Building a bridge

Schools cross boundaries and comfort zones to come together to learn from each other

By John Shaughnessy

What Michelle Tuttle set in motion on Feb. 1 is rare and possibly unique in the archdiocese.

It also may offer a lesson for a country that seems to be ever more divisive, focusing on the differences between people instead of the hopes, dreams and similarities that connect them.

And so on the morning of Feb. 1, a nervous and hopeful Tuttle—and the 492 students at St. Jude School in Indianapolis—waited for the school buses that would bring the 270 kindergarten-through eighth-grade students of St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis to their school for the day.

In Tuttle’s plan, it would be a day to build bridges, a day when a mostly-white school community (St. Jude) and a mostly-Hispanic school community (St. Philip Neri) from different economic realities would come together to share classes, lunch, recess and their Catholic faith.

“St. Philip Neri School is seven miles away, but it’s a world apart,” said Tuttle, a social worker at St. Jude who previously served in the same position at St. Philip Neri School for eight years.

“St. Philip Neri School is rare and possibly unique in the archdiocese,” said Tuttle, a social worker at St. Jude who previously served in the same position at St. Philip Neri School for eight years.

“This day gives students an opportunity to get to know someone outside their boundaries and their comfort zones. We have a tremendous amount of similarities, but we also have these differences that are unique. We have an opportunity to learn from each other.”

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The possible fulfillment of that opportunity to build bridges started slowly—a reality that was evident in a kindergarten class where a St. Jude teacher put on a fun dance video, in an attempt to build the two groups of students together.

“Students cross boundaries and comfort zones to come together to learn from each other.”

Refugee advocates outline arguments for legal action on presidential ban

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The breadth of President Donald Trump’s authority to limit refugees entering the United States will be fought in federal court, and some of the legal challenges ultimately may end up before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Several lawsuits have been filed challenging Trump’s Jan. 27 executive memorandum that suspended the entire U.S. refugee resettlement program for 120 days and banned entry of all citizens from seven majority-Muslim countries—Syria, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia—for 90 days.

Another clause in the memorandum established religious criteria for refugees, proposing to give priority to religious minorities over others who may have equally compelling refugee claims.

In five of the earliest lawsuits, federal judges blocked the government from denying entry to anyone from the affected countries with a valid visa.

The most sweeping order was issued on Feb. 3 by U.S. District Court Judge James Robart of Seattle, who put a national temporary hold on the ban on travel to the U.S. of the seven majority-Muslim countries. The Trump administration has appealed this decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit, based in Seattle.

Catholics across central and southern Indiana are waiting for Pope Francis to appoint a new shepherd.

To prepare for his arrival, archdiocesan Catholics are being given the opportunity to give him a clear and detailed portrait of the archdiocese and to express their hopes for its future.

This will happen through the creation of a pastoral needs assessment of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The assessment was commissioned by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, archbishop of Indianapolis from 2012-16 in the days before he was installed on Jan. 6 as archbishop of Newark, N.J.

It will involve interviews of 25-30 people from across the archdiocese, several listening sessions attended by dozens of clergy, religious and lay Catholics, and an online survey that all archdiocesan Catholics can fill out.

Washington-based consulting firm GP Catholic Services will conduct the assessment.

Daniel Conway, senior vice president for the firm and a member of the editorial board of The Criterion, will oversee the process.

“Cardinal Tobin himself said that this kind of information would have been very helpful to him when he became archbishop four years ago,” Conway said, “so he was eager to see us provide that for his successor.”

As a whole, the assessment will seek to answer two questions: where the archdiocese is at present, and where God is calling it to go.

To discern the answers to these questions, five aspects of the life of the Church in central and southern Indiana will be examined in the interviews, listening sessions and survey: prayer and worship; evangelization and education in the faith; family and community; service to the poor and marginalized; and stewardship of resources.

Pastoral needs assessment will help introduce archdiocese to new shepherd

By Sean Gallagher

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Evaluación de las necesidades pastorales contribuirá a formular una imagen de la arquidiócesis para el nuevo pastor

Por Sean Gallagher

Los católicos del centro y el sur de Indiana esperan que el papa Francisco encuentre en la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis la oportunidad para presentar la imagen de la archdiocesan para el próximo arzobispo. El cardenal Tobin expresó que la evaluación de las necesidades pastorales contribuirá a formular una imagen de la arquidiócesis para el nuevo pastor.

La arquidiócesis de Indianapolis ha estado preparándose para su próximo arzobispo durante los últimos años. El cardenal Tobin, que ha liderado la Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis desde 2011, ha expresado su deseo de que el próximo arzobispo sea una buena introducción para la Arquidiócesis a su sucesor.

La evaluación también contribuirá a que los católicos de la Arquidiócesis se preparen para recibir al nuevo arzobispo. El cardenal Tobin ha destacado la importancia de que los católicos se sientan bienvenidos en la Arquidiócesis y que la评价 también contribuirá a que los católicos de la Arquidiócesis se preparen para recibir al nuevo arzobispo.

The compilation of the pastoral needs assessment would have been the first part of the pastoral planning process. Although the decision to go forward with the archdiocesan planning process will be at the discretion of the next archbishop, Cardinal Tobin felt completing the assessment would be a good introduction of the archdiocese to his successor, and wanted it to engage many archdiocesan Catholics as possible.

It’s an attempt to reach out to everybody,” Conway said. “Not everybody will participate. But everybody will have the opportunity to participate.”

La compilación de la evaluación de las necesidades pastorales habría sido el primer paso del proceso de planificación pastoral.

Sen. Tobin noted that the assessment “is an opportunity to shape what happens in this archdiocese over the years to come, to give direction and input to our new archbishop, to stand on the shoulders of what has been, but also to look at the landscape differently. It’s an exciting time.”

Correction

An article in the Jan. 27 issue of The Criterion about service projects by middle school students at Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Simon the Apostle schools in Indianapolis mistakenly stated that there are 18 middle school students at Lourdes. There are 18 eighth-grade students at the school, and 64 students in its middle school.
WASHINGTON (CNS)—“Spiritual success” is a more accurate measure for the United States than wealth, according to likely billionaire President Donald Trump in remarks on Feb. 2 at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington.

“America is a nation of believers,” Trump said. “In towns across the land, we see what we so easily forget. The quality of our lives is not defined by our material success but by our spiritual success. I speak that as someone who has had great material success, and who knows many people who have had great material success. We face some of the most incredible people, who are very miserable, miserable people.”

Compared to people who have money but no happiness, people who have no money but happiness “are the successful people, let me tell you,” Trump said at the annual breakfast, attended by 3,000 politicians, religious leaders and dignitaries, including King Abdullah of Jordan.

Trump spoke about having gone to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware the previous day to pay respects to the remains of William “Ryan” Owens, a Navy SEAL killed in a firefight at al-Qaida in Yemen. “There is a man than that a man lay down his life for his friends,” the president said. “We will never forget the men and women who wear the uniform, believe me.”

Freedom is not “a gift of government,” but “a gift of God.” Trump added. “It was the great Thomas Jefferson who said that the God who gave us life gave us liberty.”

At a roundtable discussion held by Trump on Jan. 27 that bans travel into the U.S. of citizens of seven majority-Muslim countries—Syria, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia—on Jan. 29. His action suspends the entire U.S. refugee resettlement program for 120 days.

The nation’s religious leaders generally rejected the executive order, which would allow the bishops to sign stressed such and without reprisal.”

The leaked document, he told reporters that freedom of religion in the U.S. should mean “people should be able to practice their religion, express their religious, express areas of their faith without reprisal.”

“At the bishops’ meeting last fall, Reyes said the four-day event will be divided into three sections. There will be a number of short talks looking at the challenges facing Catholics in society. The bishops will lead sessions in explaining the role of missionary disciples, and asking those the4th of July in Orlando—will be a sign of unity for the Church because it will bring diverse groups together, to discuss not only their challenges but more importantly, their ideas, resources and coordination.”

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Trump's actions: good and bad

Pope Francis said that “we must wait and see” what President Donald Trump does before Jan. 31 judgment on him. We didn’t have to wait very long.

No one should be surprised that Trump is doing exactly what he said he was going to do. He is keeping the campaign promises he made, which obviously connected with enough voters for them to elect him president.

From a Catholic perspective, that’s both good and bad.

The good part concerns efforts to restrict abortion. On his first working day in office, one of his executive orders was to reinstate the “Mexico City Policy” that bans foreign nongovernmental organizations that receive U.S. funds from performing or promoting abortion.

On Jan. 31, he nominated Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court. Gorsuch has a track record of supporting religious liberty. He sided with the family that owns Hobby Lobby and the Little Sisters of the Poor in two cases involving the Health and Human Services mandate regarding contraception, abortion and sterilization.

Gorsuch wrote a book against assisted suicide and euthanasia in which he said, “Human life is fundamentally and inherently valuable, and the intentional taking of human life by private persons is always wrong.”

Many Catholics voted for Trump precisely so that he, rather than Hillary Clinton, would choose justices for the Supreme Court.

The bad part of Trump’s actions, from a Catholic perspective, concern immigrants and refugees. First, he issued an executive order to start building a wall on the border with Mexico and ordered the hiring of more immigration officers to enforce the country’s broken immigration laws.

