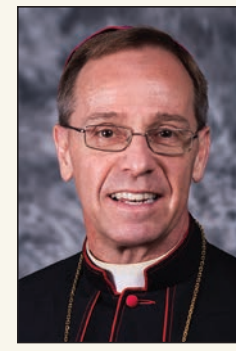




The

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## Christ the Cornerstone

Pray for the courage and fidelity to imitate Mary, page 5.

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## Belief in God as Creator of all has practical consequences, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Professing faith in God as the Creator of all human beings, or even simply recognizing that all people possess an inherent dignity, has concrete consequences for how people should treat one another and make decisions in politics, economics and social life, Pope Francis has written in his latest encyclical.



Pope Francis

“Human beings have the same inviolable dignity in every age of history, and no one can consider himself or herself authorized by particular situations to deny this conviction or to act against it,” the pope wrote in his encyclical, “*Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship*” (#213).

Pope Francis signed the encyclical on Oct. 3 after celebrating Mass at the tomb of St. Francis of Assisi, and the Vatican released the more than 40,000-word text the next day.

The pope had been rumored to be writing an encyclical on nonviolence. And once the COVID-19 pandemic struck, many expected a document exploring in-depth his repeated pleas for the world to recognize the inequalities and injustices laid bare by the pandemic and adopt corrective economic, political and social policies.

“*Fratelli Tutti*” combines those two elements, but does so in the framework set by the document on human fraternity and interreligious dialogue that he and Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo, Egypt, signed in 2019.

In fact, in the new document Pope Francis wrote that he was “encouraged” by

See POPE, page 2

See editorial, page 4.



## At Respect Life Mass, archbishop calls all to ‘live the Gospel of Life’

By Natalie Hoefer

A quarter of a century ago, St. John Paul II penned one of his most well-known encyclicals, “*Evangelium Vitae*” (“The Gospel of Life”). It addressed the dignity of the human person as well as the various threats to the sanctity of human life.

“The encyclical is as relevant today as when it was first published in 1995,” said Archbishop Charles C. Thompson.

He made this comment during his homily at the annual Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 4.

Given the anniversary and the

document’s continued relevancy, he said, “Our 2020 theme for Respect Life Month is ‘Live the Gospel of Life.’ ”

At the heart of that theme “is the steadfast conviction of our Catholic faith that every human being is created in the image of God,” the archbishop noted. “To live the Gospel of life, we must be committed to defending the sacredness of life and the dignity of the person from the moment of conception to natural death.”

### Standing with life, opposing its threats

Because living the Gospel of life “includes a sense of solidarity with one another,” he said, “we must especially be the voice and advocate

for the unborn, the elderly and all those [whom] society tends to perceive as burdens rather than persons.”

To do so, he said, means to follow the call of Pope Francis “to go out to the very margins and peripheries of society . . . to the poor, the defenseless, the abandoned, the homeless, the immigrant, the refugee, the addicted, the unemployed, the incarcerated, the sick and the dying,” and to properly care for the environment lest “we hurt ourselves and those who will come after us.”

Catholics stand for all life. Likewise, they should stand against anything that

See RESPECT, page 9

Above, Ethan Moncayo peeks between the heads of his parents Karina Ramirez and Marco Moncayo, members of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis, during the Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 4. (Photo by Natalie Hoefer)

## Growing in faith: Film features Holy Angels and a program that helps children soar to their potential

By John Shaughnessy

It’s a moment of pure musical joy—a scene that is so smile-inducing that it became the perfect ending for a new film about the human spirit, the potential of all children, and the cheerfully contagious crusade of one man in a cheese hat to change communities that face tough odds.

In the scene at Holy Angels School in Indianapolis, Elijah Montgomery drums on the cafeteria table, creating a pulsating beat for the unlikely rap song that Willo McClain delivers flawlessly—a rap song about plants, seeds, learning and the joy of life that leaves her fellow students at the table dancing, smiling and clapping.

Smiling and clapping too in that scene

See HOLY ANGELS, page 7



Stephen Ritz has created a school program that uses urban agriculture to improve students’ lives and the communities where they live. During a visit to Holy Angels School in Indianapolis, he poses with students Ashley Houessinon, left, and Atavia Boyle. (Submitted photo)





"Social friendship and universal fraternity necessarily call for an acknowledgment of the worth of every human person, always and everywhere."  
 -- Pope Francis, "Fratelli Tutti"

(CNS illustration/photo by Vatican Media)

# POPE

continued from page 1

his dialogue with the Muslim leader and by their joint statement that "God has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters" (#5).

The encyclical takes its title from the words of St. Francis of Assisi and is inspired by his "fraternal openness," which, the pope said, calls on people "to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives" (#1).

The title, which literally means "all brothers and sisters" or "all brothers," are the words with which St. Francis "addressed his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavor of the Gospel," the pope wrote (#1).

That flavor, explained throughout the document, involves welcoming the stranger, feeding the hungry, listening to and giving a hand up to the poor, defending the rights of all and ensuring that each person, at every stage of life, is valued and invited to contribute to the community, he said. It also means supporting public policies that do so on a larger scale.

Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, welcomed the encyclical as "an important contribution to the Church's rich tradition of social doctrine."

"Pope Francis' teaching here is profound and beautiful: God our Father has created every human being with equal sanctity and dignity, equal rights and duties, and our creator calls us to form a single human family in which we live as brothers and sisters," the archbishop said in a statement. "God's plan for humanity, the pope reminds us, has implications for every aspect of our lives—from how we treat one another in our personal relationships, to how we organize and operate our societies and economies."

Building on the social teachings of his predecessors, Pope Francis' document once again strongly condemns the death penalty and makes an initial approach to declaring that the conditions once used to accept a "just war" no longer exist because of the indiscriminately lethal power of modern weapons.

St. John Paul II in "The Gospel of Life," published in 1995, cast doubt on whether any nation needed to resort to

capital punishment today to protect its people. Developing that teaching, Pope Francis in 2018 authorized a change to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to make clear that "the death penalty is inadmissible."

Signaling the start of a similar effort to respond to the current reality of warfare, Pope Francis in the new encyclical raised the question of "whether the development of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and the enormous and growing possibilities offered by new technologies, have granted war an uncontrollable destructive power over great numbers of innocent civilians" (#258).

"We can no longer think of war as a solution because its risks will probably always be greater than its supposed benefits," one of the main criteria of just-war theory, he said. "In view of this, it is very difficult nowadays to invoke the rational criteria elaborated in earlier centuries to speak of the possibility of a 'just war.' Never again war!" (#258).

At the heart of the new encyclical's appeal to Catholics is a meditation on Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan and particularly on how Jesus takes a legal scholar's question, "Who is my neighbor" (Lk 10:29), and turns it into a lesson on being called not to identify one's neighbors but to become a neighbor to all, especially those most in need of aid.

"The parable eloquently presents the basic decision we need to make in order to rebuild our wounded world. In the face of so much pain and suffering, our only course is to imitate the good Samaritan," the pope said. "Any other decision would make us either one of the robbers or one of those who walked by without showing compassion for the sufferings of the man on the roadside."

"The parable," he continued, "shows us how a community can be rebuilt by men and women who identify with the vulnerability of others, who reject the creation of a society of exclusion, and act instead as neighbors, lifting up and rehabilitating the fallen for the sake of the common good" (#67).

Pope Francis used the encyclical "to consider certain trends in our world that hinder the development of universal fraternity" and acting as a neighbor to one another, including racism, extremism, "aggressive nationalism," the closing of borders to migrants and refugees, polarization, politics as a power grab rather than a service to the common good,



## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

**October 10–21, 2020**

<p><b>October 10 – 9 a.m.</b> "Morning with Mary" event at St. Jude Church, Indianapolis</p> <p><b>October 10 – 2:30 p.m.</b> Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington and St. Agnes Parish in Nashville, at St. Paul Catholic Center</p> <p><b>October 15 – 10 a.m.</b> Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis</p> <p><b>October 15 – 7 p.m.</b> Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis</p>	<p><b>October 17 – 10 a.m.</b> Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, St. Mary Parish in Lanesville and St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, New Albany</p> <p><b>October 17 – 1:30 p.m.</b> Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Mary Parish in Navilleton, St. Mary Parish in New Albany and St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight, at St. Mary Church, New Albany</p> <p><b>October 20 – 1 p.m.</b> Council of Priests meeting at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Greenwood</p> <p><b>October 21 – 10 a.m.</b> Department Heads meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center</p>
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mistreatment of women, modern slavery and economic policies that allow the rich to get richer but do not create jobs and do not help the poor (#9, #11).

"The pain, uncertainty and fear, and the realization of our own limitations, brought on by the pandemic have only made it all the more urgent that we rethink our styles of life, our relationships, the organization of our societies and, above all, the meaning of our existence," he said (#33).

Anna Rowlands, a British theologian invited to help present the document at the Vatican, told Catholic News Service the text's "golden thread" is about discerning "what gives life" and helps everyone to develop their full potential and flourish.

"The whole theme of the document is about the way in which we're called to attend to the world as Christ attended to the world," paying attention to reality rather than "evading it and avoiding it," and praying for the grace to respond as Jesus would.

When people ask, "Who is my neighbor?" often what they really want to know is "Who is not my neighbor?" or "Who can I legitimately say is not my responsibility," Rowlands said.

Pope Francis called for catechesis and preaching that "speak more directly and clearly about the social meaning of existence, the fraternal dimension of spirituality, our conviction of the inalienable dignity of each person and our reasons for loving and accepting all our brothers and sisters."

He also used the encyclical to strongly reassert a traditional tenet of Catholic social teaching: "the universal destination of goods" or "the common use of created goods," which asserts, as

St. John Paul said, that "God gave the Earth to the whole human race for the sustenance of all its members, without excluding or favoring anyone" (quoted in #120).

The right to private property and the benefits to individuals and society of protecting that right, Pope Francis wrote, "can only be considered a secondary natural right" (#120).

"The right of some to free enterprise or market freedom cannot supersede the rights of peoples and the dignity of the poor, or, for that matter, respect for the natural environment," the pope said (#122). "Business abilities, which are a gift from God, should always be clearly directed to the development of others and to eliminating poverty," especially through the creation of jobs that pay a living wage (#123).

Pope Francis, Rowlands said, "wants to rehabilitate this idea of social friendship and social peace in the face of an all-pervasive social violence, which he sees running through the economy, running increasingly through politics, running through social media."

The pope is not despairing, she said, but realistic. "He wants to offer a vision of how you begin from the most local, most every day and most concrete realities to build a culture of peace at every level." †

## Television Masses

*The following channels and times show when Sunday Masses may be viewed over-the-air in different areas of the archdiocese:*

Indianapolis: WHMB, 40.1, 9:30 a.m.
Indianapolis: WNDY, 23, 6:30 a.m.
Terre Haute: WTHI, 10.3, 10 a.m.
Cincinnati: EKRC, 12.2, 8:30 a.m.
Evansville: WEVV, 44.2, 6 a.m.
Louisville: WBNA, 21, 7 a.m.



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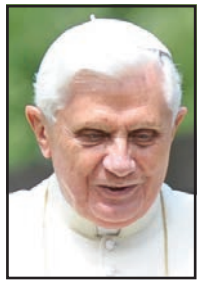
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# Pope Benedict had approved Vatican-China agreement, cardinal says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican-China agreement on the appointment of bishops was a pastoral, not political agreement, that also had been approved by Pope Benedict XVI, the Vatican Secretary of State said.



Pope Benedict XVI

Every pope, from St. Paul VI to Pope Francis, has tried to resolve what Pope Benedict described as a difficult situation “of misunderstandings and incomprehension” that did not benefit “either the Chinese authorities nor the Catholic Church in China,” Cardinal Pietro Parolin said, according to Vatican News on Oct. 3.

Pope Benedict himself, the cardinal said, approved “the draft agreement on the appointment of bishops in China,” which was signed in 2018 by the Holy See and Chinese officials and is due for renewal at the end of October.

The cardinal was speaking at a conference in Milan, marking the 150th anniversary of the presence of missionaries of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions in China.

Vatican officials repeatedly have said that the agreement with China deals only with the appointment of bishops, a question essential for the unity and survival of the Catholic Church in the country.

Cardinal Parolin said the agreement “is only a starting point,” which has already led to some good outcomes, including “signs of growing closeness among Chinese Catholics who have long been divided on many issues.”

“It is necessary to continue the dialogue so it can bear more substantial fruit,” he said in the opening speech at the conference.

Since the pontificate of Pope Pius XII, the Holy See has “felt the need for dialogue, even if the circumstances of the time made it very difficult,” Cardinal Parolin said.

It is important to reject any political interpretation of the 2018 provisional

agreement, which is purely a pastoral agreement, he said.

“I remind you once again that the agreement of 22 September 2018 concerns exclusively the appointment of bishops,” Cardinal Parolin said.

He explained that there were “many other problems concerning the life of the Catholic Church in China. But it has not been possible to deal with them all together.”

“We know that the road to full normalization will still be a long one, as Benedict XVI foresaw in 2007. The question of the appointment of bishops, however, is of particular importance. It is, in fact, the problem that has caused the Catholic Church in China the most suffering in the last 60 years,” he said.

For the first time in decades, all the bishops in China are in communion with the pope, and the faithful “know how important it is that all Chinese bishops are in full communion with the universal Church,” he added.

Before the agreement, there was always the possibility of illegitimate ordinations, which is why it was necessary “to face and resolve this delicate problem definitively” with an agreement aimed at helping “the local Churches enjoy greater freedom, autonomy and organization, so that they can dedicate themselves to the mission of proclaiming the Gospel and contributing to the integral development of the person and society.”

The agreement, the details of which have never been made public, was set to expire on Oct. 22, and a decision was expected regarding a Vatican proposal to extend the provisional agreement.

The agreement does not cover “direct diplomatic relations between the Holy See and China, the juridical status of the Catholic Chinese Church, or the relations between the clergy and the country’s authorities,” wrote Andrea Torielli, editorial director of the Vatican Dicastery for Communication, in an editorial on Vatican News in late September. †

## Catholic Charities-Social Concerns offers Immigration Roundtable Series this month

The Catholic Accompaniment and Reflection Experience (CARE) program of the archdiocese’s Catholic Charities-Social Concerns office is offering a virtual roundtable series throughout the month of October every Tuesday from 7-8 p.m.

