



The

Criterion

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A path of hope

Local psychologist addresses mental health and family, page 7.

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Joan and Steve Gutzwiller and their therapy dog Murphy bring touches of joy and hope during their visits with cancer patients at Franciscan Health Indianapolis. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

A three-time cancer survivor, her husband and a dog named Murphy bring joy to patients

(One in a continuing series of stories about “Pilgrims of Hope” in the archdiocese.)

By John Shaughnessy

With her husband Steve and their therapy dog Murphy by her side, Joan Gutzwiller walks toward the infusion room of the cancer center, remembering the fear and the emotions she had when she was a patient here four years ago.

Back then, she wondered and worried about her present and her future as the chemotherapy drugs flowed through her body, trying to kill the cancer cells.

Stepping into the room on this sunny afternoon, Gutzwiller quickly focuses on the people who are receiving their chemo treatments now, noticing their downcast expressions.

Enveloped in the quiet of the softly lit room in Franciscan Health Indianapolis, she remembers a small moment of joy from her last round of chemo in this hospital in 2021.

On that day, a therapy dog named Indy came through the cancer center where Gutzwiller had received radiation 36 times and chemotherapy treatments six times to try to kill that bout with the disease. And the joy and the smiles that Indy brought to her and the other patients that day have stayed etched in

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Pope Leo urges youths to find hope, friendship in Christ in uncertain times

ROME (CNS)—Addressing an estimated 1 million young people, Pope Leo XIV urged them to forge genuine relationships rooted in Christ rather than ephemeral online connections that can reduce individuals to a commodity.

“When a tool controls someone, that person becomes a tool: a commodity on the market and, in turn, a piece of merchandise,” the pope said during

the evening prayer vigil for the Jubilee of Youth on Aug. 2. “Only genuine relationships and stable connections can build good lives.”

The pope arrived by helicopter at the Tor Vergata field, roughly eight miles southeast of Rome’s city center, and was greeted with cheers from young people waving flags. Many of the youths were going to camp out overnight, sleeping in tents and sleeping bags on the dusty field, much like the World Youth Day celebration held 25 years ago in the same location.

Countless young people kicked up the dust from the field as they ran alongside the pope to catch a glimpse of the pontiff. Pope Leo smiled and waved at the youths, occasionally catching objects and plush toys that were lovingly pitched his way.

Exiting the pope-mobile, he was handed the large Jubilee year cross, which he carried to the main altar, accompanied by dozens of young people.

After beginning the vigil with prayers, the pope engaged in a dialogue with several young people who asked him three questions.

Dulce Maria, a 23-year-old woman

See YOUTH, page 13

See related story, page 19.

Saints Training Camp in Nashville ‘can truly change you from the inside out,’ youths say

By Natalie Hoefer

There’s a sense of joy when kids return from summer camp and excitedly share stories about their adventures—bonfires, swimming, games, canoeing, making crafts, conquering high-ropes courses.

That post-camp excitement was the same for Landan Hoskins and Adia McMasters, both members of St. Agnes Parish in Nashville.

See CAMP, page 10

Jonas Burton, left, and Laila McMasters, both members of St. Agnes Parish in Nashville, work as a team to split wood for someone in need during St. Agnes’ Saints Training Camp, offered on June 25-29. (Submitted photo)



Prayers for priests and vocations



With a relic of St. John Vianney displayed for veneration, people pray during adoration in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Aug. 4, the memorial of St. John Vianney. The archdiocesan Office of Vocations hosted a day of prayer for vocations for priests and for future vocations. St. John Vianney is the patron saint of priests. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

Peace, disarmament begin in the heart, says Archbishop Broglio

(OSV News)—Peace and nuclear disarmament begin in the heart, said the head of the nation’s Catholic bishops. “We must renew our efforts to work for the conversion of heart required for a global commitment to lasting peace, and thus the elimination of nuclear weapons,” said Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The archbishop shared his thoughts in an Aug. 4 statement ahead of the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The attacks on the two Japanese cities—launched by the U.S. on Aug. 6 and 9, 1945, in an effort to force the unconditional surrender of Japan and hasten the end of the war—killed an estimated 110,000 to 210,000 people. The true number of casualties is “probably fundamentally unknowable,” according to nuclear weapons historian Alex Wellerstein. “As we mark this doleful anniversary, we recognize the ongoing threat of nuclear weapons and their proliferation,” said Archbishop Broglio. His voice joins a growing chorus from Pope Leo XIV and several Catholic prelates on the need for disarmament amid renewed threats of nuclear attacks and heightened geopolitical tensions worldwide. Currently, more than 120 conflicts are taking place throughout the world,

according to the International Committee of the Red Cross. Among the most prominent are Russia’s war in Ukraine; the Israel-Hamas war, which has threatened to become a wider regional conflict; civil wars in Myanmar and Sudan; insurgencies in various African nations, as well as in Afghanistan and Pakistan; and armed gang violence that has destabilized Haiti. Military spending has soared, with the global total reaching a record high of close to \$2.5 trillion in 2024, up more than 7% from 2023 and averaging just under 2% of nations’ gross domestic product. The European Union, the United Kingdom and Canada have accelerated defense investments, as the U.S. under the Trump administration has unsettled longstanding defense alliances. Neither the United States nor Russia, which together account for approximately 88% of the world’s nuclear weapons, have adopted the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. “Certainly, the atrocities of war continue to be evident even in our ‘developed world,’ where human life is victimized in the womb, near death, on the streets of our modern cities, and in the various war zones of the contemporary world,” observed Archbishop Broglio, lamenting, “We are slow to learn.” He added, “Longing for peace, we pray for a change in mentality and an ever-deeper respect for every human person.” †

Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

August 9-24, 2025

- August 9 – 10 a.m.**
 25th Anniversary Mass for St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish, Bright, at St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Church, Lawrenceburg

August 10 – 5 p.m.
 St. Lawrence Day Celebration for Permanent Deacons at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis

August 11 – noon
 Seminarian convocation at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

August 12 – 10:30 a.m.
 Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

August 12 – noon
 Virtual National Eucharistic Congress Board of Directors meeting

August 13 – 6:30 p.m.
 Mental Health and Addiction Ministry Healing Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

August 14 – 10 a.m.
 Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center
- August 14 – 6 p.m.**
 Hispanic Ministries Young Adult Picnic, Indianapolis

August 16 – 4 p.m.
 175th Anniversary Mass and dinner for St. Joseph Parish, North Vernon, at St. Joseph Church

August 17 – 9:30 a.m.
 Mass to celebrate opening of school year at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, Indianapolis

August 17-21
 Region VII Bishops’ Retreat at University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Ill.

August 23 – 5 p.m.
 Mass and blessing at St. Mary Church, Indianapolis

August 24 – 2 p.m.
 Archdiocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral followed by reception at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, both in Indianapolis

Educators: Send us your favorite photos from the first days of the new school year

The first days of a new school year are filled with excitement, hope, a touch of anxiety, and plenty of promise as students return to school, and fall sports teams prepare for another season of competition. In celebration of these new beginnings, *The Criterion* is inviting you—our principals, teachers and coaches in the 69 Catholic schools across the archdiocese—to submit one or two photos that capture the essence of the first days of a new academic year at your school. The photos we receive will potentially

become part of a social media presentation that will be featured on the Facebook and Instagram accounts of the archdiocese. These pages can be viewed at facebook.com/ArchdioceseOfIndianapolis and instagram.com/archindianapolis. We also plan to showcase a selection of the pictures in a photo essay inside the printed edition of *The Criterion* in a future issue—and in a photo gallery on *The Criterion*’s website, www.CriterionOnline.com. Please send your photos to Robin Hartkorn at rhartkorn@archindy.org. †



Clarification

Regarding the “New Albany Deanery’s Summer Daze program helps youths ‘live out the faith’ ” article in the July 25 issue of *The Criterion*, Catalyst Catholic is the office of youth ministry for the New Albany Deanery, organizing youth ministry for the 16 parishes in Clark, Floyd and Harrison counties. Its offices are located at Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality in Mt. St. Francis. †



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St. John Henry Newman to be named a doctor of the Church

(OSV News)—St. John Henry Newman—the 19th-century theologian, intellectual and preacher who journeyed from Anglicanism to Catholicism,



St. John Henry Newman

powerfully shaping religious thought in both faith traditions—will be named a doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIV.

The news was announced by the Vatican shortly after Pope Leo’s July 31 audience with

Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.

The Vatican press bulletin stated that the pope had “confirmed the affirmative opinion of the plenary session of cardinals and bishops, members of the dicastery” for sainthood causes, on conferring the title, which since the early Church has been bestowed on saints whose doctrinal writing and teachings are held to have special authority.

St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great and St. Jerome were the first four doctors of the Church, and excluding the announcement about

See related reflection, page 4.

St. John Henry Newman, there have been 37 saints so named—including four women, St. Teresa of Avila,

St. Catherine of Siena, St. Thérèse of Lisieux and St. Hildegard of Bingen.

The move had been supported by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), who at their November 2023 plenary assembly voted almost unanimously to support a request by

the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales that Newman be named a doctor of the Church by Pope Francis.

Speaking at the 2023 plenary, Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, said the USCCB doctrine committee, of which he is chair, “considered this matter back in 2019 and concluded that the writings of St. John Henry Newman are truly eminent and of great relevance for the Church today, especially in the areas of the development of doctrine, the moral foundations of education, the primacy of conscience, the role of the laity and the search for the truth, amongst many others.

“The committee therefore determined that St. John Henry Newman is indeed worthy of this high honor,” said Bishop Flores at the time, who was joined in his remarks by several bishops.

According to an online biography by the Oratories of England, prepared for his canonization cause, John Henry Newman—born 1801 in London and raised in a middle-class Anglican family—displayed an early interest in Scripture.

In his *Apologia Pro Su Vita (A Defense of His Life)*, his 1864 autobiography, Cardinal Newman recounted “a great change of thought” he experienced at the age of 15, one that enabled him to “rest in the thought of two and two only absolute and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my creator.”

With the revival sparked by John Wesley, Newman converted to evangelicalism during his final year at Great Ealing School. At 16, he went on to study at Oxford, which along with Cambridge University offered seminary formation for Anglican clergy—a vocation Newman sought out, even looking to take what for that clerical tradition was the unusual vow of celibacy. He was ordained

in 1825, and dedicated himself to making pastoral visits to the sick and the poor while also tutoring college students, said the Oratories biography.

However, Newman’s zealous sharing of his faith with the students led to a clash with the administration, and deprived of the opportunity to teach, he began reading the works of the Fathers of the Church, which he described in part as “music to my inward ear” and “response to ideas ... I had cherished so long.”

Newman’s preaching began to attract national attention, and a near-fatal bout of illness in 1833, contracted while in Sicily—which saw him feverishly repeat, “I have a work to do in England”—intensified his desire for the renewal of the Church. Upon returning to his homeland, Newman teamed up with like-minded others who feared the Church of England had become complacent and politicized, said the Oratories. The group formed what would become known as the Oxford Movement, publishing tracts to rouse faithful from their torpor and reclaim the Gospel.

The future saint fell afoul of the university and Oxford’s bishop by arguing that the Church of England’s doctrines were more Catholic than Protestant. Newman left Oxford and took up residence in the nearby village of Littlemore, where he pursued study and prayer. Resigning from his parish, he began to discern—albeit not without struggle, as the Oratories observed—a calling to embrace the Catholic faith.

In the canonization cause biography, the Oratories pointed out that Newman’s battle with sacred tradition on matters such as purgatory and papal supremacy spurred further historical study, leading to his 1845 “Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine,” in which he described ideas and doctrines as organic, with

“old principles” reappearing “under new forms.” Newman observed in the work that “in a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.”

That same year, he was formally received into the Catholic Church—making his confession right in his home to a Passionist missionary priest, Father Dominic Barberi, and speaking at such length that the priest had him resume the following morning.

Newman’s conversion led to the loss not only of his Oxford fellowship, but of most of his Anglican friends and his family. Yet, said the Oratories, he also wrote of a great peace amid the isolation, describing the conversion as “like coming into port after a rough sea.”

In 1847, Newman, having completed additional study, was ordained a Catholic priest in Rome, where he became acquainted with the Oratorians of St. Philip Neri, whose communal way of life recalled the college fellowship of his university days. A year later, with papal approval, he established the first Oratory of St. Philip in England at Birmingham, with a second founded in London the following year.

Expanding his ministry to Ireland, Father Newman became the rector of the newly established Catholic University of Ireland, now University College Dublin, under the leadership of Ireland’s Catholic bishops. Through his religious, spiritual and intellectual thought, Newman synthesized the pursuit of knowledge and of God, writing that “knowledge is one thing, virtue is another.”

The demands of his role in Dublin, which saw him make 56 sea crossings from Britain to Ireland in just seven years, proved exhausting, said the Oratories, and

See NEWMAN, page 9

Mass celebrated at ‘Alligator Alcatraz’ for detained Catholic migrants

(OSV News)—The Archdiocese of Miami celebrated the first Mass for detainees at “Alligator Alcatraz,” the Trump administration’s controversial immigrant detention center in the Florida Everglades.



Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski

“I am pleased that our request to provide for the pastoral care of the detainees has been accommodated,” said Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski in a statement from the Archdiocese of Miami dated Aug. 1 and released on Aug. 3.

The archbishop added, “Also, we were able to respond to a request to provide similar service to the staff who reside at the facility.”

According to the archdiocese, the first liturgy was celebrated on Aug. 2 at an unspecified time “in the afternoon,” with “regular liturgical celebrations” set to continue “following the facility’s guidelines and the pastoral availability of our clergy.”

According to a recent report by organizations affiliated with Catholic and evangelical Christian churches, Christians account for approximately 80% of all of those at risk of deportation. The Christians most at risk of deportation are Catholics, 61% of the total.

News of the on-site Mass comes several days after

Archbishop Wenski and some 25 Knights of Columbus rode on motorcycles to pray a rosary at the gates of the facility, located some 55 miles from downtown Miami at the Dade Collier Training and Transition Airport.

The complex of tents with groups of bunk beds in cage-like units of chain-link fencing has drawn condemnation from clergy and Democratic lawmakers alike for its conditions and location—with Trump, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis touting the hostile environment as a security feature during their tour.

“It basically is in a swamp,” Archbishop Wenski told OSV News in a July 15 interview. “There are numerous alligators and pythons [and] boa constrictors, and tons and tons of mosquitoes.”

Water, sewage management, power and air conditioning are supplied by portable units, according to DeSantis. The facility, estimated to hold 3,000, is set to be expanded to accommodate 5,000, a Homeland Security official told CNN.

The “breakthrough” in access to the facility for pastoral care came “after

months of dialogue” among Florida’s Catholic bishops, archdiocesan leadership and state correctional authorities, the archdiocese said in its Aug. 1 statement.

Now, said the archdiocese, the resulting agreement “ensures that Catholic chaplains and pastoral ministers from the Archdiocese of Miami will have full access to offer two liturgical Masses to detainees and Catholic staff inside the detention facility.”

The archdiocese noted it plans to have “a successful and consistent Catholic presence” at Alligator Alcatraz—which is within the territory of the Diocese of Venice, Fla., but relatively close to Miami—“that will depend on effective organization and coordination.”

“The goal is to ensure a stable schedule of sacramental care and pastoral ministry that meets the spiritual needs of both detainees and staff, with the support of clergy and committed lay volunteers,” said the archdiocese. †

St. Catherine of Siena Enochsburg

87th Annual Church Picnic
Sunday, August 31, 2025

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Adults - \$15.00; Children 12 & under - \$7.00

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Editorial

We must respect human rights and dignity as part of immigration reform

The Catholic Church in the United States has actively advocated for immigration reform since the 1970s. During this time, the American bishops have worked closely with their brother bishops in Mexico and with Church leaders in other regions of the world to find practical ways to implement Catholic social teaching regarding the migration of peoples.

