent sources of grace we have. Sometimes we all need a stern talking to, to be held to account. But at other times, we just need someone to gently tell us that God loves us and that we'll be OK. Padre Pio could deftly navigate the tension.

Padre Pio's other great secret was his love for the holy Eucharist. Father John recalls how, when the saint celebrated Mass, people would yell things like, "Miracolo, miracolo!" (miracle) or "Evviva Padre Pio!" ("Long live Padre Pio!"). The holy friar insisted that those who interrupted the Mass in this way be escorted from the church. Padre Pio always knew that he wasn't the focus; Jesus was the center of it all.

Padre Pio reveals his deep love for the Eucharist, saying: "How happy Jesus makes me! How sweet is his spirit! But I am confused and can do nothing but weep and repeat: Jesus my food!" The Eucharist was Padre Pio's life. Describing how he felt after holy Communion, Padre Pio writes: "I almost forget that I am in the world; mind and heart desire nothing more and sometimes for quite a long time even the will to desire anything else is lacking in me." That is a special grace of union!

In Padre Pio's life, confession and the holy Eucharist did what they were ordained by God to do. They made the beloved friar holy. But here's the bottom line, and the thing Padre Pio would want us to know above all else: These sacraments can make us holy too.

(Dominican Father Patrick Briscoe is editor of Our Sunday Visitor. Follow him on X @PatrickMaryOP.) †



A statue of St. Pio of Pietrelcina is displayed in a garden at Jesus the Good Shepherd Church in Dunkirk, Md., on April 28, 2022. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

Letters Policy

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

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

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit

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

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

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org. †

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Saint's example reminds us true charity is love in action

The publication date for this column is Friday, Sept. 27, the memorial of St. Vincent de Paul. Here in central and southern Indiana, the name St. Vincent de Paul is very familiar. We have parishes, schools and a hospital named for this great saint. And many of our parishes have chapters of the society named for St. Vincent de Paul and dedicated to the service of the poor.

This is a great legacy for a humble man born in France in 1581 who dedicated his entire life to caring for the spiritual and material needs of others. St. Vincent was a pastor, an educator and a tireless advocate for the poor and vulnerable. His name is universally associated with the term "charity," which our Christian tradition understands as "love in action."

Providing food, clothing and shelter for those who have none—because of lost jobs, immigrant or refugee status or simply the inability to provide life's most basic necessities—carries on the work of Jesus Christ, who also was homeless.

We call these *corporal* works of mercy because they concern humanity's most basic needs: to feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty, to clothe

the naked and shelter the homeless, to visit the sick and imprisoned, and to bury the dead. We call them works of *mercy* because they reveal God's love and compassion for all his children, especially those who are most in need of his assistance.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#2446-2447) defines works of mercy as charitable actions that have their roots in God's justice. Quoting St. Gregory the Great, the catechism tells us: "When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice" (#2246).

How can this be? How can clothing the naked and sheltering the homeless be acts of justice rather than works of mercy? Do we really owe poor people a "debt of justice"? Whose responsibility is it to provide shelter and clothing to people in need? Is this society's obligation? Is it the Church's responsibility? By what religious or moral standard are we *required* to support those who don't enjoy the basic necessities of life?

Scripture tells us: "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has

none; and he who has food must do likewise" (Lk 3:11). "If a sister or brother is poorly clothed and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit" (Jas 2:15-16)?

With God, mercy and justice are never separated. This is one more example of the *both/and* principle of Catholic teaching. When we perform corporal works of mercy in Jesus' name, we are performing acts of charity. But we are also paying a debt of justice and sharing with the poor their proper inheritance as members of God's family.

According to the catechism, "When her mother reproached her for caring for the poor and the sick at home, St. Rose of Lima said to her: 'When we serve the poor and the sick, we serve Jesus.' We must not fail to help our neighbors, because in them we serve Jesus" (#2449). As St. Teresa of Calcutta taught, when we help others (especially the poorest of the poor), we do it to Jesus, with Jesus and for Jesus. This is love in action—charitable work done out of an abundance of self-sacrificing love.

Catholic Charities provides help

and creates hope for people in need throughout central and southern Indiana regardless of their religious background or social/economic circumstances. Very much in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Charities advocates for justice in social structures and calls all people of good will to do the same. Agencies located in various regions of our archdiocese work with individuals, families and communities to help them meet their needs, overcome obstacles, eliminate oppression and build a just and compassionate society.

When we pray for the poor, we invoke God's mercy on our brothers and sisters in Christ. When we donate clothing to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and when we contribute to our local Catholic Charities agencies or to the U.S. bishops' international Catholic Relief Services, we perform these most basic corporal works of mercy—to clothe the naked and shelter the homeless.

Let's remember St. Vincent de Paul by providing clothing and shelter to those who need our help. The gifts we have to share with them are not ours. They belong to the just and merciful God, who has entrusted them to our care. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

El ejemplo de los santos nos recuerda que la verdadera caridad es el amor en acción

La fecha de publicación de esta columna es el viernes 27 de septiembre, memorial de san Vicente de Paúl. Aquí, en el centro y el sur de Indiana, el nombre de san Vicente de Paúl es muy conocido e incluso tenemos parroquias, escuelas y un hospital que llevan el nombre de este gran santo. Muchas de nuestras parroquias tienen sucursales de la sociedad que lleva el nombre de san Vicente de Paúl y que se dedica al servicio de los pobres.

Se trata de un gran legado puesto que se trataba de un hombre humilde nacido en Francia en 1581 que dedicó toda su vida a atender las necesidades espirituales y materiales de los demás. San Vicente fue pastor, educador y defensor incansable de los pobres y vulnerables. Su nombre se asocia en todo el mundo con el término "caridad," que nuestra tradición cristiana entiende como "amor en acción."

Proporcionar alimento, ropa y cobijo a quienes no los tienen, ya sea porque perdieron su trabajo, son inmigrantes o refugiados o simplemente por incapacidad de cubrir las necesidades más básicas de la vida, es una continuación de la obra de Jesucristo, que también fue un sin techo.

Estas se denominan obras *corporales* de misericordia porque atienden las necesidades fundamentales del ser humano: alimentar al hambriento y dar

de beber al sediento, vestir al desnudo y dar albergue al indigente, visitar a los enfermos y a los prisioneros, y dar sepultura a los muertos. Las llamamos obras de *misericordia* porque revelan el amor y la compasión de Dios por todos sus hijos, especialmente por los que más necesitan de su ayuda.

El *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica* (#2446-2447) define las obras de misericordia como acciones caritativas que tienen sus raíces en la justicia de Dios. Citando a san Gregorio Magno, el catecismo nos dice: "lo que poseemos no son bienes nuestros, sino los suyos." Es preciso "satisfacer ante todo las exigencias de la justicia, de modo que no se ofrezca como ayuda de caridad lo que ya se debe a título de justicia" (#2246).

¿Cómo es esto posible? ¿Cómo puede ser que vestir al desnudo y dar cobijo a los sin techo sean actos de justicia y no obras de misericordia? ¿Acaso tenemos en verdad una "deuda de justicia" con los pobres? ¿De quién es la responsabilidad de proporcionar refugio y ropa a los necesitados? ¿Es esta la obligación de la sociedad? ¿Es responsabilidad de la Iglesia? ¿En virtud de qué norma religiosa o moral estamos *obligados* a apoyar a quienes no gozan de las necesidades básicas de la vida?

Las Escrituras nos lo dicen: "El que tiene dos túnicas dé al que no tiene, y

el que tiene comida haga lo mismo" (Lc 3:11). "Si un hermano o una hermana están desnudos y les falta la comida diaria, y alguno de ustedes les dice: 'Vayan en paz, caliéntense y sáciense' pero no les da lo necesario para el cuerpo, ¿de qué sirve?" (Stg 2:15-16)

Con Dios, la misericordia y la justicia nunca están separadas. Este es otro ejemplo más del principio del "tanto y el como" nuestras enseñanzas de la fe católica. Cuando realizamos obras de misericordia corporales en nombre de Jesús, estamos tanto realizando actos de caridad como también pagando una deuda de justicia y compartiendo con los pobres la herencia que les corresponde como miembros de la familia de Dios.

Según el catecismo: "El día en que su madre le reprendió por atender en la casa a pobres y enfermos, santa Rosa de Lima le contestó: 'Cuando servimos a los pobres y a los enfermos, somos buen olor de Cristo' (#2449). No debemos dejar de ayudar al prójimo, porque en él servimos a Jesús. Como enseñó Santa Teresa de Calcuta, cuando ayudamos a los demás (especialmente a los más pobres entre los pobres) es para Jesús, con él y por él. Esto es amor en acción: trabajo caritativo ofrecido por la abundancia de amor abnegado.

Caridades Católicas proporciona ayuda y genera esperanza para las

personas necesitadas en todo el centro y el sur de Indiana, independientemente de su origen religioso o de sus circunstancias socioeconómicas. En consonancia con la obra de San Vicente de Paúl, Caridades Católicas aboga por la justicia en las estructuras sociales y llama a todas las personas de buena voluntad a hacer lo mismo. Las agencias situadas en diversas regiones de nuestra Arquidiócesis trabajan con individuos, familias y comunidades para ayudarles a satisfacer sus necesidades, superar obstáculos, eliminar la opresión y construir una sociedad justa y compasiva.

Cuando rezamos por los pobres, invocamos la misericordia de Dios sobre nuestros hermanos y hermanas en Cristo. Cuando donamos ropa a la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl, y cuando contribuimos a nuestras agencias locales de Caridades Católicas o a los Servicios de Auxilio Católicos internacionales o de los obispos estadounidenses, llevamos a cabo las obras de misericordia corporales más básicas: vestir al desnudo y dar cobijo a los sin techo.

Recordemos a san Vicente de Paúl al proporcionar ropa y cobijo a quienes necesitan nuestra ayuda. Los dones que compartimos con ellos no son en verdad nuestros sino que pertenecen al Dios justo y misericordioso, que los ha confiado a nuestro cuidado. †

Events Calendar

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

October 1

St. Mary Parish, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. **Jesus and the End Times Video Series Week 2: "Who is the Whore of Babylon? How to Read the Book of Revelation,"** 6:30-8 p.m., week two of four-week video Bible study by theologian Dr. Brant Pitre, attend any or all weeks, free. Information: 812-346-3604, parish@stmarysnv.com.

October 1-November 5

St. Jude Parish, 5353 McFarland Rd., Indianapolis. **Project Hope: Faith-based Mental Health Support Group,** 7-8:30 p.m., six Tuesday sessions, limit of 10 participants, mental health professional present, free. Information, registration: lnkiy.in/archindymentalhope, bvarick@archindy.org, 317-236-1543.

October 2

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

October 3

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **Season of Creation Celebration,** 6-9 p.m., Mass followed by presentation and discussion with Paula Brooks, Hoosier Environmental Council environmental justice director, on "Advancing Environmental Justice in Indiana," free. Information: 317-253-1461, churchinfo@staindy.org.

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Mass for the Feast Day of St. Mother Theodore Guérin,** 11 a.m. Information: 812-535-2952, pvctr@spsmw.org.