Each night of the virtual roundtable series is a stand-alone event that addresses a specific topic providing information, building awareness and prompting action on behalf of immigrants.

A recording of the Oct. 6 session, “Immigration 101” presented by Tim Winn, Catholic Charities’ Immigration Legal Services director, is available through the Catholic Charities-Social Concerns office.

The remaining topics in the series are:

- Oct. 13: “Know Your Rights,” presented simultaneously in Spanish and English by immigration consultant Haley Bastin. Learn the difference in the statuses of migrant, refugee, asylum seeker and undocumented immigrant; the root causes of migration; the Catholic Principles of Migration; and recent policy changes to immigration enforcement.

- Oct. 20: “Unaccompanied Minors” led by Cindy Neal, a foster care licensing specialist for Bethany Christian Services Transitional Foster Care. Gain an understanding of the journey of unaccompanied minors to the U.S., how Bethany Christian Services’ Transitional

Foster Care Program works to support reunification of families, and how to become involved.

- Oct. 27: “Immigrant Resources,” presented simultaneously in Spanish and English by Kayla Bledsoe and Joanna Lopez, both of the Immigrant Welcome Center. Learn about the resources available to immigrants in Indianapolis, barriers that immigrants often face, and the Natural

Helpers Program, a volunteer opportunity to help local immigrants and refugees.

The virtual roundtable events are free, but registration is required for each. Recordings of all presentations are also available.

To register go to [immigration.eventbrite.com](https://www.immigration.eventbrite.com) or contact Simona Reising in the Catholic Charities-Social Concerns Office at [sreising@archindy.org](mailto:sreising@archindy.org) or 317-236-2457. †

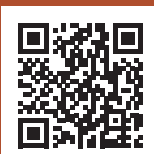


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<p><b>October 16-17</b> <u>Weekend of Peace</u> led by Judy Ribar, Assoc. Director</p>	<p><b>October 23-25</b> <u>Men's Retreat</u> led by Fr. Vince Petersen, OFM Conv.</p>
<p><b>October 20-22</b> <u>Voice of God in Creation</u> led by Fr. Vince Petersen, OFM Conv.</p>	<p><b>October 31</b> <u>Wisdom of the Second Half of Life</u> led by Judy Ribar, Assoc. Director</p>

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## Editorial

# An encyclical for all brothers and sisters

*“If every human being possesses an inalienable dignity, if all people are my brothers and sisters, and if the world truly belongs to everyone, then it matters little whether my neighbor was born in my country or elsewhere”* (Pope Francis, *“Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship”*).

Can a papal encyclical be controversial before anyone has read what it says? Unfortunately, yes.

Some criticized Pope Francis’s new encyclical before it was published because its title, *“Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship”*—which was taken from an expression of St. Francis of Assisi that is usually translated into English as “brothers” or “brethren”—seems to ignore women. Others feared that the pope would go too far in his criticism of contemporary society.

The Vatican was quick to point out that the new encyclical is dedicated to “fraternity” and “social friendship,” and is meant to be inclusive of all members of God’s family. The choice of the title “in no way intends to exclude women, that is, more than half of the human race,” the Vatican said. The Holy Father clearly addresses his message to “all his sisters and brothers, all men and women who populate the Earth: everyone, inclusively, and in no way exclusively.”

And while *“Fratelli tutti”*

clearly offers a critique of individualism and indifference in society today, its vision is that of the universally beloved saint from Assisi who sought to unite all peoples in the spirit of love and friendship.

It’s a sign of our times that a letter written from the heart by one who cares deeply for all the people he has been called to serve has to be defended even before it’s been read. We are so quick to find fault with our leaders today that we assume that they have failed us before they can act or speak.

In fact, no one who reads *“Fratelli tutti”* can honestly say that it fails to include everyone. Or that it is divisive. Its whole purpose is to gather together all people regardless of gender, race, culture, nationality, economic or social status.

After all, its author is the man who at the height of the pandemic stood all by himself in an empty St. Peter’s Square in the pouring rain, and prayed for that “blessed common belonging” which makes us all sisters and brothers.

As Pope Francis writes in the beginning of his new encyclical:

“I offer this social encyclical as a modest contribution to continued reflection, in the hope that in the face

of present-day attempts to eliminate or ignore others, we may prove capable of responding with a new vision of fraternity and social friendship that will not remain at the level of words. Although I have written it from the Christian convictions that inspire and sustain me, I have sought to make this reflection an invitation to dialogue among all people of good will” (*“Fratelli tutti,”* #6).

Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, welcomed the new encyclical calling it an important contribution to the Church’s rich tradition of social doctrine.

According to Archbishop Gomez, “Pope Francis’ teaching here is profound and beautiful: God our Father has created every human being with equal sanctity and dignity, equal rights and duties, and our Creator calls us to form a single human family in which we live as brothers and sisters.

“God’s plan for humanity, the pope reminds us, has implications for every aspect of our lives,” Archbishop Gomez said, “from how we treat one another in our personal relationships, to how we organize and operate our societies and economies.”

Archbishop Gomez continued: “In analyzing conditions in the world today, the Holy Father provides us with a powerful and urgent vision

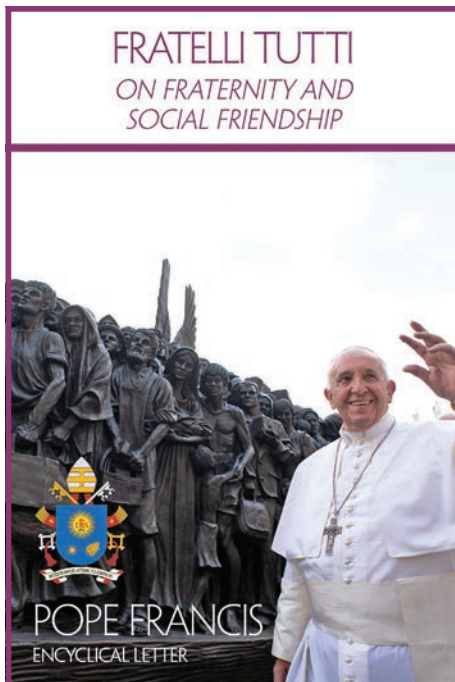
for the moral renewal of politics and political and economic institutions from the local level to the global level, calling us to build a common future that truly serves the good of the human person.”

Everyone should read *“Fratelli tutti.”* It is worthy of St. Francis of Assisi, the pope’s namesake, because its central theme is our unity with all creation and our solidarity with all members of the human family, all who have been made in the image and likeness of God.

Pope Francis concludes his new encyclical with two prayers: “A Prayer to the Creator,” and “An Ecumenical Christian Prayer.” Both call for a renewed sense of sisterhood and brotherhood among all members of the human family. Both seek “a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war” wherein we can discover Christ in each person regardless of who they are or where they come from.

Let’s pray that *“Fratelli tutti”* will inspire us all to open our hearts to the beauty and joy of all God’s creation, and to love all our sisters and brothers in Christ.

—Daniel Conway



## Making Sense Out of Bioethics/Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

# COVID-19 vaccine myths

Several popular myths about COVID-19 vaccines have been gaining traction on social media in recent months, particularly in regard to messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines being developed by Moderna, Sanofi, Pfizer and a handful of other companies. I would like to consider five of these myths.



**Myth 1:** *For vaccines that rely on injecting patients with mRNA, the possible incorporation of these genes into our genetic makeup will fundamentally alter who we are as humans, moving us into a project of Transhumanism, the production of a “Human 2.0,” etc.*

**Reply:** Any incorporation of new genes into our chromosomes from a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine would be an exceedingly rare occurrence, if it were to occur at all. It is actually very difficult to get the genetic information of mRNA to integrate into our chromosomes, partly because this would mean a *reverse* directional flow of the so-called *Central Dogma of Molecular Biology*: our DNA or chromosomes are read (“transcribed”) to produce mRNA, which is then read (“translated”) to make proteins. Even if the accidental and unintentional incorporation of an mRNA message into our chromosomes were somehow to occur following vaccination, this would not mean that we were creating “Human 2.0,” since those genetic changes would not be expected to affect our sex cells, and therefore would not be transmitted to the next generation. Vaccinating people with an mRNA vaccine for COVID-19, therefore, does not imply that we are “remaking man” or heading down the path of Transhumanism.

**Myth 2:** *The rapid pace of clinical trials means that vaccines will be unsafe and/or ineffective.*

**Reply:** This could be a legitimate concern, if proper testing were to be curtailed, or approval for public vaccination campaigns were to be granted ahead of conclusive safety and efficacy testing. Such approval, however, appears highly unlikely when it comes to any of the major national regulatory agencies like the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the European Medicines Agency, or Australia’s Therapeutic Goods Administration (with the possible exception of regulatory agencies in China and/or Russia).

**Myth 3:** *Luciferase is the name of the bioluminescent enzyme contained in the vaccine, which seems connected to the “forces of evil.”*

**Reply:** Luciferase, an enzyme involved in firefly illumination, is being used in various testing and development stages ahead of the production of a COVID-19 vaccine, but is not itself part of the injected material included in human vaccinations. Luciferase is a commonly used biomedical research tool and has been used, for example, in lab animals to study the most effective way to deliver mRNA vaccines, whether

by an injection into the skin, muscle or a vein.

**Myth 4:** *Vaccine manufacturers have no legal repercussions for any bad effects from their vaccines.*

**Reply:** Dr. John Grabenstein, retired global executive director of Medical Affairs for Merck Vaccines, offers the following corrective: “Manufacturers are indemnified for unforeseeable adverse events. They are not indemnified for negligence. This is standard practice.”

With pharmaceutical companies getting ready to immunize hundreds of millions of people, the question of who will cover claims for damages in case of unanticipated future side effects is quite important.

Ruud Dobber, a member of the senior executive team at the pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca, recently argued: “This is a unique situation where we as a company simply cannot take the risk if in ... four years the vaccine is showing side effects. ... In the contracts we have in place, we are asking for indemnification. For most countries it is acceptable to take that risk on their shoulders because it is in their national interest.”

In the U.S., for example, a 2005 law, known as the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness, or PREP Act, provides immunity from liability, apart from any willful misconduct, for products like vaccines that are developed to address a public health emergency.

**Myth 5:** *Using hydrogel nanotechnology to deliver an mRNA vaccine means there will be “big brother” monitoring and the introduction of microchips into the human body.*

**Reply:** No microchips are present in vaccines. Hydrogel nanotechnology refers to the “lipid nanoparticles” which encase the mRNA. This is a glorified way of saying “very small oil droplet.”

Lipids are what our cell membranes are composed of, so when the mRNA vaccine is injected, the lipid of the vaccine particle merges with the lipid of the cell (like two oil droplets merging) and the piece of mRNA is delivered to the inside of the cell (“transfection”).

These “lipid nanoparticles” could theoretically be misused to deliver other controversial substances into the body like microchips, but this does not mean they should not be used for valid purposes, like delivering life-saving mRNA vaccines during a pandemic.

Debunking these various myths does not mean that there aren’t still questions and concerns about proposed COVID-19 vaccines. But we shouldn’t argue against vaccines in ways that make neither ethical nor scientific sense.

(Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale University and did post-doctoral work at Harvard University. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See [www.ncbcenter.org](http://www.ncbcenter.org) and [www.fathertad.com](http://www.fathertad.com).) †

## Letter to the Editor

# Accolades for Mickey Lentz are well-deserved, reader says

The fact that your tribute to archdiocesan chancellor Mickey Lentz took up nearly one-third of the Sept. 25 issue of *The Criterion* was a testimony in itself of what an amazingly valuable guardian angel our archdiocese has been blessed with over the years.

I couldn’t have been happier to see

anyone else receive such accolades. Mickey is a godsend to us.

May we all continue to endeavor to live the life she absolutely exemplifies.

God has blessed us one and all!

Alice Price  
Indianapolis





# Christ the Cornerstone

## Pray for the courage and fidelity to imitate Mary

*“While Jesus was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, ‘Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed.’ He replied, ‘Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it’” (Lk 11:27-28)*

Continuing our October reflections on the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Gospel reading for this Saturday’s Mass (Lk 11:27–28) reminds us that all of us, including Mary, are called to listen to the word of God and to incorporate it fully into our daily lives.

When a woman from the crowd shouts out “Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed” (Lk 11:27), Jesus appears to contradict her. “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it” (Lk 11:28).

St. Augustine, in his treatise, “On Holy Virginity,” made this startling, seemingly contradictory, statement: “Thus also her nearness as a mother would have been of no profit to Mary, had she not borne Christ in her heart after a more blessed manner than in her flesh.” This is not a diminution of Mary’s singular role as the Mother

of God. It is an affirmation of her openness to God’s will—no matter what it cost her. It also calls attention to the witness Mary gave to the true meaning of Christian discipleship.

What Mary did so perfectly when she opened her heart to God’s messenger, and said “yes” to the divine call to sacrificial love, is what each of us is invited to do in our life’s journey. That’s why Jesus emphasizes the blessings that come from fidelity to God’s word. Mary was blessed because of her generous response to the will of God, not simply because she gave birth to God’s Son.

What the woman in the crowd exclaimed is no different from Elizabeth’s greeting to her young cousin, which we repeat each time we pray the Hail Mary: “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb” (Lk 1:42).

There is a singular honor in Mary’s being chosen to be the *Theotókos* (Mother of God), but there is an even greater honor in her free decision to “hear the word of God and observe it.”

Pope St. John Paul II, in “*Redemptoris Mater*” (1987), wrote that “in her new motherhood in the

Spirit, Mary embraces each and every one in the Church, and embraces each and every one through the Church” (#47). “In the expression ‘Blessed are you who believed,’ we can therefore rightly find a kind of ‘key’ which unlocks for us the innermost reality of Mary, whom the angel hailed as ‘full of grace.’ If as ‘full of grace’ she has been eternally present in the mystery of Christ, through faith she became a sharer in that mystery in every extension of her earthly journey” (#19).

In Mary, there is no difference between her role as the Mother of God and her responsibilities as the first Christian disciple. She is blessed (full of grace) both because of who she is and because of what she does.

