



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



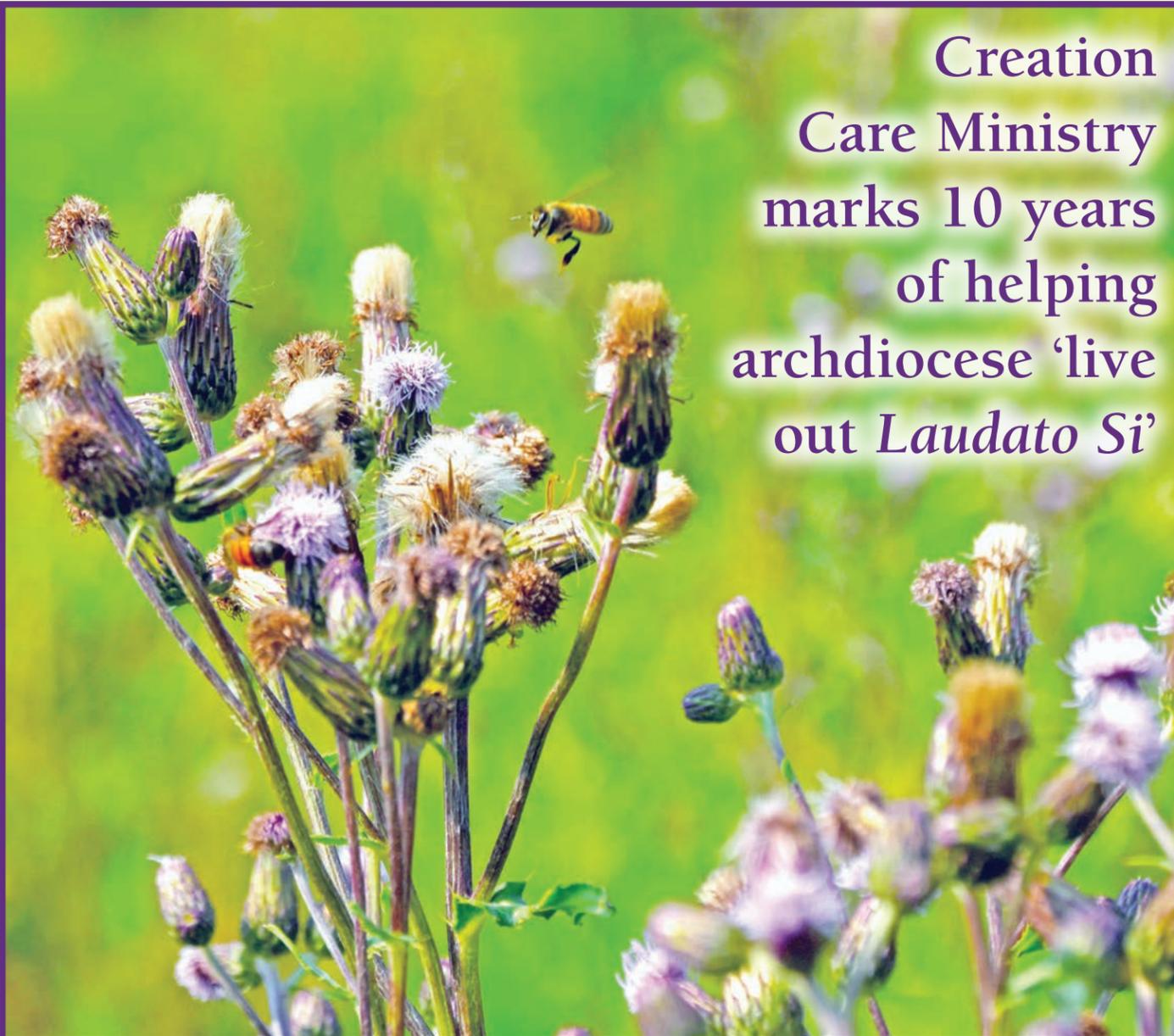
One in Christ

New column on Pope Leo XIV continues focus on the joy of the Gospel, page 7.

CriterionOnline.com

June 27, 2025

Vol. LXV, No. 35 75¢



Creation Care Ministry marks 10 years of helping archdiocese 'live out *Laudato Si'*

By Natalie Hoefler

Ten years ago, in June 2015, Pope Francis issued his landmark encyclical, "*Laudato Si'*: On Care for Our Common Home."

In it, the pope made this stark proclamation:

"The pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet's capacity that our contemporary lifestyle, unsustainable as it is, can only precipitate catastrophes, such as those which even now periodically occur in different areas of the world. The effects of the present

imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now" (#161).

Those are not passive words.

Retired Louisville, Ky., Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, then-president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, called the encyclical "our marching orders for advocacy" of care for creation and those negatively impacted—predominantly the poor—by a lack of doing so.

From those "marching orders" arose the archdiocesan Creation Care Ministry.

See CREATION, page 10

Above: In this photo from June 12, a bee flies in search of nectar in a wildflower meadow on the campus of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Fortville. The meadow was a project of the parish's Creation Care ministry as an effort to increase local biodiversity and attract pollinators like bees, birds and other insects. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

After U.S. attacks on Iran nuclear sites, Pope Leo, American bishops plead for peace

WASHINGTON (OSV News)—The U.S. on June 21 attacked three nuclear facilities in Iran, in a move that comes amid repeated pleas from Pope Leo XIV and other Church leaders for peace and dialogue in ending multiple conflicts throughout the world, including that between Israel and Iran.



Pope Leo XIV

In remarks following his June 22 *Angelus* address, Pope Leo XIV said,

"Alarming news continues to emerge from the Middle East, especially from Iran.

"Today more than ever, humanity cries out and calls for peace," the American-born pope said.

"This is a cry that requires responsibility and reason, and it must not be drowned out by the din of weapons or the rhetoric that incites conflict," said Pope Leo. "Every member of the international community has a moral responsibility to stop the tragedy of war before it becomes an irreparable chasm. There are no 'distant' conflicts when human dignity is at stake."

In a brief address to the nation from Washington on June 21, President Donald J. Trump announced that the U.S. military had carried out "massive, precision strikes on the three key nuclear facilities in the Iranian regime."

Speaking from the White House, Trump said the objectives were "the destruction of Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity and a stop to the nuclear threat posed by the world's No. 1 state sponsor of terror.

"Iran, the bully of the Middle East, must now make peace," Trump said. "If they do not, future attacks will be far greater and a lot easier. ... There will either be peace or there will be tragedy for Iran, far greater than we have witnessed over the last eight days."

See IRAN, page 2

'Be bold for Jesus': Los Angeles closes out the National Eucharistic Revival

LOS ANGELES (OSV News)—The three-year National Eucharistic Revival closed in Los Angeles on *Corpus Christi* Sunday with a call to "become eucharistic missionaries" and lead others back to the Catholic faith at a celebration scaled back due to unrest caused by recent immigration raids.

"The Eucharistic Revival does not end today but continues in each one of us, you and me," said Los Angeles Archbishop

See REVIVAL, page 3

Father Eric Augenstein, archdiocesan director of seminarians, places a host in a monstrance during a Mass for the feast of *Corpus Christi* at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles on June 22 during the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage. Father Augenstein served as a master of ceremonies at the liturgy. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)





Rescue personnel evacuate a resident from under a building at an impacted site after a missile attack from Iran, amid the Iran-Israel conflict in Tel Aviv, Israel, on June 22. (OSV News photo/Tomer Appelbaum, Reuters)

IRAN

continued from page 1

Following the strikes—dubbed “Operation Midnight Hammer” by U.S. defense officials—Iran’s foreign minister Abbas Araghchi posted on X that his nation “reserves all options” to retaliate, warning the U.S. attack would have “everlasting consequences.”

The strikes on Iran’s nuclear facilities took place just two days after Pope Leo—in an exclusive interview with journalist Ignazio Ingrao of RAI, Italy’s state media network—said he wished to renew his “appeal for peace.”

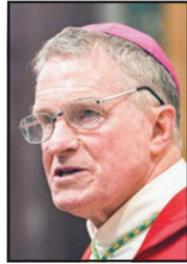
“We must try at all costs to avoid the use of weapons and seek dialogue through diplomatic means,” the pope told Ingrao. “Let us work together to find solutions.”

Moments after Trump’s media address, Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services and president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, told OSV News in a statement, “With all men and women of goodwill, we beg Almighty God to end the proliferation of acts of war and to inspire dialogue before more innocent people are harmed.

“My heart goes out to all victims and also to those whose lives are in danger,” Archbishop Broglio said. “Let us beg the Prince of Peace for an end to hostilities.”

One priest in Israel, whose name and

location OSV News is not identifying for safety reasons, said, “The response from Iran after the U.S. attack ... has been more intense.”



Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio

On June 19, Trump had indicated he would decide “in two weeks” whether to intervene on behalf of Israel in its military conflict with Iran. Israel launched “Operation Rising Lion” against Iran on June 13 as what Israel called a “pre-emptive”

strike to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapon capabilities.

Operation Rising Lion has been met by repeated retaliatory strikes on Israel by Iran—with some 24 killed in Israel and 400 in Iran, according to authorities in each country. The U.S. strikes on Iran have increased rising fears of a wider regional war breaking out.

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres said in a June 21 post on the X social media platform that he was “gravely alarmed” by the U.S. use of force, which marked a “dangerous escalation in a region already on the edge” and “a direct threat to international peace and security.”

He called for de-escalation and the rule of international law, warning, “At this perilous hour, it is critical to avoid a spiral of chaos.

Official Appointments

Effective July 2, 2025

Deacon Gary Blackwell, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Beech Grove, appointed to Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Indianapolis, and St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, Indianapolis.

Deacon Joseph Beauchamp, St. Ann Parish, Indianapolis, appointed to St. Thomas More Parish, Mooresville, while remaining at St. Ann Parish, Indianapolis.

Deacon Ronald Freyer, St. Louis Parish, Batesville, appointed to St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Morris, while remaining at St. Louis Parish, Batesville.

(These appointments are from the office of the Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of Indianapolis.) †

Correction

Due to an editing error, it was incorrectly stated in Kim Pohovey’s “Joyful Witness” column in the June 13 issue of *The Criterion* that Fathers Thomas Day, Liam Hosty and Isaac Siefker had all attended Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

Fathers Hosty and Siefker did attend Bishop Bruté. Father Day did not. †

Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

June 28–July 2, 2025

June 28 – 10 a.m.
Archdiocesan Pastoral Council meeting at St. Bartholomew Parish, Columbus

June 29 – 10 a.m. CST
Mass and altar consecration at St. Paul Church, Tell City

June 28 – 5 p.m.
75th Parish Anniversary Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, New Albany

June 30–July 2
The Institute on Catechism Convocation at University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Ill.

“There is no military solution,” he continued. “The only path forward is diplomacy. The only hope is peace.”

Pope Leo echoed those thoughts in his June 22 *Angelus* remarks, saying, “War does not solve problems; on the contrary, it amplifies them and inflicts deep wounds on the history of peoples, which take generations to heal. No armed victory can compensate for the pain of mothers, the fear of children, or stolen futures.

“May diplomacy silence the weapons! May nations chart their futures with works of peace, not with violence and bloodstained conflicts!” the pope said.

“If diplomacy is possible, war is unlawful,” Mary Ellen O’Connell, professor of law and international peace studies at the University of Notre Dame, told OSV News. “Diplomacy is needed now more than ever to end the senseless bloodshed throughout the Middle East. While Iran is correct that it is the victim of a grave breach of international law, it has no right to retaliate merely for the sake of revenge.”

The sites named by Trump in his late night address were Fordo, a key uranium enrichment facility located more than 260 feet below ground; Natanz, an enrichment facility previously targeted by Israel as part of its Operation Rising Lion; and Isfahan, a research facility also struck earlier by Israel.

The U.S. assault on Iran was conducted in coordination with Israel, which lacked the U.S. weaponry and aircraft—specifically, the 30,000-pound GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator, often called the “bunker buster” bomb, and the B-2 Stealth Bomber capable of carrying it—to destroy the underground Fordo site.

In a June 22 on-camera media briefing, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth and Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff Air Force General Dan Caine revealed that the “strike package” had in total comprised more than 125 U.S. aircraft, 75 precision-

guided missiles and 14 “bunker buster” bombs, and included a decoy mission to evade detection by Iran’s defenses. The operation had been launched at approximately 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on June 21, preceded by planning for “a matter of weeks.”

Iran confirmed the strikes, but officials claimed to have evacuated uranium and equipment from the Fordo site and said the damage was “not irreversible.”

However, Trump said the attacks, which he described as a “spectacular military success,” had left the sites “completely and totally obliterated.”

He also warned Iran “there are many targets left.”

“If peace does not come quickly, we will go after those other targets with precision, speed and skill. Most of them can be taken out in a matter of minutes,” he said.

Trump’s order, however, drew criticism from some in Congress for not briefing them first before taking military action, given the increased risks to American civilians and 40,000 U.S. military personnel in the Middle East.

Recently retired Bishop David A. Zubik of Pittsburgh was also among the first U.S. bishops, along with Archbishop

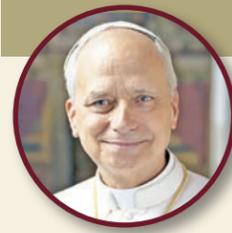
Broglio, to issue a statement on June 21 in response to the U.S. strikes on Iran, calling for prayers of peace “in these uncertain and fragile moments.”

“May our hearts resist fear and turn instead toward hope, compassion and unity,” said Bishop Zubik. “Let us ask God to guide world leaders with wisdom, protect the innocent and lead all nations toward a path of lasting peace. Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us.” †



Bishop David A. Zubik

Pope Leo’s prayer intentions for July



- **For formation in discernment**—Let us pray that we might again learn how to discern, to know how to choose paths of life, and reject everything that leads us away from Christ and the Gospel.

See Pope Leo’s monthly intentions at archindy.org/popesintentions.



Phone Numbers:

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

Price: \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

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

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

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

NEWS FROM YOU!

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

E-mail us:
criterion@archindy.org

Staff:

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



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

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

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
Copyright © 2025

Criterion Press Inc.

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



06/27/25

Moving?

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

Name _____

E-mail _____

New Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

New Parish _____

Effective Date _____

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

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

REVIVAL

continued from page 1

José H. Gomez in his homily at the June 22 Mass, which drew more than 3,000 people to the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels on a day of picture-perfect, balmy Southern California summer weather.

The liturgy, together with the procession that followed, marked the official end of the month-long 2025 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, which traveled more than 3,000 miles across 10 U.S. states from Indianapolis to Los Angeles and served as the national revival's final act.

The pilgrimage's closing weekend in Los Angeles included stops in two communities ravaged by the January 2025 wildfires, Altadena and Pacific Palisades, as well as two missions founded by St. Junípero Serra, San Buenaventura and San Gabriel.

Plans for a post-Mass festival and a procession through downtown Los Angeles on Sunday were shelved days earlier due to the unrest caused by mass raids targeting immigrants without legal permission to live and work in the U.S. But at the end of a shortened procession held inside the cathedral plaza, Archbishop Gomez briefly stepped out onto Temple Street carrying a monstrance holding the Blessed Sacrament and blessed the city of Los Angeles.

The moment was a fitting climax to an event marked by moments of silent prayer and rousing song, and attended by everyone from young families to cheery nuns and pilgrims—all expressing the kind of missionary enthusiasm that Archbishop Gomez had called for in his homily.

"Jesus is counting on us to bring people back to the Church, back to Mass," said the archbishop. "We can never approach the altar without wanting to bring others with us, to know the love that we know. So, let's be bold for Jesus!"

The principal celebrant of the Mass was the apostolic nuncio to the U.S., Cardinal Christophe Pierre, and the liturgy was concelebrated by 10 bishops and more than 30 priests. In his opening remarks, Cardinal Pierre reported that while in Rome earlier this month, he told Pope Leo XIV that he would be visiting Los Angeles for the occasion.

"The Holy Father told me to greet you in a very special way, and I do," said Cardinal Pierre, who added that Pope Leo told him he was aware of the many pilgrimages held during the course of the National Eucharistic Revival.

Cardinal Pierre said the purpose of the feast of *Corpus Christi* was to celebrate the power of the Eucharist to transform people into "God's presence," including in their homes, schools and even in politics.

"The Church is ourselves, because we receive the body of Christ," said Cardinal Pierre. "This is the good news of our faith, that we are the Church, that the Church is the presence of God in America."

The celebration's hopeful tone was a contrast to the weekend's more troubling news headlines, among them the bombing of three nuclear facilities in Iran by U.S. bombers, and the continued raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, agents in Southern California targeting Latinos suspected of lacking legal status.

An intention read during the prayers of the faithful at the Mass asked "for healing and restoration, especially for all persons and communities impacted by wildfires, and those who live in fear of unrest and the separation of families."

Marianne Dyogi of Carson, Calif., came with her husband Gary and their five children to the cathedral on Sunday. She described the Mass and procession as "a very hope-filled event" during a "very dark time" marked not only by war and unrest, but also the growing mental health crisis and "a lot of brokenness in



Chicago Auxiliary Bishop Robert J. Lombardo carries a monstrance after a Mass for the feast of *Corpus Christi* at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles on June 22 during the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

families and marriages" in society.

"People don't know if things are going to get better, and they're very nervous about what's coming in the future," said Dyogi, who attended the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis last summer, and wanted to give her family a "taste" of what she experienced.

"There are a lot of things happening, but we brought our kids because their faith is really powerful. Their prayers work," she said.

"We just wanted to be a part of this big thing," added Isaac Martinez of Delano, Calif. "The center of our faith is the Eucharist, so it's an important place to be."

At the conclusion of the Mass, members of the Knights of Columbus and Knights and Dames from the Order of Malta and the Order of the Holy Sepulchre led a procession out of the cathedral.

Before Archbishop Gomez and his

fellow bishops finally reached Temple Street to bless the city, the procession paused at three prayer altars in the plaza, where the crowd knelt to pray and sing before the monstrance.

Afterward, the crowd gathered back inside the cathedral for one more moment of eucharistic adoration and Benediction. Then the National Eucharistic Revival's lead organizer, Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minn., stepped to the lectern to thank the three-year initiative's various sponsors and supporters.

Bishop Cozzens, who also serves as president of the National Eucharistic Congress board, also thanked "all the people across this country who have felt in their own hearts that burning love of the heart of Jesus that flows from the Eucharist and have responded.

"You've really helped us to end this revival as a pilgrimage of hope," he told them. †

Five ideas for young adults to move closer to Christ this summer

By John Shaughnessy

The *Criterion* invited Meagan Morrisey, the archdiocese's director of the Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry, to share her ideas to help young adults deepen their relationship with Christ this summer. Here are her ideas:

—"Find pilgrimage sites on your vacations. Look for shrines, adoration chapels and other sites near where you're traveling and spend an extra half day making a mini pilgrimage."

