Pope amends Church law on Mass translations, highlights bishops’ role

MEDELLIN, Colombia (CNS)—In changes to the Code of Canon Law regarding translations of the Mass and other liturgical texts, Pope Francis highlighted respect for the responsibility of national and regional bishops’ conferences. He gave the changes, released by the Vatican on Sept. 9 as Pope Francis was traveling in Colombia, noted the sometimes tense relationship between bishops’ conferences and the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments over translations of texts from Latin to the bishops’ local languages. The heart of the document, which applies only to the Latin Rite of the Church, changes two clauses in Canon 838 of the Code of Canon Law. The Vatican no longer will “review” translations submitted by bishops’ conferences, but will “recognize” them. And rather than being called to “prepare and publish” the translations, the bishops are to “approve and publish” them.

Archbishop Arthur Roche, secretary of the worship congregation, said under the new rules, the Vatican’s “confirmatio” of a translation is “ordinarily granted based on trust and confidence,” and “supposes a positive evaluation of the faithfulness and congruence of the texts produced with respect to the typical Latin text.”

Pope Francis made no announcement of immediate changes to the translations currently in use.

The document is titled “Magnum Principium” (“The Great Principle”) and refers to what Pope Francis called the “great principle” of the Second Vatican Council that the liturgy should be understood by the people at prayer, and therefore bishops were asked to prepare and approve translations of the texts.

Pope Francis did not overturn previous norms and documents on the principles that should guide the various translations.

By John Paull (USCCB) encouraged Catholics to promote the Catholic faith.

See POPE, page 15

Street evangelizers near farmer’s market hope their efforts create a heavenly harvest

By John Shaughnessy

COLUMBUS—It’s a sun-splashed Saturday morning, a gorgeous late-summer day that brings a crowd to the Columbus farmer’s market for fresh fruits, vegetables and baked goods, with a sampling of music and art. Less than a block from the weekly outdoor market, at the corner of 5th and Brown, Kelley Snoody and Deacon Russell Woodard have set up their own stand—this one covered with rosaries, Miraculous Medals and pamphlets promoting the Catholic faith.

Their hope is to share a religious item and start a conversation with the passersby lured by the farmer’s market, all with the intent of extending the true gift they want to offer—a closer relationship with God through the Catholic faith.

“It’s the kind of “putting yourself out there” evangelization that many Catholics aren’t comfortable with, and both Snoody and Deacon Woodard acknowledge it’s an effort that has taken them out of their natural comfort zone. But it’s also led to some memorable moments, from the time a little girl glowed when she was given a pink rosary that matched her pink shoes, to the time a man asked for a rosary to send to his ill Catholic friend in Florida.

“He came back the next week and thanked us,” says Deacon Woodard, parish life coordinator at Holy Trinity Parish in nearby Edinburgh.

There was also the Saturday morning when their group received a visit from members of the Columbus Police Department. The officers came to check them out after someone called the police to complain about their efforts.

“They said, ‘Are you charging anything?’ We don’t. Then they said we’re OK,” recalls Deacon Woodard, noting that the interaction with the police officers was as low-key, respectful and non-confrontational as the approach their group uses when they interact with people.

“There are at least a couple of people who don’t want us there. But the majority of people are fine. We recognize that not everyone wants us there, but we’re there to offer—a closer relationship with God through the Catholic faith.”

See EVANGELIZERS, page 10

Bishops encourage Catholics to continue outpouring of support for victims of hurricanes Harvey and Irma

MIAMI (CNS)—In the wake of two devastating hurricanes in just two weeks, the executive committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) encouraged Catholics to continue their generous outpouring of prayers and financial support for people whose lives have been impacted by the storms that have killed more than 100 people and destroyed countless homes and businesses.

“With lives and livelihoods still at risk in Texas, Florida, the Virgin Islands and throughout the Caribbean, we pray for the safety and care of human life in the wake of two catastrophic hurricanes,” the bishops said in a statement released on Sept. 12. “The massive scale of the dual disasters and the effect it has on communities, families and individuals

See SUPPORT, page 15

A mobile home, destroyed by Hurricane Irma, is seen on Sept. 11 in Naples, Fla. (CNS photo/Bryan Woolston, Reuters)
ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM COLOMBIA (CNS)—Politicians who call themselves pro-life must be pro-family and not enact policies that divide families and rob young people of a future, Pope Francis said.

Flying from Colombia back to Rome late last week, Pope Francis was asked about U.S. President Donald J. Trump’s decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which allowed some 800,000 young people brought to the United States illegally as children to stay in the country, working or going to school.

Trump announced on Sept. 5 that he was phasing out the program; his decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which allowed some 800,000 young people brought to the United States illegally as children to stay in the country, working or going to school.

“Because I’ve heard the president of the hope he rethinks it a bit,” the pope said, from the legislature, but from the executive families is not something that will bear study the details of the issue. However, he was phasing out the program; his decision was strongly criticized by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Pope Francis said he had heard of Trump’s decision, but had not had time to study the details of the issue. However, he said, “uprooting young people from their families is not something that will bear fruit.”

“This law, which I think comes not from the legislature, but from the executive [branch]—if that’s right, I’m not sure—I hope he rethinks it a bit,” the pope said, “because I’ve heard the president of the United States speak, he presents himself as a man who is pro-life, a good pro-lifer.

“If he is a good pro-lifer, he understands that the family is the cradle of life and its unity must be defended,” the pope said.

Pope Francis said people must be very careful not to dash the hopes and dreams of young people or make them feel “a bit exploited,” because the results can be disastrous, leading some to turn to drugs or even suicide.

Pope Francis spent only about 35 minutes answering journalists’ questions and commenting on his five-day trip to Colombia. After he had answered eight questions, Greg Burke, director of the Vatican press office, told the pope it was time to sit down because the plane was approaching an area of turbulence.

The pope went to the journalists’ section of the plane still wearing a small bandage on his left eyebrow and sporting a large bump, which had turned black and blue, on his cheek. Rather than joking with reporters, he told them that he had been reaching out of the popemobile to greet people and turned, “I didn’t see the glass.”

While his trip back to Rome did not have to change flight plans like the flight to Colombia on Sept. 6 did because of Hurricane Irma, Pope Francis was asked about the apparently increasing intensity of hurricanes and other storms and what he thinks of political leaders who doubt climate change is real.

Talking about his five-day stay in Colombia, Pope Francis said he was “really moved by the joy, the tenderness of the appearances of the Blessed Mother of hurricanes and other storms and what he thinks of political leaders who doubt climate change is real.

How has the rosary affected your life of faith? This year marks the 100th anniversary of the appearances of the Blessed Mother to three children in Fatima—appearances in which she instructed the children to spread the word about the importance of praying the rosary for peace in the world, for peace in people’s hearts.

In honor of the Blessed Mother’s request, and since October is the month of the Holy Rosary, The Criterion is inviting readers to share their stories of how praying the rosary has made a difference in their lives and the lives of people they know.

Please send your responses and your stories to assistant editor John Schaugnessy by e-mail at jschaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime number where you can be reached.

“Anyone who denies this must go to the scientists and ask,” he said. “They speak very clearly. Scientists are precise.”

Pope Francis said he read a report citing a university study that asserted humanity has only three years to reduce the pace of climate change before it’s too late. “I don’t know if three years is right or not, but if we don’t turn back, we’ll go down, that’s true.”

“Climate change— you can see the effects,” the pope said. “And the scientists have told us clearly what the paths to follow are.”

Everyone has a moral responsibility to act, he said. “And we must take it seriously.

“It’s not something to play with,” the pope said. “It’s very serious.”

“Politicians who doubt climate change is real or that human activity contributes to it should speak to the scientists and then decide. And history will judge their decisions.”

Asked why he thinks governments have moved so slow on this act, Pope Francis said he thinks it’s partly because, as the Old Testament says, “Man is stupid, a stubborn one who does not see.”

But the other reason, he said, is almost always money.

