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Like lessons of Lent, allow retreats to transform you, year-round, page 12.

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Standing at center, Easley Smith, a second-grade student at Sacred Heart School in Jeffersonville, explains the Second Station of the Eucharist to other students in the parish's activity center on March 12 during a Stations of the Eucharist exhibit she and her classmates created and presented as part of a project preparing them to receive their first Communion. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

Sacred Heart second-graders' project helps them 'really understand the Eucharist'

By Natalie Hoefer

JEFFERSONVILLE—Petite and poised, Zoey Evanczyk greets a group of youths to her table, excited to share with them about her favorite of the 14 Stations.

"Welcome to the Fourteenth Station," she begins. "My station is about the Wedding Feast of the Lamb."

She didn't misunderstand the station. Zoey and her second-grade classmates of Sacred Heart School in Jeffersonville were presenting an exhibit on the 14 Stations of the Eucharist in the parish's activity center on March 12 for

the other grades and all members of the parish. The project helps prepare the students for their first Communion.

After learning about the stations and creating their presentations, the children "really understand the Eucharist—I mean they *really* understand," says Debby Townsend, the school's second-grade teacher. "I think kids can understand and do more than we think."

Father Adam Ahern, pastor of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Augustine parishes, both in Jeffersonville, agrees "100%."

See STATIONS, page 8

Pope Leo XIV addressing the signs of our times

A statement from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) provides a great deal for us to consider concerning the outbreak of wars within and among nations.

Drawing from various Church documents and resources, especially



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

"*Gaudium et Spes*," the Second Vatican Council's "Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World," published on December 7, 1965, the Catechism notes that peace is "more than the mere absence of war."

It also points out the need for addressing the root causes of war, violence, and other disruptions to the social order of humanity, including:

- *Injustice;*
- *Excessive economic or social inequalities;*
- *Envy, distrust, and pride raging among men and nations, constantly threatening peace and causing wars.*

"Everything done to overcome these disorders contributes to building up peace and avoiding war" (CCC, #2317).

Overcoming these disorders involves addressing various types of egos, personalities and ideologies that contribute to the ever-deepening polarization of practically every facet of human relationships.

Rooted in the Sacred Scriptures and long-standing Catholic teaching, Pope Leo XIV has been persistent about the need for authentic reflection, dialogue, discernment and action to address the signs of our times, particularly with regard to morality and ethics of aggressive behavior toward others. While it is the poor, vulnerable, and innocent who suffer the most from war, few if any members of society really win.

See POPE LEO, page 9

Moms offer their best advice to women expecting their first child

(In anticipation of Mother's Day, The Criterion is inviting moms to share one piece of advice you would give to a woman expecting her first child—and/or the best advice someone has ever given you about being a mom. Here is the first story in this series.)

By John Shaughnessy

When Roarke LaCoursiere had her first child seven months ago, she not only experienced the joy of giving life to her daughter, she also felt the strong bond of being connected with all moms.

"The best part about becoming a mother is entering into the secret society of mothers everywhere," notes LaCoursiere, a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis with her husband Chase.

See MOMS, page 15

Roarke LaCoursiere shares a tender moment with her first child, 7-month-old Ruth. (Submitted photo)





Pope Leo XIV greets a man and young women as he attends a meeting with the Algerian community at the Basilica of Our Lady of Africa in Algiers, Algeria, on April 13. (OSV News photo/Simone Risolutie, Vatican Media)

Pope praises witness of Algeria's Christian martyrs at meeting with Catholics

ALGIERS (OSV News)—Pope Leo XIV honored the memory of Algeria's Christian martyrs on the evening of April 13, telling the country's tiny Catholic community that the blood of those who died for their faith remains "a living seed that never ceases to bear fruit."

Speaking inside the Basilica of Our Lady of Africa, a 19th-century church perched on a promontory overlooking the Mediterranean Sea and the city of Algiers, the pope praised the 19 men and women religious beatified in 2018 who were killed during the Algerian Civil War of the 1990s.

"It is precisely love for their brothers and sisters that inspired the witness of the martyrs we have commemorated," the pope said. "In the face of hatred and violence, they remained faithful to charity even to the point of sacrificing themselves alongside many other men and women, Christians and Muslims."

The visit marks a remarkable moment for the North African country in which Catholics number fewer than 9,000 in a predominantly Sunni Muslim nation of more than 45 million people. Pope Leo described the Church's role in Algeria as a "discrete and precious presence."

Outside the basilica in heavy rain was a 19-year-old Catholic convert who shared with OSV News how he was raised in a Muslim family but was baptized in 2024 despite his family's opposition. Speaking under the condition of anonymity, he said that he was inspired by the miracles of the Church, in particular the Marian apparition of Our Lady of Zeitoun in Egypt. As an active member of the local Catholic community, he volunteered to help with the pope's visit.

Prior to his arrival at the basilica, the pope visited the Great Mosque of Algiers. "Through this place of prayer, through the search for truth, including through study and through the ability to recognize the dignity of every human being, we know—and today's gathering is proof of this—that we can learn to respect one another, live in harmony and build a world of peace," he remarked spontaneously in Italian.

Inside the basilica, Pope Leo sat under an apse mosaic with a French inscription that translates, "Our Lady of Africa, pray for us and for the Muslims."

Cardinal Jean-Paul Vesco, archbishop of Algiers, told the pope that the vast majority of people who cross the basilica's threshold are Muslim.

"*Madame l'Afrique,*" as she is often called here, is inscribed in the heritage of Algeria and in the hearts of Algerians," the cardinal said in French. "The inscription that welcomes them, 'pray for us and for the Muslims,' expresses Mary's maternal vocation for all humanity, and the vocation of this basilica, which hosts so many cultural and religious events, and gathers so many confidences and moments of intimate prayer."

In his speech inside the basilica, Pope Leo, also speaking in French, said, "This very basilica is a sign of our desire for peace and unity."


"It symbolizes a Church of living stones, where communion between Christians and Muslims takes shape under the mantle of Our Lady of Africa," he said.

Among those present inside the basilica was Father Jean Fernandes Costa, rector of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Algiers, who described the local Catholic Church as very small and "highly diverse in terms of nationalities and cultures." He said the community serves "as a sign of the Church's universality in a non-Christian society."

He told OSV News he has been in Algeria for seven years and serves the Archdiocese of Algiers not only as the cathedral's pastor, but also as chaplain to university students from sub-Saharan Africa.

"It is a very unique situation, as we are embedded in a predominantly Muslim society and must constantly adapt to this reality," said Father Costa, a Brazilian member of the Shalom Catholic Community. "Dialogue with Algerian society has developed gradually through welcoming visitors to our small churches and through our service to the poorest."

Father Fernandes said that, for local Catholics, the papal trip to Algeria is "a



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

April 18–26, 2026

<p>April 18 – 3:30 p.m. Wedding at Sacred Heart Motherhouse Chapel, Louisville</p> <p>April 19 – 11:30 a.m. Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Susanna Parish, Plainfield, at St. Susanna Church</p> <p>April 20 – 5:30 p.m. Echo, ACE and FOCUS gathering at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p>April 21 – Noon Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, followed by lunch for Annual Catholic Center Employee Recognition Celebration at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, both in Indianapolis</p> <p>April 22 – 11 a.m. College of Deans meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p>	<p>April 22 – 7 p.m. Confirmation Mass for the youths of Christ the King, Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Pius X parishes, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral</p> <p>April 23 – 10 a.m. Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p> <p>April 23 – 7 p.m. Confirmation Mass for the youths of St. Mark the Evangelist, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ and St. Michael the Archangel parishes, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral</p> <p>April 25 – 4 p.m. Mass and altar blessing at St. Charles Borromeo Church, Bloomington</p> <p>April 26 – 10 a.m. Disabilities Awareness Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral followed by reception at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p>
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great gift from God for this small Church, which never imagined a papal visit so early in his pontificate and at the start of his apostolic journey to Africa. It is also a sign of hope for the future of this small community."

In his remarks, Pope Leo pointed to the great witnesses to faith both ancient and modern in the North African country, where St. Augustine of Hippo served as bishop in the fourth and fifth centuries. Pope Leo cited the writings of St. Charles de Foucauld, the French hermit and missionary canonized by Pope Francis in 2022, who lived in Algeria among the Tuareg people of the Sahara before his martyrdom.

He also quoted Brother Luc, the elderly physician-monk of the Trappist community of Notre-Dame de l'Atlas at Tibhirine, Algeria, whose story was depicted in the acclaimed 2010 French film *Of Gods and Men*.

Before his martyrdom, when offered a chance to flee potential danger at the cost of abandoning his patients, Brother Luc replied simply: "I want to stay with them."

Earlier in the day, the pope made a private visit to the Augustinian Missionary Sisters of Bab El Oued to honor two of their members, Sister Esther Paniagua Alonso and Sister Caridad Álvarez Martín, who were killed in 1994 while on their way to Mass. Both were among the 19 martyrs beatified in 2018. Their congregation continues to serve the local population through education and outreach for children, youths and women.

Following his address in the basilica, Pope Leo prayed in a side chapel dedicated to St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, which also contained a cross from the Tibhirine monastery and an icon of the martyrs of Algeria, where the pope lit a candle in prayer. †

Official Appointments

Effective June 1, 2026

Deacon Robert Beyke, permanent deacon at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, assigned as permanent deacon at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, also in Indianapolis.

Deacon Richard Renzi, permanent deacon at St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, assigned as permanent deacon at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.

Effective July 2, 2026

Deacon John Cord, permanent deacon at St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour, assigned as permanent deacon at St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.

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



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Pope decries horror, inhumanity that ‘some adults boast of with pride’

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Warning against an increasingly unpredictable and aggressive “delusion of omnipotence” threatening the globe, Pope Leo XIV called on world leaders and individuals to empty their hearts and minds of hatred and violence, and to start serving life.

“Enough of the idolatry of self and money! Enough of the display of power! Enough of war! True strength is shown in serving life,” he said during a special evening prayer vigil for peace in St. Peter’s Basilica on April 11.

“Those who pray are aware of their own limitations; they do not kill or threaten with death,” he said. “Instead, death enslaves those who have turned their backs on the living God, turning themselves and their own power into a mute, blind and deaf idol, to which they sacrifice every value, demanding that the whole world bend its knee.

“Let us listen to the voices of children,” who he said write to him all the time recounting “all the horror and inhumanity of actions that some adults boast of with pride,” he said.

The vigil, which drew thousands of people inside and outside the basilica, featured the praying of the glorious mysteries of the rosary. Before each mystery was recited, women wearing traditional dress from countries representing the different continents of the world lit small lamps from a flame of the Lamp of Peace from Assisi that was placed below a statue of Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Prayer can move mountains, the pontiff said in his remarks in Italian. “War divides; hope unites. Arrogance tramples upon others; love lifts up. Idolatry blinds us; the living God enlightens.”

It just takes a tiny bit of faith “to face this dramatic hour in history together,” he said.

For a people of faith in the risen Lord,

who conquered death with love, he said, “nothing can confine us to a predetermined fate, not even in this world where there never seems to be enough graves, for people continue to crucify one another and eliminate life, with no regard to justice and mercy.”

While the pope did not mention any one current conflict in his remarks, he did recall St. John Paul II’s fervent efforts and calls for peace during the 2003 invasion of Iraq conducted by the U.S. with the assistance of a multi-national coalition.

“I make his appeal my own this evening, relevant as it is today,” Pope Leo said, referring to his predecessors’ calls for “no more war.”

“The Church is a great people at the service of reconciliation and peace,” he said. “She advances without hesitation, even when rejecting the logic of war may lead to misunderstanding and scorn.”

The Church “proclaims the Gospel of peace and instills obedience to God rather than any human authority, especially when the inherent dignity of other human beings is threatened by continuous violations of international law,” Pope Leo said.

With the help of prayer and God, people can help “break the demonic cycle of evil” and be at the service of the kingdom of God, where there is “no sword, no drone, no vengeance, no trivialization of evil, no unjust profit, but only dignity, understanding and forgiveness,” Pope Leo said.

“It is here that we find a bulwark against that delusion of omnipotence that surrounds us and is becoming increasingly unpredictable and aggressive,” he added.

He criticized the use of God’s name in justifying violence, saying “even the holy name of God, the God of life, is being dragged into discourses of death.”

Those invoking God’s name in such a way erase a world made up of brothers



Pope Leo XIV watches as the faithful, wearing clothing representing nations in Asia, light a lamp below a statue of Our Lady Queen of Peace in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on April 11 during a prayer vigil and the recitation of the rosary for peace. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

and sisters with one heavenly Father and instead create a “nightmare” where the world is made up of enemies and threats, rather than calls to listen and to come together, he noted.

Speaking to the world’s leaders, the pope said, “Stop! It is time for peace! Sit at the table of dialogue and mediation, not at the table where rearmament is planned and deadly actions are decided!”

However, all the world’s people also have a duty to reject the violence in their own hearts and minds and to help build a kingdom of peace each and every day in one’s own home, school and community, he said.

“Let us believe once again in love, moderation and good politics,” he said, urging people to learn more and “get personally involved” in being part of “the mosaic of peace!”

“Dear brothers and sisters, let us return home having made a commitment to pray without ceasing and without growing weary, a commitment to a profound conversion of heart,” the pope said.

