



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



Faith in History

New column reflects on how God's work in human history can deepen our faith, page 12.

CriterionOnline.com

October 10, 2025

Vol. LXVI, No. 2



Participants in the Life Chain event in Shelbyville pose on Oct. 5 for a photo in front of St. Joseph Church in Shelbyville. (Submitted photo by Mackenzie Nugent)

Respect Life Mass honors truth that each person 'is loved into existence by God'

By Natalie Hoefer

It is a primary teaching of the Catholic Church: As beings made in the image and likeness of God, each person has inherent dignity that is to be respected from conception to natural death.

But such respect is not always shown.

"We, and our sinfulness, obscure our vision of this dignity," said Father James Brockmeier, rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. "We choose to see only ourselves, our interest, our will, our bias, our hatred, our limitedness, our need."

But those of us "who have received the gift of faith," he continued, "... are called to be servants who love in response to sin."

Father Brockmeier made these comments in his homily during a Mass held at the cathedral on Oct. 5, Respect Life Sunday. The day and the Mass are part of October as Respect Life Month in the Church in the United States, an annual, intensified focus on the dignity of all human life.

The recipients of this year's archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity adult and youth respect life awards were also honored at the Mass—respectively, Annisia Kellum of St. Michael Parish in Bradford and Madilyn Wethington of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. (Read about the recipients on page 8.)

Kellum and Wethington are examples of the call to uphold the sanctity of life.

See **RESPECT LIFE**, page 8

One can't serve God and money, pope says on day he signs text on poverty

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Jubilee Year requires making a choice: serving God and justice or money and inequity, Pope Leo XIV said, marking the Jubilee of Migrants and the Jubilee of the Missions.



Pope Leo XIV

"We pray to be a Church that does not serve money or itself, but the kingdom of God and his justice," he said during a special audience in St. Peter's Square on Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

It was the same day that the pope also signed his first apostolic exhortation, "*Dilexi Te*" ('I Have Loved You'), which was to be released on Oct. 9.

The document is expected to focus on poverty and the poor. Vatican Media footage of the pope signing the text in the library of the Apostolic Palace showed the first page of the table of contents in Italian with chapters dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi, "The cry of the poor," "Ideological prejudices," "God chooses the poor," "Jesus, the poor Messiah," "A Church for the poor," "The true riches of the Church" and more.

St. Francis was known for his life of radical simplicity and poverty, seeking to imitate Christ and be detached from material possessions and earthly glory to better love and serve God.

Pope Leo continued the theme of poverty in his catechesis during the Oct. 4 Jubilee audience, reflecting on St. Luke's account (Lk 16:13-14) of a group of Pharisees who loved money and sneered at Jesus' counsel to be completely dependent on God.

The Gospel passage speaks about making the choice to serve God or to serve money, Pope Leo said in English.

"When we allow material possessions to rule over us, we can fall into spiritual

See **POPE**, page 3

Camino journey leads two women to an even closer friendship and a deeper faith

By John Shaughnessy

(Editor's note: A record 499,239 pilgrims from all over the world walked the historic Camino pilgrimage route in northern Spain in 2024. The Criterion has invited people from the archdiocese who have made all or part of that pilgrimage to share how that experience has influenced their life and their faith.)

First in an occasional series

It was a way for the two friends to celebrate their relationship of 35 years. It was also a way for the two friends to go deeper in their faith.

Of course, there are less challenging ways to do both than setting out on a walking journey together of nearly 500 miles over a period of 40 days.

See **CAMINO**, page 7

Benedictine Sister Nicolette Etienne, left, and Peggy Elson—friends for 35 years—walked the *Camino* together this summer. (Submitted photo)





Pope Francis clasps the hands of Maoz Inon, center, an Israeli whose parents were killed on Oct. 7, 2023, by Hamas militants, and Aziz Sarah, right, a Palestinian whose brother was killed by Israeli soldiers, during a meeting at the Arena in Verona on May 18, 2024. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Top Vatican official sees ‘perverse spiral of hatred’ in Israel-Gaza war

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Hamas attack on Israel two years ago “was inhuman and indefensible,” the Vatican secretary of state said, and Israel’s two-year-long war on Gaza has had “disastrous and inhuman consequences.”

“It is unacceptable and unjustifiable to reduce human beings to mere ‘collateral damage’ ” in Israel’s stated goal of destroying Hamas, said Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Vatican secretary of state.

The cardinal was interviewed by Vatican Media on Oct. 6, the eve of the second anniversary of the terrorist attack on Israel and the start of Israel’s massive attack on the Gaza Strip.

“We prayed, and continue to pray, and we continue to ask that this perverse spiral of hatred and violence, which risks dragging us into an abyss with no return, comes to an end,” the cardinal said.

Asked about U.S. President Donald J. Trump’s proposed peace plan, Cardinal Parolin said that “any plan that includes the Palestinian people in decisions about their own future and helps put an end to this slaughter—releasing hostages and halting the daily killing of hundreds of people—is to be welcomed and supported.” As *The Criterion* went to press, ceasefire talks were underway.

However, the cardinal expressed frustration at the international community’s seeming inability to act.

“It’s not enough to say that what is happening is unacceptable and then continue to allow it to happen,” he said. “We must seriously ask ourselves about the legitimacy, for example, of continuing to supply weapons that are being used against civilians.”

As first Pope Francis did and now Pope Leo has done nearly weekly, Cardinal Parolin also called on Hamas to release the remaining hostages taken on Oct. 7, 2023.

“I am deeply struck and saddened by the images of these people held prisoner in tunnels, starved,” the cardinal said. “We cannot and must not forget them.”

Hamas is believed to still have 20 hostages who are alive and the bodies of another 25 or so who died in captivity.



Cardinal Pietro Parolin

The cardinal told Vatican Media he prays for the hostages’ families each day and continues “to offer our full availability to do whatever is possible to reunite them with their loved ones alive and safe—or at least receive the bodies of those who were killed, so that they may be properly buried.”

And as Pope Leo did at his Jubilee audience on Oct. 4, Cardinal Parolin condemned increasing signs of antisemitism around the world.

“We live in a world of fake news, of oversimplified narratives,” he said. “This leads people who feed on these distortions to attribute responsibility for what is happening in Gaza to the Jewish people as a whole. But we know that is not true” since many Jews, in Israel and abroad, have protested the Israeli government’s war on Gaza.

Many also object to how the Israeli government has promoted “settler expansionism, often violent,” he said, which “seeks to make the creation of a Palestinian State impossible.”

“No Jew should be attacked or discriminated against for being Jewish,” Cardinal Parolin said, “and no Palestinian should be attacked or discriminated against simply for being Palestinian, because, as is unfortunately sometimes said, they are ‘potential terrorists.’ ”

Such a “perverse chain of hatred can only generate a spiral that leads nowhere good,” the cardinal said, adding that “it is painful to see that we still fail to learn from history, even recent history, which remains a teacher of life.”

Cardinal Parolin noted that the Holy See officially recognized the State of Palestine in 2015, continuing its decades-long support of “a Palestinian State that is independent, sovereign, democratic and viable, encompassing the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza.”

The agreement signed with Palestinian officials “envisions this state not as opposed to others, but capable of living side by side with its neighbors in peace and security,” the cardinal said.

The recognition of Palestine in late September by France, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia was a positive development, Cardinal Parolin said, “but we note with concern that Israeli declarations and decisions are moving in the opposite direction—that is, aiming to prevent the possible birth of a real Palestinian State once and for all.” †



Public Schedule of

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

September 23–October 20, 2025

Sept. 23 – Oct. 10

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Pilgrimage, Italy and European travel

October 13 – 3 p.m.

Virtual Evangelization and Catechesis Subcommittee and Committee Chair meeting

October 14 – 10:30 a.m.

Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 14 – 6 p.m.

Saint Meinrad Alumni Dinner at Ritz Charles, Carmel, Ind.

October 15 – 10:30 a.m.

Catholic Center Connection at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

October 15 – noon

United Catholic Appeal employee lunch at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

October 16 – noon

Lunch gathering with archdiocesan priests, Indianapolis

October 16 – 6 p.m.

United Catholic Appeal Advance

Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral followed by dinner at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, both in Indianapolis

October 18 – 1 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Mary Parish, New Albany, and St. Michael Parish, Charlestown, at St. Mary Church

October 19 – 1 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for the youths of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Jeffersonville; Holy Family Parish, New Albany; St. Joseph Parish, Corydon; St. Mary Parish, Lanesville; and St. Augustine Parish, Jeffersonville, at Holy Family Church

October 19 – 5 p.m.

Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. John Paul II Parish, Sellersburg; Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, New Albany; and St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, Floyd County, at St. John Paul II Church

October 20 – 5:30 p.m.

75th Anniversary Celebration for Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Northside Events and Social Club, Indianapolis

Supreme Court begins fall term amid split in public opinion on its work

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—The U.S. Supreme Court began its fall term on Oct. 6, with cases on its docket that include legal battles over some of President Donald J. Trump’s policies and use of executive authority.

“As always, the Supreme Court’s docket so far includes many cases that raise interesting, important and tricky legal questions,” Rick Garnett, a professor of law at the University of Notre Dame, told OSV News.

In three consecutive months, the court will hear cases over Trump’s tests of the limits of his presidential power: In November, the justices will consider Trump’s tariff policy, which he set unilaterally; in December, they will consider whether he can remove personnel at independent agencies; and in January, they will consider his attempt to fire Lisa Cook, a member of the Federal Reserve’s Board of Governors.

Others will likely follow, as the Trump administration asked the high court to weigh in directly on his executive order to end birthright citizenship for children born in the U.S. to parents without legal status or who are temporary visa holders.

The high court began its new term

amid a split in public opinion over its work. An Oct. 2 Marquette Law School Poll survey found 50% of the public said they approve of the way the Supreme Court is handling its job, and 50% disapprove.

The Marquette survey also found that more than half of respondents (55%) said they “believe the Court is going out of its way to avoid making a ruling that President Donald Trump might refuse to obey.” Asked about that finding, Garnett replied that it is “not surprising, given the state of political discourse and disagreement in our country, that many people think this.”

“I believe that the justices expect that the president will abide by their rulings, even if he thinks they are mistaken,” he said. “Under our Constitution, presidents and members of Congress take an oath to the Constitution, and are obligated to interpret the Constitution, just as the justices do and are. This does not mean presidents and members of Congress have to agree with the court, but our tradition, except in extremely rare cases, has been for them to comply with the court’s decisions.” †



Phone Numbers:

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

Price:

\$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

Postmaster:

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

Web site :

www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail:

criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December, the first week of January and every other week from June to August (*summer schedule*). Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2025 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

NEWS FROM YOU!

Do you have something exciting or newsworthy you want to be considered to be printed in The Criterion?

E-mail us: criterion@archindy.org

Staff:

Editor: Mike Krokos
Assistant Editor: John Shaughnessy
Reporter: Sean Gallagher
Reporter: Natalie Hoefler
Graphic Designer / Online Editor: Brandon A. Evans
Executive Assistant: Ann Lewis



The Criterion

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

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

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2025 Criterion Press Inc.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to: Criterion Press Inc. 1400 N. Meridian St. Indianapolis, IN 46202



10/10/25

Moving?

We'll be there waiting if you give us two weeks' notice! Use the form below or at archindy.org/moving.

Name _____

E-mail _____

New Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

New Parish _____

Effective Date _____

Note: If you are receiving duplicate copies please send both labels.

The Criterion • 1400 N. Meridian St. • Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Bishops’ president begs Americans to see Christ ‘in every person’

(OSV News)—Five years after the release of Pope Francis’ encyclical on fraternal love, and amid a rise in political violence, the leader of the U.S. Catholic bishops is pleading for a rediscovery of—and respect for—a common humanity.

“I ask every American to reflect on the value of every human life. I beg you to see Christ in every person, even those whose politics you oppose,” said Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

The archbishop, who also leads the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military



Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio

Services, shared his thoughts in an Oct. 1 pastoral invitation for reflection ahead of the fifth anniversary of “*Fratelli Tutti*: On Fraternity and Social Friendship.” Pope Francis penned the encyclical and released it Oct. 3, 2020, as an exploration and

exhortation on the issues of human fraternity and social friendship.

The late pope noted that his encyclical—which focused on a topic about which he had frequently spoken—was partly inspired by his own fraternal encounters with leaders of other faith traditions: Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I and Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, one of the pre-eminent Sunni Muslim scholars in the world.

Quoting the late pope, Archbishop Broglio said the encyclical “prophetically” observed that the world must rebuild its sense of communion, and that the erosion of social communion leads to humans being manipulated by the powerful. He referenced the late pope’s warning in the encyclical on how great words—the pontiff gave “democracy, freedom, justice or unity” as examples—have been emptied of their meaning, bent and shaped “to serve as tools for domination, as meaningless tags that can be used to justify any action.”