Then he issued an executive order—which is already being challenged in the courts—that temporarily bans entry into the United States of any citizens of seven Muslim-majority countries—Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia. It affected many people who already had valid visas to enter the country, even some who were already on planes. It also caused protests throughout the country from people who understand that this is unjust.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, former Archbishop of Indianapolis, for example, said that Trump’s actions were “not rational acts” and called the orders “inhuman policies.” He also vowed to continue resettling refugees in the Newark, N.J., area where he is now archbishop.

Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, said, “The executive order to turn away refugees and to close our nation to those, particularly Muslims, who are fleeing war, oppression and persecution is contrary to both Catholic and American values.”

In Indiana, the presidents of the University of Notre Dame, Purdue University and Indiana University all issued statements condemning Trump’s order. So did other university presidents across the country.

Trump has said that he is issuing this temporary ban to protect our country from acts of terrorism, and that it will be lifted after new procedures are in place for more stringent vetting of Muslims seeking to enter the country. However, the current procedures are stringent indeed, including multiple interviews and background studies that usually take three to four years. Those refugee families who were helped to come to Indiana through the services of Catholic Charities were severely vetted before they arrived.

There is every reason to believe that Trump’s presidency will continue much as it has started, i.e., mixed, from a Catholic perspective. However, how is this different from the previous presidency of Barack Obama? He, too, did many good things from a Catholic perspective, and many bad things. It’s just that now the roles are reversed.

We praised Obama’s good actions and criticized his bad ones. We will continue to do the same for Donald Trump. Let’s pray that we can praise his actions more often than we criticize them.

John F. Fink

I’m not a fan of the New England Patriots. Never have been. Never will be. My NFL blood runs Indianapolis Colts’ blue. I can’t say that I’m old enough to remember the time the Colts were around before the NFL was created, but I was a Cincinnati Bengals fan (sorry all you Bengals fans in the Bexley Deaneary).

But I’m confident that I always will be a Colts fan into the future. Nonetheless, I could not help but admire the way in which the Patriots, led by 39-year-old quarterback Tom Brady, came back from a 28-3 third quarter deficit in Super Bowl LI on Feb. 5 in Houston to defeat the Atlanta Falcons 34-28 in overtime.

What improved for the virtue of persistence in the face of hardship that their effort so dramatically displayed for coming people around the world who watched the game.

After falling behind 21-3 at halftime, those that defeated the increase halftime deficit, the Patriots through the third quarter, it would have been understandable if the Patriots thought that their chances were slim. The Lombardi Trophies were finished.

ESPN certainly thought so. It sent out tweets at various points during the game showing the decreasing chance for a Patriots’ victory according to their computer analytics. After the Falcons went up 28-3, ESPN said the Pats had only a 5 percent chance of winning.

The Patriots’ mindset wasn’t ruled by computer analytics, however, but by confidence in their abilities and their coaches’ game plan. Their defense kept Atlanta’s hot offense off the field, and forced a key turnover in the fourth quarter. And Brady had a game for the ages, passing for 466 yards, and being nearly perfect in the fourth quarter and overtime when the margin for error was razor thin.

In the end, he won a record-breaking fifth Super Bowl and fourth Super Bowl Most Valuable Player award.

But none of that would have been possible if he, his teammates and their coaches didn’t wake up the morning of Feb. 5 and hang their heads when they saw 28-3 on the scoreboard. Instead, they were determined to do their best one play at a time and see where the chips fell in the end.

That kind of persistence, fueled by God’s grace, has driven Christians throughout history to cling to their faith and live it out with determination no matter how bleak their situation appeared. That attitude came from Christ himself, the “pioneer and perfector of faith” (Heb 12:2).

Think about it. The Romans would have put Christ’s chances at victory at about 0 percent when he was carrying his cross up to Calvary. And the same would go for countless Christian martyrs from the Church’s earliest days to the present. Yet the Church has continued to spread around the world, no matter how close to defeat it has appeared again and again.

St. Paul used various attractions to help early believers understand the life of Christ. As a Colts fan, it cuts against the grain to despise such dark moments. Cling to the light of Christian hope and the sure promise that our Lord is faithful and strong.

In the life of the Church and in our individual lives of faith, we’re faced daily with many small and sometimes large hardships. At the time we experience them, they can seem overwhelming and hopeless. But we know in God’s grace. Victory will come, even if in a form we might not have wanted or expected.

(Sean Gallagher is a reporter for The Criterion.)

Letter to the Editor

Be respectful, listen to others as we watch immigration situation evolve, readers say

With regard to our national security, our people and the welcoming spirit we offer to immigrants who wish to migrate to our country for a better life, we must respectfully and thoughtfully listen to each other and hear everybody’s concerns.

Consider these facts, and thoughts: President Donald J. Trump’s temporary ban is on people from seven countries—Syria, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia—and those countries were originally identified by the previous administration.

The ban is for three to four months while we sort out the screening we must do in order to restart immigration again, to offer immigration to those who wish to come to our country for a better life—whether refugees seeking asylum or for other humane reasons, and to forbid entry to those who harbor evil thoughts and plans for damaging our country and murdering our people.

Please keep in mind that several of these countries have no way to identify potential migrants, nor do they have any credible records of their past activity. Nobody said this will be easy.

In the view of those who are quietly watching all these developments, listening to speeches and, of course, watching riots (which accomplish nothing of any importance to the restoration of order), we cannot continue on the present course and wait for more terrorist attacks in Europe, the U.S. and elsewhere to do action will only lead all of us deeper into the abyss.

This ban is temporary while we reinforce our screening so we may again open our doors to those who truly seek a better life.

That is always what America has stood for, and will continue to stand for. All churches should support what the U.S. is doing.

We must be patient as this situation evolves.

Greg and Marilyn Harter

Columbus

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and should be relevant, well-expressed, concise, temperate in tone, courteous and respectful.

The editors reserve the right to select and edit the letters based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content.

Letters must be typed and submitted by computer. In exceptional reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367.

Readers with e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
WASHINGTON (CNS)—President Donald Trump nominated Judge Neil Gorsuch to fill the U.S. Supreme Court vacancy created by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia last February.

Gorsuch is a man the country needs, Trump said in announcing his nominee on the eve of the 44th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision. He added that his pick for the high court has had bipartisan support.

“Judge Gorsuch has outstanding legal skills, a brilliant mind, tremendous discipline,” he said.

When Trump announced his choice at the White House, in the audience was Maureen McCarthy Scalia, the widow of the late justice. One of the couple’s children was also present: Father Paul Scalia, a priest of the Diocese of Arlington, Va.

In his remarks, Gorsuch said he was thankful for friends, family and faith giving him balance. Groups echoed the gratitude and honored him to be chosen as a nominee to the nation’s highest court. He declared in his Scalia a new appointment, raw, and said he missed him.

He said he respects the fact that Congress, not the courts, writes the laws.

It is the role of judges to apply, not alter, the work of the people’s representatives. A judge who likes every one of the laws she reaches is very likely a bad judge, stretching for results he prefers rather than the law, he said.

Several news outlets reported that hundreds of demonstrators held a rally outside the Supreme Court protesting Trump’s choice of Gorsuch. Pro-life organizations, however, were quick to praise the president’s selection of someone who they said would “carry on the legacy of Scalia.”

Tobias, president of National Right to Life, said in a statement.

“We are heartened that Judge Gorsuch appears to share Justice Scalia’s view that federal judges are constrained to enforce the text and original intent of constitutional provisions, and on all other matters should defer to democratically elected lawmakers.” Tobias added.

Prests for Life, the American Life League, the Susan B. Anthony List and others opposed a similar payday loan expansion measure including Katie Taylor, policy director for the Indiana Association for Community and Economic Development. “The payday industry urges lawmakers to support “responsible alternatives.” Taylor said that the Community Loan Center program currently operating in Lafayette and Fort Wayne is one alternative that provides loans to an economically vulnerable group, yet does so in a fair and equitable manner.

According to a 2015 study on payday and small dollar, high-cost installment loans by the Washington-based Pew Research Center, 75 percent of adults Americans want payday loans to be more regulated, and 72 percent of payday loan users also want more regulation of the industry. Fourteen states and the District of Columbia have banned categorically high-cost installment loans.

Sen. Bill 245 has been assigned to the Senate Committee on Insurance and Financial Institutions and awaits a hearing.

Tebbe said he expects the hearing to take place in the next two weeks, and he plans to testify in support of Sen. Bill 245. He added he hopes the panel defeats the bill, and suggested lawmakers consider lending alternative options such as those offered currently by the community loan centers program to provide more equitable loan options for low-income borrowers.

(Brigid Curtis Ayer is a correspondent for The Criterion.)

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**Judge Neil Gorsuch nominated to fill Supreme Court vacancy**

Gorsuch, a judge of the Denver-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, is 49, making him the youngest Supreme Court nominee in 25 years. He was born in Denver. He currently lives outside of Boulder, Colo., with his wife and two daughters. He lived in the Washington area as a teenager when his mother, Anne Gorsuch Burford, was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Gorsuch attended the Jesuit-run Georgetown Preparatory School where he won a national debate championship.

Gorsuch has the typical qualifications of a conservative judge. He graduated from Columbia, Harvard and Oxford, clerked for two Supreme Court justices and also worked for the Department of Justice. He also is an adjunct law professor at the University of Colorado, and he wrote a 2009 book arguing against the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia. Gorsuch hasn’t written a ruling specifically on abortion, but he has strong views on religious liberty. He sided with the Little Sisters of the Poor in their challenge of the contraceptive mandate and sterilization mandate of the Affordable Care Act. And in Hobby Lobby Stores v. Sebelius, in June 2013, the 10th Circuit ordered the federal government to stop enforcement of the federal mandate.