This kind of absolute consistency is impossible for us. We are sinners, and we always fall short in our efforts to hear God’s word and then do it. That’s why we look to Mary and all the saints as examples.

It’s also why it’s so important for us to encounter Jesus in prayer, in the sacraments (especially the Eucharist) and in service to those in need. As Jesus tells us clearly in Saturday’s Gospel reading, we’re blessed

when we respond to God’s call the way Mary did—freely and without hesitation.

To be successful as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, we must be attentive to God’s will for us. That means tuning out all the distractions that prevent us from hearing God’s word. We also must be willing to sacrifice our own comfort and to do things that would be impossible for us without the help of God’s grace. Fortunately, we can always turn to Mary, our mother, for inspiration and assistance. With the help of her intercession, doors that would otherwise be closed and locked are miraculously opened for us. As long as we follow her instructions to the servants at the wedding feast in Cana—to do whatever Jesus tells us—nothing is impossible for us.

As St. Augustine would remind us, nearness to God profits us nothing unless we also bear Christ in our hearts and express his self-sacrificing love in our actions. Let’s pray for the courage and fidelity to imitate Mary. Let’s be attentive to God’s word, and let’s strive to observe it in everything we say and do. †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## Recemos por el valor y la fidelidad para imitar a María

*“Mientras Jesús decía estas cosas, una de las mujeres en la multitud alzó la voz y dijo: ‘¡Dichosa la matriz que te concibió y los senos que te criaron!’ ‘Al contrario,’ le contestó Jesús, ‘dichosos los que oyen la palabra de Dios y la guardan’” (Lc 11:27-28).*

Continuando con nuestras reflexiones de octubre sobre la Santísima Virgen María, la lectura del Evangelio de la misa de este sábado (Lc 11:27-28) nos recuerda que todos nosotros, incluida María, estamos llamados a escuchar la Palabra de Dios y a incorporarla plenamente a nuestra vida cotidiana.

Cuando una mujer de la multitud grita: “¡Dichosa la matriz que te concibió y los senos que te criaron!” (Lc 11:27), Jesús parece contradecirla. “Al contrario, dichosos los que oyen la palabra de Dios y la guardan” (Lc 11:28).

San Agustín, en su tratado *Sobre la Santa Virginidad*, planteó la siguiente de declaración que resultó a la vez sorprendente y contradictoria: “Así también su cercanía como Madre no habría sido de ninguna utilidad para María, si no hubiera llevado a Cristo en su corazón de una manera más bendita que en su carne.” Esto no le resta en modo alguno al singular papel

de María como Madre de Dios, sino que es una afirmación de su apertura a la voluntad de Dios, sin importar lo que le cueste. También destaca el testimonio que María dio del verdadero significado del discipulado cristiano.

En la travesía de nuestra vida se nos invita a cada uno de nosotros a hacer lo que María hizo tan perfectamente cuando abrió su corazón al mensajero de Dios, y dijo “sí” al llamado divino al amor sacrificial. Por eso Jesús hace énfasis en las bendiciones que provienen de la fidelidad a la Palabra de Dios. María fue bendecida por su generosa respuesta a la voluntad de Dios, no solamente porque dio a luz al Hijo de Dios.

Lo que la mujer de la multitud exclamó no es diferente del saludo de Isabel a su joven prima, que repetimos cada vez que rezamos el Ave María: “¡Bendita tú entre las mujeres, y bendito el fruto de tu vientre!” (Lc 1:42).

Hay un honor singular en el hecho de que María haya sido elegida para ser la *Theotókos* (Madre de Dios), pero hay un honor aún mayor en su libre decisión de “escuchar la palabra de Dios y observarla.”

En su encíclica “*Redemptoris Mater*” (1987), el papa san Juan Pablo II escribió que “con su nueva

maternidad en el Espíritu, a todos y a cada uno en la Iglesia, acoge también a todos y a cada uno por medio de la Iglesia” (#47). “En la expresión ‘feliz la que ha creído’ podemos encontrar como una clave que nos abre a la realidad íntima de María, a la que el ángel ha saludado como ‘llena de gracia.’ Si como a ‘llena de gracia’ ha estado presente eternamente en el misterio de Cristo, por la fe se convertía en partícipe en toda la extensión de su itinerario terreno” (#19).

En María, no hay diferencia entre su papel de Madre de Dios y sus responsabilidades como primera discípula cristiana. Está bendecida (llena de gracia) tanto por lo que es como por lo que hace.

Este tipo de constancia absoluta nos resulta imposible. Somos pecadores, y siempre nos quedamos cortos en nuestros esfuerzos para escuchar la palabra de Dios y luego ponerla en práctica. Por eso vemos a María y a todos los santos como ejemplos.

También es por eso que es tan importante para nosotros encontrar a Jesús en la oración, en los sacramentos (especialmente la Eucaristía) y en el servicio a los necesitados. Como Jesús nos dice claramente en la lectura del Evangelio del sábado, somos

bendecidos cuando respondemos al llamado de Dios de la manera en que María lo hizo, libremente y sin vacilación.

Para tener éxito como discípulos misioneros de Jesucristo, debemos estar atentos a la voluntad de Dios para nosotros. Eso implica desconectar todas las distracciones que nos impiden escuchar la palabra de Dios. También debemos estar dispuestos a sacrificar nuestra propia comodidad y hacer cosas que nos resultarían imposibles sin la ayuda de la gracia de Dios. Afortunadamente, siempre podemos recurrir a María, nuestra madre, para que nos inspire y nos ayude. Con la ayuda de su intercesión, se nos abren milagrosamente las puertas que de otra manera estarían cerradas y trabadas. Mientras sigamos sus instrucciones como los sirvientes en el banquete de bodas en Caná, para hacer lo que Jesús nos diga, nada es imposible para nosotros.

Como san Agustín nos recuerda, la cercanía a Dios no nos beneficia en nada a menos que también llevemos a Cristo en nuestros corazones y expresemos su amor abnegado en nuestras acciones. Recemos por el valor y la fidelidad para imitar a María. Estemos atentos a la palabra de Dios, y esforcémonos por observarla en todo lo que digamos y hagamos. †



# Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/events](http://www.archindy.org/events).

## October 13

**Immigration Virtual Roundtable series: "Know Your Rights"** (offered in English and Spanish), second of four stand-alone sessions (Oct. 20, 27), sponsored by the archdiocese's Parish Social Ministry, 7-8 p.m., existing rights regardless of immigration status, free, registration required. Registration, information: [immigration.eventbrite.com](http://immigration.eventbrite.com), [sreising@archindy.org](mailto:sreising@archindy.org) or 317-236-2457.

Sisters of Providence **virtual "Act justly, Love tenderly, Walk humbly" Monthly**

**Taizé Prayer Service**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence. Link: [cutt.ly/Taize](http://cutt.ly/Taize). Information: 812-535-2952, [provctr@spsmw.org](mailto:provctr@spsmw.org).

## October 15

St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information:

317-574-8898 or [www.catholiccemeteries.cc](http://www.catholiccemeteries.cc).

## October 16

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **"Passion and Prayer" Christ-centered marriage enrichment conference: "Sacramental Marriage,"** 7-9 p.m., Msgr. Mark Svarczkopf presenting, space limited to 20 couples, \$20 per couple option for online participation with donation at [facebook.com/OurLadyGreenwood](https://facebook.com/OurLadyGreenwood), registration required either way. Registration, information: Tom and Marcy Renken,

[olgmarriageinistry@gmail.com](mailto:olgmarriageinistry@gmail.com) or 317-489-1557.

Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Blvd., Mt. St. Francis. **Chik N' Fish To-Go Dinners**, fried chicken or fish, mashed potatoes, green beans, coleslaw, roll, homemade dessert, \$13, order by 5 p.m. Thur. for Fri. 4-6 p.m. pick-up. Order at [mountsaintfrancis.org/dinners](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/dinners) or 812-923-8817.

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 East 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange "Being raised Catholic: Persevering**

**through COVID and Crisis,"** 7 a.m., Denney Sponsel, CEO and owner of RJE Business Interiors presenting, Mass, buffet breakfast and program., \$15 members/\$21 non-members. Information and registration: [catholicbusinessexchange.org](http://catholicbusinessexchange.org).

## October 16-23

**St. Vincent de Paul Society of Indianapolis "Struttin' Our Stuff" virtual silent auction**, more than 150 items. Registration, information and option to donate available starting Oct. 10 at [www.svdvindy.org/fashion](http://www.svdvindy.org/fashion). Questions: Jenny Matthews, 317-289-3324

or [jmattbogey@gmail.com](mailto:jmattbogey@gmail.com); Mary Ann Klein, 317-796-6325 or [Klein.jm@yahoo.com](mailto:Klein.jm@yahoo.com).

## October 20

**Immigration Virtual Roundtable series: "Unaccompanied Minors,"** third of four stand-alone sessions (Oct. 27), sponsored by the archdiocese's Parish Social Ministry, 7-8 p.m., understanding their journey, information on resource reunifying families; free, registration required. Registration, information: [immigration.eventbrite.com](http://immigration.eventbrite.com), [sreising@archindy.org](mailto:sreising@archindy.org) or 317-236-2457. †

# Wedding ANNIVERSARIES

## 65 Years



**RAYMOND AND SHARON (HOOVER) CLINE**, members of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Oct. 8.

The couple was married in St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on Oct. 8, 1955.

They have one child: Cynthia Kump. The couple also has four grandchildren. †

## 50 Years



**ROBERT AND CATHERINE (MEGEL) BRANHAM**, members of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 12.

The couple was married in St. Joseph Church in Jennings County on Sept. 12, 1970.

They have three children: Teresa Flaspohler, Joseph and Mark Branham. The couple also has eight grandchildren. †



**THOMAS AND NOLA (HAVENS) GREGG**, members of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 3.

The couple was married civilly on Oct. 3, 1970, but later had their marriage convalidated at St. Michael the Archangel

Church in December of 1984.

They have three children: Jennifer Anderson, David and Thomas Gregg, II.

The couple also has five grandchildren. †



**TEDDY AND RUTH ANN (LAKES) REUSS**, members of St. Michael Parish in Brookville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 26.

The couple was married in St. Michael Church in Brookville on Sept. 26, 1970.

They have two children: Craig and Jason Reuss.

The couple also has five grandchildren. †

## 60 Years



**DALE AND SUSAN (FOWLER) RUDICILL**, former longtime members of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis and now members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in The Villages, Fla., celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 27.

The couple was married in Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Indianapolis on Aug. 27, 1960.

They have three children: Lisa, Sheryl and Richard. The couple also has six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Their anniversary was celebrated with a surprise "golf-cart drive-by" from their friends and neighbors. †



**CARL AND KATHLEEN (SIATKA) CHERNICH**, members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 19.

The couple was married in St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church in Chicago, Ill., on Sept. 19, 1970.

They have three children: Sandra Balint, David and Michael Chernich. The couple also has five grandchildren. †



**JIM AND ROSE (MESSMER) WATHEN**, members of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 3.

The couple was married in St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church in Floyd County on Oct. 3, 1970.

They have two children: Brian and Doug Wathen.

The couple also has three grandchildren. †



**Richard, Sr. and Suzanne (Schuler) Ullrich**, members of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Aurora, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 13.

The couple was married in St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church in Aurora on Aug. 13, 1960.

They have four children: Suzanna Jameson, Diane, Gregory and Richard Ullrich, Jr.

The couple also has three grandchildren. †



**JACK AND RITA (KEENE) FERKINHOFF**, members of St. Maurice Parish in Napoleon, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 10.

The couple was married in St. Louis Church in Batesville on Oct. 10, 1970.

They have three children: Andrea, Kristina and Zachary Ferkinhoff. The couple also has five grandchildren. †



**WILLIAM AND CONSTANCE (KNECHT) WINTZ**, members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 17.

The couple was married in St. Peter Church in Franklin County on Oct. 17, 1970.

They have two

children: Rebecca and Douglas Wintz.

The couple also has three grandchildren. †



**MICHAEL AND DEBORAH (BEVINGTON) FOX**, members of St. Ann Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 10.

The couple was married in St. Mark Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Ind., on Oct. 10, 1970.

They have two children: Dawn Sekulich and Shane Fox. The couple also has six grandchildren. †



# HOLY ANGELS

continued from page 1

from *Generation Growth* is Stephen Ritz, the guy in the cheese hat, an educator from the Bronx borough of New York City.

Ritz has created a school-based program that uses urban agriculture to improve student performance and introduce children in low-income families to healthy foods while also striving to “transform communities that are fragmented and marginalized into neighborhoods that are inclusive and thriving.”

*Generation Growth*—which will be showcased during the Heartland Film Festival in Indianapolis on Oct. 8-18—captures the inspiration and the outcomes of Ritz’s efforts to plant the seeds of his program across the United States, including at Holy Angels, the only Catholic school featured in the film.

Asked to explain his decision to include Holy Angels in the film, Ritz notes, “When I set out as a teacher—and then sought to scale our program—my goal is to always create settings and opportunities that I would want for my own child. When I entered Holy Angels, I knew this was a place I would be comfortable with for my own child. That is the litmus test for excellence.”

For Ritz, there is also the test for education in the United States, a test that challenges each person and community.

“For me, the greatest resource in the world is the untapped potential of communities like mine,” he says about his economically-struggling Bronx area, similar to the area around Holy Angels. “And more often than not, those children who are on the fringe possess the potential to do amazing things. What we need to do is to make meaningful connections with children. So they want to absorb content that’s going to change their lives.”

“When you get to the fact that all children need to be treated the way you want to treat your own children, and when they feel that love, that’s it, man. The doors are open. It’s game on.”

That “game” at Holy Angels—and at schools across the archdiocese, Indiana and the country—comes with high stakes and sobering realities about the connection between nutritional food, healthy children and hopeful futures.

## ‘It’s had an incredible impact’

In the film, the extent of that reality is shared by Kate Howe, managing director of the Indy Hunger Network.

“There are about 200,000 people using

food assistance in our county here in Indianapolis,” she says. “And really the cause is poverty. When people don’t have enough to eat, they don’t perform well at work, they don’t perform well at school. Kids when they’re growing and their brains are developing, if they don’t have sufficient nutrition, it can affect them for a lifetime.”