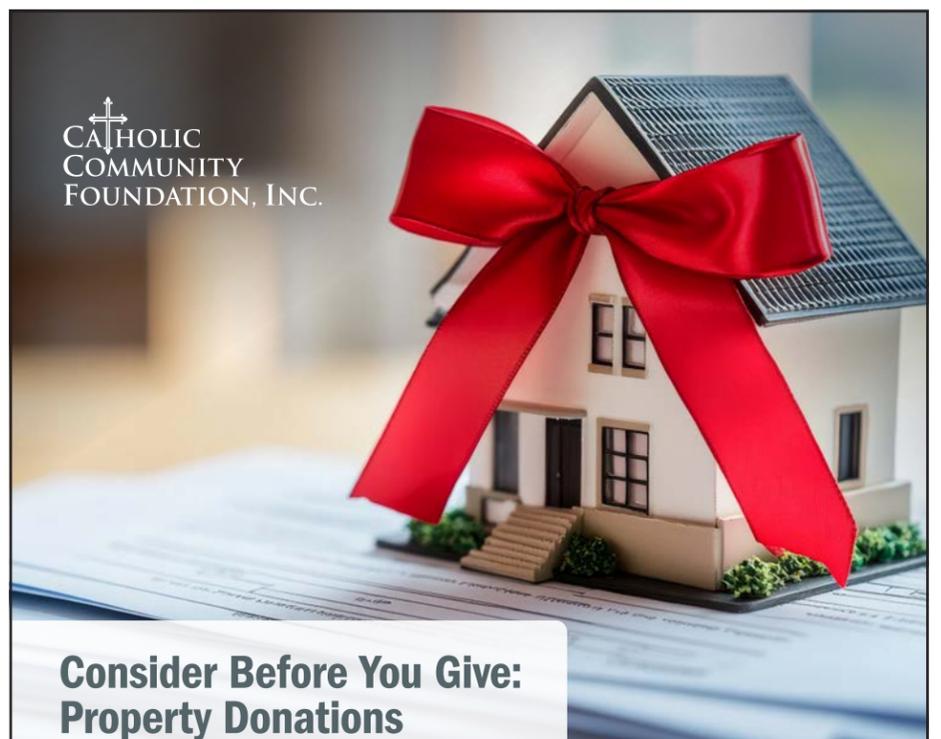
—"If you're knee-deep in wedding season, and you have a lot of weddings you're invited to or attending, take time to pray intentionally for those getting married."

—"Schedule time to go to confession."

—"Pick a spiritual book for your beach read."

—The Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry is also offering several evenings of Theology on Tap this summer.

The informal faith gathering of young adults—which "is great to attend if you just moved to the city or have an internship this summer"—features a Catholic speaker, beverages and a food truck. For information on the Theology on Tap schedule, visit www.indycatholic.org. †



Consider Before You Give: Property Donations

Throughout time, individuals have made all manner of gifts to charity – from stocks to property, grain, vehicles and more. Such donations can greatly benefit the charity of their choice. However, it is important to note that one man's treasure may not be what the charity needs or can accept.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis and all its entities are governed by a Gift Acceptance Policy and must follow requirements for appraisal of the potentially donated property.

If you are thinking of a gift of property to benefit your favorite parish, school, agency or Archdiocesan ministry, it is best to first contact the organization to determine if your gift can be accepted. Or, feel free to contact the Catholic Community Foundation for more information at ccf@archindy.org.



MCNULTY

REAL ESTATE SERVICES

Tom McNulty
BROKER/ATTORNEY

317.507.0688 • mcnultyre@gmail.com

Patrick McNulty
BROKER

Brian Candlish
BROKER

Jamy Brase
BROKER

Andy Barnett
BROKER

Steve Hullett
BROKER



Experience counts... Let us share ours with you!

Serving our friends and customers for over 35 years in Central Indiana. Specializing in Brokerage, Legal, and Investment Services for all types of real estate transactions.

MCNULTYRE.COM



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher*
Mike Krokos, *Editor*

Sally Krause, *Associate Publisher*

Editorial

An avid fan, Pope Leo XIV views sports as a way to grow in relation to others and God

We've heard the stories of recently elected Pope Leo XIV and his love of sports.

From his continued interest in how teams at his college alma mater, Villanova University near Philadelphia, fare to his surprise appearance on an archived Fox Sports video of him sitting in the stands watching his beloved hometown Chicago White Sox battle the Houston Astros on their way to the 2005 World Series title, our Holy Father is not shy about rooting for teams where he feels a strong connection.

While many are quick to point out the pope's love of sports, at 69, Pope Leo himself still likes to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Before being elected the Church's universal shepherd last month, he was known to play tennis and work out at one of Rome's health clubs, where it was reported he used cardio machines, stationary bikes and treadmills designed to improve cardiovascular endurance and burn calories.

Whether his election as the bishop of Rome will allow him to keep up a consistent workout schedule remains to be seen, but the pope recently reflected on the importance of athletics at a June 15 Mass in St. Peter's Basilica to conclude the Jubilee of Sport. And he cited another avid sportsman, Pope St. John Paul II, in his homily at the liturgy.

"Sports are not only about physical achievements, however extraordinary, but also about giving of ourselves, putting ourselves 'in play.' It is about giving of ourselves for others—for our personal improvement, for our athletic supporters, for our loved ones, our coaches and colleagues, for the greater public, and even for our opponents," Pope Leo said.

"Being a 'good sport' is more important than winning or not. St. John Paul II—himself, as we know, a sportsman—put it this way: 'Sport is joy of life, a game, a celebration. As such, it must be fostered ... by recovering its sheer gratuity, its ability to forge bonds of friendship, to encourage dialogue and openness toward others ... quite apart from the harsh laws of production and consumption and all other purely utilitarian and hedonistic approaches to life.'"

Pope Leo told athletes and sports professionals attending the liturgy that "every good and worthwhile human activity is in some way a reflection of God's infinite beauty, and sport is certainly one of these."

The Mass, as reported by Catholic News Service, marked the conclusion of a weekend of celebrations of the world of sport throughout Rome. Panel discussions with athletes on sports and hope were part of the agenda, and a sports village in the center of the city brought together the world of athletics with faith, prayer and fraternity.

The June 15 liturgy also marked the



Pope Leo XIV wears a Chicago White Sox baseball cap during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on June 11. (OSV News photo/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

feast of the Holy Trinity, a fact the pope said was not accidental. Noting the relational nature of the Trinity, he said "the life of God is a kind of 'dance': a dance of mutual love."

Sports, he said, "can thus help us to encounter the triune God, because it challenges us to relate to others and with others, not only outwardly but also, and above all, interiorly." Without such approaches, Pope Leo said, athletic competition "becomes nothing more than an empty competition of inflated egos."

God sees everything and looks upon us with great love and affection. Because we know our heavenly Father is a witness to our lives, we would do well not to let our egos guide us—in athletics or in any way we live out our call to discipleship.

The pope noted three ways sports serve as a tool for human and Christian development: fostering a sense of community in an individualistic society; in an increasingly digital society, offering "a valuable and concrete means of bringing individuals together, providing a healthier sense of the body, of space, effort and real time;" and teaching the value of failure and resilience in a competitive culture.

"Athletes who never make mistakes, who never lose, do not exist. Champions are not perfectly functioning machines," Pope Leo said, "but real men and women, who, when they fall, find the courage to get back on their feet."

The Holy Father also mentioned Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, a patron saint of athletes, who will be canonized on Sept. 7.

Sports, he noted, played "a significant role in the lives of many saints in our day, both as a personal discipline and as a means of evangelization."

"[Blessed Frassati's] straightforward and luminous life reminds us that, just as no one is born a champion, no one is born a saint," Pope Leo noted. "It is daily training in love that brings us closer to final victory and enables us to contribute to the building of a new world."

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/Sean Gallagher

Trying to find meaning in the difficult end to the Indiana Pacers' playoff run

The postseason run of the Indiana Pacers in their 2024-25 season seemed to have a natural narrative arc.



One time after another, the team fought hard to come back from great late-game deficits and saw its superstar, Tyrese Haliburton, make unbelievable shots at the end of games to put the Pacers over the top.

That happened in all four of their playoff series, right up to the NBA finals. If the story of the Pacers' postseason run had been written by a playwright, it would have been clear that they were destined to be champions.

But they're not. The Pacers lost game seven of the finals on June 22 to the Oklahoma City Thunder 103-91. And not only that, Haliburton, after starting off the deciding game well, hitting three three-point shots, went down eight minutes into the game with a severe injury to his lower right leg.

Who would have written a script like that?

But that's just it about sports. They're unscripted. That's what has drawn people across history and in countless cultures to them. They not only mirror the hopes and dreams and sadness and downfalls of the human condition—they do this without a script.

And that's where sports most imitates life. Far be it from me to doubt the great Bard, William Shakespeare—but all the world is not a stage and we're not all players on it. At least we do not live lives devoid of freedom, merely playing the part given to us.

Nothing is promised to us in this life. Everything may seem to be going our way because we're good people and we work hard. But the history of the world is filled

with stories of good people who, through no fault of their own, suffer defeats that are hard to understand and maybe even harder to accept.

In some ways, if there is a story that fits what happened to the Pacers in their playoff run, it's the Old Testament story of Job, a good man who suffered calamities for no discernable reason.

The Book of Job is a profound exploration of why God allows unspeakable tragedies to happen, something that has been a fundamental challenge to faith throughout history.

But the book doesn't come to a completely satisfying answer. The best explanation that it can offer is that finite human reason cannot fully comprehend what the infinite God wills and permits in this world marred by human sin.

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not putting the Indiana Pacers on the same level as God's revelation found in Job. Basketball is, after all, just a game.

But Pacers fans across the state, the country and the world are probably wondering right now why their team's season came to the end that it did, in the way that it did.

The sting of that defeat, with a championship so seemingly in the team's grasp, may take a while to fade.

But when it does, maybe Pacers fans can hope that the difficult end to this season will give the team strength to face challenges—and hopefully overcome them—in future seasons.

If sports is, indeed, a mirror of the highs and lows of human life, then maybe, too, Pacers fans can take the risk to hope against hope, not only for the future of their team in this dark moment, but also to do so in their own lives when hardships that are difficult to understand come their way as they inevitably do.

(Sean Gallagher is a reporter and columnist for The Criterion.)

Letter to the Editor

Reader reflects on Carmelite spirituality and its alignment with God

I have a profound fascination with ontology, epistemology and phenomenology. Ontology asks: What exists? Epistemology asks: How can we know about the existence of such a thing? Phenomenology asks: What is this experience like or how does this lived experience present itself?

Ontology is what reality actually is. It deals with the nature of being, while epistemology is what we perceive and describe reality to be.

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge. It is concerned with the mind's relation to reality. What is it for this relation to be one of knowledge? Do we know things? And if we do, how and when do we know things?

Phenomenology studies conscious experience from the first-person perspective, emphasizing how things appear to us in our subjective experience. It asks, "What is the structure of lived experience?" and seeks to describe phenomena as they are perceived, without preconceived theories.

All these are interwoven: ontology defines what exists, epistemology

addresses how we know it, and phenomenology describes how we experience it, each informing and shaping the others in philosophical exploration. I find these studies to be fascinating.

Carmelite spirituality, while primarily focused on the pursuit of union with God through prayer, contemplation and asceticism, definitely touches upon, and in some cases deeply engages with, concepts related to ontology, epistemology and phenomenology. This is particularly evident in the writings of its major figures, such as SS. Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross, and especially Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein).

Carmelites seek to align their will with God's, allowing his presence to shape their thoughts and actions. This process ultimately leads to divine transcendence, where the soul moves beyond mere intellectual understanding and enters into a mystical communion with God.

Kirth N. Roach
Order of Carmelite Discalced Secular
Indianapolis

Letters Policy

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.

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

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

Let Christ inspire us to make ‘great things’ through him

This Sunday, we celebrate the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. These great saints were both completely transformed by their encounters with the person of Jesus Christ. As Jesus’ missionary disciples, both were rescued from severe trials by the Lord.

The first reading for this Sunday (Acts 12:1-11) tells us that the prayer of the Church was instrumental in helping St. Peter miraculously escape the murderous hands of King Herod:

[Herod] had him taken into custody and put in prison under the guard of four squads of four soldiers each. He intended to bring him before the people after Passover. Peter thus was being kept in prison, but prayer by the Church was fervently being made to God on his behalf. (Acts 12:4-5)

St. Peter was an ordinary man, a Galilean fisherman, who was chosen by Christ to serve as head of his Church. Nothing in his background or experience suggested that he would be able to exercise leadership over a spiritual movement that would change the world, but God works with flawed human beings to transform them.

St. Peter had no doubt that it was an angel who freed him from the chains

that bound him. He knew that the grace of Christ overcomes all obstacles—internal and external—that would prevent us from carrying out our work as his missionary disciples. Indeed, the prayerful support of others strengthens us and helps us to proclaim boldly Christ’s death and resurrection.

In the second reading for this Sunday (2 Tm 4:6-8, 17-18), St. Paul writes:

I, Paul, am already being poured out like a libation, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance. (2 Tm 4:6-8)

St. Paul knew he did not reach this point by his own efforts, so when he appears to compliment himself, what he is really saying is that by God’s grace, and with the help of “all who have longed for [Christ’s] appearance,” great things have been accomplished in him that would never have been possible otherwise.

St. Paul was a well-educated and gifted religious leader, but before

he encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus, all his skill and his religious fervor were destructive. He was literally headed in the wrong direction until the Lord changed his life and transformed him into a faithful missionary disciple.

God takes us “where we are” and by the power of his grace, he transforms us. Nothing that we do in Jesus’ name can be accomplished by our own efforts. We are all earthen vessels (2 Cor 4:7-10). We are frail human beings who possess a precious treasure, the Good News that we have been rescued by Jesus Christ.

One of the most striking things about Jesus’ ministry is that it involved all aspects of the human person. Jesus was a man of prayer who taught and who healed. What we call the physical, mental and emotional dimensions of human life were all addressed by the Lord’s ministry. Jesus was able to heal the soul sickness that affected so many in his time, as in ours, by casting out demons, by bringing hope to the hopeless, and by offering comfort to people in distress.

Saints Peter and Paul worked similar miracles in Jesus’ name not because of their own abilities. They were

instruments of God’s providence. Their faith was strong, and they allowed the Holy Spirit to work through them. The results were incredible. Closed minds were opened; stony hearts turned to hearts of flesh; lonely and anxious people found comfort and hope; and lame men and women “jumped up and began to walk!”

As a missionary, then-Bishop Robert F. Prevost (Pope Leo XIV) was not eager to leave his work in Peru and become a Vatican official. However, his missionary experience was exactly what Pope Francis wanted in the person who would oversee the selection of bishops throughout the universal Church. “He called me,” the future pope said, “because he wanted a missionary.”

Now, called by the Holy Spirit, Pope Leo has courageously accepted the challenge given to both Peter and Paul—to be Jesus’ missionary disciple and to exercise leadership and service in his holy name.

As we celebrate the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul this Sunday, let’s say “yes” to our own baptismal call to missionary discipleship. May the Holy Spirit inspire us with the fidelity and zeal of these two great Apostles. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Dejemos que Cristo nos inspire para hacer ‘grandes cosas’ a través de él

Este domingo celebramos la solemnidad de san Pedro y san Pablo, dos grandes santos que se transformaron completamente a partir de sus encuentros con la persona de Jesucristo. Como discípulos misioneros de Jesús, el Señor los rescató de duras pruebas.

La primera lectura de este domingo (Hch 12:1-11) nos cuenta que la oración de la Iglesia fue decisiva para ayudar a san Pedro a escapar milagrosamente de las manos asesinas del rey Herodes:

Una vez capturado, [Herodes] encomendó su custodia a cuatro piquetes, compuesto cada uno por cuatro soldados, con el propósito de juzgarlo públicamente después de la Pascua. Mientras Pedro permanecía bajo custodia en la cárcel, la Iglesia rogaba fervientemente a Dios por él. (Hch 12:4-5)

San Pedro era un hombre corriente, un pescador galileo, que fue elegido por Cristo para servir como cabeza de su Iglesia. Nada en su formación o experiencia sugería que fuera capaz de ejercer el liderazgo de un movimiento espiritual destinado a cambiar el mundo, pero Dios trabaja con seres humanos imperfectos para transformarlos.

San Pedro no dudó de que fue un ángel quien lo liberó de las cadenas que le ataban. Sabía que la gracia de Cristo supera todos los obstáculos—internos y externos—que nos impedirían llevar a cabo nuestra labor como sus discípulos misioneros. En efecto, el apoyo en la oración de los demás nos fortalece y nos ayuda a proclamar con valentía la muerte y la resurrección de Cristo.

En la segunda lectura de este domingo (2 Tm 4:6-8, 17-18), san Pablo escribe:

Mi vida está a punto de ser ofrecida en sacrificio; la hora de mi muerte está al caer. He luchado con valor; he corrido hasta llegar a la meta, he conservado la fe. Sólo me queda recibir la corona correspondiente a mi rectitud, que el Señor, justo juez, me entregará el día del juicio. Y no sólo a mí, sino a todos los que esperan con amor su manifestación. (2 Tm 4:6-8)

San Pablo sabía que no había llegado a este punto por sus propios medios, así que cuando parece elogiarse a sí mismo, lo que en realidad está diciendo es que por la gracia de Dios, y con la ayuda de “todos los que esperan con amor su manifestación,” se han realizado en él grandes cosas que de otro modo nunca habrían sido posibles.

San Pablo era un líder religioso con

dones y buena educación, pero antes de encontrarse con Jesús en el camino de Damasco, toda su habilidad y su fervor religioso se dedicaban a la destrucción. Se podría decir que prácticamente avanzaba en la senda equivocada hasta que el Señor cambió su vida y lo transformó en un fiel discípulo misionero.

Dios nos encuentra allí “donde estamos” y, por el poder de su gracia, nos transforma. Nada de lo que hagamos en nombre de Jesús puede lograrse por nuestros propios medios; somos vasijas de barro (2 Cor 4:7-10), seres humanos frágiles que poseemos un tesoro precioso, la Buena Noticia de que hemos sido rescatados por Jesucristo.

Una de las características más impactantes del ministerio de Jesús es que involucraba todos los aspectos de la persona humana. Jesús era un hombre de oración que enseñaba y que curaba; su ministerio abordaba lo que llamamos las dimensiones física, mental y emocional de la vida humana. Jesús era capaz de sanar las enfermedades del alma que afectaban a tantas personas de su época al expulsar demonios, brindar esperanza a los desesperados y ofrecer consuelo a quienes se sentían afligidos.