Gorsuch has written a number of important legal opinions. He joined_l a quarter century ago a group of judges who worked together to overturn the 10th Circuit ordered the federal government to stop enforcement of the federal mandate. He has written that the law was unconstitutional.

Gorsuch is an Episcopalian. Scalia, who had been on six Catholic members of the court, was often described as its most conservative voice and known for his support of the Constitution’s intent.

“All too often, our efforts to protect unborn children and other vulnerable humans have been overridden by judges who believe they have a right to impose their own policy preferences,”

The Criterion, Friday, February 10, 2017

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**A measure to expand payday lending, a plan the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) opposes due to its exploitative nature of low-income persons, is expected to be heard before a Senate panel by mid-February.

The proposal, Senate Bill 245, called the Long Term Small Loans bill, would expand short-term, high-cost loans, also commonly referred to as “payday” loans, in three ways. It increases the dollar amount of the loan, the payback duration, and the interest rate charged.

Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the ICC, who serves as the public policy spokesman for the bishops in Indiana, said the current system is “bad policy” for the market for those who use short term accumulation. payday loan borrowers are charged exorbitant interest rates and fees.

The Church opposes this type of loan expansion.

Advocates of payday loan expansion say more products on the market give borrowers more options. Advocates also claim payday loans help people who potentially help low-income persons with poor credit establish a credit history.

Tebbe said the major objections using payday loans do so to cover everyday expenses, such as rent and household repairs. He said those who employed, borrowers’ pay is not enough to make ends meet. The cycle repeats. They borrow in debt for months because their paycheck is not enough for living expenses, plus high interest rates and fees generated by the payday loans.

Senate Bill 245 increases the dollar amount of pay day loans to a $605 minimum and $500 maximum. The payback period for the loan may not be more than 24 months, and caps monthly finance charges to an amount not to exceed 20 percent of the principal. Interest earned on a daily basis must use the simple interest method.

Current law in Indiana allows for a $50 minimum to a $500 maximum payday loan, but the loan may not exceed 20 percent of borrower’s monthly gross income. The annual percentage rate (APR) on a 14-day loan is 380 percent of the amount borrowed.

“The Catholic Church teaches that it is the church’s purpose to protect and to facilitate the common good,” said Tebbe.

“The weakest members of society should be helped to defend themselves against usury. Laws and policies must protect them from additional burdens.”

Quoting from the U.S. bishops’ 2009 pastoral “Catholic Framework for Economic Life,” Tebbe said, “All economic life should be shaped by moral principles. Economic choices and institutions must be judged by how they protect or undermine human dignities of the human person, support the family, and serve the common good.”

The bishops’ statement also points out that exploiting people living in poverty is unjust.

“We do not contradict the provisions of civil law, any form of unjustly taking and keeping the property of others is contrary to the Church’s commandment: thus, deliberate retention of goods lent or of objects lost; business fraud, paying unjust wages, forcing up prices by taking advantage of the ignorance or hardship of another” (#2409).

Tebbe added, “Taking advantage of someone and exploiting them is wrong. Although it may be legal, it does not remove one’s obligation to do what is just. Extending the payday lending practice does not benefit the person, and it is not contrary to providing for the common good, to help persons and our society flourish.”

During the 2016 session of the Indiana General Assembly, several groups opposed a similar payday loan expansion measure including Katie Taylor, policy director for the Indiana Association for Community and Economic Development. “The payday industry urges lawmakers to support “responsible alternatives.” Taylor said that the Community Loan Center program currently operating in Lafayette and Fort Wayne is one alternative that provides loans to an economically vulnerable group, yet does so in a fair and equitable manner.

**‘Taking advantage of someone and exploiting them is wrong. Although it may be legal, it does not remove one’s obligation to do what is just. Extending the payday lending practice does not benefit the person, and it is not contrary to providing for the common good, to help persons and our society flourish.’ **

—Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference
**February 13-18**
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. Continuation of Eight-Day Festival of Prayer, spiritual activities and activities celebrating the feast days of Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Bernadette. Information: 317-576-7291 or parishsecretary@saintlawrence.net.

**February 13-18**
St. Lawrence Parish, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. "The Blood of the Lamb!" Bible study, offered eight weeks on Mon., Wed., and Thurs. 7 p.m., for book. Information: Sandra Hartlieb, 317-634-4489 or shartlieb@saintlawrence.net.

**February 13-April 6**
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 535 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. "Preparing our Hearts for Easter," a reverse silent retreat. The program begins at 8 a.m. on Feb. 21 and runs through Feb. 21. The raffle starts at 7:30 p.m. Ticket sales are $20 for dinner, $25 for entry in a $750 pool, or $50 for dinner entry in a $1,250 pool, plus 20 chances for a Pacers ticket, dinner at a special hotel and dinner package. The event will also offer pull tabs, a 50/50 pot and a silent auction. Ticket holders need not be present to win. To purchase tickets, log onto heartsandhandsindy.org or call 317-592-4072.

**Events Calendar**

**February 24-26**

**February 25**
Providence Spirituality & Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. "Lunch on Tap," presenting, quiet reflection time for busy moms with time for sharing, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., $45 includes lunch, registration deadline Feb. 13. Information and registration: 317-535-2922 or jandefilatre@svdp.org.

**March 1**
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5355 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Silent Self-Guided Day of Reflection. $32 includes room for the day, continental breakfast, lunch and use of community areas. Adults 57 and older extend stay to include the night before or after day of silence and includes light dinner. Information and registration: 317-535-2922 or jandefilatre@svdp.org.

**March 1-2**

**March 4**
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Church of the Immaculate Conception, 7815 W. 39th St., Indianapolis. "Preparing our Hearts for Lent," an educational retreat experience, at the Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove, on March 4-5. Attendees will participate in a poverty simulation, role-playing a family in poverty, shopping to assess the most basic needed services. They will also learn about recent and ongoing local efforts of FOP to meet new hope to those in need. The program begins at 8 a.m. on March 4; and ends at 5 p.m. on March 5.

**March 5**
The $100 charge covers program materials, overnight accommodations (single or double rooms) and five meals. Due to the amount of material, an overnight stay is required. To register, log onto svdpindy.org then choose "SC Training Retreat." Registration deadline Feb. 26. Scholarships are available for St. Vincent de Paul of Indianapolis Archdiocese members. Interested, contact Doreen Rouse at 317-985-2149 or Pat Jarrell at 317-783-1300.

**Indianapolis Family Catholic Conference**

**February 25 in Kokomo**
The Indianapolis Family Catholic Conference will take place at Kokomo High School, 2501 S. Berkeley Road, in Kokomo, Ind., from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Feb. 25.
The theme of this year’s conference is “He Saved Me Because He Delighted In Me.” The event features Catholic speakers including Voluntas Dei Father Leo Pastalanghit, Dominick Albano, Dr. Chuck Dietzen, Father Rick Nagel, pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, and Katie Beardmore, a speaker. Middle schoolers and high schoolers. Adoration and the sacrament of reconciliation are also included, and the events ends with Mass at 5 p.m. The cost is $25 for teens and singles, $50 for a married couple, and $75 for a family. The cost includes lunch. The registration deadline for the Kids Corner (ages 3-11) and nursery (ages 1-2) is 11 a.m. on Feb. 11. Walk-ins are accepted for ages 12 and older.
For more information and to register, log onto www.familycatholicconference.org or call 765-565-9964 or 765-452-6021.

**Applications for New Albany Deanery Youth Ministries summer fellowship due Feb. 17**

**New Albany Deanery Youth Ministries is offering a paid fellowship for a Catholic young adult who will have finished his or her first year of college by this summer, who is pursuing work or studies related to ministry or helping professions such as counseling, community, social work.**
The fellowship begins on May 15 and ends on Aug. 11. Weekly hours will vary depending on the programming. The recipient of this fellowship would be directly involved in youth ministry programs in the New Albany Deanery, located in Harrison, Clark, and Floyd counties of southern Indiana. Applications are due by Feb. 17. To download an application, log onto www.nadyouth.org. E-mail completed applications to family@nadyouth.org or mail to Great Lakes Office, c/o C.J. Smith Fellowship Application, 101 St Anthony Drive, Mt. St. Francis, IN 47146.
For questions, call 812-923-8335 or e-mail sandy@nadyouth.org.

**Indiana Catholic Charities Indianapolis offers two fundraising opportunities in February**

**Catholic Charities of Indianapolis will offer two fundraising opportunities in February.**
The first is an ongoing opportunity through Feb. 21. Through Feb. 21, at any Indianapolis location Child’s restaurant (Noblesville, Eagle Creek, Martinsville, Plainfield, Traders Point and Keystone) or a location of your choice, mention Holy Family Shelter by name, and $50 for a married couple, and $75 for a family. The cost includes lunch. The registration deadline for the Kids Corner (ages 3-11) and nursery (ages 1-2) is 11 a.m. on Feb. 11. Walk-ins are accepted for ages 12 and older.
For more information and to register, log onto www.familycatholicconference.org or call 765-565-9964 or 765-452-6021.