“Talking about his five-day stay in Colombia, Pope Francis said he was “really moved by the joy, the tenderness”

**Official Appointment**

**Effective September 20**

Rev. Martin Rodriguez, returning from a temporary leave of absence, to associate pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis.

*(This appointment is from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.)*

**Correction**

In an article in the Sept. 1 issue of The Criterion about Catholic school students viewing a total solar eclipse on Aug. 21, the name of Laura Swessel was misspelled. She is a science teacher at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville.

**Also in This Issue**

**NEWS FROM YOU!**

Do you have something exciting or newsworthy you want to be considered to be printed in The Criterion? E-mail us: criterion@archindy.org

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Pope Francis answers questions from journalists aboard his flight from Cartagena, Colombia, to Rome on Sept. 10.
CARTAGENA, Colombia (CNS)—Pope Francis said he had no magic words or special recipes for Colombians seeking peace, but rather he wanted to listen to them, learn from them and travel a bit of the road with them.

He had a small accident on the road on Sept. 10 in Cartagena, the last city and last day of his five-day trip: Riding in the popemobile down a street packed with people who wanted to see him, Pope Francis turned and struck his face on the edge of the window, cutting his eyebrow and provoking a sizable bump on his left cheekbone.

While the bruise would fade, the overall experience of the trip was likely to linger. “I really was moved by the joy, the tenderness ... the nobility of the Colombian people,” he later told reporters flying back to Rome with him.

Before ending the trip with a Mass in Cartagena, Pope Francis had visited Bogota, Villavicencio and Medellin. He celebrated a large outdoor Mass in each city and had a packed schedule of meetings with government officials, bishops, youths, children living in a group home, and with priests, religious and seminarians.

The painful realities of Colombia’s recent past were openly acknowledged with tears and hugs on Sept. 8 in Villavicencio. At a national prayer service for reconciliation, a former member of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, commonly known as FARC, Cardinal Ruben Salazar Gomez of Bogota told the pope on Sept. 7 that the process of building peace “has become a source of political polarization that every day sows division, confrontation and disorientation.”

But the cardinal also brought up an issue Pope Francis repeatedly warned could undo any hope for peace. “We are a country marked by deep inequalities and inequities that demand radical changes in all fields of social life,” the cardinal said. “But it does not seem we are willing to pay the price required.”

No peace deal can last without addressing the poverty and social exclusion that led so many people to fight in the first place, the pope said. “If Colombia wants a stable and lasting peace,” he said on Sept. 10, “it must urgently take a step in this direction, which is that of the common good, of equity, of justice, of respect for human nature and its demands. Only if we help to untie the knots of violence will we unravel the complex threads of disagreements.”

With St. Peter Claver, the 17th-century Jesuit saint known as the Apostle of the Slaves, never far from his mind, Pope Francis asked Colombians to ensure all the nation’s people are part of its progress.

The pope ended his trip in the city where the saint died and his relics are venerated. St. Peter Claver ministered tirelessly to the African slaves brought to the Colombian port town in the 1600s, and “he faced strong criticism and persistent opposition from those who feared that his ministry would undermine the lucrative slave trade,” the pope said, standing in front of the church built in his honor.

St. Peter Claver knew what the Gospel was calling him to do, the pope said, even though it was not popular at the time. With great respect for what Colombians have suffered and admiration for the faith and hope they managed to maintain despite a 52-year civil war, Pope Francis asked them to look beyond their old behaviors and alliances and ask what new thing God might want of them. “We are called upon to be brave, to have that evangelical courage which springs from knowing that there are many who are hungry, who hunger for God, who hunger for dignity, because they have been deprived,” the pope said at a Mass in Medellin on Sept. 9.

Throughout the trip, it seemed like the pope had all the time in the world. He seemed confident. No more than 2,000 people could gather on the street outside the nunciature for the evening encounter, but it may have been Pope Francis’ favorite part of the day.

Throughout the trip, he urged every Colombian to make some gesture of peace: to forgive someone or help someone. On a small scale, that’s what the groups outside the nunciature were doing, whether that meant offering shelter and a future to street children, promoting the social inclusion of young people with Down syndrome or strengthening fragile families.

With the doors of the apostolic nunciature where he was staying just a stone’s throw away, Pope Francis would watch the evening’s groups perform a folk dance or sing songs or play instruments. One or two or three of them would make a little speech describing what their organization does. And the pope would respond with a few remarks of his own.

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Every day, we are called to be our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers.

Sept. 11, 2017, will go down in history as a day when our nation and the world were responding to powerful hurricanes that battered the United States and parts of the Caribbean, dealing with the aftermath of a devastating earthquake in Mexico, and listening to an earnest plea from Pope Francis for the Trump administration to reconsider the rescinding of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. And those stories barely cover the breadth of headlines our 24-hour-news cycle offers us on that day.

As was the case 16 years ago to the day when terrorist attacks in New York City, Shanksville, Pa., and the Pentagon left nearly 3,000 people dead, we believe people of faith will rise to the challenge of assisting those affected by the tragic circumstances. As our Catholic faith and as the tenants of other faith traditions teach, we are called to respond as brothers and sisters who are always ready to respond to the call to help our neighbors in need. Hurricane Harvey’s and Irma’s wrath to date have resulted in more than 100 deaths across the affected areas and billions of dollars of damage. The Sept. 7 earthquake that struck the Pacific coast of Mexico registered a magnitude of 8.1 and left nearly 96 people dead and hundreds injured.

And the pope made it clear he was disappointed with the Sept. 5 rescinding of the original DACA decision. That original decision allowed some 800,000 young people known as “Dreamers” to remain in the United States illegally as children, to stay in the country, work or go to school. Changing that policy was potentially going to divide families and rob young people of a future, the pope said.

The Holy Father even went so far as to say that politicians, including President Donald J. Trump, who call themselves pro-life must be pro-family and not enact policies that divide families. “If [President Trump] is a good pro-life, he understands that the family is the cradle of life, and its unity must be defended,” Pope Francis said.

The pope’s words about DACA echoed what the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said in a Sept. 7 statement clarifying their position on advocacy and care for migrants and refugees.

“It is preposterous to claim that justice for immigrants isn’t central to Catholic teaching. It comes directly from Jesus himself in Matthew 25. ‘For I was hungry and you gave me food … a stranger and you welcomed me’” (Mt 25:35), the bishops wrote. “Immigrants and refugees are precisely the strangers we must welcome. This isn’t Catholic partisanship. The Bible is clear: welcoming immigrants is indispensable to our faith. ‘Caring for and about the “Dreamers” is nothing more than trying to carry out that seemingly simple, but ultimately incredibly demanding, commandment,’” the bishops continued. “It is a commandment found throughout sacred Scripture, reaching back to the Hebrew scriptures, including Leviticus, ‘When an alien resides with you in your land, do not mistreat such a one’ (Lev 19:33). In fact, the Church has been pro-immigration since God called Abram to leave Ur: ‘Go forth from your land, your relatives, and from your father’s house to a land that I will show you’ (Gn 12:1). To suggest otherwise is absurd. A disciple of Christ, we understand that the wounds in life—whether they be hurricanes, an earthquake or spiritual discussion about being brought to America by their parents—extend beyond politics or partisanship. Our lives of faith are rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who calls us to love—not judge—our neighbor.

What the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, and other life-changing events that happen nearly each day teach us is that we must always be ready to offer our loving hands to assist our brothers and sisters in need.

With an assist to Our Sunday Visitor, we share this Xavier University website, www.xaveri.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/our-times-of-natural-disaster.cfm, which offers timely advice when dealing with natural disasters:

While it is comforting to know the many ways that local, regional and national government workers and officials are responding to a natural disaster,” the Jesuit website says, “you may find yourself asking if there is anything you can immediately do to help? There are three practical ways:

• Pray.
• Donate to a relief agency.
• Become a trained volunteer for the next event.”

Our witness as disciples of faith does not end after we respond to a particular tragedy or life challenge. It is a lifelong vocation that we are called to live each day.

May we always embrace and live that tenet.

