



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960

Spiritual lift for students



Doctors help establish program at Butler to help students deepen their faith, page 13.

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'A little miracle'



Six-year-old Litzy Maria Luna Mendoza of Cuba gives a special hug to Dr. Martin Kaefer, a physician at Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis and member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, who performed a life-changing surgery for the girl on Feb. 20.

Girl's life-changing surgery shows bond between archdioceses in Cuba and Indy

By John Shaughnessy

As Pope Benedict XVI prepares to visit Cuba on March 26-28, he would likely be inspired by the story of a 6-year-old Cuban girl who has been called "a little miracle."

With her infectious smile, big blue eyes and strong spirit, Litzy Maria Luna Mendoza has given a special human connection to the ever-growing relationship between the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Archdiocese of Camaguey in Cuba.

And thanks to the collaboration of people from both archdioceses, Litzy has benefited from an operation at Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis

that has corrected a physical condition which threatened her life.

It's a story of faith, compassion and cooperation, according to Dr. Chuck Dietzen, an Indianapolis physician who had a key role in arranging Litzy's surgery.

"Mother Teresa always understood that the only way you have true conversion is if you set a good example," says Dietzen, who worked with her in Calcutta in 1996. "If people pray for hope, health and healing, it's going to come in the form of another human being. That's what has happened here. The question is sometimes asked, 'I've been praying to God, but where is he?' I believe God hears. The real question is, 'Do we hear him, calling on us to deliver?'"

The story of Litzy is the tale of how two groups of people from different countries and backgrounds—yet still united by their shared faith—delivered an outcome of hope for a little girl.

Building the bridge

The beginning of Litzy's story actually takes place before she was born, back in 1998 when Pope John Paul II visited Cuba.

Following that visit, Catholic Relief Services developed the Global Solidarity Partnership, an effort to use the structure of the Church to link dioceses in the United States with dioceses in developing countries. As part of the partnership, the

See MIRACLE, page 8

U.S. bishops set March 30 as day of prayer and fasting for religious liberty

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. bishops have urged Catholics and "all people of faith" across the nation to observe March 30 as a day of prayer and fasting for religious freedom and conscience protection.

The bishops announced the daylong observance in a statement titled "United for Religious Freedom" that was approved on March 14 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Administrative Committee.

They asked Catholics and others to join them in "prayer and penance for our leaders and for the complete protection of our first freedom—religious liberty—which is not only protected in the laws and customs of our great nation, but rooted in the teachings of our great tradition."

The bishops said that among current threats to religious liberty is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate that forces employers, including religious ones, to provide coverage of contraception, sterilization and abortifacients in their health plans.

Prayer resources have been posted on the USCCB website at www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/conscience-protection/resources-on-conscience-protection.cfm.

Also, "Prayer for Religious Liberty" prayer cards are available as a downloadable PDF file. The cards are available in English and Spanish, and feature three images—Mary as the Immaculate Conception, patroness of the U.S.; Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas and the unborn; and St. Thomas More, the patron saint of the legal profession, who was martyred for standing up for his religious beliefs.

In a letter about the March 30 day of prayer addressed to Catholics in their state, Pennsylvania's bishops said the observance was planned in response "to the assault by the federal government on constitutionally guaranteed religious liberty." They also cited the federal contraceptive mandate, saying it "punished the Church for its firmly held beliefs and consistent teaching."

See LIBERTY, page 9

Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard praises Catholic schools and school choice at monthly business exchange meeting

By Mary Ann Garber

Catholic education got an enthusiastic endorsement from Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard during his early morning address to Catholic Business Exchange members on March 16 at the Northside Knights of Columbus Hall in Indianapolis.

"The Catholic education model in our city is so important," Ballard told the business professionals and Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator, who celebrated a Mass before the organization's monthly breakfast and program.

"The Catholic schools are a good model for what other schools should be doing because you have high expectations," the mayor emphasized. "It does have a dramatic impact. ...

I know times are tough. I know budgets are tough. But if you can expand the influence of the Catholic schools throughout the city, we will be better off. There's no question about it. Catholic schools do a tremendous job in our city."

There are a number of great schools in Indianapolis, he said, mentioning other private and charter schools that are filling the needs in "education desert" areas of the city.

"But the Catholic model by itself is very, very strong," Ballard said. "I'm hoping that people look at it and will continue to look at it as a way to help us propel education forward in this city."

Charter schools have been "a tremendous success," he said. "I'm a big believer in competition

See SCHOOLS, page 8



Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard endorses the importance of Catholic education for the future of the city during a speech to members of the Catholic Business Exchange on March 16 at the Northside Knights of Columbus Hall in Indianapolis.

Bishop Coyne to be celebrant of Holy Week liturgies at cathedral

By Sean Gallagher

Filled with rituals celebrated only once a year, the liturgies of Holy Week are the solemn high point of the Church's liturgical calendar.

Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator, will be the principal celebrant for each of them at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, and looks forward to praying with Catholics from across central and southern Indiana during the liturgies.

While he encourages Catholics to gather for such liturgies at their home parishes, Bishop Coyne also said it is good on occasion to participate in them at the cathedral.

"The celebration of the liturgy by the bishop is at the heart of the Church's life," he said. "Each parish celebration and each celebration by a priest or deacon shares in the bishop's celebration of the liturgy, which in turn is joined to the universal liturgy of Christ, the great high priest.

"As a bishop, too, I love to celebrate with people from all over the archdiocese whenever I can. Gathered around the 'cathedra,' or 'chair,' of the next archbishop, we can celebrate our unity as an archdiocese and continue to faithfully anticipate the naming of our next archbishop."

The liturgies of Holy Week start with Palm Sunday Mass. They continue with the celebration of the annual chrism Mass, which takes place in the archdiocese on Tuesday of Holy Week.

On Holy Thursday, the Easter Triduum begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, which celebrates the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood at the Last Supper. The Lenten season ends when the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper begins.

Christ's suffering and death are solemnly recalled during the Celebration of the Lord's Passion.

The Easter Triduum then culminates with the solemn and joyous celebration of Christ's Resurrection during the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night.

"Aside from the Sunday celebration of Mass, the Easter Triduum is the highlight of our liturgical year," Bishop Coyne said. "Not only do we initiate and welcome new members into our Church at the Easter Vigil, but in the unity of the three days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, we encounter the mystery of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Bishop Coyne pointed out a unique aspect of the liturgies of the Easter Triduum. Mass on Holy Thursday evening begins with the usual greeting, but does not end with the ordinary dismissal. Both are absent from the



Bishop Christopher J. Coyne baptizes Tomiko Whitaker during the celebration of the Easter Vigil on April 23, 2011, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Jerry Galooley, right, served as Whitaker's sponsor.

liturgy of Good Friday. And the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night does not begin with the ordinary greeting, but ends with a joyful Easter dismissal.

"This is not by accident. It is by design," Bishop Coyne said. "The

Easter Triduum is intended by the Church to be celebrated as a unity. We are encouraged to see these three days as days of liturgy, prayer and vigil, all joined together, all leading us more deeply into the mystery of faith." †

Holy Week liturgies are set at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis

The following is the Holy Week liturgical schedule for SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.

Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator, is scheduled to be the principal celebrant of all the liturgies except for Easter Sunday Mass. Father Noah Casey, rector of the cathedral, will be the celebrant of that Mass.

April 1—10:30 a.m. Mass for Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion.

April 3—3 p.m. chrism Mass.

April 5, Holy Thursday—6:30 p.m. Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper followed by eucharistic adoration until 10 p.m.

April 6, Good Friday—3 p.m. Liturgy of the Passion and Death of the Lord.

April 7, Holy Saturday—9 p.m. Easter Vigil.

April 8, Easter Sunday—10:30 a.m.

Easter Sunday Mass.

This year will mark a change in the time of the

celebration of the annual chrism Mass in the archdiocese.

Starting in the early 1970s, the chrism Mass was celebrated on Tuesday evening of Holy Week.

This year, the chrism Mass will be celebrated at 3 p.m. on April 3, the Tuesday of Holy Week.

Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, apostolic administrator, said that the earlier time will allow more Catholics from across the archdiocese to participate in the Mass and return home safely. †

U.S. bishops stand in solidarity with people facing Middle East violence

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Citing continuing conflict in the Middle East, the U.S. bishops' Administrative Committee reiterated its support for the region's bishops and all people of faith, urging them to stand against violence even in the face of hostility and aggression.

A statement from the committee, which concluded a two-day meeting in Washington on March 14, called for a "change of heart and mind on the part of all those who sow division and hatred."

Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, N.Y., a member of the bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, told Catholic News Service the statement calls upon Christians especially to respond to violence in a nonviolent manner.

"As the statement says, violence begets violence," Bishop Murphy said. "Pope John Paul II said that many years ago, and it remains true. When one person has his or her dignity violated, then there are three possibilities. They can run away. They can turn around and respond with violence. Or they can learn how to stand their ground without being violent.

"The third is the one that the Lord imposes upon us. That takes restraint. It takes suffering. But it needs to be supported. That third choice, which is the true choice, needs to be supported by Catholic bishops," he said.

Bishop Murphy explained that the statement refers to all forms of violence in the entire region rather than specific incidents.

The four-paragraph statement was adopted unanimously, he said. "I do know from my personal relations with a number of bishops in the Middle East that they take our words to heart and that they find a great deal of comfort in the solidarity that we offer to them," Bishop Murphy added.

The statement acknowledged the difficult circumstances that Catholic bishops face as they guide the Church and its members in the face of conflict.

"We insist that peace, which is ultimately a gift of God, must be made the goal of every nation, not only internally but in consort with all the nations and peoples of the region," the statement said.

"When innocent women and children are slaughtered, when journalists are killed pursuing their profession, when the defenseless are cut down on their way to work or even in their homes, then those responsible must be brought to reasonable justice. Violence so often leads to more violence. War is always a loss for humanity, whether it be civil and internal or nation to nation," it said.

The administrative committee also urged "our brothers and sisters in the Christian Churches as well as all our brothers and sisters and the religious leaders of all faiths to renew their commitment to work together, to pray, and to use all their good offices to offer an alternative to division, conflict and violence."

Bishop Murphy also called for prayers for the people in the region.

"I have trust in the Lord and I have trust his power is stronger than our words," he said. †



Bishop William F. Murphy

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Groups forming in archdiocese to promote beauty and art

By Sean Gallagher

From its earliest days, the Church has encouraged artists to create works that communicate the beauty and truth of the Gospel.

Reflected in paintings on the walls of ancient catacombs to the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, from Gregorian chant to the Masses of Mozart, the faithful throughout the world have expressed their love of Christ and sought to evangelize through beauty.

Three organizations based in Indianapolis that promote the work and fellowship of Catholic artists are carrying on that ancient tradition.

The Catholic Writers Guild, headed by Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary parishioner Ann Lewis of Indianapolis, is a national organization that encourages Catholic poets and prose writers. Lewis hopes to establish a local chapter of the guild.

Indy Catholic Artists is a recently established group that provides spiritual support and fellowship for Catholic visual artists in the archdiocese. Father John Hollowell, associate pastor of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg and chaplain of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, helped found the fledgling organization and serves as its chaplain.

And the Ministry through the Arts Project (MAP) was founded recently by Jonathan Stahl, also a Holy Rosary parishioner. This organization seeks to promote the new evangelization through encouraging the work of Catholic artists in the archdiocese and beyond.



Fr. John Hollowell

All three leaders see the movement of the Holy Spirit in the fact that these organizations have been started around the same time.

"It certainly seems like the Holy Spirit is at work here," Father Hollowell said. "We see all the time in our Church that when there's a need, new energy will spring up and there are new wellsprings of grace. You usually see it coming from lots of different people."

Catholic Writers Guild

Ann Lewis and a group of other Catholic writers across the U.S. and Canada came together in 2007 to found the Catholic Writers Guild (www.catholicwritersguild.org).

Prior to that time, Lewis had worked as a writer of children's stories based on characters from *Star Wars* and various comic books. But she wanted something more.

"I felt that I was missing a part of myself," said Lewis, 45, president of the guild. "I wanted to write my own material, first of all. But I also wanted to write [about] my faith. And it's hard as a fiction writer to write about your faith and get it out there because there is a secular resistance to material that has any sort of religious theme to it."

Because of the desire to have her faith inform her work and the challenges of getting it published, she and other Catholic writers who had belonged to an online group went a step further and founded the guild.

It sponsors an annual conference that includes workshops to help writers hone their craft and gives them a forum in which to build friendships. Those relationships are then fostered through online discussions throughout the year.

"You realize that you're not alone," Lewis said. "That's major. There are other people that want to do what you want to do. And you can help each other to do that."

Since the guild was founded, Lewis published a collection of short stories with Sherlock Holmes as the main character.

The collection is titled, *Murder in the Vatican: The Church Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes*.

In addition to helping her and other writers in their work, the example of other guild members has nurtured Lewis' life of faith.

"It has made me really focus on the grace of going about frequenting the sacraments and spending some time in adoration," she said. "These are things that I really never would have considered doing before. It's made me grow in my spiritual life. I talk to God more because I need him to talk to me."

Lewis said that guild members who live close to each other in cities across the country have formed local chapters and sponsored workshops throughout the year as opportunities for support. She hopes that Catholic writers in the archdiocese can start a chapter.

People interested in learning more about the Catholic Writers Guild and establishing a chapter in the archdiocese can contact Lewis at president@catholicwritersguild.com.

Indy Catholic Artists

Before Father John Hollowell entered the seminary, he had focused his life on sports and working as a math teacher. At that point, the arts weren't important to him.

But then a spiritual director challenged him to explore the relationship of beauty and the life of faith.

Now, almost three years after his ordination, Father Hollowell said that art is at the heart of his priestly life and ministry.

"The biggest confirmation for me as a priest has been to see the differences in places where there is beauty and where the music is beautiful, and the impact that beauty has on people and in my own celebration of the Mass," he said. "It's no longer a theory that I read in Pope Benedict [XVI's writings]. It's something that I've come to realize is very much true."

As he came to know other young adult Catholic artists in the archdiocese, Father Hollowell explored with them the possibility of starting a group that would provide spiritual support and fellowship. Earlier this year, those discussions bore fruit in the founding of Indy Catholic Artists.

The group was promoted through e-mail and the Internet social networking website Facebook.

Their first event was a Feb. 17 holy hour of eucharistic adoration at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis during which Father Hollowell preached about the interrelationship of faith and art. Afterward, there was time for fellowship.

Katie Sahn, who helped form the group with Father Hollowell and Melissa Scarlett, a photographer and graphic designer, was at the event, which drew approximately 30 people.

"It was really inspiring for everybody," said Sahn, a Holy Rosary parishioner. "We just shared what we do, our life experiences, and how important and inspiring meeting each other was."

While Scarlett and Sahn appreciate the chance to build relationships with other artists through Indy Catholic Artists, they also see a deeper purpose to the group.

"I don't think this group will be about light topics, and just talking about why things are pretty and why that's important," said Scarlett, a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis. "It's much deeper and we want to tap into that, especially as Catholics. Art and beauty are a huge part of our tradition."

Father Hollowell hopes that the new group will help "Catholic artists realize that their art has a role to play in bringing people to Christ, and that it's not simply secondary to who they are as people. It's the tool that Christ is calling them to use to bring other people to him."

For more information about Indy Catholic Artists, send an e-mail to Father Hollowell at fatherjohnhollowell@gmail.com.

Ministry through the Arts Project

Jonathan Stahl grew up in a



Katie Sahn, left, helps Gabriella Einterz, a third-grade student at Lumen Christi School in Indianapolis, with an art project on March 15. Sahn, who helped found Indy Catholic Artists, teaches art at the school.



Jonathan Stahl speaks during a Feb. 11 fundraising dinner for the Ministry through the Arts Project (MAP) that took place at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. Stahl, a Holy Rosary parishioner, founded MAP to promote the work of Catholic artists in central and southern Indiana.

Catholic family, but said that practicing the faith wasn't important to him during his childhood and teenage years.

Then, as a 20-year-old student studying writing and theater at the University of Indianapolis, he met an aspiring actress who related her love for beauty with her Catholic faith.

"She went to Mass and thought that it was the most beautiful and most powerful thing in the world," Stahl said. "It kind of shocked me that all that could be said about the Mass. It was through that direct encounter with beauty and of another Catholic artist that I really got set on fire with my faith."

Now 29, Stahl hopes to bring others closer to Christ and the Church through art in the Ministry through the Arts Project (MAP) that he founded last August (www.mapindy.org).

"It all comes down to the new evangelization," he said. "Certainly, I want to entertain people. I want them to have a good time. We as Catholics like to enjoy

and celebrate life.

"But if the new evangelization is going to work, if it's going to be effective, artists will have to take a leadership role in it."

Stahl hopes that MAP will encourage Catholic artists in a broad variety of media, and help make beauty and the arts a more conscious part of the life of faith of individual Catholics and parishes in the archdiocese and beyond.

One of the ways that this will happen is through MAP's sponsorship of Catholic arts festivals.

Stahl has been in contact with people involved in Indy Catholic Artists, and hopes that the two organizations will work together to promote beauty and art in the Church in central and southern Indiana.

"I don't think that it's a surprise that so many groups are starting up," Stahl said. "I think that's the way the Holy Spirit works. But it's not a mystical snap of the finger. It's the incredible men and women encouraging us to go out and use our vocations to further the Gospel." †



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Editorial

Clerical sex-abuse scandal

Nothing tore the Catholic Church apart more during the past decade than the clergy sex-abuse scandal. It seems safe to say that no one ever imagined the seriousness of the scandal when it first broke or that it would reach the international proportions that it did.

We know that many Catholics even stopped practicing their faith because of the scandal. We believe that that was an unfortunate reaction, essentially hurting themselves by no longer taking advantage of the spiritual aids that the Church offers because some human members of the Church acted sinfully.