“We have seen the manifestation of this notion in the perverse idea that one can serve the common good by becoming an instrument of violence,” he said. “This happens when we refuse to see the face of Christ in the other person and only see an enemy that must be dominated or destroyed.”

He said, “Tragically, decent people of every political persuasion continue to fall victim to this deadly trend.”

Archbishop Broglio pointed to his experience ministering to military members and their families, saying, “I have known the pain that the violence of war inflicts on men and women and those closest to them.”

Now, he said, “grievous acts of violence have intruded into the daily lives of too many Americans—an experience that, tragically, many civilians around the world have long endured.

“Places once regarded as safe harbors to grow and learn—our schools, universities, and churches—have become sites of heartbreaking tragedy and bloodshed,” said Archbishop Broglio.

While he did not name any specific incidents, the archbishop’s reflection was released just days after several high-profile killings, including deadly targeted attacks on a Latter-day Saints church in Michigan and a Catholic church in Minnesota, and the assassination of conservative political activist Charlie Kirk at a Utah university campus.

Princeton University’s Bridging Divides Initiative, a research and policy development effort to mitigate political violence, predicted that 2025 would be “a bellwether year for political violence” in the U.S., with rising threats against local officials and communities, and a deepening “climate of hostility in American politics.”

International online research firm YouGov, which since 2022 has polled on how extensive a problem respondents perceive political violence to be in the U.S., has found that levels of concern depend “to some degree” on “whether someone from their side or from the other side is the most recent to be attacked.”

Archbishop Broglio, quoting from “*Fratelli Tutti*,” said that “authentic

reconciliation does not flee from conflict, but is achieved in conflict, resolving it through dialogue and open, honest and patient negotiation” (#244).

As Pope Francis wrote in the encyclical, said the archbishop, “the path to social unity always entails acknowledging the possibility that others have, at least in part, a legitimate point of view, something worthwhile to contribute, even if they were in error or acted badly” (#228).

The late pope stressed that peace “requires us to place at the center of all political, social, and economic activity the human person from conception to natural death, who enjoys the highest dignity, and respect for the common good.”

“Each of us should examine our hearts, our thoughts, and our actions and ask ourselves how we contribute to the polarization and animosity plaguing our nation,” Archbishop Broglio said.

That self-reflection should be accompanied by concrete actions to mend a wounded society, he said.

“We should also put into practice those behaviors that can help us begin to heal the rifts between us,” said Archbishop Broglio, recommending in particular the corporal works of mercy, which along with their spiritual counterparts are described in Catholic teaching as “charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities.”

The corporal works of mercy listed by Archbishop Broglio in his reflection included “feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead.”

Along with such outreach, said the archbishop, “Consider fasting from social media for one day a week or in the evening.”

In addition, he said, “Pray for your enemies,” referencing a command given by Jesus Christ to his followers during both the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:38-48) and the Sermon on the Plain (Lk 6:27-35).

“Listen and talk with those with whom you disagree—especially within your



A girl holds a candle during a vigil at Lynnhurst Park in Minneapolis on Aug. 27 following a shooting earlier in the day at Annunciation Church. A shooter opened fire with a rifle through the windows of the school’s church and struck children worshipping at Mass during the first week of school, killing two children and wounding 21 people in an act of violence the police chief called “absolutely incomprehensible.” (OSV News photo/Tim Evans, Reuters)

own family,” said Archbishop Broglio. “Disagree, debate civilly, stand for your rights, but always remember in your heart that we are all children of God and deserve dignity and life.”

The archbishop concluded his reflection with a call to pray “that we may discover anew that all are important and all are necessary, different faces of the one humanity that God so loves. Amen.”

The USCCB is also providing Catholics with a variety of resources to help implement the vision of “*Fratelli Tutti*” on its fifth anniversary. These include information on its CivilizeIt initiative, the “*Fratelli Tutti* Study Guide,” resources on Catholic social teaching and the corporal works of mercy, all of which can be found on its website, usccb.org. †



Pope Leo XIV signs his first apostolic exhortation, “*Dilexi Te*” (“I Have Loved You”), in the library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican on Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, as Archbishop Edgar Peña Parra, the substitute secretary for general affairs at the Vatican Secretariat of State, looks on. The exhortation was to be released on Oct. 9. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

POPE

continued from page 1

sadness,” he said. “When we choose God, however, we choose hope and a life of forgiveness and mercy.”

While the Holy Year dedicated to hope is a time for seeking forgiveness and mercy “so that everything can begin anew,” he said in his main address in Italian, “the Jubilee also opens up the hope of a different distribution of wealth, the possibility that the Earth belongs to everyone, because this is not the case right now.”

“During this year, we must choose whom to serve, justice or injustice, God or money,” he said.

“To hope is to choose, because those who do not choose are driven to despair,” he said, and “the world changes if we change.”

“One of the most common consequences of spiritual sadness, or sloth, is not choosing anything,” Pope Leo said. “Those who experience this are overcome by an inner laziness that is worse than death.”

Among those who made a courageous choice in life were St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi, he said.

Even though Oct. 4 is the feast day of St. Francis, it was also important to speak about St. Clare because they both are “models of those who understood the Gospel and chose a life of poverty as Jesus did,” he said in English.

“Their choice continues to inspire many to remember

that the Earth belongs to everyone,” he said, inviting people to pray “to be a Church that serves God and the poor and opens the door of hope to the world.”

“Clare understood what the Gospel asks of us,” the pope said in Italian. “But even in a city that considers itself Christian, taking the Gospel seriously can seem revolutionary.”

“Then, as now, a choice must be made!” he said.

“Jesus says: you cannot serve two masters,” Pope Leo said, and the Church remains “young and attracts young people” when it follows the right master.

“Clare made her choice, and this gives us great hope,” he said, because she has inspired vocational choices throughout the world for centuries.

She also “reminds us that young people like the Gospel,” he said. “Young people like people who have made a choice and bear the consequences of their choices.”

“This makes others want to choose” in a kind of “holy imitation” where “one does not become a ‘photocopy,’ ” he said, referring to a maxim by St. Carlo Acutis, who also found inspiration in Assisi’s saints, “but each person—when choosing the Gospel—chooses himself. He loses himself and finds himself.”

“Let us pray, then, for young people; and let us pray that we may be a Church that does not serve money or itself, but the kingdom of God and his justice,” he said. “A Church that, like St. Clare, has the courage to live differently in the city. This gives hope!” †

Safe, dependable transportation to outpatient appointments, procedures and miscellaneous errands.

APPOINTMENT PARTNER L.L.C.

Angie Schubach, St. Jude parishioner
317-759-7007
www.appointmentpartner.com
Angie@appointmentpartner.com

O'RILEY BRANSON
FUNERAL SERVICE & CREMATORY

6107 South East Street
Indianapolis, IN 46227
(317) 787-8224
ORileyBranson.com

A Trusted Partnership in Care

O'Riley Branson is proud to be a preferred partner of Abbey Caskets.

Let us help you honor your loved one with care and craftsmanship you can trust.

OPINION



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher* Sally Krause, *Associate Publisher*
Mike Krokos, *Editor*

Editorial



Rescuers carry a victim's body recovered from a damaged house in Bogo, Philippines, in Cebu province on Oct. 1, in the aftermath of a magnitude 6.9 offshore earthquake. The quake collapsed houses and buildings late on Sept. 30 in the central Philippine province, leaving at least 72 dead and injuring many others. (OSV News photo/Eloisa Lopez, Reuters)

Lord, lead us to build a culture of life built on faith, hope and love

The Apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.” The Lord replied, “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you” (Lk 17:5-6).

Lord, increase our faith.

That plea from the Apostles in last weekend’s Gospel from St. Luke offers us a lesson worth emulating as we seek Christ’s assistance on our journey as missionary disciples. As we continue our observance of Respect Life Month, wouldn’t it make sense to begin each day with that heartfelt prayer?

What’s more, why couldn’t that simple petition be part of our life on every day of our pilgrimage of faith?

We see there is so much to pray for in our chaotic world. We keep family, friends, co-workers and others who have asked for our prayers at the top of our list. May we always remember them. We pray: *Lord, increase our faith.*

But we learn daily of so many others around the U.S. and the globe who need petitions as well.

Recent victims of a tragic church shooting involving school children in Minnesota, and a shooting and arson fire set at a place of worship in Michigan.

The assassination of a husband and father of two young children living out what he believed was his call to discipleship.

A terror attack outside a packed synagogue in the United Kingdom on *Yom Kippur*—the holiest day in the Jewish calendar—that left two dead and four wounded.

The ongoing Ukrainian and Russian conflict.

A 6.9-magnitude earthquake in the Philippines that resulted in at least 72 dead and hundreds injured.

If we scour the headlines, we realize the list could go on and on. We pray: *Lord, increase our faith.*

But there are countless others who need our assistance, and it goes beyond our prayers.

We learn at a young age that “actions speak louder than words,” and many of us were encouraged to be people who were unafraid to get their hands dirty

when it came to serving our brethren.

Our faith reminds us we are our brothers and sisters’ keepers. And Jesus himself tells us in Scripture, in the corporal works of mercy, that we should tend to the physical needs of others.

In chapter 25 of the Gospel of Matthew, we are called to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, and ransom the captive (visit the imprisoned). The last corporal work of mercy, burying the dead, comes from the Book of Tobit (Tb 1:16-18)

As disciples called to be the hands and feet of Christ to our brothers and sisters in need, let us never forget this charge. We pray: *Lord, increase our faith.*

The spiritual works of mercy have also long been a part of the Christian tradition, appearing in Scripture, the works of theologians and spiritual writers throughout history. Just as Jesus attended to the spiritual well-being of those he ministered to, the spiritual works of mercy, as we read in the *United States Catholic Catechism of the Adults*, guide us to “help our neighbor in their spiritual needs.”

Let us remember our call: to instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, admonish sinners, comfort the sorrowful, forgive injuries, bear wrongs patiently, and pray for the living and the dead.

In our vocation as missionary disciples, may we see Christ in our neighbor and all who cross our path. We pray: *Lord, increase our faith.*

Respect Life Month reminds us each October of our call as children of God to respect all human life, from conception to natural death.

In the world we live in today, too many have little or no faith and allow evil to envelop their world, which, too often, leads to tragic consequences.

Let us pray that light overcomes that darkness, and that each of us develops a stronger commitment to building a culture of life centered on faith, hope and love.

We pray: *Lord, increase our faith.*

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/Greg Erlandson

Hatred and learning from history

Why do we want to learn about the dark times, the ugly times, in our country? It is a relevant question today, as museum displays and park exhibits are being censored for being unduly negative about shameful moments in American history.

The study of history is a path to self-knowledge if we learn not only our accomplishments but also our failings.

To celebrate accomplishments is estimable. Yet, to think that we are without flaws is a childish fantasy. Worse, to not understand these flaws is dangerous, for we will be less able to resist such darkness when it arises again.

Timothy Egan has written a remarkable and timely book, *A Fever in the Heartland* (Penguin Books), about one of the darkest chapters of American history. His book chronicles the seemingly inexorable rise of the Ku Klux Klan across the country in the 1920s and the grip it had on city and state governments, starting in, of all places, Indiana.

This is a story of great relevance for Catholics, for we were one of the three groups most targeted by the Klan, along with Blacks and Jews.

The rebirth of the Klan after World War I was a Midwest and northern phenomenon. While Jim Crow laws reduced the southern Black population to near servitude again, in the north the racism was combined with a hatred of immigrants—often from Catholic countries—and Jews.

A female Klan member said of immigrants from southern Europe, “They are idiots, insane, diseased criminals,” Egan wrote. “Within a generation or two, she warned, white Protestants would be replaced by an inferior breed. The Jews were behind this plot.”

The Klan sprang up from California to Pennsylvania, but Egan focuses on Indiana and the case of D.C. “Steve” Stephenson. He was a con artist of hate and violence packaged as Christian patriotism. “I did not sell the Klan in Indiana on hatreds. I sold it on Americanism,” he said.

Egan said Stephenson had a “talent

for bundling a set of grievances against immigrants, Jews, Roman Catholics, and Blacks.” As he grew the organization, he grew his own wealth, and soon he had every major politician in Indiana in his grasp. Hundreds of thousands of Hoosiers—men, women and even children (the Ku Klux Kiddies)—were enrolled in the Klan.

By mid-1924, Egan wrote, “the blazing cross had become as much a part of life as the soda fountain and the barbershop pole” in American towns, as was the violence and intimidation of those people the Klan deemed inferior.