St. Brigid Parish, 1520 Hepburn Ave., Louisville, Ky. (Diocese of Louisville). **Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi,** 6:30-8 p.m., liturgy reflecting on 800th anniversary of St. Francis's reception of the stigmata, reception to follow, free. Information: 502-584-5565, mtribbey@sbsjlou.org.

October 4

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

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,** Mass 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion,** 11:40 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

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

October 4-5

Planned Parenthood, 8590 Georgetown Road, Indianapolis. **Knights of Columbus 40 Days for Life Overnight Vigil,** Fri. 7 p.m.-Sat. 6 a.m., all invited to join

six participants. Information, registration: retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org, 812-923-8817, tinyurl.com/msfwomenwknd24.

Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Cultivating Hope,** Fri. 6 p.m.-Sun. 10 a.m., Providence Sister Corbin Hannah presenting. \$300 includes lodging and five meals, \$180 commuter includes five meals, \$150 Sat. only (9 a.m.-8 p.m.) includes two meals, register by Oct. 1. Information, registration: events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org. †

the Knights in silent prayer for a few hours, and hour or more. Information: life@indianakofc.org.

October 5

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion,** 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, confession 8-8:30 a.m. followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 5692 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Oktoberfest,** 4-11 p.m., German-style food, beer, live music, games, bounce houses, Teenzone featuring DJ, free admission. Information: 317-257-2266, drewhuntcd@gmail.com.

October 6

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Respect Life Mass,** 10 a.m., Archbishop Charles C. Thompson celebrating, archdiocesan adult and youth pro-life

awards presented at end of Mass. Information: bvarick@archindy.org, 317-236-1521. Meridian St. between 12th and 16th streets, Indianapolis. **Central Indiana Life Chain,** 2:30-3:30 p.m., public prayer and witness to sanctity of life, free street parking. Information: CentralIndianaLifeChain@gmail.com, centralindianalifechain.org.

Holy Family Parish, 3027 Pearl St., Oldenburg. **Parish Festival,** 11 a.m.-4 p.m., fried chicken and roast beef dinners, turtle soup, adult and kids' games, raffles for quilts and baskets and cash, silent auction, craft booths, free admission. Information: 812-934-3013, holyfamilycheryl@gmail.com.

St. John Paul II Parish, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **Turkey Shoot/Chicken Dinner/Fall Festival,** 11 a.m.-4 p.m., chicken dinner with homemade dumplings (price TBA), wheels, country store, raffles, kids' games, firing range, free admission.

Information: 812-246-2512. Monte Cassino Shrine, 13312 Monte Cassino Shrine Road (off S.R. 62), St. Meinrad. **Rosary Procession Pilgrimage,** 2 p.m. CT, Benedictine Brother Jude Angel Romero Olivas presenting "Mark 10: 2-16," includes sermon, rosary procession, Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, free. Advance information: 812-357-6501, khall@saintmeinrad.edu. Day-of information: 812-357-6611.

October 6 or 8

St. Mary Parish, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. **Jesus and the End Times Video Series Week 3: "The Final Tribulation, the 'Rapture' and the Second Coming of Christ,"** week three of four-week video Bible study by theologian Dr. Brant Pitre, Oct. 6 4-5:30 p.m. or Oct. 8 6:30-8 p.m., attend any or all weeks, free. Information: 812-346-3604, parish@stmarysnv.com. †

Retreats and Programs

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

October 11-13

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **A Rosary Retreat,** Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, \$300 single, \$425 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

October 14-18

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Priests Retreat: The Gospel of Mark: Lessons in Rejection,** Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell presenting, \$465 single, \$200 commuter. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

October 18-20

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

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Women's Weekend of Peace,** Fri. 7 p.m.-Sun. noon, \$250, includes accommodations, meals and materials, limited to

Evangelization events set for Oct. 17 in Seymour and Nov. 2 in Greenwood

The archdiocesan Office of Evangelization will offer two events for individuals interested in or already involved in parish evangelization.

The first is the Seymour Deanery Evangelization Gathering at St. Ambrose Parish, 325 S. Chestnut St., in Seymour from 7-8:30 p.m. on Oct. 17. The second is a Parish Evangelization Enrichment Day for parishes with an evangelization team, and will be held at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, 5901 Olive Branch Road, in Greenwood, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on Nov. 2.

The Seymour Deanery Evangelization Gathering is an informational event for anyone who is interested in learning about the Office of Evangelization's mission to evangelize in central and southern Indiana. Organizers will share a basic approach to encouraging parish communities and their leaders to share the Gospel. The event is free, and no

registration is required.

The Parish Evangelization Enrichment Day for parishes with an evangelization team will feature Dominican Father Ben Keller, parochial vicar of St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington. The goal of this event is to continue to inspire and encourage parish evangelization teams, giving them the confidence in reaching out to the unchurched and both alienated and practicing Catholics in and around their parish community. The event includes an apostolic resource fair and lunch. The cost is \$25—check with your parish about having the fee assessed to it. Registration is required by Oct. 23.

For more information on either of these events or to register for the Nov. 2 event, contact Anita Bardo, archdiocesan evangelization and discipleship coordinator, at 317-236-1466 or abardo@archindy.org. †

Wedding Anniversaries

MICHAEL AND JANE (NICHOLSON) SCHWARTZ members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on June 22.

The couple was married in St. Joseph Church in Jasper, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville), on June 22, 1969.

They have two children: Jason and Matthew Schwartz.

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



RICARDO AND ANASTACIA (GUERRA) MIRANDA, members of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 8.

The couple was married in St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on June 8, 1974.

They have two children: Julie Longland and Melanie Miranda.

The couple also has one grandchild.



DAVID AND KAREN (ULREY) NELIS, members of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 24.

The couple was married in Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove on Aug. 24, 1974.

They have three children: Stephanie Allen, Sarah Koop and Matthew Nelis.

The couple also has four grandchildren.

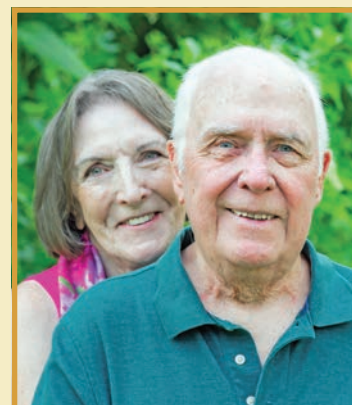


HAROLD AND PATRICIA (MONAHAN) TUCKER, members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 22.

The couple was married in Holy Trinity Church in Rollingstone, Minn., on June 22, 1974.

They have four children: Molly North, Kathleen Tamayo, Meg Sullivan and Bridget Tucker.

The couple also has eight grandchildren.



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

Sacred art from former church continues to nurture faith in other parishes

By Sean Gallagher

Linda Clodfelter loved being a member of the former Holy Cross Parish on Indianapolis' near eastside.

And she sees the life of faith she experienced at Holy Cross continuing on when she has had the chance to worship in other communities across the archdiocese where pieces of sacred art that were part of her former faith community now adorn those churches.

That happened when she attended Mass at St. John Paul II Church in Sellersburg. The New Albany Deanery faith community's current church building, dedicated in 2022, features stained-glass windows and Stations of the Cross that were previously at Holy Cross.

For Clodfelter, worshipping with members of St. John Paul II Parish wasn't just a chance to view beautiful works of art from her former faith community's church.

"It made you feel more a part of the community of Catholics," said Clodfelter, now a member of St. Philip Neri Parish in Indianapolis. "There is unity when you go to a church that's been a recipient of some of the artifacts ... from Holy Cross.

"When we were in Sellersburg, sitting there, having the sun shine through stained-glass windows [from Holy Cross], it just made you say, 'Praised be to God.'"

Clodfelter has also viewed Holy Cross' former high altar, now at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis, and pews from her former parish's church at Holy Angels Church, also in Indianapolis.

Other archdiocesan parishes that have received sacred art from Holy Cross include Good Shepherd Parish, St. Jude Parish, St. Luke the Evangelist Parish and St. Philip Neri Parish, all in Indianapolis.

"Once they find out that you're from Holy Cross, there's a great outpouring of love," said Clodfelter of worshipping in churches that received items from Holy Cross. "It's nice to see that other people appreciate what was there."

Holy Cross Parish was merged into St. Philip Neri in 2014. For decades before the merger, Holy Cross Church had experienced a significant degree of physical deterioration. A year after the merger, in 2015, a stone archway over the front entrance to Holy Cross Church collapsed.

Because of this deterioration,



Stained-glass windows that were originally in the former Holy Cross Church in Indianapolis are seen in St. John Paul II Church in Sellersburg. (Submitted photo)

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson issued a decree in 2019 that relegated Holy Cross, in the terminology of canon law, to "profane but not sordid use." This meant that, while Holy Cross was no longer a place of worship, it could also not be used for a purpose inappropriate for a former church.

Soon thereafter, items from Holy Cross began to be distributed to other faith communities.

As pastor of St. John Paul II Parish, Father Thomas Clegg was glad on many levels to be able to incorporate stained-glass windows and Stations of the Cross from Holy Cross into his faith community's new church.

He had been pastor of the former St. Catherine of Siena Parish and the former St. James the Greater Parish, both in Indianapolis. They were closed in 1993, and Good Shepherd Parish was then established to serve the needs of Catholics in its south side neighborhood.

"I would have loved it if any part of St. Catherine was able to be used by another church," Father Clegg said. "That just wasn't happening then. Now,

a lot of times when priests are building, many of them are thinking what could be repurposed from churches that are shut down and no longer functioning."

While he appreciates the good stewardship that using items from the former faith community on Indianapolis' near east side in his current parish represents, Father Clegg's connection to Holy Cross is more personal.

"My dad was baptized and received his first Communion in that church," Father Clegg said.

He was also happy to help St. Philip Neri Parish, where he grew up and where he served as a youth minister and as a teacher in its school before discerning a call to the priesthood.

St. John Paul II making a significant donation to St. Philip Neri when it received items from Holy Cross, Father Clegg said, "was a way to help a center-city parish have a little more financial stability and, at the same time, help us."

When Father Clegg leads worship at St. John Paul II, he sees how sacred art from the church where his father was baptized in 1931 continues to nurture the

faith of Catholics nearly a century later.

"It speaks to the paschal mystery, the life, death and resurrection of Christ when we can utilize some of these beautiful art pieces in our church," he said. "Hopefully it will give some light to the people of Holy Cross."

Despite the current condition of Holy Cross making worship there not possible, Father Jeffrey Dufresne, pastor of St. Philip Neri Parish, sees "a definite silver lining" in sacred art from Holy Cross continuing to nurture the faith of Catholics across central and southern Indiana.

"We know that these beautiful pieces of sacred art and architecture were commissioned or, in some cases, crafted by the people of Holy Cross in order to show their love for the Lord," he said. "And so, we want people to continue to benefit from that devotion that prompted the building of Holy Cross.

"What really brings me joy as a pastor is to see these pieces that were closed up in a vacant church for so long installed in parishes where people can experience the beauty and be drawn closer to the Lord by that beauty." †

Mental health expert: 'We need to not be afraid to talk about suicide'

(OSV News)—As National Suicide Prevention Month draws to a close, a Catholic mental health expert told OSV News that open, ongoing conversations about suicide are crucial.