Before entering the basilica, Pope Leo greeted the faithful gathered in St. Peter’s Square, thanking them for their presence. He explained his reason for the prayer vigil, which was also being joined by countless others around the world, either online or in their own parishes.

By praying the rosary together, he said, “we want to tell the whole world that it is possible to build peace, a new peace, that it is possible for all people, of all religions, of all ethnicities, to live together, and that we want to be disciples of Jesus Christ, united as brothers and sisters, all united in a world of peace.” †

Cardinals speak out against war, deportations in ‘60 Minutes’ interview

(OSV News)—Three American cardinals voiced their concerns over the Iran war, mass deportations and more in an interview that aired on April 12 on CBS’s “60 Minutes.”

In a joint interview with CBS correspondent Norah O’Donnell, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago, Cardinal

Robert W. McElroy of Washington and Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, N.J., began by giving their impressions of the first U.S. pope, Pope Leo XIV.

“He’s the pastor of the world,” Cardinal Tobin told O’Donnell. “He’s not a pundit. So, the distinction is he’s not going to pronounce on everything. But he’s going

to pronounce on what’s important.”

The segment highlighted Pope Leo’s recent calls for peace, a rebuke of President Donald J. Trump’s threat to Iranian civilization as “truly unacceptable,” and the pope’s warning that Jesus “does not listen to the prayers of those who wage war.”


Cardinal McElroy, who in a March 9 interview outlined six conditions that must be met for a war to be just according to Church teaching, said that according to Catholic teaching the Iran war “is not a just war” as “the Catholic faith teaches us there are certain prerequisites for

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The Criterion

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Editorial



A file photo shows worshippers praying in front of a statue of Christ during Holy Week celebrations at St. Clare Church in Ayacucho, Peru. (OSV News photo/Oscar Durand)

Everyone has a vocation to be holy

All Christians are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity. (“Light of the Nations,” the Second Vatican Council’s “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” #40.2)

Every baptized Christian has a vocation. We are each called to be holy after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ and all the holy women and men who have followed him during the past 2,000 years.

What does it mean to be “holy”? And why does the Church teach that the vocation, or call, to holiness extends to every Christian, including you and me?

In its fullest meaning, “holiness” means perfection. We are called to be perfect, the Lord says, “as your heaven Father is perfect” (Mt 5:48).

Perfection is a tall order. None of the saints were perfect, but they were all holy. What does this apparent contradiction mean—especially for those of us who are not saints?

The Second Vatican Council’s document titled “*Lumen Gentium*” (“Light of the Nations”) makes it clear that the call to holiness is universal. Holiness is not just for a few. It’s for all of us. But it’s also clear that perfection is not achieved overnight, and it’s never accomplished “once and for all.”

As the council teaches, “In order to reach this perfection, the faithful should use the strength dealt out to them by Christ’s gift, so that doing the will of the Father in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbor” (#40).

We have to *grow in holiness* throughout our lifetime. And we can never say to ourselves, “OK. Now I’ve reached perfection. I can stop growing—intellectually, physically, emotionally or spiritually—and just stay where I am.”

The path to holiness is a lifelong journey. Fortunately, none of us has to make this journey alone. We have God’s grace to sustain us, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments of the Church, especially the holy Eucharist and the sacrament of penance, and we have God’s Word spoken to us in sacred Scripture and reflected in the teachings of the Church.

What does it mean to be holy? It means making progress on the path

to perfection. And it means growing in wisdom and grace, as Jesus did, by following the example of his parents, teachers and elders in the faith.

Holiness is a dynamic virtue. It is defined by the responses we make to the challenges we face each day. The more we tell the truth, the holier we become. The more we pray, and the more we practice our faith day in and day out, the closer we come to being perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#2015) teaches, “The way of perfection passes by the way of the cross. There is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle” [cf. 2 Tim 4]. Growing in holiness isn’t easy, but it is possible—with the help of God’s grace.

When will we become holy? When we choose to let go of our preoccupation with selfish things and begin to make real progress on the journey to heaven. Every one of us is called to be holy, to achieve our full potential as human persons who are invited to know, love and serve God. In the end, perfection can only be attained in heaven—when we are united with God and with all our brothers and sisters who have been united with him in the realm of eternal happiness.

For now, we journey toward holiness one day at a time, one step at a time. In the process, we grow and change. We resist temptation and practice the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

On the path to perfection, we encounter the cross, but God’s grace allows us to continue the journey despite every obstacle. We are called to fulfill our most basic vocation—to perfect all the gifts God has given us and to become holy men and women who follow Christ without counting the cost to ourselves.

As we continue our observance of Easter, let’s pray that we will all succeed as we progress toward holiness—one day at a time. Let’s pray that, with the help of God’s grace, we may all make our way to the holy city, the new and eternal Jerusalem where God dwells among all his holy people in perfect love and joy.

—Daniel Conway

Reflection/Sean Gallagher

Love of parent and child is forged through the games they share

The Masters, arguably golf’s greatest tournament, came to a conclusion on April 12 at the hallowed Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga., with Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland donning the contest’s famed green jacket as its winner for the second year in a row.



As the Masters was being played this year, my mind turned back to the tournament played 40 years ago in 1986 when I was just 15.

At the time, my favorite golfer was Jack Nicklaus. But I was really born too late to be a fan of arguably the greatest golfer of all time, known as “the Golden Bear” because of his bright blond hair. That’s because he won eight of his record 18 major tournament victories before I was born in 1970.

By the time the 1986 Masters came around, Nicklaus hadn’t won a major tournament in five years and, at 46, was definitely in the twilight of his career. So, it was so exciting for me to see my golfing hero shoot a 7-under-par 65 on the final day of the tournament to come from four shots down to win his record sixth green jacket. Nicklaus is still the oldest winner in the history of the Masters.

Maybe one of the reasons I ended up liking Nicklaus so much was that he was of my dad’s generation, born just two years after him.

My dad was the person who introduced me to golf, the primary person who taught me the game and easily the person I played with the most over the years. And I’ll confess that, while neither of us were great at the game, my dad was always better than me. I honestly don’t recall a time when I posted a lower score than him.

Golf was something that bonded us together and gave us great memories that live on vividly in my heart now nearly four years after my dad’s passing.

I heard a similar bond of love in the voice of Jack Nicklaus II, the oldest of

the five children of Nicklaus and his wife Barbara, who have been married for nearly 66 years.

Nicklaus II narrated a video posted online by the Masters on April 12 about his father’s victory at Augusta in 1986. It was fitting for him to do it because he served as his father’s caddy at the tournament that year.

To the world, Nicklaus II said, his father is “the greatest Masters champion ever, but I just call him ‘Dad.’”

The video featured great moments from the final round in 1986. But they weren’t just highlights of Nicklaus’ play. They also showed the love of father and son.

When Nicklaus rolled in an eagle putt on the 15th green, you can see Nicklaus II jump up in the air in celebration, something a caddy ordinarily doesn’t do.

Then, after Nicklaus putted out on the 18th hole to finish his historic round, you see father and son embrace on the green with a TV announcer saying, “What a round, what a player.” Nicklaus II continued in the video by adding, “and what a dad, husband and ‘Peepaw’ to his 24 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.”

Jack Nicklaus, who turned 86 earlier this year, is most certainly a champion in golf. But, more importantly, he is a champion in life.

Children who spend time over the years with a parent in a shared hobby, sport or pastime often get to see how they’re champions, too, which is a great gift to pass on to the next generation.

The bonds forged in such sharing deepen when faith binds parents and children together. I’m grateful for the way that my father and his father, Grandpa for me, formed my faith.

If they’re still living, take time to thank your parents for the time they spent with you in sports or in hobbies. If they have passed on from this life, then give thanks to God for the blessings he gave you through them.

(Sean Gallagher is a reporter for The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.) †

Be Our Guest/Gretchen R. Crowe

Artemis II and perspectives gained

The Artemis II space mission was extraordinary for many reasons, and not insignificantly so for the perspectives it gave us.



The team of four astronauts, inside a spacecraft named “Integrity,” showed us views we’d never seen before. We got new angles of the far side of the moon. We saw the moon eclipse the sun from the

perspective of space—something Integrity crew member Victor Glover called going “sci-fi.” We saw different views of the Milky Way galaxy, of stars and of planets. Earth was reduced to a crescent, the likes of which earthlings are only used to seeing during certain lunar phases.

Each perspective gave new scientific insights and new inspiration for further exploration.

We saw other perspectives, too—those from inside the Integrity. We saw four individuals solidify into one unit as they worked together constructively to complete their mission. We saw them support one another professionally and personally.

We saw a master class in communication with, as my colleague Gina Christian pointed out, a synodal

emphasis on listening and clear dialogue. We saw them laugh, cry, play, report, photograph and transmit “moon joy” to their home planet. We saw them at such a loss for words that they told mission control they needed “20 new superlatives” to properly be able to describe the other-worldly experience they were having.

But we saw a further perspective from the team: one that seemed to feel the weight of the responsibility of history. Not just the history of NASA or space exploration, but the history of humanity itself. Artemis II left Earth at one of the planet’s most precarious times in recent memory, with a new war raging and an uncertain future looming.

As Pope Leo XIV told members of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See in January, “War is back in vogue and a zeal for war is spreading.” Speaking at a press event on Holy Saturday, and clearly hyper aware of the moment, Glover emphasized the preciousness of human existence.

“You guys are talking to us because we’re in a spaceship really far from Earth, but you’re on a spaceship called Earth that was created to give us a place to live in the universe,” he said. “Maybe the distance we are from you makes you think what we’re doing is special, but we’re the same distance from you. And I’m trying

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

We encounter Jesus in the Holy Eucharist

The Gospel for the Third Sunday of Easter (Lk 24:13-35) tells the powerful story of the two disciples who encounter Jesus on the road to Emmaus. The two disillusioned disciples are on their way home, convinced that Israel's high hopes for the coming of the Messiah had once again been shattered by the powers of sin and death.

The two travelers meet a stranger along the way. In response to his questions, the disciples (one is called Cleopas, the other is unnamed) recount "the things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him" (Lk 24:19-20). They let it be known that they had placed their hopes in him only to be bitterly disappointed:

But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his Body; they came

back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see. (Lk 24:21-24)

The stranger rebukes his newfound companions saying: "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (Lk 24:25-26) Then he proceeds to interpret the Hebrew scriptures—beginning with Moses and the prophets—that referred to the way the *Cristos* (the Anointed One) would have to suffer and die for the redemption of his people.

When the three travelers stop for the evening at an inn near the two disciples' destination, the stranger is persuaded to stay with them and share the evening meal.

The miracle that occurred that evening ("the first day of the week") can be described as the first Sunday Eucharist, the first time that the Risen Jesus gave himself to his followers in sacramental form. The fact that the disciples did not recognize him until

he broke the bread and shared himself with them—Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity—is significant because it affirms the importance of this great sacrament as the source and summit of the Christian life.

It is in and through the Eucharist (the breaking of the bread) that we encounter the Risen Lord. And it is in the context of this profound sacramental encounter that we are able to understand the truths that are revealed to us in Sacred Scripture, the Word of God that is made flesh in him.

Something wonderful happens to the two disciples. From disillusioned followers who have lost all hope, they become convinced that Jesus is their hearts' desire:

With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us? So, they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken

place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread. (Lk 24:31-35)

After rejoining the disciples in Jerusalem, the two who recognized Jesus in the Eucharistic miracle that he worked for them must wait with the rest of Jesus' followers for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Yes, their eyes have been opened, and their hearts were set ablaze by the fire of Christ's love, but they are not yet ready to proclaim to the world what they have seen with their own eyes.

In time, after the Lord has ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of his Father, all of Jesus's disciples will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then, nourished by Jesus's gift-of-self in the Holy Eucharist, and emboldened by the Holy Spirit, they will proclaim Christ crucified and risen from the dead to all nations and peoples until the end of time.

We are invited to join the two disciples in receiving Jesus in the Holy Eucharist so that we, too, can be empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the mystery of our salvation: *The Lord has truly been raised. Alleluia! †*



Cristo, la piedra angular

Encontramos a Jesús en la Sagrada Eucaristía

El Evangelio del tercer domingo de Pascua (Lc 24:13-35) nos presenta el conmovedor relato de los dos discípulos que se encuentran con Jesús en el camino a Emaús. Los dos discípulos, desilusionados, regresan a casa, convencidos de que las grandes esperanzas de Israel en la venida del Mesías se habían visto, una vez más, destruidas por los poderes del pecado y de la muerte.

Los dos viajeros se encuentran con un extraño en el camino. En respuesta a sus preguntas, los discípulos—uno llamado Cleofás y el otro, cuyo nombre se desconoce—relatan: "Lo de Jesús el Nazareno, un profeta poderoso en obras y palabras a los ojos de Dios y de todo el pueblo: cómo nuestros sumos sacerdotes y magistrados lo condenaron a muerte y lo crucificaron" (Lc 24:19-20). Dejaron claro que habían depositado sus esperanzas en él, solo para llevarse una amarga decepción:

Nosotros esperábamos que iba a ser él quien liberaría a Israel; pero, con todas estas cosas, llevamos ya tres días desde que eso pasó. El caso es que algunas mujeres de las nuestras nos han sobresaltado, porque fueron de madrugada al sepulcro y, al no hallar su cuerpo,

vinieron diciendo que incluso habían visto una aparición de ángeles que decían que estaba vivo. Fueron también algunos de los nuestros al sepulcro y lo hallaron tal como las mujeres habían dicho. Pero a él no lo vieron. (Lc 24:21-24)

El forastero reprende a sus compañeros de camino diciendo: "¡Qué poco perspicaces sois y qué mente más tarda tenéis para creer todo lo que dijeron los profetas! ¿No era necesario que el Cristo padeciera eso para entrar así en su gloria?" (Lc 24:25-26). Luego procede a interpretar las escrituras hebreas—empezando por Moisés y los profetas—que se referían al modo en que el *Cristos* (el Ungido) tendría que sufrir y morir por la redención de su pueblo.

