Catholic leaders find proposed federal budget largely fails the moral test

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Donald J. Trump’s proposed fiscal year 2018 budget sent shivers through many in the social service, education and environmental communities, prompting Church leaders and advocates to question the administration’s commitment to people in need.

The leaders repeated in interviews with Catholic News Service (CNS) that a budget is a moral document that reflects the nation’s priorities, and that they found that the spending plan revealed on May 23 backs away from the country’s historical support for children, the elderly and the poor, and protecting the environment.

Their concern focuses on the deep cuts — totaling $52 billion in fiscal year 2018 and $3.6 trillion over the next decade — in international aid, senior services, health care, hunger prevention, job training, air and water protection, and climate change research. The cuts essentially are paying for a corresponding $52 billion boost in military spending.

“We say there’s a human component here. It’s not just about defense. It’s not just about deficits,” said Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

Too often, we think the budget is a number. It’s not. Right behind those numbers are human beings, and they look like you and they look like me,” he told CNS.

Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, echoed Bishop Dewane’s contention, saying she was “profoundly disturbed” by the White House plan. “You can’t have people who are suffering and expect them to bring themselves out of poverty when we cut off access to food and health care and job need.

“I probably will be at least that old, maybe older,” she says feel good.”

clearly saying where the values are of this administration. And their values

after her groundbreaking tenure ends, Sheila Gilbert hopes to devote more attention to one of the great passions of her life — working in her garden.

She also plans to spend more time practicing the piano. For the past six years, both activities have been severely limited as Gilbert has served as the president of the national council of the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul — the first woman ever elected to that position.

During that time, the 76-year-old Gilbert has been planting seeds of a different kind, nurturing efforts to remove a plight and escape the cycle of poverty.

For the better part of the month, the 76-year-old Gilbert has been planting seeds of a different kind, nurturing efforts to remove a plight and escape the cycle of poverty.

A member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis, Gilbert has also worked to increase the scope of the society’s efforts to assist people affected by disasters.

And she has embraced innovative programs to help people start a new life after prison.

Sheila Gilbert is the first woman to serve as president of the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul. As her six-year term heads into its final months, Gilbert makes a visit to the client-choice food pantry of the Indianapolis Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, where she talks with John Ryan, president of the Indianapolis council. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Groundbreaking woman has planted seeds to stop growth of poverty across country

By John Shaughnessy

After her groundbreaking tenure ends, Sheila Gilbert hopes to devote more attention to one of the great passions of her life — working in her garden.

Pope Francis also gave the president a copy of his message to the world’s bishops that focuses on the family; and “Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home,” on the environment.

Pope Francis speaks of hopes for peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis and U.S. President Donald J. Trump spent 30 minutes speaking privately in the library of the Apostolic Palace on May 24, and as the president left, he told the pope, “I won’t forget what you said.”

The atmosphere at the beginning was formal and a bit stiff. However, the mood lightened when Pope Francis met the first lady, Melania Trump, and asked if she fed her husband “potica,” a traditional cake in Slovenia, her homeland. There were smiles all around.

Pope Francis gave Trump a split medallion held together by an olive tree, which his interpreter told Trump is “a symbol of peace.”

Speaking in Spanish, the pope told Trump, “I am giving you this because I hope you may be this olive tree to make peace.”

The president responded, “We can use peace.”

Pope Francis also gave the president a copy of his message for World Peace Day 2017 and told him, “I signed it personally for you.” In addition, he gave Trump copies of three of his documents: “The Joy of the Gospel,” “Amoris Laetitia,” on the family; and “Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home,” on the environment.
Catholic groups sue over order protecting abortion advocacy

ST LOUIS (CNS)—St. Louis archdiocesan elementary schools, a Catholic-operated shelter for homeless people and a women’s health care planning company and its owner have sued the city of St. Louis over a new ordinance they say violates their religious freedom because it grants “protected status” to abortion advocates.

Through The Thomas More Society, a national not-for-profit law firm, filed the lawsuit on the plaintiffs’ behalf on May 22 in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri.

Enacted in February, the city ordinance provides two religious-status kinds of resources in the community. The are the “getting-by” resources, like food stamps. And the other are the “getting-ahead” resources—education jobs, job-finding resources, knowing where you can get child care so they truly can be job-ready.

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Immigration, religious liberty are on agenda for bishops’ meeting

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The proverbial plate is full of issues for U.S. bishops to tackle at their upcoming spring assembly on June 14-15 in Indianapolis. They will discuss issues ranging from immigration to religious freedom, as well as the next meeting of the Synod of Bishops on youth and the Fifth National Encuentro gathering, both coming up in 2018.

“We’re certainly going to talk about the upcoming convocation in Orlando, some of the specific plans,” said Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces, N.M., referring to the “Convocation of Catholic Leaders: The Joy of the Gospel in America” on July 1-4 in Orlando, Fla. “Other topics of interest for all of the bishops have been the fifth Encuentro, coming up in 2018, how things are developing in that.”

Bishop Cantu, chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), will address the persecution of Christians abroad.

“We regard to our bishops’ meeting, there is the concern of the plight of Christians in parts of the world where they’ve been persecuted, whether it’s in Africa or Syria or in any other part of the world,” he said.

Bishop Cantu said he will give updates about the work of his committee, which has taken him to see some of the hardships Christians face in places like Asia and the Middle East. After making his annual trip to the Holy Land in January, Bishop Cantu said he traveled to Iraq and Kurdistan. He witnessed some of the work by Church members, which included the building of schools, churches and universities for displaced communities of Christians forced to leave their homelands.

“The archbishops have done heroic work,” he said.

For example, Archbishop Bashar Warda of the Chaldean Archeparchy of Irbil, Iraq, built a university so that young people who were displaced from Mosul could continue to study, said Bishop Cantu.

“He did that in very short order. He talked to me about that two years ago, that he wanted to create a university and so when I was there in January, I asked him how those plans were going. He said, ‘Oh, we’ve been up and running for a year and half.’ I was just absolutely astounded. He’s got this, a vision, this ‘do it’ mentality. They’ve just been working constantly to give Christians every opportunity and every reason to stay in Iraq.”

Another archbishop had access to a small plot of land, and there, he built a church, an elementary school and a university.

“It’s amazing, just absolutely amazing, what they’ve done in such short time and to keep their people together and to give them a sense of identity and of support,” he said.

Bishop Cantu also met with Church members in dangerous zones to talk about what Americans have been advocating, particularly for establishing safe zones for Christians in Syria and Iraq, on their behalf.

“They said they don’t like that idea, they don’t think it’s a good idea to have a specifically Christian zone because that would make them a target for their enemies,” he said. “They want to live in an integrated society with proper security and full citizenship . . . that’s what they believe will give them the greatest security, so we wanted to clarify that, as a point for safety for them, a clarification for their voice.”

The bishops also will discuss the 2018 Synod of Bishops meeting, in which the pope wants discussion about “young people, faith and vocational discernment,” as the theme of the gathering.

The bishops also will discuss and vote on whether to establish the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty as a permanent USCCB committee. They also will consider for discussion and votes revised Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments With Persons With Disabilities; a collection of blessings in Spanish; and a new translation of the Order of Blessing the Oil of Catechumens and of the Sick and of Consecrating the Chrism.

The public sessions of the bishops’ assembly will all be day on June 14 and half a day on June 15. An executive session may include “the inroads we have made into having a relationship with the new administration” in the White House, as well as the challenges, said Bishop Cantu, who also may give an update on his March meeting with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

“We certainly expressed our concern last November about the attitude and the plight of immigrants,” he said.

The bishops also may receive an update on President Donald J. Trump’s executive orders dealing with his travel ban, which is tied up in the courts, yet is affecting refugees coming into the country. The bishops have issued statements opposing the original order and its revision. ↑

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Remember our missionaries who died serving others

We celebrated Memorial Day earlier this week, a time when we as a nation remember and honor those who did while serving our country’s armed forces both here and abroad.

While the federal holiday is always observed on the final Monday of May, we believe family members who lost military personnel take time to remember their loved ones each day. It is also an appropriate time for all of us to thank God for the brave men and women who ventured into harm’s way, and made a difference through their unwavering commitment to their mission.