San Pedro y san Pablo obraron milagros en nombre de Jesús no por sus propias

capacidades; sino que fueron instrumentos de la providencia de Dios. Su fe era fuerte, dejaron que el Espíritu Santo actuara a través de ellos y los resultados fueron increíbles. Las mentes cerradas se abrieron, los corazones de piedra se convirtieron en corazones palpitantes, quienes se sentían solos y ansiosos hallaron consuelo y esperanza, y los paralíticos “¡saltaron y empezaron a andar!”

Como misionero, el entonces obispo Robert F. Prevost (el papa León XIV) no estaba ansioso por dejar su trabajo en Perú y convertirse en funcionario del Vaticano. Sin embargo, su experiencia misionera era exactamente lo que el papa Francisco habría querido en la persona que supervisaría la selección de obispos de toda la Iglesia universal. “Me llamó,” afirmó el futuro Papa “porque quería un misionero.”

Ahora, llamado por el Espíritu Santo, el papa León ha aceptado con valentía el reto lanzado tanto a Pedro como a Pablo: ser discípulo misionero de Jesús y ejercer el liderazgo y el servicio en su santo nombre.

Al celebrar este domingo la solemnidad de san Pedro y san Pablo, digamos “sí” a nuestro propio llamado bautismal al discipulado misionero. Que el Espíritu Santo nos inspire la fidelidad y el celo de estos dos grandes Apóstoles. †

Events Calendar

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

July 2

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30-8:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605.

July 4

Fairbanks Park, 1100 Girl Scout Lane, Terre Haute. **Wabash Valley Rubber Duck Regatta**, 7 p.m., benefitting Catholic Charities Terre Haute, free admission, adopt ducks in advance: one for \$5, six for \$25, 12 for \$50, 24 for \$100, owner of winning duck receives \$10,000 and chance at \$1 million. Information on how to adopt ducks: duckrace.com/terrehaute, on Facebook [@WVRubberDuckRegatta](https://www.facebook.com/WVRubberDuckRegatta).

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion**, 11:40 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred

Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

July 5

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

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

July 8

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available. Information: Taize.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2952.

July 9

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Bilingual Holy Hour for Young Adults**, 7-9 p.m., confessions available in English and Spanish, Encounter Ministries teams available, free.

Information: 317-592-4006, emastronicola@archindy.org.

July 13

Marian University, Norman Center Room 222, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **People of Peace OFS Monthly Meeting**, 12:30-3 p.m., explore Franciscan spirituality with lay Franciscans, free. Information: 317-432-0909, jodymdalton@aol.com.

July 16

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

July 17

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

July 18

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Jim Hallett, retired CEO of KAR and owner of the Indy Fuel hockey team, presenting "Leaving it to God," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on July 15. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

July 19

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center,

1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **"Healing to Love: Healing the Heart and Recovering Hope" (in Spanish)**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Amar Al Maximo Institute co-founder and international Theology of the Body speaker Evan Lemoine presenting, sponsored by archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, for ages 18 and older, includes lunch, \$25, register by June 30. Information, registration: 317-800-9306, corona@archindy.org.

July 19-20

All Saints Parish, St. John the Baptist campus, 25743 State Route 1, Guilford. **Chicken Dinner and Summer Festival**, Sat.: 5 p.m.-midnight, live music by Yorkridge Boys. Sun.: 11 a.m.-7 p.m., chicken dinners available 11 a.m.-5 p.m. or sold out, food prices TBA. Both days: food, beer garden, B&G ice cream, kiddie land, raffles, religious exhibit "Celebrating America," \$10,000 Big Money Raffle, free admission. Information: 812-576-4302, emilyalig.asp@gmail.com.

July 23

McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis.

Theology on Tap, 6-9:30 p.m., Shayla Elm of Christ in the City ministry presenting, for ages 18-39, includes presentation, full bar, food trucks and socializing, free admission. Information: 317-592-4006, emastronicola@archindy.org.

July 26

Hamilton Community Center and Ice Arena, 2501 Lincoln Park Dr., Columbus. **First-ever Ice-Skating Fundraiser**, 5:30-7:30 p.m., fundraiser for Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry in Greensburg, \$10 includes skate rental, bring coats and gloves, registration required. Information: 812-212-3463, contactus@covenantresources.org. Registration: covenantresources.org/events/ice-skating-fundraiser.

St. Mary Parish, 777 S. 11th St., Mitchell. **Summer Festival**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., fried chicken dinners, dine-in or carry-out, indoor and outdoor vendor booths, cake walk, cash raffles, silent auction, door prizes, free admission. Information: 812-849-3570,

stmarysmitchell294@gmail.com

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk**, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in front of church. Information: holyrosary.prolife@gmail.com.

July 26-27

All Saints Parish, St. Martin Campus, 8044 Yorkridge Road, Guilford. **Summer Festival**, Sat.: 5 p.m.-midnight, ham stand, live music by Misty Creek. Sun.: 11 a.m.-7 p.m., chicken dinners available 11 a.m.-5 p.m. or sold out, food prices TBA. Both days: lunch stand, food, beer garden, B&G ice cream, kiddie land, raffles, \$10,000 Big Money Raffle, religious exhibit "Celebrating America," free admission. **5K Country Run/Walk**, Sun. 9:30 a.m., \$20 with T-shirt or \$15 without T-shirt until July 13, \$25 with T-shirt or \$20 without T-shirt after July 13 or on-site, register online at tinyurl.com/StMartinRun25. Information: 812-576-4302, emilyalig.asp@gmail.com. †

Retreats and Programs

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

July 9, August 19

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$45, includes room, lunch, Mass and use of common areas and grounds, overnight stay available for additional \$32, dinner additional \$11. Registration: archindy.org/

fatima-events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

July 18-20

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **Honoring the Elderly and Grandparenting in Scripture**, 5 p.m. Fri.-10 a.m. Sun., Franciscans

of the Immaculate Father Joachim Mudd facilitating, \$241 for single, \$302.90 double, \$368 triple, \$433.12 quadruple, includes four meals and room for two nights, commuters \$50.70 includes lunch and dinner on Sat. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com. †

Rachel's Vineyard retreat offered in Indy area on July 25-27 for those grieving after abortion

A Rachel's Vineyard post-abortion healing retreat will take place in the greater Indianapolis area on July 25-27. The location will be disclosed upon registration.

The retreat is for women and men who have known regret, sorrow, guilt or shame after abortion. Supported by the sacraments, the goal of the retreat is to help provide insight, comfort and healing.

The weekend combines Scripture meditations, spiritual exercises and discussions in a guided process that leads to the heart of God's love and compassion.

The cost is \$200, although scholarships are available. No one will be turned away due to financial difficulties.

Registration is required by July 18. To register or for more information on the upcoming retreat, call 317-452-0054 or send an e-mail to projectrachel@archindy.org. Inquiries, registration and participation are strictly confidential.

For information about Rachel's Vineyard Retreats, go to www.rachelsvineyard.org. †

Indians hosting 'Catholic Night at Victory Field' on July 10

The Indianapolis Indians are hosting a "Catholic Night at Victory Field," 501 W. Maryland St., in Indianapolis, on July 10. Gates open at 5:30 p.m., and game time is 7:05 p.m.

Discounted tickets are available

for \$12, and any parish or group wanting to purchase them should contact Indians ticket sales executive Matt Marencik at mmarencik@indyindians.com or 317-975-1464. †

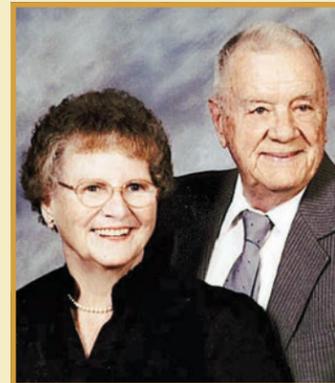
Wedding Anniversaries

RONALD AND LOIS (SHOCKLEY) KRAMER, members of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on July 9.

The couple was married in the former St. Francis de Sales Church in Indianapolis on July 9, 1960.

They have four children: Karen Sahn, Michael, Richard and Robert Kramer.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

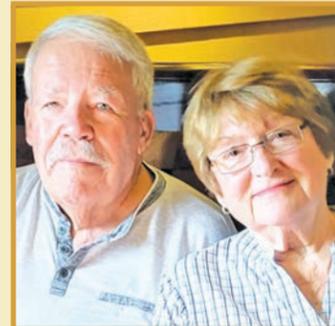


PHILIP AND CATHY (SAUER) CAMPBELL, members of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 26.

The couple was married in the former St. Catherine of Siena Church in Indianapolis on June 26, 1965.

They have four children: Kelly Qureshi, Brian, Kevin and Mark Campbell.

The couple also has 10 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



ALFRED AND MARCIA (BAUER) CAPUANO, members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 19.

The couple was married in St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on June 19, 1965.

They have two children: Jeff and Michael Capuano.

The couple also has four grandchildren.



Joe and Vicki (Trombly) Little, members of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 7.

The couple was married in St. Phillip Neri Church in Indianapolis on June 7, 1975.

They have four children: Melissa Smith, Joseph, Joshua and Matthew Little.

The couple also has seven grandchildren. †



Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to cutt.ly/anniversaries or call 317-236-1585.

*In illo uno unum (In the One Christ we are one)***One in Christ/Daniel Conway**

New column on Pope Leo XIV starts with continued focus on joy of the Gospel

This is my first monthly column on the teaching of Pope Leo XIV. As was the case with my reflections on the teaching of Pope Francis, my objectives are simply to call attention to what the Holy Father proposes to us as important to daily life in Christ, and to convey the pope's messages as clearly and accurately as I can.

Pope Leo's first address to the cardinals the day after his election as the successor of St. Peter provides a clear agenda for his papacy.

"I would like us to renew together today our complete commitment to the path that the universal Church has now followed for decades in the wake of the Second Vatican Council," the Holy Father said. "Pope Francis masterfully and concretely set it forth in the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* ["The Joy of the Gospel"] from which I would like to highlight several fundamental points."

The "fundamental points" that Pope Leo listed included:

—"The return to the primacy of Christ in proclamation." In his apostolic exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel," Pope Francis wrote, "A renewal of preaching can offer believers, as well as the lukewarm and the non-practicing, new joy in the faith and fruitfulness in the work of evangelization" (#11).

Pope Leo affirms that the heart of Christian preaching must always be the God who revealed his immense love in the crucified and risen Christ.

—"The missionary conversion of the entire Christian community." Pope Francis wrote that, "If we wish to lead a dignified and fulfilling life, we have to reach out to others and seek their good."

Our new pope, a former Augustinian missionary, knows from personal experience that we are all missionary disciples of Jesus Christ and that "the love of Christ urges us on" (2 Cor 5:14).

—"Growth in collegiality and synodality." Pope Francis reminded us that "the important thing is to not walk alone, but to rely on each other as brothers and sisters, and especially under the leadership of the bishops, in a wise and realistic pastoral discernment."

Pope Leo's papal motto *In illo uno unum* (In the One Christ we are one) makes clear his commitment to unity in Christ as a priority for Christian life and ministry.

—"Attention to the *sensus fidei* ["the people's instinct of faith"], especially in its most authentic and inclusive

forms, such as popular piety."

"The Joy of the Gospel" states explicitly that "All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients" (#120).

Pope Leo understands that faith and devotion are frequently demonstrated most powerfully in the piety of God's people and in the diverse cultural forms in which the people's instinct of faith is expressed.

—"Loving care for the least and the rejected." Pope Francis never ceased to call attention to the scandalous truth that "masses of people today find themselves excluded and marginalized: without work, without possibilities, without any means of escape."

Pope Leo insists that his pontificate will continue to advocate for all those who are on the fringes of society and, therefore, are especially deserving of the Church's pastoral care.

—"Courageous and trusting dialogue with the contemporary world in its various components and realities."

Finally, Pope Leo joins with all his predecessors since the Second Vatican Council in proclaiming in the words of the pastoral constitution, "*Gaudium et Spes*" ("Joy and Hope"). "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts" (#1).

The agenda proposed by Pope Leo is nothing more, or less, than a continued proclamation of the joy of the Gospel.

May our new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, succeed in carrying out this agenda in the spirit of Vatican II and in continuity with the popes who have gone before him.

And may his devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary give him the courage and the patience he needs to serve all the people of God, the flock entrusted to his care.

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

**Uno en Cristo/Daniel Conway**

La nueva columna sobre el papa León XIV comienza centrándose en la alegría del Evangelio

Esta es mi primera columna mensual sobre las enseñanzas del papa León XIV. Como en el caso de mis reflexiones sobre el magisterio del papa Francisco, mis objetivos son simplemente destacar aquello que el Santo Padre nos plantea como aspectos importantes para la vida cotidiana en Cristo, y transmitir los mensajes del Papa con la mayor claridad y precisión que me sea posible.

El primer discurso del papa León al colegio cardenalicio al día siguiente de su elección como sucesor de San Pedro nos presenta una guía clara de su papado.

"Quisiera que renováramos juntos, hoy, nuestra plena adhesión a ese camino, a la vía que desde hace ya decenios la Iglesia universal está recorriendo tras las huellas del Concilio Vaticano II. El Papa Francisco ha recordado y actualizado magistralmente su contenido en la Exhortación apostólica *Evangelii gaudium* [La alegría del Evangelio], de la que me gustaría destacar algunas notas fundamentales."

Entre las "notas fundamentales" que enumeró el papa León se encuentran:

—"El regreso al primado de Cristo en el anuncio." En su exhortación apostólica "La alegría del Evangelio," el papa Francisco escribió: "Un anuncio

renovado ofrece a los creyentes, también a los tibios o no practicantes, una nueva alegría en la fe y una fecundidad evangelizadora" (#11).

El papa León afirma que el corazón de la predicación cristiana debe ser siempre el Dios que reveló su inmenso amor en Cristo crucificado y resucitado.

—"La conversión misionera de toda la comunidad cristiana." El papa Francisco escribió que "quien quiera vivir con dignidad y plenitud no tiene otro camino más que reconocer al otro y buscar su bien."

Nuestro nuevo Papa, antiguo misionero agustino, sabe por experiencia propia que todos somos discípulos misioneros de Jesucristo y que "es el amor de Cristo el que nos apremia" (2 Cor 5:14).

—"El crecimiento en la colegialidad y en sinodalidad." El papa Francisco nos recordó que "lo importante es no caminar solos, contar siempre con los hermanos y especialmente con la guía de los obispos, en un sabio y realista discernimiento pastoral."

El lema del papa León *In illo uno unum* (En el único Cristo somos uno) deja claro su compromiso con la unidad en Cristo como prioridad para la vida y el ministerio cristianos.

—"La atención al *sensus fidei* [el instinto de fe del pueblo], especialmente en sus formas más propias e inclusivas, como la piedad popular."

La Alegría del Evangelio afirma explícitamente que "Cada uno de los bautizados, cualquiera que sea su función en la Iglesia y el grado de ilustración de su fe, es un agente evangelizador, y sería inadecuado pensar en un esquema de evangelización llevado adelante por actores calificados donde el resto del pueblo fiel sea sólo receptivo de sus acciones" (#120).

El papa León entiende que la fe y la devoción se manifiestan con frecuencia con mayor fuerza en la piedad del pueblo de Dios y en las diversas formas culturales en las que se expresa el instinto de fe del pueblo.

—"El cuidado amoroso de los débiles y descartados." El papa Francisco nunca dejó de llamar la atención sobre la escandalosa verdad de las "grandes masas de la población se ven excluidas y marginadas: sin trabajo, sin horizontes, sin salida."

El papa León insiste en que su pontificado seguirá abogando por todos aquellos que se encuentran al margen de la sociedad y, por tanto, son especialmente merecedores de la atención pastoral de la Iglesia.

—"El diálogo valiente y confiado con el mundo contemporáneo en sus diferentes componentes y realidades."

Finalmente, el papa León se une a todos sus predecesores desde el Concilio Vaticano II al proclamar las palabras de la constitución pastoral, *Gaudium et Spes* (Alegría y esperanza). "Los gozos y las esperanzas, las tristezas y las angustias de los hombres de nuestro tiempo, sobre todo de los pobres y de cuantos sufren, son a la vez gozos y esperanzas, tristezas y angustias de los discípulos de Cristo. Nada hay verdaderamente humano que no encuentre eco en su corazón."

La agenda que propone el papa León no es nada más ni nada menos que una proclamación continua de la alegría del Evangelio.

Que nuestro nuevo Santo Padre, el papa León XIV, tenga éxito en llevar a cabo este programa en el espíritu del Concilio Vaticano II y en continuidad con los papas que le han precedido, y que su devoción a la Santísima Virgen María le dé el valor y la paciencia necesarios para servir a todo el pueblo de Dios, el rebaño confiado a su cuidado.

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.) †

In illo uno unum (En el único Cristo somos uno)

New Catholics at St. Rose of Lima cite school as part of draw to the faith

By Natalie Hoefler

A parochial school is often considered a parish's largest ministry. It can also serve as a parish's largest form of evangelization.

Take the school of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Franklin, for example. Bethany and James Skaggs and their son Xander were not Catholic when they enrolled him in second grade at St. Rose of Lima School in the fall of 2023.

"He talked about his religion class all the time," says James. Bethany notes Xander "would say some of the prayers at home that he learned at school, and James and I would ask him to explain them to us."

Another non-Catholic couple, Widd and Jamie Lewis, enrolled their daughter Elena in the school's pre-kindergarten class last fall.

"We went to all the school Masses we could, almost every Friday," says Widd. "It's like we were learning with the kids," Jamie adds with a laugh.

Moved in part by their experience of the faith through the parochial school and also by a parish community both couples call "very welcoming," James, Bethany, Xander, Widd and Jamie—as well as one other family with a student in the school—were among those welcomed into the full communion of the Church at the Easter Vigil Mass in St. Rose of Lima Church on April 19. A fourth family associated with the school is finalizing details to receive the sacraments of initiation as well.

Below, the Skaggs and Lewises share about their faith journey and the role St. Rose of Lima School played in their draw to the Catholic Church. †



Moved in part by their experience of Catholicism through having children enrolled in St. Rose of Lima School in Franklin, three families were welcomed into the full communion of the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass on April 19 at St. Rose of Lima Church. They are Widd and Jamie Lewis, left, Zahra and Zackery Estes, and Bethany, Xander and James Skaggs. Standing behind them is Father Timothy DeCrane, pastor of the parish. (Submitted photo)

Witness of St. Rose community—and 'Uncle Bill'—draw family to the faith

By Natalie Hoefler

Life can be a series of highs and lows, joys and sorrows. Sometimes those contrasts are concurrent, and sometimes the highs and joys are borne from the lows and sorrows.

James and Bethany Skaggs and their 9-year-old son Xander know this well.

During the 2022-23 academic year, when Xander was in first grade, struggles with his school led to the challenge for James and Bethany of trying to find a school where he could excel.

Then last fall the family lost a cherished loved one, James' uncle, Bill Skaggs.