The Church’s position could not be clearer. Christ has commanded us to “welcome the stranger among us” and to treat every human being with dignity and respect. As Pope Leo XIV said recently in his message for the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees:

“Many migrants, refugees and displaced persons are privileged witnesses of hope. Indeed, they demonstrate this daily through their resilience and trust in God, as they face adversity while seeking a future in which they glimpse that integral human development.”

This year, rather than being celebrated on Sept. 24 as usual, the World Day of Migrants and Refugees will coincide with the Jubilee of Migrants and of Missions, which takes place on Oct. 4-5.

As migration has become a contentious issue here in the United States, the Catholic Church has been actively involved in education efforts and the crafting of political solutions to the current broken system. The bishops of the United States have proposed a comprehensive set of recommendations for changing laws and policies to bring about a more humane and just immigration system in the United States. Efforts to preserve family unity and protect human dignity remain at the center of the Church’s reform efforts.

Sadly, during the past four decades, our Church’s best efforts to address the problems associated with immigration reform have been frustrated as political leaders in Congress and in the White House from both major parties have failed to deliver and/or enforce laws that would provide effective solutions to growing problems with immigration.

Especially since the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, debates about immigration have focused almost exclusively on enforcement. The Catholic Church acknowledges the right of sovereign nations to control their borders and to regulate legal immigration, but for several decades now, leaders in the Catholic Church have urged our legislators to pass additional immigration legislation that would reaffirm the centrality of family unity in the immigration system and exemplify respect for the innate value of the human person. Unfortunately, positive reform efforts have fallen victim to a growing partisan divide that has continually stymied passage of any workable, bipartisan solution.

—Daniel Conway

Sight Unseen/Brandon A. Evans

Salvation is for the weak

Sometimes when I think of the angels it makes me a bit fearful—mostly because so many of them are in hell.

Angels are, as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, spiritual beings of intellect and will, created before the world as “personal and immortal creatures, surpassing in perfection all visible creatures” (#330).

They stand before God with nothing between and nothing hidden, beholding his eternal nature in fullness and with a flawlessly sharp intellect.

Yet a third of them looked at love and mercy itself and said, “No.” A third of them *threw themselves into hell* and became demons rather than adore such everlasting goodness.

How could that be? What chance do we have as mere mortals to make the right choice if they can’t?

Our understanding and appreciation of God—and his holiness—is considerably dimmed by original sin.

And what’s more, that same fallen nature has led all of us to lead lives that, to put it mildly, fall short of what God commands.

But maybe it’s sin that is what gives us hope, strangely enough. Maybe we have it all backward: it’s possible that so many of the angels fell not in spite of their perfection, but *because of it*.

They didn’t need a savior. They didn’t need Jesus Christ to die for them; to show



them his supreme and self-effacing love for their sake.

And they never had the chance to be so wounded that only a miracle could heal them.

When we pray for help “at the hour of our death,” it is partly a prayer, I think, to recognize in those final moments what God has been offering us all along. The hand he reaches out with is one of mercy and restoration—the hand of the one who is willing (and able) to wipe out a lifetime of debt and ill-spent grace.

Only by granting us the blessing of seeing our own misery so clearly do we understand just how good God is to want us to be in heaven with him. Only by being in such dire need are we so willing to be helped.

It’s precisely why Jesus warned people about the dangers of power and wealth: the more you have of both, the less you think you need God—or anybody else.

The angels’ might was so great that they could be mistaken for gods. They had no debt of sin and no deficit of nature.

Perhaps that’s why so many fell, at least in part.

And it begs the question as to whether our pitiable nature is the hinderance that we think it is.

Our weakness may not, after all, be what holds us back from salvation: it may be the very thing that makes it so possible.

(*Sight Unseen is an occasional column that explores God and the world. Brandon A. Evans is the online editor and graphic designer of The Criterion and a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield.*) †

Reflection/Sean Gallagher

A new doctor of the Church, St. John Newman joined faith and learning

I was delighted when I learned on the morning of July 31 that Pope Leo XIV had approved the naming of St. John Henry Newman as a doctor of the Church.

The title “doctor of the Church” has been given through the centuries to only 38 saints (including Newman) who are judged to have made significant contributions to growth in the understanding of the faith.

For me, Newman embodied two important aspects of the person I strive to be. Like him, I desire to keep learning until the day I die. I also seek, like Newman, to apply this learning to growing in my relationship with Christ and the Church, in my faith and how, with the help of God’s grace, I strive to live it out in daily life in the vocation to which God has called me.

Newman was born in England in 1801 and died in 1890. In the middle of his life, in 1845, he was received into the full communion of the Church after a long journey of faith.

He had been a noted priest and scholar in the Church of England, helping to lead a renewal movement in the 1830s and early 1840s by encouraging the restoration of its ties to the writings and spirituality of the early Church fathers.

Newman was convinced at the time that the Church of England ran a middle course between what he saw as the excesses and errors of Catholicism and the Lutheran, Calvinist and other forms of Protestantism.

But as he studied the early Church fathers more and more, Newman became convinced that the beliefs of the Catholic Church of his time were a natural (or, rather, supernatural) development from the beliefs of the fathers.

That led him to write his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* and,



ultimately, to be received into the Catholic Church. He was later ordained an Oratorian priest and was named a cardinal by Pope Leo XIII in 1879.

Newman not only sought to apply his lifelong learning to his own life of faith. He also strove to help his students do the same. This happened both when he was an Anglican priest and scholar at Oxford University, and later as a Catholic priest and educator in Ireland and in Birmingham, England.

His goal as an educator wasn’t simply to impart knowledge, but to form hearts through a mutual seeking of the truth with his students.

Newman chose “*Cor ad cor loquitur*” as his motto when he was named a cardinal. It is Latin for “heart speaks to heart” and represented the approach to learning and faith that had shaped his life.

But there was for Newman a prior “heart speaking to heart” that deepened and strengthened the hearts of student and teacher speaking to each other. That was the hearts of the student and the teacher speaking to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

He knew from his life of faith that this encounter with the heart of Jesus happened most profoundly in the Eucharist. In a prayer he wrote, Newman asked God that, “when thou dost condescend to suffer me to receive thee, to eat and drink thee, and thou for a while takest up thy abode within me, O make my heart beat with thy heart.”

Pope Francis quoted this prayer of Newman in his encyclical on the Sacred Heart “*Dilexit nos*” (“He loved us”) issued last October.

May St. John Henry Newman, now a doctor of the Church, intercede for all of God’s sons and daughters so that we all may be drawn more fully into the heart of Jesus in coming to know him more fully in this life and completely in the next.

(*Sean Gallagher is a reporter for The Criterion.*) †

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Surrender to God and amazing things will happen

Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength (Dt 6:4-5).

Today, Friday, Aug. 8, the Church celebrates the memorial of St. Dominic de Guzmán (1170-1221).

Dominic was a Spanish priest who founded the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) totally dedicated to preaching for the salvation of souls. He was convinced of the value of contemplative prayer, a spiritual discipline focused on resting in God’s presence, often involving silence and a letting go of distracting thoughts. Contemplative prayer invites us to open our hearts and minds to God, seeking a deeper, more intimate relationship with Him.

St. Dominic’s followers testified that his nights were spent in contemplation of God’s Word, his days in the preaching of that Word. They said that Dominic spoke only “to God or about God.” St. Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican friar, described the Dominican charism as “contemplating and handing on to others what has been contemplated.”

The Gospel reading for today’s liturgy (Mt 16:24-28) describes what is expected of Jesus’ disciples:

Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life?(Mt 16:24-26)

Self-denial, the Way of the Cross, is the foundational principle of Christian life. If we wish to follow Jesus, we must be prepared to suffer and die as he did. No earthly treasures, no amount of fame or worldly glory, can satisfy the hungry hearts of women and men who truly seek God. St. Dominic was keenly aware of the necessity of self-denial in order to live the Word that he preached.

A modern saint who also gave witness to this principle of self-denial as fundamental to Christian spirituality was St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) whose memorial we will celebrate tomorrow, Saturday, Aug. 9.

Edith Stein was born to a Jewish family in Breslau, Germany (today part of Poland), in 1891. At 14, she became

an atheist, but her sincere search for truth and wisdom as a scholar of philosophy led her to the threshold of the Catholic Church. We can only imagine the challenges she faced as a Jewish woman, who excelled in her philosophical studies, even as she struggled personally to seek and find God.

The Gospel reading for tomorrow (Mt 17:14-20) speaks to the kind of faith that Edith Stein was seeking:

Because of your little faith. Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, “Move from here to there,” and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you. (Mt 17:20)

Faith gives us access to the kind of spiritual power that moves mountains. When we allow our faith to guide us, and when we surrender our egos to Divine Providence, amazing things can happen. God’s love will do for us things that we could never do by ourselves.

After reading the autobiography of St. Teresa of Ávila, Edith Stein exclaimed: “This is the truth!” Ten years later, she entered the Carmelite order and was given the name Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Contemplation is, of course, a

charism of the Carmelites, so the former Edith Stein added to her search for God a commitment to contemplative prayer. She learned to practice the spiritual disciplines that helped to transform her intellectual knowledge into the wisdom of the heart. In the process, she learned to live the ancient Jewish prayer, the Shema, which called her to love the Lord, her God, with all her heart, and with all her soul, and with all her strength.

Sister Teresa Benedicta was seized by the Nazis on August 2, 1942, and died at the Auschwitz concentration camp seven days later. Her love for Jesus was consummated by her own participation in the Cross of Christ. As a result, she is venerated as a “martyr for love.”

What do the 13th-century preacher, St. Dominic de Guzmán, and the 20th-century Carmelite nun, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, have in common? Both denied themselves, took up their crosses, and followed Jesus, the Word of God Incarnate.

As missionary disciples, and Pilgrims of Hope, we all are invited to contemplate the Mystery of God’s love for us and then to hand on to others the truth that we have contemplated. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Ríndete a Dios y sucederán cosas increíbles

Escucha, Israel: el Señor—y únicamente el Señor—es nuestro Dios. Amarás al Señor tu Dios con todo tu corazón, con toda tu alma y con todas tus fuerzas (Dt 6:4-5).

Hoy, viernes 8 de agosto, la Iglesia celebra el memorial de santo Domingo de Guzmán (1170-1221).

Domingo fue un sacerdote español, fundador de la Orden de Predicadores (dominicos) totalmente dedicada a la predicación para la salvación de las almas. Estaba convencido del valor de la oración contemplativa, una disciplina espiritual centrada en permanecer en la presencia de Dios, lo que a menudo implica silencio y apartar los pensamientos que distraen. La oración contemplativa nos invita a abrir nuestro corazón y nuestra mente a Dios en busca de una relación más profunda e íntima con Él.

Los seguidores de santo Domingo daban testimonio de que pasaban las noches contemplando la Palabra de Dios y durante el día la predicaban. Decían que Domingo solamente hablaba “con Dios o sobre Dios.” Santo Tomás de Aquino, fraile dominico, describió el carisma dominico como “contemplar y transmitir a los demás lo que se ha contemplado.”

La lectura del Evangelio para la liturgia de hoy (Mt 16:24-28) describe

lo que se espera de los discípulos de Jesús:

Si alguno quiere ser discípulo mío, deberá olvidarse de sí mismo, cargar con su cruz y seguirme. Porque el que quiera salvar su vida, la perderá; pero el que entregue su vida por causa de mí, ese la encontrará. ¿De qué le sirve a uno ganar el mundo entero, si pierde su propia vida? ¿O qué podrá dar el ser humano a cambio de su vida? (Mt 16:24-26).

La abnegación —el vía crucis—es el principio fundamental de la vida cristiana. Si queremos seguir a Jesús, debemos estar dispuestos a sufrir y morir como él. Ningún tesoro terrenal, ninguna cantidad de fama o gloria mundana, puede satisfacer los corazones hambrientos de los hombres y las mujeres que en verdad buscan a Dios. Santo Domingo era muy consciente de la necesidad de la abnegación para vivir la Palabra que predicaba.

Una santa moderna que también dio testimonio de este principio de abnegación como elemento fundamental de la espiritualidad cristiana fue santa Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz (Edith Stein), cuya memoria celebraremos mañana, sábado 9 de agosto.

Edith Stein nació en 1891 en el seno de una familia judía en Breslau, Alemania (hoy parte de Polonia).

A los 14 años se hizo atea, pero su sincera búsqueda de la verdad y la sabiduría como estudiosa de la filosofía la condujo a las puertas de la Iglesia católica. Tan solo podemos imaginarnos los retos a los que se enfrentó por ser una mujer judía que se destacó en sus estudios filosóficos, incluso mientras libraba una lucha personal por buscar y encontrar a Dios.

La lectura del Evangelio de mañana (Mt 17:14-20) habla del tipo de fe que buscaba Edith Stein:

Porque ustedes no tuvieron fe. Les aseguro que si tuvieran fe, aunque sólo fuera como un grano de mostaza, le dirían a este monte: “¡Quítate de ahí y ponte allí!” y el monte cambiaría de lugar. Nada les resultaría imposible. (Mt 17:20)

La fe nos da acceso al tipo de poder espiritual que mueve montañas. Cuando dejamos que nuestra fe nos guíe y rendimos el ego a la Divina Providencia, pueden ocurrir cosas asombrosas. El amor de Dios hará por nosotros cosas que nunca podríamos hacer por nuestra cuenta.

Tras leer la autobiografía de santa Teresa de Ávila, Edith Stein exclamó: “¡Esta es la verdad!” Diez años más tarde ingresó en la Orden de las Carmelitas y recibió el nombre de sor Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz.

La contemplación es, por supuesto,

un carisma de las carmelitas, así que la antigua Edith Stein añadió a su búsqueda de Dios un compromiso con la oración contemplativa. Aprendió a practicar las disciplinas espirituales que le ayudaron a transformar sus conocimientos intelectuales en la sabiduría del corazón. En el proceso, aprendió a vivir la antigua oración judía, el Shema, que la llamaba a amar al Señor, su Dios, con todo su corazón, con toda su alma y con todas sus fuerzas.

La hermana Teresa Benedicta fue aprehendida por los nazis el 2 de agosto de 1942 y murió en el campo de concentración de Auschwitz siete días después. Su amor por Jesús se consumó con su propia participación en la Cruz de Cristo y por ello se la venera como “mártir del amor.”

¿Qué tienen en común el predicador del siglo XIII, santo Domingo de Guzmán, y la monja carmelita del siglo XX, santa Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz? Ambos se negaron a sí mismos, tomaron sus cruces y siguieron a Jesús, el Verbo de Dios encarnado.

Como discípulos misioneros, y Peregrinos de la Esperanza, todos estamos invitados a contemplar el Misterio del amor de Dios por nosotros y, después, a transmitir a los demás la verdad que hemos contemplado. †

Events Calendar

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

August 13
Fat Dan’s, 5410 N. College Ave., Indianapolis. **Young Catholic Professionals Networking Happy Hour**, 7-9 p.m., for young Catholics ages 21-39, dress is business casual, free. Information, registration: info@ycpindianapolis.org, youngcatholicprofessionals.org/chapter/indianapolis.

August 15
Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Viewrail CEO and founder Len Morris presenting “When Life Gives You Lemons, Go Find an Orange Grove,” rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Aug. 12. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

August 15-16
St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **SausageFest**, 5:30 p.m.-midnight, Kincaid’s sausages, beer garden featuring Sun King beer, live music, kids’ games, teen zone with D.J., free admission. Information 317-253-1461, mlorch@staindy.org.