Nevertheless, a decade after the headlines broke, other members of the Church are still determined to make sure that nothing like that scandal happens again.

The largest international symposium on the topic took place on Feb. 6-9 in Rome. It was organized by the Jesuit's Pontifical Gregorian University with the backing of the Vatican. The purpose of the symposium was to inspire and educate bishops' conferences around the world as they seek to comply with the Vatican's mandate to establish anti-abuse guidelines by May.

The United States, Canada, Australia and Germany already have binding guidelines they are working under, and dioceses that might not have had effective procedures now have them. Of course, that includes the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, which had them in place for many years.

The message at the symposium was clear—victims, truth and justice must come first. There is to be no more silence on the part of bishops out of a mistaken idea that they are protecting the Church.

No one spoke more plainly about that silence than Msgr. Charles Scicluna, who heads the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's handling of sex-abuse cases. He said, "The deadly culture of silence, or *omerta*, is in itself wrong and unjust." *Omerta* is usually associated with the Mafia.

Bishops have a duty to cooperate fully with civil authorities when civil laws are broken, Msgr. Scicluna said.

His superior, U.S. Cardinal William Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, gave the opening address at the assembly. He said that more than 4,000 reports of sexual abuse of minors were received by his office during the past 10 years.

They showed, he said, that an exclusively canonical response to the crisis has been inadequate, and that a multifaceted and more proactive approach by all bishops and religious orders is needed.

Emphasis at the symposium was given to the need to listen to victims. The cardinals, bishops and others present practiced what was preached by listening to Marie Collins, an Irish woman who had been abused as a child.

At the beginning of the symposium, she told those assembled that having her abuser's superiors shift the blame



Msgr. Charles Scicluna, the Vatican's chief prosecutor of clerical sexual abuse, attends a Feb. 7 penitential vigil at St. Ignatius Church in Rome to show contrition for clerical sexual abuse. The service was led by Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for Bishops.

onto her and fail to stop the perpetrator caused her more pain and shock than the abuse itself.

Canada's Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, was listening to Collins. Later, he and 10 other bishops led a solemn penitential service in which they asked forgiveness for failing to protect children and serving instead as an "instrument of evil against them."

Under Cardinal Levada's leadership, the Holy See's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is determined to bring this problem under control. Last May, it released a circular letter listing what should be the Church's five emphases in addressing clerical sex abuse:

- Listening to the victims and their families with a commitment to their spiritual and psychological assistance as a shepherd of souls should do.
- Taking concrete steps to ensure a safe environment for children in churches and schools.
- Paying greater attention to the formation of candidates for the priesthood and religious life with regard to a true understanding of celibacy, chastity and spiritual fatherhood.
- Focusing on continuing formation of the clergy and awareness of sexual abuse issues.
- Cooperating with the civil authorities in cases of alleged crime by anyone working for the Church.

We believe that this scandal is finally under control. There might be a bishop or superior of a religious order who hasn't gotten the message yet, but they should be few and far between.

If there had ever been any doubt about the pope's and the Vatican's position, those days are over.

—John F. Fink

Making Sense Out of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Federal mandates and the crushing of religious freedom

On Jan. 20, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a mandate placing First Amendment rights and religious freedom in the crosshairs.



The mandate, as a provision of the health care reform act signed into law in 2010, requires "preventive health services" to be covered by all health insurance issuers and all group health plans.

Those insurance plans must provide—with no co-pay—the full range of Food and Drug Administration-approved contraceptive methods for women.

These include not only surgical sterilizations, but also potential abortion-causing agents such as Plan B—the morning-after pill—intrauterine devices (IUDs) and another form of "emergency contraception" known as Ella.

This drug, which the FDA acknowledges may also work against the life of the embryo "by preventing attachment [implantation] to the uterus," can be taken up to five days after "unprotected" sex.

Essentially, all employers would thus be forced—and therefore complicit in—financially subsidizing pharmaceutical abortions, contraception and sterilization procedures for their employees. All these procedures represent sinful and damaging human choices as the Catholic Church has never ceased to point out.

The mandate constitutes a direct intrusion into the religious works and governance of the Church, and represents a federally sponsored violation of its members' consciences.

The Church, as the largest provider of not-for-profit health care in the U.S., operates roughly 600 hospitals and employs three-quarters of a million people in addition to employing hundreds of thousands of others in her educational and social service ministries.

Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago aptly described the authoritarian environment being created by the HHS mandate in one of his recent newspaper columns. "The bishops would love to have the separation between Church and state we thought we enjoyed just a few months ago, when we were free to run Catholic institutions in conformity with the demands of the Catholic faith, when the government couldn't tell us which of our ministries are Catholic and which not, when the law protected rather than crushed conscience. The state is making itself into a church."

In the words of another commentator, "As is more and more obvious, ObamaCare has nothing to do with controlling health care costs. It has everything to do with government control. It's time to admit a mistake, repeal the law and look at market-based ways to control health care costs."

Critics of every persuasion have condemned the HHS mandate as a particularly egregious violation, both of religious freedom

and the rights of conscience.

"I side with those who feel this was an insult to freedom of religion and a slap in the face of faith-based institutions," Rabbi Eliot Pearlson of Temple Menorah in Miami Beach said.

Rabbi Dr. Michael Korman of Congregation Anshei Shalom in West Palm Beach concurred.

"The entire contraception policy was poorly instituted. It appears to be in violation of our First Amendment."

Jessica Devers, in a letter to the editor in *The Wall Street Journal*, perhaps put it most clearly when she wrote, "I am not Catholic. I am a social liberal and a supporter of Planned Parenthood. I've educated my children about birth control since they were young. Nevertheless, I am offended at the arrogance of our government ruling that the Catholic Church must provide a benefit that the Church believes is immoral."

On Feb. 10, after stormy reaction even from President Barack Obama's staunchest Catholic supporters, he announced a so-called "accommodation," which—as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops quickly explained—really changed nothing.

When the government documents were made available, it became clear that there was no compromise at all, but rather some slight procedural modifications that left the substance of the mandate entirely intact.

The day the "accommodation" was announced, in fact, the mandate was entered into the *Federal Register* with no changes, along with vague assurances of possible modifications at a future date—reminiscent of then House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's famous line when campaigning for ObamaCare: "We have to pass the bill so that you can find out what is in it."

In the same issue of *The Wall Street Journal*, Philip Rovner summed it up this way. "The ... premise in favor of the birth control mandate is based on [its] being 'essential to the health of women and families.' I assume such items as food, housing, clothing and transportation are 'essential to the health of women and families' as well.

"Therefore, I propose that the ObamaCare mandates be extended to cover food, shelter, clothing, autos, etc. In this scenario, everybody would be paying for everyone else's essentials ..."

The real issue, of course, has nothing to do with access to particular "reproductive issues"—like abortion or birth control—and everything to do with whether someone else can be forced by the strong arm of a federal mandate, in direct violation of their religious freedom, to pay for practices they recognize as morally reprehensible.

(Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D., earned his doctorate in neuroscience at Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.) †

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper's commitment to "the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God" (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the

letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

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

Another Catholic 'swing vote'—Supreme Court gets health reform law

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Although there are no specifically Catholic issues under consideration when the U.S. Supreme Court hears oral arguments on March 26-28 on various aspects of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Catholics will play some key roles.



With six of the nine current

Supreme Court justices being Catholics, it is almost inevitable that a Catholic justice will be a "swing vote" determining the outcome in at least one of the cases. And Catholic groups and individuals have not been shy about filing friend-of-the-court briefs seeking to sway the justices toward their hoped-for outcome.

The lawsuits before the court have nothing to do with the contraceptive, sterilization and abortifacient mandate set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)—and the First Amendment religious freedom questions raised by it—which has been the subject of a number of other suits in lower courts.

There are four questions before the high court in three cases, with five-and-a-half hours of arguments scheduled over the three days:

- Does the Anti-Injunction Act, which says no tax can be challenged in court before it is due, preclude a challenge to the Affordable Care Act until after the individual mandate takes effect in 2014? (*Florida v. Department of Health and Human Services*, one hour, on March 26.)

- Does Congress have the power to require Americans to buy health insurance—"the minimum coverage provision," also called the individual mandate)? (*Department of Health and Human Services v. Florida*, two hours, on March 27.)

- If the individual mandate is overturned as unconstitutional, can other parts of the Affordable Care Act remain in effect? (*National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius*, and *Florida v. Department of Health and Human Services*, 90 minutes, on March 28.)

- Can Congress require the states to expand their Medicaid programs for those with low incomes and the disabled? (*Florida v. Department of Health and Human Services*, one hour, on March 28.)

Dozens of organizations and individuals have filed friend-of-the-court briefs in the cases, including a number of Catholics.

The heads of 19 U.S. Catholic religious orders joined with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the national Catholic social justice lobby Network in a brief supporting the medicaid expansion, calling it "a moral

imperative that all levels of government institute programs that ensure the poor receive" adequate health care.

The nuns—many of whose congregations serve in health care ministries—said they "have witnessed firsthand ... the devastating impact of the lack of affordable health insurance and health care on women, children and other vulnerable members of society."

In a separate brief, an interfaith coalition called Faithful Reform in Health Care said the Medicaid expansion is both "morally proper and legally permissible.

"Because states can opt out of Medicaid, the only compulsion they face is the knowledge that the Medicaid expansion is the right and moral thing to do," it added.

The coalition, made up of Muslim, Jewish and Christian organizations, including many Catholic religious congregations, said the scriptures of the three Abrahamic religions and the sacred teachings of other faiths "understand that addressing the general welfare of the nation includes giving particular attention to the poor and the sick.

"Individual acts of kindness to persons suffering ill health are commendable, but they cannot replace a nationwide safety-net program like Medicaid, which currently serves millions of this nation's poor and vulnerable," the brief said.

Other Catholic groups argued against the Affordable Care Act, however, in briefs urging that the individual mandate be declared unconstitutional.

The Catholic Medical Association joined five other national organizations in saying that the requirement that every American purchase health insurance or face a penalty "effectively imposes an 'abortion premium mandate' that violates the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment."

Even if those who have religious or moral objections to abortion are able to find health insurance that excludes abortion, they "have their marketplace choices impermissibly limited under the [Affordable Care] Act by being forced to choose between insufficient plans that respect their conscience versus other plans that happen to require an abortion premium, but that may otherwise better meet their health needs or their choice of doctor network," the brief said.

A brief filed by CatholicVote.org, which describes itself as a nonpartisan voter education project that promotes "an authentic understanding of ordered liberty and the common good" based on Catholic teaching, took a different tack in opposing the health reform law.

"Committed to individual liberty, minimal government, federalism and the doctrine of subsidiarity, CatholicVote.org



Pictured clockwise are the six Catholic U.S. Supreme Court justices. Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, Justice Antonin Scalia, Justice Clarence Thomas, Justice Samuel Alito Jr. and Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

THE U.S. SUPREME COURT will hear arguments on four health reform questions over three days at the end of March.

- Does the Anti-Injunction Act, which says no tax can be challenged before it takes effect, preclude a challenge to the Affordable Care Act at this time?
- Does Congress have the power to require Americans to buy health insurance?
- If the individual mandate is overturned as unconstitutional, can other parts of the Affordable Care Act remain in effect?
- Can Congress require states to expand Medicaid programs?



Source: George Washington University Department of Health Policy

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believes that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is a pernicious expansion of federal power that undermines religious liberty and responsibility, diminishes the sphere of private charitable activity, and arrogates to the federal government totalitarian control of a vitally important and deeply personal matter," it said.

The New Jersey-based American Catholic Lawyers Association based its

opposition to the individual mandate on the principle of federalism.

"Forcing a person into a market—dragging that person, kicking and screaming, into a sphere of activity in which he or she has and wants no involvement whatever—contradicts utterly the deeply embedded tradition of individual autonomy and self-determination which is a hallmark of our nation," the association's brief said. †

Pope Benedict XVI offers condolences to Coptic Orthodox on death of patriarch

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Praising the ecumenical commitment of the late Coptic Orthodox Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria, Pope Benedict XVI offered his condolences to Orthodox Christians in Egypt on the death of their patriarch.

Pope Shenouda, who served as patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church for 41 years, died on March 17 at the age of 88.

In a message released at the Vatican the next day, Pope Benedict said he wanted to express his condolences and "brotherly compassion" to the bishops, priests and faithful of the Coptic Orthodox Church, which includes about 10 percent of Egypt's population of 82 million people.



In Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulcher on March 18, a priest lights a candle in front of a picture of Coptic Orthodox Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria, Egypt. Pope Shenouda, who served as patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church for 41 years, died on March 17 at the age of 88.

CNS photo/Amr Awad, Reuters

The vast majority of Christians in Egypt belong to Pope Shenouda's church, and his four decades as patriarch often involved standing up for the rights of the country's Christian minority, and working with the Muslim majority to promote human rights and the common good.

"The Catholic Church as a whole shares the grief that afflicts the Orthodox Copts," Pope Benedict said, and Catholics pray that "the God of all mercy may receive Pope Shenouda in his joy, his peace and light."

Maronite Catholic Patriarch Bechara Rai, who traveled from Lebanon to Egypt on March 17 as part of a pastoral visit to Egypt's 4,000 Maronite Catholics, had been scheduled to meet with Pope Shenouda at 4 p.m. that day.

"We were told in the morning that the meeting would not be possible because the pope's health had deteriorated badly," Archbishop Paul Sayah, vicar general of the Maronite Patriarchate in Lebanon, told CNS by e-mail on March 18.

The patriarch had advanced the date of his visit to Egypt, Archbishop Sayah said, "because we knew of the state of [Pope Shenouda's] health."

He said Patriarch Rai wanted "to express his solidarity with the pope in the difficult period the Christians and Egypt at large are witnessing." The archbishop said the patriarch also had hoped to "strengthen the ecumenical ties with all the Churches in the region, with the hope also of holding a summit for the religious leaders, Christians and Muslims, in the region."

Archbishop Sayah said Pope Shenouda "exercised very strong leadership in the Coptic Church in particular and for the Christians of Egypt in general. He was very ... courageous when it came to taking stands, *vis a vis* the

government in general. He was moderate, wise and open to dialogue. In a crisis situation, he never made a rushed decision, but instead would withdraw to his monastery to pray and consult before deciding. One of his famous sayings in such situations was, 'God exists, God is here.'

"Amid the wave of attacks on the Coptic Christians recently, he took a strong stand and yet kept the doors for dialogue open. He succeeded in keeping his links with the authorities while holding together his own people. He showed both wisdom and moderation while not appearing to be weak and helpless," Archbishop Sayah said.

Speaking with reporters on March 19, Patriarch Rai praised Pope Shenouda "as a good shepherd who led his church ... with wisdom and care."

Pope Benedict highlighted Pope Shenouda's 1973 visit to the Vatican where he and Pope Paul VI formally signed an agreement on Christ's humanity and divinity, ending more than 1,500 years of disputes on the issue and clearing the way for the formal Roman Catholic-Oriental Orthodox theological dialogue.

The Coptic Orthodox Church is one of the Oriental Orthodox Churches that trace their origins to the Christian communities that did not accept the wording of the Council of Chalcedon's definition in 451 that Christ was fully human and fully divine.

Pope Benedict also mentioned the meetings that Pope Shenouda and Blessed John Paul II had in Cairo in 2000. At the end of an ecumenical prayer service in Cairo, Pope Shenouda broke through the formality of the event, embracing Pope John Paul and telling him, "We love our country, and we love you!" Pope John Paul replied, "We love you, too." †

Events Calendar

March 23
Our Lady of Lourdes School, 30 S. Downey Ave., Indianapolis. **Men's Club, Lenten fish fry**, 5-8 p.m., \$6 adults, \$3 children. Information: www.ollindy.org.

Our Lady of the Greenwood School, 399 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Lenten fish fry**, 5-7 p.m. Information: 317-888-2861 or michaelsdeer@gmail.com.

St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish, 211 Fourth St., Aurora. **Lenten fish fry**, 4:30-7:30 p.m. Information: 812-926-1558.

March 25
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **"Liturgy of the Hours,"** 5 p.m. Information: 317-634-4519.

March 26
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. **"God's Word is Power," parish mission**, 7 p.m., free-will offering. Information: 317-638-5551.

March 27
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. **"The Eucharist—Gift and Treasure," parish mission**, 7 p.m., free-will offering. Information: 317-638-5551.

March 29
Marian University, library, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **"An Exhibition on the Crucifixion of Jesus,"**

Dr. Joseph Bergeron and Dr. Chuck Dietzen, presenters, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-955-6775 or rwgolobish@marian.edu.

Marian University, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. Global Studies Speaker Series, **"The Belgian Hammer—How Young Americans Break into the Grueling and Global Sport of Professional Cycling,"** Daniel Lee, presenter, 7 p.m. Information and registration: www.marian.edu.

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **"Questions on Religious Life with the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia,"** high school and young adult women welcome, 6:30-8 p.m. Information: 317-236-1490 or ejamison@archindy.org.

March 30
St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild, rummage sale**, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 317-885-5098 or beaglered@aol.com.

March 31
Knights of Columbus Hall, 5350 Allied Blvd., Indianapolis. **St. Christopher Parish, day of reflection, "The Passion of Jesus and the Sorrows of the Blessed Mother,"** Passionist Father John Schork, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.,

\$10 per person includes lunch, reservations due March 24. Information: 317-241-6314.

Most Holy Name of Jesus School, gymnasium, 21 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Spring rummage sale**, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: 317-784-5454.