Though they are not recognized on Memorial Day, we as Catholics know of modern-day American missionaries who died in service to others. Father Stanley Rother, the first-born American martyr who will be beatified on Sept. 23 in his native Oklahoma, comes to mind.

Father Rother, who served for more than 12 years as a missionary to the indigenous people of Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala, was murdered there on July 28, 1981.

Priests and religious in Guatemala were targeted when government forces cracked down on leftist rebels supported by the rural poor, and Father Rother, like so many, gave his life for Christ during that country’s brutal civil war from 1960-96.

During his ministry, the bodies of some of Father Rother’s deacons and parishioners were left in front of his church, and he started receiving death threats over his opposition to the presence of the Guatemalan military in the area. Though he went back to Oklahoma for a brief period, Father Rother returned to the Guatemalan village to remain with the people he had grown to love during the time he ministered there.

“There was a moment when, after hearing news of what was going on in his parish, he said: ‘A shepherd should never flee.’” Bishop Gonzalo de Villa Vasquez of Solola-Chimaltenango, the diocese where Father Rother lived, worked and died, told Catholic News Service in a recent story. “He returned to Guatemala to be with his people, to be with his flock, his faithful. It was there where they found him and killed him.”

More recently, we remember the lives of Sisters Margaret Held and Paula Merrill, who were slain in their Durant, Miss., home on Aug. 25, 2016.

Though the sisters were not martyrs for the faith, they were recognized during a dedication and blessing ceremony of a monument to honor their lives of service.

Rodney Earl Sanders, 46, of Kosciusko, Miss., later confessed to fatally stabbing the two women and stealing their car. He was charged with capital murder, burglary and grand larceny.

Sister Paula was a member of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth based in Nazareth, Ky., and Sister Margaret belonged to the School Sisters of St. Francis congregation based in Milwaukee. The two nurse practitioners worked at Lexington Medical Clinic and were members of St. Thomas Parish in Lexington, Miss., located about 10 miles from their home.

Through their medical ministry, the sisters touched countless lives during the 15 years they served the poorest of the poor in rural Mississippi.

Mary James, who worked with the sisters at Lexington Medical Clinic, said that she and the other staff members at the clinic were truly blessed to have known the two women.

“They took me under their wings, and we became family,” James said during the May 20 blessing and dedication ceremony. “The sisters’ angelic presence was so great. We miss them daily. ... Whenever we get a little down or teary-eyed, we remember these words. ‘Let love win.’ If the sisters were here today, they would probably say something like this: ‘There’s no love like forgiveness, and there’s no forgiveness without love.’”

“I think it isn’t just their deaths that are important, it’s their lives,” added Sister Tonya Severin, vice provincial for the Western province of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. “They lived with the message of Jesus, that we are to give of ourselves in loving service to others, and that’s what they did so unobtrusively.”

The priest and religious sisters are examples of missionaries living their lives with the message of Jesus, giving themselves in loving service to their sisters and brothers in Christ. There are many others who did so as well.

Let us never forget their witness and sacrifice, and the example they offer for all of us.

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/Sean Gallagher

Get pointed in the right direction on the journey to our life of faith

As each of these tendencies become more an ordinary part of our lives, it can seem more difficult for us to change them and build up a life of virtue in their place. We might even give in to the ultimate temptation of the devil and embrace a polite kind of despair, an everyday kind of hopelessness.

This is just the way I am, we might say to ourselves again and again in the back of our minds, why try to change? But in each moment of each day, God gives us a chance for victory. His ever-present grace can help us make choices toward the right direction of our journey of faith.

Sato didn’t give up hope after his attempt to win in 2012 ended with him sitting in a mangled car, watching the winner Franchitti go past him on his victory lap. He didn’t give up hope as he finished in the middle of the back of the pack in the next four races.

His determined hope finally paid off when he entered Victory Lane on Sunday.

In our daily chances for victory, each of us will make wrong choices at times and get pointed in the wrong direction. But God’s mercy, especially available to us in the sacrament of penance, can always get us back on course toward heaven.

God also wants his mercy to flow through each of us to each other. When we forgive each other with the help of grace, we make this journey to heaven together.

Victory Lane, heaven for IndyCar drivers, only admits one driver each year. Thankfully, the real heaven is big enough for all humanity. God doesn’t want us to try to get there on our own. He wants us to bring as many people with us as we can.

(Sean Gallagher is a reporter for The Criterion.)
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3rd Annual Italian Street Festival

The Criterion Friday, June 2, 2017

Page 5
Archbishop Edward ministry supports Indianapolis St., Indianapolis. Mission 27 Resale, 132 Leota June 6 suffers, 7-8:30 p.m., no charge, caregivers helping those who Program a Christian Consoler Parish, 1752 Scheller Lane, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Information: 317-243-0777. members welcome. 6 p.m. 50 and over, single, separated, Catholic, educational, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed and divorced, women members welcome: 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, 1752 Scheller Lane, New Albany, “How to be a Christian Conoler” Program, sponsored by the Ministry of Consolation, tools for family, friends and caregivers helping those who suffer, 7-8:30 p.m., no charge, register by June 5. Registration and information: 812-945-2374 or tvcr@cnbhp.org.

June 8-10 St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, 335 EEdgar Ave., Indianapolis. Funfest. Thurs. 5-10 p.m., Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. 5 p.m. midnight, dinners in air-conditioned hall, grilled and multi-cultural foods, children’s games and inflatables, live entertainment, Monte Carlo, take-a-chance. Information: 317-787-8246.

St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8155 Oakwood Lane, Indianapolis, Parish Festival, Thur. 6-11 p.m., Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. 3 p.m.-midnight, “Hannover Chase” on Thurs., “The Bishops” on Fri., “My Yellow Rickshaw” on Sat., food, games, $10 admission. Information: www.saintsimoniscopal.org. 317-826-6000.

St. Anthony Parish, 337 N. Warren Ave., Indianapolis. Crossroads of the Americas Festival, Thurs. 6-10 p.m., Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. 4 p.m.-midnight, food, carnival rides, games of chance, live music and DJ, dancing, $25 raffle tickets, $20,000 grand prize. Information: 317-636-4828.

June 8-11 Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St. Greenwood. Parish Festival, Thurs. 5-11 p.m., Fri. 5 p.m.-midnight, Sat. 2 p.m.-midnight, noon, sun. noon-9 p.m., family lunches, food booths, rides, bingo, cake wheel, Monte Carlo, children's games, spin and win, raffle, silent auction. Information: 317-888-2861.


Holy Angels Parish, 740 W. 28th St. Indianapolis. Music Festival. Fri. 5-10 p.m., Sat. 3-11 p.m., live music, children’s inflatables, food, Camp, Youth Scola, eight students for entering grades 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, register by June 2. Further information and registration materials can be requested by e-mailing archindyouth@earthlink.net.

June 10 St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Indianapolis. 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Father Martin Peter Kostka. Mass observed by reception until 8:30 p.m., all are welcome. Information: 812-276-1235 or jdahly@obcglobal.net.

June 11 St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St. Indianapolis. St. Mark French, 1 p.m. Information: acsd2014@gmail.com.

St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus Church, (Little Flower Church), 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. Class of ’63 monthly gathering, 6 p.m. Mass, optional dinner afterward. Information: 317-408-3096.

June 12-16 and 19-23 Roncalli High School, 3300 Prague Road, Indianapolis. Archdiocese of Indianapolis Summer Camp. Youth Scola, eight students for entering grades 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, register by June 2. Further information and registration materials can be requested by e-mailing archindyouth@earthlink.net.


St. John Paul II Parish, 7035 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. Indianapolis. Winerama, evening of marriage renewal featuring “That Man is You” developer Steve Bollman or e-mailing join@winerama.com, take-a-chance. Information: 317-245-9410, 386-9410 or e-mailing join@winerama.com.

The couple also has 26 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren.

