



The

Criterion

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Twenty Something

Sacred scribbles: piece by piece, page by page bring work to life, page 12.

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Bernie Price flashes a two thumbs-up sign, reflecting how her cancer diagnosis hasn't diminished her joyful approach to life and her dedication to the archdiocese's Catholic Youth Organization, which she has served for 51 years. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

CYO legend Bernie Price 'keeps going' with joy and faith in her fight against cancer

By John Shaughnessy

Even when you know Bernadette "Bernie" Price and the relentlessly positive approach she has always brought to life, what she did during a recent week makes you shake your head in awe.

On the Monday morning of that week in mid-September, she drove herself to her 24th chemotherapy treatment in the past two years, getting labs taken and having a meeting with her cancer doctor before being hooked up for an hour and a half to let the chemo flow through her body in an attempt to control her ovarian cancer.

Finished with the treatment at noon, she drove straight to the archdiocese's Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) office in Indianapolis, where she has worked for 51 years. There, she spent the afternoon helping set up a meeting for a committee charged with raising funds for the CYO's Camp Rancho Framasa in Brown County.

On Tuesday evening of that week, she coached the girls' high school volleyball team of Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis in a CYO match. And after working Wednesday and Thursday for the CYO, she served Friday as the emcee for an Irish festival in Indianapolis.

See **CYO**, page 8

Huge swath of Florida confronts Hurricane Helene's devastating impact

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (OSV News)—Four Florida dioceses with substantial coastal exposure along the Gulf of Mexico have been assessing significant flood damage while activating regional distribution centers following Hurricane Helene.

Hurricane Helene garnered Category 4 major hurricane status just before landfall along the Florida Panhandle on Sept. 26. The 500-mile-wide storm then carried catastrophic flooding and destruction through Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

By midday on Oct. 1, CNN was reporting that at least 130 people have died across six states, and officials fear the death toll will rise. "Many more remain missing, perhaps unable to leave their location or unable to contact family where communications infrastructure is in shreds," CNN said.

Although coastal areas of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee took a direct hit in terms of the hurricane's landfall, many areas in the diocese and around the South suffered from the heavy storm surge and rain.

"Other Catholic Charities CEO's have been texting me and offering help and sending stuff—I do feel like maybe we did get hit the hardest," said Maggie Rogers, executive director of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

"I moved to Florida in 2002, and I can tell you this is the most water I have ever seen from any storm," Rogers told OSV News, adding that one county in the diocese alone was reporting hundreds of homeowners are displaced following Helene.

"In the rainy season, roads here flood so easily with normal rain. So, having a hurricane pushing in that water, I knew it was going to be devastating, but maybe not quite this devastating," she added.

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of
See **HURRICANE**, page 9

Archbishop Thompson: Environment can never be isolated from our relationships with God and others

By Natalie Hoefler

Mother Nature seemed to make a comment during the archdiocese's Care for Creation Mass at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus on Sept. 24: blue skies and a few friendly clouds marked the beginning and end of the Mass, with a deluge in between.

The liturgy marked the ecumenical Season of Creation. This "season" is celebrated by many faiths each year between Sept. 1—the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation—and Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology.

Nearly 450 people were present for the archdiocese's fourth annual Care for Creation Mass.

In a sanctuary decorated with art made by St. Bartholomew School students, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson spoke in his homily of the importance of remembering that "our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God."

See **ENVIRONMENT**, page 15



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson incenses the altar during a Care for Creation Mass at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus on Sept. 24. Pictured behind the archbishop are Deacons William Jones, left, Jorge Sanchez and Juan Carlos Ramirez, Father Ashok Valabazzi, Father Christopher Wadelton and altar server Eero Haywood. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

At pre-synod retreat, members urged to be open to others and to the Holy Spirit

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Some delegates at the Synod of Bishops may need to let go of old ways of doing things and others may need to let go of a desire



Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, O.P.

to make everything new; instead, all of them must allow the Holy Spirit to speak, said Dominican Father Timothy Radcliffe.

Opening a retreat for members of the synod on synodality on Sept. 30, the British theologian urged honesty, telling

them that the “indestructible peace” given by the risen Christ “does not mean that we live in perfect harmony. We are gathered in this assembly because we do not. But no discord can destroy our peace in Christ for we are one in him.”

The 368 synod delegates, along with the theologians and experts assisting them, gathered for a two-day retreat at the Vatican before Pope Francis was scheduled to formally open the monthlong, second session of the synod on Oct. 2. After a similar gathering at the Vatican a year earlier, members were to focus this session on “How to be a missionary synodal Church.”

Father Timothy told participants that with its focus on mission and on helping the millions of people around the world who are searching for meaning and truth, the synod “is not a place for negotiations about structural change, but for choosing life, for conversion and forgiveness.