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Shop INNspired gift shop, "Spring Stravaganza,"** 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Information: www.benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

St. John the Baptist Parish, 25743 State Route 1, Guilford. ACT for Christ, youth group from St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph and St. Martin parishes, **spring craft show**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., handcrafted items, lunch and bake sale. Information: 812-576-4302 or www.stjohndover.org.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, Guest House, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Abbey Press and Relay for Life team, "Trivia Night,"** 6:30 p.m., \$15 per person. Information: 812-357-8319 or rmarsili@abbeypress.com.

April 1
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Discalced Carmelites Secular Order meeting**, noon. Information: 317-545-7681. †

Retreats and Programs

March 26
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Forgiveness—It Has Nothing to Do with the Offender,"** Jay Landry, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$38 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or marcia.johnson@archindy.org.

March 28
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"A Thomas Merton Seminar—Bridges to Contemplative Living,"** session one of four, Benedictine Sister Julie Sewell, presenter, 5:15 p.m., Mass, 6 p.m., simple supper, \$89.95 includes book and supper. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

March 30-April 1
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Transformation—Change That Lets Your Soul Grow Up,"** Missionary Oblate of Mary Father John Mark Ettensohn, \$153 per person/\$286 per couple. Information: 317-545-7681 or marcia.johnson@archindy.org.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"St. Benedict's Way,"** Benedictine Brother Maurus Zoeller, presenter. Information: 812-357-6585 or mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 1
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Outdoor Stations of the Cross,"** 4 p.m. Information: 317-545-7681 or marcia.johnson@archindy.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"RCIA Retreat—A Call to Discipleship,"** Franciscan Sister Barbara Leonhard, presenter, 1-5:30 p.m., \$45 per person includes supper. Information: 812-933-6437 or center@oldenburgosf.com.

April 2-5
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Come Away and Rest Awhile,"** silent, non-guided days/evenings of reflection, \$30 per day, \$25 per night.

Information: 317-545-7681 or marcia.johnson@archindy.org.

April 4
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"A Thomas Merton Seminar—Bridges to Contemplative Living,"** session two of four, Benedictine Sister Julie Sewell, presenter, 5:15 p.m., Mass, 6 p.m., simple supper, \$89.95 includes book and supper. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

April 4-8
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Reflections on the Triduum,"** Holy Week retreat, Benedictine Msgr. Denis Robinson, presenter. Information: 812-357-6585 or mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

April 11
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"A Thomas Merton Seminar—Bridges to Contemplative Living,"** session three of four, Benedictine Sister Julie Sewell, presenter, 5:15 p.m., Mass, 6 p.m., simple supper, \$89.95 includes book and supper. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

April 13
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Finding God in the Garden,"** Father Michael O'Mara, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$38 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or marcia.johnson@archindy.org.

April 13-15
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Worldwide Marriage Encounter.** Information: 317-545-7681.

April 25
Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"A Thomas Merton Seminar—Bridges to Contemplative Living,"** session four of four, Benedictine Sister Julie Sewell, presenter, 5:15 p.m., Mass, 6 p.m., simple supper, \$89.95 includes book and supper. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictinn@benedictinn.org. †



Registrations open for National Black Catholic Congress in Indianapolis in July

Registrations for the National Black Catholic Congress on July 18-21 at the JW Marriott Hotel in Indianapolis are due by June 1.

Congress organizers hope there will be a large delegation from Indianapolis and Indiana.

To register, log on to the congress website at www.nbcccongress.org.

Submit the form online with the notation "paying as individual with check" then send a check for \$200 to the Multicultural Ministry Office at the Archbishop O'Meara

Catholic Center.

Participants can also print the online registration form and mail it or pick up a form at the Catholic Center.

Registrations should be mailed to the Multicultural Ministry Office, Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.

Participants can opt to pay the congress fee in four installments of \$50 due by June 1.

There will be no on-site registration at the congress. †

Al Kresta to speak at Catholic Radio Dinner

Al Kresta, host of "Kresta in the Afternoon," which is broadcast on more than 180 Catholic radio stations nationwide, will be the keynote speaker for the eighth annual Catholic Radio Dinner at 5:30 p.m. on April 18 at the Riverwalk Banquet Center, 6729 Westfield Blvd., in Indianapolis.

The dinner is a fundraising event for Catholic Radio Indy 89.1 and 90.9 FM.

Tickets are \$60 per person and \$420 for a table of eight if purchased before April 1. After that date, the cost is \$65 per person and \$500 per table.

Raised as a Catholic, Kresta later left the Church and became a Protestant minister.

During the 1980s and '90s, he

hosted a popular Christian radio show in the Detroit metropolitan area.



Al Kresta

For more information about the Catholic radio dinner or to purchase tickets, call 317-842-6583 or log on to www.catholicradioindy.org. †

Questions posed to him on his show led him to return to the Catholic Church.

In 1997, Domino's Pizza founder Tom Monaghan recruited Kresta to found the Ave Maria Communications media postulate.



Conventual Franciscan Father John Bamman, second from left, associate pastor of St. Joseph University Parish in Terre Haute, and Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology students, from left, Kyle Bippus, Katherine Czapllicki, Michael Junge, Angelica Cox, Katelyn Stenger and Lisa Lillis help build a house in Tupelo, Miss., during the St. Joseph University Parish campus ministry service trip from Feb. 26 to March 3 as part of Habitat for Humanity's Collegiate Challenge, a national project to help the poor.

Students volunteer for Habitat for Humanity's Collegiate Challenge

Students from St. Joseph University Parish's campus ministry group in Terre Haute volunteered with Habitat for Humanity during the spring breaks for Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology and Indiana State University in late February and early March.

The students participated in the Collegiate Challenge, Habitat's national alternative spring break program.

"This is St. Joe's first time volunteering with Habitat for Humanity's Collegiate Challenge," said Jeff Schaffer, a Catholic campus minister at the parish.

"We are excited to serve the community and help ensure that families have decent, affordable housing."

Conventual Franciscan Father John Bamman, associate pastor, also participated in the service project.

The Rose-Hulman Institute students helped build a new home and the Indiana State University students assisted with emergency home repairs.

Both groups also prayed and reflected on their experiences as well as social justice issues related to poverty and housing. †

Shroud of Turin exhibit on display at St. Monica Parish during Holy Week

By Natalie Hoefler
Special to The Criterion

“And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth” (Mt 27:59).

“And so Simon Peter ... entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there” (Jn 20:6).

Thus begins the story of what is known as the Shroud of Turin, the purported burial cloth of Jesus Christ, which bears the front and back image of what appears to be a scourged and crucified man.

While the Catholic Church has not taken an official stance on the shroud’s authenticity, it is worthy to note that Pope Benedict XVI viewed the shroud while it was temporarily on display in Turin, Italy, in May 2010.

According to a BBC news article, the pope said that, “The holy shroud eloquently reminds us of Christ’s suffering.”

The cloth’s connection to the suffering of Christ’s Passion makes Holy Week the perfect time to contemplate the shroud. St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis is providing such an opportunity.

A traveling exhibit on the Shroud of Turin, including a life-size replica of the cloth, will be on display at St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Road, during Holy Week from 3 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on April 2-6. The exhibit will conclude with a speaker discussing the history

and studies of the shroud at 5:30 p.m. on April 6.

The highlight of the exhibit, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Father Solanus Casey Council #11276 of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Fort Wayne, Ind., in the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese, is an approximately 14 foot by 4 foot digitized photo of the shroud, encased and back-lit for easier viewing.

The exhibit also contains informational display boards, replicas of the nails and scourge used by Romans during Christ’s time, a video about the shroud, a replica of St. Juan Diego’s tilma, which bears the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and other items.

Books, videos and informational material are also available for purchase. All proceeds are applied to maintain and display the exhibit.

The concept of the traveling exhibit came to the Fort Wayne Knights of Columbus members after a local parish hosted a similar but larger exhibit from California in 1996.

“It was tremendous,” said Alex Fiato, a member of the Father Solanus Casey Council that is sponsoring the exhibit, “but it was big and bulky. We thought it would be a fabulous evangelization tool, but we wanted something that was easy to set up and rapidly deployed.”

The tour of the traveling exhibit is a testimony to its

success. From Michigan to New York, from New Jersey to Louisiana, and even as far as the Philippines and India, the exhibit has had an impact on people.

In India, “it brought Muslims and Hindus to tears,” said Fiato.

The exhibit had an impact on someone much closer to home as well—Fiato’s daughter, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was an eighth-grade student questioning her Catholic faith when she visited the large exhibit from California.

“I kept watching the video over and over,” she recalled. “I’m a ‘why’ girl, and there were just too many things on that cloth that science couldn’t explain for me not to see the shroud as a gift from God.”

Now an adult and member of St. Monica Parish, she continues to be fascinated by the shroud. She is serving as the contact person for coordinating the exhibit’s display in Indianapolis.

She will speak at 5:30 p.m. on April 6, the last day of the exhibit at St. Monica Parish, to discuss the history of the shroud and the evidence that points to its authenticity as the burial cloth of Christ. A Spanish translator will be available for the presentation.

The exhibit is open to everyone, regardless of their parish affiliation or faith tradition. There is no charge, although donations are welcome to help cover expenses.

People who wish to view the



Pope Benedict XVI prays in front of the Shroud of Turin at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Turin, Italy, on May 2, 2010. The pope paid a daylong visit to Turin, celebrating an outdoor Mass, venerating the shroud, meeting with young people and visiting the sick.

exhibit while it is at St. Monica Parish should park in the north parking lot, which is closest to St. Augustine Hall where the exhibit will be displayed.

The Shroud of Turin exhibit will also be on display at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford during the week before Holy Week, and at St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis during the week after Holy Week.

Elizabeth Fiato encouraged everyone to see the shroud exhibit, especially the “doubting Thomases.”

“For someone to get all the

things to line up—the blood type, the location of the scourge marks, the pollen and all these other things—there’s no way someone could have masterminded all that,” she said. “The science just takes my breath away, and science can’t contradict the truth.”

(If your parish or organization is interested in displaying the traveling Shroud of Turin exhibit and is in the Indianapolis area, contact Elizabeth Fiato at 504-251-8242. Interested parishes or organizations outside the Indianapolis area should contact Alex Fiato at 260-432-9702.) †

484 acres set aside for future regional seminary and monastery in the South

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (CNS)—A community of cloistered nuns and the Te Deum Foundation have jointly acquired land in North Carolina’s Cleveland County for a new monastery and a future seminary.

Mother Dolores Marie of the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration, abbess of St. Joseph Monastery, and Wilhelmina Mobley, president of the Te Deum Foundation, announced the

purchase of 484 acres in Mooresboro, about 60 miles west of Charlotte. The property is situated on the south side of the Broad River, adjacent to a county-protected greenway.

The land will be split between the Poor Clares, for a permanent monastery, and the Te Deum Foundation, for a future regional seminary.

The Poor Clares, who moved their community to the Diocese of Charlotte

from Ohio in 2010, have been living in a temporary monastery on the St. Ann Parish campus in Charlotte. They are now raising money to build a chapel and monastery on the 333 acres they will occupy.

The Poor Clares are part of the religious order of Eternal Word Television Network founder Mother Angelica, located in Hanceville, Ala., at the monastery near the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The other 151 acres are being set aside for a future regional seminary—a project being spearheaded by the Te Deum Foundation, a nonprofit organization that operates separately from the Diocese of Charlotte and supports seminarians in their education.

The proposed seminary would be the only one in the southern region of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi. †

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continued from page 1

archdioceses of Indianapolis and Camaguey were matched.

“Ours is one of the few partnerships of a diocese in the United States with any of the dioceses in Cuba,” says Charles J. Schisla, a member of the Indianapolis contingent of the Global Solidarity Partnership.

“We’ve sent down shipments of medical supplies. On a regular basis, we also try to take a group of five people down there—some who are leaders in key areas of service and ministry in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis—and connect them with similar people and areas in the archdiocese there.”

Another important focus has been to lay the groundwork to spread the Catholic faith to new generations of Cubans. The practice of religion had been forbidden for a long period of time in Cuba, but that restriction is in the past, Schisla notes.

“Historically, Camaguey is a very religious area, a very Catholic area,” he says. “The faith that’s there has been with the older people.



Charles Schisla

of Camaguey have conducted religious, value-based programs for children.

Those efforts eventually led to the awareness of Litzy, a child that her parish priest in Cuba, Father Jose Bastain, refers to as “a little miracle.”

‘We’ve never done anything like this’

Through most of her young life, Litzy has struggled with a urinary tract condition that has increasingly threatened the functioning of her kidneys. And so, in August of 2011, a request from the Cuban Catholics to help Litzy was made—a request

that flowed from those years of establishing trust and faith between the two groups.

“We’ve never done anything like this before, and we’re not set up to do it,” says Schisla, a member of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. “But they believed the need was there and that we could help. It’s just that simple. We’ve been working since August to make it happen.”

The first outreach was made to Dietzen, who was part of one of the groups from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis that had visited Cuba.

Dietzen is the president and founder of Timmy Global Health, a non-profit organization that provides medical assistance and health care to low-income communities in developing countries. The organization is named for Dietzen’s older brother, who died as an infant.

Through his contacts, Dietzen found an Indianapolis specialist—Dr. Martin Kaefer at Riley Hospital for Children—who agreed to perform the surgery for Litzy.

Litzy and her mother, Arletty Mendoza Monaga, arrived in Indianapolis on Feb. 11, 2012. The three-hour surgery was performed nine days later.

“Dr. Kaefer came out and gave us the ‘thumbs up’ sign,” Schisla recalls. “There were a lot of smiles, and we had a large group hug.”

It was the outcome that Litzy’s mom has always believed would happen one day.

“Ever since Litzy was born, I knew that something miraculous would happen,” her mother says. “I had faith that things would work out. Even when it seemed impossible, a lot of faith kept me going. I’m really thankful to everyone for what they’ve done. It’s just been like having family here.”

During their time in Indiana, Litzy and her mother have been blessed with the support of Michele Wessler Medcalf, a member of the Indianapolis contingent of the Global Solidarity Partnership, who has helped provide clothes, meals and transportation for them.

“Many others have given of their time, their talents or financial resources,” says Medcalf, a member of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield. “It’s a rich blessing to see the



Litzy Maria Luna Mendoza is all smiles as she savors an ice cream-filled moment of celebration with her mother, Arletty Mendoza Monaga. The celebration followed days after Litzy, a child from Cuba, underwent a life-changing surgery on Feb. 20 that was made possible through the efforts of a group from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

medical healing and subsequent joy of this little girl and her mother.”

‘We see God in his people’

Kaefer has been pleased with Litzy’s recovery and improvement since the surgery.

“The archdiocese brought in a girl who would have had renal damage by the time she was 10, and she would have needed a kidney transplant. Now, she will have a good life,” says Kaefer, a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis and head of Pediatric Volunteers International, an organization whose members travel to Guatemala two times a year to

provide surgeries for children.

Litzy’s successful surgery “will make a profound statement back in Cuba,” says Dietzen, a member of St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish in Zionsville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

The goodwill has already spread.

Archbishop Juan Garcia Rodriguez of Camaguey sent a note of thanks to the Indianapolis contingent of the Global Solidarity Partnership.

“It is my intention to give thanks and praises to our God for the years of brotherhood between our dioceses,” Archbishop Rodriguez wrote. “A sign that confirms this



Three weeks after her surgery at Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis, 6-year-old Litzy Maria Luna Mendoza of Cuba shows a child’s joy of having fun on a beautiful day on March 13 at Broad Ripple Park in Indianapolis.



Litzy Maria Luna Mendoza wraps her arms around Dr. Chuck Dietzen, an Indianapolis physician who arranged for the 6-year-old girl from Cuba to undergo an operation that corrected a condition that increasingly threatened the functioning of her kidneys.

blessing has been the necessary operation of little Litzy Maria. In the name of all the children of our archdiocese, we thank you for this new gesture of charity to them that marks the history of the growth of our fraternal relationship.”

A child gets the opportunity for a healthy, extended life. Two archdioceses from different countries take another step in a special partnership. All because of the faith that binds them.

“People of faith have been terrific, positive and generous,” Schisla says. “Through Litzy, we see God in his people and their actions.” †

SCHOOLS

continued from page 1

and choice.”

School vouchers are “an important tool” to help students from low-income families, he said, by giving their parents a choice about where their children receive an education.

“One great example of Catholic education is [Cardinal] Ritter [Jr./Sr. High School],” Ballard said. “African-American boys who go to Ritter go on to college at an astounding rate compared to other schools in the city.”

St. Philip Neri School on the near east side of the city also does an exceptional job, he said, of providing a quality education to Hispanic children who also are learning English as a second language.

“We must continue to have strong expectations out of the Catholic schools,” Ballard said. “... I’m here to tell you that without my Catholic education and without the military—that combination—I would not be standing before you today.

“... I urge you to continue to expand the influence of Catholic education in the city, and to advocate for choice and competition in education in Marion County,” he said. “I would appreciate it if you would do that because I think it’s important for the future of the City of Indianapolis.”

The mayor began his talk by discussing his childhood as “a little Catholic kid on the east side of Indianapolis” who attended the former St. Francis de Sales School, the former

St. Andrew the Apostle School and Cathedral High School when it was an all-boys school operated by the Holy Cross Brothers at 1400 N. Meridian St.

“I tell people all the time that my whole world until I was about 12 years old was two blocks by four blocks,” he said. “Life really is a journey. ... You just don’t know where you’re going to wind up so use your life experiences to get you where you’re going.”

After earning a bachelor’s degree in economics at Indiana University, he enlisted in the Marine Corps and served the United States in a number of countries throughout the world for 23 years.

He was awarded the Legion of Merit and other medals for distinguished service before retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 2001 then moving back to his hometown with his wife, Winnie, and their children, Greg Jr. and Erica.

On Nov. 6, 2007, as a Republican, he was elected the 48th mayor of Indianapolis then last November was re-elected for a second four-year term.