The ‘write’ stuff” Five writers for the editorial staff of Trojan Matters, the monthly magazine of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, received state and national awards from the Women’s Press Club of Indiana (WPCI) and the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW). Pam R. Haslett, Jacob deCastro, Abby McDonald and Siân Rhodes won first place in the WPCI state high school level communication contests in the career category for their story “Kneeling during the National Anthem: A New Way.” Finalists also pooled the first-place winners from all 23 categories at the state level for their “Best of the Best High School Journalism Competition.” The sports story received first place and the editorial received third place. The entire magazine staff poses for in this April 28 photo as follows: front row, Abby McDonald; left, Jazier Gievesa, Katie Meek, Kyle Donohue, Kacee Halett, Greta Horton and Emma Kennedy; back row, Marissa Almac, left, Ellen Giudice, Jacob deCastro (editor), Abigail Park, Siân Rhodes and Casey Storms. (Submitted photo)

VIPS William and Martha (Stenger) Dramann, members of St. Louis Parish in Batesville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 30. The couple was married in St. Michael Church in Brookville on April 29, 1967. They have one daughter, Theresa Fullenkamp.

The couple also has 26 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.†

Annual World Refugee Day Dinner will be on June 27 in Indianapolis Catholic Charities of Indianapolis Refugee and Immigrant Services will host a World Refugee Day Dinner at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, 140 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 6:30 p.m. on June 27. During the event, refugees will share stories while participants enjoy ethnic foods, music, artwork and networking opportunities. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets before June 13 are $25. After June 13, they are $35. To register, go to helpcreatehope.org.†

Retreats and Programs For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to archindy.org/events.

June 16-22 Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, The Image as a Window to the Soul: An Artist’s Six-Day Hands-on Workshop and Retreat, Benedictine Father Martin Esperman and Passionist Brother Michael Morgan, graphing, $550, $950 double. Information: 812-357-6855 or mroen@yahoo.com.


June 26 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Silent Self-Guided Day of Reflection, $12 includes room for the day, continental breakfast, lunch and dinner, use of all 56th St. areas, additional $37 extends stay to include the night before or after day of silence and includes dinner. Information and registration: 317-945-2661, ext. 107 or www.archindy.org/ cans.

July 3-5 Benedictine Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1400 N. 56th St., Beech Grove. Conformational in the Twenty-First Century: A View from the Trenches, Cistercian monk Father Michael Casey presenting, 7-9 p.m. Friday, 9:30-a.m. to 4-p.m. Sat., $195 residential, $145 commuter. Information and registration: 317-788-7581, www.benedictinn.org.

July 7-9 Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5553 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Step Weekend Retreat for Women Information, pricing and registration: 317-753-8527.

Events Calendar For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to archindy.org/events.
As we celebrate the feast of Pentecost this weekend, it’s good to recall Pope Francis’ thinking about the gifts we receive from the third person of the Blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the source of God’s life in us. He is the gift of freedom, the liberty that allows us to come alive in our witness of the Gospel without hesitation or fear, compromise or rigidity. In a recent homily on the Gospel account of Jesus’ meeting with Nicodemus, the pope commented on Jesus’ statement that he must be “born from above” (John 3:3, 5). This statement confused Nicodemus, as it probably confuses us. To understand this better, he described the situation in the Acts of the Apostles where Peter and John have healed a crippled man, and the doctors of the law don’t know what to do, how “to hide” what happened, “because the event was public.”

When they were questioned, Peter and John “answered with simplicity,” and when they were ordered not to speak about Jesus any more they replied: “No! We cannot remain silent about what we have seen and heard. And we will continue to do as we have been doing” (Acts 4:23-24).

These are the same men who cowered with fear behind locked doors immediately after Jesus’ resurrection. Until they received the Holy Spirit, they were incapable of acting with boldness or conviction. The gift of the Holy Spirit freed them from their fear and their rigidity. It awakened them to the truth about themselves, and it empowered them to become new men, “born of the Holy Spirit.”

According to Pope Francis, the gift of freedom that Peter and John received at Pentecost allowed them to “have courage.” He says that they received “frankness, the frankness of the Spirit, which means speaking the truth openly, with courage, without compromises.”

This is an important theme for Pope Francis who detests the tendency some Christians have to be legalistic in their practice of the faith. People who measure every move they make before reporting it to others are unable to do this. “The Spirit of the law, who ritualize everything and take no risks in their observance of their religion.”

“Sometimes, we forget that our faith is concrete,” the pope says. “The Word was made flesh; it was not made an idea. And when we receive the Creed, everything we say is concrete: ‘I believe in God the Father, Who made heaven and Earth; I believe in Jesus Christ who was born, who died…’ These are all concrete things. Our Creed does not say, ‘I have to do this, I have to do that, I have to do something else, or that some things are for these ends.’ No! They are concrete things. This is the concreteness of the faith that leads to frankness, to bearing witness even to the point of martyrdom, which is against compromises or the idealization of the faith.”

Does this mean that the pope rejects the Ten Commandments or the Church’s moral teaching? No! But it does mean that the gift we receive from the Holy Spirit is meant to free us from our tendency to negotiate, compromise or cling rigidly to precepts and laws and customs when we receive the Holy Spirit and the Spirit empowers us to do concrete opportunities to live our faith in the here and now. “[This is] the concreteness of the faith that leads to frankness,” the pope says, “to bear witness even to the point of martyrdom, which is against compromises or the idealization of the faith.”

“The wind blows where it will and you hear the voice, but you don’t know where it is coming from or where it is going,” the pope says. “So it is for anyone who is born of the Spirit. We hear the voice; we follow the voice of the Spirit without knowing where it will end. Because we have made an option for the concreteness of the faith and the rebirth of the Spirit!”

“May the Lord grant to all of us this paschal Spirit, of going forward along the path of the Spirit without compromising with freedom, with the liberty of proclaiming Jesus Christ as he who has come: in the flesh.”

Come, Holy Spirit! Grant to all followers of Jesus Christ the freedom to be bold and uncompromising in our witness to his truth and love!

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

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The Holy Spirit, source of our true freedom

Mientras celebramos la festividad de Pentecostés este fin de semana, es una buena ocasión para recordar las enseñanzas del papa Francisco sobre los dones que recibimos de la tercera persona de la Santísima Trinidad: el Espíritu Santo.

El Espíritu Santo es la fuente de la vida de Dios en nosotros. Es el don de la libertad que nos permite cobrar vida al dar testimonio del Evangelio sin titubear ni temer, sin restricciones ni rigidez.

En una homilía reciente del relato del Evangelio sobre el encuentro de Nicodemo con Jesús, el papa comentó sobre la afirmación de Jesús de que él debe “nacer de nuevo” (Juan 3:3). Esta afirmación confundió a Nicodemo, como probablemente nos confunde a nosotros también.

Para comprenderla mejor, describió el episodio de los Hechos de los Apóstoles que narra el momento en que Pedro y Juan curaron al tullido y los Doctores de la Ley no sabían cómo “esconder” lo que compartieron.

“¿Acaso esto significa que el papa rechaza las disposiciones de las Ordenes? ¡No!, sino que, al recibir el Espíritu Santo, tenemos que actuar con valor y coraje, dialógicamente, con los demás en la fe y la caridad, es decir, con el espíritu del Espíritu Santo.”

Este es un tema importante para el papa Francisco quien destaca la tendencia de algunos cristianos a ser leguleyos en su ejercicio de la fe. La gente que sabe hacer diferentes decisiones sin réplica, que sabe hablar abiertamente y con coraje, de la verdad, sin compromisos.

El viento sopla donde quiere y oyes su voz, pero no sabes de dónde viene ni a dónde va, nos dice el papa. “Así es para quien ha nacido del Espíritu: siente la voz, sigue el viento, sigue la voz del Espíritu sin saber dónde terminará. Porque ha hecho una opción por lo concreto de la fe y el renacimiento en el Espíritu Santo.”

“El que el Señor nos dé a cada uno de nosotros este Espíritu pascual, de ir por los caminos del Espíritu sin compromisos, sin rigideces, con la libertad de anunciar a los seguidores de Cristo la libertad de ser dueño de la fe que lleva a la franqueza, al testimonio hasta el martirio, que está contra los compromisos o la idealización de la fe.”