It was Bill, a member of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Franklin, who had recommended the parish's school for Xander and invited the family to come join him for Mass.

And it was the welcome they received from the parish community and the staff at the school—where Xander thrived—that called them to embrace the Catholic faith.

The journey culminated on April 19. On that day, James, Bethany and Xander were welcomed into the full communion of the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass at St. Rose of Lima Church, receiving the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist.

There was sadness that Uncle Bill did not live to witness the Mass.

But there was joy in what James calls "the most peaceful thing I have ever experienced."

'It just felt like home'

Although they didn't realize it at the time, the family's

journey to embracing the Catholic faith began with the need to find a different school for Xander to enter second grade in the fall of 2023.

Bill recommended St. Rose of Lima School. The couple explored the option, liked what they saw and enrolled Xander in the school.

James and Bethany were more than pleased with the results.

"St. Rose is the most amazing school," says James. "They've done so much for Xander. The principal there [Kim Tekippe] is absolutely amazing, and all of his teachers are awesome."

Like any child, Xander had his favorite class and time of the school day.

"Xander talked about his religion class all the time," says James. "The school Mass on Friday and religion class were his favorite."

There were other signs of the fact, too.

"He said some of the prayers at home that he learned in school," Bethany recalls. "James and I would ask him to explain them to us."

Growing up, James went to a Baptist church with his family. And while Bethany was not raised in a faith tradition, she "prayed to God every single night."

But together, the couple struggled to find a faith home for their family.

"We went to a couple of different churches," says James. "But it seemed like they were all like going to a concert, and we didn't care for them. We found other churches, too, but they didn't feel like home."

One day, "out of the blue," he asked his uncle Bill about the Catholic faith. "We were very close, and I knew



Bethany, left, Xander and James Skaggs pose for a family photo before heading to St. Rose of Lima Church in Franklin on April 19 for the parish's Easter Vigil Mass, during which the family was welcomed into the full communion of the Church. (Submitted photo)

he'd tell me the truth," says James.

He recalls his uncle's response: "If you're serious, I'll meet you at 4:30 Mass on Saturday."

See SKAGGS, page 14

New Catholic couple says 'God guided us here' to St. Rose of Lima Parish and School

By Natalie Hoefler

Sometimes we make decisions in life that seem unconnected. Only in retrospect do we see God's hand at work, leading us to something better than we could have imagined.

Take Widd and Jamie Lewis. From Widd's reassignment to Edinburgh through the military, to the location of the home they purchased sight unseen, to the non-Catholic couple's decision to enroll their daughter in pre-kindergarten at St. Rose of Lima School in Franklin—"the whole ride here was a miracle," says Jamie.



Widd, left, Elena and Jamie Lewis pose in a recent photo. The couple were welcomed into the full communion of the Church at St. Rose of Lima Church in Franklin on April 19. Elena attends the parish's pre-school. (Submitted photo.)

By "here" she means the couple's embrace of the Catholic faith.

'It all just kind of worked out'

Widd was stationed in New Jersey about five years ago when the Army reassigned him to Camp Atterbury in Edinburgh.

With no housing at the base, the couple needed to buy a home. Jamie scoured the online Zillow real estate site for homes as far south as Nashville to as far north as Carmel, Ind.

"I narrowed it down to five, and the one we got was in Franklin not far from Camp Atterbury," she says.

"We bought it blind. Widd had driven around the area in general, but we didn't see the house in person. We didn't know what the street or the neighborhood looked like."

Not long after moving to Franklin, Jamie gave birth to the couple's daughter Elena, now 4.

"Even before we had Elena, I talked about going back to the Catholic faith," says Jamie.

Although she was baptized into her mother's Protestant faith, Jamie's Catholic father took her and her siblings to Mass at Christmas and Easter.

"As we got older, we stopped going," says Jamie. "But I really liked the Masses as a kid, and I always had this desire to go back."

Widd was baptized and raised in the Baptist faith tradition. But he admits he "had a big break where I wasn't going to church for a long time."

Having Elena "inspired both of us to start going to church again," he says. "We wanted to set a good example for her."

So, when the time came to look for a preschool for Elena, the couple decided to look for one that was faith-based.

"That's when we ran across St. Rose," says Widd.

As it turned out, the house he and Jamie "bought blind" was just a mile from St. Rose of Lima Parish and its pre-kindergarten through eighth-grade school.

"It was a good school for Elena," Widd continues. "The class sizes are smaller, so [the teachers are] able to focus on each kid and their individual needs as well as the whole group. It's a very tight-knit community."

"And we liked that it was Catholic. I'd been to some Masses before I met Jamie, and I always liked them. It all just kind of worked out."

In the spring of 2024, the family enrolled Elena to start preschool at St. Rose in the fall.

'It felt like a reward for all our effort'

Also that spring, the Lewis family started attending Mass at St. Rose of Lima Church.

"The people were really welcoming," says Jamie. "The greeters sat and talked with us for a while—it was really nice."

She also says the parish's pastor, Father Timothy DeCrane, "was a big help, asking if we needed anything. He really made us feel like part of the church community."

Elena started preschool in August, and Widd and Jamie enrolled in Order of Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA), with classes starting in September.

"I really liked OCIA," says Jamie. "I felt like I knew the basics of the faith going into it, but OCIA went way deeper, and the *Catechism [of the Catholic Church]* broke down every topic we talked about. It was just really awesome."

The couple also started worshiping at "every school Mass we could, almost every Friday," says Widd. "I like how the older kids mentor the younger kids at the Masses, and Father Tim really engages with the kids and makes it interactive for them."

"It's like we were learning with the kids," Jamie adds with a laugh.

The couple were received into the full communion of the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass at St. Rose on April 19, both receiving the sacraments of confirmation and the Eucharist.

"Receiving the Eucharist was so meaningful and rewarding," says Widd.

See LEWIS, page 14

Father James Farrell shows Christ's compassion in 50 years of ministry

By Sean Gallagher

When Father James Farrell looks back upon his 50 years of priestly life and ministry, he remembers many "Gospel moments" as the highlights of his service to the people of God in central and southern Indiana.

The priest, commonly known across the archdiocese as "Father Jim," describes these as times "when God is obviously present and working."

One happened when Father Farrell met a man who just learned he had a terminal illness that would soon end his life. The man told the priest with quiet confidence, "You know, Father, you've got to die before you can live."

Another was when he visited a husband spending time with his wife and their six children as she lay dying. Father Farrell recalled the faith-filled husband telling him, "You know, Father, God loves her more than we do."

"People's faith is just amazing, outstanding," recalled Father Farrell in an interview with *The Criterion*.

Ordained an archdiocesan priest by St. Paul VI on June 29, 1975, in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican, Father Farrell will celebrate the 50th anniversary of ordination during a July 13 Mass at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church in Indianapolis.

'I think I want to do this'

It was at Little Flower Parish that the seeds of Father Farrell's priestly vocation were planted and first blossomed.

When he graduated from the eighth grade in the parish's school in 1963, the faith community had more than 20 young men who were archdiocesan seminarians. Six boys from his eighth-grade class became high school seminarians at the Latin School of Indianapolis, the archdiocese's high school seminary at the time.

"I served at Mass as a young boy," Father Farrell recalled. "And I had a great relationship with the priests at the parish. Between watching the general routine of a priest's life and seeing how nice the clergy were, how accessible and available they were, I just felt very comfortable and I thought, 'I think I want to do this.'"

The camaraderie among his peers in the parish who were open to the priesthood also helped him in his discernment.

After being ordained 12 years after his eighth-grade graduation, Father Farrell soon learned how his life at Little Flower contributed to his priestly formation.

He and other high school seminarians helped out at the parish on a regular basis.

"We had a lot of exposure to parish life," Father Farrell said. "We spent a lot of time in the rectory. We'd answer phones and the door."

So, even though he had spent the better part of four years in Rome during his last years of formation, returning to ordinary parish ministry in the archdiocese was not a difficult adjustment for him.

"I was comfortable with the routine because I had been exposed to it previously," Father Farrell said.

'Just being with people'

Not that his time in Rome was unimportant. Soon after arriving in Rome in 1971 as a recent college seminary graduate, Father Farrell attended a general audience of Pope Paul VI.

He was impressed by how the pontiff spoke in several languages to Catholics from around the world who had come to the Vatican. Then, at the end of the audience, all present chanted the creed together.

"We had just spent about an hour underscoring our diversity—diverse languages, ways of life and culture, prayer—and now we're singing something that we can all agree on," Father Farrell remembered. "Then I saw the unity and the diversity. I was sold."

After returning to the archdiocese after his ordination, Father Farrell served for periods as associate pastor of the Indianapolis parishes of St. Pius X and St. Barnabas, both of which he would later lead as pastor.

Other parishes he's led include St. Andrew the Apostle and Our Lady of Lourdes, both in Indianapolis, and Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Augustine, both in Jeffersonville.

Father Farrell said that "just being with people" is how he has found fulfillment in priestly life and ministry.

"I would use any avenue that I could to understand who they were, what was going on in their lives, and to offer support in whatever way I could," Father Farrell said. "That connection to people in their journey of faith became something that I really enjoyed."

That connection often became more intense when parishioners were close to death.

"That was where people need to hear words of faith and inspiration," Father Farrell said. "People need to be reminded as they're dying that Jesus died for them and that they can put their hope in Jesus. Being with people at those moments is life-giving."

'We're called to love our people'

Father John McCaslin, pastor of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, was a newly ordained priest when he began ministry in 2002 as the associate pastor of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis under Father Farrell.

While appreciating the Father Farrell's compassion for those who were suffering, Father McCaslin was particularly impressed by how he made himself available to them at any time.

"If there was a call in the middle of the night, we went," Father McCaslin said. "There was a real sense of responsiveness



Father James Farrell preaches a homily during a June 4 Mass for the Benedictine sisters at Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

and obligation out of our pastoral charity and our own call as priests."

He said this witness of priestly life and ministry from Father Farrell has influenced him.

"Nobody wants to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning and go to a hospital," Father McCaslin said. "But if we just embrace that as part of the way in which we're called to love our people, then we do it out of love. ..."

Deacon Richard Wagner has been shaped by Father Farrell's witness for much of his life. He was a teenager at St. Pius when Father Farrell served there as a newly ordained priest.

Viewing him as a mentor, Deacon Wagner said that the priest's caring pastoral ministry to parishioners helped him "to find ways to be more compassionate, loving and pastoral" in seeking "to be the best husband and father I could be."

That influence became more focused on ministry when Deacon Wagner served at St. Pius after his ordination in 2012. Father Farrell was pastor there at the time, leading the faith community until his retirement in 2021.

"I was ready to be a sponge," said Deacon Wagner, "because I knew I was going to learn so much just by watching and listening."

One aspect of Father Farrell's approach to pastoral ministry that Deacon Wagner admires but is still striving to emulate is the priest's memory.

"He just remembers people, their situations, the names of their family members, how he knows them," Deacon Wagner said. "I've always kind of been in awe of that. I don't know if I'll ever reach that level, but it makes me wonder how I could be more attentive to people as they are sharing with me."

'The gift of being a priest'

Father Farrell's attentiveness to others has been a highlight of his leading days of reflection, retreats and parish missions, which he started just months after he was ordained.

Much of that has happened at

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis, where he served as director from 2008-16.

Although distinct from serving as a parish priest, Father Farrell said leading such spiritual events flows from his experiences in serving his parishioners.

"It's deepened my faith and my prayer," he said. "When I walk into a retreat center on a Friday night, I am coming from where I have been over the past several months ministerially."

The demands of parish ministry, though, can sometimes make preparing for retreats difficult. That reality has led Father Farrell to grow in his trust of the Holy Spirit.

"The Holy Spirit supplies," he said. "[I've] grown in faith and in the awareness that I'm not alone operating as an independent agent. I'm operating as a minister of the Gospel in concert with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, inspiring me and providing the words."

Father Farrell has also grown close to Christ in his 50 years of priestly life and ministry, describing him as "my companion."

"I'm here because of him," he said. "I am interested in being faithful to him and helping other people to experience his presence, not only the real presence in the Eucharist, but also his presence in our midst, in the poor, in the assembly who gather to pray."

For men considering if God might be calling them to priestly life and ministry, Father Farrell offered this encouragement.

"The gift of being a priest is entering into people's lives at those sacred moments—birth, death, faith, pursuing where God is in their lives, all of the questions that come from life," he said. "What could be more rewarding than being with people when they discover the unconditional love of God when they approach death, helping them cross over into the hands of a merciful Father?"

(For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.) †

Project Outdoor Nativity Scene starts fifth year of keeping Christ in Christmas



A Project Outdoor Nativity Scene adorns a front yard at Christmastime. (File photo by Mike Krokos)

Special to *The Criterion*

Project Outdoor Nativity Scene, a program to both share the true meaning of Christmas as well as raise money for a parish or school ministry, will once again be offered this fall.

In the last four years, more than 4,600 Holy Family Nativity kits have been sold and now adorn front yards across Indiana at Christmastime.

The easy-to-assemble Nativity kits are made in the United States and are built with white, all-weather PVC material to sustain Indiana winters for years to come. They include the Holy Family and a stable. Add-on kits are available that

include the three wisemen, shepherds and sheep.

Participating organizations do not purchase kits in advance to sell, so they incur no cost and do not risk losing money.

The process is simple. A parish or school promotes the kits with provided material and gathers money for kits that are ordered. The parish or school then sends the order and the money to the manufacturer, which will deliver the kits prior to Thanksgiving so they can be distributed before Christmas.

For more information on how your parish or school can take part, contact Jim Liston at 317-590-5403 or jliston@catholicbusinessexchange.org. †

CREATION

continued from page 1

In the 10 years since its fledgling start, the team has worked hard to educate Catholics in central and southern Indiana about the encyclical's message and to promote actions toward care for the environment by individuals and parishes.

As co-founding member Sharon Horvath says, "Our hope is for people to see [care for creation] not as a side issue of the faith but as integral to who we are as Catholics."

Ten years ago, the small group of founders had no idea the impact they would have locally, nationally and globally.

'You're officially a commission!'

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis was ahead of its time in emphasizing the importance of care for the environment as an issue of faith, starting a ministry in 2007.

The parish team heard that an encyclical on the topic was coming out in 2015. In anticipation of the document, they hosted a large "eco-prayer" breakfast that March at Marian University in Indianapolis and invited then-Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin.

"A group of about six or eight of us spoke with Archbishop Tobin after the breakfast about what we could do to raise awareness about the encyclical in the archdiocese," says ministry co-founder John Mundell, president and senior environmental consultant for Mundell and Associates. He and his wife Julie, who also helped start the ministry, are members of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. "Archbishop Tobin kind of gave us a push, or at least support, to begin."

The founding members hailed from several parishes in the Indianapolis area. Like Mundell, each had environmental expertise—two in education, one in a role with her religious order, another as a lawyer, and more.

"We realized we had this full array of expertise," says Mundell. "We thought about what we could do to help the archdiocese respond to the encyclical, to make the Church more sustainable.

"We didn't know where we were going. We just knew we were all in it together."

Archbishop Tobin continued to encourage the group. "Then he was made a cardinal and swept away from the archdiocese" in 2016, Mundell notes.

Support for the team continued in 2017 with newly installed Archbishop Charles C. Thompson. In fact, he wanted to make the group "more formal" and tasked the team to develop a mission statement, says Mundell.

And so they did: "To encourage and foster the care for God's creation as a way of life and a core principle of our Catholic faith, and to minimize the archdiocese's impact on the environment."

The mission was supported by a vision statement and guiding principles.

In 2018, the archbishop approved the statement. Mundell recalls Archbishop Thompson's enthusiastic response: "I like this. This is great. Yes, go ahead—you're officially a commission!"

'We had just ramped up, then ...'

The Creation Care Ministry team started simply—developing a social media presence, speaking at parishes and schools, even hosting a booth at the 2017 National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis to "engage with youths on how to live out 'Laudato Si'," says Mundell.

The group took on its first major project in 2019—a sustainability pilot group of four parishes and



Supporters of care for the environment hold signs during a rally outside of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Dec. 3, 2015. (Submitted photo)

Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School, all on the east side of Indianapolis.

The project included educational workshops and "an audit of their energy, waste, water and land use," says Mundell. "And we helped them put together a 12-month program to carry out after the audit. ... It was very successful."

That same year, the Creation Care Ministry led the archdiocese in celebrating for the first time the long-established annual global Season of Creation from Sept. 1 to Oct. 4, sending parishes weekly action guides and reflections to share and organizing the archdiocese's first Mass for the Season of Creation.

"We still do that every year, rotating it to different parishes around the archdiocese," says ministry member Benedictine Sister Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick.

Then came 2020.

"It was so disappointing," says Mundell. "We had just ramped up, then boom, COVID hit."

But on the other side of the globe, the Vatican was developing an initiative that would share the archdiocesan Creation Care Ministry's work—and one member—with the rest of the world.

An impact locally, nationally and globally

The Vatican's Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) was created to help individuals and organizations around the world set goals to take concrete action in caring for creation. It launched in 2021.

"We were one of only 10 dioceses in the world to sign up because we were already working on an archdiocesan plan," says Mundell.

The plan—with seven goals and steps to accomplish them—was submitted in May of 2023.

The year before the plan was submitted, Mundell was named LSAP's global director, a position he held through spring of this year.

Encouraging parishes in central and southern Indiana to participate in the LSAP is one of the goals of the archdiocesan Creation Care Ministry, says Horvath.

"It's a way for them to come up with concrete plans, a roadmap for the parish of things they can do to become more sustainable," she says.

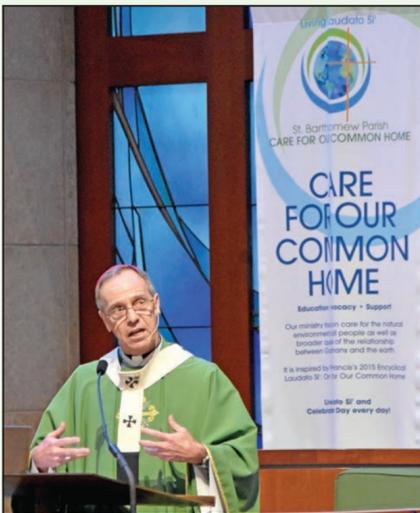
Developing and submitting the archdiocese's LSAP plan are two of the fruits of the ministry's labor during the last decade.

"In the last few years, we helped 10 parishes assess steps to take to increase energy efficiency and save money," says Sister Sheila Marie.

"We've helped parishes start a Creation Care ministry. We've created ideas and toolkits, something concrete to help care for creation, whether at the parish level or home.

"We've worked with teachers, trying to create things they can use in the classroom, and with parishes, like how to help them with recycling in their cafeteria or parish festival."