—Mike Krokos

Letters to the Editor

After DACA decision, Franciscans urge bipartisan effort to pass DREAM Act

The Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis in Oldenburg is deeply disappointed by the decision of President Donald J. Trump’s administration to suspend the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order, and break our nation’s promise to 800,000 young Dreamers. We urge congressional passage of the bipartisan Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, which would convert DACA into federal law.

The Dreamers are young people brought to the United States by their undocumented immigrant parents. They have grown up in the United States, serve in the U.S. military, attend our finest colleges and universities, are employed by many respected companies, and have distinguished themselves as good neighbors and members of our communities.

With DACA’s promise of gaining lawful status, 800,000 Dreamers applied for DACA, providing the U.S. government with all of their personal information.

The withdrawal of DACA not only breaks that promise, but makes the Dreamers easy targets for deportation because Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) now knows who they are, and where they live, work and attend school. Dreamers are our neighbors, students and friends. They need our support, our prayers and our action.

Franciscan Sister Maureen Irvin Franciscan Sister Magee Niemer Franciscan Sister Joantua Koors Franciscan Sister Mary Beth Gianoli Leadership Team Sisters of St. Francis Oldenburg, Ind.

Photos of Archbishop Thompson reveal much, Criterion reader says

The Criterion’s photographs of new Archbishop Charles C. Thompson have revealed a man who may be benevolent, devout, cheerful and charitable.

These photos of the archbishop remind me of the late New York Gov. Al Smith, known as “the Happy Warrior.” May God grant Archbishop Thompson a long and happy life.

Joseph Mucca Pittsboro

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God” (Communio et Progressus, 116). Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to determine the length of letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are preferable. Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
El cuidado de la creación de Dios y de la casa común

“Recuerdo un dicho popular que dice: Dios es el que ve cómo cuidamos sus pequeños. En cada uno de nosotros, y hemos sido testigos de que a veces nos manifiesta en pequeños poblados y zonas rurales de nuestra arquidiócesis, que conmociona belleza natural con las exigencias de ganarse la vida y criar familias en el corazón de los Estados Unidos, suministran la prodigalidad de las cosechas de Dios durante todas las estaciones del año. Para ser buenos administradores de este magnífico regalo de la creación de Dios debemos primero reconocer el papel que Él desempeña como autor y verdadero dueño de todo lo que existe, tanto el visible como el invisible. En un disco que no se ceda a la pérdida de este regalo, este regalo que es un don gratuito que tenemos que cuidar y poner al servicio de nuestros hermanos, también de las generaciones futuras. También en este caso hay que apelar a la responsabilidad de cada uno para que, con espíritu fraterno, se persigan políticas respetuosas de nuestra tierra, que es la casa de todos nosotros.”

Tal como lo han afirmado todos los papas recientes, la Iglesia no solamente tiene el compromiso de promover la protección de la tierra, el agua y el aire como dones del Creador destinados a todos, sino que por encima de todo, la Iglesia trata de proteger a la humanidad contra la autodestrucción. Al respetar y cuidar la vida humana, la Iglesia insiste en que amplímos nuestra capacidad de respetar y cuidar el espacio de vida del medio ambiente. La Iglesia se manifiesta en los criterios que el Papa Francisco recientemente ha expresado en la Carta Vaticana titulada “Caritas in Veritate” (“Caridad en la verdad”), el patrocinio de la Iglesia contra la agricultura y la construcción de edificios en áreas de la ecología.

La constancia del cuidado de Dios hacia la humanidad, como una tarea de todos, implica que el Papa Francisco expresó en el “Se cita, la piedra angular de la creación de Dios y de la casa común.”

Caring for God’s creation and our common home

“I recall a popular saying: God always listens to those who are concerned about the earth. When we speak of something as ‘ours or our stewardship,’ how often do we not respect it or consider it a gracious gift which we must care for and set at the service of our brothers and sisters, including future generations. Here too what is crucial is responsibility on the part of all in pursuing, in a spirit of fraternity, policies respectful of this Earth which is our common home.”

As all recent popes have affirmed, the Church is not only committed to promoting the protection of land, water and air as gifts of the Creator destined to everyone, but also all the Church seeks to protect humankind from self-destruction. By respecting, and caring for, human life, the Church insists we grow in our ability to respect and care for God’s gift of creation! The beauty of God’s creation is evident across our 39 counties of central and southern Indiana. Our urban centers and surrounding suburban communities call for a particular kind of stewardship, one that places the needs of the poor and vulnerable squarely before our eyes. The small towns and rural areas of our archdiocese, which combine natural beauty with the challenges of making a living and raising families at the center of America’s heartland, provide a bounty of God’s fruitful harvest through all the seasons of our common home.

In order for us to be good stewards of this great gift of God’s creation, we must first acknowledge God’s role as the author and the true owner of everything that is—both the visible and the invisible universe.

Our proper role as stewards is to express our gratitude, in words and in action, and to do our part to nurture and protect all that the Creator-God has entrusted to our care. For this to happen, it is essential to develop a profound relationship between human beings and the environment that mirrors the love of God for all creation.

This is why “caring for our common home” begins with caring for one another—all our sisters and brothers, but especially those who are most vulnerable. Respect for the dignity of all human life flows from, and reinforces, our care for our common home.

We are called to be responsible stewards of God’s creation. Let’s pray that all of us can respond to this call with love and respect for human life and for all God’s handwork. ❭
**Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish hosting comedian Tom Leopold on Oct. 6**

Comedian Tom Leopold will present “A Comedy Writer Finds God” at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 5022 Central Ave., in Indianapolis, at 7 p.m. on Oct. 6. The New York-based writer/comedian will speak about his unconventional conversion from Judaism to Catholicism. His funny, smart and non-crude Catholic experience of Catholicism offers a refreshing perspective. Cocktails and appetizers will be available at 7 p.m., and the show starts at 8 p.m. Tickets are $30, or reserved seating is available by purchasing a table for eight for $200. To purchase tickets, go to thimmykore.com. For more information, call 317-257-2266. †

**Mass celebrating feast of St. Mother Theodore Guérin is set for Oct. 3**

A Mass celebrating the feast day of St. Mother Theodore Guérin will be celebrated at St. Mary Church in Beech Grove on Sept. 15, 1967. The couple was married at Holy Name of Jesus Church in Beech Grove on Sept. 15, 1967. They have two children: Eileen and David Sielker. The couple celebrated with friends and family at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish and will go on a cruise in January. †

**VIPS**

Bob and Theresa (Feldman) Sielker, members of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 2. The couple married at St. Mary Church in Greensburg on Sept. 2, 1967. They have two children: Eileen and David Sielker. The couple also has six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. They celebrated with Mass and a dinner and reception hosted by their children. †

**Hermitage blessing**

Father Gerald Kirkhoff blesses water during a service on Aug. 20, marking the completion of a two-year renovation at the St. Paul Hermitage, a home for the elderly and infirm operated for more than 50 years by the Sisters of St. Benedict at Our Lady of Grace Parish in Beech Grove. Each resident received a container of holy water to bless their newly renovated living space. Assisting Father Kirkhoff are Benedictine Sisters Heather Jean Foltz, left, Rebecca Marie Flitterer and Jennifer Mechtild Holder, the monastery’s prioress. (Submitted photo)

**Swing Dance fundraiser for Agape Performing Arts scheduled for Sept. 29**

The Fall Harvest Swing Dance to raise funds for Agape Performing Arts Company will be held at the Knights of Columbus McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware St., in Indianapolis, from 7-11 p.m. on Sept. 29. Agape Performing Arts Company is a ministry of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, with productions taking place at McGowan Hall. The ministry strives to help youth performers grow in confidence and character. Within a loving community, they work to create high-quality theater productions that are good family entertainment. Their productions help young people strengthen their performing arts skills while also reinforcing their self-control, teamwork, diligence and patience. Tickets for the swing dance are $10, and refreshments and drinks will be available for purchase. For more information, e-mail agapeshow@gmail.com or call 317-631-4373. †

**Being and Belonging retreat for separated and divorced Catholics set for Oct. 6-8**

“Being and Belonging...A Retreat for Separated and Divorced Catholics” will take place at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5553 E. 56th Street, in Indianapolis, on Oct. 6-8. This retreat is open to all faiths. Retreatants are invited to relax as they journey with others, listening to their stories and exploring a common loss. The program will help deepen an understanding of the healing process. For more information, contact the Office of Pro-Life and Family Life, or The Criterion at 317-545-7681. For additional information, contact the Office of Pro-Life and Family Life at 317-236-1586, or e-mail diane@archindy.org. †
Anybody can evangelize

By Father Patrick Beidelman

“An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people’s daily lives; it bridges distances … it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others … standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be. It is familiar with patient expectation and apostolic endurance.” (Pope Francis, “The Joy of the Gospel,” #24)

I hear many folks talk about the remarkable example that they were given by their parents.