“Doctrines and spiritual beliefs” (from Pope Francis’s papal bull “Misericordiae Vultus”)
Students learn about mobile ultrasound RV’s role in promoting life

GREENWOOD—“Gabriel” usually only receives a few visitors a day, sometimes none. But on May 11, “Gabriel” received scores of middle school-aged visitors, an unusual age group to be popping in.

“Gabriel” is a recreational vehicle—an RV. “Gabriel” serves as the mobile ultrasound unit for Great Lakes Gabriel Project, a pro-life ministry that offers assistance to women and families facing difficult or unplanned pregnancies.

The mobile unit and the volunteers who help in its operation visited SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School in Greenwood as part of the school’s Faith in Action focus for the month of May. Following is a look at the purpose of bringing the mobile ultrasound unit to the school, and the role the RV and its volunteers play in helping pregnant women choose life.

“Right here … are people outside of that bubble”

Each month, SS. Francis and Clare students and staff participate in a different Faith in Action project “to see how they can live out their Christian values,” explains Father Stephen Giannini, the parish’s pastor.

The May focus on pro-life issues “is specifically to help form their hearts and minds in how we are called to help each other and see each other as children of God, and that all people are created in God’s image,” he says.

The May Faith in Action project always involves a donation drive for the parish’s Gabriel Project, which works in conjunction with the Gabriel Project at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, says school assistant principal Rebecca Stone. But to prevent the annual project from becoming routine, she says, “Each year, we try to give a new twist on the same thing.”

“We felt like our students” were missing out on a whole level of what the Gabriel Project does. We certainly want to continue doing the drive and helping families in that way, but the middle schoolers are ready to know some other families in that way, but the middle schoolers are ready to know some other parts of the ministry as well.”

This year, the students in grades six through eight heard a talk from a Latin woman from the Gabriel Project who works of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis, which is a recipient of the annual SS. Francis and Clare Gabriel Project donation drive.

“She talked about how the project here at the school where we donate diapers and supplies to the families [goes to] St. Patrick’s, and she showed pictures of people there and how they benefit from the things that we donate,” says Bradley Doherty, a math and religion teacher for SS. Francis and Clare’s middle school.

“She put life into perspective for [the students] and showed them how grateful we should be for all the things we have in our life, and how we should stand up and fight and be a voice for all life.”

Stone says it’s important for the middle school students to see those who are helped by the Gabriel Project.

“We live in this kind of bubble of SS. Francis and Clare, and it’s a great bubble to be in,” she says. “But we want them to understand that right here in our backyard there are people outside of that bubble.”

Offering an explanation and tour of the Gabriel Project mobile ultrasound unit served to “show another service that the Gabriel Project offers for expecting mothers,” Stone continues.

Sarah Eckhart, English teacher for SS. Francis and Clare’s middle school students, says the opportunity to see the mobile unit “is not just a one-time instance.”

“We incorporate faith in everything we do” at the school, she says. “We talk about Gospel values through all of our readings and our writing [in English class], and we try to instill those in our students. Reflecting on our experiences here is very important. We carry it through.”

Sandy Maners, a retired nurse and a member of SS. Francis and Clare Parish who volunteers on the “Gabriel” unit, says she was pleased with the students’ response during their tour.

“There was more reaction than I thought there’d be,” she says. “Several as they were walking in were like ‘Oh, wow!’ I don’t think they expected this.”

“When I was showing them the ultrasound machine and showing them how we did it, I expected a reaction from the girls. But there were a lot of boys that were paying close attention and said, ‘This is really awesome.’ It clicked with them.”

Her fellow volunteer retired nurse and parishioner Donna Kelker agrees.

“We have a Spanish interpreter, and we have pamphlets in Spanish,” she says. “The kids thought that was cool how wide-reaching [this service] can be with other cultures. After the talk on Tuesday from the last year from St. Patrick, it just kind of hit home.”

The situation is the problem, not the baby

Before students toured the RV, Kelker shared information with them about the Gabriel Project and the RV, which was made possible a few years ago by fundraising efforts and a generous donation and refitting by Mountain Comfort RV in Richmond.

Then explaining to the students that an ultrasound machine allows a pregnant woman to see her baby, Kelker noted that some pregnant women are “poor, in their teens or homeless. Maybe they’re being pressured by others to end their pregnancy.”

“Hopefully, by having an ultrasound, these moms will see their babies up on our screen, see the heartbeat, see their baby moving around, and they will choose life.”

Kelker told the students that, while free ultrasounds are available at Gabriel Project’s 1st Choice for Women pregnancy clinic on the northwest side of Indianapolis, not all women have the means to travel there.

“The RV is able to travel to where it is needed,” she said. “We go to places like Planned Parenthood and other abortion [centers] so we can meet and talk to these mothers in crisis. We try to help them realize that the baby they are carrying is not the problem—the situation they are in is the problem.”

Carrying two volunteer nurses, the mobile unit alternates primarily between two abortion centers in Indianapolis four days a week, but also travels to other locations. After the SS. Francis and Clare event on May 11, the mobile unit headed off to provide an ultrasound to a woman considering an abortion.

“In an interview with The Criterion, Kelker explains that women come to the RV by being walked over by a Gabriel Project sidewalk counselor standing by the drive of an abortion center, by scheduling an appointment using the number displayed on the side door of the RV, or just by seeing or by word of mouth.”

“When they come into the RV, we have them sit here,” says Kelker of a table surrounded by a booth that seats up six.

“They fill out a form, then Kelker says the nurses ‘try to develop a relationship with them.’ What’s going on in your life? Why are you here? What kind of problems are you having? How can we help you?”

Clients can take a free pregnancy test in the RV’s restroom, or lie down for an ultrasound at the back of the unit. Those who accompany them can sit at the table and see the results on a TV monitor in the front of the RV. If the woman is far enough along, she is given a photo of her baby.

“The photo is not all the women receives. “We give them pamphlets that show the baby’s development from conception, we give them prenatal vitamins,” says Kelker. “We have women who make baby blankets, and we let them pick one of those out. It helps them realize this is a real baby.”

“The most women seen in the usual four-hour stint that Kelker recalls was four.”

“Some days we see nobody,” she adds. “We sit in here and pray. If we see someone go in [the abortion center], we’ll call a Holy Hour.”

Of the women they see, says Kelker, “Sometimes we never know the end of the story; if they decide to keep the baby or not to keep the baby.”

“But we do have some moms we develop a relationship with. We have one mom who comes frequently just to make sure her baby is OK.”

Developing a relationship is key.

“We tell them to come back whenever,” Kelker says. “We just try to build a relationship, so they know it’s not just about the baby, it’s about them as a person.”

(For more information on the Great Lakes Gabriel Project, its services and how to volunteer or donate, log on to www.glgbproject.org.)
Participants in mini-marathon, 5K give witness to vocations

By Sean Gallagher

Benedictine Brother Peduru Fonseka knows what it means to be a minority. He grew up in Sri Lanka, an island nation off the southeastern coast of India, where Christians make up only 7 percent of the national population.

So it didn’t bother him to be part of the Race for Vocations team, made up of only 300 of the more than 22,000 people who participated in either the OneAmerica 500 Festival Mini-Marathon or the Finish Line 500 Festival 5K, both of which occurred on May 6 in Indianapolis.

The team, sponsored by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, was unified in wearing blue shirts that promoted vocations and in spirit through prayer for vocations during the events and in their training leading up to them.

“In that the Church is a Catholic faith” wondered Brother Peduru, a member of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad. “We all represent the minority.”

In addition to religious like Brother Peduru, there were also many seminarians, priests and lay Catholics who were part of the team.

“People in religious life, married life or consecrated single life, whichever vocation it may be, are all walking in this journey toward holiness together as a team,” he said. “We are all running this journey toward holiness together as a team.”

Cardinal Tobin: Being with those in need, distress communicates Christian message

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Meet our future deacons

On June 24, the third class of permanent deacons for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will be ordained at St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. There are 21 men from across central and southern Indiana who will be ordained.

This week’s issue of The Criterion continues a series of profiles of these men that will run in the weeks leading up to that important day.

To see previous profiles, go to www.archindy.org/deacons.

Juan Carlos Ramirez

Age: 50
Wife: Gabriela
Home Parish: St. Bartholomew Parish, Columbus
Occupation: Quality Director

Who are the important role models in your life of faith?