August 16
St. Barnabas Parish, 8300 Rahke Road, Indianapolis. **Saints Anne and Joachim Grandparents Workshop**, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Catholic speaker Ron Ward presenting “How to Share Your Catholic Faith,” includes lunch, \$5 donation, parents/aunts/uncles and anyone seeking to find new ways to experience Jesus in their life are also welcome, register by Aug. 10. Information, registration: stbindy.org/grandparents, 317-407-9769, chrislang1@aol.com.

August 16-17
St. Mary of the Knobs Parish, 5719 St. Marys Road, Floyds Knobs. **Knobfest**, Sat. 5:30 p.m.-midnight, Sun. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., dancing, gambling, games, fried chicken dinner, food trucks, cost TBD. Information: 812-923-3011, mhartlage@yoursmk.org.

St. Nicholas Parish, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Dr., Sunman. **Music Festival and Chicken Dinner**, Sat. 6-11 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., ribeye sandwiches, fried chicken, turtle soup, live music: CRB (Classic Rock Band), Mitch and Fitch Music, dinners \$15, free admission. Information: 812-623-2964, cludwig@etczone.com.

August 20
McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis **Theology on Tap**, 6-9:30 p.m., Benedictine Father Simon Hermann presenting, for ages 18-39, includes presentation, full bar, food trucks and socializing, free admission. Information: 317-592-4006, emastronicola@archindy.org.

August 22-24
St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Fall Festival**, Fri. and Sat. 5-11 p.m., Sun. 1-7 p.m., rides, food festival featuring Vietnamese, Mexican, African, Italian and American food, Texas Hold’em tournament on Saturday, blackjack, bingo, pull tabs, silent auction, free admission. Information: 317-244-9002.

Omni Interlocken Resort, 500 Interlocken Blvd., Broomfield, Colo. **Rejoicing in Hope: National Conference for Single Catholics**, Fri. 4 p.m.-Sun. 1 p.m., \$549 use promo code NCSC2025

for discount when registering, hotel \$189 per night (plus \$10 for triple/quad), virtual option available. Information, registration: 719-641-2281, admin@nationalcatholicsingles.com, nationalcatholicsingles.com.

August 23
Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Celebrate Marriage: Beacon of Hope Conference**, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (optional 7:30 a.m. Mass prior to conference), includes sessions, continental breakfast and lunch, \$75 per couple, limited to 30 couples, registration required and preferred by Aug. 16. Information, registration: tinyurl.com/beaconofhope25, 317-489-1557, olgmarrageministry@gmail.com.

St. Monica Parish, 6131 Michigan Road, Indianapolis. **International Festival**, 5-11 p.m., international food and entertainment, beer garden, \$3,000 raffle, kids’ games, free admission. Information: 317-253-2193, parishoffice@stmonicaindy.org.

St. Mary Parish, 311 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. **Celebrating St. Mary’s German Heritage, including English-German Mass with Archbishop Thompson**, 4:30-7 p.m., 4:30 p.m. traditional German choral music, 5 p.m. Mass in English and German with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and a German-speaking priest, blessing of plaque honoring St. Mary’s German heritage, followed by wine and cheese reception in parish grotto with German music by Indianapolis Liederkrantz, free admission. Information: 317-637-3983, bookkeeper@sainmarysindy.org.

August 23-24
St. Mary Parish, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **Parish Festival**, Sat.: 5:30-11 p.m., Adult Night, games, beer garden, pie auction, 7 p.m. live music by Nuttin’ Fancy, pork burger or pulled pork dinners, concessions.

Sun.: 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Family Day, kids’ games, live entertainment, silent auction, 50/50 raffle, fried chicken and pulled pork dinners; free admission. **On Eagles Wings 5K Run/Walk**, Sat. 8 a.m. registration, 8:30 a.m. kids’ games open, 9 a.m. race, 10 a.m. Kids Fun Run,

10:15 a.m. awards, \$20 for all participants until Aug. 13, \$25 after Aug. 13, register by Aug. 13 for T-shirt, \$8 to have shirt shipped, additional fees applied for online registrations. Information, registration: 812-663-8427, oneagleswings5k.com. †

Wedding Anniversaries

BRUCE AND LINDA (KESMAN) HAMMERSCHMITT, members of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 7.

The couple was married in St. Louise de Marillac Church in La Grange Park, Ill., on Aug. 7, 1965.

They have two children: Leanne Marson and Daniel Hammerschmitt.

The couple also has three grandchildren.



LARRY AND PEGGY (CISSELL) RICHARDS, members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on June 27.

The couple was married in St. Agnes Church in Louisville, Ky., on June 27, 1970.

They have four children: Ellen Woods, Jack, Larry and Nathan Richards.

The couple also has eight grandchildren.



TERRY AND KAREN (KAUFMAN) HEATHCOAT, members of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 19.

The couple was married in St. Anthony Church in Effingham, Ill., on July 19, 1975.

They have two children: Jennifer Still and Brandon Heathcoat.

The couple also has two grandchildren.



BILL AND MARTHA (SHEA) KUNTZ, members of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 8.

The couple was married in Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove on Aug. 8, 1975.

They have three children: Erin Aft, Bill and Brian Kuntz.

The couple also has eight grandchildren.



WILLIAM AND KATHERINE (SIEGLE) SLEVA, members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 4.

The couple was married in St. Thomas Church in Peoria, Ill., on April 4, 1975.

They have two children: Katherine Beauchamp and Mary Ellen Burns.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



RAYMOND AND CHERYL (SMITH) SPENCER, members of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 9.

The couple was married in St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on Aug. 9, 1975.

They have two children: Christopher and Raymond Spencer.

The couple also has six 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.

St. Vincent de Paul will offer Stuff-A-Truck donation opportunities at Indianapolis parishes from August-November

The Indianapolis council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is hosting Stuff-A Truck donation collection events at parishes in Indianapolis from 9-11 a.m. one day each month in August through November.

The Stuff-A-Truck events invite people to bring clothing, linens, household goods, appliances and furniture for the neighbors in need whom the organization helps. Donors simply place their donations by the truck, and volunteers will load them.

Clothing and other soft good donations should be in closed plastic bags, and household items should be in boxes.

The items should be in good enough condition to give to people without resources to purchase them. Torn, broken or dirty items, although offered in good faith and good intent, will be declined.

The upcoming 9-11 a.m. Stuff-A-Truck events in Indianapolis are:

—**Aug. 16 and Nov. 8:** St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish parking lot, 6000 W. 34th St.
—**Sept. 13:** St. Michael the Archangel Parish parking lot, 3354 W. 30th St.
—**Oct. 11:** St. Christopher Parish parking lot, 5301 W. 16th St.

All donations are appreciated; however, the following items are usually in short supply:

- Washers, dryers, refrigerators, stoves (no gas appliances)
- Dressers, chests of drawers, nightstands
- Bicycles (adult sizes preferred)
- Dining room or kitchenette tables and chairs
- Small appliances: toasters, irons, can openers, coffee makers, slow cookers
- Pots, pans, cooking/eating utensils
- Dishes, glassware
- Fans, area rugs, vacuum cleaners
- Couches, loveseats, upholstered chairs, sectional sofas (no more than 2 pieces), recliners, coffee and end tables
- Soft goods: clothing, shoes, purses, bed linens, towels, blankets, curtains

Some items, including TVs, used mattresses, printers, baby cribs/ furniture/strollers/car seats and more cannot be accepted. For a complete list of items not accepted, go to tinyurl.com/ItemsNotAccepted.

For more information, contact Bobbi Sisk at bsisk@svdipindy.org. †

Bishop, local Catholic psychologist speak on family and mental health in USCCB video

By Natalie Hoefer

Bishop James D. Conley of Lincoln, Neb., came from what he calls a “stable family.” He didn’t have “any trauma in my childhood” or “anything mental health struggles can be traced back to.”

But by 2019 he had to admit: “I was anxious and I was fearful, and I was getting depressed.”

Bishop Conley published a pastoral letter in May of 2024 about his mental health journey called “A Future with Hope.”

“I wanted to tell my story, my own journey and struggles in the area of mental health, but also offer some sort of resource for people and hope for a future,” he said in a Mental Health Roundtable on the Family video addressing mental and spiritual wellness in the family. The 32-minute video is one of three Roundtable Discussions on Mental Health videos released this year by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

Two Catholic mental health professionals also participated in the family-themed video, including John Cadwallader, a clinical psychologist and the founder of Central Psychological Services in Indianapolis.

Bishop Conley launched the discussion by recalling what led to his mental health spiral, an issue not uncommon today: stress.



At left, John Cadwallader—a Catholic, a clinical psychologist and the founder of Central Psychological Services in Indianapolis—is shown speaking in a recent U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops video called “Mental Health Roundtable on the Family.” Listening are moderator Maura Moser, second from left, Bishop James D. Conley of the Diocese of Lincoln, Nebraska (partially obscured), and clinician Virginia Madden (back to camera). (Screenshot from “Mental Health Roundtable on the Family” video)

When ‘just work harder’ doesn’t work

“The burdens of the leadership [of a bishop] became really, really intense in a lot of ways” for Bishop Conley in 2018.

It started with the renewed U.S. clergy sexual abuse crisis. In the midst of dealing with the “terrible tragedy,” he was under pressure to turn over all diocesan personnel files dating back to 1940 for an investigation of Nebraska’s three dioceses launched by the state’s attorney general.

Meanwhile, the diocese had to close two schools, “which was very traumatic,” said Bishop Conley. Then his sister was diagnosed with breast cancer and a young priest in his diocese died suddenly.

He’d been raised that “if it’s tough, you just work harder. ... I went days, weeks, months without getting a good night’s rest,” he said, his mind busy trying to find solutions.

But by the spring of 2019, he realized that “not only was I not sleeping, but I was anxious and I was fearful, and I was getting depressed.”

He saw a doctor and was diagnosed with anxiety and major depressive disorder. He started taking medication and seeing a therapist—but by the fall he saw little progress.

Finally, in November, Bishop Conley asked his superior representing Pope Francis for time off and was granted a temporary leave of absence.

He left in December of 2019 to stay at a retreat center in Phoenix.

Then the COVID pandemic hit in March.

“That added a whole other layer because I was out

of my familiar surroundings and everything became isolated,” Bishop Conley recalled.

But friends he knew in Phoenix were there for him, as well as a doctor, a psychotherapist, a psychiatrist and “a very good spiritual director.”

What was supposed to be a few months’ leave turned into the blessing of an 11-month break.

His first year back “was bumpy and rocky,” said Bishop Conley. “I was still on a lot of medication. I was still sort of fragile.” His mother’s death in December of 2020 was “another big blow.”

But with his continued therapy, medication and support from friends, the bishop “kind of got better.” He got “more traction in 2022 and 2023, and each year since then, it’s gotten better and better.”

Bishop Conley still takes medication and continues to see his therapist “from time to time.” And he is “very serious” about seeing his spiritual director once a month.

‘Lack of contact with reality’

Reflecting on Bishop Conley’s experience, Cadwallader noted the impact of a schedule that stretched the bishop too thin.

The same could be said for many families, he noted.

“We’re so busy in Western culture, whether it be extracurriculars or just demands at school,” he said.

Overuse of social media and the internet are also major contributors to mental health issues—on many fronts—Cadwallader continued.

“Being bombarded with information” can lead to stress and anxiety” in both teens and adults, he said.

When Bishop Conley noted that excessive screen

time can cause a “lack of contact with reality” and of “real friendships” for young people, Cadwallader agreed, adding that too much time online makes it “very hard for them to be in the here and now.”

He also expressed concern about the mental health issues that can result from young people’s online exposure to pornography.

“I’ve read estimates of where young people are first introduced to pornography around ages 11 to 12, and some even as young as 8 to 7,” Cadwallader said. “It becomes something which is very dangerous, certainly as far as sin, but it also creates this sense of an unhealthy substitute.

“They’re not getting loved by their parents. They’re not being loved by their family, their closest friends. They’re not talking to God about this, too. They tend to go to these creature comforts, which actually makes it much worse.”

Introduction to and pursuit of online pornography at a time when “their brains are forming” can “create a lot of dangerous things down the road in terms of how relationships are viewed, leading to trouble developing healthy relationships as they mature,” Cadwallader added.

“Parents must realize [their children are] going to find” online pornography, he said. They must consider how to help their children understand “this is not really the beauty that God has intended for our bodies and love and sexuality, and to kind of help them see that this is a distortion of it, [which] is a very sad thing.”

But the stress that parents themselves are experiencing—or their own excessive use of screen

See VIDEO, page 14

The importance of managing online time for mental health of adults and children

By Natalie Hoefer

As a clinical psychologist and a Catholic, John Cadwallader, founder of Central Psychological Services in Indianapolis, was recently a featured expert in a U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops video called “Mental Health Roundtable on the Family” (see article above).

The video is 32 minutes. When

Cadwallader spoke with *The Criterion* about the video, he noted that more was discussed during filming than could fit into the final cut. He particularly focused on the impact of excessive screen time on mental health and parents’ role in monitoring their children’s use of devices and the impact of that use on their children’s mental health.

Below are excerpts from the interview.

The importance of parental supervision

“Parents need to be mindful of the content their children are viewing, and to be careful that media is not raising our children. ...

“If we are not cautious and aware, attentive and conscientious to what our children are actually seeing, they will still be formed—and if it’s not by us, not by the Church, family values, etc., something will fill that gap, and that’s where media, although it can be good, can also be very problematic.

“One example is YouTube. ... A lot of the feeds will insert content, which could be something inappropriate and contrary to the teachings of the Church—more illicit kinds of pictures or videos, or even pornography.

“Having different kinds of securities in place so parents can monitor [sites their children visit] I think is really important, even limiting the time they have [online], and talking with their children about [such content] in terms of safety. ...

“It’s ok for parents to tell their children no. Sometimes telling them no is the most loving thing you can say, even when it’s upsetting to the child, regardless of the age. ...

“We’re not in the vocational business of trying to please our children. We naturally want that, but what we’re really

called to do is to love them. And part of that involves setting boundaries.”

‘It’s good to relax,’ but ...

“One of the struggles of social media, or even YouTube—and this is true of all ages—is that people can lose track of time, ... and maybe they haven’t gotten their homework done, or adults haven’t gotten work done or they’ve neglected other things. It’s a form of procrastination, which can lead to other problems. ...

“It’s good to relax. But sometimes when we use technology too much, it’s actually not so much about what’s enjoyable—it’s really more entering into a place that is not in the here and now.”

‘When online content disturbs your peace’

“Sometimes online content of videos or different kinds of social media feeds can actually disturb your peace, which creates more mental distress.

“When you’re done using technology for the moment of the day, do you feel more unsettled, angrier, more anxious? Do you feel despair, panic, frightened of the future, depleted? When online content disturbs your peace, then you have to ask the question, ‘What am I looking at, and is that actually good for me?’ ...

“It really comes back to a question of, ‘What is God asking me to do in my life

See MENTAL HEALTH, page 14

All are invited to Mental Health and Addiction Ministry Mass with Archbishop Thompson on Aug. 13

A Mental Health and Addiction Ministry Mass will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 6:30 p.m. on Aug. 13.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson will celebrate the Mass, which is sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity.

Options to receive a blessing from the archbishop and/or to pray with a prayer team will be offered immediately after the Mass.

All are invited to worship at the liturgy, including those suffering with—or those who know someone suffering with—mental health issues or addiction, their family and friends, those who work in the mental health and addiction recovery field, and all who want to pray for their Christian brothers and sisters enduring these crosses.