“The Lord summons us out of the small places in which we have taken refuge and in which we have imprisoned others,” the Dominican priest said.

Beginning with a reflection on Mary Magdalen, John and Peter seeking Jesus in the empty tomb, Father Timothy told participants that they, too, may feel like they are searching “in the dark.

“Since the last assembly,” he said, “so many people, including participants in this synod, have expressed their doubts as to whether anything is going to be achieved. Like Mary Magdalene, some

say, ‘Why have they taken away our hope? We expected so much from the synod, but perhaps there will be just more words.’ ”

In the Gospel account of Easter morning, he said, each of the three disciples “searches for the Lord in his or her own way; each has their own way of loving and each their own emptiness.”

In their searching, each also asks questions, he said. “Likewise, we come to this synod with many questions, for example about the role of women in the Church. These are important questions. But they cannot be seen as just questions about whether something will be allowed or refused. That would be to remain the same sort of Church. The questions that we face should be more like those in the Gospels,” which aim to help the disciples live and share what Jesus taught.

To be of service to its faithful and to the world, Father Timothy said, the Church must share its treasure, which is faith and is explained in doctrine and dogma.

“The young are hungry for the rich meat of the Church’s teaching,” he said. “They will not be satisfied if we just offer them Jesus who was ‘a nice guy’ and wants us to be kind to each other.”

Benedictine Mother Maria Ignazia Angelini, a spiritual adviser to the synod delegates, urged them to keep their deliberations anchored in prayer and in awe before the Eucharist.

“Let us make room for the amazed listening that repositions us, disposes us for this new beginning of our journey together,” she told them.

As synod delegates experienced last year, Father Timothy said, truly listening can be uncomfortable and make people feel like they are being challenged.

But, he said, they must remember that “our fierce love of the Church can also, paradoxically, make us narrow-minded: the fear that it will be harmed by destructive reforms which undermine the traditions that we love. Or the fear that the Church will not become the wide-open home for which we long.

“It is deeply sad that often the Church is wounded by those who love the Church, but differently,” he said. †

Official Appointments

Effective Immediately

Deacon Michael Boggs, permanent deacon of Prince of Peace Parish, Madison, appointed permanent deacon of Most Sorrowful Mother of God Parish, Vevay, while remaining permanent deacon of Prince of Peace Parish, Madison.

Deacon Lawrence French, permanent deacon of St. Ann Parish, Jennings County, St. Joseph Parish, Jennings County, and St. Mary Parish, North Vernon, granted permission to retire from active ministry.

Rev. Eugene John Stein, O.F.M., appointed parochial vicar of Holy Family Parish, Oldenburg.

Very Rev. Anthony Hollowell, VF, appointed director of continuing education for the archdiocesan presbyterate, while remaining pastor of St. Paul Parish, Tell City, and St. Mark Parish, Perry County, dean of the Tell City Deanery, and associate vocations director.

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



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

October 4–17, 2024

October 4

2 p.m. – Virtual National Eucharistic Revival Bishops Advisory Group meeting

October 5

10 a.m. – Pastoral Planning Listening Session at St. Benedict Parish, Terre Haute

October 5

5:30 p.m. – 75th Parish Anniversary Mass at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, Greenwood

October 6

10 a.m. – Respect Life Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

October 8

10:30 a.m. – Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

October 8

6 p.m. – Saint Meinrad Alumni dinner at Primo Banquet Hall, Indianapolis

October 9

7 p.m. – Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

October 10

8:15 a.m. – Virtual Judicatories meeting

October 10

10 a.m. – Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

October 10

6 p.m. – United Catholic Appeal Advance Mass and dinner at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, Floyd County

October 16

10 a.m. – Department Heads meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

October 17

9 a.m. – Breakfast with Catholic Legislators at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

Pope Francis believes in it. So does Ted Lasso. What is your favorite story of the great gift of hope in your life?

The TV series “Ted Lasso” focuses on the story of an American who knows nothing about soccer moving to England to coach a city’s professional soccer team. As the team prepares for the last game of its season as a heavy underdog, Ted gathers the players together and says, “So I’ve been hearing this phrase y’all got over here that I ain’t too crazy about— ‘It’s the hope that kills you.’ Y’all know that? I disagree, you know? I think it’s the lack of hope that comes and gets you. See, I believe in hope. I believe in belief.”

Hope has always been one of the foundations of the Catholic Church, along with faith and love. And starting on Christmas Eve of this year and extending until Jan. 6, 2026, the Church will mark a

Jubilee Year that has the theme, “Pilgrims of Hope.”