My role models are my parents, Rogelio and Guadalupe. My father worked very hard to give us a better life. He was what I call “a professional student.” He always was looking to learn something new. My mother was in charge to let us know the don’ts and do’s of life. She helped us to make faith in God our foundation, to rise above our circumstances, follow our heart and show compassion for others.

What are your favorite Scripture verses, saints, prayers and devotions?

Among my favorite Scripture verses are Lk 15:11-32 and Mt 5:1-11. My favorite saints are St. Peter and St. Paul. My favorite prayer is the Our Father. And my favorite devotions are the Liturgy of the Hours and the rosary.

Deacons often minister, formally or informally, to others in the workplace. How have you experienced that already and what do you anticipate doing in the future?

I’ve found what people need more than anything is often just someone to listen. And it helps if that someone has walked the same road, had the same struggles and understands all the problems that go with family life.

Why do you feel that God is calling you to become a deacon?

God has given me many gifts in my life. I feel called now to use these gifts serving God’s Church, and to use them in his service.

How do you hope to serve through your life and ministry as a deacon?

The best way to describe the impact diocesan has had on my life is that it has been transformational. The program has nurtured me in my faith journey. I have learned through self-reflection to better identify God’s presence in everyday life, including my family, friends, co-workers and even those who I do not know well, yet consider me a friend.

Matthew (Tom) Scarlett

Age: 47
Wife: Kathy
Home Parish: St. Mary in Mitchell and St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
Occupation: Vice President of Sensors Division, Tri Star Engineering

Who are the important role models in your life of faith?

Both of my parents are still quite firm and confident in their faith, and give me that enduring foundation on which my journey through the diaconate formation solidly rests. Along with them, my wife constantly shows me how faith in adversity is quiet strength to accomplish anything, a welcome reminder when challenges are great.

What are your favorite Scripture verses, saints, prayers and devotions?

My favorite Scripture verse is Mt 6:25-34. I pray often to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and find comfort and consolation by offering my prayers up through her intercession.

Deacons often minister, formally or informally, to others in the workplace. How have you experienced that already?

The workplace has been a great ministry for me and continues to challenge me. I have discovered fellow Christians at my secular job that slowly began sharing their journeys of faith over the course of work days. In a time when prayer in the workplace may not be viewed as acceptable for all, a band of Christians have formed to openly share morning prayer as a group to start the workday.

Why do you feel that God is calling you to become a deacon?

We are all called to serve God. Listening for this call can be challenging, and it can be difficult to listen in spite of the noise of daily life and keep putting one foot forward while prayerfully considering this as the direction God is calling me.

How will being ordained a deacon have an impact on your life and family?

Over the course of formation, my family has watched my growth into a role of service and accept it as the obvious thing to do. As for my teenage kids, I will still be Dad who likes to help people.

Spirited people’ lead to special grant for East Deeney schools

‘Our partnership has built a spirit of “we” not “me.”’ Shared liturgies, professional development, brainstorming among school and parish leaders, marketing our four schools as one vibrant ministry, and the recent fantastic grant for STEM opportunities have all had positive impacts on relationships and school vitality.’

—Joseph Therber, president of Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis

For Msgr. Paul Koetter, the special gift of $225,000 represents more than one of the current great success stories in the Indianapolis Archdiocese.

The gift also represents potential success stories in the future—a grade school and high school students in the deaconery will benefit from the funds being used for programs that promote education in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

The success stories—current and potential—are the result of a unique collaboration called the Eastside Catholic School Partnership—a partnership among Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School and the elementary schools of Holy Spirit, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) and Our Lady of Lourdes.

Since 2010, the four schools have worked together to strengthen the quality of Catholic education on the east side of Indianapolis, combining their resources and their ideas to enhance enrollment, marketing and planning efforts.

The partnership has worked so well that a Catholic family—who wishes to remain anonymous—has donated $225,000 so the schools can collaboratively increase their STEM education efforts.

“It’s a Catholic family here in the archdiocese,” says Msgr. Koetter, the pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis. “The wife has been a teacher and has an interest in the archdiocesan victim nº.

“Around the archdiocese,” says Msgr. Koetter, “there are Lk 15:11-32 and Mt 5:1-11. My favorite saints are St. Peter and St. Paul. My favorite prayer is the Our Father. And my favorite devotions are the Liturgy of the Hours and the rosary.

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Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

Courses offered:

• Coursed on the Catechesis of the Church from CDU
• All 13 classes for the Certificate in Lay Ministry available online
• 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners
• Employees also receive reimbursement upon course completion

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

Report sexual misconduct now

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesanvictim nº.
Faith

Pope Francis wants the Church to listen to young people

By Christopher White

Pope Francis hasn’t shied away from talking about his own mortality in recent months—and perhaps that’s the reason he’s started to focus on young people over the past year.

During April, his monthly prayer intention was for young people of the world. That same month, at a prayer vigil in anticipation of World Youth Day 2019, he declared: “Every young person has something to say to others. He or she has something to say to adults, something to say to priests, sisters, bishops and even the pope. All of us need to listen to you.”

And that’s precisely why Pope Francis has chosen the theme of “Young people, faith and vocational discernment” for the next meeting of the world Synod of Bishops that will take place in October 2018.

This, however, will not be a time of lecturing. Instead, it will be an occasion for collaboration, motivated by the pope’s conviction that “by listening to young people, the Church will once again hear the Lord speaking in today’s world.”

Much of what has driven this papacy has been an eye toward the future. In his encyclical “Laudato Si’,” Pope Francis asked the Church that will be tomorrow’s future in a way that not only serves our present circumstances, but that of future generations.

In naming cardinals from remote regions of the world, he has redirected our focus to a Church that is growing and thriving, and he’s invited the rest of the world to consider their example.

So it should come as no surprise that Pope Francis is now concentrating on today’s youth—the constituency of the Church that will be tomorrow’s future families, priests, religious men and women, and lay faithful that will shape the Church over the 21st century.

Here at home in the United States, an honest assessment serves as a sobering reminder that there’s much work to be done. A 2016 study from the Public Religion Research Institute revealed that young Catholics are leaving the Church at a faster pace than any other religious group in this country, and according to the Pew Foundation, the vast majority of Catholics who leave the Church do so before the age of 23.

While some may see this as cause for despair, Pope Francis is seizing this as an opportunity and inviting the universal Church to do the same. A primary theme of this papacy has been creating a “culture of encounter”—one that is motivated by engagement and seeking understanding.

That’s why the preparatory document for this synod concludes by posing questions attempting to better understand the plight of young people today.

Young people from around the world have been asked to consider both practical questions (such as how the language of today’s world has been absorbed into sports, art, music and other areas) and spiritual concerns (e.g., “What does spiritual fatherhood mean in places where a person grows up without a father figure?”).

For Pope Francis, the Church must be guided by the concrete realities that affect the faithful. This was true for the previous synod meeting on the family, and it will prove equally true for this gathering on young people. It’s a recognition that he so often uses the paradigm of accompanying and the images of becoming neighbors and walking alongside those journeying in faith together.

Just as neighbors and friends do in our everyday lives, the Church will attempt to engage in the practical concerns of young people. The synod preparatory document, like the synod meeting itself, will address matters of employment, immigration, sexual exploitation, drug trafficking and the growing tide of secularization that makes embracing the faith difficult.

This is an approach that is rooted in an understanding of the importance of relationships and realizing that individuals must feel loved, known and cared for, before they can be challenged and changed.

Or as the preparatory document declares: “In the task of accompanying the younger generation, the Church accepts her call to collaborate in the joy of young people rather than be tempted to take control of their faith.”

In one of his first major papal documents, “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”), the pope tasked all of us to become “joyful messengers of challenging proposals.”

Today it’s a reminder that demands of Christian life are great—but ultimately are the source of joy and salvation. It may seem countercultural to invite the youth of the world to re-evaluate their lives in light of the Gospel and consider a new way of living, but fortunately there’s precedent for that.

Two thousand years ago when a ragtag gang of young fishermen were approached and asked to do the same, their consequential “yes” changed their lives and that of the world. For a world that’s looking for hope and a new way of living, Pope Francis is hoping that this invitation to young people might just have a similar outcome.