Aug. 8, 1925, may have been the high point of the Klan’s presence in this country, when 50,000 hooded marchers paraded in Washington while 200,000 onlookers cheered.

As Stephenson’s political power grew, so did his ambitions. He hoped to become president. He already owned the governor in Indiana, as well as many other politicians. Stephenson learned one of the secrets of dictatorial power, Egan said. “If he said something often enough, no matter how untrue, people would believe it. Small lies were for the timid. The key to telling a big lie was to do it with conviction.”

Stephenson’s own vices brought him down, however. His violent lust ended up in the death of a young woman, Madge Oberholtzer, but her deathbed testimony ultimately convicted him, despite all the political power and bribes the Klan tried to bring to his defense.

Ultimately, this and other scandals, the violence and the corruption of the “invisible empire” led to the Klan’s collapse. Yet the laws they helped pass to limit immigration and harass racial and religious minorities continued to plague the country for decades.

Egan’s assessment of those perilous times: “Democracy was a fragile thing, stable and steady until it was broken and trampled.”

It is a lesson we would be wise to learn lest we be doomed to repeat it.

(Greg Erlandson is an award-winning Catholic publisher, editor and journalist whose column appears monthly at OSV News. Follow him on X @GregErlandson.) †

The rebirth of the Klan after World War I was a Midwest and northern phenomenon. While Jim Crow laws reduced the southern Black population to near servitude again, in the north the racism was combined with a hatred of immigrants—often from Catholic countries—and Jews.

Letters Policy

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

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

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

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

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

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

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

All life is sacred, so we must honor the dignity of every person

Catholic social teaching is founded on the principle that all life is sacred. Every human being, made in the image and likeness of God, is unique and irreplaceable, and it is our solemn responsibility, as individuals and as a society, to protect and defend all human life from conception until natural death.

In “Peace and Unity: A Pastoral Reflection,” which was published on Aug. 28, the memorial of St. Augustine, I write:

Because all life is sacred, we must always respect human life and dignity. This is why we work for an end to the inhumane practices of abortion, euthanasia and every instance of what Pope Saint John Paul II called “the culture of death.” Even the death penalty, which was tolerated in the past as a deterrent against violent crime and as a means of protecting society at large, must be rejected. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) teaches, “the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person” (#2267).

Our society’s quest for peace and unity demands that we pay attention to the degrading effect of the death penalty on society. This is a controversial topic, but the taking of human life, even by the state, perpetuates a culture of death, reaching into

the very fabric of the human conscience.

In my pastoral reflection, I ask: “How can families of both victims and perpetrators of violence as well as those who are charged with carrying out acts of capital punishment not be impacted by this scourge of our penal system?” Always and everywhere—even on death row—the inherent dignity of a person remains. We need only consider Jesus’ words to the thief hanging next to him on the cross, who asked to be remembered: “This day, you will be with me in paradise” (Lk 23:43).

As taught in the documents of the Second Vatican Council (cf. “*Gaudium et Spes*,” #27), respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that “everyone should look upon his neighbor [without any exception] as ‘another self,’ above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity.” No legislation could by itself do away with the fears, prejudices, and attitudes of pride and selfishness which obstruct the establishment of truly fraternal societies. Such behavior will cease only through the charity that finds in every man a “neighbor,” a brother. The duty of making oneself a neighbor to others and actively serving them becomes even more urgent when it involves the disadvantaged, in whatever area this may

be. Jesus said: “As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” (Mt 25:40).

This same duty extends to those who think or act differently from us. The teaching of Christ requires our forgiveness of offenses. He extends God’s commandment of love to all enemies. Liberation in the spirit of the Gospel is incompatible with hatred of one’s enemy as a person, but not with hatred of the evil that he does as an enemy. (CCC, #1931-1933)

As “Peace and Unity: A Pastoral Reflection” makes clear:

Any credible peace and stable unity—predicated on the principles of accompaniment, dialogue, dignity, encounter, respect and solidarity—necessarily require that inherent rights be upheld and basic human needs be met. There are certain inalienable rights that must be honored, especially regarding the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized. No person, family, or community can exist without access to clean water, nutritional food, proper housing, medical care, and dignified livelihood.

These are not luxuries or negotiables, but essential needs of every human being. Such basics are necessary for all people, regardless of religion or ethnicity, in Gaza, Ukraine or any other region of the

world, including local communities and neighborhoods.

This is also true for those incarcerated and those being detained solely based on immigration or refugee status. Indiscriminate arrests, unjust detainment, and inhumane treatment are morally unacceptable.

All sins against the dignity of persons, including the taking of a human life, sexual abuse and sexual harassment, rape, racism, sexism, nativism and homophobia are violations of this fundamental principle. We can (and sometimes must) disapprove of the behavior of others, but we may never belittle, disrespect or abuse others simply because of our differences, no matter how serious.

Pope Leo XIV has affirmed the principle that “Christians are called to build bridges, not walls” (Pope Francis). Whether in politics, race relations, economic crises or disputes among families or local communities, let us accept the challenge to be peacemakers, to find common ground and to engage in respectful dialogue.

(To read Archbishop Thompson’s pastoral reflection in English and Spanish, go to archindy.org/pastoral2025. Study questions are available at facebook.com/ArchdioceseofIndianapolis.) †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Honremos la dignidad de cada persona pues toda vida es sagrada

La doctrina social católica se basa en el principio de que toda vida es sagrada ya que cada ser humano—hecho a imagen y semejanza de Dios—es único e irremplazable, y es nuestra solemne responsabilidad, como individuos y como sociedad, proteger y defender toda vida humana desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural.

En “Paz y unidad: Reflexión pastoral” que se publicó el 28 de agosto, memorial de san Agustín, escribo:

Porque toda vida es sagrada, debemos respetar siempre la vida y la dignidad humanas. Por eso trabajamos para poner fin a las prácticas inhumanas del aborto, la eutanasia y todos los casos de lo que el papa san Juan Pablo II llamó “la cultura de la muerte.” Incluso la pena capital, tolerada en el pasado como medida disuasoria contra los delitos violentos y como medio de proteger a la sociedad en general, debe ser rechazada. De conformidad con las enseñanzas del Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica (CIC), “la pena de muerte es inadmisibles, porque atenta contra la inviolabilidad y la dignidad de la persona” (#2267).

La búsqueda de la paz y la unidad de nuestra sociedad exige que prestemos atención al efecto degradante de la pena de muerte en la sociedad. Aunque se trata de un tema controvertido, la privación de la vida, incluso por parte del Estado, perpetúa la cultura de la muerte que penetra en el tejido mismo de la conciencia humana.

En mi reflexión pastoral, planteo lo siguiente: “¿Cómo no van a verse afectadas por esta mácula de nuestro sistema penal las familias, tanto de las víctimas como de los autores de la violencia, así como las de los encargados de ejecutar la pena capital?” Siempre y en todo lugar, incluso en el corredor de la muerte, la dignidad inherente de la persona permanece. Basta pensar en las palabras de Jesús al ladrón que colgaba junto a él en la cruz y que pedía ser recordado: “Te aseguro que hoy estarás conmigo en el Paraíso” (Lc 23:43).

Como nos enseñan los documentos del Concilio Vaticano Segundo (cf. “*Gaudium et Spes*,” #27): El respeto a la persona humana supone respetar este principio: “Que cada uno [sin excepción] debe considerar al prójimo como ‘otro yo,’ cuidando, en primer lugar, de su vida y de los medios necesarios para vivirla dignamente.” Ninguna legislación podría por sí misma hacer desaparecer los temores, los prejuicios, las actitudes de soberbia y de egoísmo que obstaculizan el establecimiento de sociedades verdaderamente fraternas. Estos comportamientos sólo cesan con la caridad que ve en cada hombre un “prójimo,” hermano. El deber de hacerse prójimo de los demás y de servirlos activamente se hace más acuciante todavía cuando éstos están más necesitados en cualquier sector de la vida humana. Jesús dijo: “Cuanto hicisteis a uno de estos hermanos míos más pequeños, a mí me lo hicisteis” (Mt 25:40).

Este mismo deber se extiende a los que piensan y actúan diversamente de nosotros. Las enseñanzas de Cristo hacen un llamado a perdonar las ofensas, extendiendo así el mandamiento divino de amar al prójimo, incluso a los enemigos. “La liberación en el espíritu del Evangelio es incompatible con el odio al enemigo en cuanto persona, pero no con el odio al mal que hace en cuanto enemigo” (CIC, #1931-1933).

Tal como aclara “Paz y unidad: Reflexión pastoral”:

Una paz creíble y una unidad estable—basadas en los principios de acompañamiento, diálogo, dignidad, encuentro, respeto y solidaridad—exigen necesariamente la defensa de los derechos intrínsecos y la satisfacción de las necesidades humanas básicas. Hay ciertos derechos inalienables que deben respetarse, especialmente en lo que respecta a los pobres, los vulnerables y los marginados. Ninguna persona, familia o comunidad puede existir sin acceso a agua potable, alimentos nutritivos, vivienda adecuada, atención médica y medios de vida dignos.

No se trata de lujos ni de bienes negociables, sino de las necesidades esenciales de todo ser humano. Estos elementos básicos son imprescindibles para todas las personas, independientemente de su religión o etnia, ya sea en Gaza, Ucrania o cualquier otra región del mundo, incluidas las comunidades locales y los vecindarios.

Lo mismo ocurre con los presos y los que han sido detenidos únicamente por su condición de inmigrantes o refugiados. Las detenciones indiscriminadas, la reclusión injusta y el trato inhumano son moralmente inaceptables.

Todos los pecados cometidos contra la dignidad de las personas, incluyendo tomar una vida humana, el abuso y el acoso sexual, la violación, el racismo, el sexismo, la teoría antimigratoria del nativismo y la homofobia, constituyen transgresiones a este principio fundamental. Tenemos la capacidad (y a veces es nuestra obligación) reprobando la conducta de algunas personas, pero jamás podemos denigrar, irrespetar o maltratar a otros sencillamente a causa de nuestras diferencias, independientemente de las circunstancias.

El papa León XIV ha afirmado el principio de que “los cristianos están llamados a construir puentes, no muros” (Papa Francisco). Ya sea en la política, en las relaciones raciales, en las crisis económicas, en las disputas familiares o de comunidades locales, seamos instrumentos de paz para encontrar un punto medio y participar en diálogos respetuosos.

(Para leer la reflexión pastoral del arzobispo Thompson en inglés y español, visite archindy.org/pastoral2025. En facebook.com/ArchdioceseofIndianapolis encontrará preguntas para el estudio de esta reflexión pastoral). †

Events Calendar

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

October 14, 21, 28
Lumen Christi Catholic High School, 717 S. East St., Indianapolis. **Catholic in Recovery**, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, sponsored by Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, free. Information: catholicinrecovery.com, cir_church.holyrosary@gmail.com.

October 15
Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439, catholiccemeteries.cc.

October 16
Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898, catholiccemeteries.cc.

Terre Haute History Center, 929 Wabash Ave., Terre Haute. **Cheers for Charity Dinner**, 6-9 p.m., fundraiser for Terre Haute Catholic Charities, four-course dinner with paired wines, silent auction, live music, raffles, must be 21 or older, limited seating, \$125. Information, registration: ccthin.org, 812-232-1447, option 3.

October 21
St. Mary Church, 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg. **Little Souls Memorial Mass**, 5:30 p.m., submit baby’s name by Oct. 16 to be read at Mass, sponsored by Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry. Information, name submissions: 812-212-3463, contactus@covenantresources.org, covenantresources.org/mass.

October 22
Immaculate Conception Church, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Foundation Day Mass**, 11 a.m., in honor of date St. Theodora Guérin and companions arrived at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

October 23
Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Central Psychological Services founder John Cadwallader presenting “Taking Back Your Life from the Controls of Technology,” rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by

4 p.m. on Oct. 20. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

St. Pius X Church, 7200 Sarto Dr., Indianapolis. **Sensory Friendly Mass**, 6 p.m., Mass for those with sensory challenges, free. Information: 317-255-4534, mmehringer@spxparish.org.

October 25
St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **Polidor 5K Run/Walk**, 8:30-10 a.m., benefitting ALFA literacy program in Northern Haiti, \$20. Registration, information: 812-350-5250, saleeb9287@att.net, tinyurl.com/polidor25.

Primo Banquet Hall, 2615 National Ave., Indianapolis. **Marian Authentic Women’s Conference**, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., presenters include Catholic speaker and author Claire Dwyer, author Emily Wilson, Diocese of Cleveland Father Patrick Schultz, includes Mass, light breakfast, lunch, snacks and beverages, hosted by archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life and Living Our Vocations Everyday Ministries, Inc., \$50, register by Oct. 21. Registration, information on event, volunteering or being a vendor: loveministriesindy.org/mawc, info@loveministriesindy.org, 317-361-8361.