For more information, contact Brie Anne Varick at 317-236-1543 or bvarick@archindy.org. †

CYO recognition highlights volunteer efforts of adults and youths

The archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization honored the exceptional efforts of adults and youths during its Volunteer Awards Ceremony at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on May 13. Here is a list of the award recipients:

2025 St. John Bosco Award recipients
 Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish—John Bannister
 St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish—Randall Herrman
 Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish—Kevin Kirkhoff

2025 Msgr. Albert Busald Award recipients
 Christ the King Parish—Keith Carroll
 Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove—Rita Stuck
 Holy Spirit Parish—Anthony Kelshaw
 Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish—Jon Bannister and Elizabeth Perry
 Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish—Elizabeth Schoettle

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish—Bernie Schwering
 St. Barnabas Parish—Jim Kessenich and Jon Lally
 St. Matthew the Apostle Parish—Joe Deitchman
 St. Monica Parish—Joey Murphy
 St. Pius X Parish—Dennis Siepka
 St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish—Jeff Lathrop
 St. Thomas Aquinas Parish—Anna Logan and John Lurkins
 St. Simon the Apostle Parish—Andrew Amrhein

2025 Bernie Price Spirit of Youth Award recipients
 Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish—Will McGovern
 St. Matthew the Apostle Parish—Sam Everly
 St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish—Dean Cheever, Marek Torzewski and Madisyn Kantner

2025 Edward Tinder Official of the Year Award recipients
 St. Lawrence Parish—Rachel Mitchum
 Bill Wells †



Archbishop encourages CYO award winners to do all for God’s glory

By John Shaughnessy

It was a night when the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) honored the life of the late Bernadette “Bernie” Price—by naming its Spirit of Youth Award for her in celebration of her 51 years of joyous, give-everything-you-have dedication to serving the CYO and the children and youths of the archdiocese.

It was also a night when Archbishop Charles C. Thompson praised the contributions of Father Robert Gilday, the former pastor of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis, for his longtime service on the CYO’s board of directors.

And during the CYO’s annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on May 13, the archbishop also used the occasion to honor the award recipients—and encourage them, their families and friends to continue to strive to lead their lives to serve others and to glorify God.

“As we come together, let us be mindful that all that we are, all we are about, is to give glory to God,” the archbishop said at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Word part of the ceremony. “As we honor certain people tonight for their achievements, for their witness, for their success, it’s always to glorify God. So, let’s remember to place ourselves before the Lord so we may be, in all things, Christ-centered.”

Archbishop Thompson expanded upon that message in his homily following the preaching of the Gospel—

Matthew 18:1-5—during which Christ tells his followers, “Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 18:3).

“Jesus in the Gospel talked about letting the children come to him,” the archbishop noted. “Be not childish. Be childlike. There’s a big difference. We have enough people who are childish, including many adults. Childish is, ‘I’m the center of attention, I’m the center of the world. Everything is about me.’ Childlike is to be humble and recognize our dependence on others.”

We also need to follow the example of Pope Leo XIV who has emphasized bridge-building among people, of leading others to a personal encounter with Christ, the archbishop said, connecting that emphasis to the CYO.

“The whole purpose of CYO is to learn a lot of skills and have a lot of fun, but in the midst of all those skills and fun, it’s building relationships, building character,” he said. “It’s setting deeply those values and principles of our faith.”



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson shares a moment of celebration with John Bannister, left, Kevin Kirkhoff and Randall Herrman, this year’s recipients of the St. John Bosco Medal, the highest honor the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization gives an individual. (Photo courtesy of Zoe Hawkins)

He then asked one of the main questions he posed to everyone at the awards ceremony.

“How do we build bridges, how do we open ourselves to encounters, encountering God and one another in Jesus Christ, in true relationship and respect, in solidarity with one another, especially recognizing among us those who are more vulnerable, those who need our attention to lift them up?”

The archbishop provided a path to answering that question.

“Let us be people of grateful hearts so we can build those bridges, so we

can continue to be reminded to live fully our character, to continue to build up one another, not only on the playing field or the court, but wherever we go.”

Near the end of his homily, Archbishop Thompson described Pope Leo XIV as “humble and reserved.”

He then asked, “How do we want to be recognized?

“We want to be recognized as honorable, as bridge-builders, people of dialogue, people of character, people who live our virtues deeply. It’s all about being Christ-like.” †

Biannual grants awarded to parishes, schools and archdiocesan agencies

Criterion staff report

During the Spring/Summer portion of fiscal year 2024-25, \$398,675 was awarded in grant monies to parishes, schools and agencies in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The grants, awarded twice a year, are made available through the St. Francis Xavier Home Mission Endowment Fund, the Growth and Expansion Endowment Fund, the Queen and Divine Mercy Fund and the James P. Scott Endowment Fund. These grants were made possible through the generosity of archdiocesan parishioners, who set up the endowments.

The grant process is jointly administered by the archdiocesan Finance Office and the Office of Stewardship and Development.

Grant applications are due to the archdiocese for the two grant allocation periods on April 30 and on Oct. 31 each year.

The award period for Fall/Winter 2025 is open, with applications due no later than Oct. 31.

The 2025 Spring/Summer grants awarded for fiscal year 2024-25 are as follows:

- Holy Angels Parish, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; \$11,150 for parking lot repairs.
- Nativity School, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; \$13,805 for IT expansion in classrooms.
- Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Indianapolis; Home Mission and James P. Scott funds; \$50,000 for parish campus HVAC project.
- Good Shepherd Church, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; \$10,000 for church HVAC replacement.
- St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis; James P. Scott Fund; \$50,000 for emergency sewer line repairs.
- St. Mary Church, Indianapolis; Home Mission Fund; \$35,000 for church exterior masonry repairs.
- St. Rita Church, Indianapolis; Home Mission and James P. Scott funds; \$40,000 for bell restoration.
- St. Anthony of Padua Church, Clarksville; Home Mission Fund;

- \$16,000 for church safety and security projects.
- St. Anthony of Padua School, Clarksville; Growth and Expansion Fund; \$20,000 for classroom technology needs.
- Sacred Heart Parish, Clinton; James P. Scott Fund; \$50,000 for renovating storage building for offices and meeting space.
- St. Joseph Church, Corydon; Home Mission Fund; \$10,000 for pavement maintenance project and termite treatments.
- All Saints Parish, Guilford; James P. Scott Fund; \$10,000 for church steps and landing project.
- Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood; Growth and Expansion Funds; \$5,700 for pregnancy and infant-loss ministry.
- St. Mary-of-the-Woods Church, St. Mary-of-the-Woods; Home Mission Fund; \$3,000 for church door replacement.
- St. Ambrose Church, Seymour; James P. Scott Fund; \$10,000 for keyless access system.

- Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Terre Haute; James P. Scott Fund; \$8,000 for door replacement and lighting project.
- St. Mary’s Early Childhood Center, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; \$4,700 for social media curriculum.
- Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis; Growth and Expansion Fund; \$20,000 for set-up costs for new Seeds of Hope program.
- St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Indianapolis; Queen and Divine Mercy Fund; \$27,000 for spiritual garden project.
- St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, Indianapolis; Queen and Divine Mercy Fund; \$1,300 for supplies and costs for Children’s Rosary Ministry program.
- St. Agnes Parish, Nashville; Queen and Divine Mercy Fund; \$3,020 to establish prayer chapel.

(For information on how to apply for the grants, go to www.archindy.org/finance/grant or contact Stacy Harris in the Finance Office at sharris@archindy.org or by phone at 317-236-1535.) †

Unusual challenges are part of a winning formula for longtime coach

By John Shaughnessy

The unusual challenges to his basketball players reveal a great deal about the approach that Randall Herrman takes as a coach.

Wanting his fourth-grade boys to show respect for others, Herrman tells his players, “You will open doors for every lady 4 years old to 94 years old for the next week. I have people in the school who know you, and they will see what you’re doing. And I will ask you about it after our next practice.”

The coach at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis follows that request with another weekly one for his players:

“They had to clear off the dishes from the table, and they had to wash all the dishes or put them in the dishwasher.”

After sharing such challenges, Herrman explains the reasoning behind them.

“It’s little things like that that make a person better,” he says. “I want them to be grateful for what they have. I want them to become better at listening to their parents



Randall Herrman

and showing respect. If we don’t teach our kids to be good people, we won’t have our society today.”

For 29 years at Little Flower, Herrman has been focused on teaching those life lessons as much as he has worked to develop the skills of his players in basketball, football and baseball.

In some ways as a coach, he’s like his father, who was a staff sergeant in World War II. For both of them, winning is the goal of the game. And that starts with playing hard. There’s also the shared belief that everyone on the team is accountable to their teammates, so if one player does something wrong, they all share in the action to correct it, which often means running.

“My father treated us like soldiers,” Herrman recalls. “We had enough third-grade boys to play in a sixth-grade league. We practiced seven days a week. We were smaller than everybody, but we pressed you all the time and we ran. All my dad wanted to do was instill in you how to play basketball at your best. I’m trying to do that, but I’m also trying to instill other things into them.

“I’m more sympathetic toward the children. I never yell at them. I want them to make mistakes so I can teach them. And I try to add a lot of prayer into our games. I pray before the game, and after the game I get the other

team to get in a circle and we pray. I’m more tuned into trying to help them be a full person.”

That’s what pleased Herrman the most when he recently received the St. John Bosco Award, the highest honor that the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization gives a volunteer. In Herrman’s case, the award not only recognized his contributions as a coach, it acknowledged all his efforts to serve his parish.

For more than 20 years, he was involved in the Mother’s Day breakfast honoring the moms of the parish. He sings in the church choir. And he and his wife Nancy—who taught physical education at the parish school for 21 years before retiring—help at the parish festival and other times of need.

“This award is very nice, but I’m not one to look for gratification,” Herrman says. “I do what needs to be done, and I feel good about it. I know Jesus is watching what I’m doing.”

That foundation of faith supports the overall impact he hopes to have on his players.

“I try to pass along the importance of prayer, the Holy Spirit, Jesus and Mary to everybody that I coach,” he says. “They give you the tools you need to use in life.

“I pray every morning that the Holy Spirit gives me guidance for my life. I always ask God for help.” †

A remarkable family tradition in CYO sports continues

By John Shaughnessy

The evening had already been a memorable one for Kevin Kirkhoff.

He had just received the highest honor that the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) gives—the St. John Bosco Medal. Still, what happened later on May 13 made the honor even more special to him.

After the CYO’s Volunteer Awards Ceremony at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, Kirkhoff celebrated by having dinner with his daughters Sydney and Aubrey, his four siblings—Jeff, Marni, Mike and Mark—and other family members. And during the celebration, the siblings naturally thought of their parents, Bob and Susie Kirkhoff.

“One of my brothers made the comment that Bob and Susie would be happy tonight,” Kevin recalls. “We talked a lot about their service and how important it was to them. Dad coached CYO for close to 25 years. Mom was very involved in the parish and school [at St. Jude in Indianapolis].



Kevin Kirkhoff

“It was what you did. You get involved and you try to make the parish community a better place to be, and better for the kids.”

The family connection grew in another way that evening as Kevin joined his dad, Marni and Jeff as recipients of the St. John Bosco Medal.

Each earned the honor in their own way, with Kevin leaving his impact on the athletic program at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis. For the past 20 years, he has served at different times as a coach, basketball coordinator, gym scheduler and athletic director for the parish.

His 12 years as a coach offer the best insight into the way he has strived to make a difference to children and youths.

“I tried to adopt the CYO model,” he says. “I tried to make it fun for everybody, tried to point out life lessons that the kids could take from sports—you’re not going to win every game, and not every day is going to be your best day, but you still can show good sportsmanship, do your best and work to get better. In this day and age, we sometimes lose sight of the fact that sports are supposed to be fun.”

He also set a personal goal for each season. “I thought one of the measures of whether or not it was a successful year was when it was time to sign up for

that sport the next year. Hopefully, everyone wanted to play again because they enjoyed the previous season.”

One of his favorite memories from coaching is also telling.

“When I coached fourth-grade boys, we had a boy on our team who had Down syndrome. He had more fun than anybody. Often, late in the game, we’d set it up with the opposing coach that if the outcome of the game wasn’t in doubt, we’d get it set up where we made sure he was able to get a shot off. I remember the first time he scored a basket. Both teams erupted. It was a great moment.

“I see him to this day now, and he says, ‘Hi, Coach.’ It summarizes what it’s supposed to be about.”

While continuing to serve as the gym scheduler at Nativity, Kevin has worked the past two years as a staff member of the archdiocese’s CYO, as the boys’ athletic director. A 1986 graduate of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, he views the CYO as an extension of the Catholic schools’ focus on values and faith.

For him, it’s also an extension of a family tradition. His parents were still on his mind during his celebration of the St. John Bosco Medal with his siblings when he made this comment:

“We saw what they did and how they made a difference, and we followed suit.” †

Special moments mark the life of a coach who’s trying to ‘give back’

By John Shaughnessy

When John Bannister was 10, his father was killed by a drunk driver, leaving a heartbreaking hole in his young life.

Part of the void was filled by the men who coached him in the sports he played.



John Bannister

“Coaches meant everything to me,” Bannister recalls. “They always seemed to take me under their wing, especially in grade school because I was in the fifth grade when it happened. They seemed to look out for me. They taught me discipline, the value of teamwork, of setting goals. And those lessons carried me all the way through high school and into my business life.

“Part of me being a coach is my way of giving back. And once I started doing it, I just loved it.”

For the past 26 years, Bannister has been coaching boys in the basketball program at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis—a tenure that recently led him to be honored with the St. John Bosco Medal, the highest award that the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth

Organization (CYO) gives to a volunteer.

“I’ve been described as an old-school coach,” says Bannister, who has also served on the parish council and athletic commission. “I teach people to be accountable—to be accountable to themselves and be accountable to the team, to be responsible. If you show up five minutes before and you’re not ready to go, you’re late.

“And we teach teamwork. It’s not about the individual players. It’s moving the ball around and finding the better shot. We work a lot on fundamentals, and we work them hard. And we set goals every year. What we really want to be is the best team we can be.”

While Bannister is honored to receive the St. John Bosco Medal, he says, “You don’t coach for awards. You do it for the love of coaching.”

And he’s done it for the special moments that coaching can bring, including a city tournament game when his team was losing by a point in the final seconds and one of his players was fouled while shooting, giving him two free throws.

“The kid’s name was Trent,” Bannister says. “When the other team called timeout, our team gathered around me, and I said, ‘Listen, here’s what we’re going to do after Trent makes these two foul shots. There’s two seconds left so don’t foul, just apply pressure.’ As Trent

was walking out, I just said, ‘You got these, Trent.’ Trent nailed both shots. They threw up a desperation shot and missed, and we won. That’s one of my special moments.”

So was the year when he coached with two of his three sons, Jon and Alec, for a team that included his oldest grandson, Henry.

“There are pictures of our three generations in the huddle,” Bannister says. “That is very cool. That’s a very special thing.”

So was the CYO’s Volunteer Awards Ceremony on May 13 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis because on that same evening that he received the St. John Bosco Medal, his son Jon received the Msgr. Albert Busald Award.

Still, Bannister’s favorite moments are when he sees his former players as adults, some who now coach in the CYO and others who have moved away from Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish but return for Mass at Christmas and Easter.

“They see me and say, ‘Hey, Coach!’ And their dads still call me ‘Coach.’ I’ve had parents come up to me and say, ‘After all these years, you’re still my son’s favorite coach.’

“The fact that families give me that recognition means that I did good. That means everything to me.” †

NEWMAN

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in 1858 he returned to the Birmingham Oratory.

The succeeding two decades were marked by struggles with both Catholics and Anglicans, with some of the former distrustful of his conversion, and the latter claiming he had never been an honest Anglican in the first place. In response, Father Newman penned his massive 1864

Apologia to “show what I am. ... I wish to be known as a living man, and not as a scarecrow.”

The candor of his writing helped to assuage both Anglican and Catholic fears, and Father Newman was even invited to serve as an expert theological adviser at the First Vatican Council in 1868, although, the Oratories noted, he declined in order to complete “The Grammar of Assent,” which considers the process by which an individual espouses convictions.