**‘Ending Poverty Through Systemic Change’ retreat in Beech Grove March 4-5**
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Indianapolis will offer “Ending Poverty Through Systemic Change,” an educational retreat experience, at the Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., in Beech Grove, on March 4-5. Attendees will participate in a poverty simulation, role-playing a family in poverty, shopping to assess the most basic needed services. They will also learn about recent and ongoing local efforts of FOP to meet new hope to those in need. The program begins at 8 a.m. on March 4; and ends at 5 p.m. on March 5.

**March 5**
The $100 charge covers program materials, overnight accommodations (single or double rooms) and five meals. Due to the amount of material, an overnight stay is required. To register, log onto svdpindy.org then choose “SC Training Retreat.” Registration deadline Feb. 26. Scholarships are available for St. Vincent de Paul of Indianapolis Archdiocese members. Interested, contact Doreen Rouse at 317-985-2149 or Pat Jarrell at 317-783-1300.

**Correction**
Bishop Edward K. Braxton of Belleville, Ill., spoke on “The Catholic Church and the Black Lives Matters Movement” in Evansville, Ind., at the Evansville University, 2300 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis, at 2:30 p.m. on Feb. 19.

**Hearts & Hands to host special trivia night fundraiser on Feb. 25**

*Hearts & Hands of Indiana,* a non-profit organization started by Catholic to rehabilitate homes in St. Anthony Parish neighborhoods to help families obtain affordable housing, will host a trivia night fundraiser at 1899 Experience Venue, 164 Steeples Blvd., in Indianapolis, from 5:30-9:30 p.m. on Feb. 25.
All are invited before the event to celebrate Mass at St. Anthony Church, 537 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis, from 5:30-9:30 p.m. Doors for the event will open at 5:30 p.m., and the trivia starts at 6:30 p.m. There will be food and drink. The winning team gets ticket cost reimbursed.
For more information, e-mail elangferman@heartsandhandsindy.org or call 317-974-5740.
Rachel weeps for her children in every generation

When Pope Francis formally began his ministry as pope nearly four years ago, he stressed the legitimacy of the dignity of each person and the beauty of creation, just as St. Joseph protected the blessed Virgin Mary and her son, Jesus. “To protect creation, to protect every man and every woman, to look upon them with tenderness and love is to open up a horizon of hope,” the Holy Father said. During his first World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis expressed this way: “New ideologies, characterized by rampant individualism, ego centricism and materialistic consumerism, weaken social bonds, fueling that throwaway mentality which leads to contempt for, and the abandonment of, the weakest and those considered useless.” Despair is a consequence of the radical devaluation of the human person, the Holy Father teaches. Hope comes when human dignity is recognized and affirmed. Last month, one of his regular Wednesday audiences, Pope Francis spoke of the inconstable pain of a parent losing a child. Recalling the Wednesday audiences, Pope Francis said, “I express my pain and my sorrow for those who feel unwanted or who have been rejected by the unjust, unloving and inhuman laws, policies and social practices of this and every other age.” No one ever has to wonder, “Does God really want me?” God wants everyone. “Therefore choose life,” that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice, and cleaving to him, for that means life to you and length of days” (De 30:16, 19-20).

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee)

El rostro de la misericordia

Daniel Conway

Raquel llora por sus hijos de todas las generaciones

When Pope Francis formally began his ministry as pope nearly four years ago, he stressed the legitimacy of the dignity of each person and the beauty of creation, just as St. Joseph protected the blessed Virgin Mary and her son, Jesus. “To protect creation, to protect every man and every woman, to look upon them with tenderness and love is to open up a horizon of hope,” the Holy Father said. During his first World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis expressed this way: “New ideologies, characterized by rampant individualism, ego centricism and materialistic consumerism, weaken social bonds, fueling that throwaway mentality which leads to contempt for, and the abandonment of, the weakest and those considered useless.” Despair is a consequence of the radical devaluation of the human person, the Holy Father teaches. Hope comes when human dignity is recognized and affirmed. Last month, one of his regular Wednesday audiences, Pope Francis spoke of the inconstable pain of a parent losing a child. Recalling the Wednesday audiences, Pope Francis said, “I express my pain and my sorrow for those who feel unwanted or who have been rejected by the unjust, unloving and inhuman laws, policies and social practices of this and every other age.” No one ever has to wonder, “Does God really want me?” God wants everyone. “Therefore choose life,” that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice, and cleaving to him, for that means life to you and length of days” (De 30:16, 19-20).

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee)

The Criterion Friday, Friday, February 10, 2017

Meeting on Feb. 8 with hundreds of people involved in the “economy of communion” project of the Focolare Movement, Pope Francis said their business model of promoting sharing profits and creating jobs can be the leaven needed to promote an economic model where “the rich know how to share their riches and the poor are called blessed.”

Like the father in the Gospel story, he said, “an entrepreneur of communion is called to do everything possible so that even those who make a mistake and leave his house can hope for a job and a dignified income and not find themselves eating with the pigs,” like the younger son.

Even before requiring a sharing of money, an economic and business model more in line with the Gospel requires business leaders and workers to share their time and their talent, the pope said.

“Capitalism knows philanthropy, not communion,” he added. “It simply means giving a part of your profits, but without touching and embracing the people who receive the crumbs.”

“In the logic of the Gospel,” the pope continued, “if one does not give everything, one does not give enough.”

One cannot be a Christian if one worships idols, Pope Francis said, and “one of the most perilous idols is money.”
students together through movement and joy. And as the St. Jude kindergarten students wiggled and laughed in their familiar surroundings, the St. Philip children stood and watched.

Then there was the early interaction between two eighth-grade boys, one from each school. In one moment, they were talking about their sports teams. In the next, they looked away awkwardly from each other, searching for a familiar face to rescue them.

One of the first signs of bridge-building surfaced just before the moment when Mass as St. Jude third-grader Alex Gorski showed St. Philip third-grader Bella Bella how to use the multi-colored streamers they would wave when they processed into St. Jude Church together.

“I didn’t know what to do. She taught me,” said a smiling Bella.

The connections deepened during the Mass—a celebration that began with St. Jude pastor Father Stephen Banet greeting the packed church in English that “we are all as one in our faith” while St. Philip pastor Father Christopher Wernig greeted everyone in Spanish.

That bond blossomed further between the two groups of students when they held hands during the praying of the “Our Father,” and when they exchanged smiling signs of peace. And joy filled the church when eighth-graders from both schools rushed to the altar to join together in leading the closing hymn.

“I’m so excited,” Turtle said after the Mass. “I couldn’t sit during Mass because I had so much adrenaline. This has been awesome.”

Leaving the comfort zone

“We have come very far since scene after scene back inside the school. In one of the classrooms, St. Philip Neri third-grader Vanessa Vanquez was caught in a conversation between St. Jude third-graders Baylie Lauck and Hannah Morris—the three of them smiling and laughing together as they played a number game.

St. Philip first-grader Suzet Cruz and St. Jude first-grader Grace Donney beamed as they showed the cut-out hearts they decorated with their hand prints. “It was fun in the church and it was fun in this in the school,” Suzet said. “This is so much fun.”

At lunch, St. Philip eighth-grader Ana Silva and St. Jude eighth-grader Zoey Lord talked and ate together, before posing for a photo as they smiled and put their arms around each other.

“I like meeting new people from our neighbor church,” Ana said. “This is amazing. And we get to teach the little kids that there are more people age who are just like them.”

Zoey nodded and added, “It has been a lot better than I thought it would be—a lot more fun. It’s good to get out of our comfort zones. I feel like we sometimes get in little cliques, and now we’re talking with people we normally don’t talk to. It lets you get to know more people and be more adventurous.”

A lesson in unity

The adventures continued on the playground during recess when girls from both schools lined up to jump rope, when a game of kickball spontaneously started with children from both schools on the same team, when a boy from St. Philip and a boy from St. Jude tossed a football back and forth.

“I don’t know how many schools have ever invited an entire school to another school,” said Joe Shelburn, St. Jude’s principal. “It’s been awesome to experience the energy, the enthusiasm and the excitement.”

During the day, Shelburn told students from both schools, “We have our differences, and it’s easy to rely upon labels. But the only way to truly know people is to look inside, to look at their hearts. But we already have one thing in common—the connection of our faith. We both have Jesus in our hearts.”

Father Wadleton noted, “I love the idea of coming together, especially in the sense of what’s going on in our country today. That’s the real power in the bridge that will be built. I want this relationship to be reciprocal. I want to empower our kids to say that we have a tremendous culture and history that’s growing in our archdiocese—that we can give as well. We all have gifts to recognize in each other.”

The gift of the two schools spending a day together left its mark on Rachel Hahn.

“It’s really cool to see two different schools come together, work together and get along together,” says Rachel, an eighth-grade student at St. Jude.

“Today, people judge people before they get to know them—by the color of their skin, by their religion. What we’re doing here today can show people that kids are trying to love and accept each other—and show everyone else to do the same thing.”

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Continued from page 1

San Francisco.

Another decision came from U.S. District Judge Andre Birotte Jr. in Los Angeles, whose Feb. 1 order “enjoined and restrained” the government from enforcing the president’s memorandum against 28 plaintiffs from Yemen who have been held in transit in Djibouti since the presidential signed the document. Similar orders have come from federal judges in Boston, Seattle, Brooklyn, N.Y., and Alexandria, Va.

The court orders are short term in nature and were issued in anticipation of the cases being argued by both sides during the next several weeks before any possible restraining orders are issued.