St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Craft Fair**, 9 a.m.-3p.m., crafts and food available, free admission, vendor tables available for \$10, \$15 for tables with electricity. Information: 317-625-3130, blackjl@hotmail.com.

St. Bartholomew Parish, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **Blessed is She Who Believes: Following Mary’s Example Toward a Life of Peace**, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., women’s retreat, Catholic author and speaker Stephanie Engelman presenting, includes Mass, adoration, breakfast and lunch, \$30, register by Oct. 20. Information, registration: 812-379-9353, dschafer@stbparish.net.

Knights of Columbus Hall, 1308 W. Main St., Greensburg. **Charity Dinner and Dance**, 5:30 p.m., benefitting Clarity Pregnancy Center, \$100 per couple. Information: 812-663-2607, council1042@indianakofc.org.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk**, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in

front of church. Information: holyrosary.prolife@gmail.com.

October 26
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Filipino Mass**, 3 p.m. Divine Mercy, 3:10 p.m. rosary, 3:30 p.m. Mass with homily in English, every fourth Sunday. Information: mariasolito@yahoo.com.

November 1
St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 213 W. Ripley St., Milan. **Harvest Dinner**, 3-7 p.m., Mass at 5 p.m., pulled pork dinner, cash prizes, quilt raffle, country store, kids’ games, \$15 dinner, ages four and younger free. Information: 812-654-7051, st.charleschurch@yahoo.com.

St. Martin of Tours Parish, 1720 E. Harrison St., Martinsville. **Christmas Holiday Bazaar**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., vendor booths, St. Martin’s Attic and Crafts, Christmas cookies and caramels by the pound, homemade baked goods, raffle cash prizes, handmade quilt wall-hanging door prize, hourly door prizes, food and drinks, carry-out available, free admission. Information:

765-342-6379, parishoffice@stmtours.org.

St. John the Apostle Church, 4607 W. State Road 46, Bloomington. **Holiday Craft Show**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., handmade crafts from 35 local artisans, bake sale, lunch served 11 a.m.-1 p.m., free door prize ticket upon entry, free admission. Information: 812-821-1152, nothingfancyceramics@gmail.com.

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **All Saints Mass**, noon. Information: 317-784-4439, catholiccemeteries.cc.

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

St. Matthew the Apostle Church, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Children’s Rosary**, 9 a.m., children of all ages invited to pray rosary every first Saturday, donuts and fellowship to follow, free. Information: julie3reyes@gmail.com. †

Retreats and Programs

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

October 24-26
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Peace in the Mourning Grief Retreat for Widows**, 6 p.m. Fri.-noon Sun., \$255 includes meals and private room with shared bath. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

November 1
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Creativity is a Form of Prayer: Cardmaking**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Franciscan Sister Kathleen Branham presenting, \$50 includes lunch. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

November 2
Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 Saint Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **Holding Hope in the Holidays: A Grief Retreat**, 4-6:30 p.m., Mount Saint Francis associate director Regina Proctor presenting, soup and bread supper, \$25. Information, registration: 812-923-8817, mountsaintfrancis.org/grief-retreat.

November 3
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Divine Wine and Art with Heart**, 5-9 p.m., includes wine, beverages, snacks and all painting materials. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

November 5, 19
Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Dementia Education Series: A Positive Approach to Care**, 1-3 p.m., fifth and sixth of six stand-alone sessions, respite care available for five families, limited space, registration encouraged, online option available. Information, registration: 812-238-1561, Events.SistersofProvidence.org, ecollins@spsmw.org.

November 10
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$45, includes room, lunch, Mass and use of common areas and grounds,

overnight stay available for additional \$32, dinner additional \$11. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

November 14, December 12
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$80 with spiritual direction. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

November 14-16
Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **The Infancy Narrative According to the Gospel of Luke**, Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **More Christ-Centered Counsel for Everyday Difficulties**, 5 p.m. Fri.-10 a.m. Sun.,

Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate Father Terrance M. Chartier facilitating, \$241 for single, \$302.90 double, \$369.08 triple, \$433.12 quadruple, includes four meals and room for two nights, commuters \$50.70

includes lunch and dinner on Sat. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com.

November 15
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg.

With Grateful Hearts, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality associate director of retreats Judy Ribar presenting, \$30. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org. †

Wedding Anniversaries

LEO AND JOAN (VARNAU) HELLMANN, members of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, will celebrate their 72nd wedding anniversary on Oct. 16.
The couple was married in St. Patrick Church in Kokomo, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette), on Oct. 16, 1953.
They have four children: Maureen Ferguson, Frederick, Gregory and James Hellmann.
The couple also has 13 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.



BOB AND JANET (MILLER) PIERSON, members of Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Oct. 8.
The couple was married in Sacred Heart Church in Fairfield, Ohio, on Oct. 8, 1960.
They have 10 children: Beth Bane, LeeAnne Beiser, Shelly Burns, Kate Enneking, Sarah Shane, Lori Stanger, Sandy Westerfeld, Ben, Bobby and Luke Pierson.
The couple also has 40 grandchildren and 33 great-grandchildren.



BILL AND LAURA (JONES) FLEAK, members of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 11.
The couple was married in the former St. Bernadette Church in Indianapolis on Oct. 11, 1975.
They have four children: Andrea, Christine, Jennifer and Jeff Fleak.



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.

Retreat for separated and divorced Catholics will be held on Nov. 7-9

A “Being and Belonging” weekend retreat for separated and divorced Catholics will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis, from 6 p.m. on Nov. 7 through 1:30 p.m. on Nov. 9.

Father James Farrell, along with a team of those who have experienced divorce, will facilitate the retreat. It will offer participants a safe place to wrestle with their feelings about their separation or divorce and help

them find ways to heal and grow. Discover anew that God is with you in your struggles and in your hope.

The cost is \$210, which includes meals and a private room with a shared bathroom.

For more information or to register, go to tinyurl.com/beingbelonging25, call 317-545-7681 or e-mail lcoons@archindy.org.

If finances are an issue, contact Lisa Coons as listed above about the possibility of scholarship assistance. †

CAMINO

continued from page 1

Yet the lure of traveling the *Camino de Santiago* (The historic Way of St. James pilgrimage route) kept calling to Peggy Elson and Benedictine Sister Nicolette Etienne.

And so this summer, the two educators—who first met as teachers at St. Matthew the Apostle School in Indianapolis in 1990—laced up their hiking shoes for the 488-mile pilgrimage path from St. Jean Pied de Port, France, to the tomb of St. James at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain.

“When I asked Sister Nicolette in July of 2023 whether she had ever thought about walking the *Camino*, I didn’t expect, ‘It’s on my bucket list!’ ” Elson recalls. “I knew that day we were going to Spain. For nearly two years, we met with friends and new friends who had walked the *Camino*. We read books about the *Camino*. We viewed YouTube videos about the *Camino*, and we shopped for supplies in preparation for our departure.”

“On June 1, Peggy and I set out on an amazing journey,” notes Sister Nicolette, a member of the community of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. “The opportunity to hike the *Camino* was an adventure I never dreamed I would one day be able to complete.”

Yet that first day, the dream adventure began with a rough reality.

‘We shared joys, fears, meals and stories’

“The trek up the mountain on day 1 was a lot,” says Elson, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. “Sister Nicolette was so patient with me as I was not feeling well. During the first week, I became stronger each day. Thanks to her encouragement, we were good to go the full route by day 4.”

The next 36 days were marked by challenging and uplifting moments that have become memories for a lifetime.

“Meeting so many wonderful pilgrims along the journey was definitely a highlight,” Sister Nicolette says. “As time went on, we tended to be on the same schedule with five other people from various parts of the world. Surprisingly enough, at 63 years old, I was the youngest in our group.”

She enjoyed the many churches they found along the way, savoring the opportunities they provided for rest, meditation, prayer and Mass. She also delighted in finding God in so many moments of nature.

“Breathing the fresh mountain air, seeing the daily sunrise and enjoying the magnificent scenery made giving God the glory the best part of my day,” Sister Nicolette notes.

Elson adds to the memories with her own favorite experiences.

“During our walks, we would pray for our families, friends, students ...” says Elson. “We would pray the rosary, meditate on the mysteries of the rosary, and pray flying novenas [which involve praying the ‘*Memorare*’ nine times quickly, often for needs that are urgent, followed by a tenth one to the Blessed Mother in thanksgiving.]

“We shared joys, fears, meals and stories with pilgrims from all parts of the world. The shared joys and struggles were reminders that life is a *Camino*.”

Most of all, they shared how their bond of friendship deepened along the way.

“Peggy is an incredible companion, truly one of the most optimistic people I know,” Sister Nicolette notes. “Whenever I start to get a little cranky, she’s right there with a positive outlook, reminding me of all the blessings we’ve encountered on this pilgrimage.”

Two overall blessings stand out to her.

“Peggy and I were deep into our *Camino* trek when I realized its incredible significance: It would take exactly 40 days,” Sister Nicolette says. “How I missed that biblical number before is a mystery. The number 40 signifies a period of testing, purification and transformation—all of which we experienced.

“Yet, what never wavered was our 35-year friendship. Though my pace was quicker, we remained constant supports, always watching out for one another. We shared meals, stories, life’s joys and suffering, just as we have for over three decades. We are BFF’s [Best Friends Forever] until life everlasting!”

That same thought about their friendship is shared by Elson, who is 71 and who retired in 2022 after 45 years of serving the archdiocese in various schools and educational roles.

Elson says, “After our 40 days of *Camino* together, Sister Nicolette and I remain, as our fifth graders would say, ‘Best Friends Forever.’ ”

‘The pilgrimage has ended, but the Way continues’

Similar to sustaining a friendship through the years, one great challenge of finishing the *Camino* is how to make the seeds of that journey continue to grow in the days and years ahead.

After returning to Indiana, Sister Nicolette has continued to make the most of that experience by sharing it with another group of fellow travelers in her life—the middle school students she teaches at Holy Name of Jesus School in Beech Grove.

“Recently, my sixth graders were talking about the mountain leading to heaven,” she says. “We talked about



Peggy Elson of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis keeps her focus on a rugged stretch of the *Camino*. (Submitted photo)

how we are called to carry our crosses daily. Sometimes, we are able to put our crosses down for a time and experience pure joy and relief from the burdens of our daily life.

“I compare my daily cross to the daily backpack I carried on the *Camino* journey. There were times when the backpack felt heavy and uncomfortable on my shoulders. Other times, I felt joy when I took my backpack off and enjoyed a cup of coffee. It was a relief. It made carrying my backpack easier as I moved along the journey.

“I now share this reflection with my students: We all carry heavy burdens, our daily crosses, some shared and some private. We are called to carry them in union with Jesus, but we are also promised moments of unburdening—moments of relief, friendship and spiritual rest. These times of joy do not negate the cross. Rather, they strengthen us to pick it up again.”

Sister Nicolette shares one more insight she has gained from completing the *Camino*.

“The 488 miles to Santiago were the physical act of carrying a cross. The moment I reached the destination, however, I understood that the true, lifelong *Camino*—the intentional, daily choice to accept the burdens and savor the blessings—was just beginning.

“The pilgrimage has ended, but the Way continues.” †

Camino pilgrim opens her diary to share the journey’s challenges and blessings

By John Shaughnessy

Benedictine Sister Nicolette Etienne kept a daily diary as she traveled 488 miles in 40 days on *El Camino de Santiago* (“The Way of St. James”) this summer with her longtime friend Peggy Elson.

Sister Nicolette shared her daily accounts with *The Criterion*—accounts which offer insights into the challenges and blessings of the pilgrimage they made from St. Jean Pied de Port, France, to the tomb of St. James at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain.

Her diary captures the God moments, the helpful strangers, the beauty of nature, the walks filled with wonder, the days set aside for laundry and rest, the joy of making new friends, and the welcomed hostels at the end of a long day of hiking.

The diary also shares the times of illness and exhaustion that led them to take a taxi or a bus during a

grueling part of the *Camino*, so they could recoup their strength and energy for another day.

“It’s truly amazing to embrace the challenge, feeling that unique blend of exhaustion, soreness and profound peace,” notes Sister Nicolette, a member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. “And I want to thank my community for making it possible.”

From her diary, here are several slightly edited, daily accounts of their journey, which began on June 1 and ended on July 10.

Monday, June 9th

Day 9

“What a special rest day in Logroño! Exploring the charming town with our new friend Sue was delightful, but the real highlight must have been finding Mass. Walking into that beautiful cathedral just at the right time felt like a miracle, and receiving Jesus was exactly what we needed. I had tears in my eyes and joy in my heart.