(Christopher White is director of Catholic Voices USA and a columnist for Catholic News Service.)

Social media can be effectively used to proclaim the Gospel in secular society

By Matt Palmer

The “greatest generation” had radio and television stars. Baby boomers and Generation X had movie and rock legends. For millennials and their younger brothers and sisters, celebrities come from places like YouTube, Facebook, Netflix, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter.

Vine, the now-defunct quick clip video social network, lifted some people up to superstar status in YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Netflix, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have all emphasized people might want to learn more.

Broadcasting life is natural for millennials. Podcasts have undergone a massive renaissance thanks in large part to iPhones, National Public Radio and thousands of upstart podcasters around the globe.

When I worked at The Catholic Review newspaper in Baltimore, I would often record my interviews, write a 500-word story and then have hours of unused audio. Editing and uploading that material as a podcast took the story further and allowed listeners to more closely identify with the people I interviewed.

Pope Francis’ use of Twitter proves daily that the Gospel’s message can be shared in less than 140 characters. Simple, inspired and creative messaging—by text, video, images and memes—changes hearts in secular culture all the time.

The same holds true in the Catholic world. It’s amazing how a meme featuring a quote from the pope or a bishop can reach and engage millions.

That’s the lesson learned. If we want to change the culture, we should let it change as well, at least in positive ways. The call to evangelize is daunting, but our faith has endured for 2,000 years for a reason. Our ancestors evangelized by adapting their presentation of the timeless Gospel to the times.

Now it is our time to accept that challenge. Our faith depends on it.

(Matt Palmer is social media strategist for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and a former reporter and social media coordinator at The Catholic Review in Baltimore.)

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Observing some of Father Pancho’s work in Guatemala

Last week, I wrote about a visit I made to Guatemala in 1993 and introduced you to a priest everyone calls Father Pancho. He served 50,000 parishioners in 82 Catholic parishes in 82 villages in the hills where there was once nothing but banana plantations. One of the villages we visited consisted of 10 families who had organized in 1986 and bought 78 acres of good land. To do so, they got a loan from a institute backed by USAID at 12 percent interest. The institute dictated what the families could grow—a few cash crops for export to the United States. When the villagers couldn’t pay back the loan, the interest rate was increased to 23 percent.

Then Father Pancho got involved. He negotiated a fair loan, and bought 78 acres of good land. Then he got them started planting fruit trees, corn and trees for firewood. They built more stable homes and installed electricity from a company Father Pancho helped create.

It’s All Good/Patti Lamb

Faith and God should reside at the center of our radar

Recently at work, our team encountered an unanticipated setback. We were called to an impromptu stand-up meeting to address the challenges. Our manager gathered us to share her thoughts and answers to key concerns.

She did a great job of giving us clarifying information and communicating her vision for moving forward, despite new challenges. Due to the nature of the topic, however, the environment was tense, and the stress was palpable.

At the end of the meeting, our boss asked if there were questions. One gentleman raised his hand and admitted that his question was off topic. That gave our fearless leader a smile. She had been keen deep in the dilemma de jour, and she was thrilled to talk about anything other than what had recently been the office noise.

His question—something about the lack of ample time—was connected with increased in the cost of parking—was far removed from anything that required the immediate attention of this weary bunch.

There was an awkward pause in the room.

Our manager responded simply with this: “Thanks for the question. I can tell you right now that it’s not on my radar at this time, and, right now, I can’t even speak to that.”

She had a task at hand, a focus, and she couldn’t entertain trivial matters.

The episode at work that day served as a sort of wake-up call for me and caused me to reflect. Lately, I’ve been distracted by life’s random twists, which has made several very important priorities fall off my radar. I suppose I could call these faith distractions.

I shared this story with some friends, and they admitted that they, too, are dealing with issues that consume their focus. The issues they shared ranged widely. One friend is tackling monstrous debt and the associated strain. Another is coming to terms with a diagnosis while some other friends are working to settle a legal matter.

I think we all have issues that surface at times, hijacking center stage, which should be God’s territory. He should be at the center of our radar.

The work meeting that day reminded me of Jesus’ parable of the Sower. He is the One who knows to love and to serve God, and to get to heaven.

My faith affirms that when my priorities are aligned with God’s will, life’s challenges won’t seem like such big waves. They will be more like small ripples. But I need to be reminded of this.

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Putting sound sense, greater awareness into a march

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Heinrich

2017 has become the year of marches not only in Washington, but throughout the world. The definition of march includes the ability to do in-depth reasons surpass an analysis of a question. „Marches have changed the face of America for the better. This can be seen in the way marches have affected social justice movements, sacrifice and strong faith in their cause, and if God’s wisdom is included.”

Evicted: The U.S. housing crisis

My husband and I are sitting on our front porch on a gentle spring evening, reading “Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City.” By Habitat for Humanity, this book, which won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction, if you thought you knew how bad America’s housing crisis is, read this book and think again.

At the same time I was making my way through this harrowing chronicle of cockroaches, clogged toilets, broken windows, filthy carpeting and people’s every waking moment being spent in the curb in repeated evictions, I watched a program on Public Broadcasting Service’s “Frontline” called “Poverty, Politics and Profit,” a combination investigative piece by National Public Radio (NPR) and “Frontline.”

It, too, explores the housing crisis in America. This may be the worst housing crisis we’ve seen since the Great Depression era, and as with so many bad things, the horrors are falling chiefly on the poor.

More than that, the lack of affordable housing is causing poverty. The majority of poor renting families pay half or more of their income to pay rent.

Every year, said “Frontline,” 2.5 million people are evicted nationally. Rents are going up at a rate of 1.2 percent a year, a result of the 2008 recession, which pushed millions out of their homes and into the rental sector.

Desmond’s book chronicles the lives of eight families in Milwaukee from 2008 to 2017. Racial profiling and poverty is a heartbreaking tale of people spending just about everything on rudimentary and virtually unlivable shelter. There’s no money in being a slumlord, and Desmond introduces you to some of them, too.

The other program is less well-known: The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit is a federal program providing billions of dollars to states to issue tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation or new construction of rental housing targeted for use by the poor. This tax credit developers an incentive to develop low-income housing, and some great projects have resulted.

A fraud has been alleged as well. “Frontline” and NPR examine the following billions of dollars of fraud discovered in south Florida along with the misunderstandings resulting from these fraud cases will destroy what was essentially a good idea.

But some, like Tama LeBlanc, who is a lawyer in Grassy Lake, Iowa, see the need for much greater oversight. There have been, they said, “Frontline” seven audits of the program in 29 years. Yes, only seven audits of a program worth billions per year.

Meanwhile, the government is phasing out the program.

What can we do? We can urge our representatives to support the tax credit program that is helping millions in America settle and finding. Without fraud, this program could be producing many more affordable units.

Then, visit unshelter.org to learn what’s going on in your area and how you might help.
Pentecost Sunday
Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings
Sunday, June 4, 2017
• Acts 2:1-11
• 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13
• John 20:19-23

Pentecost, the feast celebrated on this weekend, is the greatest day of the Church’s year, save for Easter and Christmas. It is interesting in that it is the only ancient Jewish feast still observed by the Church.

In the beginning, Christians almost invariably were of Jewish origins. Quite early in Church history, the Apostles took the Gospels far and wide. As a result of these missionary efforts, many came into the Church who were not of Jewish backgrounds.

When the Church was born, a series of political upheavals were causing great stresses in traditional Judaism. All these developments meant that the attention that once would have been paid by early Christians to Jewish feasts, just as the Lord observed them, faded and eventually ended altogether. Pentecost is the lone exception.

For Jews, Pentecost celebrates God bringing them together as a people. More than just ethnic or genetic unity was achieved in this act. They were unified as a people in their mission to be true to God and to profess God before all the nations. Christians see Pentecost as a holy day for them also, recalling the moment when the Holy Spirit poured new life into the Apostles. Receiving strength and power from the Spirit, the Apostles then went forward to proclaim salvation in Christ to the entire world.