"We need to not be afraid to talk about suicide," said Capuchin Franciscan Father Fred Cabras, a licensed clinical social worker, board member of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) and board liaison for its Council on Mental Illness. Established in 1982, the NCPD works with dioceses, parishes, ministers and laity to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities in the life of the Church and society.

Since 2008, the U.S. has designated the month of September as a time to focus on suicide awareness and prevention, expanding upon the 2003 establishment of World Suicide Prevention Day (on Sept. 10) by the World Health Organization and the International Association for Suicide Prevention.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, suicide rates have climbed steadily throughout the first quarter of the 21st century, rising among both sexes across almost every age and race group. Suicide ranked as the 11th leading cause of death in the U.S. in 2022, with just under 49,500 Americans dying of suicide, and an estimated 1.6 million suicide attempts in the nation during that year. Some 13.2 million adults and 3.4 million adolescents ages 12 to 17 had serious thoughts of suicide in 2022, with 3.8 million adults and 1.7 million teens making suicide plans.

While the Catholic Church teaches that suicide is "gravely contrary to the just love of self" and condemns assisted suicide, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* also notes that "grave psychological disturbances, anguish, or grave fear of hardship, suffering, or torture

can diminish the responsibility of the one committing suicide" (#2282). And according to statistics cited by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 46% of people who die by suicide had a diagnosed mental health condition, with as many as 90% possibly experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition.

"We need to not be afraid to talk about the importance of communicating and advocating for individuals who are experiencing either mental health challenges or just sadness and depression—whatever they're experiencing in their life that may lead them to thoughts of wanting to hurt themselves and take their own life," said Father Fred.

In October 2023, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops unveiled its National Catholic Mental Health Campaign, amid a global crisis in mental health and a decline in mental health resources in the U.S. With the support of the NCPD and other key organizations, the initiative seeks to raise awareness of the issue, remove the sense of stigma for those suffering from mental illness, and advocate for help for those suffering from mental illness.

The Church has a critical role to play in addressing mental health issues, said Father Fred, who urged priests "not to be afraid to talk about mental health at the pulpit, and not to be afraid to talk about the interwovenness of spirituality and mental health, because they're strongly connected.

"Sometimes people, especially priests, are afraid to talk about it because they're like, 'Well, I'm not an expert, I'm not a clinician, I'm not a therapist,'" said Father Fred. "But you are a human being, and you experience sadness and depression—maybe not to the scale of some individuals, but you can understand somebody's pain. And to speak from that experience I think is so vital."

He commended Bishop James D. Conley of Lincoln, Neb., for candidly sharing his struggles with depression in "A Future with Hope," a pastoral letter the bishop released in May affirming that healing is possible, thanks to holistic interventions grounded in Christ that treat body, mind and spirit.

"Jesus yearns to walk with you, and he offers a peace and hope this world cannot give," wrote Bishop Conley in the introduction to the letter. "I pray sharing my journey will help you with your journey."

Father Fred told OSV News he himself has struggled with generalized anxiety disorder, and at one point sought intensive treatment.

"Unfortunately, sometimes my anxiety, because it's so pronounced in my life, takes me into some really dark places," he said, noting that about two years ago he found himself having to step away from his demanding ministry schedule to enter a 14-week program at Southdown, a Canadian-based nonprofit counseling and therapy center serving clergy, religious and lay pastoral ministers.

"I was feeling a little bit burned out from the ministry, but I was also being really hard on myself, feeling I wasn't doing enough or good enough," said Father Fred. "So that really took me into kind of a tailspin of anxiety and an 'imposter syndrome' diagnosis."

He credited his Capuchin community of "really amazing brothers" who had helped him discern the need for help.

"They said, 'You know, we've been noticing this [issue]. What do you need us to do? How can we help you?'" said Father Fred. "And I said, 'I think I need to go into treatment,' and they were like, 'Absolutely.' In a week I was at Southdown, and it was just a wonderful experience." †

TEAM

continued from page 1

imagined that the trip would also lead to a powerfully emotional moment that touched everyone involved.

"I've shared this story a few times," says Johnson, the head football coach and assistant athletic director of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. "On June 25, we traveled to my hometown of Elkhart to scrimmage Elkhart High School and Fort Wayne Wayne High School.

"A longtime friend and college roommate's mother had turned 91 the day before we arrived. Unfortunately, she had been admitted to the hospital that same day due to degenerative heart failure."

As Johnson's friend worried about his mother, he also kept a commitment that he had made to Johnson.

"My friend, who owns a family restaurant, agreed to make pizzas for our trip back to Indianapolis," Johnson notes. "After the scrimmage, we stopped by the restaurant to pick them up, and our team captains went inside to help carry the pizzas and drinks to the bus.

"As we were about to leave, one of our players asked for hand sanitizer. Since we didn't have any on the bus, I remembered there was a dispenser in the restaurant entrance. I took the player inside to get some, and as we were heading back to the bus, my friend came running out to check if everything was OK. I saw it as the perfect opportunity to introduce him to the team and thank him for the pizzas. What happened next, I'll let him share in his own words."

At this point in the story, Johnson shares what his friend, Rico Iavagnilio, posted on his Facebook page the following day.

"A very old and close friend of mine, Levar Johnson, came into town yesterday with his high school football team," Iavagnilio wrote. "For their trip back to Indy, I made pizzas for the kids to eat on the way home. Levar introduced me to all these young men and then told them about my mom's situation. These young men, who had just met me and didn't know me at all, did something that brought me to tears. The entire team prayed for my mom, right there on the spot, in front of me!

"To Levar and to the parents of these young men, thank you! You should be proud of this group—they brightened my day with their kindness. The tears came after I walked off the bus! LOL. Thanks again, Levar!"

Picking up the story again, Johnson notes, "Rico's mother survived for another two months. Janet Iavagnilio passed away on Wednesday, August 28th, surrounded by family."

The pain and love that Johnson showed for his friend and the love and pride that he has for his players shines through as Johnson looks back on that moment when



Dan Kinghorn, longtime coach of the girls' and boys' cross-country teams at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, shares a moment of joy with three of the school's runners, Grace Leppert, left, Maisie Chesebrough and Emmerson Bloede, following a recent meet. (Submitted photo)

thoughts of winning a game faded in comparison to showing concern for someone in need.

"The best part of coaching high school football is watching boys grow into young men," Johnson says. "My hope is that they leave high school as better individuals than when they arrived, prepared to become productive members of society.

"It's not always about wins and losses. It's about teaching young men kindness, compassion and the value of family. I love each and every one of the young men on my team, and the kindness and compassion they showed to a stranger they had just met is the reason I coach."

A 'strong foundation of faith, community and leadership being built'

The seeds of a successful season are always planted and start to grow before the first game or race begins.

And a truly successful season in high school sports should always be measured in ways that exceed victories and championships.

Dan Kinghorn has embraced both those beliefs in his 30 years as the head coach of the boys' and girls' cross-country teams at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

To prepare for this year's fall season, Kinghorn created a special trip for his two teams this summer.

"We traveled to Warren Dunes in Michigan for our team camp," Kinghorn recalls. "During these three days, we camp at a rustic campground, and athletes run challenging workouts on the trails and dunes.

"These rigorous workouts help develop our runners as more mentally healthy individuals and more supportive teammates, as well as develop invaluable leadership skills that prove to be essential to our team's success throughout the season—and that athletes are able to incorporate in their lives beyond high school cross country."

The camp especially provides opportunities for the seniors to grow as leaders, including sharing reflections at each meal that are designed to strengthen the faith of their teammates.

Skits and fun games on the beach also lead to building relationships among team members.

"As a coach, it was awesome to witness the strong foundation of faith, community and leadership being built during our team camp, and to see how those amazing values contribute to our team's success throughout the season, and in our athletes' lives after high school."

For Kinghorn, it's the essence of what has motivated him as a coach for three decades: "to see kids improve and develop as a runner, a teammate, a leader and a person."

'Records don't mean anything, only heart and the love for the game'

As the first game of the season approached, Nick Burkhardt wasn't sure what to expect on the field from the co-ed soccer team of Seton Catholic High School in Richmond, but he was already impressed by the players' preparation and determination.

"We are a very young team with many underclassmen and are in a rebuilding year," says Burkhardt, the team's head coach. "These kids came in knowing numbers would be down with seven starters graduating. They went out and recruited the most kids the program has had in the years I have been coaching. They worked hard pushing each other to be prepared for the first game.

"As game day came, they got a quick start and then by half were tied. They came off the field with nothing but hopes of returning to finish the game strong. These kids listened not only to me, but then built on what I said and pushed each other going into the second half."



As the head coach of the co-ed soccer team at Seton Catholic High School in Richmond, Nick Burkhardt, in a blue shirt with sunglasses on his head, measures success by players' heart and love for the game. (Submitted photo)



In his first year of coaching the girls' volleyball team at Providence Cristo Rey High School in Indianapolis, Matthew Condon shows his enthusiasm for the way team members embrace each other and the sport. (Submitted photo)

The team won that game, setting off a round of joy. Burkhardt was also thrilled for the win—and something even deeper.

"I have always told these kids records don't mean anything, only heart and the love for the game," Burkhardt says. "These kids showed me that they understood and proved it to me by giving it their all.

"I love being able to help out and coach these kids on and off the field and lead them to be outstanding young adults."

'I will be forever thankful'

In the course of a season, it was a small moment between teammates, but it represents everything that Matthew Condon wants from his players.

"One of my favorite things is watching our returning players build friendships with some new girls on the team—sharing laughs, advice for volleyball, and establishing that strong culture for the group," says Condon, the girls' volleyball coach at Providence Cristo Rey High School in Indianapolis. "The group of girls approach each day eager to learn and get better as a team.

"One moment that sticks out to me would be one of our junior setters helping a new player on the team. During one of our early practices, the junior stopped what she was doing with her warm-up partner and walked through the approach for setting a ball and working on hand placement. I watched as she was patient in explaining this process and offered some positive reinforcement during their time together.

"It opened my eyes to the great attitude our girls have of coaching each other up when an obstacle appears, but it also establishes that team camaraderie that every coach strives for in a season."

Such moments are the measure of success for Condon in his first year as the team's head coach.

"The best part of coaching for me would be the bonds built with the athletes and the growth they show over the course of the season," he says. "Regardless of the win/loss record, I will forever be thankful for the girls believing in me as a coach, but also believing in each other that they can accomplish their goals." †

PRO-LIFE

continued from page 1

bears the face of Jesus Christ, bears the face of the Lord, who even before he was born, and then just after birth, experienced the world's rejection."

However, "the law and millions of our brothers and sisters have yet to recognize this reality," said Bishop Burbidge.

Despite the Supreme Court's June 2022 overturning of *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, enabling elected officials "to reduce or end abortion ... 50 years of virtually unlimited abortion has tragically created a national mindset where many Americans have become comfortable with some amount of abortion," said Bishop Burbidge. "This allows the abortion

industry to continue to provide any amount of abortion."

Abortion rates actually rose or stayed at pre-*Roe* levels in the U.S. following the *Dobbs* decision, which overturned the *Roe* and *Doe* rulings.

Globally, there are a total of some 73.3 million abortions each year, according to the Guttmacher Institute—a number about 4 million greater than United Kingdom's current population, and almost 15 million more than the United Nation's 2019 crude death rate, or total number of deaths worldwide in a given year.