Ballard said he is very proud of his wife, Winnie, who promotes financial literacy and other causes as a volunteer, and his children, who graduated from Indiana University.

“Quite a few years ago, even before I was the mayor,” he said, “I was a tutor at the Boys and Girls Clubs. One day, I was there helping kids with their homework. ... A boy said, ‘Both my daddies are in jail.’ That breaks your heart. We are in a multigenerational cycle right now where the parents don’t know how

to be parents ... because no one showed them. I learned a long time ago that unless you see it you can’t conceive it. So what do you do?”

“We have to expand what the school is,” Ballard said. “It has to be a health center. It has to be a counseling center. It may have to be a job counseling center for some of these parents. It has to be more of a community model. The school has to be more than just the school.”

If the students don’t receive help to achieve success during their educational years, he said, they are more likely to make the wrong choices and end up in jail.

“The vast, vast majority of any city’s budget across the nation is public safety,” Ballard said. “We spend an enormous amount of time and money on 4 to 5 percent of the population because we didn’t do the right thing back then [when they were in school]. ... Somebody has to step in and break that cycle.”

Public safety also is a priority for his administration, he said, as is supporting the police officers and firefighters who risk their lives every day to serve and protect others in the line of duty.

“I think half of the firefighters in the City of Indianapolis are from [Father Thomas] Sccecina [Memorial High School] or Cathedral High School,” Ballard said. “... The police and firefighters do such a great job. They see [tragic] things all the time that you and I don’t see. That has to have an effect on them. I’m just so proud

of what they do, and I try to pat them on the back as much as I can. Anybody who wears that uniform and goes into danger on behalf of all of us really is special to me. I’ll continue to support them.”

Before offering a closing prayer, Bishop Coyne thanked the mayor for “his good words on behalf of Catholic education.”

Catholic schools are successful, the bishop said, because of their dual mission of formation and education.

“It’s about educating the mind, the spirit and the heart,” Bishop Coyne said. “When children come into our schools, we’re forming them not just to pass tests, but also to become good citizens of the city, the state and the nation.

“We’re about community,” he said. “We’re about caring. We’re about holding the students to standards of behavior, which we can do better and easier because we’re private schools. Formation is what makes us so strong and so good as Catholic schools.”

St. Simon the Apostle parishioner Jackie Byers of Indianapolis, who serves on the budget and finance committee of the archdiocesan Finance Council, said after the program that she was glad to hear Ballard commend the good work of Catholic schools.

“They are a great model for other schools,” Byers said. “It’s really neat to see kids from all different economic statuses, different schools and different family backgrounds coming together and developing as good Christian young people.” †

Restoring St. Patrick's Cathedral to cost \$175 million, take five years

NEW YORK (CNS)—St. Patrick's Cathedral, "America's parish church and the soul of the capital of the world," will undergo a \$175 million, five-year restoration project that is necessary for its survival, according to Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York.

Cardinal Dolan made the announcement on the steps of the cathedral on March 17,

hours before reviewing the 251st St. Patrick's Day Parade up Fifth Avenue.

He said the 133-year-old landmark is a "supernatural home" for Catholics, all believers and people with no explicit religion



Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan

"who come here for a hint of the divine and assurance of help."

The ambitious project is not a cosmetic facelift, Cardinal Dolan said, but a sorely needed response to crumbling bricks, splitting windows, aged heating, a leaky

roof and a grit-encrusted facade.

Cardinal Dolan said \$45 million was raised for the first part of the three-phase project, which will begin before the end of March. The initial work will repair, restore and clean the soot-darkened exterior, and clean the stained-glass windows "inside and out," he said.

The cardinal acknowledged the daunting task of raising \$175 million in a tight economy. "The dare of the campaign could chill us" if not for the pride and passion evident in the New York community, he said.

As he donned a red hard hat after the announcement, Cardinal Dolan quipped, "This hat's gonna cost me a lot more than one in Rome did."

At a festive Mass between the announcement and the parade, Cardinal Edwin F. O'Brien encouraged worshippers to support the renovation. Cardinal O'Brien, grand master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, is a native New Yorker who served the archdiocese for 30 years. He and Cardinal Dolan were elevated to the College of Cardinals in February.

In his homily, Cardinal O'Brien challenged people to make sacrificial

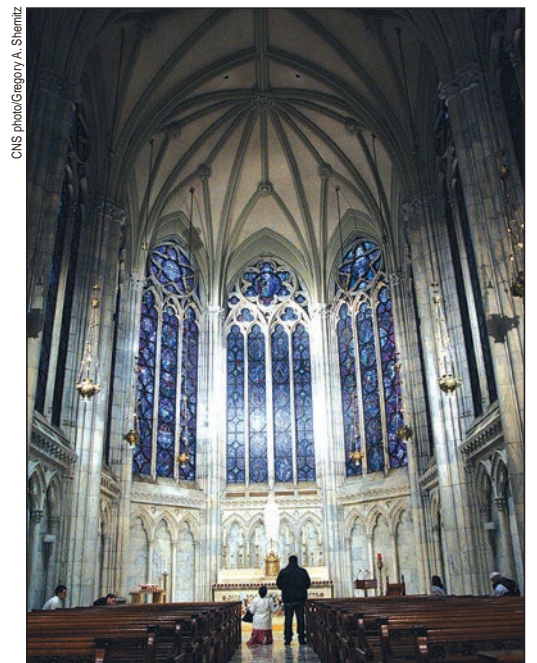
offerings in thanksgiving for the religious freedom they enjoy. To applause, Cardinal O'Brien said religious freedom was imperiled by not-so-subtle government strangulation.

He said the history of St. Patrick's Cathedral, from its inception in 1859 by Archbishop John Hughes, New York's first archbishop, to its dedication by Cardinal John McCloskey in 1879, was a tribute to Archbishops Hughes' foresight, and the commitment of Irish immigrants to their faith and new country.

Cardinal O'Brien said contemporary pundits called the project "Hughes' Folly" because it was thought to be unrealistic, poorly timed, too expensive and too remote from the heart of New York.

"Irish immigrants were openly rejected by the elite of the day," Cardinal O'Brien said.

On St. Patrick's Day, Irish immigrants and their descendants filled St. Patrick's Cathedral in the heart of midtown Manhattan then spilled out onto Fifth Avenue to join 2 million spectators and more than 200,000 marchers at the oldest, largest annual parade in New York. †



People pray in the Lady Chapel at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York on March 17. The cathedral will undergo a \$175 million, five-year restoration project that is necessary for its survival, according to Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York.

New ways proposed by HHS to pay contraceptive costs for religious employers

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. Department for Health and Human Services (HHS) on March 16 proposed new ways for religious organizations that have moral objections to providing free abortifacients, sterilizations and contraceptives to their employees to comply with the requirement.

Among the suggestions proposed are having the costs covered by a "third-party administrator" of a health plan or "independent agency" that receive funds from other sources, such as rebates from drug makers.

The Obama administration also announced that most college student health insurance plans will have to include free contraceptive coverage. Although the policy will apply to all colleges and universities, religiously affiliated institutions will be given an additional year to comply with the mandate.

It also said colleges that have self-insured student health coverage plans will not be required to offer free contraceptive coverage.

Media representatives of the U.S. bishops and Catholic health care and college organizations told Catholic News Service on March 19 that they were still reviewing the proposals laid out in a 32-page document published on March 16 in the *Federal Register*.

The proposal "would establish alternative ways" to fulfill the federal contraceptive, sterilization and abortifacient mandate when health coverage "is sponsored or arranged by a religious organization that objects to the coverage of contraceptive services for religious reasons and that is not exempt under the final regulations published [on] Feb. 15, 2012.

"This document serves as a request for comments in advance of proposed rulemaking on the potential means of accommodating such organizations while ensuring contraceptive coverage for plan participants and beneficiaries covered under their plans [or, in the case of student health insurance plans, student enrollees and their dependents] without cost sharing," the agencies said.

On Jan. 20, HHS announced that the federal government would require all employers, including religious employers, to provide no-cost coverage of all contraceptives approved by the Food and Drug Administration as part of preventive health services for women. Only houses of worship are exempt.

In an accommodation announced on Feb. 10 and published on Feb. 15, President Barack Obama said religious employers could decline to cover contraceptives if they were morally opposed

to them, but the health insurers that provide their health plans would be required to offer contraceptives free of charge to women who requested such coverage. His announcement did not answer how the mandate applied to self-insured religious employers.

The newly published proposal reinforces mandated contraceptive coverage at self-insured Catholic hospitals and social service agencies. It also stresses that the cost would not be directly paid by the employer, but by a "third-party administrator" or "independent agency."

Administration officials who spoke with reporters in a March 16 teleconference about the proposal stressed the need to find ways for the third-party administrators to offset costs of contraceptive coverage. They suggested that administrators could use funds from other sources, such as rebates from drug makers.

The administration is seeking public comment on the proposed ruling for the next 90 days before it makes a final decision.

In its announcement on college student health insurance plans, the Obama administration said institutions that provide self-insured student health coverage will not be required to offer free contraceptive coverage.

Mercy Sister Mary Ann Walsh, director of media relations for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, told CNS, "The bishops are studying the announcement which HHS put forth late Friday afternoon."

"We have to spend time reviewing it," said Sister Carol Keehan, a Daughter of Charity who is president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association.

The director of communications for the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities said the organization was "still examining the notice released on Friday."

Steve Schneck, director of the Institute for Policy Research and Catholic Studies at The Catholic University of America, described the proposal as encouraging, particularly because of its comment-seeking period which he said can give Catholic leaders an opportunity for further input.

He also noted that the proposal clarifies some of the language in the federal health mandate and indicates that more religious institutions are exempt from the contraceptive coverage than previously realized.

"Religious institutions that get their insurance coverage under a higher institution that qualifies for the exemption will also get the exemption," he said. In other words, a Catholic school which follows the diocesan health insurance plan would also be exempt from the contraceptive mandate. †

LIBERTY

continued from page 1

Meanwhile, the Pro-Life Action League, based in Chicago, and Citizens for a Pro-Life Society, based in Michigan, have organized a Nationwide Rally for Religious Freedom on March 23.

An announcement said that the rallies were to take place at noon local time outside federal buildings, congressional offices and historic sites.

A rally will take place from noon to 1 p.m. on the south steps of the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis. A coalition of ecumenical and pro-life organizations, including Right to Life of Indianapolis, are organizing the local event.

Religious leaders and other public figures were scheduled to be among the speakers at the various sites. The website www.standupforreligiousfreedom.com included general information about the rally and locations across the country.

The event, described as "a peaceful, family-friendly, nonpartisan, ecumenical event," has the theme "Stand Up for Religious Freedom—Stop the HHS Mandate!"

In their five-page statement approved on March 14, the nation's top bishops declared themselves "strongly unified and intensely focused," and also vowed to continue their multipronged defense of religious liberty in the courts, Congress and the White House.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Administrative Committee, made up of the USCCB officers and committee chairmen and an elected bishop representative from each of the geographic regions of the USCCB, opened their statement with thanks for "all who have stood firmly with us in our vigorous opposition to this unjust and illegal mandate," referring to the HHS' requirement that nearly all employers must provide free coverage of contraceptives, sterilization and abortifacients to their employees through health insurance plans.

"This is not about the Church wanting to force anybody to do anything. It is instead about the federal government forcing the Church—consisting of its faithful and all but a few of its institutions—to act against Church teachings," they said. "This is not a fight we want or asked for, but one forced upon us by government on its own timing."

The debate over the contraceptive mandate is "not a Republican or Democratic, a conservative or liberal

issue. It is an American issue," the bishops added.

Nor is the issue about access to contraception or about "the bishops somehow 'banning contraception' when the U.S. Supreme Court took that issue off the table two generations ago," they said.

What especially concerns the bishops about the contraceptive mandate and the narrow religious exemption to it is the "new definition of who we are as people of faith and what constitutes our ministry," the statement said.

"Government has no place defining religion and religious ministry," the bishops said. "HHS thus creates and enforces a new distinction—lien both to our Catholic tradition and to federal law—between our houses of worship and our great ministries of service to our neighbors, namely the poor, the homeless, the sick, the students in our schools and universities, and others in need, of any faith community or none.

Such a definition creates "a second class of citizenship within our religious community" that could "spread throughout federal law, weakening its healthy tradition of generous respect for religious freedom and diversity," they added.

The bishops said their Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty plans to publish a statement on religious liberty that will "address the broader range of religious liberty issues."

The upcoming document "reflects on the history of religious liberty in our great nation, surveys the current range of threats to this foundational principle, and states clearly the resolve of the bishops to act strongly, in concert with our fellow citizens, in its defense."

The bishops closed their statement by calling on Catholics and other people of faith "to join us in prayer and penance for our leaders and for the complete protection of our first freedom—religious liberty—which is not only protected in the laws and customs of our great nation, but rooted in the teachings of our great tradition.

"Prayer is the ultimate source of our strength—for without God, we can do nothing. But with God, all things are possible," they added.

(The bishops' full statement is available at www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/upload/Admin-Religious-Freedom.pdf. Bulk packages of "Prayer for Religious Liberty" prayer cards will soon be available. They can be ordered at www.usccbpublishing.org, and will be ready for shipping in April.) †

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Catholic Nutrition Center Saves Lives — Before, After Results are Breathtaking

Children like Carmen are what keep Ana Aleman going even on her worst day.

She found baby Carmen lying in an old milk crate on a side street in El Progreso, Honduras. Abandoned by her family, the frail infant's skin clung to her bones. She was severely malnourished — nearly dead.

Ana, the director of Prince of Peace Nutrition Center, rescued her and brought her back to her ministry for treatment.

Now Carmen is a happy, healthy toddler. The care she received at Prince of Peace Nutrition Center has literally saved her life.

"How can you see a need like baby Carmen's and turn away?" says Ana Aleman, a devout Catholic. "My faith compels me to help these children. And I thank God every day that I have the opportunity to work here. This is what Christ meant when he said we should live out our faith."

A Texas native, Aleman came to Honduras 10 years ago on a mission trip, and she never left. Moved to tears after seeing tiny children with skeleton-like bodies and desperate mothers begging

passersby for help, she decided to open the nutrition center that now provides life-saving care to dozens of malnourished children whose destitute parents cannot afford to feed them.

"We see so many sad cases coming here. It is truly heartbreaking," she says. "Children are the most tragic victims of poverty. They are helpless to protect themselves, and their impoverished parents are simply incapable of caring for them."

Aleman explains that the mothers who bring their children to the nutrition center are living at the most severe levels of poverty — typically living on less than \$1 per day. They are also uneducated and may be providing their children with poor food choices, leading to vitamin deficiencies and other health problems. Such babies come in to the center weighing little more than a newborn even though they may actually be nearly a year old.

At the nutrition center the children are provided with five daily meals, and they remain under close supervision until they are nursed back to health.



Ana Aleman makes a difference — thanks to the U.S. donors who support Cross Catholic's outreach.

Meanwhile, their mothers are taught how to prepare nutritious meals using inexpensive foods available locally. This training insures that the children don't relapse into the same malnourished state they arrived in once they leave Prince of Peace.

"The mothers are thrilled to see their children recover," Aleman says. "After seeing their children suffer, it is also a relief for them to have solutions — ways of warding off malnutrition with the training they've received."

Carmen Hernandez, a mother whose 2-year-old son has been at the nutrition center for two months, was overwhelmed by how quickly he recovered from a severe case of malnutrition.

"Joel was so sick even the local hospital turned us away," says Hernandez, who then brought him to Prince of Peace. "This place is wonderful. My son's recovery is a miracle."

Dramatic recoveries like Joel's are what Aleman lives for, however, she knows that is a mission she could never accomplish alone. She acknowledges the nutrition center depends on the financial support

of Cross Catholic Outreach and its Catholic donors in the U.S. They, she says, empower her to serve.

"It is amazing what we can do by working together. Cross Catholic Outreach's donors play a role and Ana Aleman plays a role. Neither can be whole without the other," says Jim Cavnar, the American charity's president. "In fact, Cross Catholic Outreach was created with that perspective in mind. We wanted to develop a stronger connection between Catholics in the U.S. and Catholics who serve overseas. We wanted parishioners in America to see what a huge difference their support makes in the lives of the poor — and, at the same time, sought to give the poor an opportunity to bless us with their great faith. In that way, the Church is united and all of us are blessed."

To make a tax-deductible contribution to Cross Catholic Outreach and its work with Catholic ministries overseas, use either the enclosed postage-paid brochure or send donations to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00871, PO Box 9558, Wilton, NH 03086-9558.



"Before" and "after" photos of Kelvin show the dramatic impact of the Center's loving care.

"Cross" Now Endorsed by More Than 60 U.S. Bishops, Archbishops

As Cross Catholic Outreach (CCO) continues its range of relief work to help the poor overseas, its efforts are being recognized by a growing number of Catholic leaders in the U.S.

"We've received an impressive number of endorsements from American Bishops and Archbishops — more than 60 Catholic leaders at last count," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach. "They're impressed by the fact that we've done outreaches in more than 40 countries and that we undertake a variety of projects; everything from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless to supplying safe water and

supporting educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor."

Archbishop Robert Carlson of St. Louis sent one of the more recent letters of encouragement, writing: "It is my hope that this ministry will continue to flourish and reach as many people as possible. I will inform the priests of the Archdiocese of St. Louis of the important work that Cross Catholic Outreach does and elicit their prayerful and financial support for the service you provide to the less fortunate around the world."

In addition to praising the work CCO accomplishes, many of the Bishops

and Archbishops are also impressed by the unique collaborative relationship Cross has with the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* in Rome. This allows the charity to participate in the mercy ministries of the Holy Father himself. In his praise of CCO, **Archbishop Dennis Schnurr of Cincinnati** underscored this unique connection.