Ritz uses a high-energy, school-based, urban-agriculture approach as a counter to that reality. In a meeting with Holy Angels’ teachers in the film, he explains the goals of his nine-week program in which he uses tower gardens—and the process of growth from planting seeds to harvesting healthy vegetables—to teach lessons in science, math and language arts.

“You are not going to cure hunger with this thing,” he tells the teachers. “You are not going to cure diabetes. But you are going to pique children’s curiosity and get them excited about healthy food.”

For Holy Angels principal Justin Armitage, his excitement comes in the impact the program has had on the students since it began in 2018 at this Notre Dame ACE Academy.

“It’s had an incredible impact,” says Armitage, in his third year of leading the school. “I’ve been in education for almost 15 years now. Being part of this program has shifted our culture so much quicker than I ever thought it would. Part of it is because the kids are so engaged in their learning. Attendance rates have gone up to where we’re about 95 percent each day. Test scores have increased. The children are doing so much better in school. They want to be here. They want to participate.”

Ritz’s Green Bronx Machine program has been so successful at Holy Angels—where students also are provided breakfast, lunch and dinner through a federal government initiative—that it’s been expanded into the curriculum from kindergarten to sixth grade.

Armitage has also tied the program into the faith foundation of Holy Angels. Last year’s theme for the school was “Rooted in Christ.” This year, it’s “Harvesting Hope.”

“There are so many biblical references to planting a seed and sowing and the fruits of labor,” he says. “We tie all of those things into everything we do. It’s especially important here at Holy Angels because so few of our kids are actually Catholic.”

“We use this fun curriculum to build in that moral foundation and tie into our religious beliefs. We have third- and fourth-graders now who are talking about being baptized because of the things they’re learning. They literally see the cycle of life in front of them. It’s just opened so many discussions in the



Justin Armitage, principal of Holy Angels School in Indianapolis, shows one of the community garden boxes that have been created in honor of the parish’s late pastor, Father Kenneth Taylor. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

religion classes. It’s been really cool in that aspect.”

“Really cool” might also be the best way to describe the involvement of the many Holy Angels’ students who are featured in the film.

## A community celebration

“The kids loved it,” Armitage says. “They thought they were like movie stars. Our halls were filled with a movie producer, director, cameras, lighting. They got to see their teachers getting interviewed in the classroom in the big, bright lights. The students came in one morning, and the film crew was at the front door filming them as they came through the door.”

Now fifth-graders, Rion Simpson and Jamari Briscoe are among the students who were featured when the film crew came to Holy Angels once a month during the 2018-19 school year and the beginning of the 2019-20 school year.

“At first, it was scary watching cameras watch us as we were learning,” says Rion, who is 10 now. “At first, it was stage fright, and then I got used to it. I love nature. I just like to be with plants. I thought of it as a fun way of learning.”

In the film, Jamari is captured sharing part of his ode to the arugula he grew in class.

“I was worried I might mess up,” says Jamari, who is also 10. “I kind of like being the center of attention. Because the more attention you get, the more people know you.”

Both students are excited to see the film, and Armitage is trying to make that happen for the school community, but it’s a challenge in these times of social distancing because of COVID-19 concerns.

When that opportunity arises, the principal hopes everyone will focus on another special scene from the film. That’s the scene that captures the community celebration that happened after the students harvested their plants.

“We threw a harvest party in 2019,” Armitage says. “We took the things we grew off our three tower gardens, and we made four different salads and served them to the families and the parishioners. So it’s really brought the community together, too.”

That’s the one goal that guides him after the school’s two primary goals of helping students get to college and heaven.

“We really want to revitalize and transform this community,” he says. “It starts within the walls of this school.”

It also extends to an area behind the school. There, nine garden boxes have been created in the shape of a cross—a tribute to the life and legacy of the parish’s late pastor, Father Kenneth Taylor.

Armitage knows that “Father K.T.” would embrace this goal from Ritz: “We are very much about engaging the next generation of healthy students, healthy teachers and healthy communities to grow something stronger.”

“Hope is what we need to lean into,” Armitage says. “There’s so much potential in this community if people pitch in and work together to make it great.”

(As part of the Heartland Film Festival, *Generation Growth* will have its “red carpet” premiere showing at Tibbs Drive-In in Indianapolis at 7:15 p.m. on Oct. 11 on screen 2.) †

# Trump administration drops refugee cap to historic low

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The steep slope, appearing almost as a vertical line, is a stunning mark by the Trump administration on what was once a refugee program recognized around the world as a model to welcome the tyrannized and persecuted masses.

Late on Sept. 30, the administration announced it would bring the refugee cap—the maximum number of displaced people the country decides to resettle in a federal fiscal year—to a historic low: 15,000.

The average during presidencies of both Republicans and Democrats had been around 95,000. But the announcement on the new cap doesn’t mean the bad news for refugees, or organizations that help them, ended there.

“It’s not official; the president still has to sign it,” so no refugees can enter the country until that happens, said Ashley Feasley, director of policy for Migration and Refugee Services at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). “I have no idea when he’ll sign it.”

Feasley said there’s a “pause” until Oct. 26, which means nothing will happen until then.

In a joint statement released on Oct. 2, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the USCCB, and Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington said they “continue to be disappointed by the Trump administration’s diminishment of the U.S. refugee resettlement program.”

“These decisions have a tangible impact on those fleeing religious persecution and other vulnerable families in need of refuge,” they said. “While refugees will thankfully be allowed to seek refuge here in the United States in 2021, the low number of admissions, given the global need and the capacity and wealth of the United States, is heartbreaking.”

They called on Congress to “seriously examine

the administration’s proposal and strongly encourage the president to increase the eventual presidential determination significantly.

“Welcoming refugees is an act of love and hope. By helping to resettle the most vulnerable, we are living out our Christian faith as Jesus has challenged us to do,” Archbishop Gomez and Bishop Dorsonville added, pointing to Pope Francis’ words to Congress during his U.S. visit five years ago: “Let us remember the Golden Rule: ‘Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.’ ... The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us.”

“In the same spirit,” the USCCB leaders said, “we urge the administration to continue to offer welcome to refugees to our country. We can and must lead by example in the defense of all human life, including those fleeing persecution.”

The low refugee number was a gut-punch to those who already were bracing for bad news, but now they worry the administration’s stalling action could put even more lives in danger as people who need refuge will be left out.

“The number is terrible,” said Feasley, in an Oct. 1 interview with Catholic News Service. “It’s a continued cutting of refugees allowed to come to the U.S. in a moment of global need. We’re seeing increase refugee flows from a number of places, including places that the administration is very much taking an active policy role in, like Venezuela.”

Though a media note released around midnight late on Sept. 30 mentions Venezuela, and “our support for the legitimate government of Venezuela in the face of the illegitimate Maduro regime’s tyranny,” it says nothing about how the U.S. will help the 4 million people who have been displaced from the South American country, which finds itself in conflict.

“There’s a mention, but no action to help,” Feasley said.

The announcement is a continuation of a downward trend, one starkly visible in a graph by the Migration Policy Institute that shows the ebbs and flows of the 40-year-old program, with a steep drop starting in fiscal 2017, when President Donald J. Trump took office.

The cut was a further blow to agencies, such as Catholic Charities, who along with secular and other faith organizations, including the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, have for decades helped populations under siege resettle in the U.S.

“This is just a further death by a thousand paper cuts in terms of the capacity of a great network,” Feasley said. “Not just Catholic but interfaith and secular groups in partnership with the federal government that was recognized as model around the world.”

Feasley also said it cuts programs that had allowed the Church to practice its long tradition of helping the stranger.

“It means a lot for Catholics as our faith tradition has a long history, a noted history, of being forced to be on the move, being refugees but also of a people who are welcoming, of accompanying others who are forced to leave,” she said.

“From Jesus onward, we see stories of this in the Bible,” she continued. “Additionally, Pope Francis has mentioned this as one of his issues of great focus and understanding ... recognizing those who have been forced out of their homes, fleeing persecution or circumstances beyond their control.”

The announcement came after the Catholic Church celebrated Sept. 27 as the 2020 World Day of Migrants and Refugees. †



## Respect Life Award winners dedicated to ‘changing culture into a culture of life’

By Natalie Hoefler

Each year, the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity calls upon Catholics in central and southern Indiana to nominate individuals or couples for the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Respect Life Award.

This year’s winners are Eric Slaughter of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, and Maria Guadalupe (“Lupita”) Aguayo and her husband Mario Soberanos Armenta of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis.

“The 2020-21 Respect Life theme ‘Live the Gospel of Life’ is fitting for this year’s award recipients,” said Brie Anne Varick, the archdiocese’s Human Life and Dignity office director. She recognized the winners during the Respect Life Mass on Oct. 4 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

“They not only live the Gospel of life, but lead others to recognize the dignity of the human person in the most vulnerable, and dedicate their lives to changing our culture into a culture of life.”

Below are the inspiring stories of one man who helps other men avoid regretting lost fatherhood through abortion, and a couple who serve women in unplanned pregnancies and migrants on Indianapolis’ east side.

(To hear Varick’s comments and see the recognition of the winners during the Oct. 4 Respect Life Sunday Mass, go to [cutt.ly/RespectLifeMass](http://cutt.ly/RespectLifeMass).) †



Brie Anne Varick, director of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity, right, poses with this year’s winners of the office’s Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Respect Life Award—Eric Slaughter, left, and Maria Guadalupe (“Lupita”) Aguayo and her husband Mario Soberanos Armenta, center—at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis after the annual Respect Life Mass on Oct. 4. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

## Father of aborted child seeks to heal, save other men from ‘lost fatherhood’

By Natalie Hoefler

Years ago, when Eric Slaughter’s then-girlfriend wanted to abort their baby, he helped pay for the procedure.

Now he is on a mission: “I want to help men who have been told to be silent and bullied into suppressing their feelings to understand they have a right to feel the loss and shed tears for their lost little ones, and [to let them know] that they have a right and responsibility to speak up and protect their baby and the mother, even when the law of man denies them.”

Catholic since 2004, the member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis says he is thankful for the love for Christ he developed through his former Baptist faith.

He cites two women for his passion in the pro-life movement: Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, former director of what was then called the archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life, and former Great Lakes Gabriel Project director Eileen Hartman.

In the early 2000s, Slaughter delivered

his post-abortion testimony as a part of a Silent No More rally in a park in downtown Indianapolis, he recalled. It was the first time he publicly shared “the story of my regret for my lost fatherhood.”

Following the rally, Sister Diane encouraged him to attend the archdiocese’s first Rachel’s Vineyard post-abortion healing retreat.

“With the help of the wonderful people I met through the retreat, and by God’s grace, I accepted his forgiveness and found the courage to speak out” against abortion, he said.

Helping with Project Rachel Post-Abortive Healing Ministry, including Rachel’s Network and Rachel’s Vineyard Healing Retreats, is now “most dear to his heart,” said Brie Anne Varick, director of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity, as she introduced Slaughter as one of this year’s Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Respect Life Award winners during the Respect Life Mass on Oct. 4 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

“Through his own journey of healing, he has shared his post-abortive testimony of how Jesus Christ ... redeemed his lost fatherhood.”

Slaughter is also active with several other parish and community efforts to promote life and peace.

At the parish level, Slaughter has been actively involved in Pro-Life Ministry at Holy Rosary for the past eight years and is currently the parish’s Respect Life Coordinator. He also helps coordinate a Pro-Life Lecture Series in collaboration with St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

In the broader community, he helps organize the annual Indiana March for Life, is involved with the 40 Days for Life campaign and supports the Great Lakes Gabriel Project.

“Evangelizing the Gospel of life within the Black community,” is important to Slaughter, who is Black, said Varick. He staffs the pro-life booths at the annual Indiana Black Expo and the Indiana State Fair.

Religious liberty and peace are also causes Slaughter actively supports. He helps organize neighborhood parish rosary walks for religious freedom, and this year began coordinating Soldiers for Peace rosary walks, calling on the faithful to walk the streets of downtown Indianapolis praying for an end to violence.

Even as he mourns his aborted daughter and a miscarried grandchild, Slaughter enjoys being a stepfather to his wife Rebecca’s daughter and grandfather to his four living grandchildren.

“While it is nice to receive this award and I am thankful,” said Slaughter of the archdiocese’s recognition for his pro-life efforts, “it unfortunately means that it is necessary to remind people of the battle that continues to be fought both physically and spiritually—a battle in which lives and souls are at stake.”

(For more information on Rosary Walks for Peace in Indianapolis, go to [cutt.ly/SoldiersForPeaceIndy](http://cutt.ly/SoldiersForPeaceIndy).) †

## Couple sees award as nod from God to ‘defend me in precious unborn lives’

By Natalie Hoefler

It is difficult for Maria Guadalupe (“Lupita”) Aguayo to recall ever not being involved in the pro-life movement.

“God gave me the gift of being born into a pro-life family,” she said of her childhood in Guadalajara, Mexico. Her parents led pro-life marches there, and she learned “to defend the unborn regardless of the consequences.”

After two months of marriage and six weeks pregnant, then-22-year-old Aguayo was abandoned by her husband. She raised her daughter alone for seven years before receiving an annulment and marrying Mario Soberanos Armenta from Sonora, Mexico.

It was through his wife that Armenta “started being aware about the sanctity of unborn life,” he said.

That belief and their Catholic faith were foundations for the couple in raising their firstborn child, Maria de los Angeles, whom they called Angelita. She was born with Trisomy 13 or Patau Syndrome, a genetic condition which causes severe mental and physical issues.

“Although advised to abort their daughter, ... they chose to give [her] life and joyfully cherished her,” said Brie Anne Varick, director of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity. She was

describing the couple prior to recognizing them as winners of the office’s Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Respect Life Award. Varick made the comments during the Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 4.

Just six weeks prior, Angelita died on Aug. 22 at the age of 13. She joined three other children the couple lost through miscarriages.

“She taught me that every life has worth,” said Aguayo of Angelita. “That each person is created with tenderness in secret. There are no mistakes. It is God’s perfect plan, and that through special beings, with a different design, our Lord loves us and invites us to serve him in the most vulnerable.”

The couple, members of St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis, have four living children.

And like Aguayo’s parents, she and Soberanos are teaching them by example to respect and protect life.

In 2015 during a retreat, Aguayo sensed a call “not only to save babies, but to save souls from abortion.”