Cuando los tres viajeros se detienen a pasar la noche en una posada cercana al destino de los dos discípulos, persuaden al forastero de quedarse con ellos y compartir la cena.

El milagro que se produjo aquella noche ("el primer día de la semana") puede describirse como la primera Eucaristía dominical, la primera vez que Jesús resucitado se entregó a sus seguidores en forma sacramental. El hecho de que los discípulos no

le reconocieran hasta que partió el pan y se entregó a ellos—Cuerpo y Sangre, Alma y Divinidad—es significativo porque afirma la importancia de este gran sacramento como fuente y cumbre de la vida cristiana.

Es en la Eucaristía—al partir el pan—donde nos encontramos con el Señor Resucitado, y es en el contexto de este profundo encuentro sacramental donde podemos comprender las verdades que se nos revelan en la Sagrada Escritura, la Palabra de Dios hecha carne en Él.

A los dos discípulos les sucede algo maravilloso: De seguidores desilusionados que han perdido toda esperanza, llegan a la certeza de que Jesús es el anhelo de su corazón:

Entonces se les abrieron los ojos y lo reconocieron, pero él desapareció de su vista. Se dijeron uno a otro: "¿No ardía nuestro corazón en nuestro interior cuando nos hablaba en el camino y nos iba explicando las Escrituras?" Levantándose al momento, se volvieron a Jerusalén y encontraron reunidos a los Once y a los que estaban con ellos, que decían: "¡Es verdad! ¡El Señor ha resucitado y se ha aparecido a Simón!" Ellos, por su parte, contaron lo que había pasado en el camino y cómo lo

habían reconocido al partir el pan. (Lc 24:31-35)

Tras reunirse con los discípulos en Jerusalén, los dos que reconocieron a Jesús en el milagro eucarístico que obró para ellos deben esperar, junto con el resto de los seguidores de Jesús, el don del Espíritu Santo. Sí, sus ojos se han abierto y sus corazones se han encendido con el fuego del amor de Cristo, pero aún no están preparados para proclamar al mundo lo que han visto con sus propios ojos.

Con el tiempo, después de que el Señor ascienda al cielo para sentarse a la derecha de su Padre, todos los discípulos de Jesús recibirán el don del Espíritu Santo. Entonces, alimentados por el don de sí de Jesús en la Sagrada Eucaristía y fortalecidos por el Espíritu Santo, anunciarán a Cristo crucificado y resucitado de entre los muertos a todas las naciones y pueblos hasta el fin de los tiempos.

Se nos invita a unirnos a los dos discípulos para recibir a Jesús en la Sagrada Eucaristía, para que también nosotros, fortalecidos por el Espíritu Santo, proclamemos el misterio de nuestra salvación: *El Señor ha resucitado de verdad. ¡Aleluya! †*

Events Calendar

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

Every Wednesday:

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Corpus Christi Parish Hall, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Catholics in Recovery Support Group**, 7 p.m., meets every Wednesday, Catholic 12-step program serving those with addictions and unhealthy attachments. Information: 317-557-8888, jjdav887@gmail.com.

April 20, May 18

Virtual Sister Thea Bowman Black Catholic Women's Prayer Group, 7 p.m., meets online monthly on third Monday, sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, all women welcome. Meeting: tinyurl.com/SrTheaPrayerGrp. Information: iowhosomaddox@archindy.org, 317-261-3381.

April 24

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **Race in the Catholic Church**, 6:30-9 p.m., Notre Dame Professor Darren Davis presenting, appetizers, wine, babysitting, free. Information: 317-253-1461, churchinfo@staindy.org.

April 24-26

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Worldwide**

Marriage Encounter in Spanish, \$75 non-refundable application fee. Registration: www.me.org. Information: Ken and Ann Butt, 317-863-5680.

April 25

Holy Spirit Parish, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis. **Evangelization 101 Workshop: Elevate your Spiritual Discipleship Journey**, 9 a.m.-3p.m., writer, speaker, evangelist Meg Hunter-Kilmer presenting, \$30 fee either paid by attendee or assessed to parish, includes lunch and materials, registration deadline April 20. Information, registration: tinyurl.com/Evang101-2026, 317-236-1466, abardo@archindy.org.

April 26

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Disabilities Awareness Mass**, 10 a.m., Archbishop Charles C. Thompson celebrant, reception to follow at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., free. Information: 317-749-0871, ueble@archindy.org.

May 1-2

White Violet Center, Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of

Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Spring Plant Sale**, Fri. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-3 p.m., organically grown vegetables, flowers and herbs. Information: Events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2946, lrobinette@spsmw.org.

May 6

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—ages 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday 1 p.m. lunch events. Information: 317-796-8605.

May 9

White Violet Center, Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Lunch and Learn: Native and Invasives of Indiana Woods**, noon-3 p.m., lunch followed by guided hike with forester Stuart Haney, \$40. Information: Events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2932, lrobinette@spsmw.org.

May 15

Liter House, 5301 Winthrop Ave. Indianapolis. **Catholic**

Business Exchange, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, presenter TBD, \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. May 12. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

May 16

St. Anthony of Padua Parish, 316 N. Sherwood Ave., Clarksville. **Living Rosary**, 2 p.m., rosary procession around the church (weather permitting), free. Information: 812-282-2290, a.macaluso@stanthony-clarksville.org.

May 22-24

Carmelite Monastery, 59 Allendale, Terre Haute. **Monastic Experience Weekend**, Fri 3 p.m.-Sun 3 p.m., vocation discernment retreat for women ages 18-40, includes accommodations and meals, free. Information: 812-299-1410, ext. 214, vocations@heartsawake.org.

May 28-30

St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8155 Oaklandon Road, Indianapolis. **St. Simon Festival**, Thurs. 5-11 p.m., Fri. 5 p.m.-midnight, Sat. 3 p.m.-midnight; food, beer garden, games, Vegas room, rides, \$20 per family. Information:

317-826-6000, chair@saintsimonfestival.com.

May 29-30

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **International Festival**, 5 p.m.-midnight both nights, food, amusement rides, carnival games, \$5,000 raffle, live music, sponsor booths, evangelization station, free admission. Information: 317-291-7014, eesparza@stgabrielindy.org.

May 29-31

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish, 4720 E. 13th St., Indianapolis. **Summerfest 2026**, Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. 3-11 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., \$4,000 raffle, Bingo Fri. and Sat., Monte Carlo Fri., rides, silent auction, live entertainment, food, beer, wine, games for kids and adults, \$10 admission for \$10 in event coupons. Information: 317-357-8352, ext. 102, ifsummerfest@littleflowerparish.org.

June 3

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—ages

50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday 1 p.m. lunch events. Information: 317-796-8605.

June 11-13

St. Anthony Parish, 337 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis. **Crossroads of America Festival**, 4-11 p.m., carnival rides, food, live entertainment, raffle, free admission. Information: 317-742-0103, sandra@saintanthonyindy.org.

June 12-13

St. Mary Parish, 2500 St. Mary Dr., Lanesville. **Festville on the Hill**, Fri. 5:30-9 p.m., Sat. 4-10 p.m., fried chicken dinner, raffles, games for all ages, beer and wine garden, live music from Smokin' Joe and Midnight Radio, fireworks, free admission and parking. Information: 812-952-2853 ext. 24, makayla.mccarty@catholic-community.org.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Italian Street Festival**, 5-11 p.m., Marian procession Sat. 6:45 p.m. prior to 7 p.m. Mass, Italian food, drinks, live entertainment, free admission and parking. Information: indyitalianfest.org, 317-636-4478, info@holyroaryindy.org. †

Retreats and Programs

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

May 1-3

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Women Carrying the Light of Christ: Past and Present**, women's retreat, Dr. Kimberly Baker presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

May 11

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St.,

Indianapolis. **Talk Saves Lives**, 6:30-8 p.m., suicide prevention talk, Father James Farrell presenting, free. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

May 12, June 18

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$55, includes room, lunch, Mass and use of common areas and

grounds, overnight stay available for additional \$42, dinner additional \$14.40. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

May 15-17

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Being "Eucharistic" People**, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration:

812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

May 16

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center, 8220 W. State Road 48, Bloomington. **The Broken Mary Project**, 9 a.m.-5:15 p.m., former radio broadcaster Kevin Matthew presenting, \$65, includes lunch. Information, registration: 812-825-4642, ext. 1, motheroftheredeemer.com.

May 22-24

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Healing Loneliness**, Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

May 27

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Heart on Fire**, Jane Feliz Rush presenting, \$75 single, \$150 double.

Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

May 30-31

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Flourishing in Seasons of Surrender**, Sat. 11 a.m.-Sun. noon, Teresa Venatta presenting, includes overnight accommodations, lunch and dinner, \$175. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

June 5-6

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **The Treasure of Friendship**, Fri. 5 p.m.-Sat. 5 p.m., includes overnight accommodations, lunch and dinner, \$175. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

June 5-7

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **TOBIT Marriage Preparation**

Weekend, 7 p.m. Fri.-11:45 a.m. Sun., \$400 per couple, separate rooms, includes meals and materials. Registration: ftm.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Spirituality of Liturgical Architecture**, Benedictine Father Lorenzo Penalosa presenting, \$350 single, \$550 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

June 7-10, 11, 12, or 13

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Road, Mt. St. Francis. **Quilters Retreat**, three nights \$500, four nights \$600, five nights \$700, six nights \$800, commuters \$75 per day, \$100 non-refundable deposit required to hold spot, pay in one or two installments. Information, registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/quilters-retreat-1, 812-923-8817. †

Feast of Our Lady of Fatima evening of reflection will be held in Indy on May 13

An evening of reflection for the feast of Our Lady of Fatima will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, from 5-8 p.m. on May 13.

Author and Relevant Radio contributor Jesuit Father James Kubicki will facilitate the discussion. Father Kubicki has a special devotion to Our Lady of Fatima. He currently serves as the spiritual director at St. Francis

de Sales Seminary in St. Francis, Wis., in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

The event is free, but registration is required. Freewill donations to Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House will be accepted. This is the first of the retreat house's two major fundraisers for the year.

For more information or to register, go to tinyurl.com/OLFatima0526, call 317-545-7681 or e-mail lcoons@archindy.org. †

Two southside Indy parishes will offer festivals in early May

Two parishes on Indianapolis' south side will host festivals prior to the publication of *The Criterion's* annual parish festival listing on May 22. The information for the two events is included below.

—**May 7-9:** St. Ann Parish, 6350 S. Mooresville Road, Indianapolis. **Church Festival**, Thurs. 5-10 p.m., Fri. 5-11 p.m., Sat. noon-11 p.m., rides, food,

activities, casino, beer garden, free admission. Information: 317-821-2909, admin@stannindy.org.

—**May 16:** St. Roch Parish, 3600 S. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. **Mayfest: A Taste of the Southside Festival**, 2-11 p.m., features Mexican, Irish, German, Italian and American cuisines, bounce houses, games, beer garden, food prices vary, free admission. Information: 317-784-1763, church@strochindy.org. †

Wedding Anniversaries

JOHN AND DOLORES (WERNER) AMBERGER, members of Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on April 23.

The couple was married in Holy Family Church in Oldenburg on April 23, 1966.

They have three children: Angela Shane, Lynn Verdooren and Michael Amberger.

The couple also has six grandchildren and five great-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**

Let us proclaim the faith as one voice united in Christ

Unity is a consistent theme in the teaching and preaching of Pope Leo XIV. His papal motto, *In Illo Uno Unum* (In the One Christ We Are One), is taken from St. Augustine's commentary on Psalm 127, and it stresses the fact that while we Christians are many, we are united as one body in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Unity is not achieved by human efforts alone. In fact, our best endeavors often result in separation and division rather than in unity. To succeed in bringing people together and maintaining harmony and peace among diverse cultures and points of view, we must surrender our egos and allow the grace of God to intervene in our lives and to heal our brokenness.

St. Paul is the New Testament figure who best exemplifies the movement from ego-driven divisiveness to the ability to bring together and reconcile communities torn apart by factions and conflicting loyalties. As Pope Leo observed in his homily for the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on Jan. 25:

In his First Letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul refers to himself as "the least of the Apostles" [1 Cor 15:9]. He considers himself unworthy of this title because he had once been a persecutor of the Church of God. Nevertheless, he is not a prisoner of that past, but rather a "prisoner in the Lord" [Eph 4:1]. It was indeed by the grace of God that Paul came to know the risen Lord Jesus, who revealed himself first to Peter, then to the other Apostles and to hundreds of other followers of the Way, and finally also to him, a persecutor [cf. 1 Cor 15:3-8].