Our former archbishop, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, speaks of his mother frequently. He calls her “The Mother of all Tobins,” and he shared many stories about her during his time with us, many of which spoke of her strong and enduring faith in his life and in the life of many others.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson gave a moving tribute to his father at the end of his installation Mass in July, speaking of his father “as the greatest example of faith, hope and charity of any man” he knows.

It’s just not bishops who talk about their parents’ witness to the faith. Many couples on their wedding day take time to say thanks for the love, guidance and example of a parent in the ways of faith.

So many people talk about their parents, it almost feels clichéd for me to do it. However, when thinking about evangelization and missionary discipleship, my thoughts immediately turn to my mother, Patricia.

My mom’s example of how anybody can evangelize is an inspiration to me, especially when viewed in the light of Pope Francis’ call to each of us to focus on accompaniment, dialogue and encounter as missionary disciples. I witnessed my mom’s skill at speaking with the eyes of love, guidance and example of a parent in the ways of faith.

When thinking about evangelization and missionary discipleship, my thoughts immediately turn to my mother, Patricia.

...just to name of few? she knew how to turn an “I can’t” into an “I can” with a loving phrase: “Oh Patrick, you have other gifts.”

God knew it, and she knew it, too. We all have been created to carry out some special part of God’s mission—mine was not going to be with the Indiana Pacers.

In reminding me that I had other God-given gifts that I needed to discover, my mom was able to be a vessel of God’s love for me and to help me search for the path he wanted me to follow.

While experiencing it firsthand was great, I mostly heard about Mom’s evangelizing witness from others.

I remember a mutual friend of ours who had experienced the trauma of a divorce telling me how present my mom was to her when she shared the news of the breakdown of her marriage.

My mom interrupted her to touch her arm and say “I am so sorry,” the first person to acknowledge her loss in such a way that helped begin to break the darkness of the isolation she felt.

There was the time when the mother of the teenage daughter who had become pregnant asked Mom, “How could God do this to us?”

Mom looked her in the eye and said, “Honey, God didn’t do this to you. But he’s the one who’s gonna get you through it.”

Sometimes, it just involved reminding people that they are wonderful—which, by the way, you can see in each person when you look at them with the eyes of faith.

People would tell me over and over again, your mother is so wonderful! I would agree, stating that she’s just a “big ole charmer.” But what I really meant was that she knows how to evangelize, how to walk and talk with people as Jesus did.

Even now, in the midst of living with dementia, she’s still charming the socks off of everybody. There isn’t a nurse or caregiver who she doesn’t compliment or treat like a long lost friend. Some people may say, “I am not like that,” but I would contend, that since we’re all trying to walk in the footsteps of the Lord, then anybody can do it.

(Father Beidelman is the executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization.)

Friends invite others to join in the joy of their faith

By John Shaughnessy

The passion of Cindy Woods and Catharine Diehr is surpassing at first.

As they begin their story, they seem like the last two people who would try to bring non-Catholics to the Catholic faith.

For 40 years, Woods left the Catholic faith of her youth, finding Mass to be boring, while Diehr has been a member of Protestant churches for most of her life, including 20 years at a mega-church.

And yet here they are, their faces glowing and their voices filled with joy—like two children at recess—as they share how both embraced the Catholic faith within the past five years, and how they have tried all these ideas to bring other people to a closer relationship with God, even walking through the neighborhoods of their parish to invite non-Catholics to a cookout marked by sizzling hamburgers, free school supplies and a warm welcome to join them at Mass.

Their smiles grow even wider as they mention how 200 people from the neighborhood came to that picnic.

And that’s just a part of the story of Woods’ and Diehr’s efforts to share their faith—efforts that they say all flow from one word, “invite.”

A turning point of faith

The story of the faith journey of the two friends begins in 2012 with Woods’ return to a defining place in her childhood—St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis. Woods graduated from the parish grade school in 1963, the same year as the current pastor of the parish. Father Robert Gilday.

“I left the Church for about 40 years, but I decided to go back,” she says. “I went to the rectory and saw Father Bob. When I went to church there, I didn’t know anyone anymore, but it felt like going home.”

Diehr noticed a difference in Woods once she returned to Little Flower, telling her friend and neighbor that she seemed happier.

“In 2013, Cindy invited me to go to the church with her,” says Diehr who is best known by her nickname “Cac.” “It felt like home. The people at Little Flower were so friendly, and her friend made me an honorary member of the Class of 1963.”

Diehr was also struck by something Father Gilday said during his homily at the first Mass she attended: “He said that Catholics don’t go out and share their faith.”

Woods felt the same way. And Diehr says the turning point of her faith came when Woods invited her to church. Both women soon saw the fruits of what could happen from a simple invitation. Diehr decided to become a Catholic. She attended through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RICA) program with Woods as her sponsor.

“My RICA team now,” Diehr says with a smile. “I realize what a great entry point it is for the Church. I love the Catholic Church. I feel a close relationship to Jesus.”

They also feel a passion to share that relationship and connection with others.

Extending the invitation

“One thing we didn’t have represented on the parish council was evangelization and community outreach,” says Father Gilday. “When Cindy rejoined the parish, she and I really took off with this. It’s important. We had over 5,000 Catholics in the parish when we were in grade school. Obviously, demographics have changed, and it’s not such a Catholic area. They try to do a lot of good things.”

Woods and Diehr formed a committee to share their faith with people in the neighborhood, a committee they decided to call, “invite.” One of the biggest efforts was the first free picnic in the summer of 2016.

“We wanted to get out to the borders of our parish,” Woods says. “I went up and down the streets of the parish, looking for people in their yards or on their porches and just invited them. I put up posters in the neighborhood stores. We made bookmarks with the Mass schedule. About 200 people came to the picnic.”

Diehr smiles and adds, “We had games for the kids, free school supplies and hamburgers. We ran out of food!”

The friends repeated the picnic this summer. They also try to connect with non-Catholic parents of school children during a special reception. And they’ve held dinner for parishioners of other ministries at Little Flower, encouraging them to share their faith when the opportunity arise.

Some of the best opportunities for the “invite” committee arose when they had a booth at the parish festival.

“Can we pray with you?”

“We gave people holy cards and Mass schedules. We also gave out necklaces with a crucifix on them. People said, ‘You don’t know how much I needed this,’ recalls Wood.

“That one gloomy lady came up and started bad-mouthing the Church. She was angry at the hand she had been dealt in life. We said, ‘Can we pray with you?’ She said yes. We prayed together, and she started crying. I hugged her, and her attitude completely turned around.”

She invited Woods and Diehr to “keep on pushing,” hoping the seeds they’re planting will make a difference to someone, at some point. Father Gilday shares that hope.

“It took a long time to get this going, but it’s going strong.” 

“We wanted to get out to the borders of our parish, and I’m very grateful to them for taking on this ministry. With Cindy finding her way home and Cac finding her way to the Catholic Church, this is something they have a passion for.”

That passion shines in the smiles of Wood and Diehr.

“The satisfaction is that we’re beginning to see people realize that a very important part of our faith is to share their joy,” Diehr says. “A lot of people don’t know they can have a truly personal relationship with Jesus. They don’t know what they’re missing.”