As we prepare to celebrate this Jubilee Year, *The Criterion* is inviting you, our readers, to share your stories of hope—how embracing hope has helped and guided you in the toughest moments of your life, how others have given you hope for your present and your future, how your faith in God has sustained you and uplifted you in hope during your life.

Send your responses and stories to John Shaughnessy by e-mail at jshaughnessy@archindy.org or by mail in care of *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Please include your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †



Pope’s prayer intentions for October

- **For a shared mission**—We pray that the Church continue to sustain in all ways a synodal lifestyle, as a sign of co-responsibility, promoting the participation, the communion and the mission shared among priests, religious and lay people.

See Pope Francis’ monthly intentions at archindy.org/popesintentions.



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

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



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Archbishop celebrates Mass of Thanksgiving for eucharistic congress and encourages the faithful to build on its impact

By Mike Krokos

The National Eucharistic Congress (NEC), held in Indianapolis in July, was a “special moment of unity, grace, celebration and renewal for the Church” that had a “profound unifying effect,” and it is up to the faithful to move forward, building on its impact, said Archbishop Charles C. Thompson.

“In worship and adoration, we allowed ourselves to be captivated by the sacramental presence of divine love in our midst . . . We surrendered ourselves to the transforming grace of the real presence of Jesus Christ, the living Word giving himself to us in the Eucharist,” the archbishop noted to the approximately 200 people in attendance at a Sept. 18 Mass of Thanksgiving for the NEC at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

“As Cardinal [Luis Antonio] Tagle [Pope Francis’ special envoy to the congress] stated so beautifully in the closing liturgy at the congress, as we have been given such a profound gift, we must be gift to others. Remember, he said, ‘Be gift, not a burden,’” said Archbishop Thompson.

If we are to be a gift to others, the archbishop continued in his homily, “we must embrace Jesus for who he is rather than who we or the world want to make him out to be.

“This requires that we not merely know about him but encounter the person of Jesus—and have a personal relationship with him—through prayer, Scripture, sacramental grace, humility, faith seeking understanding, Church teaching and Christ-centered service.”

Calling it “an incredible moment in the life of the Church,” the archbishop said that during a recent National Eucharistic Revival board meeting, it was shared that all 50 states and multiple countries were represented at the July 17-21 congress.

“This is having an international impact. Other countries are reaching out to us, wanting to know how to do this, the way it was done here in the United States,” he noted. “It’s had that kind of an impact.”

‘Empowered me to move forward’

Jeff and Nora Grasser of St. Louis de Montfort Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, were among those who attended the Sept. 18 liturgy.

Nora also participated in all four routes of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, which converged on Indianapolis for the congress. She finished her journey by taking part in the western St. Junipero Route that came through Terre Haute.

During the congress, the Grasser’s had several houseguests, including a priest from the Diocese of Tyler, Texas, a French journalist and several others.

“When we finished the week [of the congress], there was a sense of letdown—but also fulfillment,” Nora said. “This to me [the liturgy], was a finishing.”

Jeff agreed.

“For me, this offers a kind of closure,” he said. “It was such a phenomenal, historical event.”

The couple hopes the seeds planted in their lives through the congress bear fruit.

“To me, it opens up a little easier path to pray with people, having had that time with adoration with 50,000 people,” Nora said. “It’s just kind of empowered me to move forward.”

Jeff concurred, adding, “I think God’s working on me. Hopefully, there will be more to come from my story as well.”

‘The real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist’

Eucharistic adoration was an integral part of the congress, as each night participants filled Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis to reverently pray with our Lord.

“In eucharistic adoration, remember we



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson delivers a homily during a Sept. 18 Mass of Thanksgiving in SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

began with that monstrosity Pope Francis had blessed—with the body, blood, soul and divinity, the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist—reminding us that we’re all here gathered from all over the country and beyond,” Archbishop Thompson said, “not for any other personality, but for the person of Jesus Christ, and our focus on him makes it clear of what we’re to be about as his witnesses and his disciples.”

‘They were part of what you were part of’

Maureen Bogard and Mary Duffey, both members of Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove, took part in the congress—Bogard as an attendee and Duffey as a volunteer. Both said their faith was strengthened by the experience.

Bogard, who said she “felt God calling me to come,” was glad she took part.

“The unity of the Catholic Church, you felt it there. No matter who you talked to, they were part of what you were part of,” she said, “and I felt totally changed by it . . . feeling part of a large Catholic Church.”

As a result of the congress, Bogard said she has hopes to reach out to people she “knows are Catholic, but don’t really practice their faith.

“My goal is to bring people into the Church for the love of God,” she noted.

As a volunteer, Duffey reflected on the patience shown by attendees who waited in line for hours during registration on the first day of the congress.

“They were all so wonderful and so patient,” she noted. “They would tell us

about their two- or three-hour waits, but they were still positive and so happy.”