With Armenta’s support, her mission began as a parish ministry praying outside of the Indianapolis Women’s Center abortion facility on the city’s east side.

“Seeing the need presented by the

moms, we decided to help with diapers and clothes to the moms who needed it,” said Aguayo. “In 2017, we went from being a parish group to forming Provida Indianapolis, a non-profit organization.”

The organization gathers people to pray outside of the Indianapolis Planned Parenthood abortion facility for the fall and spring 40 Days for Life campaigns, and organizes living Stations of the Cross there during Holy Week. The current fall 40 Days for Life campaign runs through Nov. 1.

Through Provida Indianapolis and its volunteers, the couple “serves their migrant community assuring that ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] detainees have access to pastoral care, [and] provide clothing and supplies for migrant children in foster care whose parents have disappeared,” said Varick.

The ministry “serves mothers and families in [the couple’s] community ... and has saved many from the heartbreak of an abortion,” she added.

Mothers like the teen whom Aguayo helped choose life, accompanying her on her journey through the ultrasound to the birth of her baby boy.

The couple stood by her side as godparents to the baby during his baptism just one week after Angelita died.

“God is clear: ‘You shall not kill,’ ”

Armenta said. “Moreover, because the unborn cannot defend him- or herself, they need advocates, as Jesus advocated for people who were going to be killed and saved them, like the woman caught committing adultery.”

Even a fire that destroyed the organization’s building on July 29 has not caused the couple to waver. Through God’s providence, said Aguayo, they broke ground for a new structure on Aug. 12.

Armenta said receiving the Respect Life Award is “like God is saying to us, ‘Go ahead, this is the mission I have given you. Go on and defend me in precious unborn lives.’ ”

Aguayo agreed. “Now, even living in my grief six weeks after our daughter María de los Angeles died, there is a clear certainty in [the award] I am receiving today,” she said. “More than an award, it is an alliance.

“It seals a commitment that I accept voluntarily and by the grace of God our Lord, in which my life will continue to speak for the one who has no voice, and to pray so that temptations do not take away more souls.”

(For more information on Provida Indianapolis, go to [cutt.ly/ProvidaIndianapolis](http://cutt.ly/ProvidaIndianapolis).) †

## Standing up for life around central and southern Indiana

Criterion staff report

October is Respect Life Month in the Catholic Church. The first Sunday of the month is celebrated as Respect Life Sunday, which occurred this year on Oct. 4. On that day each year, Catholics gather at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis for a Respect Life Mass, and Catholics and Christians throughout

central and southern Indiana join together for Life Chain, a peaceful, hour-long public witness of quiet prayer for respect for life at all stages organized through the National Life Chain organization.

Life Chain events were held in the archdiocese this year in Bloomington, Brazil, Brookville, Columbus, Greencastle, Greensburg, Lawrenceburg, Spencer County and Terre Haute. †



Participants in the Greencastle Life Chain event on Oct. 4 pose for a photo outside of St. Paul the Apostle Church in Greencastle. (Submitted photo by Mary Howard)



Stella Masaka, a member of St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute, holds a sign outside of the Vigo County Courthouse during the city’s Life Chain event on Oct. 4. (Submitted photo by Tom McBroom)



Father Daniel Bedel joins in the stand for life at the Terre Haute Life Chain event on Oct. 4. He is pastor of St. Margaret Mary and St. Patrick parishes in Terre Haute. (Submitted photo by Tom McBroom)



Participants in the Columbus Life Chain event line a street in the city on Oct. 4. (Submitted photo)



With St. Charles Borromeo Church in the background, participants in the Bloomington Life Chain event on Oct. 4 share their message of life with the public. (Submitted photo)



Maria Hernandez and her husband Daniel Cabrera, members of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville, pose with their sixth child—due in December—at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis after the Respect Life Mass on Oct. 4. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Rob and Lauren Mersch pose with their baby Elaine during the Brookville Life Chain event. All are members of the Oratory of SS. Philomena and Cecilia Church in Oak Forest. (Submitted photo by Jerry Mersch)



Shannon Murphy, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, holds her daughter Penny, 3, during the Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 4. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

## RESPECT

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threatens the dignity of each person, said Archbishop Thompson, “namely, abortion, racism, human trafficking, all forms of abuse, unjust discrimination, capital punishment, euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide.”

Some actions that might not be considered as grave as those listed still attacked the dignity of others, he noted.

“We must also speak out against the impact of gossip, shaming, bullying and intimidation that contribute to the growing struggles of polarization, violence, mental illness, depression, despair and suicide,” said the archbishop.

“We do well to keep before us that our real battle is not so much with another person as with sin and evil.”

### ‘Remain Christ-centered’ to witness well

To apply this year’s “Live the Gospel of Life” theme requires Catholics to be Christ-centered, said Archbishop Thompson. “Remaining Christ-centered enables us to look upon one another as brothers and sisters rather than as a threat, burden or enemy.

“Remaining Christ-centered in proclaiming the Gospel of life must be

rooted in prayer, both individually and communally, drawing from the wisdom of God’s word and sacramental grace, especially in the real presence of Jesus Christ’s Body and Blood in the Eucharist.”

Living the Gospel of life also requires “advocacy, accompaniment, dialogue and encounter,” the archbishop noted.

“May our witness bear the good fruit of mercy, compassion, encouragement, understanding and reconciliation. Let us strive to be Christ to others and embrace Christ in others. May our every effort to protect and defend human life be founded on Christ the cornerstone.”

Time was set aside toward the end of the Mass to recognize this year’s Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Respect Life Award winners chosen by the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity. (See articles on opposite page)

Then Archbishop Thompson offered the final blessing to the congregation and those watching the livestream of the Mass, calling on them and all to go forth and “live the Gospel of life.”

(To view the Mass and listen to the archbishop’s homily, go to [cutt.ly/RespectLifeMass](http://cutt.ly/RespectLifeMass). For resources on this year’s Respect Life theme



Deacon Nathan Schallert, left, master of ceremonies Loral Tansy, Deacon Stephen Hodges (partially obscured) and Msgr. Mark A. Svarczkopf look on as Archbishop Charles C. Thompson elevates the Blessed Sacrament during the Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 4. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



## Mass offers prayer, sacraments as ‘great aids’ for those with mental health issues

By Natalie Hoefler

It was Sept. 15, the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. A painting of the Blessed Mother, tears streaming from her eyes, stood near the pulpit where Msgr. William F. Stumpf delivered his homily.

“Mary knew firsthand the struggles and pain that life can bring,” the archdiocese’s vicar general said. “As our Mother, she cares deeply about the burdens and trials we face.”

The message resonated with the nearly 60 people gathered for the archdiocese’s Healing Mass for Mental Health Awareness.

The Mass, which is celebrated annually around central and southern Indiana, was held this year at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. An additional 34 people watched the Mass online.

During his homily, Msgr. Stumpf empathized with the congregants.

### ‘This painful cross’

“The focus of our liturgy today and our time together, which centers on the struggles and impact of mental illness, is deeply personal,” he said.

He shared how a person dear to him struggled periodically with depression.

“I understand firsthand how challenging and painful mental illness can be for the patient and for those who love them,” he said. “And I also know that its effects touch all aspects of a person’s life—even their spiritual life.”

While awareness of mental health issues “has grown exponentially,” such issues are still misunderstood, and society often stigmatizes those who “suffer carrying this painful cross,” Msgr. Stumpf said.

“But amid those misunderstandings, our Church reminds us powerfully that mental illness is not a sign of insufficient faith or weakness of will. ... Indeed, men and women of heroic holiness—men and women like St. Thérèse of Lisieux [and] St. Benedict—suffered from psychological wounds.”

Christianity does not promise a life with no pain or suffering, he noted.

“However, faith, prayer and the sacraments are great aids for healing and the source of much comfort in coping with mental illness or any illness,” he added.

Catholics are called to care for others, to help “carry their burdens and crosses,” said Msgr. Stumpf.

“Thus, we have a duty to reach out to those who struggle with mental illness and to accompany them—all the while doing everything we can to heal or diminish their suffering.”

### ‘We are not alone’

Such are the goals of the archdiocese’s annual Healing Mass.

This year’s event included opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation, a personal blessing from Msgr. Stumpf, and for individuals or groups to be prayed over by two-person prayer teams.

“We wanted people to have a full experience of healing with multiple sacraments available,” said Brie Anne Varick, coordinator of the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity. The office’s Mental Health Ministry sponsors the annual Mass.

This year saw the highest turnout in the event’s four-year history, perhaps because of the pandemic, said Varick.

“We had this [Mass] planned long before we knew about COVID-19,” she said. “I think we were in need of healing before COVID, and [the pandemic] just kind of brought it to the surface. ... Anything people were struggling with before is now exponentially worse.”

Add to the mix isolation, restrictions on socializing,

anxiety regarding the coronavirus and the short-term inability to receive the sacraments, and the result is “a real crisis” for mental health, said Varick.

Ed Cahill agreed.

“It’s a complex issue,” said the member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood. “We all have ups and downs in our lives, and we need each other to just push through it.”

Cahill worshipped at the Mass with five of his siblings. Noting that other members of the family have dealt with mental health issues, he was grateful for the healing Mass.

“Things like this help us understand how we can be more compassionate toward those people,” he said. “Through [the archdiocese’s] outreach and ministries and Masses, it helps us better understand the issue and gives us ways to be there for each other.”

Katie Warrenburg, a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, witnessed the positive effects of the event. The artist of the Our Lady of Sorrows painting displayed during the Mass also served as one of the prayer team members.

“They seemed lighter, their faces not so tense, smiling,” she said of those over whom she prayed. “We just need to be reminded every once in a while that we are not alone.”

(To view the Healing Mass for Mental Health Awareness Month, a recording will be available for a limited time at [cutt.ly/HealingMass](http://cutt.ly/HealingMass). For more information on the archdiocese’s Mental Health Ministry, go to [cutt.ly/ArchIndyMentalHealthMinistry](http://cutt.ly/ArchIndyMentalHealthMinistry) or call the Office of Human Life and Dignity at 317-236-1543 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1543.) †



A couple receives a blessing from Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan vicar general, after the Healing Mass for Mental Health Awareness on Sept. 15 in St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)



Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan vicar general, offers a homily during the archdiocese’s annual Healing Mass for Mental Health Awareness on Sept. 15 at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The Mass was held on the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, depicted in a painting to his left. (Photos by Natalie Hoefler)

## Documentary reveals the amazing life of the inspiring ‘rosary priest’

By Ann Margaret Lewis

I’m embarrassed to admit it, but when I heard the title of the film, *Pray: The Story of Patrick Peyton*, I said, “Who?”

Now having seen this award-winning documentary, I am not only embarrassed but angry at myself. Surely my late parents knew about “the rosary priest” Father Peyton and mentioned him to me,

but I must have let it evaporate from my memory.

I had heard the phrase “The family that prays together stays together,” but I had no idea it came from Father Peyton’s on-fire mission to encourage family prayer, enlisting Hollywood entertainers in his regular radio and television productions to this end, and touching the souls of millions to the point of

overturning the rule of corrupt Philippine dictator, Ferdinand Marcos.

Now I have no excuse. I know about him, and I’m glad I do.

Peyton was born in a small town in Ireland and raised by parents who valued family prayer. He was drawn to the priesthood as a youth, but was rejected by Irish seminaries because of his

minimal education. He and his brother therefore emigrated to the United States with dreams of riches, but the call to the priesthood never left him. Plunging himself into study and excelling beyond anyone’s expectations, he graduated from the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana, and after a miraculous cure from tuberculosis, was ordained a priest for the Congregation of the Holy Cross in 1941.

Taking us on location to his childhood home in Ireland and sharing interviews with many who knew him while he lived, as well as those inspired by his message, *Pray* successfully paints the portrait of a faith-filled man who wouldn’t take “no” for an answer (in the most loving way).

The documentary is produced by Family Theater Productions, an organization originally founded by Father Peyton in the 1940s for his radio and television shows. Intended as a launch point for a new “Pray Together Now” movement, it is fitting to tell the story of the priest who led a worldwide movement for family prayer while the world was embroiled in the Second World War.

The film itself is engaging, well-written and directed. Recordings of Father Peyton’s words help those of us

who’ve never heard his lilting Irish voice, giving a sense of the man’s gentleness and strength. For someone like me who knew nothing about him, I went away fully educated on who he was, and impressed by all he accomplished in his lifetime. I had no idea that millions of people would gather in stadiums to pray the rosary. Could you imagine what could happen if we did that today?

I highly recommend the film to families because it will inspire them to pick up the rosary and pray it together. Those who wish to do so can pledge to start their own

family prayer time on the film’s web site.

*Pray: The Story of Patrick Peyton* will be showing at the Parkland Theater, 6550 Parkland Ave., in Cincinnati beginning on Oct. 9. It will begin streaming online in early 2021 through on-demand services that are yet to be announced.

To view the trailer or to search for show times, go to [praythefilm.com](http://praythefilm.com).

(Ann Margaret Lewis is executive assistant in the archdiocesan Office of Communications and the author of several books. E-mail her at [alewis@archindy.org](mailto:alewis@archindy.org).) †



Holy Cross Father Patrick Peyton leads a rosary rally in Rio de Janeiro Brazil, on Dec. 16, 1962. There was an estimated 1.5 million in attendance. (Photo courtesy of praythefilm.com.)



Fr. Patrick Peyton, C.S.C.



# Faith *Alive!*

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## Loss of a 'sense of place' can harm relationships with God, others

By David Gibson

Many people suffer the loss of "a sense of place" when a region that is like home to them is exploited or abused in large ways.

Places that afford us a sense of place have played major roles in our lives. They mirror key dimensions of our identity back to us.

Many in the U.S. region called Appalachia know what the loss of a sense of place means. The Catholic Committee of Appalachia said in its 2015 people's pastoral letter titled "The Telling Takes Us Home" that harmful mining practices and other damage to streams, towns or mountain vistas harmed not just "the landscape."

Rather, some developments, like "extreme mining activity," exacted a toll on the "sense of place and of home." Those living in Appalachia's mining areas "and beyond often grieve the loss of home as they would the loss of a dear friend."