"Given this challenge, the U.S. bishops have affirmed that, while it is important to address all the ways in which human life is threatened, 'abortion remains our pre-eminent priority as it directly attacks

our most vulnerable brothers and sisters, destroying more than a million lives each year in our country alone,'" said Bishop Burbidge, quoting a 2024 document by the U.S. bishops on conscience formation and political responsibility for Catholics.

With the U.S. presidential election just weeks away, Bishop Burbidge asked Catholics in the U.S. to "renew our commitment to work for the legal protection of every human life, from conception to natural death, and to vote for candidates who will defend the life and dignity of the human person."

In addition, he said, "we must call for policies that assist women and their children in need, while also continuing to help mothers in our own communities through local pregnancy help centers and our nationwide, parish-based initiative,

Walking with Moms in Need."

Faithful must "likewise continue to extend the hand of compassion to all who are suffering from participation in abortion," highlighting the Church's abortion healing ministries, such as Project Rachel.

"Most importantly, we must rededicate ourselves to fervent prayer on behalf of life," said Bishop Burbidge, who invited Catholics "to join me in a concerted effort of prayer between now and our national elections, by daily praying our Respect Life Month 'Prayer for Life to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.'"

The text of the prayer, along with several resources for Respect Life Month, is available on the initiative's website at www.respectlife.org/respect-life-month. †

BLUE RIBBON

continued from page 1

Ribbon honor. Seven are Catholic, with four of those in the archdiocese.

‘Everything—period, exclamation point’

Roncalli’s current leaders have good reason to rejoice in the school’s national recognition.

Kevin Banich graduated from Roncalli in 2009 and later served as a teacher there before becoming its principal four years ago.

“I’m just unbelievably proud and grateful that our school’s excellence was recognized at the national level,” he said. “... This place has been such a blessing, and I’m so proud we can have this recognition on behalf of our faculty, staff, students and families.”

Chuck Weisenbach was on Roncalli’s staff the last three times it was named a Blue Ribbon School, in 1993, 1998 and 2003. A 1979 graduate of the school, he later served as a coach, teacher and principal at Roncalli before becoming its president.

“Things have changed since the last time we won, so I think it represents our great work,” Weisenbach said.

One change he noted is the student population’s increased diversity in ethnicity, socio-economic status and its range of learners, “from kids with special needs, to kids working toward a four-year college degree, to internships for kids who want to pursue a more hands-on career.”

What hasn’t changed at Roncalli, Banich noted, is the centrality of its Catholic identity, which he insisted has “everything—period, exclamation point”—to do with its academic excellence.

Weisenbach agreed, saying, “It’s always rewarding to show folks you can have academics in a faith-based environment, that you can pursue both with great passion. We place great emphasis on the faith formation of our students. So, to not forfeit academic excellence, that’s pretty cool.”

Banich noted that the 10 Catholic grade schools of the parishes in the Indianapolis South Deanery that send students on to Roncalli “deserve a large portion of the credit” for their role in making the honor possible. “We stand on the shoulders of the foundations they laid.”

Weisenbach lauded the schools and parishes as well.

“If they aren’t doing great work, we don’t have any magic powder to shower on them when they enter as freshman,” he said. “I hope they in some way feel part of this.”

Honoring a ‘hidden gem’

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School in Greenwood is one of those South Deanery schools. But on Sept. 27, its 430 students reveled in their own Blue Ribbon honor—the first time the Greenwood school, founded in 2006, has been so recognized.

Rebecca Stone, SS. Francis and Clare’s principal, described the school as a “hidden gem” in Johnson County.

“To be recognized as a Blue Ribbon School has been a goal of ours for years. We’ve known that we’re this great,” she said. “Now the whole nation will know about the great things that are happening at SS. Francis and Clare.”

Stone has been on the staff at the school for 14 years and is in her first year as principal. She succeeded Betty Popp, currently serving as principal at St. Simon the Apostle School in Indianapolis, and gave her much credit for the honor given to SS. Francis and Clare. The pair will travel together to Washington, D.C., for a ceremony to honor this year’s Blue Ribbon Schools.

Stone says the academic excellence at SS. Francis and Clare is rooted in its dedication to “center all of our decisions around our faith.”

When that happens, she said, “then that bleeds into everything we do throughout the school day. Then it ends up being the way that the kids make decisions and interact with one another.”

Wearing a blue wig, Stone shared the good news with the school’s students at the end of the day on Sept. 23 in a



‘These schools are led by outstanding leaders who integrate the Catholic faith into all aspects of the school experience. The partnerships between their outstanding teachers and engaged parents support the spiritual, academic and character growth of all students.’

—Brian Disney, superintendent of archdiocesan schools



Roncalli High School director of campus ministry Katie Hibner, right, uses blue spray on the school’s assistant principal for student life Michael Wantz on the grounds of Roncalli’s campus in Indianapolis on Sept. 24 to celebrate the school being named a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School. (Submitted photo)

gathering in its gym, joining them in an impromptu dance party to celebrate the honor.

“Celebrating with the staff and students means so much to me,” said Stone as she passed out blue-packaged Rice Krispies Treats to the departing students. “I have been very proud of this place for a long time, and today meant even more because I could see the pride on their faces.”

“Being recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School is a group effort. We are blessed with the best staff and students.”



In this Oct. 5, 2022, photo, Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy Sister Loretto Emenogu, archdiocesan mission educator for the Missionary Childhood Association (MCA), engages with students of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County. MCA was the recipient of the proceeds of that year’s fall school fundraiser—a form of community involvement that helped the school earn its first National Blue Ribbon School honor this year. (File photo by Natalie Hoefer)

The palpable presence of the Holy Spirit

Another first-time archdiocesan recipient of the Blue Ribbon award is St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyd County in the New Albany Deanery.

While principal Tracy Jansen said the school community feels “very honored,” the designation is something she had faith the school would one day achieve.

“I always thought we had what it would take to be a Blue Ribbon School,” she said.

The school is one of only five rural, non-public schools nationally to receive the honor this year.

She credits the recognition in part to “our exceptional Catholic faith community that we have at our school, and our excellent teachers and staff. I can’t say enough about our community. You walk in our school and it’s palpable, the presence of the Holy Spirit.”

Of course, academic excellence factored in the honor as well—each grade ranked in the top 15% on standardized test scores in 2023, a requirement to apply for the honor.

Jansen, who has headed the school for 11 years, also credited the school’s “outstanding” teachers, some of whom “created an innovative reading program for kindergarten through grade two that helps us create a strong foundation in literacy and reading skills.”

Another aspect Jansen is “really proud of” is the school’s “focus on our environment and culture and the way we engage learners through our school mission: That, guided by Christ, all students will be nurtured spiritually, academically and individually. Our teachers do all they can do to carry out our mission.”

And that mission, she emphasized, is closely tied to the life of the parish that sponsors it.

“When a parish has a thriving Catholic school, they have a thriving parish,” Jansen said. “Keeping kids engaged with their Catholic faith is crucial to the Catholic Church.”

‘This is who we are’

Keely Beaudette has known for more than 30 years that St. Pius X School in Indianapolis was special. She

first arrived as a third-grade student in the late 1980s and has been on staff there for 12 years, the last six years serving as principal.

So, she wasn’t surprised when St. Pius was named a Blue Ribbon School this year.

“I knew we had received it in the past,” Beaudette noted, referring to St. Pius being named a Blue Ribbon School in 2007. “It was important for me in my leadership role to get our teachers and students back to that. This is who we are. This is what we do. We just needed to get back there.”

When the announcement was made on Sept. 27, Beaudette was especially happy for the teachers at St. Pius.

“It’s a true testament to them and everything that they’ve done, and their dedication to the students, the parents and the community,” she said.

Beaudette also expressed her pride in the school’s students, who experienced many difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic, but persevered to the point where the school has now been recognized nationally for its academic excellence.

“It was rough with what the kids had to go through with COVID, from being in school to not being in school, wearing masks,” Beaudette said. “We’ve asked them to do a lot just to function in a classroom. We’re just very proud of their work ethic and willingness to keep going when things were hard.”

“This is a huge honor for all of the students. They kept working. They kept going. They helped us get this honor, which is wonderful.”

One of the factors Beaudette said helped St. Pius excel academically in the face of many challenges is its Catholic identity.

“It’s at the forefront of our minds,” she said. “We want to develop the whole child, not only to be academically strong, but spiritually strong, and socially and emotionally strong. The Catholic identity piece helps us to move our kids closer to that every single day.” †



Keely Beaudette



Tracy Jansen



Anita Bardo, left, the archdiocese's coordinator of evangelization and discipleship, explains a point to Alejandra Aguilar, associate youth minister at St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, during a ministry fair for new parish ministry leaders at the Archbishop Edward T. O' Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis on Sept. 17. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)



Megan Lauritsen, left, the archdiocese's coordinator of youth ministry, shares a moment of joy with Leighann Eckrich, youth and young adult minister at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, during a ministry fair for new parish ministry leaders at the Archbishop Edward T. O' Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis on Sept. 17. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Orientation session aims to assist those new to parish ministry

Criterion staff report

The archdiocese's Department of Parish Leadership hosted an orientation session for new parish ministry leaders at the Archbishop Edward T. O' Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis on Sept. 17.

Focusing on leaders with less than three years of experience in their position, the orientation began

with a morning Mass in the Blessed Sacrament chapel of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, followed by presentations on effective parish leadership, and included a fair featuring many of the archdiocesan ministries that offer support for parish leaders.

"We had two main hopes," said Paul Sifuentes, senior director for the archdiocese's Department of

Parish Leadership, about the orientation session. "Number one was to help our parish leaders be familiar with different resources here at the Catholic Center. The archdiocese wants to provide the ways in which Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and his staff can help them as parish leaders. We also want to give them resources on what it means to be a parish leader where they are." †

Delaware governor vetoes bill to legalize physician-assisted suicide in state

WILMINGTON, Del. (OSV News)—Delaware Gov. John Carney on Sept. 20 vetoed House Bill 140, turning back legislative efforts to make legal physician-assisted suicide in the state.

"And although I understand not everyone shares my views, I am fundamentally and morally opposed to state law enabling someone, even under

tragic and painful circumstances, to take their own life," Carney, a Democrat, said in a statement.

In a June political maneuver that enabled supporters to rescind the Senate vote from the previous week that defeated the assisted suicide bill, the measure passed in a new vote with 11 Democrats voting in favor of it in the 21-member state Senate. It

went to Carney's desk from there.

The Diocese of Wilmington was among numerous organizations that opposed the bill, which was similar to one defeated earlier in the year in Maryland.

"I want to express my sincere appreciation to Governor Carney for vetoing HB140 that would legalize physician-assisted suicide in Delaware," Bishop

William E. Koenig of Wilmington said.

"I also want to thank the thousands of Catholics and others of good will who helped with their prayers and efforts to protect the elderly, ill and disabled of our community," he said. "All human life is created in the image and likeness of God and must be protected, especially the most vulnerable." †

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SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Prayer can shape daily life, even when it is busy from sunrise to sundown

By Megan Nye

(OSV News)—Boisterous children, unwashed dishes, office deadlines and a cozy bed at the end of a long day—all of these can call to us more loudly than the quiet voice of God inviting us into prayer.