“We always think that people just need to be asked and invited.”

Longtime friends Cindy Woods, left, and Catharine Diehr have combined their efforts to try to lead non-Catholics to the Catholic faith at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)
Author to speak in Bloomington on tie between evangelization, catechesis

By Sean Gallagher

Evangelization, broadly understood, is the emanation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ both to those who have never heard it, and to the baptized who need to embrace the Gospel more deeply.

Catechesis is the process by which people who have been evangelized grow in their understanding and embrace their faith more intensely.

These two important aspects of the life of the Church are not understood and deepen their relationship with Christ.

Called for the development of resources and process “starts at the grassroots level and intense missionary activity, consultation, all Catholics in the United States to ecclesial reflection and action that invites the effort as “a four-year process of V Encuentro.”

A major milestone in the four-year process is the regional V Encuentro process, which is currently underway and which will eventually lead to a national V Encuentro document. The regional process began in 2017 and is expected to conclude in 2018.

The regional process includes a series of meetings and events that involve local parishes and diocesan offices. These meetings are designed to give local leaders the opportunity to reflect on the needs of their communities and to develop strategies for evangelization and catechesis.

The national V Encuentro document is expected to be released in 2019 and will be used by diocesan and parish leaders across the United States to guide their evangelization and catechesis efforts.

The document will be based on the themes of the four years of the V Encuentro process and will be informed by the reflections of the regional document coordinators and the national document coordinators.

The document is expected to have a significant impact on the Church in the United States, helping to guide its efforts in evangelization and catechesis for years to come.
Convocation focuses on the ‘great mission’ of evangelization

By Natalie Hooter

Perhaps no last words are more well-known than those of Christ to his Apostles before he ascended into heaven: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations…” (Mt 28:19)

Ken Ogorek calls this command to evangelize the “marching orders” of the Church.

“There are times when we really need to just rally around that great mission of Jesus, and remember what our marching orders are,” says the archdiocesan director of adult formation.

For that reason, Ogorek and about a dozen others from the archdiocese attended an “unprecedented” gathering coordinated by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Orlando, Fla., on July 1-4. Called the “Convocation of Catholic Leaders,” it brought together leaders from dioceses and Catholic organizations from across the nation to discuss modern challenges and opportunities for evangelizing.

The theme was “The Joy of the Gospel in America.” Attendees were asked to read Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”) prior to the convocation.

Daily themes included unity, landscape and renewal, work and witness, and a spirit of mission. The event included three Masses, an evening of Marian devotion, an evening of adoration and a eucharistic procession.

Of the 25 presenters, 12 were bishops and cardinals.

She is director of youth and young adult formation at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, and director of the One Bread, One Cup youth and young adult liturgical leadership program, a series of conferences and internships held several times at the school each summer.

Becht was one of six staff members from the school of theology who went in hopes that we would find out what’s happening on the cutting edge, and to

self-assess to see where we stack up in the U.S. in terms of ministry to young people,” she says.

In Indianapolis were contingencies from across the nation to discuss modern challenges and opportunities for evangelizing. The people who attended were there out of a true desire to embark on a new endeavor of ministry,” she says.

For Becht, the convocation was well worth the trip to Orlando in July.

“I feel like I took away something good from each session I went to,” she says. “Even though it might seem we’re in dire circumstances with young people leaving the Church, what I brought away is that everything we need to minister well to young people, we already have. We just need to find a new way to offer the ministry we have.”

The challenge with youth, says Becht, is “to help them see both our liturgy and our Church life as something that’s relevant to their lives.”

In one of the sessions she attended, discussion included the effects of social media on today’s society.

[People] long for but lack community,” she summarizes from the session. “All are connected by social media but missing face-to-face interaction. Jesus with skin on in is what people need, but social media doesn’t reach them isolated. …”

“[But] we have to go to where they are … We’ve got to find a way to reach them through that phone and motivate them to move out of that sphere to human interaction, which is what will really meet their needs.”

‘Even though it might seem we’re in dire circumstances with young people leaving the Church, what I brought away is that everything we need to minister well to young people, we already have. We just need to find a new way to offer the ministry we have.’

—Tammy Becht

Parish in Indianapolis were contagiously enthusiastic about the convocation. To describe it, they use words like, “overwhelming,” “inspiring,” “educational,” “challenging” and simply “Wow!”

The African-American couple is proving ways to become involved in marriage ministry in the archdiocese, particularly to black Catholics. Gretchen says the couple wants “to stand in faith” in an area “that we don’t think is really a focus.”

At the conference, Gretchen says they “met so many people from across the country. It was really edifying and uplifting to know that there are so many people who are working for the good of the Church and God’s people.”

“Many of the folks we met are directors of an office of family life for their diocese. It was uplifting … just the sheer number of programs and national movements and places to get involved and get information, and different approaches based on the specific need in their area.”

The Hornes, who have four children ranging in age from 8-23, found the convocation “spiritually lifting” as well as educational.

For Reggie, who entered into the full communion of the Church in 2007, that combination came especially in the form of the liturgies celebrated.

“Being in Mass with the hundreds of priests and cardinals and hundreds of priests was pretty overwhelming for me, and awe inspiring.”

For Gretchen, it was the eucharistic procession. She says of the roughly 3,000 people who attended the convocation, a “large number” participated in the outdoor procession.

“It was an incredible witness,” she notes.

Overall, says Reggie, the convocation “was a large, best-practices-sharing event. … Getting to talk to leaders from around the nation was really helpful to us.”

“It just gave you more motivation to go do the work that needs to be done in our community at home.”

Account for each soul in parish territory

As the archdiocesan director of catechesis, Ken Ogorek found the convocation to be a combination of a national ministry-specific type of gathering, with a local gathering of leaders of various ministra: “two good experiences to make one great one,” he says.

There were a lot of people there involved in specific ministries from around the nation. There were also a lot of ministries represented. That sort of gathering just doesn’t happen very often,” he notes.

Ogorek says the convocation was held “to really focus on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus with a mission, and really to help make disciples of Jesus with a clear sense of mission.”

He was impressed by the “strong sense of unity” present at the event.

“Even though there were lots of different ministries, ages, races and vocations present, a lot of what we did tied together—the worship, the prayer, the devotion—are the sorts of experiences that I have found tend to really inspire a sense of unity in Catholicism.”

He specifically noted the hour and a half of prayer held on the first evening.

“It was a beautiful Marian devotion, acknowledging that our Blessed Mother is the star of the new evangelization—she was the first disciple.”

Ogorek walked away from the convocation with several takeaways.

“One is that being a missionary disciple starts with being a disciple,” he says. “We have to put good effort into our disciple relationship with our Lord, and we have to help make disciples by God’s grace. When we do that well, I think a true disciple of Jesus can’t help but feel a sense of mission.”

Ogorek’s second takeaway had to do with reaching out to those on the fringes of society.

“If we want to reach the peripheries, we shouldn’t overlook people who are marginalized within our own parish territory,” he says. “If every parish really could account for each soul within the parish territory, we would definitely be reaching the peripheries, the peripheries we have the most ability to reach—those people in our backyard who are marginalized.”
Priests gain insight on ministry of catechesis during conference

By Sean Gallagher

The St. John Bosco Conference held each summer at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio, draws hundreds of catechetical leaders from across the country and around the world. It is a time for them to be renewed in their mission of forming people in the faith in the various settings in which they minister—parishes, schools and catechumenate camps—and among people of all ages.

Most of those who attend the conference are lay catechists, many of whom have largely assumed leadership in this field of ministry in the decades since the Second Vatican Council. Parish priests still have a role to play in catechesis, though, often through proaching, in various occasions of ministering to Catholics, and in encouraging the ministry and formation of lay catechetical leaders in their faith communities.

Three priests serving in archdiocesan parishes attended this year’s St. John Bosco Conference on July 17-20 in order to carry out more effectively the catechetical aspects of their priestly life and ministry, and to collaborate better with lay Catholics involved in this field.