"Cross Catholic Outreach's close collaboration with the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* is a source of encouragement," the Archbishop said. "The Holy See has unique knowledge of local situations throughout the world through its papal representatives in

nearly two hundred countries and through its communications with Bishops and others who care for the poor and needy in every corner of the world."

CCO president, Jim Cavnar, explained the significance of this connection.

"Our collaboration with *Cor Unum* allows us to fund outreaches in virtually any area of the world, and we have used that method in special cases — to help the victims of natural disasters, for example," he said. "It only represents a small part of our overall ministry, but it can be a very important benefit in those situations. We have been thrilled with the results so far."

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Escaping the Deadly Cycle of Poverty

Cross Catholic Outreach Celebrates Success of its Global Mission

Mercedes Nuez's day begins at 6:30 a.m. when she enters Guatemala City's huge, rat-infested dump. The single mother will spend the next 13 hours wading through piles of steaming garbage in search of items that she can sell for a few cents to one of the city's recyclers.

The work is backbreaking. With each breath of methane gas rising from the trash, she feels as if her lungs may burst — but she keeps going because she knows that if she stops her daughters won't eat tonight.

"I never went to school... maybe they can escape the life I have had to live."

Mercedes Nuez, worker on the Guatemala City dump

For Nuez and the nearly 2,000 poor families who live off this massive garbage dump, a hard life is all they know.

"Life is very hard here. The days are long, and there aren't many sources of help for people like me," says Nuez, who has been working in the dump since she was 14 years old. "I never went to school, but I am thankful my girls are getting an education. Maybe then they can escape the life I have had to live."

The education Nuez is talking about is an afterschool program created to help the city's poor. Their school, on the edge of the dump, is an important ray of hope in the otherwise beleaguered community.

"Thanks to donations from compassionate Americans, this educational center is able to provide a whole new world of possibilities to children who have only known the eight filthy blocks that surround the garbage dump," explains Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a U.S.-based charity helping to support schools in impoverished communities worldwide.

Cross Catholic Outreach is a firm believer in helping the poor through educational programs. Independent research backs up the value of their approach.

"Study after study has shown that investing in basic social services for children is a key to alleviating their poverty," Cavnar adds. "By providing education along with food and medical care, we help break the cycle of poverty that's dominated the lives families for generations."

And the alternative is shockingly bleak for those who do not benefit from an education.

For example, the illiterate poor typically live on \$2.50 or less a day, and their living conditions are both dangerous and a health threat. A recent study by UNICEF found that, 24,000 children die each day because of poverty.



Mercedes Nuez (below) lives on the outskirts of the dump, but she has higher hopes for her children and the other families who work there.

One in three lack adequate shelter, while one in five don't have clean water to drink. If an education can bring better conditions and opportunities, it is literally saving lives.



"There are undoubtedly practical reasons to do what we are doing to educate the poor, but that's only one of our motivations — our desire to manifest God's love is another important reason," Cavnar says. "God called us to help our neighbors and to show Christ-like compassion by meeting their needs. By helping people like Mercedes Nuez and her children we are serving God and following Christ's teachings."

Cavnar highlighted Cross Catholic's

outreach to 8-year-old Humphrey as another example of how the charity puts its faith into action.

Humphrey and his siblings, Nancy, 5, and John, 4, were abandoned by their family. They lived for almost three years by themselves in a dilapidated, one-room shanty in the middle of the notorious Kibera Slum of Nairobi, Kenya.

To call their life "difficult" would be an understatement. Humphrey wasn't even in third grade yet, but he was forced to juggle work and school in a desperate attempt to support his younger siblings. He and the younger children often went without food.

Fortunately, the struggling children were discovered by a group of Catholic nuns who provide food, educational opportunities and spiritual counseling to AIDS orphans and vulnerable children living in the slum. With financial support from Cross Catholic Outreach, they were able to give the fledgling family the help they needed.

"Without the help we provided, these

children probably would not have survived," Cavnar says. "Thankfully, they now have a safe place to live, clothes to wear, plenty of food to eat, and they are able to attend school every day. Their suffering is over."

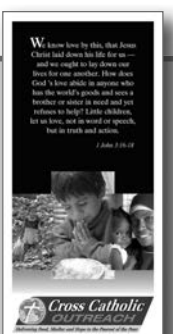
Cavnar explains that life-saving programs like this wouldn't exist without the support Cross Catholic Outreach receives from its generous Catholic donors in the U.S.

"Our Catholic benefactors are vital to the success of our work. Without them, we would not be able to support Catholic outreaches in Africa, Central America, the Philippines and elsewhere," Cavnar says. "Our success is only possible because of their generous spirit. They are the heroes in this story."

To make a tax-deductible contribution to Cross Catholic Outreach and its work with ministries overseas, use either the enclosed postage-paid brochure or send donations to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00871, PO Box 9558, Wilton, NH 03086-9558.

How to Help:

Your help is needed for Cross Catholic Outreach to bring Christ's mercy to the poorest of the poor. Use the enclosed postage-paid brochure to mail your gift or send it to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC00871, PO Box 9558, Wilton, NH 03086-9558.



Indian vocations guided by spirit of St. Thomas, says CNEWA president

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Vocations to the priesthood and religious life in India's two Eastern Catholic communities are strong and a sign that the missionary spirit of St. Thomas the Apostle flourishes, said the president of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA).

At multiple locations in southern India—in seminaries and houses of formation for men and women religious—Msgr. John E. Kozar said he was “blown away” by the quality and quantity of the candidates for religious life in the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Churches during his 12-day visit.

“The first impression when you walk into a huge seminary chapel or gathering hall is that you see 200, 300, 400 seminarians,” Msgr. Kozar told Catholic News Service on March 14 from his office in New York. “That in itself is a culture shock when you compare it to what you know here [in the United States].”

“You’re welcomed with big smiles. You’re welcomed with songs and a warmth that reaches out and grabs you,” he said.

St. Thomas was the only Apostle to make his way to India and spread the Christian faith.

After traveling through Syria and Persia, now Iran, he is believed to have sailed to India in A.D. 52, landing on the Malabar coast in what today is Kerala state. He was speared to death in A.D. 72 while praying.

CNEWA sponsors 2,134 seminarians and 857 men and women in formation for religious life in India. Hundreds more are in formation as well throughout the country.

With such a large number of men and women in formation, the two Churches are able to send priests and sisters on missionary service to other countries, which Msgr. Kozar said he found an inspiration for his ministry.

“It’s an ingrained part of the life of the Church there,” he said. “These two rites carry the missionary spirit today. To me, that’s very dynamic.”

Msgr. Kozar also said he found collaboration among the Eastern and Latin rites—especially among their leaders, the bishops—to be strong, resulting in meaningful service to children, people with handicaps and poor families.

Most touching during the visit, he said, was seeing children, some with severe physical handicaps that affected their mobility, full of joy as they danced, sang and greeted the CNEWA team.

Msgr. Kozar said he was impressed by the education standards upheld by the sisters, giving children a chance to move out of the dire poverty in which their families are rooted.

For that, he credited the sisters

who oversee the institutions for creating an environment that upholds the dignity of each resident, without regard to physical ability, illness or family background.

Individual donors, through CNEWA, sponsor about 18,500 children in numerous educational and health and wellness programs.

“The children in many parts of the world of poor are really the jewel in their sincerity, their honesty, their simplicity. They are the reflection of the hope, the idealism, the love of that country, the best of that culture,” Msgr. Kozar said.

“You find that joy in the faces of the sisters. In their gentle hearts and loving way, they have given children this joyful environment. It’s contagious,” he added.

Msgr. Kozar was particularly struck by a 15-year-old boy at one location who rolled down hallways and up steps to get to a welcoming ceremony for the CNEWA visitors. The boy had no limbs, but remained mobile. Msgr. Kozar saw that other children had similar, if less-serious physical conditions, but still managed to get to where they had to go on their own.

“Some would say it’s horrible they had to do that,” Msgr. Kozar said. “No, they were mobile. They were abled differently. That was part of the dignity they received. Otherwise, they would have been warehoused, put into a corner of their home, almost like a leper, and not have any social interaction.”

“They are not handicapped.



CNS photos/Msgr. John E. Kozar, courtesy of CNEWA

Above, seminarians pray at St. Joseph Pontifical Seminary of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in India's Kerala state on March 8. Vocations to religious life in India's Eastern Catholic Churches are strong and a sign that the missionary spirit of St. Thomas the Apostle flourishes, said the president of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association.



Right, a nun smiles in the hallway of St. Joseph Pontifical Seminary of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in India's Kerala state on March 8.

They have the beautiful dignity, and they are joyful.”

It is just such stories that Msgr. Kozar said he will share in the coming months.

“The children just fired me up,” he said. “That’s the importance in what we do in these institutions, these

sponsorships, these partnerships. We are bringing to them the joy that Christ is offering.”

(Msgr. John Kozar's full blog posts on his trip can be found online at www.cnewa.org/blog.aspx?ID=20&pagetypeID=33&sitecode=HQ.) †

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Unique program at Butler helps students deepen their faith

By John Shaughnessy

She knows how easy it can be for college students to slip away from their faith.

He knows how they can get so caught up in tests, papers, friends, and concerns about their futures and college costs that their relationship with God suffers.

So Dr. Paula Trzepacz and Dr. Robert Baker—a Catholic couple from Indianapolis—decided to help establish a program that would encourage college students to deepen their faith and live out their values in faith-related settings.

For the past two years, the couple has been a major contributor to the Fund for Discernment in the Catholic Tradition at Butler University in Indianapolis.

So has Father Thomas Baima, a 1976 Butler graduate and priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

The fund provides paid internships for Butler students to serve in Catholic agencies, organizations and other settings.

“This is a critical stage in life for young adults in college,” Trzepacz says. “They can get so focused on their grades, studies and careers that it’s very easy to lose the sense of their spiritual side. This is a concrete way for them to live their faith by working in Catholic agencies, schools and monasteries. And they will be working around

people who will model their faith for them.”

Baker nods and adds, “We don’t have kids of our own, but we’re happy to support things that benefit the next generation. It’s an important time in their lives where they are exploring things that will matter to them for the rest of their lives—to do things for others, that life isn’t just self-focused. It should be focused on others.”

Mallory Winters is one of three Butler students who has benefited from the fund that is administered by Butler’s Center for Faith and Vocation. In the fall semester of 2011, she served as an intern for the Sisters of St. Benedict at Our Lady of Grace Monastery and the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Beech Grove.

“The internship gave me a much greater sense of calm,” says Winters, a Butler senior from Commerce City, Colo., where she is a member of Shrine of St. Anne Parish. “As a senior, it is very easy to get caught up in nerves about what direction my life is headed. But it gave me a faith and a belief that if I make God-minded decisions in my life, things will work themselves out. It also put me in an environment where I was surrounded by people of extreme faith.”

The internship also gave her the opportunity to use her major in electronic journalism. Winters often worked on marketing projects that

promoted programs at the Benedict Inn. She also helped to create a new website.

“The opportunity was wonderful,” Winters says. “It is very easy for a faith or religious life to get put on the back burner because there is so much else going on. The internship gave me the chance to put my faith back in the forefront of my mind as well as let me see faith at work in a daily, real-life scenario. It gave me a chance to form wonderful relationships with faith-filled people who I know I can turn to when issues of life and faith will inevitably face me.”

As the director of Butler’s Center for Faith and Vocation, Judith Cebula sees another benefit for the students in the internship program.

“They are trying on work in organizations rooted in Catholic teachings and seeing that people can make meaningful lives in these faith-based work places,” says Cebula, a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis. “The students are considering that it is possible to serve others through their faith lives while they make a living.”

While the paid internships benefit students spiritually and financially, they also signal that the work being done is important to society, the doctors say. The couple also encourages other Catholics to

Photo by John Shaughnessy



Dr. Paula Trzepacz and Dr. Robert Baker, a Catholic couple from Indianapolis, have contributed to a program at Butler University that provides paid internships to students to serve in Catholic agencies and organizations as a way to deepen their faith.

support this kind of effort, whether it’s at Butler or any other college.

“There’s nothing about this idea that has to be just Catholic or just Butler,” Baker says. “We’d like to see it get bigger.”

The couple’s association with Butler developed through Trzepacz serving on the university’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Board of Visitors. Both doctors work for Eli Lilly and Company. She is a senior medical fellow in neurosciences research while he is a global development leader of the psychiatry and pain disorders team.

The connection with the college students has had an impact on the faith journeys of the two doctors, who are members of both SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood and St. Agnes Parish in Nashville.

“Even though we’re older and have a better sense of our own faith, we get busy with our own jobs and slip,” Trzepacz says. “To get involved with these young people strengthens our resolve. They’re a witness to us. I imagine they’re a witness to the people they work with, too. Everyone needs to be refueled in their faith.” †

Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following list of services were reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

March 27, 7 p.m. for St. Nicholas, Ripley County; St. Anthony of Padua, Morris; and St. Louis, Batesville, at St. Louis, Batesville
 March 28, 6:45 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist, Enochsburg
 March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
 April 4, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. for St. John the Baptist, Dover; St. Martin, Yorkville; St. Paul, New Alsace; and St. Joseph, St. Leon, at St. Joseph, St. Leon

Bloomington Deanery

March 25, 3 p.m. for St. John the Apostle,

Bloomington; St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington; and St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, at St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington
 March 27, 7 p.m. for St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, and St. Mary, Mitchell, at St. Mary, Mitchell

Connersville Deanery

March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Rose, Knightstown

Indianapolis East Deanery

March 27, 6 p.m. at St. Rita
 March 29, 7 p.m. for SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral and St. Mary at St. Mary

Indianapolis South Deanery

March 25, 3 p.m. at Good Shepherd
 March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Ann
 April 2, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

March 27, 6:30 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
 March 27, 9 p.m. at Marian University
 March 28, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph
 March 31, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Michael the Archangel

New Albany Deanery

March 26, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Clark County
 March 28, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Navilleton, and St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs, at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs
 March 29, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
 April 1, 1 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight

Seymour Deanery

March 28, 6 p.m. at St. Patrick, Salem

March 29, 6 p.m. at American Martyrs, Scottsburg

April 2, 7 p.m. for St. Ann, Jennings County; St. Mary, North Vernon; and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County

Tell City Deanery

April 1, 2 p.m. at St. Paul, Tell City †

Lenten activities available online

Be sure to visit *The Criterion*’s Lenten Web page at www.archindy.org/lent. The page consists of links to daily readings, archived Lenten columns by Archbishop Emeritus Daniel M. Buechlein, a full list of communal penance services taking place at parishes and other features. †

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Transfer of patients marks close of St. Francis hospital in Beech Grove

Special to *The Criterion*

It has been a time of transition and memories, a time of wistfulness and appreciation.

At 12:10 p.m. on March 14, the last patient at Franciscan St. Francis Health's hospital in Beech Grove was transported to the more modern Franciscan St. Francis Health's hospital in Indianapolis, ending 98 years of in-patient care at the Beech Grove facility.

The transfer of that last patient ended more than a year of consolidation efforts between those two campuses of Franciscan St. Francis Health.

It also essentially closed the doors of the Beech Grove facility that has meant so much to so many people on the south side of Indianapolis for nearly a century.

That significance was recently recognized again by Franciscan St. Francis Health president Robert J. Brody and St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration Sister Marlene Shapley, vice president of mission services for Franciscan St. Francis Health. They issued a statement that pays tribute to the hospital's past, present and future. Here is an edited version of that statement:

"Relationships often begin with a simple invitation. That is exactly how it began not long after the turn of the 20th century when clergy at the fledgling Holy Name Catholic Church and local citizens recognized there was a definitive need for a hospital in Beech Grove. They looked northward, far beyond Indianapolis' city limits, and invited the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration to consider the possibilities.

"Two sisters made the trip by horse-drawn buggy from the St. Francis Convent in Lafayette in 1909. They met

with Msgr. Peter Killian of Holy Name Catholic Church and looked at several parcels of land before selecting a site at the corner of Troy Avenue and Sherman Drive.

"Together, the sisters and Beech Grove got to work. By 1913, hammers were pounding, scaffolds were lifting steel and other materials. One year later, St. Francis Hospital—a fully modern medical facility—was opened to the public.

"In early 2007, we announced the consolidation of inpatient services and other clinical and support programs at Beech Grove to our Indianapolis campus at Emerson Avenue and Stop 11 Road. That campus—only seven miles away from Beech Grove—has been in operation since 1995. It was not an easy decision to make, but the reality was clear. Combining the two hospitals would enable us to operate more efficiently and strengthen our ability to deliver a level of care all of our patients deserve.

"Our health care ministry continues to be embodied in our Franciscan values—respect for life, fidelity to mission, compassionate concern, joyful service and Christian stewardship. These are the cornerstones of our mission.

"Understandably, this is an emotional time for many Beech Grove residents and for our staff, many of whom have called 1600 Albany St. 'home' for decades.

"For nearly a century, the hospital and its people have forged an endearing relationship with Beech Grove. The walls of the hospital echo more than just history; they resound with the cycle of life. It is a place where newborns took their first breath, where healing, comfort and compassion were extended. A place of shared laughter, tears and prayers. Where new friendships forged and careers



Above, the night shift in the Emergency Department at Franciscan St. Francis Health's hospital in Beech Grove gathers a few minutes before the unit officially closed at 7 a.m. on March 16.

Right, as the end of the week arrived for consolidating clinical services, workers were busy removing external signage at Franciscan St. Francis Health's hospital in Beech Grove.



launched. And, yes, a place where earthly lives have ended.

"It has been our privilege, pleasure and point of pride to have cared for generations in Beech Grove. We have grown together and shared much. We have been good neighbors. As the sisters were invited to begin a health care ministry in

Beech Grove, we are proud to have you continue to accompany us on that journey for years to come."