Duffey, who is an extraordinary minister of holy Communion at her parish and at an area hospital, said as a result of the congress she wants to reach out more in her ministry to share “that piece of heaven” with others.

‘Proclaiming the kingdom of God at hand’

In our call to missionary discipleship, Jesus “beckons us to go forth in joy and hope,” encouraging “others to a personal encounter with him and proclaiming the kingdom of God at hand,” Archbishop Thompson said.

“Many transforming graces and blessings will continue to flow from the National Eucharistic Congress, especially as we continue to focus on the pillars of the National Eucharistic Renewal that continue,” the archbishop noted, including:

—“Continuing to enhance a personal encounter with Jesus and one another”;

—“To reinvigorate worship, to know what it means to be a community of believers, a community who worships together”;

—“Deepening formation, understanding what it means to belong to the body of Christ, to belong to something greater than ourselves”;

—“Missionary sending, how we go forth to take that experience, that gift, and bring that gift to the world to transform the world, a world in such desperate need of hope.” †



Women kneel in prayer during a Mass of Thanksgiving for the National Eucharistic Congress on Sept. 18. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

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The Criterion

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

Editorial



A statue of St. Francis of Assisi is seen in a garden at Community First! Village in Austin, Texas, on Sept. 9, 2021. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

It's time for another Franciscan renewal

“Laudato Si’, mi’ Signore”—“Praise be to you, my Lord.” In the words of this beautiful canticle, St. Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. (Pope Francis, “Laudato Si’: On Care of Our Common Home,” #1)

Today is Oct. 4, the memorial of St. Francis of Assisi. Francis can truly be called a saint for all seasons, but he is relevant to this season, the third decade of the 21st century. Why? Because the virtues that St. Francis was known for are especially needed today.

Francis was a man of peace—but wars, or the effects of war, are everywhere today. He was a man who loved the poor—but poverty, homelessness and class struggles continue year after year. Francis was open to dialogue with those who disagreed with him—but our political discourse today is full of rancor and incivility.

Francis of Assisi dedicated his whole life to praising God and loving his fellow creatures. He showed reverence and respect for everyone and everything that God has made. He identified with outcasts, and he brought healing and joy to those who were afflicted with hopeless diseases like leprosy.

G.K. Chesterton, in his wonderful “spiritual biography” of this great saint, recalls how Francis began as a romantic young man, “a colorful troubadour” who loved poetry and ballads, who spent his wealthy father’s money extravagantly and who seemed to enjoy life to the fullest. Then God intervened in his life in the person of a poor beggar seeking alms. The young man’s eyes were opened to “a world beyond himself,” and he vowed to embrace poverty and live a life of radical simplicity.

When Christ first spoke to young Francis, he asked him to “rebuild my Church.” Francis took him literally, and immediately he began restoring the dilapidated church of San Damiano outside the city walls of Assisi. Later, it became clear that what the Lord had in mind was an infinitely more extensive rebuilding, a renewal of the whole Church from the inside out, guided by the Holy Spirit and touching every aspect of Christian life.

As Chesterton describes it, St. Francis undertook this renewal with a great sense

of humility and generosity, with joy and compassion, and with an ardent love for all of God’s creation. Francis was a man of vision who shared in the suffering of Christ (the stigmata) and who inspired thousands of followers—during his lifetime and up to our present day—to live simply and joyfully as he did.

The kind of renewal that St. Francis ignited in 13th-century Italy was seen this past summer on July 17–21 during the National Eucharistic Congress that took place in Indianapolis. An estimated 50,000 people were “on fire” with the love of Christ—really present in the great sacrament of his body and blood—and, as a result, they committed themselves to the ongoing work of missionary discipleship.

Pope Francis calls for Catholics in every region of the universal Church to embrace the baptismal call to share the joy of the Gospel and to be Spirit-filled evangelizers who never hesitate to proclaim our salvation in Christ.

At his first audience on March 16, 2013, Pope Francis said that he had chosen his name in honor of St. Francis of Assisi and that he had done so because he was especially concerned for the well-being of the poor. The Holy Father recounted that right after the election one of the cardinals had told him, “Don’t forget the poor,” and that made him think of St. Francis of Assisi. It was the first time a pope has taken the name Francis.

Concern for the poor, love for all creation, respect for migrants and refugees, eucharistic devotion, enthusiastic proclamation of the joy of the Gospel—all of these and more are Franciscan themes. They are reflected in the life of the saint from Assisi and in the teaching and ministry of our current pope. These Franciscan themes have a certain urgency in our world today and in our Church’s response to the needs of people everywhere.

As we remember this great saint today, let’s do more than just talk. Francis was above all a man of action. He delivered on all his promises, and he fulfilled the admonition attributed to him: Preach the Gospel always. When necessary, use words.