Sister Sheila Marie



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson delivers a homily during the archdiocesan Mass for the Season of Creation at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus on Sept. 24, 2024. (File photo by Natalie Hoefler)

also notes the extensive resources available on the Creation Care Ministry's website. Each of its four sections—Catholic social teaching, prayers/songs/liturgies, environmental justice and sustainable practices—has from four to nine pages of links to articles, documents, guides, handouts, webinars, other websites and more, as well as a link to the LSAP.

Mundell notes the team's impact locally, nationally and globally. "We've had members be part of a national diocesan creation care group and given input on Catholic education programs around the world," he says.

'Everybody needs to be the doers'

Honestly speaking, though, Mundell says the team's current members—all volunteer—"would say we're never satisfied with what we're doing. That's who we are—we want to do more."

Horvath says the ministry's members recently identified "working on the energy piece" as a priority.

"We really want to encourage people to take a look at the energy they use in their lifestyle, how energy is used in businesses, homes and school," she says.

"We really want to focus on going to net zero energy use. The archdiocese is working on that for the [Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara] Catholic Center and Xavier Building in Indianapolis. We want to try to get parishes to commit to that too."

On a broader scale, Mundell would like people and parishes to "see creation care as a real ministry, as part of who we are as Catholics, part of our faith and practices, part of our stewardship."

As Sister Sheila Marie notes, "We can educate and promote care for creation. But everybody needs to be the doers."

(Learn more about the archdiocesan Creation Care Ministry and the ways it offers Catholics and parishes across central and southern Indiana to integrate care for the environment into their life of faith at ourcommonhome.org. To contact the team or for information on volunteering, send an e-mail to mail@ourcommonhome.org.) †

Parishes in central and southern Indiana share sustainability success stories

By Natalie Hoefler

In response to Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical 'Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home,' parishes throughout central and southern Indiana have taken steps to become better stewards of their resources, making their campuses more energy efficient—and saving money along the way.

Below is a list of a few of those parishes and some of the projects they've implemented, as well as some parish creation care ministry efforts.

St. Benedict Parish, Terre Haute

—Installed a variable refrigerant system with heat pumps in the church in 2012. That June—a hot one—the church's electric bill was just \$525.

—Replaced all lighting with LED lights and added motion detectors for energy efficiency.

—In the process of adding programmable thermostats in soup kitchen's refrigerators.

—Created Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP) goals with steps to continue working toward better sustainability.

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Fortville

—Created a wildflower meadow to increase bio-diversity and a habitat for pollinators like birds, insects and bees.

St. John the Apostle Parish, Bloomington

—Through the course of nine years, added solar panels, switched to LED lights and replaced HVAC units with more energy-efficient ones. Parish's electric bill dropped from \$23,200 in 2014 to \$1,200 in 2024.

—Per monitoring software, the energy efficiency measures saved 610 tons of carbon dioxide, equating to planting more than 10,000 trees.

Top five eco-friendly things even you can do!

—Replace incandescent lightbulbs with LED lighting.

—Shop at thrift, re-sale and consignment shops.

—Use a cup instead of a plastic bottle of water.

—Turn off the faucet while you brush your teeth or while you're lathering up in the shower.

St. Barnabas Parish, Indianapolis

—Switched to LED lights in the church and school, contributing to a more than \$20,000 drop in the parish electric bill in one fiscal year.

—Added tinted film to windows in school to reduce air conditioning usage by keeping rooms cooler.

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Indianapolis

—Established Creation Care ministry in 2007.

—Parish and school use durable dishware instead of Styrofoam, with volunteers who wash the dishes.

—Created pollinator garden on school grounds.

—Helped parish and school create individual LSAP plans.

—Use plant-based or paper disposable ware for parish festival, and recycle items used during the parish's festival, such as cardboard.

—School applied for and was selected to receive the federal Department of Education's Green Ribbon School National Award for sustainability efforts in 2014.

St. Bartholomew Parish, Columbus

—Active Care for Our Common Home ministry organizes talks and events to educate parishioners on sustainability and to raise awareness of how environmental issues affect the poorest people most. †



New solar panels gleam on the roof of the Parish Life Center at St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington as a workman installs the final panels on Dec. 6, 2017. (Photo courtesy of Cliff Burk)

Contribute to endowment fund to support sustainability projects in throughout the archdiocese

Criterion staff report

A Creation Care Endowment Fund was created through the archdiocesan Catholic Community Foundation.

Its purpose is to provide financial support to archdiocesan parishes, schools and agencies for capital improvements or lasting projects that enhance or support the care of God's creation for the benefit of their campus, facilities or property.

Such projects could include reducing energy or water usage; increasing the use of clean and renewable energy sources; protecting local land, water and air; providing lasting educational value on creation care; or otherwise demonstrating

greater care for creation.

Donations have a current and future impact. By contributing to the endowment, donors help the fund grow, making sustainability projects possible through annual distributions for years to come.

To donate, scan the QR code,

go to www.archindy.org/ccf or contact the Catholic Community Foundation at 317-236-1482 or ccf@archindy.org. †



Several members of the archdiocesan Creation Care Ministry pose during a team meeting on Jan. 18. They are Andy Pike, left, Benedictine Sister Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick, Julie Reyes, John Mundell, Sharon Horvath, Joe Shierling and Andy Miller. Not pictured are members Sarah Mundell and Madeline Patterson Smith. (Submitted photo)

A love letter to a mother: a touch of regret and an abundance of gratitude

(Editor's note: The Criterion invited you, our readers, to share your stories and tributes about motherhood from two perspectives—the gift of having your mom and the gift of being a mom. We received so many wonderful responses, and this one is the last in our series of stories.)

By John Shaughnessy

Even in our closest relationships—and maybe mostly in our closest relationships—we don't always share the gratitude and the love that we have for someone as fully as we want.

And when we can no longer share those thoughts and feelings with someone face to face, there can be regret.

Ann Gilday Lundy has a tinge of regret concerning her relationship with her mother, Mary Catherine Gilday.

"There's so much I wish I had said to her while she was here—how much I admired her strength, her faith, her unwavering love," notes Lundy, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis.

"If I could go back, I'd tell her how much her courage meant to me, and how it shaped not just who I became, but how I live my life every day."

Lundy shared that thought in "a love letter" to her mother that she recently

wrote, 23 years after her mom's death in 2002. Yet far more than the regret, it's the love that stands out from that tribute to her mom—a tribute that revolves around a heartbreaking time when Gilday's courage, strength and faith left a lasting impression on her daughter.

"One of the most profound memories I carry of my mother is from 1979, during my senior year at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis," Lundy recalls. "She had gone in to renew her driver's license and failed the eye exam. We soon learned that she was blind in her left eye. Our fears were quickly realized when she was diagnosed with a meningioma—a brain tumor the size of a grapefruit.

"Though benign, the tumor had grown into her optic nerve and caused the blindness. At the time, she was also managing type 2 diabetes, and the combination left me heartbroken and terrified."

Her fear and heartbreak began to fade because of the faith and fearlessness that her mom showed through this challenging time.

"What happened next shaped me forever," Lundy notes. "My mother endured a long and difficult hospitalization—three months—but never lost her faith. Through every painful moment, every setback, she leaned into her unshakable trust in God.

"I remember watching her resilience, her courage and her grace in the face of adversity. She was determined not to miss my graduation, and in May of 1980, she kept that promise. I can still see her there, beaming with pride, a living miracle at the Cathedral High School campus on the hill. I will always remember that May in 1980—not just for my graduation, but for the gift of having my mother by my side."

So many other memories stand out to Lundy from the 22 more years she had with her mother—"a gift we all considered miraculous," Lundy says. She still savors memories of holidays spent together, trips to Florida, and times at a lake in southern Indiana.

She also feels blessed that her mother was there for her start in the health care profession, when she became a registered

nurse. And there's a cherished photo of the two of them side by side from 1993 when Lundy's compassion and care as an oncology nurse at then-St. Francis Hospital in Beech Grove led to her receiving the St. Francis Family Spirit Award.

Lundy credits her mom and her mom's health crisis for her career as a health care professional, including the past three years when she has served as the chief executive officer of Indiana Health Centers, which serves more than 50,000 people across the state.

"That chapter of our lives stirred something deep in me," Lundy notes. "I wanted to serve those who suffer, to stand alongside families in moments of fear and uncertainty, just as my mother had stood with me. Every day, I carry her with me—in the work, in the mission, and in my heart."

While a tinge of regret lingers for Lundy that she didn't share everything on her heart with her mom, her choice to write "a love letter to my mother" speaks volumes about the depth of her love—and her hope that her tribute will somehow reach her mom.

She ended her love letter with this thought:

"Her presence was a blessing, her love an anchor. I honor her legacy with all the love and gratitude she so richly deserves." †



Ann Gilday Lundy



Mary Catherine Gilday

Roncalli makes history as state champs in boys' volleyball

By John Shaughnessy

After his team had completed its heart-stopping comeback on the way to a historic state championship, the coach who helped his players through that defining moment admitted to having an unusual reaction.

"Honestly, I feel like I blacked out a little bit," recalls Nick Jennings, the head coach of the boys' volleyball team at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. "If you replay that situation 20 times, we don't win any of the next 20. But we won the one we needed to. It was so much relief, excitement and chaos. Every emotion was running through my body."

The comeback happened during the team's semi-final state championship match against Fishers High School, with Roncalli trailing 14-12 in the fifth game that was being played to 15—with the winning team needing to win by two points.

Calling a timeout, Jennings gathered his players and calmly told them, "Hey, you've earned the right to be here. You've done this all year. We've practiced this. Have confidence in who we are, be unselfish, and we'll make it out of this situation."

Roncalli won the next four points, their head coach "blacked out," and 2 1/2 hours after that emotionally-draining match on May 31, the team walked back onto the Mackey Arena court at Purdue University in West Lafayette for the opportunity to win a state championship—the first ever state championship in boys' volleyball that was sanctioned by the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA).

And across the net from them was their Catholic school rival.

Powerhouses and a powerful moment

Through the growing years of boys' volleyball in Indiana, the teams from Roncalli and Cathedral High School in Indianapolis have been the powerhouses in the sport that included 133 teams from across the state this year—a number which led it to be sanctioned by the IHSAA.

In years past, under the banner of the Indiana Boys Volleyball Coaches Association, both schools have won numerous championships, including the previous three years by Roncalli. And going into this year's state championship tournament, Roncalli was ranked first in the state and Cathedral second.

"It's fun to compete against the best," Jennings says about Cathedral. "You look at the history of the sport, they were the giant that nobody could beat. And now Roncalli has become that powerhouse."

Roncalli continued its recent dominance in the state by beating Cathedral for the state championship, 25-14, 25-22 and 25-23.

In the overflowing joy that followed the championship point, Jennings shared hugs, high-fives and huge smiles with his players and his assistant coaches, who include



The players, coaches and managers of the boys' volleyball team of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis are all smiles on May 31 at Mackey Arena in West Lafayette, Ind., as they celebrate winning the first Indiana High School Athletic Association's state championship in the sport. (Photo courtesy of John Smith of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis)

Will Buechler, Andrew Gallagher and Dom Jannazzo. An extra special moment was shared with the other assistant coach, Jennings' mother, Jane (Deak) Jennings, a 1983 Roncalli graduate.

"She coached me when I was in high school," says Jennings, a 2011 Roncalli grad. "A lot of the things I've learned came from her. I don't think I'd want to coach with anybody else. We gave each other the biggest hug when it happened because we both wanted it so much. To have that finally pay off—the relief and the love you feel after you finally do it is utterly amazing."

That love extended to his family in the stands at the championship, including his wife Emily, his father Paul and his three siblings and their families. And that feeling of family flowed toward the players and their parents, with a special focus on the seven seniors who led the team—Eli Berger, Ben Buechler, Matthew Dial, Joey Evans, Elijah Goers, Chris Griffin and Aiden Hill.

"We had great senior leadership," their head coach says. "It's probably the most confident group of players I've ever coached. And they earned the right to be confident. They're also aggressive and dedicated. We knew going into the season we were going to get everybody's best. And they wanted it. That shows a lot about the kind of kids we have in this program."

Jennings also shared one more defining quality of the players.

A team for the ages

"We pray after every practice. We pray before every

match," Jennings says. "We definitely keep God and the Catholic faith at the forefront because I do believe we are where we are because of the type of players we have. They have that relationship with God."

The journey to the state championship was also highlighted by the support of the Roncalli family.

"The amount of support we had at Mackey was so incredible," Jennings says. "We had so many students, parents and family friends. Anytime we traveled, it didn't feel like an away game because we had so many fans."

During the week following the state championship match, Jennings was back in the gym, holding a volleyball camp for grade-school children, focusing on the future. Still, the memories will linger for a long time from making history as the team to win the first state-sanctioned championship in boys' volleyball.

"This one meant more than any other championship we've played in," Jennings says. "We knew at all times during the season that we had the best six on the court. We may have not always had the best player, but we definitely had the best team on the floor. We knew if we played together, we would do exactly what we set out to do."

"It's been so cool to see these boys get the love and attention they deserve. It's an unreal feeling that I never thought I'd get in my life."

(A story about the state championship season of the girls' softball team of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis will be featured in the July 11 issue of *The Criterion*.) †

SERRA Club Vocations Essay

Student uses prayer to find pathway to understand God's vocation

By Patrick Egan

Special to *The Criterion*

God, the creator of the universe, wants you! He has a plan for your life. I think about it like this: You are a tool

God wants to use to do a specific job. No one else can do the job God has for you. This is your vocation.

My priests, Father Jonathan Meyer and Father John Hollowell, have encouraged the boys at our parish to

discern the vocation to priesthood through their "Altar Boyz" program.

We have monthly meetings to talk about interesting topics, like different forms of prayer. The first week Father Hollowell gave an amazing talk on contemplation. This is when you simply sit and feel God's presence. I didn't think I would have time or the ability to do that.

But later, as I was going to adoration with my family, I saw Father Hollowell in church. He was sitting in the way he taught us to when doing contemplative prayer. He looked so at peace with God and himself. It gave me hope that if I could do that, I could have an hour of blissful joy with our Lord every week in adoration. His example has led me to try to seek God in this way.

I first began to think about my vocation when I was in a middle school religion class. The teacher announced that we would start reading the book *33 Days to Eucharistic Glory*. She told us to write down our hopes and dreams for what we could achieve after reading this book. Then she said very seriously to me, "I believe that one day you will be a priest."

I was blown away by her words. She believed that I, the class goof who couldn't pay attention and messed around, could be a priest. Because she said this to me, I have hope that, if I

try every day, I can be the man God is calling me to be.

To prepare for this, I love talking to God about his plan for me. All you have to do is ask and he will tell you. I do this through prayer. I also like praying the rosary. This simple chain of beads is one of the most amazing and beautiful tools I use to talk to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Not only does God love us, but so does Mary. She wants us to do God's will and she can help us.

I also enjoy contemplative prayer. You hold out your hands in your lap and God puts his hands in yours. You just sit, knowing that he's there. His love for you encases you both in a circle of joy and happiness. This is a difficult form of prayer and very intimidating, but it's just like playing a piano. You work hard on it and eventually there will be beautiful music.

Remember, God has a plan for all of us. If you follow your vocation and do his will, you will be the saint God is calling you to be!

(Patrick Egan and his parents, Justin and Katharine Egan, are members of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright. He recently completed ninth grade as a homeschooled high school student and is the 9th-grade division winner in the Indianapolis Serra Club's 2025 John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest.) †



Patrick Egan

Project Rachel Ministry
Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Rachel's Vineyard

UPCOMING
RACHELS VINEYARD RETREAT
JULY 25-27 2025
GREATER INDIANAPOLIS AREA

for confidential help and to register
call 317-452-0054
or email projectrachel@archindy.org

Catholic Women's Giving Circle builds community, assists those in need

By Mike Krokos

Deacon John Cord understands the importance of the archdiocesan Catholic Women's Giving Circle (CWGC).

As the coordinator of Corrections Ministry in the archdiocese, he has witnessed firsthand how funds from the group have impacted women and men being released from prison.

His office was one of three ministries last fall that received a \$25,000 grant from CWGC. The others were Catholic Charities Bloomington and Mother Theodore Catholic Academies in Indianapolis.

"We are very blessed by the funds from the Catholic Women's Giving Circle. We are using this money to set up a mentoring program for women and men who are returning from prison across the archdiocese," Deacon Cord said.

The funds will be used as seed money to enter into an agreement with Trusted Mentors (a program that matches trained volunteer mentors with at-risk adults to help them remain housed and out of prison) and the United Methodist Church of Indiana, Deacon Cord noted.

"We are hoping to have the mentoring program started in Marion County by the fourth quarter of 2025. Once it is established in Marion County, we will expand into the counties where we will be launching a re-entry program in 2026," Deacon Cord added.

"Without the amazing gift from the Catholic Women's Giving Circle, we would not be able to get the mentoring program off the ground so quickly."

Deacon Cord was among the speakers at an April 29 CWGC launch event for its 2025 campaign at Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis.

Any Catholic woman in central and southern Indiana can join, multiplying her own and the circle's ability to impact

the works of Catholic ministries in the archdiocese.

Initiated last year, CWGC celebrates the growing number of women giving to philanthropic causes. Within this endeavor, a grant process is open to ministries in the archdiocese. CWGC members evaluate grant applications and vote to determine grant recipients. The initiative seeks to empower Catholic women to collectively support Catholic causes, as well as share in the camaraderie of time spent with women who share the same faith-based values.

Kim Pohovey, director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese, introduced the concept of an archdiocesan Catholic women's giving circle, which gives them the opportunity to grow in faith, knowledge and friendship as well.

About 60 women attended the April gathering, Pohovey noted.

The process is repeated annually, both in terms of membership and awarding grants.

Membership lasts one year, with commitments of \$1,000 or \$250 determining whether a member gets a whole or quarter vote on the final grant recipients. Membership this year is open through June 30.

"We hope to raise \$75,000 in order to award three \$25,000 grants again this year," Pohovey noted.

"This opportunity is available to any Catholic woman in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis," she added. "They did not need to attend the launch event to join the circle. Whether in Indianapolis or not, women can take part in person or vote online."

Colleen Renie, who founded the Villages of Merici in Indianapolis, a Catholic housing community for people with developmental disabilities, also spoke at the gathering.



Sharon Haggengos, left, Anne Wilmes, Cathy Kroeff and Ellen Sanders were among those who attended an April 29 Catholic Women's Giving Circle launch event for its 2025 grant process at Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

"The steering committee decided to highlight at their events Catholic women doing amazing things in our community," Pohovey said. "Colleen spoke about her ministry as well as female philanthropy."

'Incredibly powerful and moving'

Kathy O'Connell was among the attendees at the April gathering.

A member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, she had several takeaways from the event.

"Hearing from one of the recipients of the inaugural grants [Corrections Ministry] was incredibly powerful and moving," O'Connell said. "It was a charity that I had not considered volunteering in, but after hearing about their work, the dedication of the volunteers, the magnitude of appreciation

and the significant impact on the recipients, it is certainly on my radar now.