“Beyond that eucharistic joy, immersing ourselves in the local festival, browsing the vibrant booths, and topping it all off with the best ice cream ever truly made our day of rest perfect.”

Tuesday, June 10th

Day 10

“Our 17.32-mile walk from Logroño to Nájera was a true test of endurance, especially with the sun beating down at 90 degrees and hardly any shade! Peggy and I were exhausted by the time we arrived, but what an incredible feeling of accomplishment to conquer another day on the *Camino*.

“We have found our walking rhythm, always staying within sight of each other and finding new friends to chat with along the way. We are always happy to find rest in the beautiful churches along the way. Those peaceful rests in towns and at the end of the day are incredibly appreciated. Our faith in God continues to be a source of strength for us. *Buen Camino!*”

Friday, June 13th

Day 13

“I think it will take the rest of my life to process all that I’ve experienced on this *Camino* journey, as I find it difficult to find words that adequately express how I feel when I try to put my thoughts down on paper. The

language barrier has certainly been a challenge, but we’ve managed thus far!”

Saturday, June 14th

Day 14

“One of the most fascinating aspects of this journey is constantly reconnecting with pilgrims I’ve met days or even weeks ago. It’s incredible how this *Camino* fosters such a strong sense of community and keeps bringing me back together with my new friends.”

Thursday, July 3rd

Day 33

“Even with a later start, fueled by a delicious breakfast and the camaraderie of fellow pilgrims, Peggy and I tackled a remarkable 15.4 miles and 35,000 steps from O Cebreiro to Triacastela.

“We had a slightly extended route due to a missed sign which turned into a blessing, as a kind woman in her garden became one of the *Camino*’s many ‘angels,’ guiding us back to the correct path.

“It’s truly inspiring how the journey provides not only a physical challenge but also a spiritual one, with divine guidance appearing when needed most. We are grateful for all the prayers and support from our friends and family. Know of our prayers for you as well.”

Thursday, July 10th

Day 40

“The much-anticipated day has finally arrived, marking the culmination of a 40-day journey! This morning, at the crisp hour of 5 a.m., Peggy, Sue, Nerlhuys, Alice and I set off on our final 12.5-mile trek to Santiago. The weather was ideal, and though hills dotted our path, our excitement overshadowed any physical challenge. We reached Santiago before noon.

“After capturing our momentous arrival with photos, we made our way to the Pilgrims Office to receive our *Compostela*, the traditional Latin religious certificate verifying our completion of the *Camino*.

“Peggy and I, with the invaluable help of Sue and her husband [who met her in Santiago], found our hotel. After checking in, we returned to the Cathedral for a time of prayer and exploration, including a visit to the tomb of St. James.

“Tomorrow, we will begin our journey home. It will take a lifetime to process the past 40 days. It truly was a *Buen Camino!*” †



Benedictine Sister Nicolette Etienne of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove enjoys a dish of ice cream, one of her joys during the challenging and uplifting journey on the *Camino*. (Submitted photo)

RESPECT LIFE

continued from page 1

Because, as Father Brockmeier noted in his homily, “Life, as it is lived in each human person, in each story, everywhere and in every time, possesses infinite dignity.”

God ‘breathes his divine life’ into each person

The story of man’s creation in Genesis served as the opening of the homily. Father Brockmeier called it “one of the most important stories in the Scripture that tells us about who we are.”

In Genesis, he said, “God forms together the dust of the Earth and breathes his divine life into the dust. And God says, ‘Let us make man in our image’ ” (Gen 1:26).

Sweeping his gaze over the congregation, Father Brockmeier proclaimed the truth of each person’s existence.

“Your creation was not a random accident,” he stated emphatically. “You were made with the tremendous dignity of God’s intention and love. You are a gift from God.

“And what we know to be true of you and I is true of every human life. Every human life is the intention of God our heavenly Father. Every human life is loved into existence by God.”

The Church proclaims that this infinite dignity begins at conception and continues through natural death.

“But at times in our sinfulness, we choose not to see the dignity” of others, including “the child in a mother’s womb,” said Father Brockmeier.

When sin obscures our vision, we must “allow faith to change our stony hearts,” he said. In doing so, then where we were “clouded by our bias, clouded by our own will,

we would see the infinite dignity” of each human life.

Servants ‘who love in response to sin’

Father Brockmeier noted that in the day’s Gospel reading from Luke 17:5-10, Jesus lays down a challenge.

“We who have received this gift of faith, we who have received the divine life, are called to be servants ... who love in response to sin.”

He offered Project Rachel as a “tremendous example” of a ministry that “sees the woundedness of our sin and seeks to respond in faith and love.”

Project Rachel was created by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. It provides specially trained priests, religious, counselors and laypersons to care for those suffering in the aftermath of or any involvement in abortion. The ministry is offered at the diocesan level, including in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

“Jesus tells us that we are to serve in faith, in love, because we have received this great gift of God’s dignity and life,” said Father Brockmeier.

And according to the Gospel reading, “We should not see this as anything but what we must do as those who have been made in God’s image, as those who have been given the gifts of faith and love. When you have done all you have been commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what we were obliged to do.’ ”

He closed the homily with a desire for the fruition of the Church’s mission “that all would see the dignity of each human person from conception to natural death. ...

“As we celebrate this Respect Life Month and this Respect Life Sunday, pray that our vision be restored [and] that we may respond in love.”

(For more information on the archdiocese’s Project Rachel ministry, other resources for healing from



Father James Brockmeier, rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, prays the eucharistic prayer during the Respect Life Mass at the cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 5. Standing at left is Deacon Thomas Hosty. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

abortion and other respect life issues, go to tinyurl.com/ArchIndyLifeAndDignity or contact Brie Anne Varick, director of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity, at bvarick@archindy.org or 317-236-1543.) †

Archdiocesan awards honor adult and high school student for respect life efforts

By Natalie Hoefler

Each year, the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity seeks nominations for an adult or married couple to receive the Archbishop O’Meara Respect Life Award and a high school student to receive the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Atnd their work to uphold the dignity of human life.

‘A true firecracker for life’

Madilyn Wethington, this year’s winner of the archdiocesan Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award, experienced peer pressure last school year—in a good way.

Her friends—fellow classmates at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis—were going to the Indiana March for Life and youth rally in Indianapolis on Jan. 22 this year, “and they had kind of peer-pressured me to go,” she says.

“It was, I think, the best thing that I could have been peer-pressured into doing.”



Madilyn Wethington, a senior at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, poses with Caren LeMark, her theology teacher and teacher moderator of the school’s Royals 4 Life Club, during the Right to Life of Indianapolis fundraiser banquet at the Marriott Hotel in Indianapolis on Sept. 25. Wethington is the winner of this year’s archdiocesan Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Youth Award. (Submitted photo)

For Wethington, a junior at the time, the pro-life movement was still a new concept. She had been raised in various non-denominational Protestant churches and was welcomed into the full communion of the Church at age 14 at St. Jude Church in Indianapolis, where she is still a member.

She found the rally and march “very interesting, seeing that many youth[s] attend that kind of event.”

She joined Roncalli’s Royals 4 Life pro-life club and started talking more about the topic with the group’s teacher moderator and Wethington’s theology teacher, Caren LeMark.

It was LeMark who shared with the club members last spring about a social media internship with Voices for Life, a non-profit fighting abortion in Indiana. Wethington applied and was selected.

“We really work hard to cater to our audience and how to properly portray our message through the media,” she says. “It can be so hard to do that, especially when a lot of people like to twist words.”

The internship has also shown her “how fun it can be” to work in the pro-life movement.

“A lot of people see the movement as a whole as a really kind of dark topic and something that needs to be taken seriously, which is very true,” she says. “But I do think it truly is a movement that’s made out of love for all. I think a lot of people miss that.”

Wethington also feels that many people don’t see the scope of the pro-life cause beyond fighting abortion.

“It’s also other things like opposing the death penalty and being against poor treatment of the homeless and helping those in need, and just kind of loving everyone,” she says.

Wethington’s embrace of the broader pro-life

concept shines through her actions, LeMark noted on her nomination form for the award.

“Madilyn is concerned not only with the pre-born but also with her peers and all who are vulnerable,” she wrote. “She demonstrates a largeness of heart, serving in a quiet and unassuming way, while making deliberate efforts to treat everyone with respect and care. She has the courage to step out on her own and act with integrity, inspiring those around her.”

It was LeMark who announced Wethington’s award during a meeting of the Royals 4 Life club—which the 18-year-old senior now helps lead.

“I started crying just because it was very important and it’s a very big part of my life that I really believe in,” says the sixth of Lisa and James Wethington’s seven children.

After graduating, Wethington plans to pursue a nursing degree, “something with moms and babies, like labor and delivery or neonatal [care] or pediatrics in general.”

LeMark commented on this career choice on her nomination form.

Wethington’s “compassion, creativity and witness to the intrinsic value of every human person already reflect her future vocation,” she wrote.

“She is a true firecracker for life and a model for her peers.”

Helping those in need ‘maintain their dignity’

In the pro-life cause, the dignity of all human life extends beyond the womb.

And that’s where Annissa Kellum comes in. The member of St. Michael Parish in Bradford is the recipient of this year’s archdiocesan Archbishop O’Meara’s Respect Life Award.



Annis Kellum of St. Michael Parish in Bradford receives the archdiocese’s Archbishop O’Meara Respect Life Award from Deacon Thomas Hosty during the archdiocesan Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 5. October is Respect Life Month in the Church in the United States. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

What started as a favor temporarily storing clothes for children in need as a local school underwent renovations in 2018 has blossomed into Ann’s Angels of Hope, a ministry that seeks to uphold the dignity primarily of children but also adults in need in Crawford, Floyd and Harrison counties.

It starts with donations. Kellum uses social media to seek donations of quality, in-style clothes and shoes from the local community, as well as hygiene items and one-time needs like a meal or a bed.

Items are given to those in need based on referrals from school counselors, social workers, police officers and others.

One such person, who for security purposes wishes to remain anonymous, nominated Kellum for the respect life award.

“Her clothes closet has evolved into providing not only clothing, but toiletries, food, school supplies and any resources needed to help make our kids feel better

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Life Chain

Life Chain peaceful pro-life prayer events took place in communities throughout central and southern Indiana on Oct. 5, Respect Life Sunday. Below are Life Chain photos submitted to *The Criterion*.



Members of the Cobb family of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield take part on Oct. 5 in the Indianapolis Life Chain event. They are, from left, Rose, Michelle, Daniel, Greg, Isaac and Daniel Cobb. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Jerry and Mary Jane Hunter of St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood take part in the North Vernon Life Chain event. (Submitted photo)

Participants in the Life Chain event in Greensburg—primarily from St. Mary Parish in Greensburg—pose for a photo on the Decatur County Courthouse lawn in front of white crosses honoring the unborn. (Submitted photo)



Standing in front of the city hall in Columbus, participants in the Bartholomew County Life Chain event smile while holding pro-life signs. (Submitted photo)

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

about themselves,” he wrote. “This helps build our kids’ self-esteem and allows them to maintain a level of dignity they may not find anywhere else.”

And by making all visits one-on-one and private, Kellum “allows those involved to maintain their dignity,” he wrote. “She helps them understand that someone does love them where they are [and] shows them that there is support here to build a better life.”

Kellum extends that dignity and support to those in Clark, Floyd, Harrison and Scott county jails battling addiction. On the day of their release, they receive clothing from Ann’s Angels of Hope “because when they get out, they have nothing,” she says.

Her promotion of human dignity moves beyond Ann’s Angels of Hope. Kellum is a mentor for women seeking help from substance addiction through Genesis House in Harrison County.

She also serves on the organization’s board and on the board for Harrison County Community Services. And she

uses her experience and knowledge of local needs and resources to help the community as Harrison County’s first female county commissioner.

Kellum says she was “shocked” when she learned that she was selected to receive the archdiocese’s respect life award.

When her pastor Father Aaron Pfaff and Deacon John Jacobi, who serves at St. Michael, notified her, “I said, ‘Well, I’m honored, but I’m sure there’s more deserving people than me,’ ” she says.

Kellum cites her late mother Ann Kellum as the inspiration and role model behind all of her efforts to help the vulnerable. The “Ann” in “Ann’s Angels of Hope” was a director of religious education at St. Bernard Parish in Frenchtown and a “true servant” in her parish and local community.

“The more people I help, the more I want to help,” says Kellum. “I want to see people succeed and not fail. ... This [award] really is an honor and inspires me to just want to do more.” †



Indianapolis parish with German roots marks 150 years of faith

By Sean Gallagher

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis has its roots in the large number of German Catholic immigrants who settled in a neighborhood on the near southside of the city in the second half of the 19th century.