The man who was known as Saul before his conversion was a driven man. His self-righteous zeal was intended to scatter and divide his enemies, but the Risen Lord intervened. As the Holy Father says, "By the grace of God, the one who once persecuted Jesus has been completely transformed into his witness. The one who once fiercely opposed the name of Christ now preaches his love with burning zeal."

This radical transformation from a persecutor—one who divides—to a missionary disciple—someone called to bring together the people who follow Jesus—is essential to achieving true unity. "We are reminded," the Holy Father says, "that [St. Paul's]

mission is also the mission of all Christians today: to proclaim Christ and to invite everyone to place their trust in him."

Our mission as disciples of Jesus is to unify by the grace of God what Satan is working overtime to divide. As the pope teaches us, "Every authentic encounter with the Lord is, in fact, a transformative moment that grants a new vision and a new direction for the task of building up the body of Christ [cf. Eph 4:12]."

According to Pope Leo, it is the shared task of all Christians to say humbly and joyfully to the world: "Look to Christ! Come closer to him! Welcome his word that enlightens and consoles!" (Homily of the Mass for the beginning of the pontificate of Pope Leo XIV, May 18, 2025).

In the Jan. 25 homily, he noted that the Lord invites us to renew our commitment to the great unifying mission we have received from Christ, "bearing in mind that the divisions among us—while they do not prevent the light of Christ from shining—nonetheless make the face which must reflect it to the world less radiant."

In his Letter to the Ephesians (cf. Eph 4:4-6), St. Paul repeatedly uses the adjective "one." He tells us that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God.

In his homily for the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, the Holy Father asked:

[H]ow can these inspired words not touch us deeply? How can our hearts not burn within us when we hear them? Yes, "we share the same faith in the one and only God, the Father of all people; we confess together the one Lord and true Son of God, Jesus Christ, and the one Holy Spirit, who inspires us and impels us towards full unity and the common witness to the Gospel" [November 23, 2025, Apostolic letter "In Unitate Fidei," #12]! We are one! We already are! Let us recognize it, experience it and make it visible!

"May the Holy Spirit find in us docile minds even today," Pope Leo continued, "so that we may proclaim the faith with one voice to the men and women of our time!"

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

**Uno en Cristo/Daniel Conway**

Proclamemos la fe como una sola voz unida en Cristo

La unidad es un tema constante en la enseñanza y la predicación del papa León XIV. Su lema papal, *In illo uno unum* (En el único Cristo somos uno), está tomado del comentario de san Agustín al Salmo 127, y pone de relieve el hecho de que, aunque los cristianos somos muchos, estamos unidos como un solo cuerpo en la persona de Jesucristo nuestro Señor.

La unidad no se consigue únicamente con el esfuerzo humano; de hecho, incluso nuestros mejores esfuerzos a menudo desembocan en separación y división, en lugar de unidad. Para conseguir unir a las personas y mantener la armonía y la paz entre culturas y puntos de vista diversos, debemos dejar de lado nuestro egoísmo y permitir que la gracia de Dios intervenga en nuestras vidas y cure nuestros quebrantos.

San Pablo es la figura del Nuevo Testamento que mejor ejemplifica el paso del afán de división a la capacidad de unir y reconciliar comunidades desgarradas por facciones y lealtades enfrentadas. Como observó el papa León en su homilía de la solemnidad de la Conversión de San Pablo Apóstol, el 25 de enero:

En uno de los pasajes bíblicos [...] el apóstol Pablo se define como "el último de los Apóstoles" [1 Co 15:9]. Se considera indigno de este título, porque en el pasado fue perseguidor de la Iglesia de Dios. Sin embargo, no es prisionero de ese pasado, sino más bien "preso por el Señor" (Ef 4:1). Por la gracia de Dios, de hecho, conoció al Señor Jesús Resucitado, que se reveló a Pedro, luego a los Apóstoles y a cientos de otros seguidores del Camino, y finalmente también a él, un perseguidor (cf. 1 Co 15:3-8).

El hombre que era conocido como Saulo antes de su conversión era un hombre impulsivo. Su celo desmedido pretendía dispersar y dividir a sus enemigos, pero el Señor Resucitado intervino. Como dice el Santo Padre: "Por la gracia de Dios, aquel que una vez persiguió a Jesús se transformó por completo y se convirtió en su testigo. Aquel que combatía con ferocidad el nombre de Cristo, ahora predica su amor con ardiente celo."

Esta transformación radical de perseguidor (alguien que divide) en discípulo misionero (alguien llamado a unir a las personas que siguen a Jesús) es esencial para lograr la verdadera

unidad. "Se nos recuerda"—afirma el Santo Padre—"que su misión es también la misión de todos los cristianos de hoy: anunciar a Cristo e invitar a todos a confiar en Él."

Nuestra misión como discípulos de Jesús es unificar por la gracia de Dios lo que Satanás se empeña incansablemente en dividir. Como nos enseña el Papa: "Cada encuentro verdadero con el Señor es, en efecto, un momento transformador, que concede una nueva visión y una nueva dirección para llevar a cabo la tarea de edificar el Cuerpo de Cristo [cf. Ef 4:12]."

Según el papa León, todos los cristianos tenemos la tarea compartida de decir con humildad y alegría al mundo: "¡Miren a Cristo! ¡Acérquense a Él! ¡Acojan su Palabra que ilumina y consuela!" (Homilía del inicio del Ministerio Petriño del Obispo de Roma León XIV, 18 de mayo de 2025).

El Señor nos invita a renovar nuestro compromiso con la gran misión unificadora que hemos recibido de Cristo, "conscientes de que las divisiones entre nosotros, si bien no impiden que brille la luz de Cristo, hacen, sin

embargo, más opaco aquel rostro que debe reflejarla sobre el mundo."

En su Carta a los Efesios (cf. Ef 4:4-6), san Pablo utiliza repetidamente el calificativo "uno." Nos dice que somos un solo cuerpo, un solo Espíritu, una sola esperanza, un solo Señor, una sola fe, un solo bautismo, un solo Dios. Por tanto, nuestro Santo Padre nos pregunta:

¿Cómo podrían no conmovernos profundamente? ¿Cómo puede nuestro corazón no arder ante su impacto? Sí, «compartimos de hecho la fe en el único y sólo Dios, Padre de todos los hombres, confesamos juntos al único Señor y verdadero Hijo de Dios Jesucristo y al único Espíritu Santo, que nos inspira y nos impulsa a la plena unidad y al testimonio común del Evangelio (Carta ap. In unitate fidei, #12, 23 de noviembre de 2025). ¡Somos uno! ¡Ya lo somos! ¡Reconozcámoslo, experimentémoslo, manifestémoslo!

En palabras del papa León: *¡Que también hoy el Espíritu Santo halle en nosotros una inteligencia dócil para comunicar con una sola voz la fe a los hombres y mujeres de nuestro tiempo!*

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

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

STATIONS

continued from page 1

“I love this event,” now in its third year, he says. “All the kids [in the school] who are making their first Communion, I think they understand the topic a little bit better. [The exhibit is] another avenue for them to understand that the Eucharist is Jesus.”

Townsend might have come up with the idea of using the Stations of the Eucharist as catechesis for first Communicants. But the actual stations and concept of the exhibit?

“I borrowed them,” she admits.

‘Bible detectives’ researching the Eucharist

It was the summer of 2023 when Townsend heard about an exhibit on the 14 Stations of the Eucharist on display as part of All Saints Parish’s picnics at each of its four campuses in Dearborn County.



Debby Townsend

“I was just getting ready to start teaching second grade” at Sacred Heart, which included preparing students for first Communion, she says. “I thought maybe [the exhibit] could be something I could do with the second-graders, so I went.”

The 14 stations were created by Father Jonathan Meyer, who serves in the four parishes of Dearborn County. In a booklet explaining the stations,

he notes they were inspired by the 12 Stations of the Holy Eucharist designed by the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration of Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Hanceville, Ala.

The stations span events throughout the Bible. From the sacrifice of Abel in Genesis to the wedding feast of the lamb in Revelations, each reveals God’s plan for the gift of the Eucharist.

In the middle, the Seventh Station presents the birth of Christ.

“I decided to try out the Christmas one with the kids,” says Townsend. “It talks about how Bethlehem means ‘house of bread,’ and Jesus is the bread from heaven—and they got it. They totally understood.”

As preparation for the exhibit begins in February, she says she turns the students into “Bible detectives.”

“For each station, we read the Scripture passage together,” Townsend explains. “Then I’ll ask, ‘What from that [reading] reminds you of Mass?’ Then they all write down what they think, and we talk about it.”

Before long, the children start recognizing words and phrases in the liturgy that they encountered in the passages for the stations.

“We’ll be reading the Scriptures for the stations, and they’ll say, ‘Oh! That’s the thing we say in Mass!’” says Townsend. “Like, when Father holds up the Eucharist and says, ‘Behold the Lamb of God,’ they’re like, ‘That’s what John the Baptist said!’

“Or I’ll ask, ‘Why is Jesus the lamb? Because he’s fluffy?’ And they all say, ‘No! Because he’s the sacrifice!’”

By the time of the exhibit, the students “really get” the Eucharist,” says Townsend. “I think they understand it

better than most adults do.”

In fact, she adds, parents of the students and adults who visit the exhibit have made comments to her like, “I’ve learned things from my kid that I didn’t know,” “that never made sense to me before” and “I never heard that before.”

Like a prediction, those very words are heard at Eli Wright’s presentation of the Thirteenth Station.

‘I’m really, really, really excited!’

A group of students and adults listen as he recounts from the Gospel of Luke the story of Jesus joining two disciples traveling to Emmaus the day after the crucifixion.

“But they didn’t know it was Jesus until he blessed and broke the bread at supper,” says Eli.

When he adds, “That makes [Emmaus] the second Mass,” an older woman in the group turns to another in surprise, saying, “I never knew that.”

“The priest breaks the bread at every Mass just like Jesus did,” Eli concludes. “So, we can recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread at Mass like the [two] disciples.”

Father Ahern appreciates how the stations are grounded in Scripture.

“Everything relates back to the Old Testament and New Testament,” he says. “It just helps [the second-graders] see the connections the Eucharist has across human history.”

Eisley Smith makes those connections clear in her presentation on the Second Station, the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham in the Book of Genesis. Like a well-versed scholar, she ticks them off one by one.

“So, Isaac is like Jesus,” she says. “Isaac is Abraham’s only beloved son; Jesus is God’s only beloved son. Isaac carried the wood for the sacrifice up the mountain; Jesus carried the wood of the cross up Calvary. Isaac will be the sacrifice; Jesus will be the sacrifice. Isaac walked three days to get to the mountain; Jesus spent three days in the tomb.”

“Now, Abraham said that God will provide a lamb for the sacrifice,” Eisley continues, adding emphasis to drive home her points. “But he didn’t provide a *lamb* for the sacrifice—he provided a *ram*. The ram got stuck in thorns, and Jesus wore a crown of thorns. Later, when



Millie Hoskins, a second-grade student at Sacred Heart School in Jeffersonville, stands next to her exhibit on the Eighth Station of the Eucharist and listens as Father Adam Ahern, pastor of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Jeffersonville, explains his actions of consecration during the Mass. The second-grade students presented an exhibit of the Stations of the Eucharist in the parish’s activity center on March 12 as part of a project preparing them to receive their first Communion. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Jesus died on the cross, *that’s* when God provided the lamb—*Jesus* is the Lamb of God.”

The Fourteenth Station continues the “lamb” theme as Zoey shares about the wedding feast of the Lamb.

“For this is the wedding day of the Lamb, his bride has made herself ready,” she reads from Revelation 19:7-8. “She has been given a dress to wear, made of the finest linen, brilliant white. Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast of the Lamb.”

Zoey points to a statue on her table of a bride adorned in white—just like the dress she will wear in a few weeks.

“I wanted to present this station because it’s all about Communion, and I’ll be making my first Communion” on May 3, she shares with a broad smile. Six of her 16 classmates will join her. Three other second-graders received their first Communion and were also baptized and confirmed during the Easter Vigil Mass on April 4 at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Jeffersonville.

Zoey’s enthusiasm proves how the 14 Stations “personalize the Eucharist a whole lot more” for the second-graders making their first Communion, says Father Ahern. “It’s just another way for them to understand this teaching that we have: Jesus is the Eucharist.”

And Zoey understands—she *really* understands. “I’m going to receive Jesus, and Jesus is going to be way closer to me than he used to be,” she gushes, her face lit with joy. “So I’m really, really, *really* excited!” †

CARDINALS

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a just war. You can’t go for a variety of different aims. You have to have a focused aim, which is to restore justice and restore peace. That’s it.”

“Iran has been the chief exporter of terror,” O’Donnell noted, asking, “Is there no scenario in which preventing that can be a just war?”

“It’s an abominable regime, and it should be removed,” Cardinal McElroy

replied. “But this is a war of choice that we went to, and I think it’s embedded in a wider moment in the United States that’s worrying, which is this: We’re seeing before us the possibility of war after war after war.”

Cardinal Cupich objected to the “gamification” of war with how the White House has portrayed the conflict on social media. The show played a clip of a social media post from the White House alternating images of bombings with movie clips.

“We’re dehumanizing the victims

of war by turning the suffering of people and the killing of children and our own soldiers into entertainment,” he said, adding that to “splice together movie cuts with actual bombing and targeting of people for the purposes of entertainment is sickening. This is not who we are. We’re better than this.”