"Becoming involved in CWGC has opened my eyes to more specific needs in our community," she added. "Ultimately, that impacts where we choose to contribute our time, talent and treasure."

'Their generosity made a difference'

Like O'Connell, Cathy Kroeff appreciated learning how a grant awarded last year is being used. She was impressed by the Corrections Ministry's efforts to impact the lives of more inmates.

"I believe that type of accountability, giving the donors a firsthand witness of how their generosity made a difference, is critical to keeping momentum for the group," she said.

See CIRCLE, page 19



 **CenterWell**
Senior Primary Care
It's about time™

50% more one-on-one time with your doctor.*
Feel heard. Not hurried.



Senior-focused primary care



Same-day appointments



Schedule your tour
317-597-8725
MyCenterWellIndiana.com

We're Medicare-friendly! We accept Medicare plans from many providers, including Aetna, Anthem, Cigna, Devoted Health, Humana, UnitedHealthcare and Wellcare.

*Comparison based on a study by American Public Health Association published in January 2021 that shows that the average primary care exam was 18 minutes. CenterWell does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability, age or religion in their programs and activities, including in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, their programs and activities.

For Medicare members

SKAGGS

continued from page 8

“So, one Saturday I showed up,” says James. “And then I kept going and going and going.”

Bethany and Xander joined him. James says Father Timothy DeCrane, the parish’s pastor, “and everyone at St. Rose were just awesome and really welcoming. People came up to give us hugs saying, ‘We’re glad you’re here’ and ‘Call if you need anything.’ It just felt like home.”

Through Bill’s guidance, the welcome they received from the parish and school community and Xander’s unknowing witness, James and Bethany knew they had found the faith they’d been yearning for.

When they enrolled in Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) at the parish last fall, it was not just to learn more about the faith, says James: “It was to become Catholic.”

‘I couldn’t quit smiling’

Bill had hoped to be his nephew’s sponsor. But he was sick—“sicker than we thought,” James notes. “We built an addition on the house, and he moved in with us.”

Despite the family’s care, Bill Skaggs died in November.

Father DeCrane was with him when he passed away. But before Bill died, he asked a favor of the priest.

“Uncle Bill had bought Xander his first rosary,” says James. “He gave it to Father Tim, and Father Tim gave it to Xander at the funeral.”

The morning of the Easter Vigil Mass “was difficult,” James admits. “I was down because Uncle Bill wasn’t there. I even called Father Tim.

“Xander was having a bad time, too. He and Uncle Bill were going to wear matching suits and go out to dinner after [the Mass]. Father Tim reminded him even if you can’t see him, he’s there.”

Xander says his favorite part of the Easter Vigil Mass was being baptized—which is a bit ironic.

“When Xander started going to Mass at first, he was upset because he couldn’t have the Body of Christ,” Bethany recalls. “Uncle Bill explained to him that you have to be baptized in the Church first. In [Xander’s] eyes, that meant ‘dunking,’ and that scared him. Once he found out he wasn’t going to be ‘dunked,’ he was excited!”

Being baptized was also a memorable moment for James.

“It was the most peaceful thing I ever experienced, like I was the only person there,” he says. “It was like just me and Christ. I couldn’t quit smiling.”

Bethany felt joy, too, but expressed her emotion in tears.

“The best thing for me was receiving the Eucharist for the first time,” she says. “It was always my favorite part of the Mass, but I couldn’t take part in it. I believed in [Christ] and prayed to him, but I didn’t truly feel his presence until I finally got to receive Communion. I just cried.”

The communion of saints—above and below

During OCIA at St. Rose, catechumens and candidates took time to research the saints, looking for one to choose as a patron for their confirmation.

For James it was St. Hubert, the patron saint of hunting.

“I’m an avid hunter, and I love the outdoors,” he says. “I was looking up a saint I could relate to, and when I saw him, I was like, ‘Oh yeah, that’s my saint!’”

Bethany says St. Dymphna chose her rather than vice-versa.

The saint, most often known as the patron for those suffering with anxiety and depression, is also the patron of

those who have lost a parent. That patronage spoke to Bethany, whose stepfather died in March.

“I had three saints in mind” for her confirmation, she says. “But when they asked me who my saint would be, St. Dymphna just popped out.”

As for their son, his choice was easy: “St. Francis of Assisi, because he picked up trash,” says Xander.

After a chuckle, James explains.

“Xander will tell you this is God’s Earth,” he says. “He gets so mad when people throw trash on the ground. He says, ‘You have to keep the Earth clean,’ and St. Francis took care of the Earth.”

Bill Skaggs now walks with Hubert, Dymphna and Francis among the deceased communion of saints.

But thanks in part to Bill—and the welcome and witness of St. Rose of Lima’s parish and school communities—James, Bethany and Xander are now counted among the living communion of saints.

And James and Bethany, like their beloved Uncle Bill, are now leading others to the faith, too.

“We raised two nieces. One of them is 18,” says James, who then proudly adds, “She’s going through OCIA classes at St. Rose in the fall.” †

LEWIS

continued from page 8

“It was the culmination of everything we learned. OCIA is a long process, and looking back to mulling over the idea of needing to get back to church—it felt like a reward for all our effort.”

Jamie agrees “with everything Widd said. Receiving the Eucharist was a blessing, like I was becoming part of something bigger.”

Being a nurse and of Italian descent, she chose St. Catherine of Siena—patron of nurses and of Italy—as her confirmation saint.

Widd chose St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

“That was easy,” he says. “She’s the patron saint of Alaska and aviators. I’m a big aviator fan, and I lived most of my adult life in Alaska. We even went to see her shrine in Juneau,” he says of the family’s recent trip to Alaska.

‘It’s like God guided us here’

Now that Jamie and Widd are Catholic, they are fully embracing their faith.

“It feels so good to finally be part of the Church!” says Jamie. “I’m still just taking it all in and eager to learn more.”

Widd is looking for ways “to continue learning and

also to give back, like joining the choir or becoming [an OCIA] sponsor.”

He says he has a prayer life “that was practically non-existent before. And we pray with Elena every night.”

But mostly, says Widd, “I just like going to Mass. It just feels so good being there. It’s so peaceful.”

Looking back, Jamie sees God’s hand in every step of the couple’s faith journey.

“First Widd was stationed here,” she says. “Then we buy a house that happens to be down the road from St. Rose. Then they had a faith-based preschool when we were looking for one for Elena.

“It’s like God guided us here.” †

EVERY HEARTBEAT IS EXTRAORDINARY

You’re not a name on a chart. You’re the pulse of what we do. At Franciscan Health, we listen to the rhythm of your life by understanding what makes your heart beat stronger. From the first consultation to your routine follow-up, we’re here to make sure your heart stays as strong as your spirit.



#1 in INDIANA for HEART CARE



HEAL YOUR HEART

FranciscanHealth.org/HeartCare



Franciscan HEALTH

LOVE YOUR extraordinary LIFE

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Have a deeper encounter with Christ by preparing well for Mass

By Fr. Ralph W. Talbot, Jr.

(OSV News)—Most events in life require preparation. When you go on a trip, you get to the airport early so you can get through security. When you go to a concert or sporting event, you arrive early to find your seat. When you host a party, you make sure you have all the right food and supplies.

Preparation is important for a successful day at work, at school or even at the gym. Getting in the right mindset, anticipating what might happen and setting goals for what you want to achieve is a recipe for success. It helps you feel a sense of security, readiness and satisfaction.

The same holds true for Mass.

For some people in parishes, taking time to prepare for Mass is absolutely essential. Your parish priest prepares a homily. Lectors spend time reviewing the readings. Music directors select hymns that tie into the readings. The choir practices. The sacristan readies the vestments, the hosts and the wine. Liturgy committee members make sure altar linens are pressed and flowers are arranged. Staff members make sure bulletins are ready for distribution. Someone cleans the church.

Most Catholics would agree that these preparations are important for a prayerful liturgy. But what most Catholics don't realize is that it is also important for the people in the pews to prepare for Mass.

Here are five simple things you can do to prepare for Mass. They aren't difficult or time-consuming. But they will help you enter more deeply into the celebration of the Mass and achieve a more intimate union with Christ and the other members of the worshipping community.

—**Know why you are there**—The Mass is a liturgy. The word liturgy comes from a Greek word meaning “the work of the people.” You come to Mass not as a spectator but as a participant. You join with other members of the parish community in prayer, worship, thanksgiving and communion. You are no longer just an individual. You are an important part of the mystical body of Christ.

Take a few minutes each week to think about your place in that body. It will give you a deeper appreciation of who you are. It will help you recognize the unique gifts and talents that God gave you. It will give you a deeper appreciation of the other people in your parish community.

—**Reflect on the readings**—Set aside a few minutes on a specific day each week to read the first reading, the responsorial psalm, the second reading and the Gospel for the following weekend. Let the words penetrate your mind and your soul. How do these readings apply to your life? What is the Lord saying to you in these readings?



Pilgrims from the Diocese of Pittsburgh, the Diocese of San Bernardino, Calif., and St. Agnes School in St. Paul, Minn., pray after receiving Communion during a March 7 jubilee Mass at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. Preparation for Mass can help worshippers deepen their experience of the liturgy. (CNS photo/Pablo Esparza)

Is there something that you are being asked to do? Is the Lord leading you in a new direction?

Finding the weekly readings is easy. You can purchase a personal missal, or subscribe to a magazine like *My Daily Visitor*, *Magnificat* or *The Word Among Us*. You can also check out readings in many online sources, among them www.usccb.org. Many podcasts provide recordings of the proclamation of the readings and reflections on them.

As you become accustomed to reviewing the readings ahead of time, you will begin to look forward to going to Mass. During the Mass, you will have a deeper awareness of how the opening prayer (called the “collect”) ties into the theme of the readings. When you hear the readings proclaimed and listen as a priest or deacon gives the homily, the insights you receive will be more profound and you will have a heightened spiritual awareness.

—**Think about your offering**—

When you come to Mass, you bring everything that you are to the altar as an offering to the Lord. It's a good idea to spend a little time throughout the week thinking about what you will offer to the Lord.

What joys will you share? What sorrows would you like to unburden yourself of? How have you used the gifts that you have been given? What anxieties or tensions are troubling you? Do you want to offer up any pain or suffering you have experienced? Do you have questions or doubts that you want to give to God?

Think also about the state of your soul. Are you ready to give yourself to God entirely? Are you holding anything back, carrying any anger or resentments? Do you need to forgive someone or seek the forgiveness of someone you hurt? Do you need to seek the Lord's forgiveness in the sacrament of reconciliation?

It's also a good idea to think about what you want to ask God. Is there

something or someone that you want to pray for? Do you need guidance in some area of your life? For what are you grateful?

—**See yourself as part of the community**—Your experience of the Mass begins the moment you arrive at church. Plan to get there a little early.

Outside of the church, smile and speak to the other people who are arriving, keeping in mind that everyone in the parish community is part of the body of Christ. You might take a moment in the parking lot or vestibule to introduce yourself to someone you don't know. A friendly hello makes everyone feel wanted and welcome.

As you enter the church, make the sign of the cross with holy water. This is a reminder of your baptism, which made you a part of the body of Christ. It is through your baptism that you can participate in the fullness of the eucharistic celebration.

You might try sitting in a different pew every once in a while. It will give you a new view of the altar and a chance to interact with different people. Be sure to genuflect or bow before entering your pew. We do this as an act of reverence and an acknowledgement of God's presence.

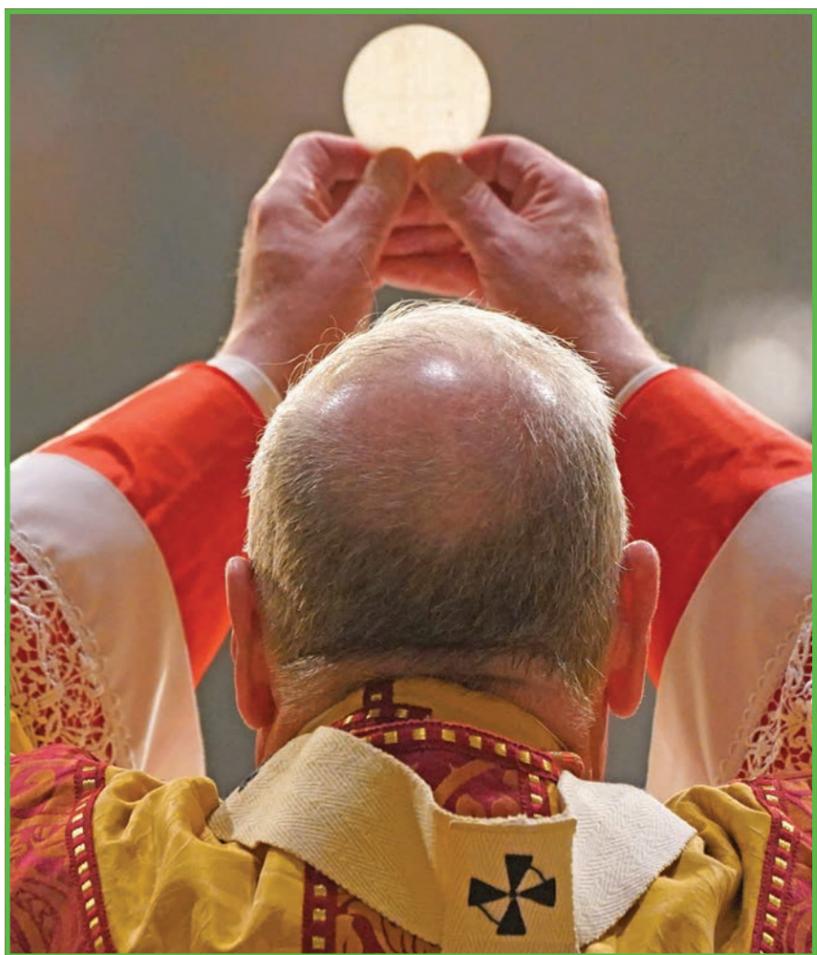
—**Allow yourself to be drawn into God's presence**—Spend some time in silence before Mass begins. Quiet your mind. Let go of any tensions or anxieties that you brought with you. In all of this, allow God to draw your into his presence.

Think about how you purposely avoided food for an hour before Mass. One reason for this fast was to create in you a feeling of hunger for the Eucharist. Allow your soul to yearn for the Lord. Ask God to fill all of the empty places inside you.

Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you in the readings, the music, the homily, the prayers of the Mass and your Communion meditation. Everything that you think and do in these final moments before Mass instills in you a joyful anticipation for your encounter with the Lord.

When you take the time to prepare for Mass, your attitude begins to change. The Mass becomes much more than something that you do every weekend. Your mind discovers a deeper appreciation of the mystery that you experience during the liturgy, your heart becomes more open to God's love, and your soul becomes more receptive to the graces that God is bestowing upon you.

(Father Ralph Talbot is pastor of St. Hubert Parish in Chanhausen, Minn.) †



New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan elevates the host on Dec. 24, 2024, as he celebrates midnight Christmas Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Worshippers who prepare in advance for taking part in a Mass open themselves to a greater encounter with Christ in the liturgy. (OSV News photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Journey of the Heart/Jennifer Burger

First grandchild offers a reminder that God is everywhere

One of the most anticipated moments in life for many is the birth of the first grandchild. This is something that we had hoped for, but we acknowledged that it would be according to God's plan and his will.



When our daughter announced last fall that they were expecting a child and due in May, this journey of hope came alive. Our daily prayers for this life within the womb, her health, growth and safe passage into the arms of her parents awakened in our hearts a love that was new yet familiar in so many ways as we were making way for this new child and "role" in our lives.

It is a love that I cannot fully describe as it is still unfolding and revealing itself in this wondrous kind of awe.

My experience as a grandparent is limited in terms of time, but I feel like my heart has been ready for moments such as holding a newborn child for an eternity!

We are blessed to live very close to our granddaughter, and I've been able to visit and help often since she was born. In these first few weeks of her

life, there is not much she can do—she just is.

Other than feeding her and changing diapers, there is not much for me to do but to just "be" with her.

When she is asleep in my arms, I find myself studying her every feature, gently touching her soft skin, paying attention to her sweet little noises, and breathing in that new baby smell, beholding and marveling at the miracle and how beautiful she is. And my heart just melts.

It is when she is awake, however, that I have experienced a deeper *movement* in my heart. Although I offer many expressions of love to her, I know she is too young to acknowledge or respond to them, but her eyes speak to me of something that is unspoken. As our eyes search each other, there is a deep sense of mutual submission and love.

She does not understand love, but she knows it instinctively and receives it. Without words and with only a gaze, we are held together and suspended in time—beholding, receiving and embraced in this wondrous awe of life-affirming love!

I know these days will soon pass as she continues to grow, develop and become more aware of her surroundings. And while there will be many things I hope to teach and pass along to her

in the future, for now, it is she who is impressing a holy wisdom upon me—to be vulnerable and have no recourse but to be held, and the transforming power of looking into the eyes of the lover and being the beloved.

I know my love for God will never match the love he has for me, but when I fix my gaze completely upon and search for him, he meets my gaze and speaks to me in the silence. Submitting myself to his love, I experience the fullness of life as a beloved child of God, and it is enough to keep me going.

So often our journey is to commit to God's will in our life, but let us not forget to sit and be in awe of his wondrous love, to behold and be held and to receive. Let God be God, and let our hearts be stirred and united to his love already in us.

God is everywhere, if we simply slow down and keep our eyes open. His love breathes and speaks through all things, especially in what we can only behold—in the Eucharist, in nature and even in a newborn child!

(Jennifer Burger is program manager at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis and a member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. She is also a spiritual director.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

God draws families and the Church to himself in comings and goings in this life

In life on this side of eternity, nothing stays the same. There are always comings and goings. That is true for the world as a whole, including families.



They start with a man and woman meeting, falling in love and discerning that God is calling them to marriage.

If God so blesses them, they welcome children into their

marriage. As the years pass, relatives in their extended family die, some after a long life, others maybe more unexpectedly at a young age.

Friends and neighbors can play important roles in the life of a family as they come and go through the years.

Those children who were welcomed at their birth eventually leave the nest and form lives of their own, discerning their vocation, possibly forming families of their own if God calls them to do so.

And that husband and wife who came together through God's grace earlier in life eventually part ways, at least in this life, when our heavenly Father calls them to himself.

God in his providence plays a role in all of these comings and goings in this ever-changing world. They are moments in which he invites family members to be drawn in love closer to him and each other as they journey together each day closer to the kingdom of heaven.

What is true of individual families in this regard is also true of the Church, the family of faith that our Lord created and brought to life through the Holy Spirit.

Comings and goings occur all the time in the Church. But they came to the fore for the faithful around the world in a special way in the past few months as Pope Francis died and Pope Leo XIV was elected to succeed him as bishop of Rome.