St. Francis of Assisi, pray for us. Inspire us to follow your example in our actions and our words.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Nancy Shields

Phyllis Schlafly: A pro-life Catholic we should know

(The following column was written to coincide with Respect Life Month, which is celebrated by the Church each October.)



I learned about Phyllis Schlafly (1924-2016), who would have celebrated her 100th birthday this year, from a book about my family tree.

We share the ancestry of Catholics whose persecution in England led them to flee to Maryland, eventually settling in Missouri to build Catholic communities where they could freely practice their faith. There are hundreds of books, articles, videos, interviews and debates (she was a formidable debater) available that represent her incredible body of work.

Aside from being a conservative icon, she worked tirelessly for pro-life and pro-family ideals. She spearheaded the grassroots movement STOP ERA (Stop Taking Our Privileges Equal Rights Amendment), later named the Eagle Forum.

Schlafly roused people of all religions to astonishingly put an end to the ERA in the late 1970s. She felt strongly that the innocuous title of the amendment belied a danger that, if passed, would sweep away legal protections of gender-specific privileges enjoyed by women, including “dependent wife benefits” under Social Security, separate restrooms for males and females and the exemption of women from the military draft.

She believed that American women are a privileged group, beneficiaries of a tradition of respect for women which dates from the Christian age of chivalry and the honor and respect paid to Mary, the mother of Christ.

In 1973 when *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion on demand, it was a seminal moment for church-going Americans. Christians began to listen to Schlafly.

Believing that the traditional home was being attacked by organized feminism, she and Eagle Forum members organized a counter-conference during the 1977 National Women’s Conference in Houston. Held in Houston, the

counter-conference was packed with pro-life, pro-family supporters whose agenda was to protect and promote family values in American politics. Historians agree that this event had a monumental impact in dividing and defining the pro-life and pro-abortion movements.

My interest in Schlafly led me to want to know about her faith and what gave her the strength to fight.

I spoke to her daughter Anne Schlafly Cori, who has continued her mother’s work. She told me this story: although her mom was born Phyllis McAlpin Stewart on Aug. 14, 1924, she claimed her birthday as Aug. 15, the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a detail of special importance to her.

She had a deep love and devotion to Our Lady and prayed her rosary daily.

Those close to her knew the *Memorare* was a favorite prayer of hers.

Of the many gifts she gave her six children, one was her love of the parable of the talents found in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 25:14-30). She brought it up often and wanted to ingrain in them that it is a privilege to be entrusted with God’s gifts, resources and opportunities to work toward God’s purposes in the world. And she taught them her motto to live by, “faith and fidelity.”

Schlafly worked almost up until the time of her death on Sept. 5, 2016. Her funeral was held at The Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis in St. Louis. She liked to say she was “hatched” (baptized) by her devout Catholic parents, “matched” (married) in 1949 to John Frederick “Fred” Schlafly, Jr., her most staunch advocate and supporter, and would be “dispatched” (rite of Christian burial) from the basilica.

Her Eagle Forum, which is still going strong, earned its name from a passage from the book of the prophet

Isaiah: “Those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not become weary, they will walk and not faint” (Is 40:31).

In searching what gave her the strength to fight, these beautiful facts answer my question perfectly.

(Nancy Shields is a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis.) †

She believed that American women are a privileged group, beneficiaries of a tradition of respect for women which dates from the Christian age of chivalry and the honor and respect paid to Mary, the mother of Christ. ... She had a deep love and devotion to Our Lady and prayed her rosary daily.

Letters Policy

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

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

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit

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

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

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ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

What do we need to be happy? Look to St. Francis

Today is the memorial of St. Francis of Assisi. Saints are women and men who inspire us by their holiness and their humanity. They are “icons” of Christ, living images that present to us different aspects of the face of Jesus, who is God incarnate.

Some saints are great teachers. Some give themselves entirely to caring for the poor and the sick, as Jesus did. Some sacrifice their lives and die a martyr’s death, as Jesus did.

All surrender their personal desires to do the will of God, as Jesus did when he prayed, “Not my will be done, Father, but yours” (Lk 22:42). Saints are mirror images of our Savior, Jesus Christ. They reflect particular features of our Lord’s human and divine nature.

Our current Holy Father chose to take the name Francis in honor of today’s great saint. When asked why he decided to honor this particular saint, Pope Francis points out the saint from Assisi’s humility, his emphasis on God’s mercy, his concern for the poor, his commitment to interreligious dialogue and his passionate concern for all God’s creation.

Many people—including followers of different religions or people with

no religion at all—say that Francis of Assisi is their favorite saint. Why? What is it about this 13th-century Italian man that inspires people of all ages, nationalities and philosophical or religious points of view? What do we see in Francis that so stirs our minds and hearts that we recognize in him the image of God?