As the conversation moved to immigration, O’Donnell asked Cardinal Tobin about why he called Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) a “lawless organization.”

“I didn’t say that they were people without law,” he replied. “But when people act in this way, when they have to hide their identities to terrify people, when they can actually violate other guarantees of our Constitution and Bill of Rights, well, I think somebody’s got to call that out, and I’m not the only one.”

Cardinal McElroy, previously bishop of the Diocese of San Diego where there is a high number of border crossings, said that he felt the number of crossings was getting “out of control” under former President Joe Biden. Saying that he did believe in strong borders, he added that the policy under Trump is “a roundup of people throughout the country. People who have been living good, strong lives, been here a long time, raised their children here, many of their children born here, and are citizens.”

O’Donnell asked them what they would say to “people in the pews who

say, ‘I don’t want to hear politics from my priest.’”

“I say fine,” Cardinal Cupich replied. “I want to preach the Gospel. God wants us to promote peace in the world—because his desire is that we be one human family.”

“What we’re seeing as pastors is an enormous, profound level of human suffering, and that’s what motivates us,” Cardinal McElroy added.

O’Donnell noted that Pope Leo will spend July 4 in Lampedusa, an island in the Mediterranean Sea that serves as a primary European entry point for migrants, many coming from Libya and Tunisia.

“It’s America’s 250th birthday,” she said. “Do you think the Holy Father is sending a message ... with that visit?”

“He’s sending a message that his top priority right now is to be with those who are downcast and marginalized,” Cardinal Cupich answered.

O’Donnell asked Cardinal Tobin about the record number of people who entered the Catholic Church this Easter in his archdiocese. “Do you think that surge in interest and attendance has something to do with Pope Leo?” she asked.

“I do,” he said. “I’ve had the privilege of working closely with four popes, very different people in a lot of ways. But each one in some way was the right one for that moment in time. I believe that Pope Leo is the right man at this time.” †



In a joint interview with CBS’s Norah O’Donnell on “60 Minutes” on April 12, Cardinals Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, N.J., left, Robert W. McElroy of Washington, and Blase J. Cupich of Chicago, began by giving their impressions of the first U.S. pope, Pope Leo XIV. (OSV News screenshot/Facebook)

Pope Leo responds to Trump: 'Blessed are the peacemakers'

ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT TO ALGIERS (OSV News)—Responding to wide-ranging blunt criticism of him by President Donald J. Trump posted on social media on April 12, Pope Leo XIV said he has “no fear” of the president’s administration, telling journalists that his message to the U.S. president is “the message of the Gospel: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers’ ” (Mt 5:9).

Speaking aboard the papal plane en route from Rome to Algiers, the capital of Algeria in northern Africa, the pope said that he had seen Trump’s recent social media post lashing out at him the night before the papal trip.

“I have no fear neither of the Trump administration nor speaking out loudly of the message of the Gospel, which is what I believe I am here to do, what the Church is here to do,” the pope said during the flight in a video recorded by OSV News.

The pope spoke in response to Trump’s comments on April 12 calling the pope “weak on crime” and “terrible for foreign policy,” as tensions escalate in the Middle East.

“We are not politicians,” Pope Leo said. “We are not looking to make foreign policy ... with the same perspective that he might understand it, but I do believe in the message of the Gospel: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers’ is the message that the world needs to hear today.”

Pope Leo added that he did not intend to engage in a political dispute.

“I do not look at my role as being political, a politician,” the pope said. “I don’t want to get into debate with him. I don’t think that the message of the Gospel is meant to be abused in the way that some people are doing.”

“The message of the Church, my message, the message of the Gospel: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers,’ ” he reiterated.

Pope Leo has been a staunch critic of combat operations generally, including those initiated by the U.S. and Israel against Iran on Feb. 28. He also condemned Trump’s threat to wipe out Iran’s “whole civilization,” which the president later backed down from, citing negotiations with Pakistani mediators.

The pontiff held a special evening prayer vigil for peace in St. Peter’s Basilica on April 11.

“I will continue to speak out loudly against war, looking to promote peace, promoting dialogue and multilateral relationships among the states to look for just solutions to problems,” Pope Leo said on the way to Algiers.

“Too many people are suffering in the world today. Too many innocent people are being killed. And I think someone has to stand up and say there’s a better way,” he added.

Trump, writing on his Truth Social platform late on



Pope Leo XIV speaks to reporters aboard the papal flight from Rome to Algeria on April 13. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

April 12, said he did not want “a Pope who thinks it’s OK for Iran to have a Nuclear Weapon.”

“I don’t want a Pope who thinks it’s terrible that America attacked Venezuela, a Country that was sending massive amounts of Drugs into the United States and, even worse, emptying their prisons, including murderers, drug dealers, and killers, into our Country. And I don’t want a Pope who criticizes the President of the United States because I’m doing exactly what I was elected, IN A LANDSLIDE, to do, setting Record Low Numbers in Crime, and creating the Greatest Stock Market in History,” the president wrote on Truth Social.

Pope Leo commented, “It’s ironic—the name of the site itself. Say no more.”

Pope Leo, the first U.S.-born pope, has called for the rejection of nuclear weapons, and there is no evidence he supports Iran having such weapons.

Trump claimed Pope Leo was elected as pope because the Church thought an American pontiff would be “the best way to deal with President Donald J. Trump.

“If I wasn’t in the White House, Leo wouldn’t be in the Vatican,” he wrote.

Several journalists aboard the plane asked Pope Leo about Trump’s comments, to which the pope explained, “To put my message on the same plane as what the president has attempted to do here, I think is not understanding what the message of the Gospel is, and I am sorry to hear that but I will continue on with what I believe is the mission of the Church in the world today.”

Pope Leo spoke to journalists on the first flight of the pope’s 11-day, four-country tour of Africa in which he will visit Algeria, Cameroon, Angola and Equatorial Guinea.

In a separate statement late on April 12, Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said he was “disheartened” by Trump’s remarks.

“Pope Leo is not his rival; nor is the pope a politician,” Archbishop Coakley said. “He is the Vicar of Christ who speaks from the truth of the Gospel and for the care of souls.” †

POPE LEO

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Properly understood, religion can serve as the conscience of society. At the same time, awakening, prodding or stirring the conscience can sometimes prompt unfriendly reactions.

Our Holy Father Pope Leo has clearly stated that his responsibility as Shepherd of Souls is to proclaim the Gospel rather than pose as any type of politician. Still, his statements and actions can seem to threaten those who look to justify acts of violence, unjust war and indiscriminate behavior from less than reputable agendas. Upon arriving in Algiers, Algeria, for his recent papal trip to Africa, Pope Leo commented: “God desires peace for every nation: a peace that is not merely an absence of conflict, but one that is an expression of justice and dignity.”

In his statement of April 13, 2026, Archbishop Paul Coakley of Oklahoma City, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, reacted to negative comments made by U.S. President Donald J. Trump about

Pope Leo XIV: “I am disheartened that the President chose to write such disparaging words about the Holy Father,” Archbishop Coakley said. “Pope Leo is not his rival; nor is the pope a politician. He is the Vicar of Christ who speaks from the truth of the Gospel and for the care of souls.”

Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, N.J., my predecessor of very fond memory here in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, provided the following statement:

In response to recent events, I reaffirm that Pope Leo serves a higher authority and desires to proclaim the Gospel faithfully and advances the Church’s peaceful mission in a world deeply in need of healing. He will continue to speak clearly against war and other offenses against human dignity and to call for authentic dialogue, because the Church’s witness is grounded in the peace of Christ, not in partisan interests. (Archdiocese of Newark, April 13, 2026)

Cardinal Tobin went on to stress that the U.S. president’s criticisms “convey a grave misunderstanding of the Holy Father’s ministry and a troubling lack of respect for the faith of millions.”

As is clearly reflected in “*Gaudium et*

Spes,” the Church Fathers of the Second Vatican Council were greatly concerned about the escalation of wars within and among nations. Recognizing the danger of self-interest and the various issues outlined in the Catechism, they called for the establishment of international organizations to promote peace, dialogue, authentic justice and rightful determination of force as well as defense, resolution and reconciliation.

Along with a properly formed conscience and informed understanding, we all need checks and balances to help maintain a social order based on authentic truth, beauty and goodness. At times, we need to be reminded that the exercise of individual freedom must never come at the expense of the common good.

The Catholic Church has been blessed with some wonderful popes throughout the course of its long history, including the popes who served during my lifetime. It is our Catholic belief that the Holy Spirit guides the election of a pope.

I firmly believe this to be true for the election of Pope Leo XIV. While few saw it coming—hardly daring to think that

someone born in the United States could be elected as the Supreme Pontiff—the Cardinals certainly knew what they were doing. At least, they allowed the Holy Spirit to make them look really good! Pope Leo has not disappointed. Though humble and unassuming, he is a man of deep spirituality, great intellect, measured decisions, keen insight, undaunted courage and profound discernment. He is the right person to address the signs of our times.

Like St. John the Baptist, Pope Leo is clear about who he is and who he is not. As he says, his task is to proclaim to all the Gospel message that the Church has been given by Jesus Christ. Refusing to bend to any worldly ego, personality, ideology or regime, the Holy Father remains Christ-centered.

Please join me in holding Pope Leo XIV in prayer, esteem, solidarity and respect.

+ Charles C. Thompson

+Charles C. Thompson
Archbishop of Indianapolis

Diaconate ‘come and see’ events scheduled throughout May

Men interested in learning more about the life and ministry of deacons and deacon formation in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis are invited to take part in any of a series of four “come and see” events held across the archdiocese.

The two-hour event will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday evenings on the following dates and places:

—May 5 at Christ the King Parish, 5884 Crittenden Ave., in Indianapolis

—May 12 at St. Patrick Parish, 1807 Poplar St., in Terre Haute

—May 19 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish,

1752 Scheller Lane, in New Albany

—May 26 at St. Michael Parish, 145 St. Michael Blvd., in Brookville.

These meetings will be held in advance of monthly inquiry sessions about the diaconate on Sunday afternoons that will begin in September and will continue through the following spring.

The sessions are meant to assist men who are discerning a possible call to be a deacon. During the course of the sessions, they may be able to apply to be accepted into a new cohort of aspirants for the diaconate that would begin formation in the fall of 2027.

The Church’s *Code of Canon Law* sets 35 as the minimum age at which a man can be ordained as a permanent deacon. Additionally, the archdiocese also requires men to be no older than 65 at the time of their ordination.

For more information about the upcoming diaconate “come and see” events across the archdiocese or about the formation of deacons and the life and ministry of deacons in the archdiocese, visit archindy.org/deacon or contact Deacon John Jacobi at jjacobi@archindy.org or 812-946-0873. †

Friendship, faith, service at heart of St. Augustine Home fundraiser on May 6

By Mary Short

Special to *The Criterion*

In a world that often moves too quickly for deep connection, a group of women in Indianapolis offers a powerful witness to what can happen when friendship is rooted in faith and expressed through service. For more than a decade, their commitment to one another—and to the mission of the Little Sisters of the Poor at the St. Augustine Home for the Aged in Indianapolis—has quietly transformed not only an annual fundraiser, but also their own lives.

In 2014, Linda Rambicure and Dottie Eveleigh brought together a group of women with a shared purpose: to strengthen the St. Augustine Home Guild's signature fundraiser, Hats Off to Spring (HOTS). What began as a simple effort—to encourage participation, invite new members, inspire ideas and develop fundraising strategies—soon became something much more enduring.

Over the years, that initial gathering grew into a dedicated core group: Linda Rambicure, Dottie Eveleigh, Angie Bagnoli, Sue Bailey, Deborah Simmons, Sandra Farr, Joanne Dyer, Sherry Porter, and Patricia Damler.

Month after month, year after year, they have met, planned, collaborated and prayed—providing the foundation that sustains HOTS. Beyond logistics, their story is one of intentional faith, lived in community.

Sue Bailey describes the group as “can-do” women, each bringing unique experiences—from business and finance to community leadership and the wisdom gained through life itself. Yet what stands out most is not simply what each woman contributes, but how they do it together.

“It has been a learning experience to listen and watch each member bring her talents as we discuss ideas and plan the annual HOTS fundraiser,” says Bailey. “It has demonstrated to me how each person has her part, and all parts are needed and necessary for success.”

Eveleigh adds, “While our group contributes to the success of the event, there are many St. Augustine Home Guild members who give their time and talent” to the Hats off to Spring event.

Their words echo St. Paul's image of the body of Christ: many parts, each essential, working together as one. In this group, that teaching is not abstract—it is lived. Each woman's gifts are offered freely, received gratefully and woven into something greater than any

one person could accomplish alone.

That spirit of shared purpose is grounded in a deep desire to live the Gospel well. Rambicure reflects on how their work has been shaped by faith from the beginning.

“The Gospel encourages us to use our talents and skills to help others,” she says. “Together our group used our individual skills to improve processes and fundraising. We were guided in many ways by our faith and desire to help the elderly residents [of St. Augustine Home] and the ‘walking saints,’ the Little Sisters.”

Their service is not simply about organizing an event—it is about responding to a call. It is about seeing Christ in the residents of St. Augustine Home and in the Little Sisters who care for them, and then asking, “What more can we do?”