A statement issued on Jan. 29 from the Department of Homeland Security said the U.S. Customs and Border Protection has “began taking steps to comply with the orders.”

More lawsuits are expected and could encompass several parts of the law that govern presidential authority over who to admit and not admit to the U.S.

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Granholm, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, said her agency would avoid joining any lawsuits challenging presidential action, but would focus on making “people aware of what’s happening” with refugees that “is not in line with the Gospel.”

Continued from page 1

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Attorney Charles Roth, director of litigation at the National Immigrant Justice Center in Chicago, suggested that a half dozen or more areas of law could be cited in any legal challenges to the executive action.

One of the arguments is that the president’s statutory authority doesn’t allow him to make these sweeping rules about everyone from a particular country,” said Roth, who is Catholic. The executive memorandum is vague enough that questions remain about the status of visa applications for refugees already in the U.S. versus those still outside of the country, Roth said.

“It feels to me that the president seems being tough on refugees is the symbolism he’s looking to have. His order doesn’t seem to be designed to be particularly dependable as a legal matter or particularly important to the justice and fairness,” Roth said.

Despite the memorandum’s vagaries, Gemma Solomine, a legal director and professor of law at Fordham University’s School of Law in New York, expects the government to defend it on national security grounds and deny that Muslims are being singled out.

Acknowledging that the law gives Trump broad discretionary powers with respect to entry into the U.S., she said she found the document “is clearly not well thought out. There isn’t a lot of guidance [for carrying it out].”

“If they were clearly serious on national security, there would be other things [in it] to actually have an effect on these issues,” Solomine said.

She suggested that the memorandum could have justified its stance by including information about any attacks by foreign nationals from particular countries.

“The reason they made this a national security problem or under the guise of national security is because it is less challenging. The government clearly has a lot more discretion when they say this is an issue of national security,” Solomine said.

Officials at the Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Charities USA told CNS they do not plan to enter the legal fray, however.

William Canny, MRS executive director, said it is unlikely that Trump would rescind his memorandum so the agency will focus on making sure actions under the new policy address humanitarian concerns, such as family reunification whereby a child or parent is awaiting entry into the U.S.

“The majority of [cases MRS has] handled in recent years have been reunifying families. So now you have families separated [because of the memorandum] and anyone who is separated from family by distance and time—knows the pain,” Canny said.

Most of the people MRS has been resettling are women and children, “who for example witness the murder of their father, and who are languishing in a camp and who have family to join here in the U.S. to help them, who can’t return to their country, who can’t find work or schooling in the country they’re in.”

“That’s who we take,” he said.

Canny urged federal officials to keep such needs in mind and complete the vetting of refugees as quickly as possible.

Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, said her agency would avoid joining any lawsuits challenging presidential action, but would focus on making “people aware of what’s happening” with refugees that “is not in line with the Gospel.”
Missionary to Ireland has ‘love for helping youth know Christ’

By Natalie Hoefer

Ireland was once known as a devoutly Catholic nation, with priests present as far back as the fifth century. But the future of the faith on the Green Isle has turned grim.

While the nation’s 2011 census shows that 84 percent of the population self-identify as Catholic, the Pew Research Center projected that by 2050 just 52 percent worship weekly at Mass. Scott is a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis. She graduated from St. Monica Parish School and Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School.

During her junior year of studying education at Seton Hall University in New Jersey, an opportunity for Scott to get a year in of missionary work before I started my career in teaching. She found out about an opening in Ireland through a friend in Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) at Set Hall. "The youth in Ireland need [ministry] so much," she says. "They have no one to lead them."

She applied for the program and was accepted.

Scott left for Ireland in early August 2016. She is serving in an 'itty-bitty' country town of Bohermeen in County Meath, on the eastern coast of Ireland. "Bohermeen is the biggest country parish in Ireland," she says. "It has one priest, three church buildings, five parishes of each other, three elementary schools, and I think about 1,000 families."

She and six other NET missionaries comprise a team dedicated to revitalizing the faith of the youths of the parish and surrounding towns. The team leads youth groups, teach confirmation classes, host high school retreats and "do whatever the priest needs us to do." Scott says that last minute, but the Holy Spirit helps us with whatever we need in whatever moment, which is really beautiful!"

In all that they do, says Scott, "We’re being a presence in the community to show that loving God is an amazing thing, and you can be happy and joyful. You can love God and have a fantastic life."

"Bohermeen is the biggest country parish in Ireland ‘don’t understand that youth group is for fun and learning about God. They think it’s just pruning the rose. That’s one of the main reasons I love being here. I want to tell them, ‘No, listen! Everything is so cool when you love God, and you can have fun at the same time!’ I have such a love for helping youth know Christ is and coming to know him." The children are starting to respond, says Scott, "by writing a confirmation class as an example. ‘At the beginning, they were really shy,’ she says. ‘They didn’t want to answer, and they didn’t know answers to [questions]. As the year progressed, they started getting really excited. They love studying the Bible, the NET team is here! This will be fun!’"

Another proof of the positive effect Scott is having is that youth involved in youth group in Ireland came just before she returned home for Christmas. One 12-year-old boy gave her a Christmas card that he said he had written “from the bottom of his heart. ‘He wrote this beautiful paragraph about how he thought religion was boring, and there was no way to love Jesus and still have fun. He said he’s learned so much and is excited to learn about faith. ‘I thought, ‘Wow, they’re actually learning and listening to us, and it’s absolutely beautiful!’

Scott finds the youths now wanting to come to Mass and be more involved, but the parents are not willing to take them. In an effort to reverse such an attitude in the next generation of parents, Scott and her peers have coordinated with an Irish Catholic organization called Youth 2000. The group organizes festivals, retreats, prayer groups and more for young adults ages 16-35 in Ireland. "We try to get parents involved with that, but they don’t see the point," says Scott. "They’ll drop their kids off, but [the parents] are not interested."

The children are not "the only ones benefitting from Scott’s missionary efforts. I am so much deeper in my faith," she says. "I have such a greater appreciation for Mary, for the Bible, the mission of youth ministry, and also how important faith formation and learning is. My teammates here have become my family. ‘I’ve grown so much confidence in myself, because I have people on my team who’ve pushed me to become better. I’m not afraid of talking or singing in front of people. I’m loving every minute here."

While Scott has grown confident in speaking publicly through teaching classes and leading youth groups, she has also done so through soliciting donations to support her work as a missionary. "We pay for our food, transportation to get to the parishes, and help fund parish programs," she explains, "plus our training, all the money we need to help kids in schools and the parish."

Scott estimates living as a missionary in Ireland costs about $1,200 a month. With $6,500, a maximum of $17,000, she says, "Just $6,500 would be scraping by." Scott is having on the faith lives of youths "I think the episcopal conference probably thought that after a long period of negotiation, the government was able to approve this work, which today will become a university."

Archbishop Kurtz visits Vietnam to show solidarity, offer support

CHICAGO (CNS)—U.S. bishops sent their immediate past president to Vietnam to see how they could help with the first college-level Catholic school approved in the Asian country in about 40 years. Archbishop Kurtz is visiting Vietnam to show solidarity, offer support and "do whatever the Church needs to do to strengthen religious freedom advocacy group Religious Freedom Advocacy Group Christian Solidarity Worldwide as well as focusing on ‘control and management of religious activities, rather than protection of religious freedom.’ Archbishop Kurtz said the law ‘does at least recognize the existence of the Church.’

The passage late last year in Vietnam of the Law on Belief and Religion, which is meant to recognize the basic guarantees of freedom of religion, was heavily criticized by the U.S.-based religious freedom advocacy group Christian Solidarity Worldwide as well as focusing on ‘control and management of religious activities, rather than protection of religious freedom.’ Archbishop Kurtz said the law ‘does at least recognize the existence of the Church.’

Substantial portions of land previously owned by the Church remain in the hands of the Vietnamese government. "I saw instances where there had been former schools that had been taken over by the government," said Archbishop Kurtz. "Currently, religious communities are able to conduct kindergarten, but they are not given permission to conduct schools. One of the issues that’s been identified now is the capacity for the Church to open up its mission to schools and hospitals," which he said were a vibrant part of society prior to 1975. The law on religion was changed in the late 1980s through 1990s, and there was a strong Catholic presence, and the Church was an influential force. But in 1975, when communists took power after the Vietnam War, the government tightened control over religion and religious institutions. Catholics were harassed, arrested and detained as part of government crackdowns. In the first two decades under communism, hundreds of thousands of southern Vietnamese fled and an estimated 350,000 sought asylum in the U.S. The bishops’ conference website says there were nearly 500,000 Catholic Vietnamese-Americans in 1993. In the early 1990s, as Vietnam opened up trade with other countries and relations with the United States started to normalize, Vietnam’s government got less involved in Church affairs. There are still reports of sporadic crackdowns in different parts of the country. While the government is not involved in the Church hierarchy, government approval is still required for numerous activities ranging from building churches in certain areas to doing certain Church-related work.
VATICAN CITY (CNS)—When religious orders focus on survival rather than on sharing the joy and hope of faith in Jesus, they risk losing the faith of their young people, Pope Francis said.

Speaking as a fellow member of a religious order, Pope Francis urged religious to keep alive the faith, hope and audacity of the men and women who founded the orders to which they belong.

“We are heirs to those who have gone before us and had the courage to dream,” he said during the Mass, which began with the blessing of candles celebrating the World Day for Consecrated Life.