We mourned the passing of Pope Francis much like families do when a beloved parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle dies. And we celebrated with joy when Pope Leo first appeared on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, much like families gladly welcome a new child, a son- or daughter-in-law or a grandchild.

Catholics across central and southern Indiana similarly rejoiced earlier this month when three men took a new place in our family of faith when they were ordained priests.

And early next month, Catholics in many parishes across the archdiocese will say goodbye to beloved pastors and parochial vicars (associate pastors) who may have served them for many years, and welcome new ones in their stead.

Moments of people coming and going in our families and in the Church in this life are sometimes marked by sadness and uncertainty. At other times, they are occasions of joy.

That they will happen at some point or another is unavoidable. But God would not allow these moments to happen without offering his grace in them. He uses them as steppingstones to draw families and the Church closer to himself. So, when we naturally get caught up in the feelings of such moments, remember God is using them as means to give us something far greater.

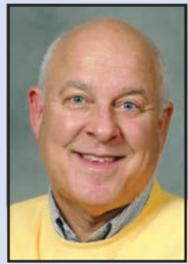
The constant change of life and the mixture of emotions that come will go away when, with the help of God's grace, we are all welcomed into the heavenly wedding banquet.

There are no goings there, only comings as our heavenly Father draws more and more of his adopted children to himself out of our changeable time into his perfect eternity. †

Evangelization Outreach/Ken Ogorek

Two enemies of hope: know them to have more hope

Carbon monoxide detectors. We have them because, although carbon monoxide is an enemy of oxygen in a sense, we can't detect carbon monoxide on our own. We need help.



Please consider this column as an aid to assist you in detecting two realities that can work against a strong presence of hope in your life. Once detected, you can take steps to diminish these two enemies of hope, helping this important virtue fill your heart, strengthening your friendship with God.

Beyond down in the dumps

We all feel a bit down every now and then. When having the blues shows signs of clinical depression, there's no shame in seeking professional help. Removing the stigma attached to counseling and therapy in the face of serious mental struggles is very important.

Short of depression, though, an enemy of hope can creep in to our life: despair. Despair makes us question God's love for us, his ability to help us. Sometimes despair leads us to justify one or more unhealthy behaviors—unhealthy physically, spiritually or emotionally.

The lies that despair whispers in our ears can make us lose sight of an important lesson lovingly shared by Jesus: on the other side of suffering, new life often awaits.

Knowing what despair is, and being able to identify it in our life, helps alert us to when we need to pray for growth in the virtue of hope—availing ourselves of sacramental grace as well as additional helps for our journey of faith.

I'm not Hitler, so I guess I'm going to heaven

A second main enemy of hope rears its head with thoughts like "I presume I'm going to heaven because, you know, I'm a nice person. A good person—at least as I define good. Not even sure if I need all that churchy stuff."

This thief of authentic hope is called presumption.

Presumption makes us vulnerable to a false hope in the Jesus I create in my image and likeness—a supreme being who affirms how I vote, how I spend my money, what I do in the bedroom and how I treat my neighbor—never challenging me to try following all of Church teaching, including those I find personally challenging.

While it's OK to have confidence in our odds for heaven, getting there takes more than being a good or nice person in a vague sense.

Our one and only true hope for heaven is the living, risen Jesus—accepting his gift of salvation, striving for a life of merit as he defines it through his Church, running into his merciful arms when we fall short in our lifelong struggle with sin.

Ask and you will receive

How then can I grow in hope?

"Pilgrims of Hope" is the theme capturing our attention during this Jubilee Year. The best way to grow in the virtue of hope is, acknowledging that it's a gift from God, to pray for it fervently and frequently.

As mentioned above, being on the lookout for hope's enemies in our life as well as placing a sacramental prayer life high on our priority list helps ensure our ongoing growth in hope.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus and Our Lady of Hope, may you conquer hope's enemies by God's grace and mercy, embracing his beautiful gift of hope and hopefulness, living an authentically hope-filled life.

(Ken Ogorek is executive director within the archdiocesan Secretariat for Evangelizing Catechesis. He can be reached at kogorek@archindy.org.) †

Called to Holiness/Jaymie Stuart Wolfe

The Church still needs the fisherman and the Pharisee

Although it hasn't been a holy day of obligation in the United States since 1840, the solemnity of SS. Peter and



Paul is as close as we can get to that, without declaring it one. The feast is observed annually on June 29, which falls on a Sunday this year.

Peter and Paul could not have been more different from each other. But the

liturgical wisdom that brought these two towering saints together in a shared feast underscores the fact that the Church needed both the fisherman and the Pharisee—and still does.

Christ Jesus has always called ordinary workers and natural leaders, people with hearts that are quick to commit themselves fully and shoulders that are willing and able to bear the weight of responsibility. But God also calls people who take things more deliberately, minds that grapple with the truth and then offer themselves in service to it; energetic souls who don't hesitate to go to the ends of the Earth in every respect.

The readings for the Vigil Mass that commemorates them are instructive. In Acts 3:1-10, we see Peter and John on their way to Temple prayers when they encounter a man who had been crippled from birth at the gate begging for alms. Peter takes the man's needs—and his

request—seriously, then challenges the man to see that they did not possess what he was asking them to give.

But instead of ending the encounter there, Peter offers something better: "I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, rise and walk" (Acts 3:6). I suppose Peter and John could have kept walking in good conscience. They chose not to. Luke tells us that Peter took the man "by the right hand and raised him up" (Acts 3:7). At that moment, the beggar's feet and ankles were healed. After leaping up to his feet and walking around, the man joined Peter and John and went into the Temple with them.

Solemnity of SS. Peter and Paul/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, June 29, 2025

- Acts 12:1-11
- 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18
- Matthew 16:13-19

This weekend, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of SS. Peter and Paul.

Jesus commissioned St. Peter to be first among the Apostles and the first leader of the Church. He was a fisherman, probably unable to read or write, as was the case with most people at the time. At some time, he was married, as the Gospel mentions his “mother-in-law,”

but no mention ever is made of his wife (Mt 8:14-15; Mk 1:29-31; Lk 4:38-39).

He left Palestine, went to Antioch and finally to Rome, where he led the Church in the great city.

According to an ancient tradition, he was martyred there by being crucified. But he was crucified upside down at his request because he felt unworthy to die in the way Christ died.

His successors, as bishops of Rome, have headed the Church through the centuries.

St. Paul, by contrast, was born into wealth. He was highly educated for his time. A convert to Christianity, he became a great missionary. He, too, finally died in Rome as a martyr.

The Acts of the Apostles furnish the first reading. Beginning with the trial and execution of the Lord, Christianity was at odds with civil authorities from the beginning.

In this reading, Peter is in prison, sent there by King Herod, the Roman puppet who figured in the story of Christ's crucifixion. Lying in prison, Peter suddenly was released by an angel sent by God.

God preserved him from whatever might have been his plight, to secure the spread of the Gospel and the good order of the Church.

The second reading is from St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, in which Paul wrote to Timothy, a disciple of his and the first bishop of Ephesus in modern Turkey. Paul speaks of the obstacles that confronted him as he proclaimed the greatness of the Lord.

As was the first reading, it is a declaration of God's protection of those

who served the Lord faithfully.

The Gospel reading, from St. Matthew's Gospel, is a clear and compelling testament to the faith of Peter.

In the reading, Jesus asked his disciples who they thought he was. Peter replied that he was “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16). The Lord tells Peter that his faith is a gift from almighty God, and that Peter will be the foundation upon which the Church will be built.

Reflection

The readings on this feast, which is historically so important to the Church, proclaim the special identity of Peter.

The proclamation should be seen in context. The gift of faith, possessed by every believer, is no coincidence. It is an act of God's love and mercy, given to anyone who accepts Jesus as the “Son of the living God,” as St. Peter said in describing his belief in Christ (Mt 16:16).

God's love and mercy are supportive and strengthening. True believers still are being rescued from whatever attempts they make to forget Christ, from doubts and temptations, vexing them, just as Peter had his problems with Herod.

All Christians struggle. Whatever the problem, God sustains and protects those who love the Lord.

Such also was the case with St. Paul. In the second reading in this liturgy, Paul refers to the difficulties that he experienced as a missionary.

In other epistles, he enumerates some of these hardships. People walked away from his preaching, unable to understand or unwilling to commit to Jesus. Again and again, Paul faced the hostility of civil authorities. He was imprisoned and, in the end, he was martyred.

Even so, as in this letter to Timothy, Paul testifies that the Lord rescued him from every threat.

God, in Christ, gave us the Church literally to save us from eternal doom. He gave us Peter to assist in that process. God still protects us. He loves us.

The Criterion will not have an issue next week due to its summer schedule. The reflection of Msgr. Campion for Sunday, July 6, will be posted at www.archindy.org/campion. †



Daily Readings

Monday, June 30

The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church

Genesis 18:16-33

Psalms 103:1b-4, 8-11

Matthew 8:18-22

Tuesday, July 1

St. Junipero Serra, priest

Genesis 19:15-29

Psalms 26:2-3, 9-12

Matthew 8:23-27

Wednesday, July 2

Genesis 21:5, 8-20a

Psalms 34:7-8, 10-13

Matthew 8:28-34

Thursday, July 3

St. Thomas, Apostle

Ephesians 2:19-22

Psalms 117:1b-2

John 20:24-29

Friday, July 4

Genesis 23:1-4, 19; 24:1-8, 62-67

Psalms 106:1b-5

Matthew 9:9-13

Saturday, July 5

St. Anthony Zaccaria, priest

St. Elizabeth of Portugal

Genesis 27:1-5, 15-29

Psalms 135:1b-6

Matthew 9:14-17

Sunday, July 6

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 66:10-14c

Psalms 66:1-7, 16, 20

Galatians 6:14-18

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

or Luke 10:1-9

Monday, July 7

Genesis 28:10-22a

Psalms 91:1-4, 14-15ab

Matthew 9:18-26

Tuesday, July 8

Genesis 32:23-33

Psalms 17:1b-3, 6-7b, 8b, 15

Matthew 9:32-38

Wednesday, July 9

St. Augustine Zhao Rong, priest, and companions, martyrs

Genesis 41:55-57; 42:5-7a, 17-24a

Psalms 33:2-3, 10-11, 18-19

Matthew 10:1-7

See READINGS, page 18

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Canon law foresees parish membership as being tied to where a Catholic lives

Recently, I heard a priest speak on the importance of supporting your “territorial parish,” which he made sound like whatever parish happened to be in your neighborhood. But I have been an active member of a different parish for years, and I don't understand the need to support a parish I didn't choose to register in.



While Catholics are free to attend Mass and otherwise be involved in the life of whatever parish they choose, in most cases, a Catholic's official parish membership is determined by where they live.

Canon 102 of the *Code of Canon Law* defines the concept of “domicile,” which is the canonical term for “residence.” People acquire a canonical domicile when they move to a place with the intention of remaining indefinitely or if they have been living in a place for five years in actual fact.

Similarly, people acquire a “quasi-domicile”—i.e., a significant but temporary residence—if they intend to remain or actually do reside in a place for at least three months. University students living away from home during the academic year are a good example of individuals who would have a canonical quasi-domicile.

Canon 107 goes on to describe how parish membership relates to domicile, telling us that “both through domicile and through quasi-domicile everyone acquires his or her own parish priest and ordinary [i.e., diocesan bishop].” Or, in other words, canon law envisions parish membership as being an automatic consequence of living at a particular address.

Canon 518 further underscores this relationship between geography and parish membership (even while it does carve out a few limited exceptions). As it states: “As a general rule, a parish is to be territorial, that is, it is to embrace all Christ's faithful of a given territory.”

One element that does not exist in canon law is the concept of “parish registration.” Parish registration is a non-canonical custom that developed in some parts of the world, notably the

United States, as a practical aid to parish administration.

Registering at a parish is certainly a good thing to do, insofar as it helps the parish better communicate and keep in touch with parishioners or other Catholics who regularly participate in parish life there. However, registration does not affect canonical parish membership, whereas moving into the parish's territory does.

All that being said, there is no strict requirement to attend Mass at one's proper parish. Canon 1248 indicates that the faithful legitimately fulfill the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and other holy days at any Catholic Mass.

And there can be good pastoral reasons to be involved with a different parish—for instance, a different parish might have a catechetical program better suited to a family's specific needs. Also, while Canon 222 states a general duty for the faithful to support the needs of the Church, it does not explicitly require this support be directed to one's territorial parish.

However, in a culture where so many things are customizable and on-demand, I think it's good for us to consider the wisdom in the Church's system of organizing parishes based on geography rather than the personal preferences of the faithful.

For one thing, pastors and parish priests are responsible for the spiritual care of everyone living in their territory, whether or not they show up at Mass regularly or otherwise make themselves known (see Canon 528). This territorial responsibility ensures that nobody “falls through the cracks.” That is, every Catholic—or really every person, Catholic or not—is automatically a part of a parish and thus has a priest responsible for his or her spiritual needs.

And for members of the faithful, it can be good for us to pray alongside our literal neighbors, even if they might not have been the spiritual companions we would have chosen for ourselves. Loving those whom God providentially places in our paths can be a powerful way of growth in true Christian charity.

(Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.) †

My Journey to God

Unconditional Love

By Teresa Holland

God loves me,
of this I'm sure,
even when I struggle
to feel Him near.
He stretched out His arms
pouring out His love.
Come to Me my child,
I am always here.



(Teresa Holland is a member of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield. Photo: Sunlight illumines a stained-glass window depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus in St. Bridgit of Ireland Church in Bright. In the Catholic Church, June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.) (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

ALTIZER, Rosemary, 85, St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville, May 20. Mother of Adam, Eric, Tim and Todd Altizer and Eric Phillips. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of two.

AMIS, James D., 65, St. Gabriel, Connerville, May 4. Brother of Andra and Andy Amis.

ARELLANO MENDOZA, Maria S., 55, St. Mary, New Albany, March 13. Wife of Mario Garcia. Mother of Cecilia and Omar Garcia. Sister of nine. Grandmother of three.

ARNOLD, Ann H. (Boeck), 96, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, May 6. Mother of Frank Arnold. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of four.

BARTH, Gail, 78, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, Feb. 7. Mother of Sarah Barth. Sister of Ida Cochell, Dell and Jerry King. Grandmother of two.

BASTNAGEL, LaVonne, 97, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, May 12. Mother of James, John, Philip and Thomas Bastnagel.

Grandmother of 19. Great-grandmother of 20. Great-great-grandmother of four.

BIRO, Robert, 91, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, May 27. Husband of Mary Jane Biro. Father of Dawn Frame and George Biro. Grandfather of 15. Great-grandfather of 31.

BRANSTETTER, Nancy C., 72, Prince of Peace, Madison, May 20. Wife of Kenneth Branstetter. Mother of Robyn Copeland, Kendra Denby and Barbie Howdeshell. Sister of Brenda Vincent. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of three.

BURCH, Dr. Larry T., 91, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, May 12. Husband of Carol Burch. Father of three. Brother of Irene Parson. Grandfather of several.

BYRN, Loraine T. (Wooley), 76, St. Michael, Bradford, May 13. Wife of Michael Byrn. Mother of Valerie Trusty and Michael Byrn. Sister of Jo Thrasher.

COMPTON, Charles R., 97, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis, May 22. Father of Elizabeth, Charles, Steve and Tom Compton. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of four.

COSTELLE, Doris A. (Kruer), 85, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, May 8. Mother of Kelly McCutcheon, Karen Sonne, Doug, Gary and Richard Costelle, Jr. Sister of Cheryl Book, Evelyn Lilly, Patsy Nett, Jean Schellenberger, James, Merle and Norman Kruer. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of one.

DIVITA, Mary F., 85, St. Gabriel the Archangel, Indianapolis, May 12. Mother of Anne, Mary, Lawrence and Michael Divita. Grandmother of four.

EARLY, Barbara A., 89, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, May 10. Wife of Rexford Early. Mother of Angie, Michael and Patrick. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of two.

ELLIS, Barbara A., 72, St. Michael, Brookville, May 23. Wife of Richard Ellis. Mother of Megan and Brad Ellis. Sister of Bonnie Foltz and Bill Higgs. Grandmother of two.

FAULKENBERG, Kenneth G., 88, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, April 3. Husband of Mary Ann Faulkenberg. Father of Tammy Sandage, Tracy Schaefer, Toni Vaal and Terry Faulkenberg. Brother of Linda May, Mary Wheatley and Larry Faulkenberg. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of 15.

FEDLER, Fern F., 86, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, May 2. Sister of Rhea Fedler. Aunt of several.

GULLEY, Robert E., 74, St. Mary, Greensburg, May 15. Husband of Kathy Ann Gulley. Father of Anthony Gulley. Brother of Paul and Richard Gulley.

HENN, Eugene E., 93, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, May 8. Husband of Helene Henn. Father of Claire, Edward, Frederic and Matthew Henn. Grandfather of three.

HILDENBRAND, Eugene, 90, St. Boniface, Fulda, April 24. Father of Lynn Preston and Scott Hildenbrand. Brother of Elsie Blythe and Leroy Hildenbrand. Grandfather of four.

HUBER, Margaret K., 94, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, May 21. Mother of Sandy Dolan, Theresa Rapp, Vicki Russell, Kathy and Danny Huber. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of 14.

Great-great-grandmother of four.

JACOBI, Joseph, 92, St. Michael, Bradford, May 10. Husband of Lillian Jacobi. Father of Janette Fetz, Donna Miller, David, Deacon John and Thomas Jacobi. Brother of Melvin Jacobi. Grandfather of 15. Great-grandfather of 24.

JOUBERT, Jr., Raymond J., 90, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, May 3. Father of Therese Andry, Angela Cox, Jennifer Fernandes and Michael Joubert. Grandfather of seven.

KRUEER, Martha J., 90, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, May 23. Mother of Kathy Eberle, Marge Robison, Dan and Leroy Kruer. Sister of Earl and Mel Bertrand. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of three.

LAUZON, Mary Jane, 70, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, May 14. Mother of Michelle Stephens and Matthew Lauzon. Sister of Anne-Marie, Cathy, Crystal, Daniel, John, Kevin, Richard and Robert. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of three.

LINVILLE, William E., 66, St. Louis, Batesville, May 1. Husband of Cindy Linville.

Father of Casey Rhoads and Eric Linville. Brother of Brenda Henretty, Donna Speckman, Bob and Ken Linville. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of three.

MCANDREWS, Thomas F., 87, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, May 8. Father of Kelly Scheidler and Patrick McAndrews. Grandfather of five.

MCMILLAN, Timothy P., 70, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, May 30. Husband of Michelle McMillan. Father of Ashley Shackelford, Cory, Justin and Sean McMillan. Brother of Daniel, Gary and John McMillan. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of one.

MOHR, Jeanne R., 95, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, May 20. Sister of Bob Mohr, Sr. Aunt, great-aunt and great-great-aunt of several.