The Beech Grove site will continue to be used for some outpatient services, including physical therapy, for the foreseeable future, according to hospital officials. †

What was in the news on March 23, 1962? Orthodox bishops speak out on East-West differences, and editor urges laity to minimize differences

By Brandon A. Evans

This week, we continue to examine what was going on in the Church and the world 50 years ago as seen through the pages of *The Criterion*.

Here are some of the items found in the March 16, 1962, issue of *The Criterion*:



- Orthodox bishops speak out on East-West differences
- Would plan cooperation with Rome

"BERGAMO, Italy—

Orthodox Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople [Istanbul] has urged that all Christian forces be united 'to fight not only communist materialism by all "isms" which threaten religious faith.' ... Patriarch Athenagoras recommended that theological differences be shelved for the time being and that His Holiness Pope John XXIII place himself at the head of a movement 'for Christian recovery and cooperation.' This movement, he said, would permit the different Churches to continue as they are but

would lead them to 'work side by side always more closely in the field of practical action.' "

- Urges laity to minimize differences

"SAN ANTONIO, Tex.—*Liberal and Conservative Catholics have so much in common in the work of the Church that their differences should not hinder their joint efforts in the lay apostolate, a Catholic lay editor declared here. This outlook was stressed by Gerard E. Sherry, managing editor of the Central California Register Asserting that the controversy between Liberal and Conservative Catholics has gone too far, Mr. Sherry cautioned that Catholic laymen must 'subordinate the domestic debate within the Church to its proper level.' 'The great debate is with the world—where men seek to idolize themselves rather than their Creator,' he said.*

- Two Italian cardinals discuss coming council
- \$50 million saved: Catholics reduce taxes by maintaining schools
- Church in Ceylon faces pressures
- Scot Presbyterian head will visit Holy Father
- The Reds and the Cardinal

- Pamphlet on Communism draws official statement
- Farmers and the income tax
- Mr. Hyde loves communists, hates communism
- Polish Reds alarmed at new 'Vatican policy'
- Church's role social thought has role for government
- Ecumenical spirit high in Holland
- Opinions: Housewife enters argument over English-Latin
- Modern Church architecture has no room for 'kitsch'—priest says
- Lilly fund gives \$50,000 to Brebeuf
- William Conley named to direct study of Catholic schools
- Asks for more laity in social justice work
- All cardinal deacons to be elevated
- 'Bacon priest' asks: What happens when Red tyranny ends?

(Read all of these stories from our March 23, 1962, issue by logging on to our archives at www.CriterionOnline.com.) †

Vatican office says SSPX response to basic doctrinal principles is 'insufficient'

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, with the approval of Pope Benedict XVI, has defined as "insufficient" the position of the traditionalist Society of St. Pius X (SSPX) on certain basic doctrinal principles and criteria for interpreting Church teaching.

U.S. Cardinal William J. Levada, prefect of the doctrinal congregation, met for two hours on March 16 with Bishop Bernard Fellay, superior of the society, to explain the Vatican's evaluation of the position of the SSPX, said Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman.

In a formal communique published after the meeting, the Vatican said it wanted to "avoid an ecclesial rupture with painful and incalculable consequences," so Bishop Fellay and leaders of the society were asked to further clarify their response to a "doctrinal preamble" the Vatican asked them to study last September.

The text of the preamble was not made public, but the Vatican had said it "states some doctrinal principles and criteria for the interpretation of Catholic doctrine necessary to guarantee fidelity" to the formal teaching of the Church, including the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.

Bishop Fellay delivered the society's official response in January, the Vatican said, and it was "placed under the

examination of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and successively under the judgment of the Holy Father."

"In compliance with the decision of Pope Benedict XVI," the communique said, Bishop Fellay was given a letter signed by Cardinal Levada explaining that "the position he had expressed is not sufficient to overcome the doctrinal problems that are at the basis of the fracture between the Holy See and the society."

Father Lombardi said Cardinal Levada told Bishop Fellay that the society had a month to clarify its position in order to heal "the existing fracture."

"A further clarification from the society is expected by mid-April," said Father Lombardi. The society has been given "more time for reflection to see if some further step can be made."

The Vatican spokesman would not give examples of the points on which the Society of St. Pius X and the Vatican still differ since the original preamble was never published. He said the additional month given to the society shows "the case is not closed," although the letter to Bishop Fellay makes clear that the consequence of "a non-acceptance of that which was foreseen in the preamble" would be "a rupture, something very serious for the Church."

Father Lombardi said Pope Benedict has taken many steps

"to make possible a reconciliation" with the traditionalist group, including lifting the excommunications imposed on Bishop Fellay and other SSPX bishops, establishing a Vatican committee for doctrinal talks with society representatives in 2009, and drafting the "doctrinal preamble" to explain the "minimal, essential" elements on which the society would have to agree for full reconciliation.

"A response was expected, it was not sufficient and, so, now [the Vatican is saying], 'If you think there is something else you would like to clarify, if you'd like to reflect some more to clarify your position, there is another month for you to do so,'" Father Lombardi said.

In late November, Bishop Fellay had said, "This doctrinal preamble cannot receive our endorsement, although leeway has been allowed for a 'legitimate discussion' about certain points of the [Second Vatican] Council."

When the Vatican's doctrinal discussions with the society began in 2009, both sides said the key issues to be discussed included the concept of tradition in general, as well as the Second Vatican Council's teaching on the liturgy, the unity of the Church, ecumenism, interreligious dialogue and religious freedom. †

If we falter in our Lenten resolutions, God will help us back up

By Louise McNulty

Although they may commit to extra acts of self-denial or good works, most Catholics don't see Lent as a more difficult time to resist temptation than at any other time of the year.

"During Lent, we are more conscious of our faith, being prayerful and avoiding what will take us away from God, but I don't think temptation happens more often," was the way that Jim Gorman, coordinator of religious education at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in South Glens Falls, N.Y., summed it up recently.

He acknowledged, however, that good Lenten intentions do have a way, like New Year's resolutions, of falling by the wayside.

"Sometimes we just forget [our promises], but the important thing is not to beat ourselves up over it, but just to get back on track," he said. The best way to do that, he recommended, is "to find a prayer practice that works for you and try to sustain it."

For some people, that could mean saying a rosary. For others, meditative prayer, adoration or attending Mass could work.

"God is always present in our lives [and ready to help us]. It's just a matter of our paying attention," Gorman said.

Judith Hoyt, advocacy coordinator for Right to Life of Northeast Ohio, said that when temptation strikes, "I turn to Jesus and Mary, and say the Our Father or Hail Mary. Or I say the prayer to St. Michael. He cast Satan, the father of lies, into hell so I believe [St. Michael] offers good protection. And sometimes I just say, 'No, I'm not going to do this.'"

What if she falters in her resolutions? "I just get right back up and pray that I won't fall again," she said.

Helen Lewis, a retired floral designer and office manager in Stow, Ohio, said on the subject of temptation, "Once I set my mind to do something for God, it's hard to get me off track."

CNS photo/Bob Ruler



Young people hold rosaries during the sixth annual Worldwide Children's Eucharistic Holy Hour at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington in 2008. Having regular habits of prayer, such as praying the rosary daily, can help Catholics stay true to their Lenten resolutions.

For instance, she offered to give up chocolate for life, and she did so "little by little" during Lent about 20 years ago.

The way to accomplish a goal, she said, is "to keep God in the forefront of my mind and then do things for him."

During Lent, prayer helps especially, she said.

"I try to say extra rosaries and go to confession once a month. That keeps you on the straight and narrow—thinking that when you go [to confession] you'll have to admit to doing something wrong."

Sally Scuderi, a colleague of Jim Gorman at St. Michael Parish in New York, is the parish's music minister.

She said she doesn't emphasize giving

up things during Lent, but focuses on doing more positive deeds.

"Whatever I choose to do, it's something outside my comfort zone," she said.

"Last year, I begged forgiveness of those who had hurt me, approaching people in person or writing to say [that] I forgave them, and asked if I had done something to trigger their action. Sometimes I didn't get an answer, but that was an answer, too," she said.

She said that she is "not a hospital person," and only visits friends when they are in the hospital or goes there to distribute Communion. But one year, during Lent, she received a request from a local hospital chaplain and decided to visit the sick.

Even if she is out doing good deeds, Scuderi said it is good for her to go out of her comfort zone in choosing what to do because there is always the temptation to not venture into the uncomfortable.

She counteracts that by trying to spend more time in silence with God, especially during Lent, she said.

"I'm in the music ministry," she said. "I make noise. It may be a joyful noise, but it's still noise. So giving up making my own noise some time every day keeps me more centered on the journey toward the Resurrection."

(Louise McNulty is a freelance writer in Akron, Ohio.) †

The psalms help us better understand Christ's suffering and death

By Nancy de Flon

Jesus tells his disciples about his forthcoming Passion three times in each of the synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark and Luke.

The predictions follow a fairly consistent pattern.

In all three Gospels, the first prediction occurs immediately following St. Peter's confession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah. It is as if Jesus wanted to be sure of Peter before disclosing the scandalous Passion that he must endure.

But Peter doesn't get it. In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, he reacts by rebuking Jesus. "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you" (Mt 16:22).

The notion of a suffering Messiah shocks him.

After the second predictions in St. Mark and St. Luke, we see how the rest of the disciples react. They don't understand what Jesus means and are afraid to ask.

As if the idea of a suffering Messiah isn't shocking enough, Jesus takes it a step further. In all four Gospels, he foretells that someone close to him will betray him. The identity of Jesus' betrayer as someone with whom he shares table fellowship seems to allude to a particular psalm. "Even my

trusted friend, who ate my bread, has raised his heel against me" (Ps 41:10).

The Old Testament passages that foretell the suffering of the Messiah have been incorporated into the Gospel Passion accounts either as details of the Crucifixion or as Jesus' last words on the Cross.

The Jewish people would not have understood all of these passages as a prediction of the Messiah's suffering. Peter had reason to be shocked.

But the early Christians, who were Jews and thus steeped in the Hebrew Scriptures, would have interpreted them retrospectively in light of their faith in the Jesus who had suffered, died and risen again.

They prayed the psalms every day, and they tapped these beloved prayers to help them come to understand more deeply Jesus' Passion and resurrection.

The psalms reverberated as the "Passion psalms" in the Christian tradition are Psalms 22, 31 and 69. Jesus, in Matthew and Mark, quotes Psalm 22 for his cry of seeming despair, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" (Ps 22:2). The last words of Jesus in St. Luke's Passion account, "Into your hands I commend my spirit" (Lk 23:46), are a quotation of Psalm 31:6.

We have all experienced occasions when a well-known prayer came spontaneously

to our lips in times of great emotion. For Jesus, a devout Jew, the psalms were those beloved prayers.

Other elements in the horrific drama of the Crucifixion that come from the Passion psalms include the Roman soldiers casting lots for Jesus' garments (Ps 22:19), the vinegar they gave him to drink (Ps 69:22), and the mocking and scorn of the crowd in all three psalms.

Our Catholic tradition recognizes the importance of the Passion psalms by incorporating them into the Good Friday liturgy.

Again, it is important to remember that the Passion psalms' role as foretelling the suffering Messiah only began to be understood in retrospect when the early Christians realized that these passages applied to Jesus.

They also apply to the human condition in general. And it is good for us to remember that the Passion psalms all end with expressions of certain faith that God will save us.

The horrors of life don't have the last word, either in Jesus' life or in ours.

(Nancy De Flon is an editor at Paulist Press and the author of *The Joy of Praying the Psalms*.) †



CNS photo/World Youth Day 2011

A sculpture, "Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross," is part of a group of sculptures from Zamora, Spain, that were used in the Stations of the Cross during the Aug. 16-21, 2011, World Youth Day in Madrid. Several psalms have helped Christians throughout history to better understand Christ's suffering and death.

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Biblical readings: Beginning the Letter to the Hebrews

The Office of Readings utilizes the Letter to the Hebrews for the two weeks leading to the Paschal Triduum. Next week, for the Fifth Week of Lent, it includes Chapters 1-8, but skips Chapters 4 and 5 because they are included in the biblical readings for Holy Week.



Other than by reading the Gospel accounts of Christ's Passion—which, of course, are read at Mass—there is no better way to prepare for Holy Week than by reading the Letter to the Hebrews.

Before I began to read the Office of Readings, I read this book of the Bible during Holy Week.

I have to warn you, though, that Hebrews is not easy reading. This is partly because of its symbols, which were clearer to its first readers than they are to us. When reading it, therefore, it's best to take advantage of the footnotes in your Bible.

Although it is called a letter, this book

is really a sermon, or a written homily, and some biblical experts suggest that it be read aloud. It is directed toward Hebrews, or Jews who have become Christians. Hence, it helps to have a good knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures, our Old Testament.

We don't know who wrote Hebrews. For a long time, it was thought to be one of St. Paul's letters, but that seems unlikely. Not only is the vocabulary and style different from Paul's letters, but why would the Apostle to the Gentiles be writing to the Hebrews?

It was probably written before the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 A.D. If so, it may pre-date the Gospels, which many believe to have been written after that cataclysmic event for the Jews.

The purpose of the letter, or sermon, is clear—it's a message of encouragement. The author develops his main theme, the priesthood and sacrifice of Jesus, to strengthen his readers in their faith.

It starts with the assertion that God spoke in the past in partial ways, but now he spoke to us through his Son who is superior to the angels and who now sits at

God's right hand—clearly alluding to one of the psalms, "The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool'" (Ps 110:1).

Chapter 7 devotes a lot of space to Melchizedek, the king of Salem and priest of God who blessed Abraham after Abraham—actually, he was still called Abram at the time—defeated four kings in a battle. See Genesis 14. Hebrews calls Melchizedek a type of Christ, obviously greater than Abraham since the greater always blesses the lesser and Abram offered tithes to him.

Hebrews says that Melchizedek was an anticipation of the Son of God whose priesthood is eternally valid. Therefore, Jesus was a priest "according to the order [rank] of Melchizedek," as it says in Psalm 110:4. Christ's sacrifice occurred "when he offered himself" (Heb 7:27).

In Chapter 8, we are told that the old covenant is but a "shadow" of the new, pointing to but replaced by the Word of God in Jesus. Hebrews uses Jeremiah's prophecy of a new covenant to show that the old covenant is obsolete. †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

That seventh sense of ours is not only valuable, it is necessary

Guess what? There is now an app which will warn you if you are spending too much time hunched over while texting or using whatever technical gadget is available as we speak. This posture, if we adopt it too often, gives us backaches or something.



Who knew such devices were harmful to one's health? One's physical health, that is, not counting the sneaky sonic wave damage so favored by conspiracy theorists. In my opinion, many of these gizmos are already a hazard to one's mental health because they encourage us to share every insignificant fact or fancy that comes to mind, thus making us appear somewhat dim-witted.

Then there is emotional health to worry about with these things. While we are told that they encourage communication, I think they do the opposite. There is no face-to-face, no personal interaction, no opportunity to read body language or tone of voice in assessing the need or intent of our "conversational" partner. But then, admittedly, I'm an old fossil.

To me, the idea of physical presence, even by telephone, is essential to true

intimacy with another person. I realize that in today's busy life time is important and we want to use the fastest, shortest route. Not that we seem to use well all the time we save, but that's another matter. Don't get me started.

We can learn many things with personal contact, of course, since we have five senses to help us, including hearing, seeing, touching, smelling and tasting.

Some claim we have a sixth sense, too, as in extra-sensory perception. But unlike the original five senses, ESP is not common to all of us, which is too bad because it might come in pretty handy.

Apparently, another seventh sense we don't all share is common sense.

My favorite example of this lack is the above-mentioned use of electronic devices. The anonymity they provide seems to make some people lose sense entirely, as in the teenagers who send out nude photos of themselves or the unidentifiable folks who bully others online. It's that human quality known as "if they can't catch me doing it, it doesn't count."

But there are lots of other examples as the evening news tells us daily. Even well-meaning Church people can be guilty of it.

Take substituting in our liturgical language the limited "visible and invisible" for "seen and unseen," a more

beautifully profound phrase. Or changing "one in being," which is easily spoken and understood in English, to "consubstantial," a difficult Latin word. Neither example follows Pope Paul VI's desire after Vatican Council II to translate the liturgy into vernacular language which would be clear to everyone, including children and the uneducated.

Oh, well. Get over it, I say to myself. Is Lent a time to be griping about the current human condition? No, I answer myself.

Lent should be the time to use my own common sense, such as it is, to practice what I'm preaching. As in visiting an elderly aunt or picking up the telephone to call her. Or writing (gasp!) an actual letter to an old friend or inviting a new friend to dinner. Or offering to baby-sit a "grand" or a neighbor's tot or being pleasant to a surly sales clerk.

It seems to me that Lent should be about learning to love as God loves us at Easter and every other time. All our senses should be alerted to help us with this, but especially that seventh one, common sense.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

A sense of humor, education needed to restore unity and peace

Without a doubt, one of today's most battered virtues is tolerance.



Religious groups often are intolerant of one another. Members of Congress frequently demonstrate they can't stand each other. Countries we shed blood to protect want no part of us. Bigotry abounds when discussion arises about immigrant families being allowed into the United States.

The air we breathe is not only ecologically polluted, but also filled with toxic inhuman fumes of intolerance, narrow-mindedness, racism and prejudice.

Tolerance means to bear, to put up with one another, to allow and to permit. It is a prized virtue, the basis for peace and unity that we desire for our country, our families and businesses.

Helen Keller, an American author and first deaf and blind person to earn a bachelor of arts degree, once said, "The highest result of education is tolerance."

I'm not talking about school. Earning an A in school does not make a person educated. We are educated when we view an issue from many sides, when we are open-minded, docile and admit we don't know everything.