To serve their pastoral needs, Bishop Maurice de Saint Palais founded the parish in 1875 and arranged to have Franciscan friars based in St. Louis—themselves German immigrants—to minister there.

The parish grew quickly. Within three years of its founding, the parish had built a school, which soon had to be enlarged multiple times.

But what symbolized the rapid growth and strength of the parish was its large Late Gothic Revival church, completed in 1891, with its twin 165-foot steeples, which continue to dominate the skyline of Indianapolis’ near southside 150 years after the parish’s founding.

During the second half of the 20th century, the parish and neighborhood around it declined from their earlier glories as many families moved away from the near southside.

But Sacred Heart Parish remained through it all, even in the face of a destructive electrical fire in 2001 that gutted much of the interior of the parish church.

The church and its glorious sacred art featuring stained-glass windows, paintings and wood-carved altars, all emblematic of German old-world craftsmanship, were able to be restored. Similarly, throughout the past decade or so, the neighborhood around the parish and the parish community have seen their own revival.

People are moving back into the neighborhood. Old homes are being restored. And Sacred Heart Parish is being filled with new life and new parishioners, including a number of young families who come to it from near and far.

Both new and longtime parishioners came together on the weekend of Sept. 20-21 to celebrate Sacred Heart’s first 150 years, a celebration which was also an expression of their hopes for the future of the parish.

Past and present linked together

Franciscan Father Ducanh Pham has led Sacred Heart since 2019. A native of Vietnam, he emigrated to the U.S. much like many of his predecessors who served as Sacred Heart’s pastor during its first several decades.

“I’m very aware of what happens when people come from another country and they don’t know the English language,” he said of the parish’s early history. “They want to come together with people of their own background and culture.”

Father Duc, as he’s known in the parish, has seen links between the

changes in the parish in recent years to its early history.

“The commonality here is a sense of uprootedness and trying to find a home,” he said. “That’s what’s happening with our people. There are a lot of people who are new in the neighborhood.”

Looking at Sacred Heart’s history, Father Duc sees three “foundations” for the parish. The first was its original founding in 1875. The second was in the restoration of the church after the fire in 2001. The third is happening now as the parish community is working to put its church on a firm footing for the future.

“We’ve taken care of the roof,” he said. “We’re taking care of the bricks and mortar. We’re sealing our windows and restoring the artwork on the inside. We want to make sure that this is the third foundation so that the people in the future can continue to use this as a beautiful worship space.”

The parish ‘is not just a building’

Sacred Heart parishioner Alan Goebes takes pride in his faith community and its beautiful church. His great-grandparents came to the parish in the 1880s as immigrants from Bavaria in southern Germany at the time of the building of the Gothic church.

A man who has done research on Sacred Heart’s history, Goebes came to the parish instead of going to work on April 27, 2001, after learning of the early morning fire that gutted the church.

“It was really disheartening,” he recalled.

Goebes served on a committee that helped guide the restoration work of the structure. Seeing it return to its former glory, along with other improvements made to the church, made Sacred Heart’s history come alive for Goebes.

“It made you think what it must have been like back in the 1930s when they basically finished the church,” he said of the time when the interior decoration of the church was completed.

At 81 and a lifelong member of Sacred Heart, Alma Blake has lived through more than half of her faith community’s history. For much of that time, its beautiful church and the worship that went on there were at the heart of her understanding of the parish.

The fire in 2001 began to change her perspective. The parish was forced to celebrate Mass in its social hall a block north of the parish campus. The building had previously been a bank, so it had nothing of the beauty of the parish church.

“Then it dawned on me that [the parish] is not just a building,” Blake recalled with emotion.

Now, knowing that she’s closer to the end of her life, Blake hopes that her beloved parish will continue strong into the future, continuing to be linked to the surrounding neighborhood, even as it has changed so much from the time of her childhood.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson celebrates a Mass on Sept. 20 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis to mark the 150th anniversary of the founding of the faith community on the near southside of the city. (Submitted photo)



An archive photo dating from 1928 shows the campus of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis. The 165-foot tall twin steeples continue today to dominate the skyline of the near southside of the city. (Submitted archive photo from The Indiana Album)

“We need more evangelization in the neighborhood,” Blake said. “There are people there who are not Catholic, have not had an affiliation with a church. I think they need to know what the values of Sacred Heart really are.”

‘Part of the whole history of it’

Michael and Naomi Coney and their six children are doing their part to keep the parish and the neighborhood close together. The husband and wife moved to the parish in 2009 as young adults when both were in their 20s. They married in 2013 and have watched the parish grow along with their family.

“When our oldest was born [10 years ago], she was probably the only kid under the age of 12 or 15,” said Michael, who lives with his family in a home about a block from the parish. “There may have been a couple of teenagers there, but that was it. Now, there are many families [with children] there.

“It is encouraging to see the parish growing. Our hope is always in the Lord. But it’s also hopeful to see the size of the congregation growing.”

During the time that he and his family have been members of Sacred Heart, he’s seen other younger families moving into the neighborhood and joining the parish. At the same time, he sees the parish being a draw to newcomers who don’t share his faith.

“There are people who are neighbors who come to the church who aren’t Catholic,” Coney said. “They’re curious or just want to pray. They come to the church because it’s there.

“I really hope for the parish to become a source of life for the neighborhood both in the life of the

Catholic Church and its parishioners, but also in the broader community, drawing people into the Church who are not part of the Church.”

The parish is also a source of life for people who live far from it and have become parishioners in recent years. Rodney Asher was received into the full communion of the Church at Sacred Heart’s Easter Vigil in 2024. At the same time, his wife Karen returned to the practice of the Catholic faith after having been away from the Church for many years.

Although the couple live on the westside of Indianapolis, both are active in many ministries and committees at Sacred Heart, some of which involve outreach in the neighborhood.

“It’s really deepened my faith,” said Rodney. “My faith journey has been unbelievably joyful.”

“It’s great for me to get to grow with some of the people in the parish and get involved in activities that help not only the parish, but also the community,” added Karen.

Although they don’t have ties to the parish’s historic roots like Goebes and Blake, the Ashers see themselves and other new families at Sacred Heart as continuing on the legacy of those who have gone before them.

The early years of the parish, with all its building and expansion, said Rodney, “was their time to do what they needed to do. Now, it’s our time to do what we need to do. It makes you feel like you’re part of the whole history of it. You’re doing your part for future generations.”

(To learn more about Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis, visit www.sacredheartindy.com.) †



This 1940 photo of a Mass celebrated at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis shows the beauty of the interior of the Late Gothic Revival church. Its building was completed in 1891, and its interior decoration was finished in the 1930s. (Submitted archive photo from The Indiana Album)

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Church’s view on the ‘theory’ of evolution is carefully nuanced

By Benjamin Wiker

First of two parts

(OSV News)—When people ask me, “What does the Catholic Church think about evolution?” they are rarely prepared for my answer: “Let’s sit down for a few months and talk about it.”

The problem is this: the Catholic Church doesn’t just think about evolution. It sees the theory of human evolution in the much larger context of its understanding of human being, human reason, human science, human sin, human morality and the redemption of humanity by God incarnate. The Church can’t think about something, without thinking about nearly everything because everything is made by God.

I make this point straight off, because the tendency of our sound-bite culture is to land on some short quote made by a pope in a speech or encyclical, by a Vatican official, by a Catholic scientist or by a Catholic theologian and treat it in isolation as if all we needed to know about evolution as Catholics could be written on an index card and carried in our wallet or purse for handy reference.

But that is not how the Catholic Church thinks about evolution—or anything else for that matter. The Church doesn’t think in sound bites crafted for the impatient. It thinks like a cathedral where everything is connected, stone placed upon carefully balanced stone, complexly and intimately interdependent, built in centuries to last for even more centuries according to the eternal plan, all harmoniously crafted for worship of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so that everything human is redeemed, nature transformed by grace as it stretches to heaven.

Perhaps the best place to begin to understand what that might mean in regard to evolution is the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. You will find some isolated statements specifically about evolution, but these statements are an integral part of the entire catechism, the vast cathedral-like presentation of the faith.

Like individual stones in a cathedral, you can’t snatch out the isolated statements without causing the whole edifice to crumble. More directly, we may say that the Catholic consideration of evolution takes place within the Catholic catechesis on creation and redemption. Within this catechesis, there are certain givens—both natural and supernatural—that set definite limits to the consideration of evolution.



Stephen Guadagnino kneels in prayer during a beach Mass in Long Beach, N.Y. The Church teaches that believers can perceive the glory of God in creation. This affects the Church’s nuanced view on the concept of evolution. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz, Long Island Catholic)



Elephants walk along a dirt path at sunset on March 19, 2024, inside Chobe National Park, located in Kasane, Botswana. The Church has a nuanced view of the concept of evolution in the natural world. (OSV News photo/Sam Lucero)

Let me offer two examples from the catechism that haven’t appeared in the popular press’ coverage of the Catholic Church and evolution. “By natural reason, man can know God with certainty, on the basis of his works” (#50). That is actually a dogmatic assertion based upon the wonderful capacities of natural human reason and the fact that nature itself—including the biological aspects of nature—manifests the glory and wisdom of its Creator, each creature reflecting “in its own way a ray of God’s infinite wisdom and goodness” (#339).

What does that mean for our consideration of evolution? That any view of evolution that assumes on principle that biological nature is entirely governed by chance and blind laws must be in error. On that view of evolution—championed today by such prominent atheists as Richard Dawkins—nature reveals the entire absence of wisdom—that is, the absence of a wise Creator. Against this, the catechism stoutly maintains that “we believe that God created the world according to his wisdom. It is not the product of any necessity whatever, nor of blind fate and chance” (#295).

Aha! That must mean that the Catholic Church rejects evolution! No—sorry. There are no such quick and easy answers. The Catholic Church doesn’t reject evolution, because it doesn’t reject any legitimate scientific inquiry. Indeed, it welcomes it. Science studies nature and the truth of creation can never contradict the truth of the Creator.

So (quoting the First Vatican Council’s dogmatic constitution “*Dei Filius*”), the catechism informs us that “methodical research in all branches of knowledge, provided it is carried out in a truly scientific manner and does

not override moral laws, can never conflict with the faith, because the things of the world and the things of faith derive from the same God” (#159).

So, what does that mean for evolution in particular? Well, read on. “Creation has its own goodness and proper perfection, but it did not spring forth complete from the hands of the Creator. The universe was created ‘in a state of journeying’ [*in statu viae*] toward an ultimate perfection yet to be attained, to which God has destined it” (#310). “In God’s plan, this process of becoming involves the appearance of certain beings and the disappearance of others, the existence of the more perfect alongside the less perfect, both constructive and destructive forces of nature” (#310).

On this view, as Cardinal Christoph Schönborn has noted, evolution is understood as creation “extended over time.”

Aha! That must mean that the Catholic Church accepts evolution! No—sorry.

There are no such quick and easy answers. The Church can’t simply accept the theory of evolution, because there isn’t some one thing, one evolutionary theory, that it can accept. There are, instead, different theories, different approaches to evolution.

As St. John Paul II wisely noted, “rather than speaking about the theory of evolution, it is more accurate to speak of the theories of evolution. The use of the plural is required here—in part because of the diversity of explanations regarding the mechanism of evolution, and in part because of the diversity of philosophies involved.”

The truth of the matter is this. The Church cannot wholeheartedly affirm evolution because evolution as a science itself isn’t wholly firm. We have to distinguish between the thing itself (evolution), and our knowledge of the thing (what scientists at this point in time happen to think they know about evolution).

Evolution, we have every reason to believe, is something that happened, but what actually happened in evolution is something that must be discovered on the long, difficult road of scientific discovery, along which we have only traveled part of the way. That is why the Church is rightfully cautious.

So, what is the truly Catholic stance?

So much confusion has been stirred up by controversies regarding evolution, intelligent design and creationism, it is small wonder that Catholics are almost entirely mystified about what to think. Sorting things out will be no easy task, but here’s a start, point by point.

In the next article, we will explain ways that Catholics can look at specific aspects of evolution from the perspective of their faith.

(Benjamin Wiker holds a doctorate in theological ethics and is the author of several books.) †

Faith in History/Sean Gallagher

Reflecting on how God works in human history can deepen our faith

I have had a great love of history, and of Church history in particular, for much of my life.

It was nurtured in me by the teachers I had growing up at St. Joseph School in Shelbyville. I can remember doing research as a fifth grader in the school’s small library on the leaders of the Protestant Reformation.