In 1874, he countered Prime Minister

William Gladstone’s assertion that Catholics could not be loyal subjects due to their papal allegiance, with Newman writing in an open letter that his coreligionists did not deserve “this injurious reproach that we are captives and slaves of the pope,” quoted the Oratories.

Three years later, Father Newman returned to Oxford and received the first honorary fellowship of Trinity College. In 1879, Pope Leo XIII named him a cardinal, extolling his fidelity to the faith, and granted his request to remain in Birmingham and forego consecration as a bishop. The

elevation was lauded by Catholics and Anglicans alike, said the Oratories.

In Birmingham, Cardinal Newman continued to write, pondering in one of his final works—quoted by the Oratories in the online canonization biography—that God “has provided for the creation of the saint out of the sinner. ... He enters into the heart of man, and persuades it, and prevails with it, while he changes it.”

Cardinal Newman died at age 89 in 1890 and was canonized in 2019 by Pope Francis. †

CAMP

continued from page 1

Yes, there were bonfires and swimming and games. But most of their adventures were a bit different than your typical summer camp.

“Being able to help people in our community was a lot of fun,” says 12-year-old Landan. “I learned that sometimes doing the simplest things can make a big difference.”

Adia, 15, shares how she and her fellow campers cut down a large tree and hauled away the “giant pieces” of wood.

“I did a lot of stuff I never thought I could do, but I did it,” she says with well-earned confidence.

Adia and Landan participated in their parish’s Saints Training Camp on June 25-29 for young people in grades six through 12. They were joined by 11 other youths from St. Agnes and two from St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington.

The camp was organized by St. Agnes youth minister Adrianne Spahr and her husband Paul, with help before and during from other parishioners.

“The goal of the camp is to get the young people to see what living in community, prayer, simplicity and service really means,” says Spahr.

‘We can be there for each other’

Prayer, simplicity, community and service. These form the “four pillars” of the Saints Training Camp, values the kids both learned about and practiced.

“Each day had an assigned pillar and a saint who was a good example of that pillar,” Spahr explains. St. John Bosco was the example for community, St. Vincent de Paul for service, St. Thérèse of Lisieux for simplicity and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini for prayer.

Prayer formed the bookends of each day of the camp, including prayer groups in the morning and evening and adoration each night.

“I thought it was nice to have adoration every night,” says Landan. “It helped me learn how prayer can change your life.”

And as they learned about each day’s saint in the prayer groups, the campers were reminded “that the saints are there to pray for us when we need their help,” says Adia.

“It just comforted me in knowing that God and the saints are watching over you and there’s somebody to ask for help if you need help or somebody to pray for you.

“And we learned that it’s OK to ask for help,” she added. “It doesn’t mean you’re helpless. It just means that we can be there for each other.”

Which leads to the pillar of service. Each day, the campers split into groups to help local residents in need.

“We helped five households in the community—three [St. Agnes] parishioners and two non-parishioners—who couldn’t afford to fix their property or simply couldn’t do it for themselves,” says Spahr. “The kids painted, cleaned, did yard work, tree removal and garbage removal. And they managed to get some work done at the church, too.”

But the youths also learned the other side of service that is equally—if not more important—than the physical labor: the importance of getting to know those whom they’re serving, hearing their



Youths and adult leaders who participated in Saints Training Camp, offered by St. Agnes Parish in Nashville on June 25-29, pose with Marsha Placke, seated, whose yard and home they worked on as a service project during the camp. Among the youths were Landan Hoskins, third from left in the second row, and Adia McMasters, second from right in the third row. St. Agnes youth minister Adrianne Spahr, third from right in the third row, organized the camp with her husband Paul, fourth from right in the third row. (Submitted photo)

stories and connecting on a human level.

“One lady, her husband died a few weeks before we came,” says Adia. “We had to clean up her house and yard so she could sell [her property].

“She told me she used to do all these kinds of sports, and now she can’t do a bunch of stuff, which made me sad. But she doesn’t let that get her down.”

Landan enjoyed “working together as a team to get things done.”

That awareness of accomplishing together more than one person could achieve alone was a lesson on the pillar of community. The campers did everything in community—prayed, served, ate.

They even lived out the pillar of simplicity in community.

“They left their phones at home, ate simple meals, slept on mats in [St. Agnes’] Youth Barn, bathed with a hose or in a lake,” says Spahr. “If it could be done simply, we tried to do it simply.”

‘It’s life skills, and they’re serving others’

The Saints Training Camp was not a boot camp. But it was a sort of reboot camp.

It originated as Nazareth Farm in 1994 as a joint effort of the St. Agnes youth minister and the head of Terre Haute’s deanery-wide youth ministry, says Spahr.

Her husband was an early participant in the program. She began helping coordinate the camp with her Terre Haute counterpart after being hired as youth minister at St. Agnes in 2003.

The last year of the joint effort was 2016.

“Terre Haute had a change in youth ministers and couldn’t bring a crew in 2017, so we did the camp as just St. Agnes,” says Spahr. “After that, we decided to take a break in 2018 to rethink the camp.”

By 2021, Spahr and her husband felt called to revive the camp.

“We missed the help to the community, watching the kids grow in faith and doing

that by serving others—it’s just priceless,” she says.

She and Paul modified the program slightly, incorporating the saints and renaming it Saints Training Camp.

The camp did happen that summer. But the lack of adult volunteers due to the COVID pandemic was a challenge.

Again, the camp was put on hold. “This past year, again we were missing the camp,” says Spahr. “I put together a committee of people that had been to Nazareth Farm—and yes, Paul was one of them, always!”

She gushes about what the campers gain from the four-day experience.

“The kids gain a lot of confidence going out and helping people and learning that they can handle doing a job—climbing a ladder, pulling a stump. It’s life skills, and they’re serving others.

“It’s amazing to see the before and after growth in their confidence and in wanting to serve other people.”

This year, the Spahrs witnessed those changes in their three children young enough to participate in the camp.

“I watched our own kids grow in confidence and love for others from just four days of prayer, simplicity, community and service,” says the proud mother.

Serving ‘just makes you feel so good’

The Spahrs were not the only parents who saw their children grow from the experience.

Elizabeth McMasters recalls Adia sharing a story about a wood splitter that wouldn’t start, “and the group prayed to St. Cabrini, and then it started working.”

She says Adia and Laila, another daughter who participated in the camp, “brought this awareness and appreciation for the saints home. It reminds me to be more aware of the beauty of our Catholic faith that I take for granted.”

The Saints Training Camp is “a great opportunity for teens to do things they never have the opportunity to do,” says McMasters. “Then you add in the spiritual

side of it all, and it’s just outstanding.”

Jessica Hoskins, Landan’s mother, also appreciates how the camp drew upon the lives of the saints.

“It gave [the kids] an opportunity to learn about other saints and how they used the same virtues in doing their big work,” says Hoskins, who with her husband was involved with Nazareth Farm for many years.

Beyond the faith component, Hoskins calls the camp “a remarkable opportunity for youths to look outside of themselves and see how they can make a positive impact now as youths and not necessarily waiting until they’re adults.

“Landan came away with a greater awareness of people in his own community that are in need of help—help that he can provide.”

The Saints Training Camp “truly changed me,” says Landan. “It changed the way I thought about people.”

For instance, he admits he used to feel uncomfortable around the elderly. But time spent getting to know an older person he helped during the camp altered his viewpoint.

“Now I feel like they’re nice to be around and fun to learn from,” says Landan. “The camp can truly change you from the inside out.”

As for Adia, the experience opened her eyes to a connection between the saints and serving others.

“Helping people makes me feel like a good person,” she says. “But the camp really inspired me, because many saints helped others either physically or spiritually.”

At the end of the four days, did Adia enjoy taking a hot shower when she got home?

“Yeeesss!” she drawls like a sigh of relief.

“But despite the hose showers and sunburns and bug bites you can get, [the camp is] very rewarding,” says Adia. “You see the smiles on the faces of those you helped, you make somebody’s day better, and it just makes you feel so good.” †

Father Daniel Mahan honored by publishers for 2024 book on catechism

Criterion staff report

Father Daniel Mahan, an archdiocesan priest and director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Institute on the Catechism, was recently honored for his 2024 book, *A Journey through the Catechism: Unveiling the Truth, Beauty and Goodness of the Catholic Faith*.

The book, published last year by Ave Maria Press, received a first-place award in the “Faith Formation” book category at the Catholic Media Association’s (CMA) annual awards announced on June 27 at its recent conference in Phoenix.

“This beautiful book makes the catechism easily accessible to those who would benefit from a clear

explanation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*,” judges wrote. “The book is broken down by question and provides answers on topics that many people may question about the faith with references to where those topics are addressed in the catechism.

“The beautiful illustrations enhance the content of the book, and the font and headings make it easy for the reader to process content,” judges continued. “The prayers and guidelines for how to pray specific devotions help the reader to deepen his or her faith. The appendix helps clarify unfamiliar language.”

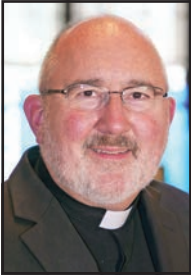
Father Mahan’s book also captured second place in the “Pastoral Ministry: Catechetical” book category.

Judges described the book as a “very thorough and accessible companion to the catechism.”

“Written in such a way that as one approaches this ‘official document,’ ” the judges wrote, “one can see their movement as a spiritual journey to a deeper relationship with God.”

The archdiocesan priest’s book received honorable mention recognition in the “Design and Production” category from the CMA as well.

Father Mahan was also honored with two awards from the Association of Catholic Publishers. His book was the first-place finisher in the “Resources for Ministry” category and received a third-place award in the “General Interest” category. †



Fr. Daniel Mahan

The Criterion again honored as nation’s best weekly Catholic newspaper

Criterion staff report

For the third time in four years, *The Criterion* won the highest award presented by the Catholic Media Association of the United States and Canada (CMA) for its work in 2024. It also won the award in 2021 and 2023.

Judges honored the archdiocesan publication with the first-place award for the “Best Weekly Newspaper” at the annual CMA conference on June 27 in Phoenix.

“This publication touches many topics, and for all ages of the community it serves,” judges wrote. “This reads and feels like a well-connected, solid publication that knows and converses with its audience.”

Staff members cited for their work by the CMA include Mike Krokos, John Shaughnessy, Sean Gallagher, Natalie Hoefer, Brandon A. Evans, Ann Lewis, and editorial writer Daniel Conway.

Sally Krause, archdiocesan executive director of communications, congratulated the staff for being honored as the best weekly newspaper in 2024, saying the recognition is well deserved.

“This honor exemplifies the ongoing commitment that *The Criterion* staff brings to each issue as Archbishop Charles C. Thompson’s primary evangelization tool by sharing powerful and transforming stories about the faith,” said Krause, who also serves as associate publisher of the newspaper. “More than ever, our culture needs the voice provided by our staff and other Catholic journalists.”

All told, *The Criterion* won 19 press awards from the CMA, Woman’s Press Club of Indiana (WPCI) and National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) for the 2024 calendar year.

CMA awards

Criterion assistant editor John Shaughnessy was awarded first place in the “Best Personality Profile—weekly newspaper” category for his article “CYO legend Bernie Price ‘keeps going’ with joy and faith in her fight against cancer.”

“This story portrays such an inspiring human being,” judges said. “It’s well-written and makes the reader feel as though they truly know her and are right there with her during the interview. Her ‘sparkling eyes’ and positive attitude shine through beautifully. Wow!”

Shaughnessy also won first place in the “Best Sports Journalism—Sports feature or column” category for “The story of a coach, a team, brothers, a family—and the love that grew in 8 days.” It focused on the eight days after Bishop Chatard girls’ basketball coach Dan Wagner unexpectedly lost his older brother, the impact of his brother’s life and death on him, and the love and the strength that the girls on his team gave him during a time he needed those gifts the most.

“Grab your Kleenex for this one!” judges wrote. “It was tremendously told and captures so many people and moments so well in what can be a very difficult story to tell. So happy I got the chance to read it!”

Reporter Sean Gallagher was awarded first place in the “Best Reporting on Priesthood, Religious Life and Diaconate—Series” category. The package included five articles, including: “Love for Christ calls father and son to ordained ministry in the archdiocese,” and “Joy of the Gospel flows forth from father, son in ordination Mass,” which highlighted the unique relationship of permanent deacon Thomas Hosty and his son, Liam Hosty, who

was ordained a transitional deacon in 2024 as part of his journey to being ordained a priest in the archdiocese in June of this year.

The other stories in the package included “At 96, priest continues to show youthful vitality after 70 years of ministry,” a feature about retired Father Paul Landwerlen, who died earlier this year on May 25; “Congress shows off the Church’s broad variety of ordained, religious vocations,” a story from the National Eucharistic Congress held in Indianapolis in 2024, and “Father Thomas Kovatch finds happiness in leading others to Christ and the Church in Bloomington and around the world,” an article about Father Kovatch’s vocation and living out his ministry in the local Church and beyond.

“Every story in this package was compelling; one brought me to tears,” a judge wrote. “One way to know when the writing is great: I had to go back a second time because I was so captivated by the stories during the first read-through.”

Gallagher also won second place in the “Best Regular Column—Family Life” category for his monthly “Faith and Family” column.

“This relatable column offers actionable insight on everyday living,” judges wrote. “It provides a perspective that both elevates and grounds the reader.”

Reporter Natalie Hoefer earned a second place award in “Best News Writing Series—National Event” category for stories highlighting events leading up to and coverage of the 2024 National Eucharistic Congress.

The package included: “Eucharistic pilgrimage routes meet in Indy with Christ leading the way”; “Encountering Christ in the Eucharist leads to encountering him in others, says papal nuncio”; “Newlyweds volunteer at National Eucharistic Congress as ‘co-workers in the vineyard’”; “Ministry helps congress attendees ‘encounter the face of the poor’ in Indy”; and “Eucharistic Congress sessions advise on building faith-filled families.”

Commenting on the article “Eucharistic pilgrimage routes meet in Indy with Christ leading the way,” judges wrote, “With plenty of angles and profiles, this piece provides an excellent overview of why the Eucharistic Congress was important and how it resonated locally—an impressive entry in a very competitive category.”

Shaughnessy won an honorable mention award in the “Best Reporting on Priesthood, Religious Life or Diaconate—One Shot” category for his story “Woman’s remarkable journey in life leads to living ‘a dream that God has for me.’” The article was a feature on the life of Carmelite Sister Marie Nguyen and her family’s ongoing challenge to get from communist Vietnam to the United States, where they eventually settled and she pursued a religious vocation later in life as a Carmelite nun at St. Joseph Monastery in Terre Haute.

Editorial writer Daniel Conway received an honorable mention award in the “Best Editorial on a National or International Issue—weekly newspaper” category for “Finding beauty, goodness and truth through the Church,” which focused on synodality and how we are called to journey together, “sharing with our sisters and brothers the beauty, goodness and truth that we discover as we walk together following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.”

Editor Mike Krokos also earned an honorable mention award in the “Best Editorial on a National or International Issue—weekly newspaper” category for “We are called to bring love to a world where it often seems missing.” The editorial highlighted the chaos that is constantly prevalent around the world and how “we are called to be ministers of love, seeing Jesus in others and being



The front page of the July 19, 2024, issue of *The Criterion*, which covered the eucharistic pilgrimages that—from four edges of the United States—were converging in Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress.

Jesus to others, [and] meant to go out in the world as agents of peace and reconciliation.”