Perhaps it is his simplicity and his joy. Especially for people who are burdened by the complexity of life and the profound anxiety that goes with living in our contemporary culture, these characteristics give outstanding witness to the person of Christ.

In Francis of Assisi, we recognize a happy man who knows how to live simply.

It’s true that Francis experienced great suffering—including the “stigmata” that allowed him to experience the wounds of the crucified Christ. Anyone who knows the many obstacles that Francis had to overcome as he sought to carry out Christ’s command to “rebuild my Church” knows that his life was not an easy one. And yet, through it all, Francis emerges as a man who loved life and who celebrated the beauty

and wonder of all God’s creation.

We long to be like him. We wish we could cast off our dependence on material things. We wish we could find happiness—and peace—in the simple beauty and in the joyful celebration of all God’s gifts. St. Francis inspires us because he carries his burdens lightly—in sharp contrast to our heavy hearts—and because he can laugh and sing and dance in circumstances that cause us much sadness and despair.

Francis maintained an intimate, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. He loved the Eucharist, and he sought nourishment for his soul in the body and blood of Christ. He was a passionate man, and his reverence for this great sacrament filled him with a powerful sense of awe and wonder.

He once wrote, “Let everyone be struck with fear, let the whole world tremble, and let the heavens exult, when Christ the Son of the living God is present in the hands of the priest. O stupendous dignity! O humble sublimity, that the Lord of the universe, God and the Son of God, so humbles himself that for our salvation he hides himself under an ordinary piece of bread!”

We like to think of St. Francis as a free spirit, but Francis was also a man of the Church. He knew that the Church is the sacrament of Christ’s presence among us and that at the center of the Church is the Eucharist.

When the Lord asked Francis to “rebuild my Church,” he responded by giving away his material possessions, by serving others, by dedicating his life to prayer and the proclamation of God’s word, and by challenging all of us (clergy, religious and lay people) to be worthy of the gifts we have received from God—in the holy Eucharist and in wonder of all creation.

Francis was a great saint and a joyful man. His simplicity, his humility, his faith, his love for Christ and his goodness toward every man and every woman brought him gladness in every circumstance. St. Francis of Assisi shows us that there is an intimate connection between suffering, selflessness, holiness and joy.

What do we need to do to be happy? We should look to St. Francis of Assisi and follow his example. We should strive to become eucharistic saints—men and women who truly are close to God! †



Cristo, la piedra angular

¿Qué necesitamos para ser felices? Posemos la mirada en san Francisco

Hoy es el memorial de san Francisco de Asís. Los santos son hombres y mujeres que nos inspiran por su santidad y su calidad humana; son “íconos” de Cristo, imágenes vivas que nos presentan diferentes aspectos del rostro de Jesús, que es Dios encarnado.

Algunos santos son grandes maestros, otros se entregan por entero al cuidado de los pobres y los enfermos, como hizo Jesús; algunos sacrifican su vida y mueren como mártires, como hizo Jesús.

Todos renuncian a sus deseos personales para hacer la voluntad de Dios, como hizo Jesús cuando oró: “No se haga mi voluntad sino la tuya” (Lc 22:42).

Los santos son reflejo de nuestro Salvador, Jesucristo, que muestran rasgos particulares de la naturaleza humana y divina de nuestro Señor.

Nuestro actual Santo Padre eligió tomar el nombre de Francisco en honor a este gran santo. Cuando se le pregunta por qué decidió honrar a este santo en particular, el Papa Francisco destaca la humildad del santo de Asís, su énfasis en la misericordia de Dios, su preocupación por los pobres, su compromiso con el diálogo interreligioso y su apasionada preocupación por toda la creación de Dios.

Muchas personas, incluidos

seguidores de distintas religiones o personas sin religión alguna, dicen que Francisco de Asís es su santo favorito. ¿Por qué? ¿Qué tiene este hombre italiano del siglo XIII que inspira a personas de todas las edades, nacionalidades y puntos de vista filosóficos o religiosos? ¿Qué vemos en Francisco que conmueve tanto nuestras mentes y corazones para reconocer en él la imagen de Dios?

Tal vez sea su sencillez y su alegría. Especialmente para quienes se sienten agobiados por lo complejo de la vida y la profunda ansiedad que conlleva la existencia en nuestra cultura contemporánea, estas características constituyen un testimonio excepcional de la persona de Cristo.

En Francisco de Asís reconocemos a un hombre feliz que sabe vivir con sencillez.