We constantly juggle the urgent tasks of this earthly life, so it's easy to miss beautiful moments to connect with our ever-present heavenly Father.

How can you make time for God when you don't know how to drop everything and truly pray? Here are 20 ways you can satisfy your thirsty soul by injecting prayer into your busy life:

—**Start the day right**—Your day may start off with a bang and not end until you collapse in bed late at night. Set yourself on the right course by beginning your day with some spiritual reading alongside your bowl of cereal.

—**Set an alarm**—You use an alarm clock or an alarm on your phone to wake up. Some people wear an activity alert band to remind them to stand up at set intervals of time. Why not take the same approach to your spiritual health that you take with your physical health? Set alarms throughout the day to remind yourself to pray—even if it's only a few words spoken with God.

—**Use your commute**—Speak to God in the car. If you can talk to a passenger while you're driving, why not talk aloud to God? If you take public transit, use the opportunity to engage in silent conversation with your Savior.

—**Take advantage of audio**—Listen to audio recordings of the Bible, spiritual podcasts or a daily devotional. Tune in while commuting, exercising, stacking the dishwasher or taking a bath. Fill your ears with the sound of God's word.

—**Open your e-mail**—Many websites or apps offer to send you a daily e-mail containing a meditation, saint story, prayer or text of the day's Mass readings. Take advantage of this automation. The technology that can so easily distract you will now alert you to the day's prayer.

—**Use your lunch break**—Eat while reading the day's Mass readings, listening to a Catholic podcast or an online video. Keep a Bible or religious book in your desk to pull out at the beginning of each lunch.

—**Keep your Bible on your nightstand**—Reach for it first thing in the morning or right before you go to bed to take in as much of God's word as you can in that moment. Choose a chapter or pick a verse on which to meditate throughout your day.

—**Create a mental association**—Place a sticky note on your bathroom mirror to remind yourself to pray every time you brush your teeth. Hang a sign at the base of your home's stairs encouraging you to walk in prayer with God as you ascend the stairs. Soon, you will have established a habit of prayer.

—**Stay five minutes after Mass**—If you don't have the time or opportunity to make a special trip for eucharistic adoration, stay after the recessional hymn



A woman prays on Sept. 5 as she awaits Mass with Pope Francis at Gelora Bung Karno Stadium in Jakarta, Indonesia. Even when daily life is filled with activities, believers can still find ways to draw close to God in prayer. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

to enjoy one-on-one time with the Blessed Sacrament. Avoid parking lot traffic and conclude your time at Mass by fortifying yourself before venturing back into the world.

—**Make an appointment with God**—We can get so busy that we sometimes need to schedule date time with our spouses or jot down a reminder to call our loved ones. Our relationship with God is precious, too. If there's no such thing as "free time" in your world, set up one more appointment—this time with God. Carve out time for daily prayer, weekly adoration, monthly Bible study—whatever you can do.

—**Pray before meals**—There's always time for gratitude. Before digging into a meal at home or on the go, pause to thank God for his many blessings and offer prayer for those in need.

—**Make it a family affair**—Sit around the table and read a short devotional after each dinner or each Sunday lunch. Kneel down together for bedtime prayers. Establish a daily rotation so that each family member can choose a prayer intention.

—**Create traditions around prayerfulness**—Celebrate your family's patron saints' feast days with intercessory prayers. Use symbols of the liturgical year, such as an Advent wreath in Advent. Place a bowl of holy water by the front door so that your family members can bless themselves when they come and go.

—**Pray on the road**—My first-grade teacher, a member of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters, taught me to say a prayer for the souls in purgatory each time I went past a cemetery. Consider the good you can do through time for your brothers and sisters waiting to enter heaven. Or remind yourself to pray whenever you pass a church.

—**Say a morning offering prayer**—Pledge your day's activities to God in your own words or memorize an existing prayer—like the morning offering penned by Father François-Xavier Gautrelet. By dedicating your day to the intentions of the pope, the salvation of our souls, the reunification of Christians and more, you infuse purpose into your experiences.

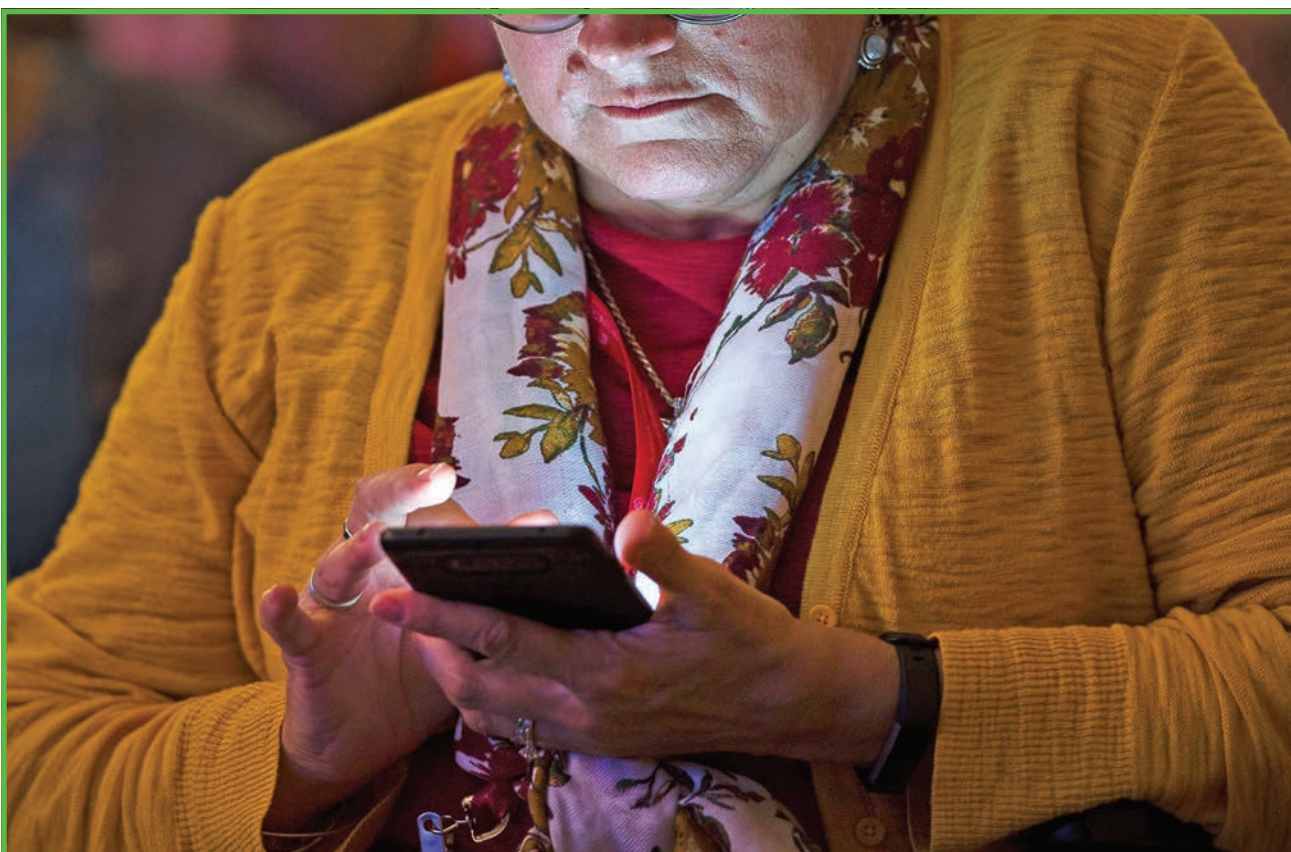
—**Offer it up**—Sometimes life hands us trials that we must bear. Offer them up—even the small frustrations in life—as prayer, joining your sufferings to those of Christ on the cross.

—**Pick up some prayer cards**—Prayer cards needn't be procured only at the funeral of a friend or loved one (though we should dust those off and pray them from time to time). Order some prayer cards of saints to whom you feel connected or who are patrons of a cause near and dear to you and your family. Keep the cards in your wallet or purse and pray the prayers while standing in line at the grocery store or stopped at a traffic light.

—**Tap into ready-made prayers**—Sometimes our minds overflow with so much activity that it's a challenge to formulate prayerful thoughts to God. Use a prayer book—or a search engine—to find a prayer that suits your mood or your spiritual need. Pray about the stress, sorrow, anger or pain that is keeping your mind from being still. Take advantage of the words that others have crafted in guiding you toward your own conversation with God.

—**Take a walk**—Even if you're just walking the perimeter of your house while holding the baby monitor, create some quiet time for yourself in the presence of God's creation. Let him speak to your heart and share your thoughts with him.

—**Change your tune**—Do you sing in the shower or while tidying the kitchen? Instead of opting for the latest hits, try a hymn. If you think you don't know any well enough by heart, consider Christmas carols—no matter the time of year. Singing of the glory of the Nativity is never out of season.



A woman is pictured in a file photo using her smartphone. Many apps are available for such devices that can help users pray throughout their daily lives. (OSV News photo/CNS file, Tyler Orsburn)

(Megan Nye writes from New Jersey.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Being a parent is a prime way of learning on the path of humility

Being a father of five boys makes for a busy life. And as my sons range in age from 22 to 11, that busyness has gone on for a long time and will remain so for a while longer. My wife Cindy and I often find ourselves simply living one hectic day after another.



With the help of God's grace, we've made faith a key part of our busy life of parenting. That's helped us stay grounded in what's most important. And it's strengthened our hope for the future of our family when hard days come, as they inevitably do, sometimes pretty frequently.

Because Cindy and I have been at this for a while now, it sometimes seems like we've been living the same life day after day for years. But I'm starting to notice more and more of the families in our parish whose parents are a good bit younger than Cindy and I, and whose children are babies and toddlers.

In fact, some of the parents we see are much closer in age to our oldest son than they are to our age.

While that makes me feel old at times, it doesn't make me complacent and smug. Not once have I looked at the

young parents around me wrestling rambunctious kids during Mass like Cindy and I did years ago, and think that I'm the grand old man with all of the answers to the questions they're facing since I answered them time and time again years ago.

I'm too busy dealing with the challenges of my life as a father here and now to think like that.

When I was in those young parents' place, say 15 to 20 years ago, I sometimes wondered what it would be like to be the more experienced parents sitting near Cindy, our young boys and me at Mass.

They looked so much less overwhelmed and so much more in control. And maybe they were. But sometimes looks can be deceiving.

I at least know that now as a more experienced parent.

If humility is a key virtue in our lives as followers of Christ, then I think God designed parenting as a prime way to learn it.

Humility leads believers to depend more and more concretely on the help of God to live out the vocation to which he has called them. I learned early on as a father that my mission was far beyond my capabilities alone.

But, thanks to God's grace, I've trusted that God is always there to help me to carry it out.

He sends his help to me most abundantly in Cindy, but also in the sacraments and a life of prayer and in the support and fellowship of our family and friends.

Humility also leads believers to a sense of awe at the wonders God works in our lives. When this happens, we see how small we are and how great God is.

As a father, I see this when seeds of faith and virtue Cindy and I planted in our sons start to blossom. Living virtuously and faithfully is hard enough for me on my own, let alone trying to form my sons to do the same. So, when I catch beautiful glimpses of my boys starting to do this, I know immediately in my heart that it's a work of God before my eyes.