For group member Angie Bagnoli, that call has taken on a joyful persistence. Each year, as the fundraiser concludes and the group looks ahead, a familiar pattern unfolds.

“After the last HOTS is over, somebody says, ‘I’ll do the invitations next year,’ and then I say, ‘I’ll do patrons,’” she explains with a smile. “Then everyone else says, ‘Well, I guess you can count me in for another year’—sometimes after they’ve said this was their last year.”

Her humor carries a deeper truth: commitment born of love rarely follows a strict timeline.

“I have been very blessed to be associated with the Little Sisters of the Poor,” Bagnoli adds. “They don’t ever retire—and neither will I.”

While their work has strengthened HOTS, it is their relationships that have sustained the nine women. What began as monthly planning lunches gradually became something more meaningful—a space where faith and friendship could grow side by side.

“There’s always time to talk about personal things too,” Bailey notes, “as we get to know each other on a more intimate level.”

Over time, those conversations deepened into shared prayer and mutual support. Rambicure recalls how the group began lifting up one another's families in times of illness and need. When her husband passed away, the women surrounded her with compassion and care.

“They were very supportive of me,” she says simply.

Bagnoli reflects on the many seasons they have walked through together—times of loss and challenge, as well as moments of celebration.



Members of the St. Augustine Home Guild planning group pause to celebrate a birthday during a monthly gathering as they prepare for the annual Hats Off to Spring fundraiser, benefiting the Little Sisters of the Poor at St. Augustine Home in Indianapolis. Pictured are: Angie Bagnoli, left, Joanne Dyer, Patricia Damler, Linda Rambicure, Sherry Porter, and Debbie Kukla. (Photo courtesy of St. Augustine Home Guild)

“During all those years, our group has all faced challenges—family illness and deaths, as well as happy times,” she says. “It is good to know that everyone faces the same struggles at some point, and we are always there for each other. Working for such a worthy cause helps us keep going even during difficult times.”

In these moments, their witness becomes especially clear. This is what it means to be intentional in faith: to show up not only for a mission, but for one another. This is what it means to be the body of Christ: to carry each other's burdens and to rejoice together. This is what it means to live the Gospel well: to love in action, consistently and generously.

As another spring approaches, this group continues its work, now supporting the 2026 HOTS co-chairs Mary Coyle and Mary Patout. Their legacy is not only in the success of the fundraiser, but the spirit they have cultivated—one of collaboration, generosity and enduring friendship.

The community is invited to be part of that spirit at the Hats Off to Spring Luncheon and Fashion Show on May 6, benefiting the residents served by the Little Sisters of the Poor at St. Augustine Home. (See details below.) This year's theme, “Companions on Our Journey,” reflects the story of these women and the mission they support.

The impact of HOTS is tangible. Thanks to last year's supporters, more than \$135,000 was raised, enabling the guild to purchase a 14-passenger

accessible bus to transport St. Augustine Home residents. This year, the goal is to complete the Home's transportation needs by funding a smaller mobility-accessible vehicle. Any additional funds raised will support the ongoing needs of the Home.

Beyond the details of the day, the event offers something deeper: an invitation to join in a mission of love and service. It is an opportunity to support the dignity and care of the elderly poor, to stand with the Little Sisters in their vocation and to become part of a community shaped by faith.

This story reminds us that the Gospel is most powerfully proclaimed not in words alone, but in lives lived with intention. Through shared purpose, steadfast friendship and generous service, the group of nine women has shown what is possible when we say “yes” to God—and to one another.

(Mary Short is communications director for the St. Augustine Home Guild. The Hats Off to Spring Luncheon and Fashion Show will be held at the Ritz Charles, 12156 N. Meridian St., in Carmel, Ind., on May 6. The event begins at 10 a.m. with a champagne reception, shopping, a luncheon at noon, followed by a fashion show featuring items from J. McLaughlin clothing store in Indianapolis. The show will highlight a mother-daughter theme, with pairs from the Guild and the St. Augustine Home staff. The cost is \$65, and the registration deadline is April 24. To request an invitation, call 317-294-1955 or go to tinyurl.com/HOTS26.) †

Good Friday alfombra

A Holy Week tradition in Guatemala and Central America is the creation of *alfombras*—religious-themed “carpets” made of flower petals and dyed sawdust—on streets and in churches. For the last two years, a group of Guatemalan members of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis have designed and created *alfombras* for the parish on Good Friday and for other holy days. Starting at 6 a.m. on April 3, the date of Good Friday this year, the group began dying sawdust purchased and donated by Father John McCaslin, St. Monica's pastor. By noon, they started laying out an *alfombra* in front of the church. Water was sprayed to keep the sawdust in place, then red and white rose petals were used to create images of the Eucharist within the *alfombra*. The creation was ready for the 3 p.m. outdoor re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross.

(Photos by Natalie Hoefler)



Red and white rose petals are used to create eucharistic images in an *alfombra*.



Water is sprayed to keep the dyed sawdust of an *alfombra* in place.

SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Mother Cabrini served Italian immigrants and others across America

(Editor's note: With 2026 being the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, this story is the first in a series of occasional "Simply Catholic" articles about great Catholics who have called America their home.)

By Russell Shaw

(OSV News)—Before the great wave of Hispanic immigration that swept the U.S. in the last several decades, historians spoke of four main periods of Catholic immigration linked to four ethnic groups: the Irish (peaking in the 1850s); the Germans (1880s); the Italians (early 1900s); and the Poles and other Slavs (1920s). The immigrant experience, including entry into the Catholic Church as they found it in their new country, was in some ways different for each.

Many found the transition difficult. That was especially true for Italians.

Between 1880 and 1920, as many as 4 million of them came to America, mostly from poverty-ridden southern Italy. Many were temporary workers—"builders of bridges, tunnels and subways, longshoremen and factory workers," as one writer said—who came to earn money and, that done, hastened home. But many stayed and made new homes in America. Or tried.

Early in those years, Mother Frances Cabrini had met with Pope Leo XIII and told him of her dream to go to China as a missionary. "No," Pope Leo answered, "not to the East, but to the West." He wanted her and her new women's religious order, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, to go to America and do pastoral work among the Italian immigrants.

What happened after that is a bright page in the sometimes tumultuous story of Italian-American Catholicism. The heroic love of God and neighbor that motivated her was formally recognized in 1946 when Frances Cabrini was declared a saint. That made her the first U.S. citizen to be canonized—even though she remained, in the words of a historian, "Italian ... to the very marrow of her bones."

Francesca Cabrini was born on July 15, 1850, in Sant' Angelo Lodigiano, a town in the northern Italian region of Lombardy, the youngest of 13 children of a well-off farming family. A pious child—the "little saint," neighbors called her—she longed to be a missionary and played at sailing paper boats filled with violets representing the sisters she meant to send all over the world.

But her father had other ideas, and after studying to be a teacher, Francesca taught school. On two occasions, she sought admission to religious orders but was turned down—ostensibly for poor health, but in fact because a local monsignor had other ideas: He wanted her to take over direction of a troubled orphanage.

After she had operated the orphanage for six years,



A statue of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, patron of immigrants, is seen after its unveiling on Oct. 12, 2020, in the Manhattan borough of New York City. (OSV News photo/Carlo Allegri, Reuters)

the bishop of the diocese asked her and her companions to form a religious community. The Missionary Sisters were born, with the foundress taking Frances Xavier as her religious name—"Xavier" for the 16th-century Jesuit missionary to the East Asia, St. Francis Xavier.

Although the new order was at first only a diocesan institution, Mother Cabrini had larger plans from the start. After establishing new convents in Cremona and Milan, she went to Rome to seek papal approval and, she hoped, open a convent there. At first, the cardinal in charge of such matters said "no"—Rome had enough convents already—but this determined woman of great charm persisted, and the cardinal ended by allowing her to open not just one convent but two.

It was around then that she had the interview with Pope Leo XIII that sent her on her way to the United States. Already in 1884, the American bishops at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore had discussed the desperate pastoral situation of Italian immigrants. Little came of it, except that "the Italian problem" was by now recognized as a problem for the Church at large.

New York already had some 50,000 Italians, but only a handful ever went to church. The newcomers' situation included poverty, a critical shortage of Italian-speaking priests, habits of anti-clericalism and spotty religious practice that accompanied them from the old country. There was also pervasive anti-Italian feelings, not only outside, but within the Catholic community in America.

Over time, a pastoral strategy began to take shape, bolstered by the arrival of new Italian religious communities like the Scalabrinian Fathers and the Pallottines, as well as by training American priests to work with the Italians.

The first parish in the U.S. specifically for them had been founded in Philadelphia in 1852, and now these spiritual enclaves retaining the language and devotional traditions of Italy multiplied. Mother Cabrini and her sisters were part of the increasingly effective response to a situation of obvious need.

Mother Cabrini arrived in New York on March 31, 1889, and, after a short-lived period of tension with the

local archbishop over where to set up shop, she and her companions got to work. Within a month, they were running an orphanage. In less than three years, they had a hospital as well. (Mother Cabrini called all her hospitals—two in New York, two in Chicago—Columbus Hospital.)

There's not enough room here to list here all the orphanages, schools, hospitals and clinics these women were responsible for establishing and operating. But numbers at least suggest the magnitude of what they achieved. By the time Mother Cabrini died 34 years after her arrival, the 2,300 Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart ministering in the United States and throughout the Western Hemisphere had launched 67 institutions devoted to the physical, moral and spiritual welfare of people in need.

Italians were not the only ones they served, but Italians remained the special focus of the sisters' efforts.

As early as September 1891, Mother Cabrini took 14 sisters to Nicaragua to start an academy there. Returning to the United States by way of New Orleans, she discovered that a year earlier a mob there had lynched a number of Italians accused of crimes. Her response was to summon several sisters from New York to begin serving among the Italians of the Crescent City.

Like the little girl who years before had dreamed of dispatching missionaries all over the world, Mother Cabrini carried on a ministry of expansive horizons. Argentina and Chile, France, Spain, England—Missionary Sisters went to all these places to minister. In the U.S., the order spread west across the United States—to Chicago, to mining camps in Colorado and Sing Sing prison in New York, Mississippi, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Washington in the Pacific Northwest.

In 1909, Mother Cabrini became a naturalized citizen. The following year, knowing her strength was failing, she announced her intention to resign as superior general of her order and devote herself exclusively to prayer. But the houses of the Missionary Sisters voted unanimously in favor of her staying on.

Observing those results, the cardinal-prefect of the Vatican's congregation for religious told her, jokingly, "Mother Cabrini, though up to now you have governed your institute badly, I have decided to give you another chance. You are to remain superior general." The foundress wasn't fazed. "Well, I warn you that I shall be just as severe as in the past," she replied.

She died on Dec. 22, 1917, at Columbus Hospital in Chicago. After, for the time, an unusually brief interval of 21 years, Pope Pius XI declared her blessed. Pius XII declared her a saint in 1946 and in 1950 designated her "Patroness of the Immigrants."

(Russell Shaw, a longtime journalist and writer, was the author of more than 20 books, including three novels. He died in January 2026.) †



A mosaic of St. Francis Cabrini is seen in the Trinity Dome at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. Canonized in 1946, Mother Cabrini, as she is popularly known, was the first U.S. citizen to be declared a saint. Beside the image of her are mosaics of St. Josephine Bakhita, left, and St. Damien of Molokai. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

Evangelization Outreach/Sandi Patel

Like lessons of Lent, allow retreats to transform you, year-round

When I was a young child, my Lenten sacrifice was most often imposed by my parents. No candy or sweets was the main theme. And in a family of eight,



it was a sensible sacrifice, taking a little pressure off the family budget. However, the sacrifice didn't leave a lasting impression on my faith life because Easter Sunday dawned with sweet-filled baskets, and our Lenten journeys were quickly forgotten.

Now, my goal is to discern a Lenten fast that will have an impact on my relationship with Jesus Christ that can be carried into the joy of the

Easter season. Perhaps giving up candy and sweets can do that when done correctly, but I have yet to find that path. Lent shouldn't be a 40-day challenge, but an opportunity for spiritual growth and strength.

This year, I wanted to find a better balance in my life. I'm always on the go, always thinking about what comes next, so I'm often neglecting the things that matter most: my relationships. To be honest, I am my own worst enemy because I put unreasonable

expectations upon myself. "Balance" is my word of the year, and I am finding many ways to lean into that word.

Perhaps you are seeking balance, too. We are reminded to make time for prayer every day, just as Jesus does, but the demands of everyday life and picture-perfect social media posts have us running in unforgiving circles. Not that this is all bad—we may be doing some very good things. But it's so easy to let our faith shift from the center of our lives to the edges.

To retreat is to move away or withdraw to quiet and seclusion, like Jesus did in Mark 1:35. A retreat allows you to get rid of the distractions of daily living, to clear your mind and simply rest in our Lord's embrace.

When your phone is turned off and the laundry is miles away, you are ready to listen with your heart to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Retreat time creates a stillness that helps us prioritize our Catholic faith and we become mindful of our risen Savior.

We can trust that Jesus will meet us where we are on a retreat, gently leading us to deeper communion with him as the retreat unfolds. Because retreats can take many

forms, Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis offers evenings and mornings of reflection, days of silence, days of reflection with a presenter, or a weekend experience with different presentations, reflection time and activities. You can also craft your own private retreat on our beautiful campus. Whatever you choose, you will find peace that puts you more attuned to God's call in your life.