For 50 years, the Catholic Committee of Appalachia has served as an advocate for this region. "The truth of Appalachia is harsh," its first pastoral letter affirmed.

Released in 1975 and signed by 25 Appalachian bishops, it was titled "This Land Is Home to Me." It explored a sense of powerlessness in this often-forgotten region, which it called "the spiny backbone of the eastern United States."

It stressed that "the suffering of Appalachia's poor is a symbol of so much other suffering." It stands as a "symbol of the suffering which awaits the majority of plain people in our society if they are laid off, if major illness occurs, if a wage earner dies or if anything else goes wrong."

Thus, "at stake is the spirit of all our humanity." Indeed, said the pastoral letter, "there are too few spaces of soul left in our lives."

I contributed a chapter to a 1987 book titled *A Sense of Place*. Visiting any locale that evokes this sense is always more than "a trek into the past," I wrote. It means revisiting one's roots.

These are places populated in our memories by people who fulfilled unforgettable roles in our lives.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, while my wife and I were unable to participate

in our parish's Sunday Mass, we turned to Sunday Masses livestreamed by St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minn., some 1,200 miles from us.

My alma mater is the university this Benedictine abbey operates. Its contemporary church designed by Marcel Breuer was completed during my student years.

Upon logging onto the Sunday Mass, I immediately felt at home. I experienced the indelible sense of place I've described. I wrote in the book chapter:

"St. John's is a place, a small place. A boy of 18 goes there to spend four of the most formative years of his life. When he leaves, his world has grown much larger."

But imagine sometime finding this place converted unrecognizably (for business or other reasons) to some entirely different purpose. My sense of loss would prove overwhelming.

Unsurprisingly, the Catholic Committee of Appalachia's "people's pastoral" spoke of such loss, explaining:

"Studies have confirmed higher rates of depression in the coalfields, often related to this loss of place. People of faith would be right to consider this grief a kind of spiritual death."

The Catholic Committee of Appalachia plays a vital role in making its region's compelling story widely known. If it is a story of fearsome shadows cast over workplaces, homes, neighborhoods and stunning mountain ranges, it is a story also of the efforts undertaken to create sustainable communities of many kinds and restore hope.

"There is a growing sense of apocalypse, the gradual revelation that the old order of things is coming to an end. ... But beyond apocalypse ... a new world is being revealed, and this should give us hope," the committee's 2015 message forcefully stated.

An accent on social justice characterized the 1975 pastoral letter. Twenty years later, a second pastoral letter focused equally on care for the Earth, a form of caring intertwined essentially with care for human life.

Titled "At Home in the Web of Life," it insisted that economics "should not



A man in Naoma, W. Va., is seen near a mountaintop removal coal mine on Kayford Mountain on Aug. 19, 2014. The Catholic Committee of Appalachia, a membership-based organization, has served Appalachia, the poor and creation since 1970. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

undermine human dignity and community, nor the dignity and community of nature. It needs to remain rooted in the web of life."

It is fascinating to note points of convergence between the work of the Catholic Committee of Appalachia and Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical on the environment, "*Laudato Si'*: On Care for Our Common Home."

"The history of our friendship with God is always linked to particular places which take on an intensely personal meaning," Pope Francis remarked. For "anyone who

has grown up in the hills or used to sit by the spring to drink," returning to such "places is a chance to recover something of their true selves" (#84).

Regrettably, care for "our common home" is deficient nowadays, Pope Francis made clear. Recall, he urged, that "the entire material universe speaks of God's love. ... Soil, water, mountains: Everything is, as it were, a caress of God" (#84).

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service's editorial staff for 37 years.) †



A train carries coal near Ravenna, Ky., on Aug. 21, 2014. The Catholic Committee of Appalachia's 2015 people's pastoral said, "Studies have confirmed higher rates of depression in the coalfields, often related to this loss of place. People of faith would be right to consider this grief a kind of spiritual death." (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)



Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

## Catholics should examine conscience over party loyalty

I'm on one side of the political spectrum, convicted in my choice for the upcoming presidential election. My house guest is on the other, while equally convicted in his selection. We are both faith-filled Catholics, who love and respect one another.



Initially, when my guest came to stay, I said that it would be best for us not to discuss our

political views—in an attempt to keep the peace. However, there have been several instances when we have verbally sparred. I can't say if our arguments were more of an attempt to persuade the other as much as a defense of our own position, but in each of these occasions, I feel we have walked away frustrated, maybe even a bit angry at the other's deeply held opinions.

After one such sparring session, my guest texted me a couple of links to articles that accused my preferred candidate of lying on many occasions. I shot back articles that accused his candidate of the very same. His text back to me read, "so we are choosing between two huge liars, now what?" My response:

"We vote our conscience."

Many Catholics fervently believe we should vote for one party or the other based on such hot topics as abortion or immigration. No one party, much less candidate, perfectly encompasses every tenet of our Catholic faith. It would certainly make our job as voters much easier if there was one candidate who was in perfect alignment with the Catholic Church's teachings on every issue. That never happens. What we face are candidates, on both sides, who embody one cause or another that aligns with the Church, and just as many that do not.

Enter the wisdom of our Catholic bishops. Whether you know which candidate for whom you plan to vote or not, it behooves Catholics to read and reflect on "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States," which provides a guide to Catholics as they discern how to exercise their political responsibility and be faithful citizens.

Since there is no one-size-fits-all candidate to address all issues, spending time truly discerning the best way to cast our vote is a duty of every American Catholic. Only through a thoughtful process can a Catholic vote their

conscience, as recommended by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

I concede to suffering political fatigue syndrome after what has seemingly become an eternal election season, replete with hate speech and accusations. I admit to becoming increasingly intolerant of the opposing party's positions and actions. I confess I have grown ever more obstinate in my arguments to support my candidate of choice.

However, the exchange with my house guest has left me reflecting on important virtues like respect and civil discourse. And contemplating "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" challenges me to seek God's will, through prayer, to cast my vote based on a well-formed conscience.

You're probably wondering which one of us, my house guest and I, is the Republican, and which one the Democrat? At the end of the day, it's not the party that matters. What matters is that we cast our morally convicted vote based on what we each believe God asks of us.

*(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †*

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

## We must not remain silent through today's challenging times

Catholic Charities USA recently updated a document called "Poverty and Racism, Overlapping Threats to the Common Good." This paper has been widely used throughout Catholic Charities' ministry and beyond. Upon reading this document through the lens of more recent events, it became immediately evident that there is much to gain from further study and analysis of efforts to implement solutions to the deep linkage between racism and poverty in our country.



Poverty and racism continue to undermine our nation's most basic promise of liberty and justice for all. It's been 52 years since Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

was killed, and across the country, the fight against racism and for justice still continues.

In his address to the joint session of the U.S. Congress in September of 2015, Pope Francis stated, "A nation can be considered great when it defends liberty as [Abraham] Lincoln did, when it fosters a culture which enables people to 'dream' of full rights of all their brothers and sisters, as Martin Luther King sought to do; when it strives for justice and the cause of the oppressed ... the fruit of a faith which becomes dialogue and sows peace."

Catholic Charities is watching as Black and brown men and women are suffering and dying because privilege and power have more value than they do. It happens while people are jogging, birdwatching, sleeping at home in the middle of the night, lying on the ground face down in handcuffs and not moving under a grown man's persistent weight.

Even in the midst of a global pandemic that should equalize us in our common humanity, vulnerability, community and

compassion, it goes on.

It's hard to say something meaningful when words fail. Acknowledging this failure seems like adding a tiny, weak voice in a screaming swell of anguish. But it is our voice, and the efforts of Catholic Charities to work for justice compel us to use that voice.

Catholic Charities speaks because we see our Black and brown neighbors who have been forbidden to wear a mask in a store because it signals danger, but are now required to wear a mask in the same store, lest they be a danger.

We speak because we see our Black and brown neighbors who are infected at alarmingly higher rates than white neighbors, because poverty and systemic failures to treat them with equity put them at inherently higher risk, and then can't or won't adjust quickly enough to protect them.

Whether it be from a virus that destroys lungs or a knee in the neck on the ground, we are watching our neighbors beg for their lives to matter until they have no more breath left to breathe the words.

With an unwavering gaze, we must confront and compel ourselves first, and then our neighbors, to recognize and honor the dignity of every individual we encounter—immediately, explicitly and with the same degree of inherent worth.

Words may be weak, but silence is not justice, and we have the breath to add our voice.

We commit not just to speak, but to act in and with and for love, to cherish the divine within every person. We reaffirm to our colleagues and our community that, while anguish seems unrelenting, we will not be silent.

*(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. E-mail him at [dbethuram@archindy.org](mailto:dbethuram@archindy.org).) †*

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

## Pandemic is a chance to reflect on value of entertainment, our creativity

In Italian, "divertimento" means fun and entertainment. A closer look reveals the idea of diverting our attention to something more to our liking.



Before COVID-19, entertainment was paramount for diverting us to life's brighter side. For example, during sports seasons it was exciting to lose oneself cheering for favorite

teams in a celebratory environment devoid of momentary worries. And then there were humorous comedians making us laugh and talk shows infused with witty moments tickling our funny bone.

The world of entertainment still exists. However, its jeopardized strength in relieving anxieties raises alarming questions: Is today's news stifling its fun-loving effectiveness? Are repeated

reports of violence, disasters, political backbiting, intrigues and international crises outstaging it?

Do we need to earnestly reflect on its importance for maintaining mental and physical health? Do we need to find additional imaginative ways to entertain ourselves?

I live across the street from the north lawn of the Supreme Court. Unlike times past when it was empty, it is now filled with parents and their toddlers. Watching them play is entertainment *par excellence*. I often see a dad or mom pick up their teeny toddlers, toss them up in the air and hear the chuckles that follow.

This is one of many examples of watching parents relish the joy of their child. No better diversion from life's worries exists than this.

My guess is there has been an increase in families playing games with their children or taking more time

in educating them due to COVID-19's isolating effects.

It is also my guess that many families as well as young adults and those living the single life are restructuring entertainment habits to reinforce psychological coping. Nothing is healthier than the joy of a good laugh and wholesome entertainment that creates cheerfulness.

Entertainment can come in many forms, for example, reading a good book, taking walks heretofore nonexistent, contacting forgotten friends, practicing charitable acts, or putting in order tasks we tend to avoid. When accomplished, cheerfulness follows.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to reflect on the value of entertainment and our creativity in raising it to newfound heights

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

Twenty Something/

Christina Capecchi

## Our balm for 2020: the communion of saints

Paula Kraus wasn't afraid to utter the wish burning on her heart, the one that seizes so many preparing to lose a loved one.



The Minnesota mom yearned for some kind of indication that, though she and her dying father would soon be separated, they would remain connected. And being a Catholic, Paula had the vocabulary to express it.

She had come for a one-on-one visit with her dad on a Saturday afternoon. His death appeared imminent, so she knelt at his side and peered into his hazel eyes.

"Will you send me a sign?" Paula asked. "I really want to believe in the communion of saints. I want to believe that you hear my prayers."

"I will if I can," he whispered.

The next day, Paula brought her young children to see their grandpa. On the drive home, she explained to them that a metamorphosis was underway in him, much like a caterpillar turns into a butterfly.

Early the next day, Fritz Koshiol died—a beloved 86-year-old father of 11 from Plymouth, Minn. Paula, his 10th child, was at his side. She promptly called her sister Maria, who exclaimed: "Oh, Paula, you just woke me from a dream about a cocoon changing into a big butterfly. It landed on a hospital bed in our old house."

The following day, Paula and her mom met with their priest to plan the funeral. They took the back roads home, which led them by their previous house, where they had lived until Paula was 7. The owners were outside, so Paula felt comfortable asking for a walk-through.

As she entered the house, she felt a strong sense of her dad's presence. Then they walked into the bedroom where Maria's dream had taken place right as her dad was dying. The owner moved a file cabinet, revealing a poster of a butterfly taped to the wall. It said: "There is strength in loving. If you love someone, you must be strong enough to allow them to be."

Paula wept.

The day of Fritz's burial at Fort Snelling, as the wind whipped, a big black swallowtail flew between them and up into a tree.

It felt like the sign she had asked her.

Finally, she could truly believe in the communion of saints. She could feel it in her heart. She could feel her father close.

As the years pressed on, and Paula lost her mother and raised her children, this belief turned into action. It became a way to live, on this side of heaven, a state of being that remains attached to those on the other side.

"I don't feel a separation from my parents," Paula said. "I feel like I can access them any time."

She talks to them regularly. She prays to them during Mass, when all the angels and saints gather. She speaks of them in the present tense.

She has turned her dad into a patron saint for her four young kids, invoking him whenever they depart on a road trip by remembering his penchant for taking the back roads. They pray an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be, then say, "Grandpa, King of the Scenic Route, pray for us."

As All Saints Day and All Souls Day near this difficult year, when COVID-19 has claimed more than 200,000 lives, we should embrace the communion of saints, Paula said. "The saints have experienced plagues and beheadings and riots. They know this human struggle."

Look for little signs. Pay attention to that feeling of nearness. Talk to your loved ones in heaven. And utter those powerful words: "All you holy men and women, pray for us."

*(Christina Capecchi is a writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †*



Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, October 11, 2020

- Isaiah 25:6-10a
- Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20
- Matthew 22:1-14

The first part of the Book of Isaiah provides the first reading for Mass this weekend.



Understanding the cultural, social, political and economic context surrounding the composition of biblical texts can help us to capture their meaning.

As a general rule, times were not good for the chosen people.

Aside from bursts of prosperity and peace under David and Solomon, they usually had to cope with war, invasion, want or worse.

Also, usually, the prophets saw little that they could truly applaud. They invariably wrote that human sin, not divine revenge, not divine indifference to human distress, was the cause of trouble in the world.

So, the prophets frequently demanded that people always be true to God.

This passage was written when times were not all that bad, but dark storm clouds lay on the horizon. The people, generally speaking, were lukewarm in honoring God. Isaiah loudly protested that this religious sluggishness surely would be their downfall.

He also insisted that if the people were faithful to God, all would be right. Peace and security would reign. Prosperity would prevail. Tears would be wiped away. Fears would be stilled. People would rejoice that God had saved them. God would be in their hearts.