“Putting Jesus in the midst of his people,” he said, “means taking up and carrying the crosses of our brothers and sisters. It means wanting to touch the wounds of Jesus in the wounds of a world in pain, which longs and cries out for healing.”

New gender policy won’t affect Catholic Scouting units, says national committee

IRVING, Texas (CNS)—The Boy Scouts of America’s (BSA) new policy to accept members based on their gender identity will have no impact on Scouting units sponsored by the Church, said the National Catholic Committee on Scouting.

“The BSA has confirmed that religious partners will continue to have the right to make decisions for their units based on their religious beliefs,” said the statement issued by the Catholic scouting committee.

Marian University to offer transfer assistance to Saint Joseph’s College students

Special to The Criterion

Marian University in Indianapolis is very pleased to announce the following news:

Marian University says it will honor all agreements that “we will accept and register youth in their current grade of C-.” It will also offer financial assistance guaranteeing that students pay the same out-of-pocket tuition costs that they would have paid for them to compete at Marian, we will work to develop financial aid packages for them to compete at Marian,” said Elsener. “St. Joe’s student-athletes are welcome to compete for open spots on the roster. Even if they’re not an opportunity for them to compete at Marian, we will work to develop financial aid packages that fit each individual financial situation,” Elsener said. Student-athletes can find contact information for Marian University coaches at www.muknights.com/staff.php.

There is a long road ahead for our friends at Saint Joseph’s College, and I want to offer prayers and support as they navigate a forward path,” Elsener said. “We will do all that we can to help within our financial, accreditation and academic limits, and we hope that we will see Saint Joseph’s College emerge from this difficult time as a sustainable and dynamic institution of Catholic higher education.”

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Dream, prophesy, don’t focus just on survival, pope tells religious leaders

Like Mary and Joseph, religious are called to bring Jesus into the midst of his people, the pope said. “Only this will make our lives fruitful and keep our hearts alive.”

All Christians, but especially those consecrated with the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, are called to be the leaven of the Gospel in the world, he said.

“Perhaps there are better brands of flour, but the Lord has called us to be leaven here and now, with the challenges we face. Not on the defensive or motivated by fear,” he said, “but with our hands on the plow, helping the wheat to grow, even though it has frequently been eaten among weeds.”

“The mentality of survival robs our charisms of power, because it leads us to domesticate the message to make them ‘user-friendly,’ robbing them of their original creative force,” Pope Francis continued. “It makes us want to protect spaces, buildings and structures, rather than to encourage new initiatives.”

The statement was signed by George Sparks, national chairman of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, and Father Kevin Smith, a priest of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, N.Y., who is national chaplain of Catholic Scouting.

In announcing the membership change, Michael Surbaugh, chief Scout executive, said the organization has been “challenged by a very complex topic—the issue of gender identity.”

“Over the weeks we’ve had significant conversations at all levels of the Scouting organization, he said, officials decided a birth certificate is no longer sufficient for determining eligibility for participating in Cub Scouts or Boy Scouts.

“We’ve taken the opportunity to evaluate and update our approach,” he said in a video message posted online. “I hope you’ll join me in embracing the opportunity to bring Scouting to more families and children who can benefit from what our organization has to offer.”

“This is an area that we will continue to thoughtfully evaluate to bring the benefits of Scouting to the greatest number of youth[s] possible, all while remaining true to our core beliefs,” Surbaugh said.

“Those beliefs, he said, are based on the Scout Oath, which begins “with duty to God,” and the Scout Law, which ends “with a Scout’s obligation to be reverent.”

“A separate statement e-mailed on Feb. 7 to Catholic News Service (CNS), Effie Delmarinos, the Boy Scouts’ director of communications, reiterated that “we will accept and register youth in the Cub and Boy Scout programs based on the gender identity indicated on the application. Our organization’s local councils will help find units that can provide for the best interest of the child.”

The organization did not say if a specific case had prompted the policy change, but another spokesperson told CNS that the gender identity gender identity was no longer sufficient as communities are now interpreting gender identity differently.”

Sparks and Father Smith said in their statement: “Scouting’s chartered organizations have the right to uphold their own moral standards within the units they charter. The teachings of the Catholic Church are upheld.”

About 70 percent of Boy Scout troops are run by faith-based groups.

Marian University to offer transfer assistance to Saint Joseph’s College students

Marian University in Indianapolis is very pleased to announce the following news:

Marian University President Daniel Elsener said: “We consider Saint Joseph’s College a sister institution; we share the same mission. We want to help their students, staff and faculty in any way that we can. For this reason, Marian University has established a section on its website—www.marian.edu/saintjoseph—where current and accepted prospective Saint Joseph’s College students can find information about transferring. Admissions representatives from Marian University will be on campus in Rensselaer to meet with Saint Joseph’s students on Feb. 9. “We want to make the transfer process for Saint Joseph’s College students as seamless as possible,” Elsener said. “They will meet with students, provide them with the information they need, and answer their questions, the smoother the process will be. Our goal is that the students earn their degree in the same amount of time it would have taken them to finish at Saint Joe’s.”

Marian University says it will honor all transfer credits earned with a minimum grade of C-. It will also offer financial assistance guaranteeing that students pay the same out-of-pocket tuition costs that they are currently paying at Saint Joseph’s College. Marian officials stated there will be a few exceptions, notably student-athletes and students receiving tuition remission.

“We encourage student-athletes who want to continue competing intercollegiately to contact the Marian University coach of their sport,” Elsener said. “St. Joe’s student-athletes are welcome to compete for open spots on the roster. Even if there isn’t an opportunity for them to compete at Marian, we will work to develop financial aid packages that fit each individual financial situation,” Elsener said. Student-athletes can find contact information for Marian University coaches at www.muknights.com/staff.php.

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For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry

Online Lay Ministry Formation

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Dayton’s Catholic University of Day (CUD) to offer non-credit online theology classes:

• Courses on the Catechism of the Catholic Church from CCD
• All 13 two-credit courses are available online
• 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners
• Employees also receive reimbursement upon course completion

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Pope: Marriage a ‘crucible’ in which love is refined and grows

By David Gibson

Pope Francis has spoken of marriage as a ‘crucible’ in which love is refined and grows. This emphasis on marriage as a stage of growth and transformation is a key aspect of the pope’s teachings on family life. In an annual message typically devoted to the state of family life, he included a discussion of married love.

The Scriptures offer many perspectives on the nature of married love. According to the First Letter of Peter, “Love one another with a sincere heart, as brothers and sisters, out of a pure heart and a humble spirit” (1 Pet 1:22). St. Paul echoes this sentiment in Ephesians, writing, “Be imitators of God, therefore, as beloved children, and live your lives in love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Eph 5:2). These verses all emphasize the importance of a healthy love, particularly as it pertains to the marital relationship.

In practical terms, within marriage we do justice to our own bodies, cherishing and nourishing each other, as St. Paul notes that we should love our spouse as we love ourselves cherished and nourished. A familiar passage is also a spiritual resource for the couple’s love “to grow and mature,” he writes. “Now the couple’s gaze “has to be directed to the future that, with the help of God’s grace, they are daily called to build” (#218). Other families and the Church’s pastoral ministry can help a couple’s love “to grow and mature,” he advises (#208).

He cautions, though, that “love that fails to grow is at risk” (#134). Years after their wedding, when a couple looks back upon their life together, they can clearly see that who and what they were in the beginning has undergone a transformation, a transformation that they clearly felt they were growing, maturing and changing as it happened. Time, joined with all sorts of experiences and developments, refashions a couple, so to speak. Moments that tax their strengths and other moments that are cause for celebration all fulfill dynamic roles in the crucible of their marriage.

In the crucible of family life, he writes in “Amoris Laetitia” (“The Joy of Love”), his 2016 apostolic exhortation on marriage and the family. He considers this virtue “a sign of a love free of selfish possessiveness” (#127). Tenderness, he explains, “makes us approach a person with immense respect and a certain dread of causing them harm” (#127).

Love for another person, Pope Francis adds, involves “contemplating and appreciating their innate beauty and sacredness” (#127). Moreover, “true love values the other person’s achievements” (#95).

So love does not view the other person “as a threat” or as someone to compete against (#95). Those who put love into practice “are capable of speaking words of comfort, strength, consolation and encouragement,” the pope affirms (#100). Their home is a place of understanding and support.

Married couples also “speak well of each other,” and “they develop the habit of giving real importance to the other person,” he writes (#113, #138). He wants couples to realize that “the combination of two different ways of thinking can lead to a synthesis that enriches both” (#139). Married love requires time together, “quality time” for conversation and dialogue. Pope Francis says, “This means being ready to listen patiently and attentively to everything the other person wants to say,” and it calls for “the discipline of not speaking until the time is right” (#137).

For, he continues, “we need to be sure that we have heard everything the other person has to say” (#137). One thing Pope Francis hopes couples will acknowledge is that “marriage is not something that happens once and for all” (#218). In “The Joy of Love,” he insists that helping couples realize this is one of the great challenges of marriage preparation programs.

From its beginning, a couple’s marriage is “real and irrevocable, confirmed and consecrated by the sacrament of matrimony,” he notes. “Yet in joining their loves, the spouses assume an active and creative role in a lifelong project” (#218). Now the couple’s gaze “has to be directed to the future that, with the help of God’s grace, they are daily called to build” (#218). Other families and the Church’s pastoral ministry can help a couple’s love “to grow and mature,” he advises (#208).