I think the history of my own family predisposed me to have a love of history. My maternal grandmother’s maiden name was Seward, and she took some pride in being related to William Seward, the secretary of state under President Abraham Lincoln who later negotiated the U.S. purchase from Russia of what is now Alaska.

My paternal grandfather, Victor Gallagher, came of age as a Catholic young adult in the early 1920s when the Ku Klux Klan held sway in Indiana and put much social pressure on Catholic Hoosiers like himself. As I was growing up in the 1970s and 1980s, Grandpa told me many stories about those difficult times.

At the same time that he experienced this, a maternal

great-grandfather of mine was a Klan member and served in the Indiana House of Representatives.

No matter how I may view today what my ancestors did and who they became through their actions, their history helped shape who I am today.

This is true for all of us individually, and it is true for us together as the faithful who make up the Church.

God has been active in history from the time that he created the universe. In this history of the Hebrew people, he continually sought in love to draw them closer to himself as they struggled with their own sinfulness and infidelity.

These acts of divine mercy reached their culmination when Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, entered history when he was conceived in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which we call the incarnation.

Ever since that hinge moment of our history occurred 2,000 years ago, God has continued to work through the history of men and women of faith wherever the Church has existed.

The God in which we place our trust is not the deity imagined by thinkers in the Enlightenment 250 years ago

as a divine watchmaker who creates the watch and sets it going, but then has nothing more to do with it.

Christ’s incarnation makes God working in history an integral part of the Catholic faith.

That’s what I hope to explore with readers through this new column. I call it “Faith in History” not because I am suggesting that we place our faith *in* history, but because our faith here and now can benefit from learning about and reflecting on how faith has shaped history and at times been shaped by it in various times and places.

The love of history, and of Church history in particular, that was planted in my heart and mind as a child became well-rooted in me as I studied it at Marian University in Indianapolis, the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana and at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

So, I invite you to explore faith in history with me in this column and let God’s grace flow to you through it, for he always showers his grace upon us in all the ins and outs of the history of our own lives as well as the history of peoples, nations and the Church we’re blessed to be a part of. †

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

Mother’s faith shows ‘God provides—through the hearts of others’

You’ve probably heard the saying, “God won’t give you more than you can handle.” But for many, especially those who feel alone, living through that belief can be incredibly difficult.

About eight years ago, I met a mother named Lysette. This is her story.

Lysette never imagined she’d become one of the people we pass on street corners—asking for help or sleeping on a bench. She once had a comfortable life: a nice house, a reliable car, and what looked like a happy, middle-class existence. But everything changed when she made the courageous decision to leave her marriage and escape a life of physical abuse.

Her husband made certain she was left with nothing but their four children—no money, no car, no home. Still, Lysette was determined to build a better life. She worked three jobs to keep her family afloat.

But when a medical crisis struck, she could no longer work. They lost everything again: the car she had worked so hard to buy, their home and their sense of stability. With only the clothes on their backs and what they could carry, Lysette and her children became homeless. But she refused to lose hope.

After undergoing surgery, Lysette needed bed rest. She spent their last few dollars on one night in a motel, then returned to the streets with her children. What’s truly remarkable is that during the 10 months they lived without shelter, she kept all her children enrolled in school. It wasn’t easy.

Her kids were judged—by classmates and even teachers—for their appearance and lack of grooming. They endured humiliation and health challenges, but Lysette pressed on. She knew she was the only one who could change their circumstances. She once said, “Help is hard to come by because people don’t like ugly and dirty.”

Eventually, Lysette found a job and secured a modest apartment. It wasn’t much, but for the first time in a long while, she could breathe.

Then tragedy struck again. Her oldest son, who initially showed signs of strep throat, suffered a heart attack when the infection spread to his bloodstream. While her older son was fighting for his life, her younger son developed severe breathing issues and was also admitted to the intensive care unit. The medication he’d been prescribed for asthma-like symptoms was not working because his lungs began shutting down.

As both boys battled for survival, Lysette learned that Medicaid wouldn’t cover the treatments they desperately needed. The cost of medications and care exceeded \$700 a month. Unable to keep up with car payments, she lost the vehicle. But she didn’t give up. Lysette walked more than 4 miles to work each day, saying, “It takes an awful lot of strength to keep going.”

That’s when I met Lysette. She came to me in desperate need of a car. Just a week earlier, a neighbor had mentioned wanting to donate a vehicle. I told him about Lysette, and he agreed to transfer the title to her—for just one dollar! The car was in good condition and didn’t need major repairs. My neighbor was thrilled to help, and Lysette was overjoyed.

With reliable transportation, Lysette could get to work, and her children could attend school and medical appointments with dignity and energy. She proudly shared that shortly after receiving the car, she was able to take on a second job and drive her oldest son to his final cardiologist appointment. He survived his health scare, and both boys are now doing much better.

Through it all, Lysette’s faith never wavered. She instructed her children, “God did not put you on this Earth to fail.”

Though the road ahead is still long, Lysette believes they’ll make it. She wants my neighbor to know that his generosity changed their lives.

And she hopes others will remember: “Just because you’re struggling doesn’t mean you’re a bad person. God provides—through the hearts of others.”

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

Feeling IV/Effie Caldarola

In our extremely noisy world, God’s soft, silent sounds live in our hearts

We live in a noisy world. I’m not just talking about rush hour traffic or the planes that make an approach to the Philadelphia airport far above my head at night.

I’m talking about the noises that occupy our minds due to our cell phone addictions, social media impact, the endless news cycle and mean-spirited online remarks.

One morning, a sixth-century Irish monk reminded me to make an effort to quiet this barrage.

I knew nothing about St. Kevin, the founder of Glendalough monastery in a lush valley in County Wicklow

near Dublin.

But I follow Eric Clayton on the website www.jesuits.org. He writes and podcasts in a refreshing and personal way about Ignatian spirituality. One morning recently, he explained in his “AMDG: A Jesuit Podcast” why a statue he had once seen of St. Kevin holding a nest of blackbird eggs intrigued him. The statue was dedicated to a treasured mentor of Clayton’s. But what exactly was the connection?

On a recent trip to Ireland, Clayton wanted to learn about St. Kevin, whose monastery is a principal Irish pilgrimage site. Fortunately for him, Clayton had a ready

guide in Jesuit Father Brendan McManus, an Irish author of books on spirituality and pilgrimage.

Traveling to Glendalough, the two explored the site of St. Kevin’s monastery. The pictures posted of the old stone remains, the many graves within it, and its beautiful surroundings are wonderful.

But so much about ancient saints is shrouded in legend and tradition. Like, for example, those blackbird eggs.

According to legend, St. Kevin was deep in prayer, lifting his open hands to God, when a mother blackbird laid her eggs in his hand. Because of his deep reverence for the created world, and his commitment to silence, the saint held the eggs until they hatched.

A silly story? Can’t possibly be true? Here’s where we get at the truth of something that may not be literally accurate but truthful on the deepest level.

Kevin was a man who came to live in a cave, originally, where he committed himself to God, the God who lives in silence. The God who lives in the extraordinary beauty of the created world. The God who was calling Kevin to engender this silence in others through a monastery.

Remember the famous Scripture reading about Elijah, waiting for the visit promised by God (1 Kgs 19:12)? A violent wind erupts; but God wasn’t in the wind. There’s

an earthquake. Then, there’s a fire. Surely, God must be speaking in all this noise?

But no, after this comes what some translations describe as a “still, small voice.” But in the translation given us by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, it’s “a light silent sound.”

There God speaks.

How can a sound be silent? I think it’s because silence speaks to the heart. God speaks in silence. You have to be listening quietly to hear a silent, wordless sound. To come into the presence of silence is to come into the presence of God. It’s prayer at its deepest.

Clayton’s mentor must have been a man known for leading people to silence, the goal of St. Kevin’s life.

The morning I learned about St. Kevin, I had a decision to make. I was flailing, praying, noisily and distractedly, with my own words. I decided to go to Mass, and to sit silently. Pushing thoughts away, giving them to God, is hard. But it brought me peace.

The noise of this world makes a home in our minds. God’s soft, silent sounds live in our hearts.

We all need more silence.

(Effie Caldarola is a wife, mom and grandmother who received her master’s degree in pastoral studies from Seattle University.) †

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, October 12, 2025

- 2 Kings 5:14-17
- 2 Timothy 2:8-13
- Luke 17:11-19

The Second Book of Kings is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. Once the two books of Kings were a single volume, but time passed and editors divided the volume into two parts.



These writings are among what are called the Old Testament historical books. While they are interested in the careers of the early kings of Israel, as the name implies, none of the Old Testament is primarily about secular history in and of itself.

Instead, the Old Testament books all are concerned with religion, and more precisely with the relationship between God and the Hebrew people. In the view of the ancients, the most important question in life was how to be faithful to God. Nothing else mattered.

Therefore, while the kings are prominent in these books, religious figures very much are in evidence.

This weekend’s reading is an example. The central personality in it is not a king, but a man named Naaman. Two strikes are against Naaman. He is a Gentile, and he is a leper. It was much more than a coincidence of birth, nationality, religious choice or bad health. Each circumstance represented estrangement from God. Leprosy was seen, for instance, as punishment for sin.

At the command of the prophet Elisha, Naaman was cured by bathing in the Jordan River. The Jordan formed an important border between the promised land, overflowing with life, and the foreign world, filled with treachery, death and people who were unbelievers. Crossing the Jordan symbolized and indeed was in fact entry into the land of God’s chosen people.

After being cured, Naaman went to thank God, represented by Elisha, the prophet. It is a story, then, of divine mercy and of recognizing God.

St. Paul’s Second Epistle to Timothy is the source for the next reading. Paul reassures and challenges Timothy, an early convert to Christianity, a disciple of his and eventually a bishop. The Apostle assures Timothy that anyone who truly

dies with Christ by dying to sin receives everlasting life with God.

St. Luke’s Gospel provides the last reading. Leprosy is seen throughout the Scriptures, but modern scholars do not know precisely what the disease was. Even so, the ancient problem obviously was chronic, progressive and a fearful fate.

Unaware of the science behind the workings of disease, ancient Jews saw a curse from God in leprosy, assuming that, somehow, somewhere, the leper had disobeyed God.

Fearing contagion, communities forced lepers to live apart. Lepers were not allowed any communication whatsoever with those “clean” of leprosy. Lepers lived in total isolation, rejection and want to the point of starvation.

This reading also has an ethnic component. Jews scorned Samaritans who had long ago tolerated pagan invaders. They had intermarried with the pagans, producing offspring not purely Hebrew, thereby blurring the identity of the chosen people. Jews thought that Samaritans were the worst of the worst, incapable of anything good.

Amid all this, Jesus reaches out to lepers, healing and forgiving them. His actions were works of God.

Reflection

Presumably, nine of the lepers cured in this story from St. Luke’s Gospel, as Jews, saw themselves as being entitled to God’s mercy and forgiveness.

The 10th leper, a Samaritan, was different. The Jews surely would have thought that his ancestors forfeited his claim to divine mercy. Because of his forebears, he was hopeless, estranged from God, doomed.

Nevertheless, the 10th leper believed in God’s love and forgiveness, seeing that God’s mercy indeed had come to him. He gave thanks to Jesus, whom the leper saw as the bearer of divine mercy.

By sinning, we all have deserted God. We all are, in a sense, lepers and Samaritans in the biblical context. With unending love, God cures us of the effects of our sin, restores us to life and welcomes us into his fold.

God always forgives, but it is up to us to acknowledge God. †

Daily Readings

Monday, October 13

Romans 1:1-7
Psalm 98:1b-4
Luke 11:29-32

Tuesday, October 14

St. Callistus I, pope and martyr
Romans 1:16-25
Psalm 19:2-5
Luke 11:37-41

Wednesday, October 15

St. Teresa of Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church
Romans 2:1-11
Psalm 62:2-3, 6-7, 9
Luke 11:42-46

Thursday, October 16

St. Hedwig, religious
St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, virgin
Romans 3:21-30
Psalm 130:1b-6b
Luke 11:47-54

Friday, October 17

St. Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr
Romans 4:1-8
Psalm 32:1b-2, 5, 11
Luke 12:1-7

Saturday, October 18

St. Luke, Evangelist
2 Timothy 4:10-17b
Psalm 145:10-13ab, 17-18
Luke 10:1-9

Sunday, October 19

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 17:8-13
Psalm 121:1-8
2 Timothy 3:14-4:2
Luke 18:1-8

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Adultery is not necessarily grounds for a declaration of nullity in a marriage case, canonist says

Q My husband and I got a divorce because my husband had an affair. Why doesn’t the Church agree with



me that it was his fault and grant my annulment? Why is my Church siding with him? (New York)

A I’m very sorry you went through such a painful experience. But with respect to your specific question, I think you may be misunderstanding the basic principles of the Church’s marriage nullity process.