Parents living in humility before their children may be the best lesson that they can give them. In this, they give their children a living image of Christ, the ultimate model of humility who emptied himself of his divine glory to take on our broken humanity (see Phil 2:6-11).

Parents and children walking together the path of humility, though, is no reason for them to focus on their own or others' shortcomings and failings. Instead, humility lived with the help of God's grace comes with his promise that "whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (Mt 23:12). †

That All May Be One/Fr. Rick Ginther

Festival reminds us religions are a mystery to embrace with love

Festival of Faiths 2024 is in the books. It was a delightful time to be among so many people of various faith traditions.

Curious and respectful Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Latter Day Saints, Christians and Catholics approached our booth.



Questions, answers and conversations kept Deacon Steve Hodges of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis, archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship Anita Bardo, and me engaged.

One statement brought me up short: Catholicism is the one, true religion.

I know the Church's teaching of the past. I am aware that the Second Vatican Council did speak of this. But how it spoke was neither judgmental nor intentionally exclusive.

In "*Dignitatis Humanae*," we read:

"First, the council professes its belief that God himself has made known to mankind the way in which men are to serve him, and thus be saved in Christ and come to blessedness. We believe that this one true religion subsists in the Catholic and apostolic Church, to which the Lord Jesus committed the duty of spreading it abroad among all men."

Human beings are by nature searchers for the divine. The document states that this curiosity is an obligation to be pursued. And it is the Church's obligation to share what it knows and believes.

But not with coercion. Respect for those seeking and worshipping in faith is to be observed. By the Church. And by the state.

In continuing to examine "*Dignitatis Humanae*," we read, "[Christ] spoke to the Apostles: 'Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have enjoined upon you' [Mt 28:19-20]. On their part, all men are bound to seek the truth, especially in what concerns God and his Church, and to embrace the truth they come to know, and to hold fast to it" (#1).

The Council likewise professes its belief that it is upon the human conscience that these obligations fall and exert their binding force. The truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth, as it makes its entrance into the mind at once quietly and with power.

"Religious freedom, in turn, which men demand as necessary to fulfill their duty to worship God, has to do with immunity from coercion in civil society. Therefore, it leaves untouched traditional Catholic doctrine on the moral duty of men and societies toward the true religion and toward the one Church of Christ" (#1).

Religious pluralism is the state of being where every individual in a religiously diverse society has the rights, freedoms and safety to worship, or not, according to his or her conscience.

With the expression in the document's original Latin "*subsistit in*," the Second Vatican Council sought to harmonize two doctrinal statements. On the one hand, the Church of Christ, despite the divisions which exist among Christians, *continues to exist fully only in the Catholic Church*. On the other hand, it also teaches that "outside of her structure, many elements can be found of sanctification and truth," that is, in those Churches and ecclesial communities which are not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church ("Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," #8).

But with respect to these, it needs to be stated that "they derive their efficacy from the very fullness of grace and truth entrusted to the Catholic Church" ("*Dominus Iesus*" #16).

The Second Vatican Council's "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" ("*Nostra Aetate*") states, "In her task of promoting unity and love among men, indeed among nations, [the Catholic Church] considers above all in this declaration what men have in common and what draws them to fellowship" (#1).

The declaration affirms that "The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions," but rather looks "with sincere respect upon those ways of conduct and of life, those rules and teachings, which, though differing in many particulars from what she holds and sets forth, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men" (#2).

I hope this helps us all to better understand how the Church speaks of itself, other churches and ecclesial communities, and other religions.

Ultimately, for me, how God works through the Church is amazing. And how God works through other Christians and other religions is a mystery to be embraced with love.

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

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Corrections Ministries/Deacon John Cord

Oct. 26 conference geared for both current and new prison ministry volunteers

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has many prisons and jails within its borders, including 39 county jails, nine state prisons and two federal prisons. There are more than 30,000 people incarcerated.



I am not sure exactly how many Catholics are among those incarcerated, but it is well into the hundreds if not thousands. We are blessed that we have many priests, deacons, religious women and men and lay volunteers who visit these facilities on a regular basis.

Last year, we sent out a survey across the archdiocese, and we learned that there are more than 150 Catholic women and men who volunteer in prisons and jails. We also learned that these dedicated volunteers are providing many services when they visit.

We have several priests who celebrate Mass and hear confessions. We have deacons, religious and lay volunteers who lead Communion services.

In many of the prisons, the Order (formerly Rite) of

Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) is being offered to women and men who want to join the Church. There are regular Bible studies every week. Some volunteers are providing educational classes on topics such as financial management, anger management and addictions recovery.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has dedicated volunteers who facilitate their Changing Lives forever program. Several Catholics volunteer for ecumenical organizations such as Kairos. I am always amazed and humbled by the outpouring of love I get to witness every day!

Part of the responsibility of the archdiocesan Corrections Ministry office is to make sure that we support these amazing volunteers with the latest and most relevant information possible.

Our team recently decided that we should provide this information in the form of a corrections volunteer training conference. It will be held from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on Oct. 26 at St. Ambrose Parish, 325 S. Chestnut St., in Seymour. This conference will be for current volunteers and for those who feel called to become corrections volunteers who will be going inside jails and prisons.

Topics to be covered will include: how to become Safe Parish-trained (all volunteers who go into prisons will soon be required to have this training); legal aspects of working with offenders; updates on legislation that we are promoting and following; what programs are considered Catholic and what are not Catholic; collaborating with other Catholics in the facility where you volunteer; OCIA programs inside a prison and its guidelines; and how to prevent volunteer burnout. The Indiana Department of Corrections will have a team to provide their volunteer training. There will be a few other topics, and we will have time for fellowship and prayer during the fast-paced day.

If you are interested in joining us on Oct. 26, please reach out to me and I will send you a registration form. We would love to have all of our current volunteers join us, and love to see many new faces who would like to become volunteers.

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

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, September 29, 2024

- Numbers 11:25-29
- James 5:1-6
- Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

The Book of Numbers, the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend, is one of the first five books of the Bible.



The ancient Hebrews and Jews today attribute these five books, collectively called the Pentateuch, to Moses, who has always been seen as the human instrument through whom God spoke to the people.

Thus, these five books, in Jewish theology and in Catholic teaching, are the inspired words of God. So, the Pentateuch, also known as the Torah, is the basis of all Jewish belief and religious practice. Even historical events, such as that mentioned in this weekend's reading, are interpreted in the light of this fundamental understanding.

This reading's message is that God's inspiration does not necessarily follow the route that humans may suppose or prefer.

Moses made this clear. The men discussed in the reading did not appear to be worthy messengers of God. Moses warns his contemporaries that they should not judge these men. Mere humans cannot judge whether a person possesses God's grace. God does not operate according to any human timetable or set of requirements.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend presents a section from the Epistle of St. James.

All the New Testament epistles reveal the circumstances of Christian life in the generations immediately after Jesus.

The Christians living in the last third of the first century saw some people in their midst, then as now a minority in the population, who were wealthy. This circumstance produced for the rich not only ease, but a certain sense of security.

Advantages of the rich tempted Christians, therefore, to assume that God especially blessed persons of wealth.

This passage presents a correction of this line of thinking. Wealth seems so desirable, but wealth in itself relieves none of the most pressing desires of life:

to be loved, to find peace of soul and mind. It fails to answer the most piercing questions of life. What is life all about? Why is anyone on this Earth?

Wealth is often a dangerous distraction.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading. John is troubled by the fact that a man uses the name of Jesus to drive away demons.

John does not know this man. The man is not within the circle of Christ's disciples. Therefore, the man cannot be authentic.

The Lord replies that no enemy of his would or could invoke his name to accomplish anything good. The Lord states that all those of honest faith are of God.

The reading has a second part. It reminds us that the benefits, and indeed the needs, of this world may be fleeting when eternity and things of the spirit are considered.

Reflection

It is said that when Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, Archbishop of York in the time immediately prior to King Henry VIII's break with the Church and chancellor of England for many years (the prime minister of his day) was dying, he said that if he had served God as diligently as he had served the king, he would not be afraid to die.

This worldly cardinal was hardly alone among humans who looked back upon life with regret when they were dying. Cardinal Wolsey, approaching death—and he knew the end was near—realized that he squandered time on Earth by running after material rainbows. He saw that only the spiritual endures.

The Church calls us all to recognize that earthly achievements one day will help us not at all. Only our nearness to God in this life will matter as we face eternal life.

These readings remind us that we are humans. We can be tempted and temptations can be strong. We are limited and near-sighted, our judgments imperfect. We need God's help to see reality. †

Daily Readings

Monday, September 30

St. Jerome, priest and doctor of the Church
Job 1:6-22
Psalm 17:1-3, 6-7
Luke 9:46-50

Tuesday, October 1

St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church
Job 3:1-3, 11-17, 20-23
Psalm 88:2-8
Luke 9:51-56

Wednesday, October 2

The Holy Guardian Angels
Job 9:1-12, 14-16
Psalm 88:10b-15
Matthew 18:1-5, 10

Thursday, October 3

Job 19:21-27
Psalm 27:7-9, 13-14
Luke 10:1-12

Friday, October 4

St. Francis of Assisi
Job 38:1, 12-21; 40:3-5
Psalm 139:1-3, 7-10, 13-14
Luke 10:13-16

Saturday, October 5

St. Faustina Kowalska, virgin
Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, priest
Job 42:1-3, 5-6, 12-17
Psalm 119:66, 71, 75, 91, 125, 130
Luke 10:17-24

Sunday, October 6

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
Genesis 2:18-24
Psalm 128:1-6
Hebrews 2:9-11
Mark 10:2-16
or Mark 10:2-12

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Church marriage tribunals do not actively annul marriages

QI was married in a non-Catholic wedding ceremony, then divorced years later civilly. Once I became



Catholic and wanted to marry again, I got an annulment of the first marriage. My non-Catholic friends and relatives said this was a Catholic cop-out to get around Jesus' prohibition against divorce, by saying that the first marriage "never happened." Could you comment? (Indiana)

AI certainly wouldn't call the Church's marriage nullity process a "cop-out." But I could see where non-Catholics might have this misunderstanding.

First, it's good to keep in mind that the Church's teaching on marriage, divorce and the possibility of a marriage being declared null is actually rooted in Scripture. In particular, in chapter 19 of St. Matthew's Gospel we read that: "Some Pharisees approached [Jesus], and tested him, saying, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?' He said in reply, 'Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator "made them male and female" and said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.' They said to him, "Then why did Moses command that the man give the woman a bill of divorce and dismiss her?" He said to them, 'Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. I say to you, whoever divorces his wife [unless the marriage is unlawful] and marries another commits adultery' " (Mt 19:3-9).

This passage provides the foundation for the Catholic teaching on the absolute permanence of marriage and the theological impossibility of a true divorce. However, in this Gospel passage Jesus

also notes that divorce and remarriage is possible "if the marriage is unlawful" (Mt 19:9).

Here, Jesus is referencing the fact that not every couple seeking to marry has the legitimate freedom to do so, and not every apparent marriage has all the factors necessary for a true bond to have formed.