Father Thomas Schleissmann’s home parish is St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, attended for the first time this summer. “Our job as priests is to elicit an evangelizing response,” Father Schleissmann said. “We’re looking at it that we’re planting seeds, and you never know where the seeds will grow.”

“We show our witness”

The seeds for the effort in Columbus were actually planted in Bloomington, the home of St. Paul Street Evangelization, a grassroots, non-profit, Catholic evangelization organization that has established more than 300 chapters worldwide since its start in 2012.

The organization caught the attention of Dr. David Hart two years ago, shortly after he and his wife Rochelle—two former Catholic conversion candidates—attended the full communion of the Church in 2015. When they became members of St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington, they soon learned it was also the home parish of Steve Dawson, the founder of St. Paul Street Evangelization. “We had an absolutely wonderful experience entering the Catholic Church,” says David Hart, a heart surgeon. “Catholic faith became much stronger, and we saw how rich the Catholic faith is. It occurred to us that no one would discover the beautiful richness of the Catholic faith unless we were able to share them and tell people about them.”

“I became involved in evangelizing when I met Steve. He was one of the new friends we made when we entered the Church. When I found out his calling was as an evangelist, I was drawn to him.”

When the Harts moved to Columbus earlier this year, they led the effort to begin evangelizing near the farmer’s market each Saturday morning through the spring and summer.

“One of the benefits of working with St. Paul Street Evangelization is they have a very good method of evangelizing. There’s no pressure,” Father Schleissmann said. “The method is easy, friendly, non-confrontational. And one of the great things about being Catholic is that there are wonderful sacramentals to give people. There is also a series of talking points for people who have fallen away. Every time we go out, it’s a cheerful outing. Ninety-eight to 99 percent of the interactions we have are positive. People who are inclined to be negative to the Catholic faith just pass on by, and that’s fine. We just pray for them, and then we show our witness. There are always four to five in-depth conversations, where people want to understand the difference between Catholicism and their brand of Christianity.”

Getting to share that answer is one of the best parts of evangelizing for Father Schleissmann.

“[People ask about] ‘It’s like a gift from God’

“Jesus is so close in the Catholic Church—in the Eucharist, in the tabernacle, in the confession,” he says. “It’s really there in the Eucharist. He’s really there in the confession. It’s just so magnificent that everybody ought to know about it.”

The enthusiasm in Hart’s voice rises even higher when he talks about the success of such street evangelization efforts. “With the mentality of planting seeds, you don’t always see the fruit of what you do. In Bloomington, I have seen several people who we met on the street who are now in the Church, going through RITE and the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults program that prepares people to become a Catholic.

“I feel like this is something that Catholics need to be doing,” says Snoddy, a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.

“You have to have knowledge, understanding, respect and inclusiveness,” he says. “You have to learn to work together. Those are the basics to work with different cultures.”

From his experience, though, Father Valdes knows there is a lot of work in recruiting the people to whom he minister.

“Father Schleissmann evaluate how he can give...
All are called in baptism to be missionary disciples

By Jen Sullivan

Pope Francis’ invitation in his apostolic exhortation “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”) to all the faithful to be “missionary disciples” has captured the hearts and minds of many (#24). So, it is only fitting that we reflect on ways to fulfill this call to live daily as a missionary disciple.

We take a closer look at Pope Francis’ words and actions that are meant as a general call, but a deeply personal invitation to each one of us. We are each called to live out the gift and meaning of our baptism by our participation in the life of the Church, and by our words and actions that witness to the transforming power of the Gospel.

Pope Francis offers his personal invitation to each of us to come to this deeper call to give evidence of what baptism means, specifically to be missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19).

“Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: We no longer say that we are missionary disciples, but rather that we are always ‘missionary disciples’ (cf. Mt 28:19). Missionary discipleship begins and grows in friendship with the person of Jesus Christ. Once we have truly experienced in a personal way the immense love and mercy of God revealed in Jesus, we will be moved to action by the light of the Gospel to anyone who stands in need of God’s mercy and love, especially the poor, the marginalized and those on the margins of life. For a missionary disciple, the love of God revealed in Jesus is not an abstract idea. God’s relentless love and forgiving mercy, experienced each day in our encounter with his word and in the sacraments, inspires and strengthens us in the daily and concrete ways that Jesus calls us to be his missionary disciples in the world.

Will we put out into the deep today?”

(Arnold Sullivan is secretary for Catholic education of the Archdiocese of Washington)

Lessons in evangelization from the early Church are still relevant today

By Daniel S. Mulhall

Pope Francis, in his 2013 apostolic exhortation “Evangelii Gaudium” (“The Joy of the Gospel”), says that the Church, the people of God, is called to go forth and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to all the world. In order to do this, all of the baptized must see themselves as “missionary disciples” (#120), embracing here and now the missionary zeal of Jesus’ first disciples.

To understand what it means to be a missionary disciple, a good place to start is with the stories that come to us from the early Church. Both the Acts of the Apostles and the New Testament epistles tell us much about the missionary dynamism experienced in the early years after Jesus’ death and resurrection.

The first missionary was Mary Magdalene, who after seeing the risen Jesus in the garden, ran to find the disciples to proclaim the good news that Jesus had indeed risen (Mt 28:1-10; Jn 20:11-18). Jesus tells Mary, “Do not be afraid” (Mt 28:10), good advice for all disciples.

After the disciples received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), they took the Gospel of Jesus out into the world. Peter, as presented in Acts 2:14-41, so enthralled the crowd with his preaching that about 3,000 people were baptized that day. Acts 3-4 tells of Peter’s willingness to proclaim the message of Jesus to powerful groups even after they tell him to be quiet.

The first disciple to be put to death for proclaiming the Gospel was the deacon, Stephen. He was stoned for proclaiming a message about Jesus that challenged people’s attitudes and beliefs. Most of the Apostles and many of the early disciples were put to death for proclaiming Jesus.

Perhaps the most effective missionary disciples—certainly the most famous—was St. Paul. Acts describes the three missionary journeys of Paul and his companions Barnabas, Silas and Timothy. See Acts 13-21 for specific details of these journeys.

So, what can we learn about being missionary disciples from these early disciples?

First, the message Jesus gave to Mary Magdalene, “Do not be afraid.” One has to be brave to proclaim the Gospel in the face of possible rejection, violence and even death.

Second, to understand that as disciples we are sent by the broader Church. We go because we are compelled by our faith, not because we seek fame or fortune. While we probably won’t have Philip’s experience of being sent by an angel (Acts 8), we will still be moved to action by the Holy Spirit.

Third, in our proclamation we offer to others what the Church believes and teaches, not our own personal ideas. St. Paul had to learn what it meant to follow Jesus before beginning his missionary journeys. Likewise, we have to prepare ourselves for the task at hand. If we are to proclaim the good news of Jesus, we must first understand it and love it deeply.
From the Editor: Emeritus John F. Fink

Last week, I wrote about the history of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in Indiana during the 1920s. It was a time when the students at the University of Notre Dame did that I mentioned last week, what were the Catholic response to the KKK? Let's do about it. Basically, suffering through it. I don't know how Father Charles Chartrand was bishop of Indianapolis during this time. One way he tried to do that was from the KKK to publish a list of Klan members in the Indianapolis Times. It's doubtful, though, that this was very good. A history of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis was this a way that happened after Bishop Chartrand decided to start the faith community in 1925: "Not everywhere, but I did visit another Catholic parish on the East Side. "Parishioner Rosemary Cleveland recalled. The Little Flower church next door was, to put it mildly, anti-Catholic. Their young daughter often sat in the window watching the church and singing songs like..."

That All May Be One

Fr. Rick Gittler

Unity is at heart of efforts to transform Lutheran-Catholic relations

From conflict to communion. Words to live by in this year of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation. Words to live by from this day forward. We move from conflict every day, all too often dramatically related, "The light of the right and sound engulfing screens large and small." From Charlottesville to Myanmar to Syria, the world grapples with how to bring an end to such conflicts.