Si bien es cierto que enfrentó grandes sufrimientos, incluidos los estigmas mediante los cuales sintió el dolor de las llagas de Cristo crucificado. Cualquiera que conozca los numerosos obstáculos que Francisco tuvo que superar para cumplir el mandato de Cristo de “reconstruir mi Iglesia” sabe que su vida no fue fácil. Y sin embargo, en medio de todo ello, Francisco emerge como un hombre

que amaba la vida y que celebraba la belleza y la maravilla de toda la creación de Dios.

Anhelamos ser como él y poder desprendernos de nuestra dependencia de las cosas materiales. Deseamos poder encontrar la felicidad y la paz en la belleza sencilla y en la celebración gozosa de todos los dones de Dios. San Francisco nos inspira porque lleva sus cargas con ligereza—en marcado contraste con nuestros pesados corazones—y porque puede reír, cantar y bailar en circunstancias que nos causan mucha tristeza y desesperación.

Francisco mantuvo una relación íntima y personal con Jesucristo. Amaba la Eucaristía y buscaba alimento para su alma en el cuerpo y la sangre de Cristo. Era un hombre apasionado, y su reverencia por este gran sacramento le llenaba de un poderoso sentimiento de asombro y maravilla.

Una vez escribió: “Que todos se estremecan de miedo, que el mundo entero tiemble y que los cielos se regocijen, cuando Cristo, el Hijo del Dios vivo, esté presente en las manos del sacerdote. ¡Oh, estupenda dignidad! Oh, humilde sublimidad, que el Señor del universo, Dios e Hijo de Dios, se humille tanto que para nuestra salvación se esconda

bajo un pedazo de pan ordinario!”

A menudo se retrata a San Francisco como un espíritu libre, pero también era un hombre de Iglesia pues sabía que esta es el sacramento de la presencia de Cristo entre nosotros, y que en el centro de la Iglesia está la Eucaristía.

Cuando el Señor le pidió a Francisco “reconstruir mi Iglesia,” él respondió desprendiéndose de sus posesiones materiales, sirviendo a los demás, dedicando su vida a la oración y a la proclamación de la palabra de Dios, y desafiándonos a todos (clero, religiosos y laicos) a ser dignos de los dones que hemos recibido de Dios: en la sagrada Eucaristía y en el asombro ante toda la creación.

Francisco fue un gran santo y un hombre alegre cuya sencillez, humildad, fe, amor a Cristo y bondad hacia todo hombre y toda mujer le alegraron en toda circunstancia. San Francisco de Asís nos muestra que existe una conexión íntima entre el sufrimiento, la abnegación, la santidad y la alegría.

¿Qué necesitamos para ser felices? Deberíamos posar la mirada en san Francisco de Asís y seguir su ejemplo. Debemos esforzarnos por convertirnos en santos eucarísticos, ¡hombres y mujeres que estén verdaderamente cerca de Dios! †

Events Calendar

October 8

St. Mary Parish, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. **Jesus and the End Times Video Series Week 3: "The Final Tribulation, the 'Rapture' and the Second Coming of Christ,"** 6:30-8 p.m., week three of four-week video Bible study by theologian Dr. Brant Pitre, attend any or all sessions, free. Information: 812-346-3604, parish@stmarysnv.com.

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

October 10-13

Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards, 10 S. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. **Fr. Chester P. Smith National Black Catholic Men's Conference,** registration fee includes T-shirt, luncheon banquet, souvenir booklet and registration packet, \$175 adult, \$100 ages 10-17, hotel parking \$25 per day. Hotel booking: 410-962-0202 or 800-228-9290. Conference information, registration: bowmanfrancis.org.

October 12

St. Monica Parish, St. Augustine Hall, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. **"A Final Journey" Seminar,** 9 a.m.-noon, presentation by a palliative care doctor, an attorney, a funeral home director and a Catholic Cemeteries representative on end-of-life medical, legal and funeral planning questions, refreshments provided, all invited, free. Information: cmeeer1@comcast.net.

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteering Opportunity,** 9 a.m.-2 p.m., ages 12-18, teens volunteer to help health care residents. Information, registration: 361-500-9505, jluna@spsmw.org, TeenVolunteer.SistersofProvidence.org.

October 13

St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. **Mass in French / Messe en français,** 5 p.m. / 18h, coordinated by ACFADI (*Apostolat des Catholiques*

Francophones de l'Archidiocèse d'Indianapolis), second Sunday of each month / *le deuxième dimanche de chaque mois*. Information: acfadi2014@gmail.com, rvermett@iu.edu.

Monte Cassino Shrine, 13312 Monte Cassino Shrine Road (off S.R. 62), St. Meinrad. **Rosary Procession Pilgrimage,** 2 p.m. CT, Benedictine Father Joseph Cox presenting "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Queen," includes sermon, rosary procession, Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, free. Advance information: 812-357-6501, khall@saintmeinrad.edu. Day-of information: 812-357-6611.