In some ways, this is basic common sense. To give one illustration, very few people would consider a literal "shotgun wedding," where a couple was forced to say "I do" under threat of violence, to result in a valid marriage bond. Likewise, almost nobody would say that immediate family members could marry each other.

Granted, these are extreme examples! But there are many other less dramatic things that could render an attempted marriage invalid. For instance, grave psychological disturbances could leave one or both parties incapable of consent, or one of the parties might have been seriously dishonest with respect to his or her intentions going into the union.

In order to ensure that declarations of nullity are not simply "rubber stamped" or "cop-outs," the Church has a specific process, carried out through the ministry of diocesan marriage tribunals, for investigating whether or not a marriage was invalid.

As a very broad overview, after identifying a specific reason why the marriage in question may have been invalid, the tribunal invites both parties to submit evidence—such as witness testimony, or certain kinds of documents—that could potentially prove or disprove this claim. When all the evidence is gathered, both parties can submit written statements arguing their case.

Then a tribunal official called the Defender of the Bond "plays devil's advocate" and points out all the potential reasons why the marriage bond should be upheld in a given case. Finally, a panel of three canon lawyer judges read over the assembled evidence and arguments, privately share their opinions with each other, and come to a conclusion about whether a declaration of nullity should be issued.

Incidentally, this is why the term "annulment," although commonly used, is nonetheless incorrect. The Church does not actively annul marriages. Rather, an already-null marriage is simply declared to be so.

(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.) †

Harvest MOON

A full moon rises on Sept. 17 above the Algoma Pierhead Lighthouse near the shore of Lake Michigan in Algoma, Wis. The full moon closest to the start of autumn, which happens on Sept. 22, is traditionally known as the "harvest moon."

(OSV News photo/Sam Lucero)



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.

ANDERSON, Frances A., 96, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Aug. 14. Mother of Patricia Ducharme and Michael Clarke. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of seven.

ANDRESS, Dolores M., 98, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Aug. 25. Mother of Nancy Hankins, Michael, Stephen and Thomas Andress. Grandmother of 18. Great-grandmother of 28.

ATZHORN, Rosemary, 97, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Sept. 6. Mother of Laura Bushong and Donna Stapinski. Sister of Bill Kulick. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of 11.

BARNHORST, Robert S., 85, All Saints, Dearborn County, Aug. 31. Father of Connie Edmundson, Kathy Klump and Joe Barnhorst. Brother of Dr. Donald and John Barnhorst. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of 12.

BATLINER, Bonnie Rae, 86, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Aug. 26. Mother of Marcia Bowman, Theresa Taylor, Marvin and Steven Batliner. Sister of Betty Sparrow, Darlene Lawyer, Carolyn Story and Harry Bean. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 13.

BUSCHKOETTER, Brian, 66, St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, Aug. 28. Husband of Deborah Buschkoetter. Father of Alicia Prickel, Alex and Austin Buschkoetter. Son of Camilla Buschkoetter. Brother of Brenda Preusz, Bert, Brent and Bruce Buschkoetter. Grandfather of six.

COLLET, Charles J., 84, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, Aug. 29. Husband of Louise Collet. Father of Sarah Ferguson,

Emily Huntzinger and Eileen Stanistic. Grandfather of four.

COOPER, Kenneth J., 92, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Aug. 22. Husband of Barbara Cooper. Father of Sue Fowler, Laura Gageby, Ann Guinan, Nancy, Casey and Michael Cooper. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of 10.

DAY, Joyce (Brooks), 81, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Aug. 19. Wife of Don Day. Mother of David Brooks, Christopher and Steve Day. Sister of Janice Beyl, Peggy Liebert, Sue Sieveking and Michael Harpe. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of two.

ECKERT, Steven R., 67, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Aug. 16. Husband of Delores Eckert. Father of Ryan Eckert. Brother of Sandra Bragg, Donna Cunningham, Mary Everage, Sharon Rush and Mark Eckert. Grandfather of several.

EHALT, Roger W., 87, St. Mary, New Albany, May 12. Father of Beth Burks, Terri Summers, Phil and Steve Erhalt and Tim and Tom Hendrickson. Brother of Ruth Ann Banta, Beth Bostock and Ginny Hauswald. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of eight.

FERGUSON, Dan K., 75, Christ the King, Indianapolis, June 1. Brother of Gaila Kraeszig.

GARVEY, Jackie, 100, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Aug. 24. Mother of Francesca, Jean, David, Joseph, Matthew, Michael and Tom. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of 24.

HAUSMAN, Rosemarie R., 92, St. Louis, Batesville, Aug. 29. Mother of Diana Storms and Greg Hausman. Sister of Eugene Walke. Grandmother of five.

HEMPFLING, Louis G., 89, All Saints, Dearborn County, Aug. 24. Father of Ellen Lima, Annette, Loretta, Mary, Ruth, Bernard, Gregory and Michael Hempfling. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of 11.

KELLER, Larry R., 82, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Aug. 16. Husband of Nancy Keller. Father of Marlene Shelley, Andy and Ed Keller. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of eight.

KINDLER, Sharalyn E., 78, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Aug. 25. Mother of Sally Baker, Cynthia Jones, Jason Hupe, Daniel and Eric Kindler. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of seven.

Sunset in Wisconsin



The sun sets on Sept. 17 behind the cross and steeple of St. Thérèse of Lisieux Church in Pilsen, Wis. (OSV News photo/Sam Lucero)

LAMPERT, Roseann, 97, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Aug. 20. Sister of James Lampert. Aunt, great-aunt and great-great-aunt of several.

LINGG, Joan, 91, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Aug. 19. Mother of Mary Lou Jacobs, Cathy Pfeiffer, Greg, Jeff, Louis, Mike, Steve and Toby Lingg. Sister of Fran. Grandmother of 28. Great-grandmother of 28.

MARENDT, Dave, 76, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Sept. 2. Husband of Deb Marendt. Father of Ali McElwain and Audi Shivers. Brother of Pat Miller and Tom Marendt. Grandfather of two.

MCCORMICK, Roselyn, 81, St. Ambrose, Seymour, Aug. 26. Wife of Jim McCormick. Mother of Jamie Marshall and Jim McCormick. Sister of Bobbe Dubyn. Grandmother of four.

MEYER, Rita A., 81, St. Mary, Greensburg, Aug. 23. Mother of Jenny Gehring, Marcia Kurtz, Marlene

Tichenor, Becky Walter, Adam, Steve, Nicholas and Ted Meyer. Sister of Katherine and Marilyn Berkemeier, Carol Bishop, Jean Campfield, Clara Dwenger, Harold, James and Norbert Kramer. Grandmother of 24. Great-grandmother of 32.

MOYER, Martha, 93, St. Mary, Greensburg, Aug. 30. Mother of Kimberly Green, Kelli Simpkins and Kevin Moyer. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of eight.

NIGBA, Isabella, 66, Holy Angels, Indianapolis, Aug. 7. Wife of Raymond Nigba. Mother of Bernice Alpha, Christine, Roberta, Aloysius and Korpo Ballah and Nuwah Nigba. Daughter of Martha Lincoln. Sister of Madia Brewer, Martha Gbor, Duwlee Schuster, Ploda Slawon, Kade Strand, Caroline Williams, Ayo, Adams, Alfred, Jacob, Jutieh and Patrick Lincoln. Grandmother of six.

NOVAK, Donald P., 86, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, July 11. Husband of Kay Novak. Father of Sherri Williams, Lisa and Jason

Novak. Brother of Debbie Jones, Suzie Romeo, Mary Trost, Louise Williams and Steve Novak. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of two.

PFLUM, Joseph M., 87, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, Aug. 28. Husband of Jeanne Pflum. Father of Sandra Jordan, Mark and Michael Pflum. Brother of Rosemary Draper and Claire Slick. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of 15.

SPELLACY, Patrick J., 62, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Aug. 25. Brother of Kerry Bender, Collen Cline, Meghan MacKelly, Kathleen Scaletty, Mary Clare, Danny, Kevin and Shawn Spellacy. Uncle of several.

STRIEGEL, Carol J., 83, St. Mary, New Albany, Aug. 27. Mother of Teresa Engleman, Angela Harshey, Tom Hendrickson, Jonathan, Kevin and Samuel Striegel. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of several.

TAYLOR, Patricia A., 89, St. Mark the Evangelist,

Indianapolis, Aug. 29. Mother of Steve Sleeth. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of four.

WILLIAMS, Sandra Jo, 76, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Aug. 24. Mother of Anthony, Christopher and David Keen. Sister of Shirley Downton and Dennis Owen. Grandmother of 10.

WISMANN, Betty Jean, 92, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora, Aug. 28. Mother of Lida Jones, Theresa Trowbridge, Susan True, Kathleen Watson, Lisa, J. David, James, Jason, Joseph and Raymond Wismann. Sister of Esther King. Grandmother of 37. Great-grandmother of 65. Great-great-grandmother of 36. Great-great-great-grandmother of two.

ZAHN, Jane E., 94, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Aug. 27. Mother of Jennifer Carmichael, Bethanne Wolfred, Christopher, Kevin and Timothy Zahn. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of seven. †

Pope encourages efforts to find common date for Easter

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Easter belongs to Christ, not to people deciding where it falls on a calendar, Pope Francis said.

“Easter does not take place by our own initiative or by one calendar or another. Easter occurred because God ‘so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life’ ” (Jn 3:16), the pope said.

“Let us not close ourselves within our own ideas, plans, calendars or ‘our’ Easter. Easter belongs to Christ!” he said during an audience at the Vatican on Sept. 19.

The pope was speaking to a delegation of members of the “Pasqua Together 2025” initiative. The ecumenical initiative, founded in 2022, calls on Orthodox and mainline Christian churches to celebrate Easter on a common date.

The year 2025 will mark both the Holy Year for the Catholic Church and celebrations of the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, which gave birth to the Nicene Creed, affirmed the full divinity of Christ and set a formula for determining the date of Easter, that is, the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox.

However, the Julian calendar, which is what Christians used in the fourth century and many Orthodox churches still use, was out of sync with the actual solar year, so

March 21—generally assumed to be the date of the northern hemisphere’s spring equinox—gradually “drifted” away from the actual equinox.

In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII, relying on the work of astronomers, reformed the calendar, dropping 10 days and making the equinox fall on March 21 again. Today Catholics and most Christians in the West follow the Gregorian calendar.

Easter will fall on the same day on the Julian and Gregorian calendars in 2025, however.

The “Pasqua Together 2025” initiative seeks to use the coincidence as an opportunity to invite the churches to find ways of reconciliation to overcome the division.

In his speech to the delegation, the pope praised the initiative and encouraged them to “avoid letting the important occasion of 2025 pass by in vain.

“On more than one occasion, I have been asked to seek a solution to this issue, so that the common celebration of the day of the Resurrection may no longer be an exception, but rather become the norm,” he said.

“I therefore encourage those who are committed to this journey to persevere and to make every effort in the search for a shared agreement, avoiding anything that may instead lead to further divisions among our brothers and sisters,” he 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



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2 Victim Assistance Coordinator**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

Investing with Faith/Kimberly Pohovey

Plant a blessing, boost the mission of Christ with a gift of stock

With fall comes harvest time at local orchards and farms. Cool air, warm sweaters and the joy of lifting a little one



up to pick that one, perfect, bright-red apple dangling from a higher branch all combine to make lasting memories laced with taste of cider, donuts and grandma's apple pie.