RICZO, John L., 88, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, May 27. Father of Regina Margiotti, Jerrold and John Riczo. Grandfather of one.

SCHNAPP, Linda M., 84, St. Michael, Brookville, May 7. Mother of Jennifer Crim, Dorothy Huemmer and Amy Schnapp. Grandmother of nine.

TROESCH, Walter M., 89, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, May 17. Father of Lisa Shipman and Steven Troesch. Brother of Emma Harpenau and Victor Troesch. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of one.

WAGNER, Mary D., 89, St. Maurice, Napoleon, May 3. Wife of William Wagner. Mother of Karen Horan, Rose Kramer, Dennis, Gary and Ron Wagner. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 28.

WENZEL, Mary Ann, 80, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, May 13. Wife of Donald Wenzel. Stepmother of Donna Hodge and Darla Tonkin. Sister of Frances Byrne. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of one.

WERNE, Mildred M., 97, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, April 2. Mother of Nancy Fowler, Betty Schnuck-Kerkhoff and Donald Werne. Grandmother of 11.

WILLIAMS, Richard A., 75, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood, May 8. Husband of Nancy Williams. Father of April Alvey, Fawn and Wendy Gary. Brother of Jane Butler, Marilyn Green and Dennis Williams. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of seven. †

Brent Perronie, 57, father of Father Matthew Perronie, died on May 24

Brent Eric Perronie, the father of Father Matthew Perronie, who is currently on a medical leave of absence, died on May 24. He was 57.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on June 4 at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg. Burial followed at the Knights of Pythias Cemetery in Lizton.

Perronie was born on May 14, 1968, in Indianapolis. He married his wife Kathy, who survives, on March 11, 1995. At different periods, Perronie worked for Lastec, World Communion Cups and as a maintenance technician for the Archdiocese

of Indianapolis. At the time of his death, he was working as a skilled machinist for Fleece Performance Engineering.

Perronie also volunteered for many years as an emergency medical technician for the Wayne Township Fire Department in Indianapolis. In his free time, he enjoyed fishing and golf.

Perronie was preceded in death by his father, Lawrence Perronie. He is survived by his wife, Kathy (Wathen) Perronie, his mother, Bernice Smith, and his son, Father Matthew Perronie. †

WOLFE

continued from page 16

Paul is unquestionably the greatest evangelist of all time. In the second reading, Galatians 1:11-20, however, we hear the Apostle describe his life before he encountered Christ: "You heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I persecuted the Church of God

beyond measure and tried to destroy it" (Gal 1:13).

Everything, of course, changed after Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus. And yet, Paul did not respond hastily or alone: "When God, who from my mother's womb had set me apart and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him to the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before me" (Gal 1:15-17). Paul did eventually present himself to Peter in Jerusalem, but only after three years of prayer and preparation.

Today, Christ is still looking for missionaries who have zeal for the salvation of souls, and for ministers who care for fellow disciples in self-sacrificing love. The Christian life usually challenges us to embrace both of these dimensions of discipleship at some level and in some way.

With the solemnity of SS. Peter and Paul, the Church provides us an opportunity to contemplate both mission and ministry in fullness. There are seasons of our lives that will involve more ministry than mission, and others that will be more mission than ministry.

As disciples of Christ, we will be called to care for others, to give them what we can give—the Jesus we have received. But there are also times when we will be called to what may feel like the ends of the Earth, sent to those who don't even know they need the Gospel we can so easily take for granted.

The final words of the Gospel, John 21:15-19, show us what we need to do both: "Follow me" (Jn 21:19).

Christ's question to Peter after the resurrection is posed to every one of us: "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" If we love Jesus, we will feed his lambs and tend his sheep. And if we love Jesus, we will allow ourselves to be led where we

may not want to go. If we love Jesus, we will follow him.

(Jaymie Stuart Wolfe is a sinner, Catholic convert, freelance writer and editor, musician, speaker, pet-aholic, wife and mom of eight grown children, loving life in New Orleans.) †

READINGS

continued from page 17

Thursday, July 10
Genesis 44:18-21, 23b-29; 45:1-5
Psalm 105:16-21
Matthew 10:7-15

Friday, July 11
St. Benedict, abbot
Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30
Psalm 37:3-4, 18-19, 27-28, 39-40
Matthew 10:16-23

Saturday, July 12
Genesis 49:29-32; 50:15-26a
Psalm 105:1-4, 6-7
Matthew 10:24-33

Sunday, July 13
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Deuteronomy 30:10-14
Psalm 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36-37
or Psalm 19:8-11
Colossians 1:15-20
Luke 10:25-37

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:

- Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
- CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church
- 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners

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 archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2 Victim Assistance Coordinator**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

Investing with Faith/Jolinda Moore

Gifting property and treasured assets: What you need to know

We all want to make a difference, but sometimes we may feel we lack the ability or resources to have the impact we want.



Through the years, people have made all kinds of gifts to charity—real estate, grain, vehicles and even treasured jewelry or coin collections.

Personal ties to the treasured property can make the process seem challenging and unexpected, but it is important to know the organization is fulfilling its due diligence to ensure the gift is the right gift for liquidity, ultimately impacting the people we serve.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis and all our agencies and entities are governed by a gift acceptance policy. It outlines requirements for appraising the

value of potential donations and ensures that a donor's generosity will provide the intended recipient with financial benefit.

Most of the time, gifts like property are sold as quickly as possible, so that much-needed support can reach the people we serve. It's rare that the archdiocese keeps a gift for its own use. Most are sold to support ministry work. This can be a hard realization when providing a treasured piece of property, but it is necessary to fulfill the ultimate mission, returning the goods that we have been entrusted to the work of the Church.

If you own property or real estate that you no longer need or wish to sell, a gift of these assets is one way you can benefit the Church without impacting your cash flow. You may also benefit from capital gains tax avoidance by giving rather than selling these assets. However,

keep in mind that the act of giving will require the archdiocese to work through a review process.

Different kinds of gifts have different rules, especially when it comes to taxes and paperwork required by the Internal Revenue Service. Some gifts take more time and money to handle. For example, a gift of real estate may need a review for unpaid taxes or liens, a land survey, a building inspection and a professional appraisal.

When the formal review process is complete, we will proceed with a transfer of property which allows the donor to experience the impact of their generosity.

If you are considering giving something you own to benefit your favorite parish, school, agency or archdiocesan ministry, it is always best to contact that organization first to determine whether what you intend to give can be accepted. Remember, too, that

you should always contact your own financial advisor to determine which available tax benefits may be best for you.

The Catholic Community Foundation (CCF) is happy to provide information and guidance about how your gift can be most effective for those you want to support. Contact ccf@archindy.org to learn more.

(Jolinda Moore is executive director of the archdiocesan Office of Stewardship and Development and the CCF. Tax or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice. Always consult with your legal, tax or financial advisors before implementing any gift plan. If you would like to learn more about including your parish in your estate plans, please contact us any time at 317-236-1482 or ccf@archindy.org. We exist to exclusively serve you and your parish in planned giving.) †

CIRCLE

continued from page 13

A former longtime member of St. Matthew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, Kroeff and her husband are now members of St. Louis de Montfort Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

They have been longtime supporters of Catholic schools in the archdiocese, including supporting Mother Theodore Catholic Academies and the Alliance for Catholic Education of the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana.

"I wish every child had the opportunity to learn in an environment where Christ is at the center of their education," she said.

A member of the CWGC grant committee, Kroeff "had previously been involved with 100 Women Who Care in Hamilton County, which operates on a similar donor model supporting non-profits in the county and saw the power of women combining financial and personal commitments to causes that make a difference in people's lives.

"To be able to combine my giving with other Catholic women and focus on faith-driven organizations was very motivating to me," she added.

'Lifting up our community'

A member of the CWGC steering committee, Carrie Hagovsky was amazed "to see so many women looking to connect and create community around serving others."

She said being a part of CWGC has opened her eyes to give in different ways, but added the examples her parents provided for her and her siblings continues to guide her.

"My parents instilled philanthropy and service in me and my siblings at a young age, and it's been with me ever since," noted Hagovsky, a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. "I worked in non-profit fundraising for over a decade, and now that I'm in another role, it's very important for me to find other ways to plug into my community and give back. The [Catholic Women's] Giving Circle also provides an amazing group of women to network with and have a shared mission of lifting up our community."

'Creating more awareness in our communities'

Stewardship and helping others grow in their lives of faith is at the heart of the organization's mission.

"I pray the organization bears the fruits of creating more awareness in our communities," O'Connell said. "I think that when people see or hear the real stories, they are more likely to get involved and contribute to benefit the cause."

While the "treasure" component of stewardship is an integral part of CWGC, Kroeff noted "time and talent" are important, too. She is hopeful "many professional volunteers will see opportunities to roll up their sleeves as well as write checks."

"Whenever I hear someone say 'it's in God's hands,' I can't help but think, 'But we are God's hands,'" she said. "What a privilege it is to be in a position to help so many people through these ministries."

(For more information on the archdiocesan Catholic Women's Giving Circle or application for their grants, see related article or go to www.archindy.org/womensgiving.) †

Catholic Women's Giving Circle membership and grant applicant information

Criterion staff report**Membership**

Catholic women are invited to become members of Catholic Women's Giving Circle.

Those who contribute \$1,000 have full voting membership in the circle. Contributors who give \$250 are eligible for a quarter-vote.

Those who choose to join at the \$1,000 membership level can pay in one installment or four quarterly installments of \$250 each. Payments can be made by check, securities (IRA, DAF or stock gifts) or securely online by credit card.

This is an annually renewable commitment. Membership commitments for this cycle are due on June 30.

Grant applicants

One-time, one-year grants of \$25,000

will be available to eligible archdiocesan-supported agencies and ministries. The membership response will determine the number of \$25,000 grants to be awarded.

Interested agencies and ministries will complete a grant application by Aug. 15. (Applications are now available at www.archindy.org/womensgiving.)

A selection committee of member volunteers will select three to five finalists. The archdiocesan Office of Stewardship and Development will work with these selected finalists to prepare a short video to be presented at a grant selection event on Oct. 29 at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.

"We will vote and announce winners at our voting event on Oct. 29 at the Catholic Center," noted Kim Pohovey, director of major and planned gifts for the

archdiocese. "At the voting event, we will hear from last year's grant recipients and how their grant impacted their ministry. We will also view videos from this year's finalists. And then the group votes."

Grant awardees have until Oct. 1, 2026, to target completion of their project, and will be asked to complete an impact report. Awardees may be asked to present

their report at a future gathering of the Giving Circle. Awardees will be eligible to apply for future funding.

(For more information about membership or the grant application process, go to www.archindy.org/womensgiving or contact Kim Pohovey at 317-236-1568 or kpohovey@archindy.org.) †

Classified Directory

For advertising rates call
(317) 236-1585.

Employment**Archdiocese of Indianapolis
Maintenance Technician**

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

Duties include:

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

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

Medicare Insurance**Health Insurance Professionals**

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

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

- ❖ Give us a call and allow us to review your needs, for your unique circumstances.
 - ❖ With over 30 years experience we represent several companies for Medicare Supplements, Rx, & Advantage plans, as well as Life companies.
 - ❖ Serving 126 Parishes in 39 Counties
- Gives us a call or send us an email, we will set up a visit today!**
PH: 317-787-4638
danshearhu@gmail.com

'It is God's will': Small-town parish receives big-time gift of music

By Jennifer Lindberg
Special to *The Criterion*

NORTH VERNON—It's a dream come true for a small-town parish.

Hoping to replace its deteriorating, nearly 90-year-old organ, St. Mary Parish in North Vernon recently received the powerhouse organ that was used in Lucas Oil Stadium to welcome more than 50,000 people at the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis in July of 2024.

Today, the 51-stop Rodgers organ—with its swelling sounds—helps uplift the music and the spirits of the 350 people who attend Mass each weekend in the parish's historic church.

"I don't think it's a coincidence because everything is providence," said Father Jerry Byrd, pastor of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon and St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes, both in Jennings County, of the new organ installed right before Holy Week. "At the end of the day, it is God's will that we have it because we got it. One way or another, God willed us to have this organ."

The organ was made possible with a \$32,500 matching grant from the archdiocesan James P. Scott Endowment Fund managed by the archdiocese's Catholic Community Foundation. When the parish's music director Seth Jines found out the organ was for sale, he approached Father Byrd. But he was told the parish didn't have the money to purchase it.

As a priest ministering at three parishes, Father Byrd was skeptical about getting the new organ due to the cost. He also thought he had a few years to think about it until he learned how quickly St. Mary's previous organ was deteriorating.

"The keys would stick when you played them," said parishioner Juanita McClellan, who played the old organ for 50 years at St. Mary.

The cloth wiring was also becoming a fire hazard, and Father Byrd saw that eventually he wouldn't be able to get parts for the old organ.

Providence provided the archdiocesan grant and the generosity of parishioners who helped match the grant and installation costs. However, God's will is also coming full circle for Jines, who was accepted into the full communion of the Church at the Easter Vigil in 2021.

Jines, a Protestant convert to Catholicism, first visited St. Mary's to practice on the old 1936 organ, which came from a catalog and was intended for only funeral homes or small chapels.

At the time, he was working on his master's degree in piano performance at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. St. Mary's was the only place he knew that had an organ he could practice on in North Vernon. Soon, he was asked to help play the organ for Masses.

"I said sure," Jines said. "I'd never been to [a Catholic Mass], but as I sat there and they sang the *Gloria*, the light got brighter and something said, 'You are home.'"

That homecoming is coming full circle as Jines helped welcome other new Catholics at this year's Easter Vigil. He said he was nervous to play the new organ for the first time during Holy Week and Easter—the most important Masses in the Church's liturgical year.

"There's a practical aspect that got me on the edge of my seat," he said.

He also acknowledges how coming to St. Mary to practice the organ led to him becoming Catholic and helping obtain a fine organ for the parish.

"My entire philosophy is anything to just make it better for the next person," he said. "You are not guaranteed tomorrow. Anything can happen ... and I want to leave the music tradition [at St. Mary] in better shape than I found it."

That's because it's about giving back to the community where Jines found his Catholic faith. The organ will help continue the tradition of music at St. Mary and last the church for generations.

The new organ is like having three organs in one, Jines said. It plays American Eclectic, German Baroque and French Romantic—all sounds that the old organ could not produce.

"You can do all that with this organ," Jines said. "It's so important because it really enhances the participation of parishioners. The whole point of the organ is to support the congregation, whether it's singing together or a reflective period to set a mood."

McClellan had mixed emotions about getting rid of the old organ—after all, she played it for half a century—but she agreed it is time for a new one.

"Good music makes an entirely different atmosphere," McClellan said.

She compared it to going to the movies. You don't always notice the music that plays and how it enhances the action, she said.

"But just wait until you are at an exciting scene and there's no music," McClellan said. "It makes all the difference to that movie. I think the same is true in our church. Good and beautiful music really enhances the liturgy."



Father Jerry Byrd, pastor of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon and St. Ann and St. Joseph parishes, both in Jennings County, blesses the new organ that St. Mary was able to purchase through a grant from the James P. Scott Endowment Fund of the Catholic Community Foundation of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Music Director Seth Jines is also pictured. (Submitted photo by Jennifer Lindberg)

Father Byrd, who has an undergraduate degree in musical performance, wants his parishioners to understand the importance of the new organ in light of Catholic musical tradition.

"I hope it will be inspiring to them," he said. "A lot of people can seem indifferent, not caring one way or another, but it is important that we care about these things and how it connects us with tradition."

Music is part of the Church's tradition for a very important reason, he continued.

"It assists our celebration of our worship of God," Father Byrd said. "We don't have liturgical music for our sake. It's about entering a deeper experience and expression of worship through music."

(Jennifer Lindberg is a freelance writer and a member of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon.) †



**SCECINA
MEMORIAL
HIGH SCHOOL**

CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2025!

Go forth to transform the world inspired by the light of Christ

SCECINA.ORG



Joseph Angelo Alarcon, Jr.
Lorena Eulalia Alvarado
Alexandro Bautista-Rubio
Nicholas Gabriel Bozzelli
Clifford Maurice Brown III
Kayley Phoenix Marie Campbell
Nehemiah James Cavanaugh
Peter Anthony Certo
William Dean Cheever
Liam Alexander Christopher
Allison Clinger
Andrea Yaquelin Coronado-Herrera
Naydeline Cuatlatl-Sanchez
Danny Joe Davidson
Michael Joseph Deiter
Cynthia M Dorantes-Urias
Max Aloysius Douglass
Nathan Gregory Gallagher

Mariangela Gascon
Ella Reese Gaudreau
Soledad Gonzalez
Dionte Fabian Greathouse
Anthony Nigel Grubbs
Matheus Christofolletti Guarnieri
Carlos Gutierrez
Dulce Maria Hernandez
Duc Viet Hoang
Jamyia Monet Johnson
Madison Monroe Knight
Liam Larry Kopernak
Ziqian Lai
Riley Christian Long
Diana Machuca
Saray Machuca
Zachariaiah Alan MacKenzie
McKenzie Michele Lynn Maddox

Brogan Matthew Henry Maguire
Samantha Kay Manley
Kori'Yae Mikayle Martin
Daniel Raymond Robert Martin-O'Neill
Isabelle Jean Martinelle
Ivan Aquiles Martinez
Maria Martinez
Maribel Martinez-Morales
Madysyn Cassandra McClellan
Avery Pamela McCoy
Luke Braden McDonald
Rylan Lee McGinsie
Dominic James Kerwin McKiernan
James Nolan McNulty
America Medina-Martinez
Kameryanna Rena Miller
Alexis Morales
Wesley August Morris

Giuliana Valentina Moscoso-Mori
Dan Linh Nguyen
Sheadon Alecsander O'Day
Nash David Ochs-Wald
Stephany Orozco Jimenez
Nicole Lindsay Ortega Castellanos
Colin James Owens
Gabrielle Adrianna Oxlaj
Leonel Jr. Ponce
Diana Quinonez
Brandon Roman Rangel-Ramirez
Brandon D'Angelo Ratcliffe
Leilanni Alexis Rodriguez
Leonardo Romo
Orlando DaJuan Ross
Alexia Guadalupe Saavedra Roman
Xitlally Guadalupe Sanchez
Jalen Anthony Scott

Zamiah Crystal Slack
Anthony Francis Smith
Caroline Jane Soultz
Noah Glen Stuczynski
Kyle Christopher Swinefurth
Tayla Marie Tanasovich
Alan Salvador Tapia
Journee Monai Thomas
Alexis Vasquez
Preston Dang Vu
Henry Michael Weimer
Logan Robert Weinzierl
Molly Elizabeth Welborn
Dominic Avery Alan White
Michael Verlin White
Wynton Mackinley White
Fabian Ximeyo-Coyotl