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(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.)

The Scriptures offer many perspectives on the nature of married love

By Daniel Mulhall

While the Bible is filled with stories of great loves and devoted marriages such as those of Abraham and Sarah and of Jacob and Rachel, it offers relatively few verses that speak directly to the relationship between husband and wife. But there are numerous passages in the Bible that describe the attitudes and behavior that are necessary for a healthy and holy life within the community. These same attitudes and behaviors are important within a married relationship as well.

These Bible verses also emphasize the importance of a healthy, loving relationship. For instance, the First Letter to the Corinthians, which speaks out more emphatically: “Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love covers all faults” (1 Cor 13:4–8).

St. Paul’s understanding of the importance of love within the community certainly shapes his understanding of the love that should exist between husbands and wives.

In the Letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes that men and women are to be “subordinate to one another” (Eph 5:21–32) in the same way that they would give themselves to Christ, freely because of love and work with love to grow increasingly close to each other. Paul notes that we should love our spouse as we love our own bodies, cherishing and nourishing each other, for the more we care for the other, the more we are ourselves cherished and nourished. A familiar passage is also a spiritual resource for couples: “You have been told, O mortal, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: Only to do justice to your neighbor, to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Mi 6:8).

St. Paul, echoing Micah in Ephesians, encouraged all Christians to live “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace” (Eph 4:2–3). These instructions for following God are just as true for life within a marriage as in any other context.

For practical reasons, within marriage we do justice by honoring and respecting the other, appreciating and celebrating their gifts and giving credit where it is due. We love goodness by showing appreciation for acts of love and kindness. We walk humbly by understanding that others are wonderful in their own right and not because of what they do for us. We put the needs and desires of our spouse ahead of our own.

(Daniel Mulhall is a catechetical who lives in Louisville, Kentucky.)

Marriage is like a crucible. At least Pope Francis appears to think so. But how is marriage anything like a crucible? In a recent off-the-cuff speech at the Vatican, he said that marriage “is a crucible in which love is refined and grows.”

The pope’s words echoed a familiar passage from the First Letter to the Corinthians: “Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love covers all faults” (1 Cor 13:4–8).

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Perspectives

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

One of my best friends in the Catholic press, Archbishop John P. Foley, was a person of such integrity and perspective on matters of faith and justice. He was a man of great wisdom and unwavering commitment to the values he espoused. His passing has left a void in the Catholic press.

To create peace, prayer must be a part of students’ education

[“We have political leaders who fund wars and send the young to fight the battles. We have judges and jurists who decide the fate of the innocent. We have death row, filmmakers who script gunplay on death row, filmmakers who script gunplay on death row. We have to fight for a world that is right.”]

From “Mayberry” we graduated to reality television. Reality television is all about inspiring historical figures like St. Teresa of Calcutta, Joan Baez, Jane Addams and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini. Life-Giver, that is, God, and his apostle John Paul II saw the culture of the Atomic Age through the lens of the Atomic Age. He did that for 25 years.

During Pope John Paul II’s first visit to the United States in 1979, John served as a deputy of the English-speaking cardinals with the prepress with the explanation of what was going on.

In 1984, John was elected president of the CPA. But before he could assume that role, Pope John Paul II appointed him to be the secretary of the Council for Social Communications and an archbishop. Mogr.翁Campon, who was elected to be John’s vice-president, became president of the CPA.

John was president of the council for 23 years, even more than one long-suffering head of a curial department, until his appointment as grand master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. His resonated that post in 2005, after he realized the age of 75, because of ill health. He died from leukemia on Dec. 11, 2011.

People who listened to his Christmas Midnight Mass from the Vatican each year heard John’s voice as he explained what was going on in the Mass. He did that for 25 years.

Through the years, I continued to see John whenever I was in Rome, but also during trips to international meetings of the Catholic Union of the Press. So when I were to raise ruckus from filmmakers in New Delhi. During those trips, I was usually lector and altar server for his Masses. John was one of the wittiest men I’ve ever known. He was especially known for his puns. He was best during dinners—usually Abruzzo’s in Rome—when he talked about things that happened at the Vatican. He was well liked by all who knew him.

We know that “the good old days” weren’t all good, or that current “reality” is not all reality. But what if you could live what we consider an authentic life, we can find reality. Christ mapped it out for us in his words and actions. He gave us the Good News to reassure us on the journey, with saving love and forgiveness as a gift.

The reality that underlies Christian principles is the basis for the reality sought by our secular society. Self-help books, touchy-feely advice columns, uplifting talk shows and the like reflect what the Gospels have always said. Doing unto others as we would have them do to us or treating every one of us like we would like to be treated. We'd like to keep our jobs and love our neighbors as ourselves.

What a beautiful way to serve the Church’s servants, the kind of assistance that makes it better to have the help of the Life-Giver, that is, God, and his courage to give mercy.

To create effective promoters of peace, prayer must be an integral part of students’ education. Lessons should aim at firing up students’ love for God’s order and its harm. Of the Gospels, it is easy to see that peace is to succeed, what more must it do? First and foremost, it must address the spirit within those who promote peace.

What is this spirit’s inner force and who is it attractive to the potential of sacrificing one’s life for peace? That inner force contains the gifts of the Spirit to which we rejoin: trust, wisdom, courage, council, prayer, knowledge, fortitude and fear of the Lord.

A closer look at that force reveals that as God put order into our world, it was reflected in the Garden of Eden’s animals, was, moon, oceans and the birds of the sun, moon, oceans and the birds of the sky. We know that the “good old days” weren’t all good, or that current “reality” is not all reality. But what if you could live what we consider an authentic life, we can find reality.

But wait! Along came yet another reality as presented in TV reality shows. We had “survivors” stuck on a desert island somewhere, wearing fetching rags and suffering isolation and the possibility of not, well, surviving. Never mind the background camera crew and another TV personnel around ready to serve whatever need.

The reality show extended to bad behavior. One show was about a chef competing with another in the kitchen. But shows were more like entertaining travelogues presented as travel competitions. Teams of attractive couples tried to beat each other to achieve destinations of choice at the а р еа. Of course, the premise was always “reality.” We ask, are we to think? Is nothing real? Is reality something merely in the eye of the beholder? Should we worry about it?

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The Book of Sirach, the source of this weekend’s first reading, is part of a collection of biblical writings that teach an important lesson in their very origin. As various political, economic and individual fortunes changed, collapsed and reversed among God’s people in the decades after the Babylonian captivity, and as new alien empires seized the Holy Land, Jews emigrated from the homeland of their ancestors to other places. Understandably, many went to places where opportunities were more plentiful. While certainly some of these emigrants not only survived, but possibly did well in their new surroundings, one thing was lacking. They were not living in a society in which all acknowledged the God of Israel. In fact, their adopted culture could well be hostile to their faith. So, to record their most ancient religious beliefs and very importantly to pass these beliefs along to oncoming generations, Jewish scholars composed books such as Sirach.

The essential point in Sirach was that human reason and honoring God are not ideas at odds with each other. Obeying God, logic can prove, is the way to order, peace, justice and reward in human life. God, logic can prove, is the way to order, peace, justice and reward in human life. In these readings, the Church tells us what to do and why we must do it in order to conform to what God has revealed in his love and justice.

Reflection This weekend looks to the past weeks and feasts as background. It also looks ahead. In both cases, it confronts us with the realities of our nature. It places us in relationship with God. It shows us that God loves us with a divine love.

At Christmas, Epiphany and at the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, the Church celebrated the events of salvation achieved for us by Christ, but it also told us about the Lord. It identified the Lord. In these readings, the Church tells us that to wander away from God’s law and follow our instincts or our limited reasoning is folly. Humans, impaired by original sin, always have trouble understanding this lesson.

Before too long, the Church will lead us into Lent. It will be a time in which we strengthen ourselves to know our limitations and conform ourselves to what we are, fallen human beings, but destined for eternal life with God, in love. The Church helps us to view the Mass as the integrated consecration and Communion.

The second reading, from Paul, is included in the Book of Sirach. The Gospel reading is from the Lord. The Lord is the one in whom the distinctiveness of God’s revelation is clearly defined. The Gospel reading provides a context for the Church’s celebration of the Mass on this Sunday. The Gospel, like the first reading, provides a lesson about the love and justice of God.

The Church honors King’s life, but has no feast day for him as a saint

A Your memory is two-thirds correct. Half a century ago, Catholics were taught that if you wanted your obligation to attend Sunday Mass, you needed to be present for the offertory, the consecration and Communion.

Now, though, the Church encourages us to view the Mass as the integrated whole that is it, a single act of worship from the entrance rite through the dismissal prayers, and canon law simply says, “On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass” (1247). If you happen to be in the confessional for part of that time, I would say that you are only partially at Mass. Even if you are not part of the Mass (your intention is certainly to be there) and that you are eligible to receive holy Communion.

Your question, though, about a parish’s practice of hearing confessions during Mass—deserves further comment. That practice is a source of some pastoral debate among priests. Since the faithful are gathered in largest numbers during Mass times, some view this as the opportune moment to make the sacrament of penance available; others, though, feel that it easily distracts people from the eucharistic liturgy itself. Strictly speaking, there is no universal prohibition of the practice. In fact, the Vatican has spoken directly to the point: In 2001, the Church’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, while expressing a clear preference that confessions be heard outside of Mass, specifically allowed that they can be heard while Mass is being celebrated. (Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr. Albany, New York 12203.)