You are invited to join us for our upcoming programs, including monthly days of silence; an evening of reflection on Our Lady of Fatima's feast day, May 13, featuring Jesuit Father James Kubicki; a "Seasons of Surrender" retreat on May 30-31; and a "Treasure of Friendship" women's retreat on June 5-6.

A retreat transforms your heart, not just your routine. Like the lessons of Lent, you begin to live with more intentionality and share your love of Jesus in word and example. This is what evangelization is.

(Sandi Patel is the director of the archdiocese's Office of Retreat and Renewal Ministry and Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. E-mail her at spatel@archindy.org.) †

Truth and Light/Leonard J. DeLorenzo

New short film offers a reminder that Mary is an icon of the Church

On a snow-covered winter day in 1842, Father Edward Sorin stood before a frozen lake in northern Indiana and did something audacious. He consecrated the land, the institution he was about to found and every soul who would ever study or work there to the Blessed Virgin Mary—and he did this not as an afterthought or pious decoration, but as the founding act itself.



That consecration wasn't merely symbolic, something to be noted in the university's founding documents and then quietly set aside. It was—and remains—constitutive of what the University of Notre Dame is.

Which is why the McGrath Institute for Church Life has just released *Mary, Icon of the Church*, a new short film exploring what it means for a university to be consecrated to Our Lady, and what that consecration reveals about the inseparability of Marian devotion from authentic Christian worship.

Here's what we sometimes forget: Mary isn't an optional add-on to Christianity. She's not a Catholic peculiarity that other Christians can safely ignore. Devotion to Mary is intrinsic to Christian worship because she shows us what it looks like to receive God.

Think about the Annunciation. The angel came with a message that defied every category of human understanding—a virgin would conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the child born of her would be the Son of the Most High, the one in whom God's promises to David would find their fulfillment.

This is the hinge upon which all of salvation history turned, the moment when eternity broke into time and the Word prepared to take flesh. And Mary, confronted with this utterly world-shattering proposition, said yes—not because she understood the mechanics of what God was asking, but because she trusted the One asking it of her.

Her fiat was the supreme act of freedom, the moment when a human being aligned her will so completely with God's that she became the very means by which the Incarnation occurred. As the Second Vatican Council's "*Lumen Gentium*" puts it, quoting St. Irenaeus, by her obedience she "became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race."

That's the pattern. That's what the Church is supposed to look like: receiving the Word of God, pondering him, letting him take flesh in us. Mary is the icon of the Church because she's the first and most perfect instance of what every Christian is called to be—a bearer of Christ to the world.

In his founding letter, Father Sorin wrote, "A special consecration was made to the Blessed Mother of Jesus, not only of the land that was to be called by her very name,

but also of the Institution that was to be founded there. ... I presented to the Blessed Virgin all those generous souls whom heaven should be pleased to call around me on this spot, or who should come after me."

Notice what he's doing. He's entrusting the entire educational enterprise to the one who knows what it means to receive truth and let it transform you. Because that's what education is supposed to be—not just the transfer of information, but the formation of persons who can receive reality as gift and respond with their whole lives.

There's a temptation at research universities to treat scholarship and devotion as separate domains. The intellectual life happens in one place, the spiritual life in another. Notre Dame was founded to resist that split. Its animating conviction: The pursuit of truth and the life of faith don't merely coexist, they belong together.

Mary stands as the supreme model of this integration. In her pondering heart—treasuring, weighing, receiving—we see what it looks like to encounter truth not as information to be processed but as mystery to be inhabited. She held the Word of God with both rigor and wonder, both mind and heart. That's what Catholic education at its best aims to form: people who can do the same.

This matters because we live in a time when the intellectual and the spiritual are assumed to be in tension. That assumption produces universities that train really smart people who have no idea what they're for. It produces churches that are devotionally rich but intellectually shallow. It produces a culture that's lost the ability to see the world as charged with meaning.

Father Sorin understood that a university consecrated to Mary would be different. It would refuse the false choice between rigor and reverence. It would insist that the various lines of Catholic thought intersect with all forms of human knowledge. It would form students whose learning becomes service to justice and whose lives build a society that is, in the university's own words, "at once more human and more divine."

That society—more human and more divine—is precisely the horizon Marian devotion opens. Because Mary shows us what humanity looks like when it's fully receptive to God. She's the proof that saying yes to the Almighty doesn't diminish us. It completes us.

Watch the film. Let it remind you of what Sorin knew: that every act of learning, every pursuit of truth, every effort to serve the Church happens under Mary's mantle. We've all been presented to her. The question is whether we'll receive the gift.

(Leonard J. DeLorenzo is a professor of the practice in the McGrath Institute for Church Life and concurrent professor in the department of theology at the University of Notre Dame. You can find his writing at leonardjdelorenzo.com.) †

Life and Hope/Katie Yoder

With unplanned pregnancies, remember adoption is a loving adoption

Sitting on the toilet in a dimly lit bathroom, a young woman hesitates before looking at her pregnancy test results. Her eyes widen and her heart pounds when she realizes it's positive.



This is how an advertisement, widely shared on social media as a Super Bowl ad, begins. The camera follows the young woman as she's transported into a black-and-white world where two mobs scream at each other from behind the metal fences that separate them. To her right, abortion supporters shout, "My body, my choice!" On her left, pro-lifers yell back, "Choose life!"

A voiceover interrupts the chaos to console the woman: "They're telling you that you've only got two choices. But the truth is, there's three. ... You deserve to know: Adoption is an option."

The ad, titled "The Girl in the Middle," comes from Adoption Is an Option, an initiative by the Opt Institute, an adoption advocacy nonprofit. Since its release, more than 1 million people on social media have scrolled past the video—a video that has sparked debate.

Within the pro-life movement itself, many leaders and influencers applauded the ad for placing a spotlight on adoption. Others challenged it for casting the pro-life movement as an angry one that insists women raise the children they give birth to instead of one that, in reality,

champions adoption. Abortion ends the possibility of adoption; choosing life is essential for it to happen.

But beyond the immediate reactions, the ad invites us into a larger conversation about adoption. Even though the majority of Americans admire adoption, women facing unexpected pregnancies rarely consider it, according to Ryan Hanlon, former president and CEO of the National Council for Adoption and adjunct instructor at The Catholic University of America (CUA) in Washington, and Elizabeth R. Kirk, assistant professor of law at CUA's Columbus School of Law, where she co-directs its Center for Law and the Human Person.

In a piece for the Institute of Family Studies last year, which draws from a larger article and cites research funded by the Opt Institute, Hanlon and Kirk counted more than 2 million unintended pregnancies but only about 25,000 private domestic adoptions in the United States in 2022.

"Women facing an unplanned pregnancy are far more likely to choose to parent or to have an abortion than to place a child for adoption," they wrote. "In fact, by a ratio of nearly 50 to 1, women choose to terminate a pregnancy rather than place that child for adoption."

In a survey of birth mothers, the authors found that only about 22% said they considered all of their options—abortion, adoption and parenting—at once while pregnant. Many more birth mothers (26.5%) considered only adoption and parenting than only abortion and adoption (9.6%). Another 20% considered adoption and

parenting only after considering abortion.

Hanlon and Kirk identify three main barriers to adoption: misinformation and confusion; social pressures for other options; and emotional concerns. Among other things, they advocate for informing expectant parents that private domestic adoption is not foster care; that they can choose the adoptive family; that open adoptions are standard; that emotional, legal and financial support is available; and that most adoptees and birth parents see their adoption experiences positively.

They say this education—this information—empowers women to make real choices.

And perhaps, by examining ourselves, we can know something else as sons and daughters of God through adoption. We can see that adoption is a gift and that it comes at a cost. We can see that it spells out pain and sacrifice and promises new life and hope. Most of all, we can see that it means we are radically loved and called to radically love.

Birth mothers embody this radical, self-sacrificial love by wanting what is best for their children even if that means placing them with another family. Adoptive parents participate in it by loving another's child as their own.

For the young woman in the ad, this is what adoption as an option should look like: A way to love and a way to choose life for her baby.

(Katie Yoder writes for OSV News from Maryland.) †

Third Sunday of Easter/Msg. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, April 19, 2026

- Acts 2:14, 22-33
- 1 Peter 1:17-21
- Luke 24:13-35

Again, as is usual for the weekend Masses of the Easter season, the Acts of the Apostles provides the first reading for the Liturgy of the Word.



This reading recalls an event like several others in Acts. St. Peter preached in the name of the eleven surviving Apostles. His remarks were brief and crisp.

The term used by biblical scholars is that Peter's message was kerygmatic, drawing from *kerygma*, the Greek word for "message." It means that Peter's words contained the basic information about Jesus and about God's plan of salvation.

Despite the small number of Christians at the time, and despite the facts that the Jewish culture and the effects of Roman domination were overwhelming, the Apostles still were determined to speak aloud boldly about Jesus.

Their determination revealed their trust in Jesus as Savior and as Son of God. The world desperately needed Jesus. Only Jesus could fill what the world needed then and still needs today. Remembering last weekend's first reading that described both the early Church's love for the Lord and its outreach to the troubled and needy, this reading shows that the first followers of Christ saw informing others about the Redeemer as a loving service.

Note also here, as elsewhere in Acts, even though the other Apostles were present, Peter alone spoke on their behalf.

The First Epistle of St. Peter supplies the next reading. Scholars debate the authorship of this epistle. Was Peter the author? Was someone writing in Peter's name the author? Or was the author presenting ideas that had come from Peter?

In any case, the reading shows how totally committed to Jesus the Savior the early Christians were and how aware they were that salvation had come through the Lord's death and resurrection.

The last reading from St. Luke's Gospel is the powerful and lovely story

of the risen Lord's walk to Emmaus with two disciples. The Emmaus narrative appears only in Luke. It is one of the most renowned and beloved passages in the New Testament.

Important in its message is the fact that, regardless of their devotion to Jesus, the disciples still only have a limited understanding of him and his Gospel. They are limited human beings, bewildered by the events of the Lord's death and resurrection. They need Jesus to understand the deep meaning and purpose of all that they had seen.

Secondly, Jesus meets this need. He teaches them. Thirdly, Jesus is with them. Finally, as they celebrate a meal together, heavy with eucharistic overtones, Jesus is the central figure presiding as they "break the bread" (Lk 24:30). After hearing the Lord's explanation of events and encountering Jesus, they join in a holy meal. The connection with the Eucharist is too strong to overlook.

Reflection

Beginning with the Scripture readings for Easter itself and continuing this weekend, the Church expresses to us boldly and clearly its unflinching belief that, after his crucifixion and death, the Lord Jesus rose to new life.

With equal vigor and equally strong faith, it also insists to us that Jesus did not rise and then disappear. Instead, he was with the Apostles, showing to St. Thomas his wounds and blessing those who believe. He was alive, present and still teaching during the trip to Emmaus. The meal at Emmaus was the culmination of the two disciples' time with Jesus.

The use of the technique of *kerygma* gives us the basic facts of the Lord's identity and mission. The experience of the Apostles shows us that they literally knew the risen Christ. We turn to them to know Jesus ourselves.

Knowing Jesus is more than possessing data. It confronts us with the obligation to follow Jesus if we know him.

By our discipleship, we extend Christ to those whom we meet. †

Daily Readings

Monday, April 20

Acts 6:8-15
Psalm 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30
John 6:22-29

Tuesday, April 21

St. Anselm, bishop and doctor of the Church
Acts 7:51-8:1a
Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6, 7b, 8a, 17, 21ab
John 6:30-35

Wednesday, April 22

Acts 8:1b-8
Psalm 66:1-3a, 4-7a
John 6:35-40

Thursday, April 23

St. George, martyr
St. Adalbert, bishop and martyr
Acts 8:26-40
Psalm 66:8-9, 16-17, 20
John 6:44-51

Friday, April 24

St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, priest and martyr
Acts 9:1-20
Psalm 117:1bc, 2
John 6:52-59

Saturday, April 25

St. Mark, Evangelist
1 Peter 5:5b-14
Psalm 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17
Mark 16:15-20

Sunday, April 26

Fourth Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:14a, 36-41
Psalm 23:1-6
1 Peter 2:20b-25
John 10:1-10

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Pilate and Christ had widely different understandings of kingship

One thing about which I've always been curious, especially this time of the year, is why in the various Gospel accounts of Jesus before Pilate, Jesus never directly answered, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Instead of simply saying "Yes," full stop, Jesus gave what many consider to be sidestep answers like "If you say so" or "Is that what you heard?" Could you comment? Is there a greater understanding of this exchange that I'm missing? (Indiana)



Of course, I personally don't know exactly what Jesus was thinking, nor do I think this is something that anyone can absolutely know for sure this side of heaven.

That being said, I think we can gain some insight by looking at the specific scriptural passage you seem to be referencing. In Chapter 18 of St. John's Gospel, we read the exchange between Jesus and Pontius Pilate:

"Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered, 'Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?' Pilate answered, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?' Jesus answered, 'My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants [would] be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here.' So Pilate said to him, 'Then you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say I am a

king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice'" (Jn 18:33-37).

On a straightforward surface level—albeit a level that is still meaningful—it looks like Jesus and Pilate are essentially talking past each other.