We are educated when we have cultivated introspection, when we don't jump to conclusions and admit mistakes.

Author W. Somerset Maugham pointed to another aspect of tolerance. "You are not angry with people when you laugh at them. Humor teaches tolerance."

Expanding on this idea, the renowned theologian Father Romano Guardini wrote, "One other thing is required by kindness, something of which we rarely speak—a sense of humor. It helps us to endure things more easily."

"Indeed, we could hardly get along without it. The person who sees man only seriously, only morally or

pedagogically, cannot endure him for any great length of time. We must have an eye for the oddity of existence.

"Everything human has something comic about it. The more pompously a man acts, the greater is the comic element. A sense of humor means that we take man seriously and strive to help him, but suddenly see how odd he is and laugh, even though it be only inwardly. A friendly laugh at the oddity of all human affairs—this is humor. It helps us to be kind for after a good laugh it is easier to be serious," he said.

To this we can add that it also makes us tolerant.

Most of the intolerance we are experiencing can be traced to a lack of education and loss of a sense of humor.

These two ingredients are imperative for purifying the present toxic atmosphere of intolerance that exists, and to generate the unity and peace needed to restore our mental health.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Coming of Age/Karen Osborne

Self-image in the age of YouTube

You are special and beautiful. This is something we don't tell ourselves often enough. In our cynical world, we often echo the words from the movie *The Incredibles* when the character Dash says, "If everyone is special, then nobody is." It is a big temptation to think of ourselves like that—as big fat



nothings, as one more name on a teacher's attendance sheet, as just another face in the crowd.

Faced with the stars shining bright and skinny on the magazine covers and television screens, it is easy to think of ourselves as fat, stupid and ugly.

Combine that with the negative words of classmates in hallways and on the Internet, and a low self-image is virtually a guarantee for many teenagers today.

That view couldn't be further from the truth.

All of us are so incredibly special, individual, bright, beautiful moments in time that have never appeared before in the history of the universe and will never be repeated.

That's why a recent rash of YouTube videos saddened me.

Over the past few years, girls and boys of all ages, shapes and sizes have uploaded videos to YouTube where they ask complete strangers on the Internet if they are pretty or ugly, beautiful or repulsive, gorgeous or grody.

I have seen dozens of these videos and, in every one, teenagers talk about how awful it makes them feel that other people in their school say they are ugly or fat or not beautiful at all. They wonder—Is it true? Am I really ugly?

By posting online, they hope others will lift their spirits by saying the magic words—that they are beautiful, that they are special.

Instead of boosting their self-image, they give control over their feelings on the subject to complete strangers.

But these strangers are hardly a good source on what is truly beautiful. Every person in every culture has a different idea of what that means.

The ideal, beautiful woman of the Italian Renaissance would probably consider herself overweight today.

In the Kayan Lahwi culture from South Asia, women use brass rings to stretch their necks to achieve an elongated neck, something Westerners view with curiosity.

In Jamaica, the government had to ban women from taking chicken hormone pills in their search to gain weight, something that most American women would find shocking.

We all want to be beautiful, special and unique. In the search for beauty, though, we are sacrificing what it means to be truly beautiful.

Despite what the world tells you, nobody else can ever judge your worth based on the makeup you put on, the clothes you wear or what people say about you on YouTube or Facebook.

You don't need the opinions of the world—as changeable as they are—to be beautiful and special.

One of the best ways to be happy is to recognize ourselves as beautiful and special no matter what others say. We need to peel away the outer layers of style and artifice, and really acknowledge the wonderful person inside.

But if we put our self-worth into the hands of others who don't care about our hopes and dreams, we will never get to where we want to be.

After all, there is one standard of beauty that transcends culture—the person who is truly comfortable with and confident in who he or she is.

(Karen Osborne writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Fifth Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, March 25, 2012

- *Jeremiah 31:31-34*
- *Hebrews 5:7-9*
- *John 12:20-33*

The Book of Jeremiah provides this weekend's first reading.

A common theme runs through all the written prophecies of ancient Israel. It is that despite human sinfulness and treachery, God always is merciful. He also forgives the people. He never forsakes them.

Jeremiah constantly wrote with this theme in the back of his mind. In his estimate, the people had gravely sinned. Consequently, they had brought chaos and misery into their lives.

God, however, saves sinners from their plight.

This weekend's reading speaks of a new Covenant. The old Covenant, given to the people through Moses then to David and his dynasty, had been severely stressed by the people's sins. God would offer a new way to life, peace and joy.

The Epistle to the Hebrews supplies the second reading.

This epistle is rich in Jewish symbolism, and it abundantly proclaims the most profound of Jewish beliefs, namely that God will never fail in his mercy and forgiveness if the people reform their errant ways.

This reading underscores the role of Jesus, the Son of God, in the divine plan to redeem the lost. His suffering on the Cross affirmed and verified perfect obedience to the Father. In this obedience was eternal salvation for all who also obey God.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last reading.

Greeks who are visiting Jerusalem seek Jesus. They approach Philip, an Apostle. Philip went to Andrew, another of the Twelve.

An interesting incidental here is that contact with Jesus is initiated through the Apostles.

In the early Church, when this Gospel was written, the Apostles were very, very important. They literally had known the Lord. They were the Lord's special students.

They were chosen to be the Lord's representatives. They acted and spoke with the very authority and explicit commission of Jesus.

Jesus brings an ominous overtone to this reading. He predicts death. He then implies that the Crucifixion will result in life for all. He speaks of a grain of wheat falling to the ground, lifeless and tiny. However, the Lord notes, from this small piece of reality, the mustard seed, new life springs forth.

Finally, Jesus speaks of giving so totally that it is the gift of a person's life.

The Gospel reveals the intimacy between Jesus and God the Father, and between the Lord and his disciples.

In this intimacy between the Lord and the disciples must be a disciple's will to follow the Lord despite the costs. Discipleship may not be easy.

Reflection

Next weekend, the Church will celebrate Palm Sunday, also called Passion Sunday. In not too many days, the Church will call us to mark this year's Holy Week with its magnificent and compelling Triduum.

Two consoling lessons emerge from this weekend's Gospel reading.

One is about the intimacy between the Lord and God the Father. The Lord declares that the Father will bless true disciples, true servants of Jesus. The Lord is the perfect teacher. He is the bearer of Redemption.

Then Jesus prays to the Father and is answered. Jesus is the supreme figure in the outpouring of divine everlasting love. The self-sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary is the perfect act of divine love.

God's love is never restricted or limited. In the first verse of this Gospel reading, Greeks wished to see Jesus. New life awaits all those who simply turn to the Lord.

The key is wholeheartedly to turn to the Lord. Obedience is a vitally important part of the lessons this weekend.

Jeremiah called the people to obedience. The Book of Hebrews and the Gospel of John extoll the obedience of Christ, our only model and Lord. Such unqualified obedience is demanding, to say the least, but nothing else will suffice. We must obey God as Jesus obeyed God. In our absolute, uncompromised obedience to the Father is our personal redemption. †



Daily Readings

Monday, March 26

The Annunciation of the Lord
Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10
Psalm 40:7-11
Hebrews 10:4-10
Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday, March 27

Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 102:2-3, 16-21
John 8:21-30

Wednesday, March 28

Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95
(Response) *Daniel 3:52-56*
John 8:31-42

Thursday, March 29

Genesis 17:3-9
Psalm 105:4-9
John 8:51-59

Friday, March 30

Jeremiah 20:10-13
Psalm 18:2-7
John 10:31-42

Saturday, March 31

Ezekiel 37:21-28
(Response) *Jeremiah 31:10-13*
John 11:45-56

Sunday, April 1

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
Mark 11:1-10
or *John 12:12-16* (procession)
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18a, 19-20, 23-24
Philippians 2:6-11
Mark 14:1-15:47
or *Mark 15:1-39*

Go Ask Your Father/Fr. Francis Hoffman

Annual confession, traditionally called 'Easter duty,' is a precept of the Church

QI'm confused about the confession aspect of Easter duty for Catholics.



According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the second precept of the Church is this: "You shall confess your sins at least once a year" (#2042).

However, the canon law cited for this statement reads this way: "After having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year" (#989). This canon is also quoted in the catechism (#1457).

Which is it? Must we confess once a year, regardless of whether we have committed serious sin? Or is that obligation only for those who have serious sin to confess?

One website which I visited suggested that the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 did, in fact, require Catholics to confess all sins once a year, but the present canon law obliges us to annual confession only if we have serious sin to confess.

I recognize that frequent sacramental confession is a good thing, and I practice it. But a debate about Easter duty obligations has arisen in our parish, and we need an authoritative answer to settle the issue.

AYour citations from the catechism, the *Code of Canon Law* and the Fourth Lateran Council are correct, and the question you raise is a good one.

The sacrament of penance is strictly necessary only for those who have committed a mortal sin.

However, the Church encourages frequent confession, and it has been the custom in the Church since time immemorial for Catholics to confess at least once a year.

Typically, they do so in order to receive holy Communion during the Easter season—that is the "Easter duty"—in a state of grace.

Not only the catechism, but also the new *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, states that the second precept of the Church is, "You shall confess your sins at least once a year," and leave it at that without any mention of mortal sin.

So the catechism, the compendium and the Fourth Lateran Council say one thing,

and the *Code of Canon Law* says another.

One way to solve the dilemma is to say "three to one, the catechism wins."

But Canon #989 needs closer examination. When it states that "all are bound to confess their grave sins at least once a year," the code makes no distinction between unconfessed and previously confessed mortal sins.

Previously confessed mortal sins are valid matter for the sacrament of reconciliation.

For that reason, it is customary for penitents to say at the end of their personal confession, "For these and all the sins of my past life, I am sorry, especially for 'such and such.'" The "such and such" could be previously confessed and forgiven mortal sins.

Seen in this light, technically speaking, the only Catholic who is not obliged to confess his sins at least once a year is the person who has never committed a mortal sin in his entire life.

Who would qualify for such an exemption? The Blessed Mother, and perhaps St. Dominic Savio and some others, but not most of us.

So that's the spirit of the catechism and the compendium—to encourage all Catholics to confess at least once a year.

QIf, in sacramental confession, the priest says, "May God give you pardon and peace and absolve you from all your sins," rather than "and I absolve you from all your sins," is the sacrament still valid?

ANo, the absolution is not valid. The priest must say, "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

That is the valid form in English. Anything else does not work.

This is because the priest as minister of the sacrament acts *in persona Christi*—in the person of Christ.

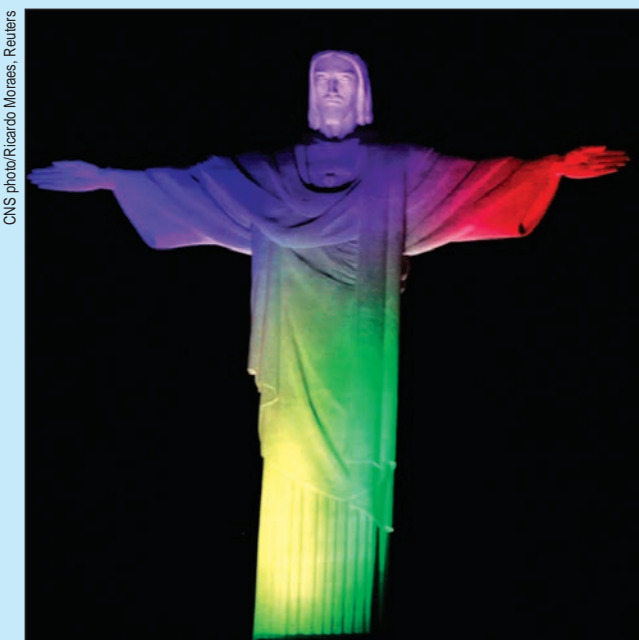
The absolution, therefore, is made in the first person—"I absolve you" versus "Christ absolves you"—and in a causative way, not just declarative—"May Christ absolve you."

Nevertheless, the penitent's sins are forgiven because it was no fault of his or her own that the priest used an invalid formula.

In this case, as sacramental theologians point out, *ecclesia supplet*—that is, the Church provides, out of her treasury of grace, the proper remedy for the defect of the minister's actions. †

My Journey to God

Caught in the Game



(Madelyn Keach is a member of St. Paul Parish in Sellersburg. The famous statue of Christ the Redeemer is lit up in different colors on Feb. 6 atop Corcovado Mountain in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to represent the pilgrims from 150 countries that will participate in World Youth Day activities on July 23-28, 2013, there.)

Like a chameleon, we move, swift and slow, changing colors as we go.

We don coats of many colors to survive, pretend and stalk our prey.

The color of righteousness blinds us to compassion. The color of generosity disguises our greed.

We move through life camouflaged, busy changing colors. We are captured by our own deceit.

Truth breathes our name, urging, calling, but we choose to play the game!

By Madelyn Keach

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.

BURNS, Robert J., 90, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, March 5. Husband of Rita Burns. Father of Kathleen Beaton, Linda Dees, Donna Street, Daniel and Robert Burns. Brother of Jean Battle. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of seven.

CARRANZA, Victor Armando Hernandez, 27, St. John the Baptist, Osgood, March 2. Son of Angel Hernandez and Catalina Carranza.

DENSFORD, Dennis Dowd, 39, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville, March 7. Father of Miranda Densford. Son of Mary Lou (Dieruf) Densford. Brother of Debbie Lester, Denise Spivey, Christina and Thomas Densford.

DRAGAN, Martin J., 90, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 3. Husband of Angeline Dragan. Father of Josephine Thompson and Mary Dragan. Grandfather of three.

DURHAM, Donald, 64, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Feb. 21. Father of Angela, Andrew, Matthew and Stephen Durham. Son of Dorothy Durham. Brother of Patricia, David, James and Robert Durham. Grandfather of two.

GENTILE, Robert Michael, 70, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, March 6. Husband of Patricia Gentile. Father of Kristina McAllister, Mary Morris, Mary Whitten and Michael Gentile.

Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of one.

HERMSEN, Paul J., 90, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, March 5. Father of Elizabeth, James, Paul and Robert Hermesen. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of seven.

HODAPP, Alphons J., 88, St. Maurice, Napoleon, March 9. Father of Betty Fisse, Ruth Herbert and Arthur Hodapp. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of 14.

KEAL, Catherine Elizabeth, 84, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Feb. 26. Mother of Sandy Afdem, Jenny Cox, LuAnn Lakes and Rodger Keal. Sister of Lena Roach and Marie Wheeler. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of nine.

KIEFER, Ruby Irene, 96, St. Mary, North Vernon, March 4. Mother of Peggy Cheesebrew and George Kiefer Jr. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 14. Great-great-grandmother of eight.

KING, Mary Ruth, 86, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, March 6. Mother of Lara Bockrath and Ronald King. Sister of Uneda East, Helen Wittman and Leonard Doogs. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of four.

LAND, John F., Jr., 75, Christ the King, Indianapolis, March 3. Husband of Janice Land. Father of Karen Land and David Land-Closson. Brother of Dorothy Land. Grandfather of two.

LARDNER, Loretta R., 93, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, March 4. Mother of Rita Allen, Mary Ann Morgan, Bonnie Murr, Frances Peyton and Donna Robb. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 20.

LAUGLE, Neal T., 83, St. Louis, Batesville, March 9. Husband of Billie (Moorman) Laugle. Father of Jenny Brebberman, Janice Cleary, Julie

Donahue, Jill Konradi, Jane Norwold, Bob, Jack, Paul and Tom Laugle. Brother of Gene and John Laugle. Grandfather of 18. Great-grandfather of six.

LOYD, Edward, Jr., 88, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, March 3. Father of Deborah Graham, Denise Mills, Edward and Keith Loyd. Brother of Frank Loyd Sr. Grandfather of several.

MOORE, Sherida, 73, St. Mary, North Vernon, Jan. 31. Wife of Thomas Moore. Mother of Terri Leake, Tricia Losey, Tammy Minger, Trent and Trevor Miller. Sister of Dennis, Larry, Randy and Timothy Burgmeier. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of two.

MORGAN, Martha, 88, St. Mary, Richmond, Feb. 17.

PAYNE, Mark R., 57, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, March 5. Husband of Jennifer Payne. Father of Ellie and Alexander Payne. Son of Sue Payne. Brother of Michael Payne.

RAY, Mary, 90, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Feb. 22. Mother of Patricia White, Charles and Michael Ray. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of nine.

RENNIE, Beatrice Aileen, 87, St. Paul, Tell City, March 9. Mother of Kathryn Fisher, Rita Mahoney, Mary Sparrow, James and Justin Rennie. Sister of Clarice and Marie James. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 12.

ROSENBERGER, Eleanor M., 94, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs, Jan. 23. Mother of Elaine Blunk, Don and Larry Rosenberger. Sister of Mary and John Peay. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of 13.

RUSSELL, Anna M., 98, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Feb. 25. Mother of Mary Lynn Phelps, Ann Rothan, Patty Squibb, J.F. and Mark Russell.