WPCI awards

The recognition for work completed during the 2024 calendar year began in May when Hoefer was honored by WPCI. She garnered four first-place awards in the state competition, one second-place award and an honorable mention. The first-place winners were:

- Specialty-Social Issues: “Program gives those released from jail ‘that support to move forward.’”
- Specialty-Religion: “Ministry helps congress attendees ‘encounter the face of the poor’ in Indy.”
- Photographer-writer: “Sisters of Life tell record Indiana March for Life crowd ‘you are a hope to this nation.’”
- Single Poem: “This Advent-tide.”

In the Specialty-Art category, Hoefer received a second-place award for “Sculptures at congress ‘crystallize a moment,’ touching hearts and souls.”

Her honorable mention award was in the Specialty-Expanded Obituary category for the article “Father Mark Weaver ‘died like he lived,’ setting ‘his sights on Jesus.’”

All of Hoefer’s WPCI first-place entries advanced to the NFPW national competition.

NFPW awards

Hoefer’s recognition from this national organization included:

- First Place—Specialty Articles—Religion, for “Ministry helps congress attendees ‘encounter the face of the poor’ in Indy.”
- Second Place—Creative Verse—Single poem for “This Advent-tide.”
- Honorable Mention—Specialty Articles—Social issues, for “Program gives those released from jail ‘that support to move forward.’”
- Honorable Mention—Photography—

Photographer-writer, for “Sisters of Life tell record Indiana March for Life crowd ‘you are a hope to this nation.’”

“We’re grateful to be able to serve the people of central and southern Indiana by reporting on the local Church,” Krause noted, “as well as bringing them news of the Catholic faith from around the world.” †

Staff of The Criterion



Mike Krokos



John Shaughnessy



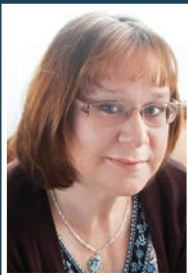
Sean Gallagher



Natalie Hoefer



Brandon A. Evans



Ann Lewis



Daniel Conway



HOPE

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her mind ever since as another gift of hope that she has vowed to embrace.

“I had hope that my cancerous tumor would shrink,” recalls Gutzwiller, a member of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood. “I had hope that my faith would keep me strong and focused on Jesus. And I had hope that I would discover a renewed purpose in my life.”



Murphy the dog

With the help of Steve and Murphy, she has found that purpose at 77. And it all starts with an introduction of Murphy to the patients in the infusion room and an offer to pet the black labrador—an introduction that leads on this day, as it always does, to wide smiles and suddenly-brightened eyes for the people who embrace the offer.

It’s a moment of joy for people enduring one of life’s toughest journeys. And for Gutzwiller, it’s her humble way of trying to give hope to the patients while also giving back for the dedicated care she received at Franciscan Health.

It’s also her way of giving thanks for being a three-time cancer survivor.

“First of all, I didn’t know anything about the cancer journey,” she says about her diagnoses and treatments. “I didn’t know what you went through emotionally. Being a person of faith, it’s times like those in life, I do need my faith. And God is the only one I can rely on because he’s the only one who knows the answer. I’m going to do what the doctors say, but it’s still under God’s control.

“I’ve got lots of friends who have had cancer. Some have made it, some have not. Some are still going through therapy and will for the rest of their lives. I feel my mission right now is to bring some hope to people. I’ve been there. And anything I can do to help ease the journey for people, I’ll do it. And if it’s through Murphy, that’s wonderful, too.”

‘She’s a V.I.P.: Very Important Puppy’

Murphy’s impact on patients becomes quickly clear as Steve leads her across the infusion room toward a married couple. The husband rests in a recliner as his chemo treatment flows through his blood stream while his wife sits next to him, giving support.

As Murphy comes to a rest near him, the husband smiles and says about the 4-year-old dog, “She’s a V.I.P., Very Important Puppy. That’s what she is to a lot of people. There are a lot of dog lovers here, and she puts a smile on our faces.”

The joy still shines in his eyes, but his face turns serious as he adds, “I have a lot of people praying for me, and that’s what’s most important. Everyone here is resolved to taking it one day at a time and making the best of each day we have.”

This brief visit from Murphy has already made the day better, according to the man’s wife. As Murphy draws close to her, content at the woman’s feet, she says, “Murphy is great. I think it’s great having therapy animals around the hospital.”

Nurses in the cancer center agree. Smiling at the sight of Murphy, Allison Day is among the nurses and other staff members who pause from their duties to take a spray of hand sanitizer from Joan Gutzwiller before stooping to pet the dog.

“It helps patients,” says Day, a registered nurse, about Murphy’s visits. “It brings up their spirits. It brings joy to their situation.”

Murphy has the same impact on Terri Dunn as she sits in the lobby of the cancer center waiting to be called for her appointment. She smiles when the Gutzwillers and

Murphy head toward her.

“It’s wonderful,” she says about the time with Murphy. “It’s awesome, especially for people worse off than me. I didn’t have to have chemo, thank God.”

In many ways, the Gutzwillers believe it’s providence—“a God wink,” Joan says—about the timing that Murphy arrived in their lives, and how she has changed their lives ever since.

‘She has soulful eyes’

The lives of the Gutzwillers and Murphy first became intertwined in 2021, the year when Joan went through her most challenging bout with cancer, the year when Murphy was born.

“We had been without a dog for a couple of years,” Joan recalls. “All our dogs were black, females and their names started with an M. She was only our third black lab. When we saw her, we were smitten with her. We asked the woman if she could hold the puppy until I was finished with my cancer treatments, which was the end of July of ‘21. She said she would.”

After they picked up the dog, Joan tapped into her Irish heritage, her maiden name of Fitzgerald and her involvement in the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians to name her “Murphy.”

“Murphy has been therapy for us, a godsend for us. Unconditional love,” Joan says. “She came on the scene after I finished my therapy. She’s always had a sixth sense of being there, getting up in my lap.”

“And she has soulful eyes,” Steve says.

As the Gutzwillers started training Murphy, they didn’t initially think about having their pet become a therapy dog. But that desire evolved as Murphy was trained by a friend who has a long history of training therapy dogs for Franciscan Health Indianapolis, including Indy.

During their conversations with the trainer-friend, the Gutzwillers learned that Indy and the dog’s handler had moved away from Indianapolis shortly after Joan’s last chemo treatment in 2021, and no other dog had replaced Indy at the cancer center.

“After she was a year and a half old, we thought we wanted to concentrate on Murphy being a therapy dog,” Joan says.

For the next two years, Murphy had her extra training for that goal while Steve went through his own training to become Murphy’s handler.

“The handler has to go through nine training models online to get an overview of the therapy animal and an understanding of the bond between the handler and the dog,” Steve says. “There’s also a live session where the handler and the dog go through a battery of behavioral tests to make sure she responds to the handler and individuals appropriately, and most importantly that she doesn’t respond to other animals. They’re trained to ignore other animals.”

After four years of not having a therapy dog in the cancer center, Murphy and Steve—with Joan as their escort—began to fill that role this year.

Each time they come to the hospital, Joan views their involvement as carrying out God’s purpose for her.

“This is our commitment right now,” she says. “This is our purpose right now.”

Nothing deters her from that commitment, she says, not even one of the other great commitments that had guided most of her adult life.

‘It just makes me feel alive’

For about 40 years, Joan was a teacher in Catholic schools in the archdiocese. She had stints at St. Barnabas School and St. Mark the Evangelist School, both in Indianapolis, before serving the last 25 years at Holy Spirit School in Indianapolis until her retirement as a full-time teacher in 2014.

“I taught in Catholic



Terri Dunn, a cancer patient at Franciscan Health Indianapolis, enjoys a visit with Joan and Steve Gutzwiller and their therapy dog Murphy. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

schools because I could not separate teaching from God,” she says. “I was the teacher who had the treats, the teacher that my partner teacher would always say, ‘You’re being too nice.’ How can you be too nice? I’m reaching people through who I am and where I’m at. I own that now.”

In recent years, she continued her ties to Catholic education as a substitute teacher at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School. Still, during the last school year, Joan would never sub on the days that she, Steve and Murphy were scheduled at the hospital. And this year, she has decided it’s time to end her career as a teacher.

At the same time, her help at the cancer center is just beginning.

“It’s almost like subconsciously I’m talking to all those people, ‘I’ve been there. It’s going to be fine. I know it’s scary.’”

A short time later, the heartbreaking and even haunting reality of cancer pours out from her.

‘Our lives are truly in God’s hands’

“It’s scary, no matter what kind of cancer you have. Because it’s so fickle,” she says. “It can come out of nowhere. It can go away and never come back. It can go away and come back again.”

She had her first bout with cancer in 2010. The second diagnosis came in 2021, followed by another in 2022. Three years later, she is considered cancer free.

“It’s important that you have faith to fall back on—faith and family,” she says.

She turns to Steve and adds, “How many times have we pulled up in front of the cancer center and we’d see people left off by one of the transit buses? And we’re like, ‘Where’s their family?’ I can’t imagine going through it alone. People do, but I think it would be a lot easier to have the support.”

Her two main sources of support include Steve, whom she first met on a blind date—a date which has led to their marriage of 54 years and a family of three children and six grandchildren.

“During my cancer experience, I couldn’t have asked for a better caretaker,” she says. “He was with me at every appointment and was so patient through my recovery.”

She has an even higher regard for her other main source of support.

“I can’t imagine not having God as my anchor,” Joan says. “Going through this, you ask, ‘Why me?’ First, ‘Why did I get it?’ And then, ‘Why me? Why am I going through it so easily?’

“I felt that God was sending me a message that I need to send a message to others. Maybe I’m supposed to be a disciple of this—and pass on the word that whether it’s good or bad, there’s still hope.”

Hope that can even be shared during a visit by a dog named Murphy and her two human companions.

Joan says, “My hope was to deepen my trust in Jesus, that I would remain cancer free, and hope that my message would encourage others to have hope amid the uncontrollable circumstances in their lives.

“Our lives are truly in God’s hands.”

(In this Jubilee Year for the Church with the theme, ‘Pilgrims of Hope,’ The Criterion invites you, our readers, to share your stories of hope—how embracing hope has helped you in the toughest moments of your life, how others have given you hope for your future, how your faith in God has sustained you and uplifted you. If you have a story of hope to share, please send it to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St. Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached.) †



Murphy the therapy dog adds a smile to the day of the staff in the cancer center of Franciscan Health Indianapolis, including Shauna Harrison, a patient service representative. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

YOUTH

continued from page 1

from Mexico, spoke of the excitement of online friendships, but also of the loneliness that comes from connections that are “not true and lasting relationships, but rather fleeting and often illusory.”

“How can we find true friendship and genuine love that will lead us to true hope? How can faith help us build our future?” she asked.

Pope Leo acknowledged the potential of the internet and social media as “an extraordinary opportunity for dialogue,” but warned that these tools “are misleading when they are controlled by commercialism and interests that fragment our relationships.”

Drawing from his Augustinian spirituality, Pope Leo urged young people to emulate St. Augustine, who had a “restless youth, but he did not settle for less.”

“How did he find true friendship and a love capable of giving hope? By finding the one who was already looking for him, Jesus Christ,” the pope said. “How did he build his future? By following the one who had always been his friend.”

Gaia, a 19-year-old woman from Italy, asked how young people can find the courage to make choices amid uncertainty.

“To choose is a fundamental human act,” the pope responded. “When we make a choice, in the strict sense, we decide who we want to become.”

He encouraged young people to remember they were chosen by God, and that “the courage to choose comes from love, which God shows us in Christ.”

The pope recalled St. John Paul II’s words spoken in the same place 25 years ago, reminding the youths that “it is Jesus in fact that you seek when you dream of happiness; he is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you.”

The pope called “radical and meaningful choices,” such as marriage, priesthood and religious life, “the free and liberating gift of self that makes us truly happy.”

“These choices give meaning to our lives, transforming them into the image of the perfect love that created them and



Pope Leo XIV carries the Jubilee Cross as he walks to the altar before the start of a prayer vigil with young people gathered in Tor Vergata in Rome on Aug. 2 during the Jubilee of Youth. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

redeemed them from all evil, even from death,” he said.

Departing from his prepared remarks, Pope Leo expressed condolences for the deaths of two pilgrims. Pascale Rafic, an 18-year-old pilgrim from Egypt, who died due to a heart condition. Earlier in the day, the pope met with a group of Egyptian youths with whom Rafic traveled to Rome.

Maria Cobo Vergara, a 20-year-old pilgrim from Madrid, Spain, died on July 30. While the cause of death was not mentioned in a statement published on Aug. 1, the Archdiocese of Madrid said the young pilgrim suffered “four years of illness.”

“Both [pilgrims] chose to come to Rome for the Jubilee of Youth, and death

has taken them in these days,” the pope said at the vigil. “Let us pray together for them.”

Lastly, 20-year-old Will, a young pilgrim from the United States, asked the pope how to “truly encounter the risen Lord in our lives and be sure of his presence even in the midst of trials and uncertainties.”

Recalling Pope Francis’ papal bull for the Holy Year 2025, “*Spes non confundit*” (“Hope Does Not Disappoint”), Pope Leo said that “hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come,” and that one’s understanding of good “reflects how our conscience has been shaped by the people in our lives.”

He urged them to foster their conscience by listening to Jesus’ word

and to “reflect on your way of living, and seek justice in order to build a more humane world.”

“Serve the poor, and so bear witness to the good that we would always like to receive from our neighbors,” he said. “Adore Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, the source of eternal life. Study, work and love according to the example of Jesus, the good teacher who always walks beside us.”

He also invited young people to pray to remain friends with Jesus and be “a companion on the journey for anyone I meet.”

“Through praying these words, our dialogue will continue each time we look at the crucified Lord, for our hearts will be united in him,” the pope concluded. †

Opportunities for plenary indulgences continue in 2025 Jubilee Year

Criterion staff report

During the Jubilee Year of Hope, which concludes on Jan. 6, 2026, the Church is offering the opportunity to receive plenary indulgences—the remission “of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1471).



The “Bull of Indiction for the Jubilee” explains that these jubilee indulgences are a “grace [which] allows us to discover how limitless God’s mercy is.”

Only one plenary indulgence may be received per day and can be applied to the person or the soul of a deceased person, but not toward those who are living.

Following is a reminder of the ways and requirements for obtaining plenary indulgences as the jubilee year continues.

Spiritual, prayer and sacramental requirements for each indulgence sought

Spiritual: Have no attachment to sin. In other words, desire not just to avoid sin but to love what is good and pleasing to God and to detest what is evil and sinful.

Prayer: Make a profession of faith (either the Apostles’ or Nicene Creed) and pray an Our Father for the pope’s intentions and for the pope himself.

Sacramental: Participate in the sacrament of penance during a period either 20 days before or after the plenary indulgence act (see below). A single participation in the sacrament of penance can apply to

any plenary indulgence act 20 days before or after going to confession. (Note: This particular requirement does not apply to those who are confined at home or elsewhere, as described below.)

Ways to obtain a jubilee plenary indulgence, per May 2024 Vatican decree

- 1) Visit a designated pilgrimage site.**
Pilgrimage sites have been designated in Rome and in dioceses around the world. A plenary indulgence can be obtained by visiting one of these sites and participating in Mass or any other public prayer, a time of adoration or a rosary while there, in addition to the spiritual, prayer and sacramental requirements listed above.
In the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, three locations have been designated as jubilee pilgrimage sites:
—SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and chapel, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis
—The Shrine of St. Theodora Guérin and the Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary of the Woods
—Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad.

- 2) Alternative for those unable to visit a pilgrimage site.**
Those “who are truly repentant of sin” but unable to visit a jubilee pilgrimage site—“especially cloistered nuns and monks, but also the elderly, the sick, prisoners and those who, through their work in hospitals or other care facilities, provide continuous service to the sick”—can obtain the jubilee indulgence “in their homes or wherever they are confined” by making a profession of faith [the Apostles’ or Nicene Creed] and praying the Our Father for the pope’s intentions and for the pope himself, “offering up their sufferings or the hardships of their lives.”