Growing up Catholic, I was taught that in order to fulfill your Sunday obligation, you were required to be present for at least three parts of the Mass—the Gospel, the offertory and Communion. Our parish just started hearing confessions at the very time the Sunday Mass is being celebrated (i.e., not just before or after Mass). So my question is this: If you are in the confessonal during any of these three parts of the Mass, have you fulfilled your Sunday obligation? And what about receiving holy Communion? (Minnesota)

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VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Christians must stand up as bridge builders, top Vatican official says

When asked about U.S. President Donald J. Trump’s recent actions on immigration, the archbishop said, “Certainly there is concern. We are messengers of a different culture, that of openness.”

Speaking on the sidelines of an event in Rome on Feb. 1, he told TV2000, the television channel of the Italian bishops’ conference, that even though the pope also emphasizes the importance of a community’s ability to integrate those who arrive in our society, it still stands that “we are builders of bridges, not walls.”

“All Christians must be strong in reaffirming this message,” he said. “I and Pope Francis, himself the son of Italian immigrants who moved to Argentina in the 1920s, has long spoken of the need to promote the rights and dignity of migrants and refugees. Here is a sampling of his most forceful pronouncements:

Christians must stand up as bridge builders, top Vatican official says

—“It is not human to close the door, for accepting more than can price can be paid for an imprudent price is political, just as a political economic crisis prompts the emergence of stranger” at his general audience, on Oct. 26, 2016.

—“Certainly there is economic crisis prompts the emergence of borders, while trying to respond as best we can to their needs. I assure you to look into their soul; perhaps you will be able to understand them better. But rather view them as persons, seeing them do unto you.’” (Pope Francis to the U.S. Congress, on Sept. 24, 2015).

—“When the stranger in our midst appeals to us, we must not repeat the sins and the errors of the past. We must resolve now to live as nobly and as justly as possible, as we educate new generations not to turn their back on ‘our neighbors’ and ‘our brothers’ in a racist fashion. Instead, we must recognize that we must constantly relate to others, rejecting a mindset of hostility towards the other. We must adopt one of reciprocal subsidiarity, in a constant effort to do our best. I am confident that we can do this.” (Pope Francis speaking with children and immigrant families at a Catholic school in Harlem, N.Y., on Sept. 25, 2015).

—“Now American institution does more for immigrants than your Christian communities. Now you are facing this stream of Latin immigration which affects many of your dioceses. Not only as the Bishop of Rome, but also as a pastor from the South, I feel the need to thank and encourage you. Perhaps it will not be easy for you to look into their soul; perhaps you will be challenged by their diversity. But know that you also possess resources meant to be shared. So do not be afraid to welcome them. Offer them the warmth of the love of Christ and you will unlock the mystery of their heart. I am certain that, as so often in the past, these people will enrich America and its Church.” (Pope Francis to U.S. Bishops in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 23, 2015).
Local Church to be represented at grass-roots leadership gathering

WASHINGTON (CNS)—For 27 years, Pat Campbell-Williams has worked on Detroit’s West Side, organizing her neighbors to tackle tough economic justice issues. It’s good work, she acknowledged, but she didn’t know if anyone cared beyond the city limits.

Patience Francis changed her outlook. Campbell-Williams, 60, co-founder of MOSES—Metropolitan Organizing Strategy Enabling Strength, rooted in the Vatican when he addressed the most recent gathering of the World Meeting of Popular Movements.

“Poverty, the underemployed, indigenous communities and farmers,” Francis said. “It’s what I’ve been working for in all of my life, grass-roots organizing.”

Campbell-Williams told Catholic News Service, “and to have the pope to be in the forefront of what we’re doing is just amazing. We’ve got a man of God that’s pushing things. The fact that he’s doing this got me excited.”

Campbell-Williams will be one of 600 people whom the pope calls protagonists, meaning people facing everyday struggles—from throughout the United States attending a regional World Meeting of Popular Movements on Feb. 16-19 in Modesto, Calif.

A contingent from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will attend the gathering, including Providence Sister Tracy Horan, archdiocesan liaison for IndyCAN (Indy Congregation Action Network) and archdiocesan contact for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Justice for Immigrants Campaign; Deacon Michael Braun, archdiocesan director of the Secretariat of Pastoral Ministries, and Oscar Castelanos, archdiocesan director of the Office of Intercultural Ministry. The meeting is co-sponsored by the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development; the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), the U.S. bishops’ domestic anti-poverty program; and PICO National Network, which engages in religions congregation-based community organizing.

The U.S. meeting is being planned at the request of Pope Francis. Cardinal Peter Turkson, dicastery prefect, called the meeting and addressed the delegates.

More than 60 U.S. bishops also are expected to attend and participate in plenary and small-group sessions over the four days, said Ralph McCloud, CCHD executive director.

Campbell-Williams said hearing from people of different faith traditions from around the world in November was inspiring, and she expects the same in California.

“I learned that we all are going through basically the same things, no matter what language you speak,” Campbell-Williams said. “We didn’t understand that until we told our stories and came together in solidarity to talk about it. That was amazing to just everybody tell their story in their language. It connected all of us to the same stories. We’re all basically dealing with the same issues.”

Dominican Sister Cheryl Liskey, executive director of Gamaleel of Michigan, one of the organizations that will be represented at the meeting, said it is folks like Campbell-Williams whom the pope has in mind when he calls the community organizers, you have to do a little rethinking. A lot of people said movements in the Church are supposed to be spiritual movements. I said to them, “There are many spiritual movements, like the folks living the real experience. We have to hear them and listen to them and accompany them,” the bishop said.

“I don’t think it will be very important as the Church that we listen because if we want to evangelize and bring the Gospel into the community, we have to hear what the community is saying,” he added. “We have to hear from the people themselves who are suffering. We can’t sit in our positions, and think we can analyze all the poverty and suffering out there.”

Belinda Snead of Lexington, Ky., also is one of the grass-roots people attending the meeting. A leader in Building a United Interfaith Lexington Through Direct-Action, or BUILD, Snead told CNS there is no better way to understand organizing successes and failures than by discussing her experiences with others.

“We all come from different parts of the country, but we’re in a similar dynamic that prevents them from getting something accomplished, from moving forward,” Snead said. “My goal is to go out and learn from others how they develop strategies on combating injustices.”

That’s exactly why the Vatican wants a U.S. meeting, McCloud said.

“First and foremost [the meeting is to acknowledge the economic inequality, that exists among the haves and have-nots] while examining the reasons people struggle because of unequal access to work, land and housing, he explained.

[The meeting] acknowledges all of these things exist and to help bring people together who have been working on these, to understand there’s a connection between all of them and look at ways they might be able to work together,” McCloud told CNS.

Immigration and racism also are to be among topics explored, organizers said.†

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Pat Campbell-Williams, co-founder of MOSES, Metropolitan Organizing Strategy Enabling Strength, in Detroit, tells a person she met on Oct. 19 at the city’s Rosa Parks Transit Center about early voting for the 2018 election. She and one of 600 people from grass-roots organizations planning to attend the U.S. regional World Meeting of Popular Movements on Feb. 16-19 in Modesto, Calif., CNS photos/jacob black, MOSES.
Growth of U.S. Hispanic population is a blessing for Church, says speaker

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Hispanics in the Catholic Church are not a problem to be solved, but a blessing and an opportunity, said Hofsinan Ospino in a Jan. 31 talk at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

The growing number of U.S. Hispanic parishioners puts a new face on the Church, forces it to renew itself, pushes it to redefine its commitment and presents dioceses with a challenge, he said.

Ospino is a professor of theology and religious education at Boston College and editor of graduate programs in Hispanic ministry there. He is well-known as a leading voice in Hispanic ministry and theology.

More than 20 million immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean are transforming the U.S. Catholic experience, according to Ospino. He calls this phenomenon a “‘tsunami.”

Hispanics are the fastest-growing community in the U.S. They make up the largest minority group in the country and, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, they will surpass the 132 million mark by 2050. By then, Hispanics will represent 30 percent of the total population, according to data from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

But the Church has not reacted at the same speed to welcome them, according to Ospino. “Dioceses, schools and parishes have been on ‘cruse control’ for more than 70 years, and a renewal, a new dynamic, is needed,” he said. “We have to read the signs of the times in light of our faith.”

He also cautioned that because Hispanic Catholics have switched to other religions, the Church “goes on as if nothing had happened” and does not “take it for granted that Hispanics are to continue in Catholicism. The Church’s present and future depend on it.”

Ospino added. “It’s important to redefine pastoral plans and ministries need to adapt and prepare for the existential.”

“Hispanic Catholics have the potential to reshape the Church,” he said.

“Only 10 percent of those registered in Catholic universities are Hispanic,” Ospino said.

“In the face of the booming Hispanic population, the Church is called to offer Catholic education to that population, he said. “Acknowledging the cost of Catholic education and the closure of numerous Catholic schools because of a lack of resources, Ospino said one solution is more lobbying for tuition tax credits to help families meet those costs.

Saying the Hispanic Church is the present and future, Ospino said Church leaders should pay attention to where Catholicism is growing. Statistics show that more than most other groups in the Church, Hispanics as a group baptize their children and see that their children receive first Communion, but at the same time, Church ministry shows resistance to that reality, he said.

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