This first reading recalls this event and its aftermath. Under the leadership of St. Peter, the Apostles were united and emboldened. They never relented from their mission of declaring Jesus as Lord and Savior. According to tradition, all but one died as a martyr.

For the second reading, the Church presents a passage from St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians. Absolute faith in Christ, as God and as Savior, is key. We are called to accompany this absolute commitment, and indeed enables faith, humans are confused and liable to fatal mistakes.

St. John’s Gospel is the source of the last reading, which is a resurrection narrative. The risen Lord appears before the Apostles. As God, possessing the Holy Spirit, Jesus gives the Apostles the power to forgive sins, extraordinary because only God can forgive sins.

Reflection
For weeks, the Church has exalted in the resurrection, joyfully proclaiming that Jesus is Lord, and that Jesus lives! As this season has progressed, the Church, through the readings at Mass, also has called us to realize what effect the resurrection has upon us and human history. The salvation achieved by Christ on Calvary will never end. It is for all time and people.

How will it be accomplished? Through the Lord’s disciples in every consecutive age.

Since true conversion requires a completely free and uncompromised individual decision, true Christians are bound together in the Church. They share their identity with Christ and the grace of the Spirit. As Acts reveals, they are part of the Church still gathered around the Apostles, under the leadership of Peter, and still looking for guidance and direction from the Apostles, in their successors, the bishops.

Through the Apostles and their successors, the Church links itself to the Savior, to the Father, and to the Spirit. The Church lives, and in it Jesus lives.

Christians, however zealous, cannot be ships passing each other silently in the night. They bear together the mission to bring God’s mercy and wisdom to the world. Christians belong to and are one in the Church.

On this feast, the Church’s lesson therefore is very relevant here and now. We belong, as did the first Christians, to an apostolic Church, a community created by God to bring divine mercy to weary and wandering humans.

This feast invites us into the framework of holiness formed by Jesus. None of us is alone in faith. We share a common bond with Christ. We share in the mission of Christ.

A
The Catholic Church has always recognized the fact that Christ’s life, death and resurrection was more than enough to cover the debt of our sins. Penitential practices, far from downplaying the dimensions of Christ’s redemption, show our profound gratitude for all that Jesus suffered for us.

The penance that the Church has consistently commanded—based in the Scriptures, links us to Christ in his suffering, shows sorrow for our sinfulness, strengthens us to resist temptation, opens us to the Holy Spirit and gives us grace to perform works of charity.

The Jews of the Old Testament often fasted as a sign of their repentance: “I turned to the Lord God, to seek help, in prayer and petition, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes” (Dn 9:3). And personal sacrifice was endorsed by Jesus, who fasted for 40 days before beginning his public ministry and who once said, “when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face … and your father who sees what is hidden will repay you” (Mt 6:17-18).

In his Letter to the Colossians, St. Paul mysteriously says that in his own sufferings, “I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the Church” (Col 1:24).

Over the centuries, the Church has not seen in this a denial of the incalculable of Christ’s death, but as an affirmation of the Lord’s invitation to us to join our own hardships to Christ’s suffering, and so to offer them up as a penance for sin.

O
Belong to a large parish and find my affiliation with it meaningful and positive—except for one thing. I’ve struggled with this, as I don’t want to be unkind, so I would appreciate your guidance. One of our regular song leaders is difficult for me to listen to.

I understand that he is a volunteer and I don’t expect professional musicians, but he is always half a step flat, cannot read music and sings very loudly. Parishioners visibly show their difficulty with his singing. Attending Mass at a different time is usually not an option for me, or I would try that.

Recently, when our parish surveyed us on what we thought about programs and services, I tried as tactfully as possible to address this situation—but several months have passed and this gentleman continues to lead us in song. I would think that he might be able to sing in a less prominent way—perhaps as a member of a choir, but not as a solo singer. (Missouri)

First, I should say that there’s a fair amount of subjectivity when judging musicians. If, though, parishioners’ discomfort is as universal as you suggest, the time has come for action. Since you’ve already tried raising the issue individually—apparently without result—the next step would be a more concerted effort.

I’d suggest that you find a couple of other parishioners who feel as you do and go together to speak your pastor. Parishioners voice their discomfort as universal as you suggest, the time has come for action. Since you’ve already tried raising the issue individually—apparently without result—the next step would be a more concerted effort.

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column.

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the “My Journey to God” column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to “The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2306 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org.”

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God is no warlord claiming victory with enemies’ blood, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—If it seems hard to find God in this world, it is because he chooses to be with us, Pope Francis said.

“God is no warlord claiming victory with enemies’ blood,” the pope said on Friday in an Easter blessing to a home in a public housing complex in Ostia, a Rome suburb on the Mediterranean Sea.

Continuing his series of talks on Christian hope, the pope looked at the Gospel of Luke’s account of the two disciples traveling on the road to Emmaus after Jesus had risen from the dead.

In essence, we are all like those two disciples,” he said. Just when life seems to be going well, “we find many failures there are in the life of every person.

In the story, the pope said, the disciples are bitter and sad, their hope was merely human, and it easily becomes bitter and sadness.

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“Yes, hope sometimes never comes cheap—it always comes through defeat.” 