SAHM, Suzanne Marie, 58, Most Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, March 10. Wife of Michael Sahn. Mother of Sara Klindt, Michelle Stanley, Stephanie Stapert, Mary, Mark

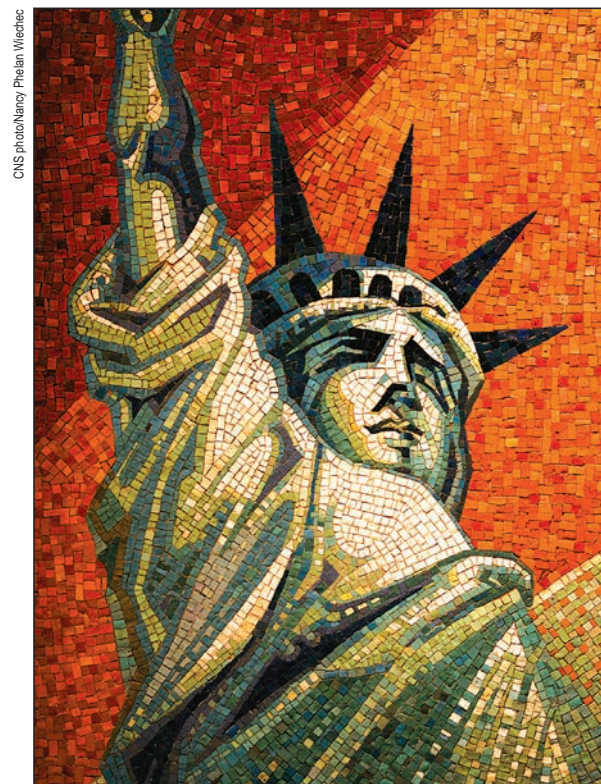
and Matthew Sahn. Daughter of Marianne (Lowe) Hermann. Sister of Beth Finney, Dolores Thie, Donna Williams and Robert Hermann. Grandmother of six.

SANDHAGE, Laura, 101, St. Joseph, Jennings County, Feb. 24. Mother of Carolyn Prewitt, Martha Porter, Wilma Richart and Charles Sandhage. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of 14. Great-great-grandmother of 15.

SAUER, Gary Lee, 59, St. Gabriel the Archangel, Indianapolis, Feb. 28. Husband of Sarah Sauer. Father of Mary Adams and Barbara Runnels. Son of Carl Sauer. Brother of Stephen and Thomas Sauer. Grandfather of four.

SCHARRER, A. Keith, 77, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Jan. 31. Husband of Nancy (Kraus) Scharrer. Father of Angela Bouch and Karl Scharrer. Grandfather of two.

WALLPE, Esther C., 90, St. Maurice, St. Maurice, March 13. Mother of Rose Ann Rempe, Eugene, James, John, Philip and Stephen Wallpe. Sister of Roselyn Hoeing, Dorothy Scheidler and Hubert Raver. Grandmother of 19. †



Lady Liberty

A depiction of the Statue of Liberty in mosaic tile is part of a larger piece in a side chapel at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

Providence Sister Alice Louise Potts served as a teacher, principal and hospital chaplain

Providence Sister Alice Louise Potts died on March 8 at Union Hospital in Terre Haute. She was 87.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 14 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Alice Louise Potts was born on Aug. 3, 1924, in Chicago.

She entered the congregation of the Sisters of Providence on Feb. 2, 1943, and professed her first vows on Aug. 15, 1945, and her final vows on Aug. 25, 1950.

Sister Alice Louise earned a bachelor's degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

During 69 years as a Sister of Providence, she ministered at Catholic schools in Indiana and Illinois for 23 years.

In the archdiocese, Sister Alice Louise taught at the former St. Ann School in Terre Haute from 1945-48, the former St. Joseph School in

Indianapolis from 1950-53 and the former St. Leonard of Port Maurice School in West Terre Haute from 1953-55.

From 1955-56, she taught at Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Indianapolis then served as principal there from 1957-63.

In 1968, Sister Alice Louise was elected to the congregation leadership, and served on the provincial team in Chicago for seven years.

After completing training in clinical pastoral education in 1977, she ministered as a chaplain at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston for 30 years.

In 2007, Sister Alice Marie returned to the motherhouse to minister to the needs of the infirm sisters.

Two years later, she began her ministry of prayer full-time with the senior sisters.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †

Mid-Atlantic Congress aims to strengthen Catholic pastoral ministers

BALTIMORE (CNS)—Hundreds of Catholics gathered at the inaugural Mid-Atlantic Congress for Pastoral Leadership to learn about strengthening pastoral ministry at parishes.

The congress opened in Baltimore on March 8 with Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., encouraging those gathered to be proud of their Catholic faith and the hope that only Jesus Christ can give.

"We are trying to work in a world that is craving hope, yet seems so far from an encounter with Jesus Christ," said Bishop Kicanas, chairman of the board of Baltimore-based Catholic Relief Services. "Remember that you are called and chosen, loved and blessed, and if you hold onto that, you can never be discouraged, you can never lose hope."

The three-day conference worked to strengthen pastoral leaders from across the region in their ministry and in the Church. It offered classes, trend sessions and nearly 100 breakout sessions. The theme was

"Witness Hope!"

Nearly 70 dioceses and archdioceses were represented at the conference, which is expected to be an annual event in Baltimore. It is co-sponsored by the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Department of Evangelization and the Association of Catholic Publishers. Next year's conference is scheduled for March 7-9 in Baltimore.

Kathy Moore, pastoral associate of St. Katharine Drexel Parish in Frederick, said Bishop Kicanas' speech inspired her.

"I came [to the conference] because I am new to pastoral ministry, and I was hoping to be motivated," Moore said. "I think Bishop Kicanas' speech was inspiring. It gave me great hope to know that I am chosen, blessed and loved."

Jesuit Father James Martin, the unofficial chaplain to the "Colbert Report" show with Stephen Colbert on Comedy Central, underscored the way that humor can be used at Church in his March 9 talk.

"Joy, humor and laughter feed hope," said Father Martin, a New York-based priest. "[These are] unappreciated ways of showing people our hope. Humor evangelizes. Joy shows your faith in that you believe in the Resurrection. That is good news."

Al Ptasznik, a member of the parish council at a parish in Virginia, said Father Martin's presentation was to the point, highlighting that "we need more humor in life."

"We are conditioned to hear only the presentation at Mass, and that's pretty much it," Ptasznik said. "[People] don't realize there was humor in the Bible, and there is."

Carolyn Woo, president and chief executive officer of CRS, spoke about business and the Church.

"It's not good enough to have good intentions," Woo said. "Business is a force for good and, of course, hope. When we talk about hope, we have to understand the best case. It depends on the moral energies of people to make it happen."

Paulist Father John Hurley, co-chairman of the congress and director of the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Department of Evangelization, said in his homily during the March 9 liturgy that coming together as leaders "gives each of us hope, and we must continue to give witness to that hope in our lives."



Fr. James Martin, S.J.

"Each of us as disciples and leaders in our communities gather during this Lenten time to remember that we are called and our being here at this congress is no accident," Father Hurley said. "God chose us and we are predestined to be his adopted children as Paul tells us. And we are hungry—hungry for hope."

A few hundred pastoral leaders experienced the Way of the Cross on March 9, a modern and nontraditional take on the 14 Stations of the Cross, with multimedia presentations and testimonies from Catholics who had experienced suffering recalled in events lived out in the Stations.

Michael Ruzicki, the Archdiocese of Baltimore's coordinator of adult and sacramental formation and the creative director for the Way of the Cross, said it celebrated the Stations of the Cross.

"Growing up, I would see Catholics come together to 'celebrate' the Cross on Fridays in Lent. However, it never seemed like a true celebration," Ruzicki said in an e-mail. "Celebration doesn't need to have clapping, dancing and an overwhelming amount of joy. More so, we know this celebration of the Cross ends with the greatest glory of all."

Sharon DeSipio, director of religious education for a parish in the Diocese of Trenton, called the Way of the Cross "exceptional."

"I knew it would be different from traditional Stations," DeSipio said. "It has to sink in." †



Victoria Romero, Bernadette Kovalsick and Gerri Merkel laugh and applaud as they listen to remarks from Jesuit Father James Martin on March 9 at the inaugural Mid-Atlantic Congress for Pastoral Leadership in Baltimore. Hundreds of Catholics gathered at the conference to learn about strengthening pastoral ministry at parishes.

Israel's residency laws challenge Jerusalem's mixed couples

JERUSALEM (CNS)—Joseph Hazboun remembers when he could hop into his car in Jerusalem and drive the few miles to the nearby West Bank city of Bethlehem to see his family. It was easy enough, even passing through mandatory checkpoints, that he and his Jerusalem-born wife and children would make the trip at least twice a month.

It has been years, though, since the Hazbouns, who are Catholic, could make the 25-minute drive on their own.

Now the family must take light rail, two taxis and walk across a checkpoint to get from their home in East Jerusalem to Bethlehem. The venture takes at least 90 minutes. The result: The Hazbouns have curtailed their visits to once every several months.

Israeli laws on the book since 2003 strictly limit who can obtain permanent residency status and thus enjoy the related benefits, including driving privileges. The Supreme Court recently upheld the law.

Although he is the spouse of a Palestinian resident of East Jerusalem who holds an Israeli permanent resident ID, Hazboun is prohibited from becoming a permanent resident of Israel because he is from Bethlehem. Only those with permanent residency can enjoy benefits of Israeli society, including coverage under the health care system and social security benefits.

Every year, the couples keep close track of their rent receipts, utility bills, school tuition payments and vaccination records. They trek to the Ministry of Interior and then to the

Civil Administration in the West Bank to get the piece of paper that allows them to live together legally as a family.

They are among thousands of Palestinian couples who continue living in a state of limbo and uncertainty because they must apply for a temporary residence permit annually.

"That puts us at their mercy as, at any given moment, they can rebuke our residency permit and tell us to go away somewhere. But I have nowhere else to go. Here is where my work is, here is where we have our home," said Hazboun, 46, who has worked in the Jerusalem office of the Pontifical Mission for Palestine for 18 years. He has lived in the city since he married his Jerusalem-born wife, Rima, 17 years ago.

"I can't understand what the security threat is to Israel if we drive," Hazboun said. "This is just another prohibition to make our life in Israel difficult. It is a demographic war. [They think] that if they make it difficult for us we will say, Why live such a life in Jerusalem when we can move about freely in the West Bank?"

Hazboun's wife is allowed to drive, but she has a driving phobia. She declined to be interviewed.

Hazboun said he is looking forward to next year when the couple's oldest daughter will be eligible for a driver's license. Under the law, their children have been registered under their Jerusalemite parents' Israeli identity card.

The couple's hopes for the system to be eased were dashed because of the Supreme Court ruling.

Under the law, the residency

application status of couples like the Habouns has been frozen, although couples who had applied for family reunification before the statute was passed in 2003 may still apply for a temporary residency permit every year. Couples who married after the law was passed may not even do that. The end result is that they live in fear that the spouse from the West Bank will be expelled from Israel.

Since the beginning of 2012, the Society of St. Yves, a Catholic human and civil rights legal aid center, has taken on 89 family reunification cases like that of the Hazbouns, said director Raffoul Rofa. In the past, he said, the agency sometimes has been successful in upgrading a spouse's status to resident status with full rights if the family reunification application was submitted in the 1990s.

Rofa estimated that more than 100 Christian couples are affected by the law, though no official statistics exist.

The center's staff estimates that thousands of couples remain dependent on the Israeli Ministry of Interior for the renewal of their temporary residency permits each year.

Elias, 39, is from Jerusalem and has an Israeli-issued permanent residency card, but his wife, Abeer, 34, is from Bethlehem and lives in Jerusalem with only a temporary resident permit.

The Catholic couple asked that their real names not be used because they fear their public comments will lead to difficulties with Israeli authorities.

The driving prohibition cuts into even the most mundane



Palstinian Joseph Hazboun, 46, poses with his children, Lene, 12, Yazan, 14, and Layal, 16, at their apartment in East Jerusalem on Feb. 28. For 17 years, Hazboun, who is from Bethlehem, West Bank, has been living with his family in Jerusalem without a permanent Israeli residency permit.

details of family life during the winter months. When it rains, as it has often since November, Abeer must either hire a taxi to take her children to afternoon activities or she must walk with them herself, even though the family car sits unused in the apartment building parking lot.

"It is a small prison here," Abeer said, sitting in her neat two-bedroom apartment in a Palestinian neighborhood of East Jerusalem.

Israel's citizenship and entry laws also affect young couples who are dating, Rofa said. Before beginning a relationship, many young people first learn where their prospective partner is from in an effort to avoid getting caught in the web of family reunification, he explained.

None of these complications figured into the plans of Elias and Abeer when they fell in love and were married almost a decade ago.

Abeer said that if she and

Elias had thought about the ramifications of their marriage, they might not have married. For now, they see the only solution to their predicament is to move abroad, but they do not want to leave their family, friends and the place where they grew up.

"It is part of our cross," Elias said. "The West thinks Israel is the only democratic state in the Middle East, but having to go through all this system is very humiliating. Every day you have to prove you are not a liar and that you don't forge documents. It makes me nervous to lose a bill or an invoice."

Hazboun expressed similar sentiments. "We would have still gotten married and lived in Jerusalem, but after what we have gone through, my wife tells our children not to even think about getting married to someone from the West Bank. It is difficult because we know what awaits them if they do." †

Pope asks married Italian couple to compose *Via Crucis* meditations

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI has asked an Italian married couple, founders of the Focolare Movement's New Families initiative, to write the meditations for his Way of the Cross service at Rome's Colosseum on April 6.

The Vatican announced on March 15 that the pope had asked Danilo and Annamaria Zanzucchi to write the meditations, which are read over loudspeakers as a cross is carried through and around the Colosseum on Good Friday.

The Zanzucchis are the first married couple to be asked to compose the texts.

Along with Chiara Lubich, the late founder of the Focolare Movement, the Zanzucchis launched the New Families project in 1967 to strengthen families, and encourage their spiritual growth and social commitment. New Families now claims some 300,000 members around the world.

The Zanzucchis' meditations will offer commentary and prayers on the 14 traditional Stations of the Cross, the Vatican said. In some years, the Vatican has gone with strictly biblical Stations marking steps in Jesus' Passion and death. The traditional Stations, for example, include

Veronica wiping Jesus' face, which is not mentioned in the Bible.

In 1985, Blessed John Paul II began asking people to compose meditations for his Good Friday prayer service rather than using traditional texts. Over the years, he asked bishops and theologians, priests and religious women, and—in 2002—an international group of journalists who were covering the Vatican.

The 2005 meditations, used just a few days before Blessed John Paul's death, were written by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict. †

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Students pray rosary for religious freedom in front of White House

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A group of 12 students from the Newman Center at George Washington University prayed the rosary on March 3 outside the White House as a prayerful witness for the religious freedom they believe is threatened by a federal contraception mandate.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has issued a requirement that health insurance plans include free coverage for sterilizations, contraceptives and abortifacients.

The students walked from their campus to the White House five blocks away following a “Mass of Conscience” celebrated at the Newman Center’s chapel by Father Greg Shaffer. The group had lunch together at the center then began their walk.

While on their walk, three of the women held signs that together read, “Protect Religious Liberty.” They walked through the center of campus past other students who were milling about in mild weather on a Saturday afternoon.

“This event is important to raise awareness ... [about] the government threatening the religious liberty of a specific group of people,” said Michael Russo, student president of the Newman Center, who is studying history and classics. “It [the students’ witness] attaches faces to the issue. It shows people are impassioned about it and willing to stand for the issue, especially on a campus like GW, which isn’t religious.”

That point was echoed by Chris Crawford, a political science major who helped organize the prayer vigil.

“We organized this [because] we got upset with the mandate,” he told the *Catholic Standard*, newspaper of the Washington Archdiocese. “We saw it as an affront to religious liberty. We’re in the middle of a city and a campus where we feel like we’re standing alone a lot. This was the tipping point.”

The fact that students were publicly standing up for religious freedom, Crawford said, “sends a good message, that this movement is coming from GW. We are on a really secular campus.”

Prayer, he said, is “very important” in such an effort. “That’s at the center of it all. It broadens the message and strengthens it. It brings it beyond politics.”

As the students walked closer to the White House, Kara Dunford, a political communications major, said, “[It’s] important for us at the Newman Center, as college students, to get involved in issues that are important to our future as Catholics in the United States. Particularly on this issue, it’s important for us to send a message [that] it’s not just bishops and priests who care about this HHS mandate, it’s us as college students. We realize this encroaches on our liberties as practicing Catholics.”

Dunford said the fact their witness was centered on prayer is critical.

“What we’re trying to show is all Church teaching is rooted in love. It’s not bigotry. It’s not hate. Starting with a Mass, and ending with a rosary, we can show it. We’re not out there screaming with signs,” she said.

Justyna Felusiak, who is studying political science, said, “I just feel like everyone has the constitutional right to religious freedom. This is beyond me being Catholic. It’s what our country was founded on, and why people came here. It’s been [our] tradition and our law since the country started.”

She, too, emphasized the importance of prayer in the effort. “As a Catholic, I feel that’s a great solution to many situations and problems.”

Joining the students was Bryce Garber, a lay missionary from the Fellowship of Catholic University Students who is serving at the Newman Center. “I believe



Catholic students from George Washington University lead the rosary outside the White House to show support for religious freedom that they say is threatened by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services mandates on contraception.

in the freedom of religious expression laid out in the Constitution, and I don’t think the government has any right stepping into that,” he said.

Then the group arrived on the sidewalk in front of the White House, and they quietly prayed the rosary together as tourists walked by and some people took photographs of them. About a block away, protesters highlighting an international issue used a loudspeaker to direct their message toward the White House.

After they prayed the rosary, the students and their friends walked together back to campus.

Christina Longofono, a history major, emphasized the importance of prayer in the effort to protect religious freedom.

“Jesus said, ‘I am the vine, and you are the branches. Apart from me, you can do nothing’ [Jn 15:5]. It’s very important that

we not only acknowledge God, but involve him in our efforts to protect our right to worship him,” she said.

On Tuesdays, she joins other Catholic students in praying the rosary outside an abortion clinic on campus, and sometimes people curse at them so Longofono said she wasn’t worried about what reaction their prayer vigil would provoke.

“This isn’t an issue that just faces Catholic Americans. It faces all Americans,” she said. “If the government can take away the [religious freedom] rights of one people, it can take away everyone’s rights.”

As she walked with her friends back to campus, she added, “Culturally, this is not a popular issue. It’s important that we do what’s right even when everyone is not on our side.” †

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