- 3) Visiting those in need.**
A jubilee plenary indulgence can be obtained by visiting “for an appropriate amount of time, brothers and sisters who are in need or in difficulty [the sick, prisoners, lonely elderly people, disabled people ...], in a sense making a pilgrimage to Christ present in them.” The spiritual, prayer and sacramental requirements listed above apply to each visit.

- 4) Performing acts of penance.**
The decree states that penance is, “in a sense, the soul of the jubilee.”
Therefore, with each act accompanied by the spiritual, prayer and sacramental requirements listed above, a jubilee plenary indulgence can be obtained by:
—“abstaining, in a spirit of penance, at least for one day of the week from futile distractions [real but also virtual distractions, for example, the use of the media and/or social networks], from superfluous consumption [for example by fasting or practicing abstinence according to the general norms of the Church and the indications of the Bishops];
—“by donating a proportionate sum of money to the poor;
—“by supporting works of a religious or social nature, especially in support of the defense and protection of life in all its phases, but also by supporting the quality of life of abandoned children, young people in difficulty, the needy or lonely elderly people, or migrants from various countries ‘who leave their homelands behind in search of a better life for themselves and for their families’ [“*Spes non confundit*,” #13];” or
—“by dedicating a reasonable portion of one’s free time to voluntary activities that are of service to the community or to other similar forms of personal commitment.” †

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Devotion to Our Lady of the Snows shows trust in Mary’s intercession

By Michael R. Heinlein

(OSV News)—In addition to the local celebrations that commemorate the dedication of a diocesan cathedral or a parish church, the universal Church liturgically celebrates the dedication of four Roman basilicas: St. John Lateran (Nov. 9), those dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul (Nov. 18) and St. Mary Major (Aug. 5).

The Basilica of St. Mary Major is the largest church dedicated to Mary in Rome and one of the most ancient shrines honoring the Mother of God. It contains a variety of ancient mosaics that date back to the fifth century. It is also home to a variety of important relics, especially a wooden fragment from the manger of Christ’s nativity. St. Jerome’s tomb is found there. And it is also the resting place of several popes, including Pope Francis.

St. Mary Major’s history dates back to the fourth century, when a church was constructed on its present site under the direction of Pope Liberius. While the original church lasted only about 100 years, work commenced on the current edifice in the fifth century. Today, much of it remains intact—although it has been amended and enlarged at several junctures.

The optional memorial of the Dedication of St. Mary Major, celebrated on Aug. 5, recalls the importance of Mary in the life of the Church. But it also calls to mind the Marian title of “Our Lady of the Snows.”

According to a legend, Pope Liberius was involved in the church’s initial construction because a rich couple who were without heirs wanted to give their fortune to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary. After asking in prayer how they could honor her, Mary appeared to them in a vision.

Afterward, on Rome’s Esquiline Hill, seemingly in answer to their request, snow fell from the sky—miraculously so, since snowfall on a Roman August day would be extremely abnormal. As a result, the couple determined a church must be built to honor the Blessed Virgin on the site where the miraculous flurries fell.

The legend has not necessarily stood the test of time. No mention is made of anything supernatural behind St. Mary Major’s construction before the year 1000.

Whether the legend is true or not, devotion to Mary under the title Our Lady of the Snows has endured. Several basilicas, shrines and churches are named in honor of this title throughout the world. Its popularity reiterates Mary’s status as a beacon of hope for Christians who turn to her in times of trial, perhaps when it seems that a miracle is needed and when it looks like all hope is lost. Through Mary’s mediation, recourse to God’s mercy is sought when it appears that there’s no way—embodied in the legend of the miraculous snowfall in the Roman summer.

Devotion to Mary under the title of Our Lady of the Snows is primarily fostered in the United States in Belleville, Ill.—just across the Mississippi River from



Pope Leo XIV visits the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome on May 25. The feast of the dedication of the basilica, celebrated by the Church on Aug. 5, is also historically tied to devotion to Mary under the title of Our Lady of the Snows. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

St. Louis—at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows under the direction of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate religious order.

The construction of this shrine seems fitting and appropriate to have been started and operated by missionaries since they understand, perhaps more than anyone, the importance and need to implore Mary’s aid amid often difficult and seemingly impossible circumstances.

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate congregation was founded by French bishop St. Eugene De Mazenod in 1816. The founder placed his new missionary order under Mary’s maternal protection and care. The Oblates came to North America not long after their founding, and they are known for their work in remote locations throughout the continent.

The Our Lady of Snows shrine in Belleville traces its origins to the 1940s, inspired by German Oblate Father Paul Schulte. Known as “The Flying Priest,” Father Paul was a pilot and had the distinction of being the first priest to celebrate Mass while airborne—in the Zeppelin airship Hindenburg just a year before its explosion in New Jersey.

Father Paul put his talent as a pilot to work delivering medical supplies to Oblate missions, typically near the Arctic Circle. He once risked death himself while carrying out a lifesaving medical mission to rescue a brother Oblate priest who was on the brink of death.

Flying through extreme weather, Father Paul credited the success of his heroic ministry to Our Lady of the Snows—to whom he already had devotion, and reportedly “when he was afraid of an imminent crash during a snowstorm, he promised Our Lady to spread her devotion under that title if she came to his aid and saved him in this emergency,” according to a 1977 memoir by Oblate Father Peter Minwegen.

He did just that after his transfer to the Oblate’s now-closed St. Henry Preparatory Seminary in Belleville, alma mater of Chicago’s late Cardinal Francis E. George, who was also with the Oblates. Father Paul was sent there during World War II because he was German and some suspected him of being a Nazi spy. He was ordered not to travel and was kept under FBI surveillance. This gave him the opportunity to deliver on his promise to Mary.

In Belleville, Father Paul commissioned an image of Our Lady of the Snows to be painted. It depicts Mary and the child Jesus surrounded by the aura of the Northern Lights, under which is found a missionary and an airplane making a sick call to an Inuit mission. It remains at the shrine in Belleville today. A perpetual novena was established in 1943 in honor of Our Lady of the Snows, and as devotion to her grew, the Oblates inaugurated construction of a shrine to honor her in 1958.

The shrine, one of the largest outdoor shrines in the United States, is a place of pilgrimage, attracting around 350,000 visitors annually. As with all its counterparts, the shrine is primarily a place of prayer, conversion and healing—particularly through encounters with Mary’s son in the sacraments.

Those who honor Mary under the title of Our Lady of the Snows, or any other title, are asking Mary to beg God to make a way out of no way, to bring his grace into their lives no matter the circumstances, and to find peace and happiness in the will of God.

Those who honor Mary seek, and hopefully find, what she had in her heart some 2,000 years ago when she said “yes” to the Lord’s plan as a young girl. What those who pray to Mary long for and receive is the hope that inspires the daring, intrepid missionaries who spread the Gospel with confidence that she will intercede for them.

Through Mary’s “yes” to the Lord, she made what seemed like a way out of no way—her “yes” brought salvation to a world awaiting it in darkness. Ultimately, those who turn to Mary are turning to her son—as has been clear since the earliest days of Marian devotion. Mary makes Jesus present to the world. And she teaches us to glorify him with our thoughts, words and deeds as members of his mystical body, the Church.

(Michael R. Heinlein is author of *Glorifying Christ: The Life of Cardinal Francis E. George*, OMI.) †



Pope Leo XIV carries a white rose on May 10 to the tomb of Pope Francis in Rome’s Basilica of St. Mary Major. The basilica is the resting place of several popes, including Pope Francis. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Joyful Witness/
Kimberly Pohovey

Can you define your purpose in only five words?

We go about our daily life running from one thing to the next. We are consumed with our “to do” lists and how many tasks we can scratch off. We go to work. We study at school. We take care of our homes and yards, do laundry and go to the grocery. You get the idea ... we are very busy.



In our busyness, I think we’ve lost the ability to simply be still and contemplate the purpose of our lives. As Catholics, we know our purpose is to know, love and serve God. But do we live our lives according to that purpose?

I read an article many years ago in which the author challenged readers to describe the purpose of their life in one, five-word sentence.

As you can imagine, the readers’ comments included some funny responses. I recall one that said, “It’s impossible, there’s no way.” Another said, “Searching for the best beer.” Still another, “Belly-flopping my way through life.” Of course, many were inspirational, such as “I practice kindness every day.”

So, I challenged myself to come up with five words that I believe define my purpose. It seems like an easy task to come up with only five words, right?

I work in stewardship and development for the Church, so I figure my sentence should be something like, “Bettering people’s lives through fundraising.” But no, that describes what I do, not necessarily my life’s purpose. My next attempt was, “Being a mother who loves.” Kind of lame. This is harder than it sounds.

I decided to see what I could find about the purpose of a Catholic’s life.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* emphasizes that our life’s purpose is rooted in our creation in the image and likeness of God. It teaches that every human being has infinite value and dignity, which is rooted in their creation. The Church affirms that our ultimate destiny is to know, love, and serve God, leading to a fulfillment of our divine vocation. This purpose is not merely about worldly success but is centered on our relationship with God, as expressed in the teachings of Christ, who reveals the mystery of God to humanity.

It’s easy for us to confuse our purpose with what we do for a living, our wants and dreams, and even others’ expectations for our lives.

I could easily define my life by my role as a wife and mother or as an employee for the Church, but I think that would short-change God’s intention.

Our purpose lies beyond our daily lives here on Earth. I think we are *from* God, exist to *love and serve* God and, ultimately, to *return* to him. This being the case, our goal is heaven. Our purpose helps us reach our goal. Therefore, our purpose is to live a life in communion with Christ so that we can attain eternal life with our Creator.

That helped me clarify my purpose. Then it struck me. My five words are: “Trying to get to heaven.”

Can you define your purpose in only five words?

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †

Our Works of Charity/
David Bethuram

A resilient child in foster care transforms her life

Everyone’s heard the saying “history repeats itself,” and for Yara, that truth felt painfully familiar in 2018.

At just 24, she found herself trapped in an abusive relationship, raising a daughter alone, echoing the same hardships her mother once faced.



But unlike her mother, whose life ended in tragedy, Yara chose a different path. With resilience and determination, she broke free from the cycles of violence, foster care and poverty—changing the narrative for herself and her daughters.

Today, Yara is safe in her own home and thriving as a student at a local community college. She’s not only found stability, she also has a sense of purpose and a message she’s determined to share.

Yara’s story began in Florida, where she was raised by her mother, as her father was absent from the start. Her childhood was shaped by the trauma of watching her mother endure repeated abuse.

Following her mother’s death, 7-year-old Yara entered the foster care system, joining hundreds of thousands of children across the U.S. facing life without a permanent home. As of 2025, more than 390,000 children are in foster care nationwide. More than half are under 10, and only 7% are infants.

A decade later, Yara found herself facing similar struggles—this time as a young mother. After reaching out to her grandmother in Indiana, she was dropped off at a Catholic Charities program for

women and children. She tried reconnecting with her biological father and other relatives, but the attempts led nowhere. Alone and overwhelmed, she faced homelessness and isolation—a world stripped of hope and dreams.

But inside that program, something shifted. Yara enrolled in a community college and soon became a top student, earning a spot on the dean’s list every semester.

Now living in a suburb of Indianapolis, Yara’s daughters are thriving in school. But the challenges she once faced continue for many. Indiana has nearly 11,000 children in foster care, and many face challenges that echo painful family patterns—like cycles of abuse and instability. Nationally, 20% of foster youth spend three or more years in the system, and more than a third endure three or more placements. These repeated disruptions take a heavy toll on their mental health, education and sense of security.

Yara’s journey hasn’t been easy, but her life is now rooted in hope and determination. Looking back, she wishes she had understood her own strength sooner and had access to the resources that helped her transform her life.

Her message is simple, yet powerful: “We’re here to make our children’s lives better than our own—to make a difference for the next generation and to teach them the lessons we’ve had to learn the hard way.”

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

Guest Column/
Richard Etienne

Let your light—and gifts—shine brightly for all to see

In the Gospel of Matthew, we read, “So let your light shine for all to see” (Mt 5:16). So, what talent or resource do you have that you have never truly shared with your family, parish, local community or even the larger world?



Stop. Go back. What did you think of when you read the above question? Read it again.

Did you think of something specific that one of these groups needs, especially at this time in history, whether it be a personal talent that you possess or some resource that you no longer require?

What keeps you from making a strategic plan to actually use or offer this gift to the service of others?

In Matthew, we also read, “Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father” (Mt 5:15-16).

Does a person set a lamp under a (bushel) basket? This would certainly dim the light that comes from the lamp. Isn’t

it amazing that we have somehow heard a passage for so long that we don’t truly “hear” it any longer?

Or does a person not set the lamp on one of the highest points in the surrounding space to take full advantage of the light that is produced so that it might illuminate as many objects as possible in the immediate area?

Have you ever heard someone say, “I have often thought about doing this [fill in the blank] but I just don’t know if now is the right time”?

As we read in St. Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians, “Now is the acceptable time” (2 Cor 6:2). In the First Letter of Peter, we also hear, “As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another ...” (1 Pt 4:10), and it continues, “... whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ ...” (1 Pt 4:11).

What are you waiting for? When would be a great time to unveil and release your special talent or treasure? The Church and larger community are waiting for those “gifts” that you alone can give!

(Richard Etienne has a degree in theology from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and resides in Newburgh, Ind.) †

Twenty Something/
Christina Capecchi

Hanging art, adding beauty, one frame at a time

When the chaos rises—the living room buzzing with four kids, piano pounding, guitar strumming, high-speed chases underway—Katie



Murray’s eyes land on the “Annunciation” print framed above the couch.

It is a pivotal scene in salvation history, summed up in Mary’s upturned wrist and bowed head.

“Every time I look at it, it re-centers me,” said Murray, 39, a graphic designer who is a member of Our Lady

of Good Counsel Parish in Kansas City, Mo. “Beauty has a way of making you pause. It lifts our hearts and minds to the eternal.”

Murray is a lifelong artist who has always worked with her hands—constructing with cardboard, building a tree house, knitting, baking. All the while, she sensed something sacred in her desire to create. “Because God is the ultimate creator, he places in us this desire to reflect his beauty by making things,” she said.

Then a two-year stint living in Europe allowed Murray to frequent museums and solidify her thinking about beautiful art: It belongs to everyone. Every home deserves the kind of art you’d see in a Paris gallery—even the young parents whose carpet has been destroyed by slime who have ruefully concluded, “We can’t have nice things.”

But Murray was surprised how hard it is to find high-quality sacred art. “I wanted to make it easier for families to surround themselves with art that reflects their faith,” she said.

One night in bed, inspiration struck: create a print shop to make beautiful, faith-filled images accessible to all. It felt like a sweet spot, the intersection of her passions and talents.

Soon Murray was scouring museum websites for paintings in the public domain. She downloaded them and began to restore them digitally—smoothing scratches, removing dust, correcting color, brightening dark patches, increasing the resolution. She partnered with a printer to use archival inks on museum-grade paper, producing a lush, painterly finish.

In April, Murray officially launched Beata Home, a print shop offering “beautiful art curated for the Catholic home.” (*Beata* means “blessed” in Latin.) Murray’s new website (beatahome.com) offers some 350 prints. Many are religious images of biblical scenes and mysteries of the rosary. The range and depth is remarkable, with eight alone titled “The Adoration of the Shepherds,” each one stirring.

Rounding out the collection is vintage art—the countryside dotted in pink flowering trees or cast in golden autumn light, baby goats frolicking with children, a mother braiding her daughter’s hair.

There is something at every price point. Customers can buy: a digital image to download for \$15; a physical print at various sizes, starting at \$25 for an 8”x10”; or a print in one of seven frames, including a large ornate frame that totals \$525.