Pilate, as a pagan Roman, was asking questions from a very prosaic and earth-bound perspective. Jesus, on the other hand, had full supernatural insight into the great cosmic, spiritual scope of what was actually occurring.

Pilate was asking Jesus if he was an earthly king in a political sense, whereas Jesus was communicating that his kingship went far beyond Pilate's understanding of the term, in the sense that Jesus is the ruler and Lord of all time and creation. Jesus' answer was simply too big to fit into the limited question Pilate understood himself to be asking.

My own impression is that when Jesus at first responds with what might be seen as a dodge (i.e., "Do you say this on your own ...?"), this might actually be Jesus' attempt to clarify the question with Pilate or even, in a manner of speaking, to "catechize" him.

That is, Jesus may have been asking Pilate the equivalent of "Are you asking if I am a 'king' according to your secular definition?" And Jesus may have meant to ask this in such a way so as to introduce the idea that there is indeed a spiritual level of authority that transcends the visible world and its merely human governing structures.

I suppose in theory Jesus could have spelled all this out even more explicitly, but one thing that always strikes me about the broader dialogue with Pilate in St. John's Passion narrative is how Pilate does seem to have an inkling that something more profoundly spiritual is playing out before him (for example, see Jn 19:7-8).

Perhaps Pilate was in that moment given sufficient grace to realize to whom exactly he was speaking. And Jesus, knowing this, might have concluded that more detailed answers to Pilate's questions would not have benefited the reluctant Pilate any further.

So, one of the many insights we might take away from this passage is the importance of being sensitive to the voice of the Lord, however he comes to us in our own lives.

(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

In the Silence

By Gina Langferman

You speak in the silence
You are the still small whisper
Quiet my heart
Quiet my mind
Let me breathe in Your love

When I open my heart to You
You fill me with peace
My doubts and fears seem far away
I still don't have all the answers
But I no longer need the same answers
The questions seem irrelevant now

It's just You and me here
In the silence
You are enough
My soul is at peace.

(Gina Langferman is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. Photo: Franciscan Father Rick Martignetti kneels during adoration in Bishop Chartrand Memorial Chapel at Marian University in Indianapolis on April 7, 2025.) (File 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.

ARMSTRONG, Mark E., 74, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, March 29. Husband of Rosella Armstrong. Father of Angie Gilmore, Lisa Lloyd and Mark Armstrong. Brother of Liz, Megan, Vickie, Doug and Jim Armstrong. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of one.

BROADY, Janet A., 81, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, March 27. Mother of Angela Popham and Douglas Broady. Sister of Carolyn Thornton. Grandmother of one.

BUSSING, Veda, 79, Annunciation, Brazil, March 9. Wife of David Bussing. Mother of Stacy Burns and Derek Bussing. Grandmother of three.

COLLIGNON, Jeanne M., 85, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, April 1. Wife of James Collignon. Mother of Jeffrey, Phillip and Randal Collignon. Sister of Norbert Lustig. Grandmother of six.

CURTIS, Larry K., 76, St. Mary, Rushville, April 2.

Husband of Ann Curtis. Father of Katy, Andy and Brady Curtis. Brother of Tara Smiley and Lynda Solimine. Grandfather of four.

CZERWINSKI, Patrick M., 88, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Feb. 21. Father of Linda Cruz, Judi Renner, Carol Thomason, Eileen, Mary, Dan and Tom Czerwinski. Brother of Barbara Rewolinski. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of five.

GASPER, Dominic P., 1, St. Ann, Jennings County, March 31. Son of David and Jessica Gasper. Brother of Margaret and Joseph Gasper. Grandson of Dan and Michelle Gasper and Donny and Charlotte Volk.

GRAF, Larry W., 79, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, March 26. Brother of Alice, Dorothy and Cletus Graf. Uncle of several.

KENNEY, Phil, 65, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, March 22. Husband of Colleen Kenney. Father of Bridget, Eileen, Mary Kate, Pat and Vince. Brother of Ann, Katie, Mary, Sheila and Vince. Grandfather of 10.

LONG, Thomas C., 78, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, March 24. Husband of Lavretta Long. Father of Dior Jones. Brother of Roberta Brown, Ruth Douglas, Marie Murray, Josephine Newman, Robert Burse and Kenneth Harper.

MCCANN, Marcella A., 88, All Saints, Dearborn County, April 9. Wife of Tom McCann. Mother of Lynn Burton, Beth Joerger, Leah Schmidl, Audra Steele, Christopher, Jeffrey, Mark and Vincent McCann. Sister of Rosella

Kemper, Monica Poole, Gerald and James Wilgenbusch. Grandmother of 23. Great-grandmother of 15.

MORONE, Doris L., 93, Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, Indianapolis, March 19. Mother of Dominic and Mario Morone.

RUST, Richard, 92, St. Mary, Greensburg, April 3. Father of Lee Rust-Gonzalez, Christopher and Tom Rust. Grandfather of seven.

SMITH, Carolyn H., 91, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Jan. 18. Mother of Bruce, Keith, Ralph and William Smith. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of three.

SMITH, Gary T., 61, St. Pius V, Troy, March 31. Husband of Rita Smith. Father of Jamie Armstrong, Ashley Luecke, Molly Melvin, Candace Voyles, Garett and Nicholas Smith. Brother of Danielle Corley, Paula Howell, Pat Luther and Rick Smith. Stepbrother of Leta, Doug and Mike Dunn. Grandfather of eight.

SULLIVAN, Vera, 89, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, March 18. Mother of Nancy Chumbley, Patsy Reynolds, Kathy Troutman, Maureen and Joseph Sullivan. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother of several.

WEIDNER, Dolores, 93, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, March 29. Mother of Joyce Hughes, Jackie Kessler, Janet Metsch, Jeff and Ron Weidner. Grandmother of 19. Great-grandmother of 44.

WICKENS, Maredia A., 80, St. Mary, North Vernon, March 29. Mother of Chad



Easter at Saint Meinrad

Surrounded by blooming flowers, a statue of Our Lady of Einsiedeln stands festively decorated while late afternoon sunshine pours through stained-glass windows and doors on April 9, Thursday in the Octave of Easter, at the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

Wickens. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of two.

ZINKAN, Mary Mae, 99, Christ the King, Indianapolis, March 16. Mother of Patricia Holtz, Peter and Stephen Zinkan. Grandmother of seven.

Great-grandmother of 12.

ZOELLERS, Ula, 88, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, March 28. Mother of Becki, Curtis and David Zoellers. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of eight.

ZUMHINGST, Sheila, 73, St. Ambrose, Seymour, March 26. Wife of Wayne Zumhingst. Mother of Emma, Aaron and David Zumhingst. Sister of Patrick Shade. Grandmother of two. †

CROWE

continued from page 4

to tell you—just trust me—you are special.”

The next day, he spoke of love, quoting the two greatest commandments of Jesus Christ: to love God “with all you are” and “to love your neighbor as yourself.”

After returning from a planned 40-minute communications blackout as the Integrity sailed around the far side of the moon, crew member Christina Koch shared a message that contained great aspirations for the future of space travel, but which ended with these

poignant words: “We will inspire, but ultimately, we will always choose Earth. We will always choose each other.”

Throughout its mission, the gained perspective of the Integrity crew was reflected back to us: that humanity, with all of the flaws that bespeak a fallen people, is fundamentally worth fighting for. That it is love—not hatred, war or division of any kind—that is the calling of each of us. That we must intentionally choose one another. The perspective of the crew of the so aptly named Integrity should be one embraced by every person of good will, and most certainly every Christian, living on what is

our precious and increasingly fragile common home.

In a news conference following Integrity’s splashdown on April 10 and the safe return of the astronauts to Earth, NASA official Lori Glaze defined the Artemis II mission as “a mission for all humanity.” From my own perspective, it was a mission that brought out the best in humanity. And I can only hope and pray that we take to heart its most fundamental lessons.

(Gretchen R. Crowe is editor-in-chief of OSV News. Follow her on X @GretchenOSV.) †

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



NASA astronaut Victor Glover, Artemis II pilot, and NASA astronaut Christina Koch, Artemis II mission specialist, react while sitting on a Navy MH-60 Seahawk from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 23 on the flight deck of USS John P. Murtha on April 10 after they and fellow crew members were extracted from their Orion spacecraft after splashdown in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California. (OSV News photo/Bill Ingalls, NASA handout via Reuters)

MOMS

continued from page 1

“You don’t know about the community until you’re a part of it. Only mothers truly understand the sleepless nights, the immense love you feel for your baby and how chaotic life becomes in the blink of an eye.

“When I was in the newborn trenches, mothers I never met before would come up to me at coffee shops, church or the grocery store and ask me how old my daughter was, how I was sleeping and give me a short word of encouragement. They saw me. They knew.”

Knowing the touching and powerful impact of that outreach from other mothers, LaCoursiere strives to do the same when she sees other new moms.

“Realizing the secret society of mothers exists made me feel empowered and helped me realize I was not alone. When the really hard days strike, you are not alone,” says LaCoursiere, who is associate director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, the public policy voice for the Church in the state. “All of this is to say, reach out as much as possible, especially to women who are going through the same phase of motherhood as you.”

She also shares one more piece of advice from a faith perspective.

“Lastly, don’t forget to ask your baby’s guardian angel to help you in caring for and protecting them.”

‘Everything will be OK’

Sometimes the best advice that a new

mom can get comes from the women within her own family, especially her mother and grandmothers.

“When I had my first child in 2015, my grandmother gave me some sage advice that I often still reflect on 11 years and three more kids later,” recalls Laura Soto, a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

“She said, ‘Your children will grow up in spite of you, not because of you.’ This was not meant in a negative way, but just as a reminder to not agonize over every small decision, thinking that one choice will change the entire trajectory of my child’s life. At that time, I was fretting about anything and everything and feeling very overwhelmed.”

That advice has helped Soto, the assistant controller of the archdiocese, as she and her husband Matt guide the lives of their children, ages 10, 9, 8 and 5.

“This advice allowed me to realize that everything will be OK. I would encourage first-time mothers just to do their best, relax, and remember that God will fill in the gaps if we allow him to.”

‘And don’t forget, God loves you’

As the mother of four grown daughters and the grandmother of four boys, Anita Bardo has always paid close attention to the profound difference that being a mom can have in the lives of her children.

She has also paid close attention to the ways that other people can have an impact on a new mom—and how a new mom needs to care for herself as she cares for her child.

Bardo especially recalls how she was



Like many families, the celebration of Easter provided an opportunity for a family photo for Anita and Marvin Bardo and their four daughters, Bre'Ann, left, Marissa, Evonne and Elysha. (Submitted photo)

affected by one particular reaction when she was first pregnant.

“I remember someone saying to me when they first saw me, ‘You are beautiful, you are glowing!’” says Bardo, a member of St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis. “This is what I’ve said to moms who are expecting for the first time, but also to those I’ve met in the store or at church, not knowing if it’s their first or third pregnancy. And I always ask how they are doing and how they are feeling before going into any further conversation.”

If that approach leads to a deeper conversation, here’s the advice that Bardo would share with a woman expecting her first child:

“Trust your instincts. Even when you feel overwhelmed, you will draw strength from places that you least expect it. Take one day at a time. Rest when you need to rest. Most importantly, ask for help. You may feel guilty in asking, but please ask—you’re not alone in this.

“And always be kind to yourself.”

Bardo, the coordinator of evangelization and discipleship for the archdiocese, also offers this advice for an

expectant mother in relation to her child.

“Talk to your baby every day. They are listening. When you are alone and your body is still, quiet moments are important to you and your baby.

“Know that you are stronger than you think. And don’t forget, God loves you.”

(The Criterion is continuing to invite our readers to share their thoughts, tributes and stories about motherhood from two perspectives. First, if you are a mom, what’s one piece of advice you would give to a woman who is expecting her first child—and/or the best advice someone has ever given you about being a mom? Second, share your thoughts, tributes and stories about how your mother’s influence has shaped you, your faith and your life—and/or share how you have strived to shape your children’s faith and lives. Please send your submissions to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached.) †



During a family vacation to Niagara Falls, Laura and Matt Soto capture a memory aboard the Maid of the Mist boat with their four children, Eli, left, Jonathan, Naomi and Mark. (Submitted photo)

Classified Directory

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Employment

Principal Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School is a school located in New Albany, Indiana. New Albany is situated along the Ohio River opposite of Louisville, Kentucky. We are actively seeking a principal beginning with the 2026-2027 academic school year. We serve a pre-school-8th grade enrollment of approximately 375 students within a Christ-centered and nurturing environment, and are dedicated to the spiritual and academic development of the whole child. Our multi-faceted curriculum prepares our students for a life-long commitment to education, the Catholic faith, and stewardship, and we are blessed with an outstanding teaching and administrative staff, and the support of engaged and invested parents. We are also blessed to be part of a faith-filled Catholic parish.

More information about Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School can be found at www.olphna.org/school.

Candidates must complete the official online application at Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

For more information and/or to submit supporting documents (i.e. resume, cover letter, references), please contact:

Maureen Okerson, Business Manager
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Employment

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Little Flower Parish, a welcoming Eastside community of 600+ households, is seeking a part-time Director of Music Ministry (approx. 25 hrs./week). The director will lead music for two weekend Masses, along with Holy Days and other special liturgies, direct the adult choir, train cantors, collaborate on school liturgies, and support a vibrant volunteer music ministry.

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