It's hard to believe that everything we cherish together in moments like these comes from a small seed planted in the ground.

But it may be even more astonishing to realize that many of the apple trees we enjoy here in Indiana were introduced by John Chapman, the man famously known as "Johnny Appleseed." In the early 1800s, Chapman wandered the frontier, living humbly and doing good. He died in Fort Wayne, Ind., in 1845, leaving behind a growing legacy of nurseries and trees.

Much good can come from good stewardship and small seeds! At the archdiocese's Catholic Community

Foundation (CCF), we have the privilege of meeting many who graciously give to those in need. From the seeds they have planted and grown through wise investments, these neighbors spread the blessings of God across southern and central Indiana.

Stock investments and a charitable heart

Stock investments are a lot like small seeds that grow into an orchard of fruitful trees.

The stocks you purchased individually or as part of a strategic portfolio often provide a great return over the long term. But they can also give charitably minded people a tax-beneficial way to support the institutions and initiatives that mean the most to them.

The policy of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is to immediately liquidate all stock gifts and transfer the monies to the donor's intended beneficiary, such as a parish, school, agency, any CCF endowment or the United Catholic Appeal. This means that gifts of stock provide an immediate boost to the mission of Christ.

A gift of stock

A gift of appreciated stock, held for more than one year, can offer donors a great way to make a big impact for the lowest possible cost. That's because they are eligible for double tax benefits: an income tax deduction as well as no capital gains tax. And while the maximum amount you can deduct in a single year is 30% of adjusted gross income, additional amounts can be carried over for up to five years.

Which stocks make the best gifts?

The best choices depend on your individual goals, but there are a few guidelines that can help you determine which stocks are the best to give.

—Stocks that have been held for more than a year are eligible to deduct the appreciation.

—Stocks with the highest amount of appreciation provide the most leverage for untaxed capital gain.

—Investors who follow set portfolio ratios can make a gift of stock that rebalances their portfolio investments while providing some tax relief.

—A stock that has lowered or eliminated its dividends may be a strong choice for making a gift.

OSD can help

The archdiocesan Office of Stewardship and Development (OSD), under which CCF resides, can accept and process gifts of stock for the archdiocese, as well as for all of our parishes, schools and ministries. If you've decided to make a gift of stock, we ask that you complete the stock gift form at www.archindy.org/DonateStock.

This form includes instructions to follow in order to initiate the transfer with your broker and enables us to match the gift to the correct donor.

(Kimberly Pohovey is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese. Tax or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice. Always consult with your legal, tax or financial advisors before implementing any gift plan. For more information on the Catholic Community Foundation, visit www.archindy.org/ CCF, e-mail ccf@archindy.org, or call 317-236-1482.) †

Vatican sees spiritual value of Medjugorje, doesn't judge it supernatural

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—With some prudence, Catholics can benefit spiritually from the messages and spiritual practices associated with the alleged apparitions of Mary in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, said the Vatican Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

"This does not imply a declaration of the supernatural character of the phenomenon," nor does it mean that the tens of thousands of alleged messages from Mary published by the supposed "seers" are authentic, the dicastery said in a long "Note About the Spiritual Experience Connected with Medjugorje," released on Sept. 19.

With the approval of Pope Francis, the dicastery did, however, recognize "the abundant and widespread fruits, which are so beautiful and positive," associated with devotion to Mary, Queen of Peace, and with pilgrimages to Medjugorje.

Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, dicastery prefect, presented the note at a news conference on Sept. 19. He said he had not met with the alleged visionaries, but that once the notification was prepared, he wrote to the six of them with some "suggestions" about the future. He provided no further details.

The cardinal also showed reporters the official "nihil obstat"—a declaration of no objection—issued by Bishop Petar Palic of Mostar-Duvno, the diocese where Medjugorje is located, authorizing public

devotion there to Mary, Queen of Peace.

While it is possible that a pope could go further and make a declaration about whether the alleged apparitions and messages have a supernatural origin, Cardinal Fernández said he asked Pope Francis if he wanted to move in that direction and the pope said, "Not at all."

The devotions in Medjugorje began after six young people, aged 10 to 16, said Mary began appearing to them in June 1981. Three of them say they still have apparitions of Mary each day, while the other three have them only on special occasions.

The Vatican's positive judgment of the spiritual experience connected to Medjugorje highlighted: "abundant conversions; a frequent return to the sacraments, particularly, the Eucharist and reconciliation; many vocations to priestly, religious and married life; a deepening of the life of faith; a more intense practice of prayer; many reconciliations between spouses; and the renewal of marriage and family life."

"It should be noted that such experiences occur above all in the context of pilgrimages to the places associated with the original events rather than in meeting with the 'visionaries' to be present for the alleged apparitions," the dicastery added.

The 10,000-word notification looked in-depth at hundreds of the "alleged messages," highlighting the positive, orthodox character of most of them while

cautioning that some contain questionable theological affirmations or appear to be more a reflection of the young people's thoughts than what the Church would expect from Mary.

Archbishop Aldo Cavalli, the resident apostolic visitor to Medjugorje, is charged with determining whether to allow the publication of alleged messages revealed in the future or alleged messages from the past that have not yet been published, the notification said.

At the news conference, Cardinal Fernández said the wording of some of the messages is "not exactly from St. Thomas Aquinas." As an example, he pointed to one about the faithful departed being happy when Masses are celebrated for them, a statement which could give the impression that even those in purgatory can be happy.

A key principle in the Church's evaluation of phenomena like Medjugorje, the note said, is that "when one recognizes an action of the Holy Spirit in the midst of a spiritual experience, it does not mean that everything belonging to that experience is thereby free from all imprecisions, imperfections and areas of possible confusion."

Affirming the spiritual value of an alleged apparition or a specific devotion, it said, does not exclude the possibility of "some error of a natural order, not due to bad intentions, but to the subjective perception of the phenomenon." †

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Employment

ASL Interpreters Needed!

The Disabilities Ministry of the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis is in urgent need of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters for 7:30 a.m. Mass at St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, and sacramental prep assistance for two children at St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.

It is preferred that interpreters be Catholic, but those who have a strong familiarity with the Catholic Mass and other liturgical rites are encouraged to apply. It is also preferred that interpreters have an Indiana Interpreting Certificate, though allowances can be made depending on experience.

For more information, contact Jenny Bryans, Disabilities Ministry Coordinator, at jbryans@archindy.org or 317-236-1448.

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The Criterion

'Biking for Babies' cyclists pedal to build a culture of life

By Mike Krokos

Conner James and Winifred White may worship in different dioceses, but they have one thing in common: they unabashedly support the unborn.

The pair were among the 27 riders who took part in the 11th annual Indiana "Biking for Babies" event, which drew its largest participation since its inception in 2014.

The three-day, 175-mile ride started on Sept. 6 at the Illinois-Indiana state line west of Terre Haute and ended on Sept. 8 at the Indiana-Ohio state line east of Richmond. Bikers were able to choose whether they wanted to ride a portion or the entire distance.

"I like wearing the [Biking for Babies] jersey and riding across the state of Indiana. It's what we're here for," said James, who also rode last year.

A member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis, the 27-year-old was one of the youngest riders this year.

"I wish there were more of us [from my generation taking part]," he added.

White, a member of Our Lady of Grace Parish in Noblesville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, has been involved in her parish's pro-life apostolate for years. It was her second time riding as well.

"Larry [Kunkel, the state life director for the Indiana Knights of Columbus] has been asking me for several years in a row to do it. I hadn't ridden a bike for years. But last year a week before [that year's event], I got on a bike and decided to do it," she said after taking part in a decade of the rosary during the event's midpoint rally on the campus of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis on Sept. 7. "It went really well."

Funds raised through the ride are used to purchase life-saving ultrasound machines for Indiana Women's Care Centers. The goal for this year is \$35,000, and donations are still being accepted.

"Imagine the effects if just one baby is saved," said White. "If only one baby is saved by a [sonogram seen on an ultrasound] machine—and we know they're going to save a lot more—it's



A group of cyclists taking part in the annual "Biking for Babies" event poses on Sept. 7 in the parking lot of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. (Photos by Mike Krokos)

worth it. You can't put a price on life."

Knights of Columbus councils throughout the U.S. have donated nearly 1,800 ultrasound machines to pregnancy care centers, including 66 donated by councils in Indiana since 2011. Several more care centers in the state have asked for machines as well. Each machine costs approximately \$35,000, and the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council matches every local dollar raised.

Kunkel, who has been involved in the pro-life movement for years, said being

asked four years ago by the Knights to become their state life director took his commitment "to another level."

"That's when I became involved in Biking for Babies and much more involved with some of the other pro-life events," said Kunkel, a member of St. Louis de Montfort Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese. "Personally, I believe in protecting life from conception to natural death, but my special passion is the babies, the most vulnerable."

The outreach offered at crisis pregnancy care centers, he added, is of utmost importance, because "what they're doing for women in crisis pregnancies, ... that is what this is really all about."

(To donate online to Indiana's "Biking for Babies" ride, go to cutt.ly/Biking. Checks can be written to: Indiana State Council K of C Charity Fund Inc., with "Biking for Babies" on the Memo line. Mail to: Attention: Paul Zielinski, 4974 Roxbury Ct., Pittsboro, IN 46167) †



Biking for Babies participants pray a rosary on Sept. 7 outside of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. (Photos by Mike Krokos)



Father Rick Ginther, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, leads a decade of the rosary for "Biking for Babies" participants during the event's midpoint rally outside the parish church on Sept. 7.

True power is exercised in service of the weakest, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—While people can get caught up in the pursuit of power and greatness, Jesus teaches that true power is found in the humility of being a servant to the most vulnerable, Pope Francis said.

Before praying the *Angelus* on Sept. 22, the pope reflected on the day's Gospel reading from St. Mark in which the disciples are discussing who among them is the greatest, a conversation they were reluctant to share with Jesus.

"While Jesus confided in them the meaning of his very life, they were talking about power, and so now shame closes their mouths just as pride has closed their hearts

earlier," the pope said. Yet Jesus responds to the conversation by saying, "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all" (Mk 9:35).

Jesus asks his disciples, "Do you want to be great? Make yourself small, put yourself at the service of all," the pope said.

That teaching "renews our way of living," he said. Jesus "teaches us that true power does not lie in the dominion of the strongest, but in care for the weakest. True power is taking care of the weakest—this makes you great!"

Pope Francis said that is why Jesus then places a child before the disciples and tells them, "Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me" (Mk 9:37).

"The child has no power; the child has needs,"

the pope said. "When we take care of humanity, we recognize that humanity is always in need of life."

All people "are alive because we have been welcomed," he said. "But power makes us forget this truth. You are alive because you have been welcomed!"

By embracing conventional notions of power, however, "we become dominators, not servants, and the first to suffer as a result are the last: the little ones, the weak, the poor," he said.

"Brothers and sisters, how many people, how many, suffer and die because of power struggles," he said, noting that they are lives "that the world denies," just as it denied Jesus.

"However, the Gospel remains living and filled with hope," the pope said. "He who has been denied is risen, is the Lord!" †



Pope Francis