What if the churches were to lead the way by demonstrating the healing power of communion? At 4 p.m. on Sept. 17, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Synod of Indiana and Kentucky, Bishop William G.afke, will open a discussion at Lecture Hall 150 of the Evans Center at Marian University in Indianapolis. Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz will present to the bishop. One of the focal texts Bishop Gafke will cite will be "From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017." This report is a work of the Lutheran-Catholic Commission on Unity. Let me briefly outline its content. In its first chapter, the authors reflect on the character of previous commemorations (angry, condemnatory, and continuing to promote division rather than unity). They then state that in this new ecclesiastical age, the character must change. They propose that any commemoration in this new age must reflect four elements: thanksgiving, repentance, common witness and commitment.

Chapter two outlines new perspectives on Martin Luther and the Reformation. It notes the deeper research on the early 20th-century Lutheran research on Martin Luther. It points to the many dialogue sessions and ecumenical projects which have resulted in a richer, more complete picture of the historical moment and realities at the time of the Reformation.

Chapter three provides an historical sketch of the Lutheran Reformation and the Catholic response, sometimes called the Counter Reformation. Chapter four outlines basic themes of Martin Luther's theology "in light of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogues." This section is most important to understand the benefits of dialogue and how it moves folks to common understanding—and then to unity.

Chapter five states that baptism is the basis for unity and common commemoration. There follows a call for preparations. Those involved are to note their shared joy in the Gospel reasons for regret and lament, evaluation of the past, and confession of sins against unity by both Catholics and Lutherans.

Chapter six is quite profound. It outlines five "ecumenical imperatives":

- "Catholics and Lutherans should always begin with the perspective of unity, and not from the point of view of division in order to strengthen what is held in common even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced."
- "Lutherans and Catholics must..."

Worship and Evangelization Outreach

Cheryl McSweeney

Time at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House offers a place to be with God

It's easy to go to Mass and feel connected to God. His presence is real and perfect. Most people leave knowing that they are going to the church, why we simply can't do any less with love and patience. But where? Do we find the church of Mass?

After working at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis for 13 years, I have walked just about every inch of the facility, as well as the many trails that we have winding through our woods. I have found that the community is simple, intimate and welcoming.

I've seen lives changed as a result of their time with Jesus, the retreat. Engaged couples begin to grasp the sacrament they are entering into, recovering alcoholics find forgiveness, high school students realize they are never really alone, and those who grieve always find God there. I find him in the breeze, in the crunching of the snow beneath my feet, and in the occasional meeting and simply being there for myself. There is never a time that I go in that I don't come out feeling more at peace, more comforted or more loved.

Don't misunderstand, I still attend Mass. As that is the only place to be in the presence of Christ, for the benefits of dialogue and how it moves folks to common understanding—and then to unity.

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The Sunday Readings
Sunday, September 17, 2017

The Book of Sirach is the source of the first reading for this weekend’s Mass. Sirach’s author was Joshua, the son of Nehemiah. (He should not be confused with Joshua, active centuries earlier as a disciple of Moses and leader of the Hebrews as they entered the Promised Land.) Written in Jerusalem, originally in Hebrew, Protestant Christians do not regard Sirach as inspired and part of the Bible because some scholars presumed that the book had first been written in Greek, instead of Hebrew. In fact, its Hebrew original later was translated into Greek. Evidently Joshua, son of Sirach, operated a school in Jerusalem for young men. (Young women received no formal education.) His great interest was to teach ethics to his students. Thus, this book is a testament of Jewish belief in God and of Jewish belief in right and wrong.

Likely composed less than 200 years before Christ, Sirach indicates the intellectual environment in which it appeared. It was an environment affecting even pious Jews, filled with regard for human logic, a circumstance taken from the Greeks whose military exploits had overtaken much of the Middle East, including the Holy Land.

The reading frankly calls upon its audience to forgive the faults of others, and to trust in the merciful God. Wrath and anger are hateful things, the reading insists. No one who succumbs to these faults should expect mercy from God. St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans provides the second reading.

The Church's teachings on purgatory, praying for the dead can be comforting

Q My mother passed away some time ago, and I wonder whether she is now in God's eternal embrace. How can I be sure?

A As you indicate, a Catholic who wishes to marry someone like that in the Catholic Church, and is it a lengthy process?

1 Timothy 2:2-4
Psalm 9:1-5
John 6:27-35

For such a dispensation to be granted, the Catholic church promise to continue to remain faithful to the Catholic church and to do all within his or her power to see that any children of the marriage are baptized and raised as Catholics.

As to the question of how often, and to what extent, must disciples forgive wrongs done to them. Although particular circumstances have obviously changed, people in Jesus’ day hurt each other much like we do today. We owe debts, material or otherwise, to others. We yeare. We suffer. We despar.

Q My widowed mother is getting ready to remarry, and she is very concerned that her fiancé has never been baptized. How is it to get a dispensation to marry someone like that in the Catholic Church, and is it a lengthy process? (Process)

True Christian forgiveness, however, must in all things take account of, and resemble, God. Those stinging with forgiveness are not of God.

Christian forgiveness, so powerfully noted here, but also elsewhere in the Gospels, reveals the essence of the Redemption, that in Christ we as sinners are forgiven. In turn, this reveals again that “God is love,” and that always God’s will for us is that we should live eternally (Mt 18:22).

Reflection
The Church, these weeks on the threshold of fall, calls us to be good disciples, but it takes no one down a primrose path. St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, source of the second reading, reminds us also of who we are. We are humans. All of us must cope with human imperfections. In the last analysis, we belong to God. God created us. God invites us to eternal life. God loves us. God’s will to forgive us never ends nor even pauses. Indeed, the fact that we may choose to seek forgiveness, or not, underscores the reality of our humanity. We are free. It also shows our foolishness and sinfulness at times.

While this reading from Matthew comforts us with promises of God’s mercy, it more broadly calls us to discipleship. As disciples, we must bear witness to God’s love by loving others. We must love ourselves by determining to live forever with God.

In a phrase, we must follow Jesus. The Lord loved us, even to death on the cross. ☩

Q Your words about forgiveness are not of God.

A The Church does not teach that everyone who dies must necessarily pass through purgatory before reaching heaven.

As a matter of fact, the Catechism of the Catholic Church specifies that the punishment due for venial sins can be mitigated “either on earth, or after death” (#1472). It goes on to say in the same paragraph that “fervent charity can attain the complete purification of the sinner in such a way that no punishment would remain.”

Even for those who must undergo some punishment after death—which, I would think, includes most of us—we have no idea as to just what purgatory involves or how long it lasts. It could even be instantaneous. Even so though you cannot have infallible certitude that your mother is already in heaven, she may well. Jesus said in St. Matthew’s Gospel, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven” (Mt 7:21). Since your mother, in your words, was a good mother and loved the Church dearly, she obviously tried to do what the Lord asked of her.

In any case, you might find comfort in knowing that anyone in purgatory will eventually reach heaven. Their ultimate destination has already been irrevocably determined by our merciful God.

But I would continue to pray for her, nonetheless. Praying for the dead is a sacred and long-held practice that even predates the Church—in the Old Testament. Jesus Maccabaeus “made atonement for the dead that they might be delivered from their sin” (2 Mc 12:46). And if your mother is already experiencing the eternal wedding banquet in heaven, then God will surely welcome your prayers nonetheless and apply them to others in purgatory.

Q We despair.

A As to the question of how often, and to what extent, must disciples forgive wrongs done to them. Although particular circumstances have obviously changed, people in Jesus’ day hurt each other much like we do today. We owe debts, material or otherwise, to others. We yeare. We suffer. We despar.

Q We yearn. We suffer. We do what the Lord asked of her.

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HEACOX, Mary E. (King), 80, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Aug. 23. Mother of Cindy Crafton and Donna Lebow. Sister of Steve Thomas. Grandmother of six.

HUNGERFORD, Mary E., 85, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Aug. 10. Mother of Beth White, Janet and Mike Hungerford. Sister of Ellen Stewart. Grandmother of four.