The second reading is from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. On several occasions recorded in Acts or in the Pauline epistles, Paul was imprisoned, having been convicted for preaching against the establishment or simply for disturbing the peace. This passage from Philippians was written while Paul was in prison.

Jail, humiliation and abuse were Paul's plight. Nevertheless, he said that his faith in God never wavered. His commitment to proclaiming the Gospel always led him. Nothing else mattered to him, not even his comfort or personal well-being. God gave Christ to the world. Paul felt that he had to extend this gift far and wide.

St. Matthew's Gospel furnishes the last

reading. The reading is a parable, with three developments.

First, a king, who represents God, invited guests, familiar and even privileged, to a wedding banquet for his son. These people rejected the invitation. Next, the king invited other guests. They also ignored the invitation, distracted by other concerns. Finally, the king invited outcasts and strangers to the feast. They came.

As all celebrated, the king saw a guest at the banquet improperly dressed. He ordered this guest to be removed.

The king's servants represent the prophets. The privileged guests who spurn the invitation represent the people of Israel. The ones invited with other interests are those who think themselves without need for God. The outcasts and strangers represent gentiles and the sinful.

God's mercy extends to everyone. Even so, God drags no one into the kingdom of heaven. Sinners must choose to cooperate with divine grace in order to reform and so be worthy of God's invitation.

## Reflection

These readings call us to recognize several basic facts. First, God's mercy never fails. He does not disown the promise he communicated long ago through the prophets and then definitively by Christ. This promise guides people to everlasting life by revealing to them the way of righteousness and strengthening their resolve to be holy.

The second fact is simple and constant throughout history. Humans reject God's goodness. They sin. Original sin always weakens and blinds them. Their priorities are twisted. They are confused. They exaggerate their own powers and insights. They discount their need for God.

They may wish to be at the banquet, but they do not prepare themselves. They arrive without truly giving themselves to God.

Humans can always come to the conviction that drove St. Paul to proclaim the Lord, in spite of everything. Nothing matters other than to be with God. Nothing genuinely good can be found apart from God. Everything other than life with God is fickle and impermanent, empty and a mirage. †

## Daily Readings

### Monday, October 12

Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1  
Psalm 113:1b-5a, 6-7  
Luke 11:29-32

### Tuesday, October 13

Galatians 5:1-6  
Psalm 119:41, 43-45, 47-48  
Luke 11:37-41

### Wednesday, October 14

St. Callistus I, pope and martyr  
Galatians 5:18-25  
Psalm 1:1-4, 6  
Luke 11:42-46

### Thursday, October 15

St. Teresa of Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church  
Ephesians 1:1-10  
Psalm 98:1-6  
Luke 11:47-54

### Friday, October 16

St. Hedwig, religious  
St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, virgin  
Ephesians 1:11-14  
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 12-13  
Luke 12:1-7

### Saturday, October 17

St. Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr  
Ephesians 1:15-23  
Psalm 8:2-3b, 4-7  
Luke 12:8-12

### Sunday, October 18

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Isaiah 45:1, 4-6  
Psalm 96:1, 3-5, 7-10  
1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b  
Matthew 22:15-21

## Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

### Blaspheming against the Spirit involves refusing God's forgiveness

**Q**I recently read an article in the Catholic press about the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and it has caused me to worry about something that happened long ago. I am now 45 years old and when I was in the seventh grade, this is what happened. I really liked a boy in my class, and I prayed and prayed that he would like me. But it turned out that he liked another girl instead.



I was upset, especially since I had prayed so hard, and I decided (and said) that I didn't need the Holy Spirit. I regretted it right away and went to confession, but I'm not sure that the priest really heard what I was saying and that he understood. He seemed busy and somewhat rushed.

I recently went to confession and brought it up again, but I didn't go into all the details. Now, I'm a huge mess. I do pray to the Holy Spirit, asking him for guidance in tough situations, and I believe that the Spirit does help me. But I'm not sure that I've ever been forgiven for that sin long ago, and I wonder where I really stand with God. (Pennsylvania)

may want to talk to a friendly priest who will assure you both of God's love and of your own goodness.

**Q**I grew up as a Roman Catholic but have since joined an Eastern branch of the Catholic Church. We receive the Eucharist by intinction. Both the body and blood are administered together by a spoon—using now a separate spoon for everyone. This seems safe to me, and it allows for full reception under both species. Could the Roman Catholic churches try this? (Indiana)

**A** Since your email arrived in mid-September, I am assuming that your Eastern Catholic parish is continuing to distribute the Eucharist by intinction during the current pandemic.

Generally, in the Roman Catholic churches of which I am aware, the practice of parishioners receiving Communion from the chalice has been suspended during the coronavirus.

But to answer your question: During normal times, yes, the practice of intinction is allowed in Roman Catholic churches. One of the ways in which Communion can be distributed to the faithful in the Roman rite is "by drinking from the chalice directly, or by intinction, or by means of a tube or a spoon" ("General Instruction of the *Roman Missal*," #245). I would note, though, that the use of a tube or spoon is not customary in dioceses in the United States.

As the general instruction goes on to explain, "If Communion from the chalice is carried out by intinction, each communicant, holding a Communion-plate under the chin, approaches the priest who holds a vessel with the sacred particles, a minister standing at his side and holding the chalice. The priest takes a host, dips it partly in the chalice and, showing it, says, 'The body and blood of Christ.' The communicant responds, 'Amen,' receives the sacrament in the mouth from the priest, and then withdraws" (#287).

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops reminds readers in "Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America" that "the communicant, including the extraordinary minister, is never allowed to self-communicate, even by means of intinction. Communion under either form, bread or wine, must always be given by an ordinary or extraordinary minister of holy Communion" (#50).

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at [askfatherdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:askfatherdoyle@gmail.com) and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †

## My Journey to God

By John McMullen

### When I Get to the Crossroads

There are many crossroads in one's life. You know—the point where opportunities open up, along with situations. A decision needs to be made: do you go to your left and see what lays in that direction, or do you go to the right and explore the unknown that awaits you there? Or do you just go straight ahead and keep doing what you're doing and most likely get the same results?

As I look back over my life, there have been many crossroads. If I had taken a different path at any of these crossroads, I know things would have turned out differently. What I do not know is if they would have turned out any better. Only the God of the Universe knows this. So, for me to linger on any of those unanswerable questions of yesteryear is nothing more than an invitation for self-pity, despair and depression. I need to live in today. As St. Teresa of Calcutta once said, "Yesterday is gone, tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today, let us begin."

It is my sincere hope and prayer that when I get to the crossroads of my final path in this life, it will be a path where my Creator will embrace me with all my faults and imperfections and say, "Welcome Home, son!"

(John McMullen is a member of St. Jude the Apostle Parish in Spencer. (Photo by Malcolm Lightbody on Unsplash.com))



# 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.

**ANDRES, Norma (Banet)**, 89, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Sept. 19. Mother of Kathy, Irvin, Jr., Mark and William Andres. Sister of Aileen and Larry Banet. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of four.

**BOOK, Harold A.**, 72, Holy Family, New Albany, Sept. 15. Husband of Frieda Book. Father of Tina Pritchett, Debbie Voss and Lisa Wiley. Brother of Barbara Eurlon, Linda, David and Irvin Book. Grandfather of eight.

**BROWN, Mary Ann**, 79, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, May 10. Sister of Nancy Gray, Sheila Lyon, Kathleen Queisser, Colleen Shikany, Eleanor Sutton, Debbie Tomlinson, Jimmy, Johnny and Tommy Brown. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

**CHAFFEE, Pat**, 85, St. Anthony of Padua, Morris, Sept. 21. Mother of Lindy, Kevin, Kyle and Tim Chaffee. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of one. (Correction.)

**COX, Leanne G.**, 82, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 24. Mother of Britt Dickinson. Sister of Angela Kriese.

Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of two.

**FESSEL, Jr., Coen J.**, 75, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Sept. 19. Husband of Margaret Fessel. Father of Kevin and Paul Fessel. Grandfather of two.

**HERTEL, Alice V.**, 90, St. Louis, Batesville, Sept. 26. Mother of Mary Speidel, Kathy Weiler, Andrew, Ken, Michael, Ric and William Hertel. Grandmother of 18. Great-grandmother of 24. Great-great-grandmother of one.

**HOLLEN, Mary**, 92, Holy Family, New Albany, Sept. 20. Mother of Virginia Gilezan, Kenneth and Terry Hollen. Sister of Pauline Hurst. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of two.

**HUFF, Catherine A.**, 95, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Sept. 24. Mother of Nora Harvey. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of seven.

**KARIBO, Marjorie J.**, 96, St. Mary, North Vernon, Sept. 22. Mother of Judy Faulkner, Shirley Loos and Sharon Sokol. Sister of Marvin Bartlett. Grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother of several.

**MAHAN, Patricia A.**, 76, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Sept. 7. Wife of Ronald Mahan. Mother of Jennifer Back, Lori-Anne Harley, Suellyn, Mark, Ronald, Jr. and Scott Mahan. Sister of Thomas O'Brien. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of six.

**MALLOY, M. Claudette**, 89, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 19. Mother of Kelly, Loren and Mitch Malloy. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of two.

**MAPLES, Erika J.**, 27, St. Ann, Jennings County, Sept. 25. Daughter of Jason and Tricia Maples. Sister of Olivia, Samantha, Joseph and Matthew Maples. Granddaughter of Ron and Margie Reitman and Kay Maples.

**MONTES, Dave**, 26, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Sept. 5.

## Autumn wonder



Visitors view autumn colors at Westonbirt Arboretum in Tetbury, England, on Sept. 29. (CNS photo/Toby Melville, Reuters)

Son of Maria Hernandez-Ramirez. Brother of Erika Montes, Jasmin, Alfredo and Miguel Casas and Davis Hernandez. Grandson of David Hernandez and Teresa Ramirez. Great-grandson of Moises and Rogelio Hernandez.

**MOORE, Lowell G.**, 94, St. Mary, North Vernon, Sept. 28. Father of Karen Jines, Lisa Low, Kevin, Mike and Tim Moore. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of 22.

**SHIRLEY, Martha (Osterholt)**, 91, St. Mary-

of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Sept. 21. Mother of Kim Fitzgerald, Barbara Reynolds, Donna Sills, Karen Summers, Angela Thompson, Daniel and Michael Shirley. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of nine.

**STEPHENS, Connie**, 73, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Sept. 24. Mother of Michelle Kruger and Charlie Stephens. Sister of Francie Downie and Kathy English. Grandmother of four.

**VORNHOLT, Jr., Dr. Lawrence L.**, 78, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Sept. 25.

Husband of Judy Vornholt. Father of Lianne Milten and Trip Vornholt. Grandfather of three.

**WAGNER, Clara M. (Hardebeck)**, 91, St. John the Baptist, Osgood, Sept. 27. Aunt of several.

**WEBER, Ruth W.**, 91, St. Barnabas, Sept. 25. Mother of Kathy Brodhacker, Nancy Gholson, Anne Graham, David and Thomas Weber. Sister of Claire Mangin, Jane Peerson and Paul Weber. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 12.

**WEED, Daniel**, 44, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Sept. 9. Son of Jack and Mary Collins and Fred and Chris Weed. Brother of Katie Kauffman, Erin Soroosh, Ashley Stewart, Jennifer and Lindsey Weed.

**WITTENAUER, Joy D.**, 81, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Sept. 13. Wife of James Wittenauer. Mother of Pam Bratton, Kent and Timothy Wittenauer. Grandmother of three. †

# Pope Francis releases apostolic letter on sacred Scripture

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In an apostolic letter dedicated to sacred Scripture, Pope Francis said that even today, Christians can learn new things from the countless translations of the Bible that exist.

The variety of translations of the Bible in the world today “teaches us that the values and positive forms of every culture represent an enrichment for the whole Church,” the pope said in his apostolic letter, “*Scripturae Sacrae affectus*” (“Devotion to Sacred Scripture”).

“The different ways by which the word of God is

proclaimed, understood and experienced in each new translation enrich Scripture itself since, according to the well-known expression of [St.] Gregory the Great, Scripture grows with the reader, taking on new accents and new resonance throughout the centuries,” he wrote in the letter released by the Vatican on Sept. 30.

Earlier in the day, before concluding his weekly general audience, the pope told pilgrims he had signed the document to coincide with the 16th centenary of St. Jerome’s death.

“May the example of this great doctor and father of the Church, who placed the Bible at the center of his life, awaken in us a renewed love for the sacred Scripture and the desire to live in a personal dialogue with the word of God,” he said.

The letter itself said that marking the 16th centenary of St. Jerome’s death is “a summons to love what Jerome loved, to rediscover his writings and to let ourselves be touched by his robust spirituality, which can be described in essence as a restless and impassioned desire for a greater knowledge of the God who chose to reveal himself.”

Catholics today, he said, must heed “the advice that Jerome unceasingly gave to his contemporaries: ‘Read the divine Scriptures constantly; never let the sacred volume fall from your hand.’”

In his apostolic letter, the pope delved into the history of St. Jerome’s life and his love of Scripture. His “monumental work” of translating the Old Testament from Hebrew, as well as his commentary on the Psalms and St. Paul’s letters, are an example for Catholics today, he said.

“As an enterprise carried out within the community and at the service of the community, Jerome’s scholarly activity can serve as an example of synodality for us and for our own time,” the pope said.

“It can also serve as a model for the Church’s various cultural institutions, called to be ‘places where knowledge becomes service, for no genuine and integral human

development can occur without a body of knowledge that is the fruit of cooperation and leads to greater cooperation,” he said, quoting a speech he gave in 2019 to the pontifical academies.

St. Jerome’s life and work also highlight the need for true witnesses of Christ who can faithfully interpret Scripture which often seems as if it is “‘sealed,’ hermetically closed to interpretation.”

“Many, even among practicing Christians, say openly that they are not able to read it, not because of illiteracy, but because they are unprepared for the biblical language, its modes of expression and its ancient cultural traditions,” he said. “As a result, the biblical text becomes indecipherable, as if it were written in an unknown alphabet and an esoteric tongue.”

The pope said that “the richness of Scripture is neglected or minimized by many because they were not afforded a solid grounding in this area,” not even from their families, who often seem unable “to introduce their children to the word of the Lord in all its beauty and spiritual power.”