First of all, the goal of the Church’s nullity process is to determine whether there was some problem or issue at the time of the wedding which was serious enough and of such a nature so as to prevent a true marriage from ever being contracted in the first place.

This is in line with Jesus’ teachings in the Gospel of Matthew on the absolute permanence of marriage, “unless the marriage is unlawful” (Mt 19:9). The Church seeks to discern whether there was some invalidating “unlawful” element present at the time of the wedding.

Some of these potential causes of marital nullity are truly nobody’s fault. For example, severe psychological disturbances or mental illness can leave a person incapable of the free consent needed to enter a binding marital union. But such issues are medical concerns, and almost by definition are not the result of any deliberate ill will on the part of the afflicted spouse.

There are other grounds for nullity that are due to one or both parties’ bad intentions. As one example, canon 1098 of the *Code of Canon Law* tells us that: “A person contracts invalidly who enters marriage inveigled by deceit, perpetrated in order to secure consent, concerning some quality of the other party, which of its very nature can seriously disrupt the partnership of conjugal life.”

Obviously, this level of

fraud is a very serious sin on the part of the deceiving spouse. No one would doubt that someone who committed this sin is morally in the wrong and should make a good confession.

Yet perhaps counterintuitively, this moral dimension is not an area that the Church’s nullity process is meant to address—even while condemning sin in general and admonishing the specific sins that lead to a failed or invalid marriage are part of the Church’s overall pastoral mission in the big picture.

Judges in marriage tribunals are not there to judge the souls of the parties in nullity cases, nor are they interested in assigning personal blame to either party. Rather, a marriage tribunal is only concerned with determining whether an alleged ground for nullity can be proven in a particular case.

Another counterintuitive piece of information about the marriage nullity process is that adultery in and of itself is not a ground for nullity. There is one ground called “partial simulation against the good of fidelity” (see canon 1101, 2) where one party essentially never intended to be faithful and entered the union with the thought that he or she would always keep the door open to extramarital affairs.

But committing adultery because this was something that was always envisioned as a possibility ever since the time of the wedding is different from a scenario where a person intended to be faithful when he or she said “I do,” but then later succumbed to temptation many years into the marriage.

Since I don’t know the details, I can’t comment on your particular case. But assuming that you petitioned for a declaration of nullity on the ground of “partial simulation against the good of fidelity,” and further assuming you received a negative decision from the tribunal where a declaration of nullity was not granted, my best guess is that the tribunal could not find sufficient proof that your husband always reserved to himself the right to have adulterous relationships from the very beginning.

But while I’m sure this decision is disappointing for you, it does not mean that the Church is siding with your husband, and even less that the Church approves of his behavior.

(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.) †

The Rosary of Life

By Natalie Hoefer



My Journey to God

Are not our lives but rosaries,
Each moment a mystery to ponder,
Some of joy and some of glory,
Others of grief or luminous wonder?

And when we pause to contemplate,
Was Christ not always there—
To help, to heal, to navigate,
To bless and love and care?

And does our love for Him not grow,
Reflecting on His story—
From Mary’s “yes” to the death He chose,
To His life in endless glory?

May we achieve a rosary life
Just as it starts and ends:
Lived in *nomine patris*, focused on Christ,
a circle of prayer ‘til our great Amen.

(Natalie Hoefer is a reporter for The Criterion and is a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: A statue of Our Lady of the Rosary adorns the bell tower of *Basilica de Nossa Senhora do Rosário* in Fátima, Portugal, on Aug. 7, 2023. The month of October is dedicated to the rosary.) (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

Special month celebrates the impact of Hispanics in the U.S., Church

(Editor's note: National Hispanic Heritage Month is annually observed from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 in the U.S. to recognize the contributions and influence of Hispanic culture to the nation's achievements, culture and history. To help us observe this celebration, we have compiled, with the help of Felix Navarrete, archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic Ministry, some of the recent happenings of our Hispanic brothers and sisters in the Church in central and southern Indiana. We pray that the gifts they continue to share with the Church assist our family live out its mission of building our diverse community of faith in the archdiocese and beyond.)

Criterion staff report

The archdiocese's Intercultural Pastoral Institute opened another academic year in August with 65 students enrolled—33 first-year students and 32 returning for their second academic year. Courses were added this year, noted Felix Navarrete, archdiocesan coordinator of Hispanic Ministry, "to provide a stronger foundation in theological topics, such as the 'Mystery of the Trinity' and 'Theology of the Body.' "

Additionally, new instructors joined the team: Father Todd Goodson, pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, and Father Isaac Siefker, parochial vicar of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove and Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis.

The weekend of Sept. 13-14, the Hispanic Ministry office hosted its annual

family camp at CYO Camp Rancho Framasa in Brown County. About 200 people attended this year's gathering, with Father Goodson speaking to parents about the universal call to holiness and Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan director of vocations, hosting a panel with young adults about vocations.

Father Keucher and Father Vincent Gilmore, pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, also led "adoration under the stars," Navarrete said, "with Jesus exposed in the National Eucharistic Congress monstrance."

Also in September, the Hispanic Ministry office organized its second Mariology workshop at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis, which drew 100 participants.

"This new collaboration with Fatima has had a tremendous impact to date," Navarrete said.

The third and final part of the series, focusing on Our Lady of Guadalupe, Star of the New Evangelization, will be held in Spanish at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 3. The cost



Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan director of vocations, leads nighttime eucharistic adoration at Camp Rancho Framasa on Sept. 13 in Brown County during the annual family camp hosted by the archdiocesan Hispanic Ministry. (Submitted photo)

is \$20. Tickets can be purchased through the Hispanic Ministry office (see below).

Catechetical formation in Spanish continued to be held at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. The archdiocese, Navarrete said, boasts the largest numbers of students and recipients of certificates. The final session will be held on Nov. 8.

The first-ever Hispanic Ministry Gala honoring the Blessed Mother will be held on Dec. 6. The evening begins with check-in at 5 p.m., followed by Mass celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. The celebration will continue in the Archbishop Edward

T. O'Meara Catholic Center with a dinner. Pablo Martinez, an Argentinian composer and musician known for his songs inspired by Scripture and the saints, including St. Augustine, will perform at the gala.

Tickets can be purchased through the Hispanic Ministry office (see below). Single tickets are \$40. Tickets for a couple are \$70. The price for a table of eight is \$240.

(For more information on Hispanic Ministry in the archdiocese, e-mail Felix Navarrete at fnavarrete@archindy.org, or visit www.ministeriohispano.archindy.org.) †

Mes especial celebra el impacto de los hispanos en la Iglesia de EE. UU.

(Nota del editor: El Mes Nacional de la Herencia Hispana se celebra anualmente del 15 de septiembre al 15 de octubre en EE. UU. para reconocer las contribuciones y la influencia de la cultura hispana en los logros, la cultura y la historia de la nación. Para ayudarnos a celebrar esta celebración, hemos recopilado, con la ayuda de Félix Navarrete, coordinador arquidiocesano del Ministerio Hispano, algunos de los acontecimientos recientes de nuestros hermanos y hermanas hispanos en la Iglesia en el centro y sur de Indiana. Oramos para que los dones que continúan compartiendo con la Iglesia ayuden a nuestra familia a vivir su misión de construir nuestra diversa comunidad de fe en la arquidiócesis y más allá).

Informe del personal de Criterion

El Instituto Pastoral Intercultural de la arquidiócesis inauguró un nuevo año académico en agosto con 65 estudiantes matriculados: 33 de primer año y 32 que regresan para su segundo año académico. Este año se añadieron cursos, señaló Félix Navarrete, coordinador arquidiocesano del Ministerio Hispano, "para brindar una base más sólida en temas teológicos, como el 'Misterio de la Trinidad' y la 'Teología del Cuerpo.' "

Además, se unieron al equipo nuevos

instructores: el Padre Todd Goodson, párroco de Nuestra Señora de Greenwood, y el Padre Isaac Siefker, vicario parroquial de la Parroquia del Santo Nombre de Jesús en Beech Grove y de la Parroquia del Buen Pastor en Indianápolis.

El fin de semana del 13 y 14 de septiembre, la oficina del Ministerio Hispano organizó su campamento familiar anual en el Campamento Rancho Framasa de la CYO en el condado de Brown. Cerca de 200 personas asistieron este año. El Padre Goodson habló a los padres sobre el llamado universal a la santidad y el Padre Michael Keucher, director arquidiocesano de vocaciones, dirigió un panel con jóvenes adultos sobre vocaciones. El Padre Keucher y el Padre Vincent Gilmore, párroco de la Parroquia de San Lorenzo en Indianápolis, también dirigieron la "adoración bajo las estrellas," dijo Navarrete, "con Jesús expuesto en la custodia del Congreso Eucarístico Nacional."

También en septiembre, la oficina del Ministerio Hispano organizó su segundo taller de Mariología en la Casa de Retiros de Nuestra Señora de Fátima en Indianápolis, que atrajo a 100 participantes.

"Esta nueva colaboración con Fátima ha tenido un impacto tremendo hasta la fecha," dijo Navarrete.

La tercera y última parte de la

serie, centrada en Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Estrella de la Nueva Evangelización, se llevará a cabo a las 6:30 p. m. el 3 de diciembre. El costo es de \$20. Las entradas se pueden comprar a través de la oficina del Ministerio Hispano.

La formación catequética en español continuó impartándose en el Seminario y Escuela de Teología de San Meinrad. La arquidiócesis, dijo Navarrete, cuenta con el mayor número de estudiantes y de personas que recibirán certificados. La sesión final se llevará a cabo el 8 de noviembre.

La primera Gala del Ministerio Hispano en honor a la Santísima Virgen María se llevará a cabo el 6 de diciembre. La velada comienza con el registro a las 5 p. m., seguida de una misa oficiada por el arzobispo Charles C. Thompson en la

Catedral de San Pedro y San Pablo en Indianápolis. La celebración continuará en el Centro Católico arzobispo Edward T. O'Meara con una cena.

Pablo Martínez, compositor y músico argentino conocido por sus canciones inspiradas en las Escrituras y los santos, incluyendo a San Agustín, presentará su recital en la gala.

Las entradas se pueden comprar a través de la oficina del Ministerio Hispano. Los boletos individuales cuestan \$40. Los boletos para dos personas cuestan \$70. El precio para una mesa de ocho es de \$240.

(Para más información sobre el Ministerio Hispano en la arquidiócesis, escriba a Félix Navarrete a fnavarrete@archindy.org o visite www.ministeriohispano.archindy.org.) †

Classified Directory

For advertising rates call (317) 236-1585.

Employment

Archdiocese of Indianapolis Maintenance Technician

This full-time, hourly, position is responsible for the maintenance of several buildings.

Duties include:

- Completing repairs, preventative maintenance and maintenance tasks on buildings and grounds.
- Responding, in a timely manner, to internal equipment repair needs.
- A verifiable background in building maintenance.
- A working knowledge of all building systems and components.
- The ability to evaluate and repair existing equipment.
- The ability to work with contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers.
- An ability to work with the Archdiocesan staff.
- Basic computer skills.
- Good organizational and communication skills.

If you are interested in this position, please send your resume to: bburkert@archindy.org.

Medicare Insurance



Health Insurance Professionals

Turning 65, retiring, SS disability, or Medicare supplement premiums continuing to increase? Confused with what type of plan fits your needs, or how to enroll into Medicare part B?

- ❖ Give us a call and allow us to review your needs, for your unique circumstances.
- ❖ With over 30 years experience we represent several companies for Medicare Supplements, Rx, & Advantage plans, as well as Life companies.
- ❖ Serving 126 Parishes in 39 Counties

Gives us a call or send us an email, we will set up a visit today!

PH: 317-787-4638
danshearhu@gmail.com

Dan Shea, RHU
Long time Parishioner of St John the Evangelist
Indianapolis.



Go Forth



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

The United Catholic Appeal supports vital ministries across the Archdiocese of Indianapolis – one of the most important being the formation of our future priests.

Fr. John McCaslin knows this firsthand. His journey to the priesthood was filled with questions, prayer, and perseverance. Thanks to the support of the Appeal, he was able to fully discern his vocation without the financial burden of seminary tuition – costing up to \$300,000 per seminarian.

Today, as pastor of St. Monica Parish, he not only serves his parish family but empowers others to live out their baptismal call to teach, serve, and go forth.

Experience his inspiring story by visiting www.archindy.org/UCA or scan the QR code below with your mobile camera.

As we journey together toward Intention Weekend this November, we encourage you to reflect on how the Appeal helps form and sustain those who teach and lead us in faith.

Visit www.archindy.org/UCA or Scan this QR code to make a difference today!