JOHNSON, Sandra, 81, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg. Sept. 5. Aunt and great-aunt of several.


LYNCH, Janette, 64, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Sept. 2. Mother of Sarah Fihnrum, Al Smith, Ashley and Samantha Lynch. Sister of Joyce and Tim Ellinger. Aunt of several.

MARTIN, Peggy, 82, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Aug. 29. Wife of Wilbert Martin. Mother of Kay Bland and Wilbert Martin. Sister and great-grandmother of five.


SWED, Dr. Jonas, J., 78, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Aug. 31. Brother of Mary Szwed. Father of Dr. Ellen Szwed, Dr. Karlyn Szwed Thompson, Dr. Joseph and Dr. Thomas Szwed. Brother of Beverly Palterino. Great-grandfather of five.

WALSER, Margaret, 89, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Sept. 1. Sister of Helen Brode. Father of Julie Minster and Irene Minster. Aunt of several.


WUENSCH, William J., 80, St. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, Aug. 28. Husband of Constance Wuensch. Brother of Lita Jones, Barb Pierle, Mike, Phil and Tom Wuensch. Great-grandfather of 27.


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HARRISON, Richard H., 81, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg. Aug. 30. Husband of Marian Harrison. Father of ...great-grandmother of 35.


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SUPPORT

The bishops shared their statement as the remnants of Hurricane Irma continued to wreak havoc along the southeastern coast of the United States, days after it leveled entire islands in the eastern Caribbean, snapping construction cranes in downtown Miami, and bringing unprecedented flooding on Cuba’s north coast. It also later resulted in flooding in parts of Georgia and South Carolina.

As The Criterion went to press, millions in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina were still without power, and many schools remained closed as city officials continued assessing the damage done to their area. Cuba was also still reeling.

“The hurricane has caused serious damage in the towns, villages and farms of the north coast of our island, from Camagüey to Holguín,” said Marta Sanchez, director of Caritas Cuba. “Flooding was caused by hurricane force winds and rains. The way from Camagüey to Santa Clara in the middle of the country, reaching as far as Matanzas and Havana along the northwest coast.”

By the evening on Sept. 10, roughly 5.7 million Florida residents were left without power. Aerial footage showed large swaths of cities like Miami and Naples, on the Gulf Coast, under water. State officials had ordered 6.3 million of the state’s approximately 21 million residents to evacuate, many headed north to stay with relatives.

“Millions of Floridians are being impacted by this storm,” Florida Gov. Rick Scott said during a news conference on Sept. 10. Earlier, the president of the USCCB called for prayers for all those in the path of Hurricane Irma.

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, whose archdiocese was hit by flooding from Hurricane Harvey, noted that people in the Caribbean had “felt Hurricane Irma’s full force.”

“Let us join in prayer for those who are in the path of Hurricane Irma, and may God bless and protect you,” he said in a statement on Sept. 9. “At a time like this, when our endurance is tested, we implore God to direct us to yet unknown reserves of strength and human compassion for those suffering so deeply. May our manifestations of love and solidarity be lasting signs in the midst of this crisis.”

The cardinal noted that, as with Harvey, the bishops’ conference would work with local dioceses, Catholic relief agencies and other groups to offer assistance.

The storm had already left a path of destruction in the Caribbean. Disaster risk analysts in Germany, estimated more than $10 billion in damages in the Caribbean, making it the costliest storm ever in the region.

The Netherlands estimated that 70 percent of the houses on St. Maarten were badly damaged or destroyed. That left 40,000 people in public shelters as Hurricane Jose approached.

The Pentagon mobilized the military to respond to the U.S. Virgin Islands, where at least four people died and devastation was widespread.

In Antigua and Barbuda, Arthur Nibbs, minister of Barbuda Affairs who was on Barbuda when Irma hit, said it was the worst storm it had ever seen.

“It was enormous. There’s nothing that is comparable. It destroyed everything that was in its path,” he said.

(For information on how to help people affected by hurricanes Harvey and Irma, go to too.el/2sC5T or visit catholiccharityusa.org.)

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments to “modify its own ‘Regulations’ on the basis of the new discipline and help the episcopal conferences to fulfill their task as well as working to promote ever more the liturgical life of the Latin Church.”

The greater oversight provided earlier by the Vatican was understandable, Pope Francis said, given the supreme importance of the Mass and other liturgies in the life of the Church.

The main concerns, he said, were to preserve “the substantial unity of the Roman rite,” even without universal celebrations in Latin, but also to recognize that vernacular languages themselves could “become liturgical languages, standing out in a not-dissimilar way to Inriginal Latin for their elegance of style and the profundity of their concepts with the aim of nourishing the faith.”

Another teaching of the Second Vatican Council that needed to be strengthened, he said, was a recognition of “the right and duty of episcopal conferences,” which are called to collaborate with the Vatican.
Let themselves continuously be transformed by the encounter with the other and by the mutual witness of faith."

• "Catholics and Lutherans should commit themselves to seek visible unity, to elaborate together what this means in concrete steps, and to strive repeatedly toward this goal."

• "Lutherans and Catholics should jointly rediscover the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for our time."

• "Catholics and Lutherans should witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world."

The full text of the report can be found at goo.gl/KuHq8h. It is an enlightening read.

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As we continue the work of the Catholic Church in central and southern Indiana, it is important to remember those who have gone before us in faith," Motyka said. "This pilgrimage will allow us to learn about the priests who served our parishes in the past and inspire us to continue to build upon the foundation they laid. Also, a pilgrimage to priests' graves on All Souls Day will remind us of the importance of praying for the souls of those who have died."

Pilgrims will board the bus at the Archbishop Edward O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 7:45 a.m. and will return at approximately 5:30 p.m.

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For more information, contact Carolyn Noone at 317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548, or e-mail cnoone@archindy.org.}

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Cornerstone blessing for Little Flower church

This photo depicts the blessing of the cornerstone of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church in Indianapolis on Nov. 26, 1961. Archbishop Paul C. Schulte can be seen in procession to the area where the future altar would stand, which is marked by a cross made from construction materials. The new church, which was completed in July 1962, was the first permanent church building for the parish, which was founded in 1925. The church building is still in use today.

All Souls Day pilgrimage to graves offers connection to local Church's past

An archdiocesan All Souls Day pilgrimage to the graves of archdiocesan priests will give pilgrims an opportunity to pray for the souls of those priests who have served the faithful of the archdiocese in previous years, and to learn about the history of the Church in central and southern Indiana.

Julie Motyka, archdiocesan archivist, and Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan vocations director, will lead the one-day pilgrimage on Nov. 2.

The pilgrimage will feature a visit to St. Joseph University Parish in Terre Haute, which is the burial place of Father Simon Lalumière, the first resident priest in the state of Indiana. Pilgrims will also celebrate Mass at the church.

From St. Joseph, the group will proceed to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, with a visit to the priests' circle in the cemetery and also to the shrine and burial site of St. Mother Theodore Guérin. The trip will conclude with a visit to Calvary Cemetery in Indianapolis to pray at the graves of priests buried there, especially several former bishops and archbishops.

Pilgrims will have the opportunity to explore these sites and to learn about the priests buried there. The archdiocesan archives also hopes to use this pilgrimage as a starting point for a project to collect photographs of the graves of archdiocesan priests buried throughout the archdiocese.

Pilgrims, as well as those unable to attend the pilgrimage, are encouraged to photograph the graves of priests buried near them and send these images to the archdiocesan archives.

Motyka said the pilgrimage will help individuals feel a stronger connection to the Catholics of the local Church’s past, and to grow in their lives of faith.

"As we continue the work of the Catholic Church in central and southern Indiana, it is important to remember those who have gone before us in faith," Motyka said. "This pilgrimage will allow us to learn about the priests who served our parishes in the past and inspire us to continue to build upon the foundation they laid. Also, a pilgrimage to priests' graves on All Souls Day will remind us of the importance of praying for the souls of those who have died."

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