Nevertheless, the celebration of the 16th centenary of St. Jerome’s death, is a reminder of “the extraordinary missionary vitality” throughout the centuries that has led to the Bible’s translation in more than 3,000 languages, he said.

“To how many missionaries do we owe the invaluable publication of grammars, dictionaries and other linguistic tools that enable greater communication and become vehicles for the missionary aspiration of reaching everyone,” Pope Francis said.

“We need to support this work and invest in it, helping to overcome limits in communication and lost opportunities for encounter. Much remains to be done. It has been said that without translation there can be no understanding: we would understand neither ourselves nor others,” he said. †



Pope Francis

### Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

For more information, please log on to [www.archindy.org/layministry](http://www.archindy.org/layministry)



### REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

- 1 Ethics Point**  
Confidential, Online Reporting  
[www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com](http://www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com) or 888-393-6810
- 2** Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator  
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410  
**317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548**  
[carlahill@archindy.org](mailto:carlahill@archindy.org)



# Staples offers tips to prove Resurrection at catechetical event

By Natalie Hoefler

For Christians, faith in the Resurrection is a given. In fact, there would be no Christian faith without belief in Christ rising from the dead.

But how does a Christian convince a non-believer of the Resurrection?

Simple, according to Tim Staples—just look at history, because the Resurrection “cannot be understood as anything other than an historical fact.”

Staples is an author, speaker and the director of apologetics and evangelization for the media ministry Catholic Answers. He was the keynote speaker for the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis’

“Gathering of Disciples” event on Sept. 12, held online this year due to the coronavirus pandemic. The theme was “Christ is Alive!”

“We are engaging a culture that’s becoming increasingly antagonistic to our Catholic faith and to Christianity in general,” he said. “And there’s no more important place to start than the apologetic defense of the Resurrection.”

## ‘No other explanation makes sense’

Catechists from around central and southern Indiana watched and listened online as Staples laid out arguments for defending the reality of the Resurrection.

He pointed to the many “eyewitness accounts” of Christ after his resurrection, most notably his appearance “to more than 500 brothers at once” (1 Cor 15:6).

For those who claim the Apostles were hallucinating or that they stole the body, said Staples, “You don’t have 500 people hallucinate the same thing. And if you’re going to do a major fraud, you’re going to involve as few people as possible to keep the story straight, not 500.”

The Apostles’ own lives, ministry and death is further proof of the reality of the Resurrection, said Staples.

“All but one of the 12 Apostles were martyred for their faith,” he noted. “No explanation makes sense other than the resurrection of Jesus Christ, because that’s the reason they gave for their own transformation, and went to their death rather than deny it.”

## ‘It doesn’t fit’

The explanation that Christ’s disciples stole his body from the tomb (Mt 28:11-13) is easily dismissed, said Staples.

“We’ve got a crack troop of Roman soldiers guarding a sealed tomb ... and a massive stone, and you’re going to move

that and break the seal—and the guards are still asleep?” Staples scoffed. “That’s almost proof *for* the Resurrection!”

Even an acclaimed Jew, 19th-century scholar Joseph Klausner, refuted this theory in the 1800s, he said.

Klausner proposed that “when you look at the lives of the Apostles, it’s absurd to say that they would facilitate such a grand fraud,” Staples said. “It doesn’t fit what we know of their lives.”

Nor is there any logic in the “swoon theory” that Jesus never died but merely fainted, he said.

“He’s in the tomb, he wakes up—how does he get out of the tomb, especially after being beaten?” Staples asked. “How does he get by the centurions? ... And the sword would have gone through the sac around [Christ’s] heart in order that blood and water poured out—it’s ludicrous to say he swooned!”

## ‘He became Christian in the process’

For skeptics who will not accept any Scriptural proof of the Resurrection, said Staples, “You always begin with manuscript evidence.”

The fact that there are more than 5,000 ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, “either complete or partial, written by hand before the advent of the printing press, ... some fragments dating to within 10-40 years of the Resurrection,” he said, can only point to the impact of an actual historical event.

“This is unprecedented when you consider [there are] only nine manuscripts [about] the Gallic Wars” that occurred just 50 years before Christ’s birth, he said. “And [no more than] 20 manuscripts for other major events.”

He also suggested pointing to second- and third-century Christian historians who wrote of historical accounts of the Resurrection event, including St. Irenaeus, Tertulian, Origen and Eusebius.

And there is the “test of skeptics throughout the centuries who investigated the facts of the Resurrection and ended up Christian,” Staples said. One such example is Sir William Ramsey, an acclaimed late-19th century scholar.

“He set out to disprove Acts,” said Staples. “Not only did he find [the book] to be historically accurate—he became Christian in the process.”

## ‘So inspiring’

Breakout sessions on four additional catechetical topics were also made

available during the Gathering of Disciples event, as well as time for virtual eucharistic adoration and songs of praise.

“I am always inspired and motivated by others who witness and live a strong faith,” said participant Gayle Schrank, pastoral associate for parish ministry at St. Mary Parish in Navilleton.

“Being so isolated this year, I was anxious to have this opportunity to gather in some way. I have had to cancel retreats I was scheduled to attend, and this was one way to be with others.”

She found Staples’ “passion and knowledge so inspiring, and his love for God is contagious.”

Schrank has previously participated in—and presented at—the Gathering of Disciples. She finds the annual event “very reflective, educational and enriching. I am thankful to have this opportunity each year.”

This year was the first time Daniel Brock participated in the event. The prayer group leader from St. Thomas More Parish in



Tim Staples makes a point during the archdiocesan Gathering of Disciples event on Sept. 12, held virtually due to the coronavirus. (Screenshot by Natalie Hoefler)

Mooresville is passionate about apologetics, and he appreciated Staples’ talk.

“It was very interesting,” he said. “I really found it fascinating. I think it’s great that the archdiocese does this to help people increase their knowledge about their faith.”

Schrank agrees.

“We live in a hurting world, and we need to grow in our ability to talk about God and share what we know about our Catholic faith.”

(Contact your parish catechetical leader for information on how to view the recordings of the Gathering of Disciples presentations.) †

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# Unrest leads to joint statement, ecumenical gathering in New Albany

By Ray Day

Special to The Criterion

NEW ALBANY—“As the Church, we have a responsibility to reclaim the witness that no person should be treated as lesser or other, and that the lessons of the past should be remembered and repented so as not to be repeated.

“Therefore, we believe that all persons were created in God’s image, according to God’s likeness, and should be treated with divine reverence and affection.

We believe that in Christ there are no distinctions, for all are children of God, and as such all are part of one family.”

Those words serve as part of a “Statement of Unity” recently issued by several churches in New Albany in response to ongoing civil unrest across the United States.

As a result, leaders of those churches—including members of three Catholic parishes—gathered for an ecumenical prayer service on Sept. 19 in New Albany. The event was an answer to a series of questions raised by the board of directors of the city’s Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, Inc. (CRBFI) at its May meeting.

Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter, who served as archbishop of Indianapolis from 1933-46 before later becoming a cardinal in the Archdiocese of St. Louis, has long been praised for integrating the Catholic schools throughout the archdiocese. He did the same when he



With masks and social distancing in mind, a Sept. 19 ecumenical prayer service in New Albany is held behind the Town Clock Church on Main Street. (Submitted photo)

became archbishop of St. Louis in 1947.

Many questions arose during the CRBFI’s May discussion: What should be done to show support for those encountering social injustice in America? What would Cardinal Ritter do if he were still alive today? How would his legacy be reflected now, nearly 75 years after his transformative actions?

“Work hard. Pray hard. Don’t worry.” With Cardinal Ritter’s often-quoted words in mind, CRBFI’s founding chairperson David Hock did just that. The member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County envisioned a prayer service in partnership with neighboring St. John Presbyterian Church across the street from the Cardinal Ritter House. Immediately, the church’s pastor, Rev. Allen Colwell, was on board.

Because of the well-documented history of the Underground Railroad in New Albany, Hock and the Rev. Colwell contacted Rev. LeRoy Marshall of the Town Clock Church, a major “station” on the way to freedom for decades of southern Blacks in the mid-19th century.

Ideas flowed and actions were taken. Soon, a “Statement of Unity” was drafted, tweaked and approved by the expanding committee. Current CRBFI board chairman Fred Ernstberger, a member of Holy Family Parish in New Albany, and incoming board member retired Father Stephen Banet were also hard at work on the project.

Father Joseph Feltz, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany and dean of the New Albany Deanery, was among the clergy who worked on editing the initial draft of the statement.

“I was pleased the statement was biblically based. It expressed the Christian worldview that all people are created in God’s image and should be treated with divine reverence and affection,” Father Feltz said. “I also was proud that Christian ministers were willing to stand together to witness human dignity.”

During the 30-minute prayer service held on the plaza behind the Town Clock Church, 11 ministers and priests representing some of the 20-plus local New Albany churches led approximately 125 attendees in prayer, song, a litany, reflection and benediction. The New Albany Deanery was represented by Father Feltz, Father Jeremy Gries, pastor of Holy Family Church in New Albany, and Conventual Franciscan Father Mark Weaver, pastor of St. Mary Parish in New Albany.

“The setting at the foot of the Town Clock Church was entirely appropriate for people of faith praying for unity in our community,” said Ernstberger.

Hock described the prayerful presence of those gathered as “a special evening. I believe in addition to the clergy and attendees, the Holy Spirit may have been with us.”

Indeed, some in attendance believed

it was the presence of the Holy Spirit when, at the very moment the service ended—7 p.m.—the bells in the Clock Tower Church unexpectedly pealed forth as if in celebration of unity among all those present.

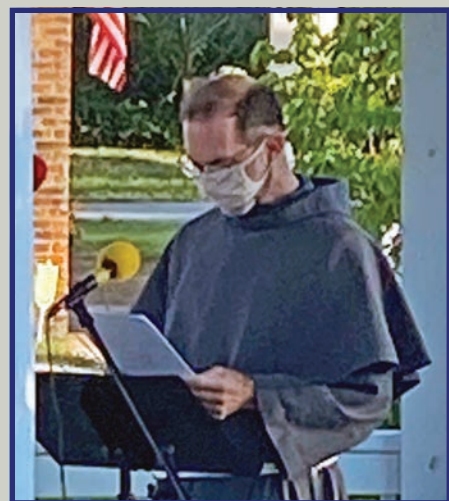
Of the 30-minute service, Hock added, “I was especially pleased with the new connections among the faiths that I witnessed. I felt a very important ecumenical spirit!”

And that spirit led to this message highlighted in the “Statement of Unity:” “Therefore, we denounce racism in all its forms and choose to strive to be a witness to our community, especially our young people, that diversity is a cause for celebration not conflict, a display of beauty not ugliness, a show of strength not weakness.”

Father Feltz said he hoped that the community would come to “understand that the battle against the sin of racism is a duty of a follower of Jesus Christ.

“I hope they also realize that this important work is something that the New Albany Christian churches can work on together. Finally, I hope they realize that when we rely on God, all things are possible.”

(Ray Day is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany and is secretary of the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation. Criterion editor Mike Krokos contributed to this story.) †



Conventual Franciscan Father Mark Weaver, pastor of St. Mary Parish in New Albany, offers a reflection on Sept. 19. (Submitted photo)

## Week 4: ‘Pray, Learn and Act as Faithful Citizens’

Compiled by the archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity and Catholic Charities-Social Concerns

The archdiocesan Office of Human Life and Dignity and Catholic Charities-Social Concerns are collaborating to offer the fourth of seven weeks of prayer, study and action as the nation prepares for an upcoming election.

This week, we will continue to explore the teaching document from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” which “provides guidance for all who seek to exercise their rights and duties as citizens.” We will take a brief look at the second section of the bishops’ statement.

### Pray

Holy Spirit, we praise and thank you! You anoint us to bring glad tidings to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, recover sight for the blind, free the oppressed and build communities in keeping with God’s vision of justice. Show us how to be light of the world, salt of the Earth, seeds that sprout love and leaven that infuses humanity with the desire to promote human dignity and solidarity. Help us to listen so that those in poverty can lead our efforts to proclaim a more hopeful vision, liberate captives from injustice heal the blindness

of the powerful, free us all from self-centeredness and build community to overcome poverty. Amen.

([cutt.ly/USCCBPrayer](http://cutt.ly/USCCBPrayer))

### Learn

The following excerpts are from “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” Part II: Applying Catholic Teaching to Major Issues: A Summary of Policy Positions of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:”

“Politics is a noble mission to promote the common good. As such, it is about ethics and principles as well as issues, candidates, and officeholders. To engage in “politics,” then, is more than getting involved in current polemics and debates; it is about acting with others and through institutions for the benefit of all. The fact that much of our political rhetoric has become very negative, and that political polarization seems to have grown should not dissuade us from the high calling to work for a world that allows everyone to thrive, a world in which all persons, all families, have what they need to fulfill their God-given destiny. In our democracy, one aspect of this task for all of us requires that we weigh issues and related policies.

“While people of goodwill may sometimes choose different ways to apply and act on some of our principles, Catholics cannot ignore their inescapable moral challenges or simply dismiss the

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Church’s guidance or policy directions that flow from these principles.”

Space does not permit us the opportunity to quote each issue at length, but we cannot urge you strongly enough to review “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” for yourself in order to discern your vote.

The following is a list of the issues that the document addresses in greater detail, and the paragraphs where you might find information on each.

- Human Life: #64-67
- Promoting Peace: #68 and #69
- Marriage and Family Life: #70 and #71
- Religious Freedom: #72
- Preferential Option for the Poor and Economic Justice: #73-79
- Health Care: #80
- Migration: #81
- Catholic Education: #82 and #83

- Promoting Justice and Countering Violence: #84
- Combatting Unjust Discrimination: #85
- Care for Our Common Home: #86
- Communications, Media, and Culture: #87-89
- Global Solidarity: #90

### Act

After a thorough reading of part two of “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” sign up to participate in national Catholic advocacy campaigns, find your official representatives, find legislation, and sign up for the newsletter at the USCCB Action Center at [www.votervoices.net/usccb/home](http://www.votervoices.net/usccb/home). For local Catholic issues and to receive updates and action alerts for statewide issues from the Indiana Catholic Conference, go to [www.votervoices.net/INDIANACC/home](http://www.votervoices.net/INDIANACC/home). †