Easter blessing

Pope Francis greets residents as he gives an Easter blessing to a home in a public housing complex in Ostia, a Rome suburb on the Mediterranean Sea on May 15. Continuing his Mercy Friday visits, the pope blessed a dozen homes in Ostia. (CNS photo/Osservatore Romano)
The touching scene led to smiles and even tears for everyone who witnessed it. That emotional moment also helps explain the generous gift that the late Father Hilary Meny made to the endowment of Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison. As the students performed, Father Meny beamed and moved his hands in what the president described as "a hands-on leader and proven administrator who is extremely grateful to have had the support of Father Meny for many years, and will be eternally grateful for his generosity." The president's responsibilities also include the spiritual growth of its members, social services, and legislative communities (at both regional and local levels). We embrace diversity and are proud to teach students of High School Youth Ministry. The primary goal of the position is to develop and St. Louis de Montfort Catholic Church has an opening for a full-time Coordinator of Youth Ministry and/or Certificate in Youth Ministry. Interested candidates are invited to send a letter of interest to: Ken Rosenbaum, Chair, St. James Principal St. James Catholic School St. James seeks a caring, child-centered principal for its Pre-Kindergarten through grade 8. Founded in 1906 and with a current enrollment of 130 students, St. James has a culture of "Today as I walk around campus, I always find myself picking up trash wherever he would be," recalled Kahn, a 1987 graduate of Shawe. "My thoughts were always like, 'Why is he always picking up trash on campus?' and Pope John XXIII School, both in Madison. As they headed to a state musical competition in 2014 in Evansville, Ind., the 45 members of Shawe's first marching band made a special stop in nearby Haubstadt to salute Father Meny just shy of his 100th birthday. It was the band's way of thanking and celebrating the priest, who led the efforts long ago to establish the two Catholic schools in Madison. As the students performed, Father Meny beamed and moved his hands like he was conducting the students. "You came a long way to say thank you," he told the band members. "That you did this for me is wonderful." Father Meny's love for the two schools is reflected in the gift that he left Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School and Pope John after he died at the age of 101 in 2016—a gift of $360,000 that was just recently announced. "It is fitting that Father Meny would choose to support the schools with a lasting legacy as he was instrumental with respect to Shawe being built and Pope John after he died," said Robert Barlow, president of Prince of Peace Parish. Barlow added that the organization "is extremely grateful to have had the support of Father Meny for many years, and will be eternally grateful for his generosity." Father Meny's connection to Madison began in 1949 when he became pastor of the former St. Patrick Parish. He served in the area for more than 40 years, according to Phil Kahn, president of the two Prince of Peace schools. Father Meny "is still viewed as an iconic figure connecting both the Catholic community for the parish and the schools," Kahn said. "He was seen as a 'do-it-all' priest. Father Meny was not only the pastor but the administrator and the bookkeeper, and he mowed the grass and helped fix things around this community and Shawe and Pope John. With Father Meny's gift, Shawe will create an annual fund of $10,000 to support the activities of the band, art and theater programs, Kahn said. A new sign will also be added to the front of the entrance to the Father Hilary Meny Gymnasium. And another $8,000 was used to buy a new stage curtain for the gym. One of Kahn's favorite memories of Father Meny extends back to his youth. "When I was in school at Pope John and Shawe, you would always see him out walking the campus and picking up trash wherever he would be," recalled Kahn, a 1987 graduate of Shawe. "My thoughts were always like, 'Why is he always picking up trash on campus?'" "Today as I walk around campus, I always find myself bending over and picking up the trash that I see. It drives me crazy to see trash on our beautiful campus. I truly believe that Father Meny felt the same way. He was a great pastor and leader. He was always setting a great example for all of us to live by.” ~ POSITION OPENING ~ The Indianapolis Council of St. Vincent de Paul is now seeking candidates for its presidency. This position is voluntary in nature and has a 3 year term beginning October 1, 2017. Candidates for this position must be able to: • Lead a team of Vincentians who are committed to serving the needy within the Central and southeastern communities of Indianapolis • Work through District and Conference Presidents, as well as operating unit leaders and board members, to be the Council’s voice to the Catholic, social services, and legislative communities (at both regional and local levels). The president’s responsibilities also include the spiritual growth of its members, financial solvency of the organization, and compliance with governance and policies. Interested candidates are invited to send a letter of interest to: St. Vincent de Paul Attn: Council President Nominating Committee 3001 E. 30th St. – Indianapolis, IN 46218 or one can email: cmm.2007@hotmail.com Coordinator of High School Youth Ministry St. Louis de Montfort Catholic Church – Fishers, IN St. Louis de Montfort Catholic Church has an opening for a full-time Coordinator of High School Youth Ministry. The primary goal of the position is to develop and oversee a Youth Ministry program for teens in the parish in grades 9-12 and oversee and ensure Confirmation preparation. Qualifications: • Bachelor’s degree in Theology/Religious Studies or equivalent • Experience in a parish youth ministry program, prefer 2+ years in a paid position • Demonstrated skills in program organization and administration • Practices a deep prayer life rooted in regular participation in the Sacraments of the Catholic Church • Willingness to work a very flexible schedule (many evenings and weekends required) • Performs preference in a collaborative, creative process within a team • Eclesial Lay Minister Certification and/or Certificate in Youth Ministry (or willingness to pursue) Interested applicants should send a cover letter and resume to: Sandy Schrader St. Louis de Montfort Catholic Church 11441 Hague Road • Fishers, IN 46038 sschrader@oldsfishers.org "Do-it-all’ priest makes generous gift to Catholic schools in Madison By John Shaughnessy For Sale MAUSOLEUM CRYPT SPACES at Calvary Cemetery, 435 W. Troy Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46225. These crypts are located in Building II, Calvary Mausoleum, Corridor C Left, Crypt number 13 and 15. Tier D (entombments- side-by-side). Currently valued at $14,000.00 for the pair will consider $12,000.00. Contact Chris at 317-781-9742 or email chunderwood38@msn.com LITTLE FLOWER PARISH 4720 E 13th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46201 For Sale - Two Commercial Buildings. We currently have a full-time daytime position for a highly motivated person to fill an immediate opening, preferred for someone who is familiar with building and grounds. Applicant must have general knowledge of maintenance and custodial duties related to School and Church buildings. Applicant will work in conjunction with Maintenance Director and Night Custodian to maintain St. Little Flower’s Campus. Applicant must be able to do heavy work, with some use of equipment for floor cleaning. Previous work experience in maintenance preferred. Evening Custodian We also have an opening for a full time custodian to do cleaning and light maintenance in the school building on Monday through Friday evenings from approximately 3 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. Applicant must be motivated to work, for the most part independently. Applicant must be able to do heavy custodial work, with some use of equipment for floor cleaning. Interested persons may pick up an application at the parish office, Monday thru Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. E., Center Parish Office by Door 11 or Door 13. No phone calls please. Principal St. James Catholic School St. James seeks a caring, child-centered principal for its Pre-Kindergarten through grade 8. Founded in 1906 and with a current enrollment of 130 students, St. James has a culture of "Today as I walk around campus, I always find myself picking up trash wherever he would be," recalled Kahn, a 1987 graduate of Shawe. "My thoughts were always like, 'Why is he always picking up trash on campus?'" 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Health Care Trusted and Compassionate Care Serving people with Autism & Developmental Disabilities Medicaid Waiver (I/C & I/F) Residential, Community, Respite & PAC Services Staff screened and trained Kathy and Terry Husser (317) 255-7700 www.HusserSpecialCare.com Career Opportunities Available ADVERTISEMENT IN The Criterion The Criterion Friday, June 2, 2017 Page 15
Knowing that Pope Francis frequently has quoted the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Trump presented Pope Francis with a large gift box containing five of the slain civil rights leader’s books, including a signed copy of *The Strength to Love.*

“I think you will enjoy them,” Trump told the pope. “I hope you do.”

After meeting the pope, Trump went downstairs to meet Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, and Archbishop Paul Gallagher, the Vatican foreign minister. He was accompanied by Rex Tillerson, U.S. secretary of state, and H.R. McMaster, his national security adviser. The meeting lasted 50 minutes.

Tillerson later told reporters that climate change did not come up in the meeting with the pope, but that U.S. officials had “a good exchange on the climate change issue” with Cardinal Parolin.

“The cardinal was expressing their view that they think it’s an important issue,” Tillerson said. “I think they were encouraging continued participation in the Paris accord. But we had a good exchange on the difficulty of balancing addressing climate change, responses to climate change, and ensuring that you still have a thriving economy and you can still offer people jobs so they can feed their families and have a prosperous economy.”

Asked how Trump responded to Cardinal Parolin’s encouragement to stick with the Paris climate agreement, Tillerson said: “The president indicated we’re still exploring this issue.”

Although the president and Pope Francis are known to have serious differences on issues such as immigration, economic policy and climate change, Tillerson told reporters 11 days before the meeting that he would be taking up for a decision when he return from this trip. It’s an opportunity to hear from people. We’re developing our own recommendation on that. So it’ll be something that will probably be decided after we get home.”

Tillerson also told reporters he did not know what Trump meant when he told the pope, “I won’t forget what you said.”

The Vatican described the president’s meetings with both the pope and with top Vatican diplomats as consisting of “cordial discussions,” with both sides appreciating “the good existing bilateral relations between the Holy See and the United States of America, as well as the joint commitment in favor of life, and freedom of religion and of conscience.”

“It is hoped that there may be serene collaboration between the state and the Catholic Church in the United States, engaged in service to the people in the fields of health care, education and assistance to immigrants,” the Vatican said.

The discussions also included “an exchange of views” on international affairs and on “the promotion of peace in the world through political negotiation and interreligious dialogue, with particular reference to the situation in the Middle East and the protection of Christian communities.”

Because of the pope’s weekly general audience, Pope Francis and Trump met at 8:30 a.m., an unusually early hour for a formal papal meeting. The early hour meant Pope Francis still could greet the thousands of pilgrims and visitors waiting for him in St. Peter’s Square.

Reaching the St. Damasus Courtyard of the Apostolic Palace, where the U.S. flag flew for the morning, Trump was welcomed by Archbishop Georg Ganswein, prefect of the papal household, and a formation of 15 Swiss Guards.

Although the president and Pope Francis are known to have serious differences on issues such as immigration, economic policy and climate change, the pope told reporters 11 days before the meeting that he would look first for common ground with the U.S. leader.

“There are always doors that are not closed,” the pope told reporters on May 13. “We have to find doors that are at least a little open in order to go in and speak about things we have in common and go forward.”

After leaving the Vatican, the president was driven across Rome for meetings with Italian President Sergio Mattarella and Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni.

The discussions also included “an exchange of views” on international affairs and on “the promotion of peace in the world through political negotiation and interreligious dialogue, with particular reference to the situation in the Middle East and the protection of Christian communities.”

The second article was about the budget plan the Trump White House released on May 23. *L’Osservatore Romano,* the Vatican newspaper, noted that it contained cuts in subsidies “for the poorest segments of the population,” and “a drastic—10 percent—increase for military spending.”

What is more, the newspaper said, “the budget also includes financing for the construction of the wall along the border with Mexico. We are talking about more than $1.6 billion.”