Murray keeps adding to the website, usually in 10-print increments. Some saints and animals are currently waiting in the wings. Her wish list runs in the thousands. “There’s just so much beautiful art!” she said. “I wish I had more time.”

That yearning pulses through each of us. We work with what we have—old houses, small spaces, messy children—and we add to the beauty. We paint the walls, we hang the art, we light the candles. The entire process is an extended prayer, an exhaled “Amen.”

For Murray, a secretary desk at the foot of her bed becomes a home office. She pores over a MacBook Pro when her kids are napping or tucked in bed for the night. Sales are slowly picking up, and she’s hoping Catholics turn to Beata Home for memorable Christmas gifts.

She often cites a quote from the Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar: “Beauty claims the viewer, changes him and then sends him on a mission.”

“I want to evangelize with beauty,” she said. “The shop is my mission.”

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Grey Cloud Island, Minn.) †

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, August 10, 2025

- Wisdom 18:6-9
- Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19
- Luke 12:35-40

The Book of Wisdom is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. It offers a reflection on the story of the Jews’ liberation from slavery in Egypt in the Exodus, which always stood high in any ancient Jewish perception of God and religion. God sent Moses to lead the people in their escape. Very much a part of the story was the people’s awareness of the debt of homage they owed to God. On occasion, they failed, but overall, they worshipped God, their deliverer.

This book, along with the other books of the Old Testament’s wisdom literature, presents itself as the fruit of human logic and faith, stressing that there is no conflict between the two.

The second reading for this weekend is from the Epistle to the Hebrews, written for Jewish converts to Christianity who faced the same difficulties as those experienced by pagan converts in the first generations of the Church.

After the Jews’ rebellion against Rome, brutally quashed by the Romans in the year 70, the legal system of the empire was no friendlier to Jews than it was to Christians. Christians were beginning to face persecution because they defied laws requiring worship of the Roman gods and goddesses, including the emperor.

This epistle encouraged and challenged these Jewish converts to Christianity.

The reading is eloquent. It literally sings about the majesty and the power of faith. By acknowledging God and by receiving Jesus, the Son of God, believers affirm that God is and has been active in human life through the centuries. Abraham experienced this and God rewarded him. The Hebrew people descended from Abraham through his son, Isaac.

St. Luke’s Gospel provides the last reading. It is always important to realize that the Gospels were not composed during the Lord’s time on Earth, but decades after Jesus lived and preached. (Biblical scholars think that Luke’s Gospel, based fundamentally upon

Mark’s, but using other sources as well, may have been written around the year 80, a half century after Jesus.) This in no way diminishes the Gospel’s validity, but it says that Luke knew the stresses facing Christians at the time when the Gospel was composed. It was written during the persecution, and certainly the struggle between the Gospel and the pagan culture affected its composition. The words of Jesus, recalled in Luke and proclaimed during this weekend’s Masses, are encouraging. They also warn. Jesus urges disciples to be prepared. He will take care of them. Surviving on Earth is not the ultimate, however. Believers will only be fully vindicated by Jesus in the heavenly kingdom. A wedding banquet is used to describe what will come. Jesus is the bridegroom. The banquet will celebrate life in heaven.

Reflection
Only two things are certain in life, they say: death and taxes. People spend much time thinking about taxes, filing returns on time, paying what is due, watching withholding statements and debating political efforts to raise or lower taxes. Few people think much about death, although it is inevitable. It is too frightening to consider. So, we turn a blind eye. These readings are blunt and utterly realistic for our own good. Physical death awaits us all. Before that comes, we can create for ourselves the living death of despair and separation from God. God wills that we live in peace now as well as in eternity. He gave us Moses and Abraham. He gave us Jesus, the very Son of God, to lead us to the eternal wedding banquet. As the Gospel emphatically tells us, as the Hebrews longing for deliverance told us, we must recognize God. We must prepare ourselves to follow Jesus by loving God above all. God alone is our security and hope. He has proved it.

The Criterion will not have an issue next week due to its summer schedule. The reflection of Msgr. Campion for Sunday, August 17, will be posted at www.archindy.org/campion. †

Daily Readings

Monday, August 11 St. Clare, virgin <i>Deuteronomy 10:12-22</i> <i>Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20</i> <i>Matthew 17:22-27</i>	<i>Psalm 132:6-7, 9-10, 13-14</i> <i>1 Corinthians 15:54b-57</i> <i>Luke 11:27-28</i>
Tuesday, August 12 St. Jane Frances de Chantal, religious <i>Deuteronomy 31:1-8</i> (Response) <i>Deuteronomy 32:3-4b, 7-9, 12</i> <i>Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14</i>	Friday, August 15 The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary <i>Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab</i> <i>Psalm 45:10bc, 11-12ab, 16</i> <i>1 Corinthians 15:20-27</i> <i>Luke 1:39-56</i>
Wednesday, August 13 St. Pontian, pope and martyr St. Hippolytus, priest and martyr <i>Deuteronomy 34:1-12</i> <i>Psalm 66:1-3a, 5, 8, 16-17</i> <i>Matthew 18:15-20</i>	Saturday, August 16 St. Stephen of Hungary <i>Joshua 24:14-29</i> <i>Psalm 16:1-2a, 5, 7-8, 11</i> <i>Matthew 19:13-15</i>
Thursday, August 14 St. Maximilian Kolbe, priest and martyr <i>Joshua 3:7-10a, 11, 13-17</i> <i>Psalm 114:1-6</i> <i>Matthew 18:21-19:1</i>	Sunday, August 17 Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time <i>Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10</i> <i>Psalm 40:2-4, 18</i> <i>Hebrews 12:1-4</i> <i>Luke 12:49-53</i>
Vigil Mass of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary <i>1 Chronicles 15:3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2</i>	Monday, August 18 <i>Judges 2:11-19</i> <i>Psalm 106:34-37, 39-40, 43ab, 44</i> <i>Matthew 19:16-22</i>

See READINGS, page 19

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Frequent ‘devotional confession’ has long been encouraged by the Church

When I was in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (commonly known as RCIA, now the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, or OCIA), the instructor said normal weekly Eucharist counts as a “confession,” and reception counts as “absolution.” She said in most cases, most people “don’t need to bother” the priest with their sins, and

only need to go to an actual confession once a year or if they’ve done something particularly wrong. Could you comment? (Indiana)

It sounds like your instructor was partially right about some things, insofar as there is at least a kernel of truth to these statements. But he or she also seems to have missed a lot of important nuances.

With respect to the first point, it is true that a devout reception of holy Communion can forgive venial (less serious) sins. Like the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us: “As bodily nourishment restores lost strength, so the Eucharist strengthens our charity, which tends to be weakened in daily life; and this living charity wipes away venial sins” (#1394).

But reception of holy Communion does not impart the forgiveness of “mortal,” or very serious, sins. Not only is a person who has committed an unconfessed mortal sin prohibited from receiving Communion as a matter of sacramental discipline (see Canon 916 of the *Code of Canon Law* for reference), but a person who receives Communion illicitly in this way can actually endanger his or her soul.

As St. Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians: “Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord. ... For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself” (1 Cor 11:27-29).

So, on that very practical level, holy Communion does not replace confession, in that a person who has committed a mortal sin needs the sacrament of penance to be able to approach the

Eucharist at all in the first place. But also, confession is a different sacrament with its own distinct focus, and it would seem to be pastoral common sense that those seeking specifically the forgiveness of any kind of sin would most fruitfully do so in the sacrament that was “custom built” for that purpose. When considering how often to go to confession, I think it becomes important to make a distinction between some questions. What is the bare minimum required of Catholics? What does the Church propose as the ideal regarding going to confession? What should we do so that we may actively grow in our life of faith? Strictly speaking, Catholics above the age of 7 are only required to go to confession once a year if they have committed a mortal sin since their last confession (see Canon 989).

But the Church encourages the faithful to approach the sacrament of penance more often, even for merely venial sins. The Catholic Church has a long tradition of promoting what is called “devotional confessions” or the confession of minor sins even in the absence of grave ones for the sake of growing closer to the Lord.

St. John Paul II expressed this teaching in his 2004 address to the Apostolic Penitentiary (the Vatican canon law tribunal that oversees many issues related to the sacrament of penance) when he noted: “It would be an illusion to want to strive for holiness in accordance with the vocation that God has given to each one of us without frequently and fervently receiving this sacrament of conversion and sanctification.”

And, as long as we approach the sacrament in a reasonable and considerate way, it’s not “bothering the priest” to seek out opportunities for a devotional confession.

In fact, canon law requires that parish priests must “strive to ensure that the faithful are nourished by the devout celebration of the sacraments, and in particular that they frequently approach the sacraments of the blessed Eucharist and penance” (Canon 528, 2).

(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.) †

My Journey to God

When All’s Been Done

By Greg Glendening

When all’s been done,
the Fight for Right
(lost or won)
has but begun.
We give up - All,
all pride and might,
to lift the Pall
that hides God’s Light.

(Greg Glendening is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington. Photo: A full moon illuminates the night along a beach in Pensacola, Fla., on June 21, 2024.) (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

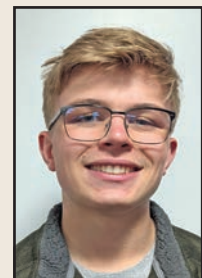


Serra Club Vocations Essay

Student comes to greater understanding of his vocation during retreat

By Albert Hudepohl
Special to The Criterion

The question of my vocation has been something I have pondered frequently for as long as I can remember.



As a child, I grew up with many exceptionally inspiring role models. But as a boy, the male leaders in my life took center stage: my father and the priests from my home parish. As an impressionable child, I wanted to model myself after these figures. I soon realized, however, that I couldn't be both a father and a priest.

My vocation, as I wanted it, not necessarily how God wanted it, would

shift frequently throughout my teenage years. It wasn't until my junior year in high school during a retreat that my understanding of vocations would be forever changed.

Through my school's youth group, a few friends and I were invited to attend Ignition, a retreat at a seminary for young men in Cheshire, Conn. Because this retreat took place at a seminary, I spent nearly the whole weekend surrounded by excellent seminarians and priests, once again provoking my thoughts of discernment toward the priesthood.

However, my thoughts went back to my girlfriend at home. I felt a great conflict inside, but I refused to confront it. This feeling persisted as the retreat continued until we finally reached its last night. It was New Year's Eve, and we were ringing in the new year with eucharistic adoration.

Once again, I was confronted with

the thought of my vocation. But instead of running from it as I had before, I chose to face it. I let my mind fall completely still, and within my thoughts and prayers, I asked God, "What do you want me to do? Be married or become a priest?"

The moment I asked this question, I was presented with a vivid image of our Lord's crucifixion in my mind. I asked God what he wanted me to do with my life, and he showed me his Son giving up his life on the cross, the ultimate symbol of love. Christ wants me to live a life of self-sacrificial love and die to myself for others.

Something that stuck out to me about this experience was a sense of urgency in Christ's message to me. When I asked him what I should be, what I meant was what should I be 10 years from now. Christ corrected me by saying my vocation is something I should be living now, not later.

My vocation is not a destination years down the road. Instead, it is how God is calling me to live my life today, and he wants me to love: my vocation is love.

Understanding the concept of a vocation in this manner has brought me much peace when contemplating my future. I now understand that if I live my life allowing Christ to penetrate my days and permeate my choices and decisions while also maintaining a life of self-sacrificial love, I will end up exactly where he wants me to be.

(Albert Hudepohl and his parents, Andy and Angie Hudepohl, are members of St. Nicholas Parish in Ripley County. He recently graduated from the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg and is the 12th-grade division winner in the Indianapolis Serra Club's 2025 John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest.) †

Call to evangelize all nations includes the digital continent, influencers say

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Dedicating a Jubilee to Catholic influencers and content creators feels "historic" as the Vatican shows increasing support for digital missionaries and their influence, some participants said.



"We're called to be apostles of all nations, and that exists also on our phones, on our computers, on our iPads," Inés San Martín, vice president of marketing and communications for The Pontifical Mission Societies in the U.S., told Catholic News Service (CNS) on July 28.

Something that was mentioned a lot in a series of talks held in Rome's Auditorium Conciliazione on July 28, she said, was the reminder that behind all these online efforts are real people.

"We're not profiles, we're faces, we're people on the other side," who are building "this missionary effort of the

Church on the digital continent," she said.

San Martín was one of more than 1,000 people from more than 70 countries registered for the Jubilee of Digital Missionaries and Catholic Influencers on July 28-29. That Jubilee was part of the larger Jubilee of Youth, which ran until Aug. 3.

What struck San Martín most about the gathering, she said, was the beauty of "seeing influencers greet one another." There was no sense of competition or comparisons, just people excited to be meeting for the first time in "real life."

She said she heard people say to each other, "I've been watching you. I've been learning from you. I've been evangelized by you. Can I hug you?" And that has truly been incredible."

Michael Lofton, host of the Reason & Theology podcast, told CNS he was struck by the encouragement that digital influencers



Michael Lofton

should not be motivated by personal gain.

"We need to speak the truth even if it doesn't get subscribers, even if it doesn't get the likes," he said. "This is something that Jesus did, and sometimes he lost disciples, right? It was costly for him. But we still have to do it.

"We need to ask the question: Is this impactful? Is this constructive? Is this truthful? Not, is this going to get me more followers?" he said.

Katie Prejean McGrady, an author, podcaster and radio host on Sirius XM's The Catholic Channel, told CNS that her "digital mission playbook" is guided by Blessed Carlo Acutis, who encouraged people to be the original person God made, not photocopies.

"If you're just yourself, if you're an authentic witness to the beauty, truth and goodness of our Gospel, and you do that by sharing your family, by talking about your kids, by having conversations about what matters to you most" and about your everyday life, she said, then "people are attracted to that. They want to talk to you about that."

McGrady said it is "so cool that the Church is acknowledging that this is a group of people doing a real thing and a real ministry in the world" by hosting a dedicated Jubilee.

"I think in a hundred years, people are going to talk about the Jubilee of

2025 and how this was the first time the Church engaged with this group of missionaries," she said. While the individual people attending the events won't end up in history books, "this Jubilee and this conversation will" because of how it will continue to impact the Church.

When asked about successful digital evangelization that seeks to get people to connect with their parish community, Brett Robinson, associate director for outreach at the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame, told CNS that Father Mike Schmitz of Duluth, Minn., has been "very good at inviting people back" and showing the Church as "a place of welcoming, peace and joy, and fraternal fellowship with others."

Also, the Hallow prayer app is "another way for people who might not be ready to set foot inside a church" to hear what the Church does say "in a TikTok post or an Instagram post," he said, which is "a big step in the Church's desire to invite more people back in." †



Brett Robinson



'I think in a hundred years, people are going to talk about the Jubilee of 2025 and how this was the first time the Church engaged with this group of missionaries.'

—Katie Prejean McGrady, author, podcaster and radio host on Sirius XM's The Catholic Channel

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Tuesday, August 19
St. John Eudes, priest
Judges 6:11-24a
Psalms 85:9, 11-14
Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday, August 20
St. Bernard, abbot and doctor of the Church
Judges 9:6-15
Psalms 21:2-7
Matthew 20:1-16

Thursday, August 21
St. Pius X, pope
Judges 11:29-39a
Psalms 40:5, 7-10
Matthew 22:1-14

Friday, August 22
The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Ruth 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22
Psalms 146:5-10
Matthew 22:34-40

Saturday, August 23
St. Rose of Lima, virgin
Ruth 2:1-3, 8-11; 4:13-17
Psalms 128:1b-5
Matthew 23:1-12

Sunday, August 24
Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 66:18-21
Psalms 117:1b-2
Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13
Luke 13:22-30

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