Marian University, Norman Center Room 222, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **People of Peace OFS Monthly Meeting,** 12:30-3 p.m., explore Franciscan spirituality with lay Franciscans, free. Information: 317-762-6259, popofsindy@gmail.com.

October 13 or 15

St. Mary Parish, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. **Jesus and the End Times Video Series Week 4: "The Life of the World to Come": The Last Judgement and the New Creation,"** week four of four-week video Bible study by theologian Dr. Brant Pitre, Oct. 13 4-5:30 p.m. or Oct. 15 6:30-8 p.m., all invited, free. Information: 812-346-3604, parish@stmarysnv.com.

October 14

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, Madonna Hall, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Confraternity of Christian Mothers,** 6 p.m. Mass followed by meeting, all Catholic women welcome, free. Information: 217-638-7433, paulabeechler@gmail.com.

October 16

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

Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Providence Hall Dining Room, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Memory Café,** 2-3:30 p.m., third Wednesday of each month, for people with early-to-moderate memory loss and their caregivers, beverages and snacks provided, free. Information, registration:

events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2873, memorycafe@spsmw.org.

October 17

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

St. Ambrose Parish, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour. **Seymour Deanery Evangelization Gathering,** 7-8:30 p.m., hosted by the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, all are welcome, free. Information: 317-236-1466, abardo@archindy.org.

October 18

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange,** author and former Indiana Secretary of State Ed Simcox presenting "He Leadeth Me," rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Oct. 15. Information, registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

October 19

St. Joseph Parish, 1125 E. Broadway, Shelbyville. **Oktoberfest,** 5-9:30 p.m., beer, brats, music, eat-in or drive-through, food prices TBA, free admission. Information: 317-398-8227.

October 20

Monte Cassino Shrine, 13312 Monte Cassino Shrine Road (off S.R. 62), St. Meinrad. **Rosary Procession Pilgrimage,** 2 p.m. CT, Benedictine Archabbot Kurt Stasiak presenting "Mary the Teacher: Lessons from a Mother," includes sermon, rosary procession, Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, free. Advance information: 812-357-6501, khall@saintmeinrad.edu. Day-of information: 812-357-6611.

October 20-Nov. 10

St. Joseph Parish, 1875 South CR 700 West, North Vernon. **Healing the Whole Person Retreat,** 3-6 p.m., four sessions (Oct. 20, 27, Nov. 3, 10), Father Jerry Byrd presenting, free admission, hardcover workbook \$25 or digital download \$16, register by Oct. 10. Information, registration: 812-346-3604, parish@stmarysnv.com, tinyurl.com/healingSJNV24. †

Wedding Anniversaries

CARL AND SHEILA (NOONE) ADAMS, members of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 13.

The couple was married in St. Augustine Church in Kalamazoo, Mich., on June 13, 1964. They have four children: Kimberly Spielmacher, Michelle Wilson, Stephanie and Bryan Adams. The couple also has five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



ARTHUR AND ROBERTA (SCHEBLER) BOHMAN, members of St. Maurice Parish in Napoleon, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 22.

The couple was married in St. Louis Church in Batesville on Aug. 22, 1964. They have two children: Glen and Lee Bohman. The couple also has four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



STEVE AND NANCY (ESAREY) HOLLINDEN, members of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Oct. 3.

The couple was married in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis on Oct. 3, 1964. They have two children: Diane Lamond and David Hollinden. The couple also has three grandchildren.



TERRY AND PATRICIA (SENSMEIER) LOEWENKAMP, members of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish in Greenwood, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Sept. 26.

The couple was married in SS. Peter and Paul Church in Haubstadt, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville), on Sept. 26, 1964. They have three children: Debra Gries, Michelle Taylor and Scott Loewenkamp. The couple also has eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



PRIMO AND SYLVIA (ARGUELLES) ANDRES, members of St. Margaret Mary Parish in Terre Haute, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 4.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Albany, N.Y., on July 4, 1974. They have one child: Adam Andres. The couple also has two grandchildren.



KEN AND DENISE (KNECHT) HANDLEY, members of St. Michael Parish in Brookville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 6.

The couple was married in St. Michael Church in Brookville on July 6, 1974. They have two children: Carrie Rupp and the late Chad Handley.



HAROLD AND BRENDA (DOUD) PREMO, members of St. Mary Parish in Mitchell, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 31.

The couple was married in St. Lawrence Church in Louisville, Ky., on Aug. 31, 1974. They have two children: Melanie and Joshua Premo. The couple also has five grandchildren.



Gabriel Project will celebrate 25 years of ministry at Nov. 7 dinner in Indianapolis

Gabriel Project will celebrate 25 years of ministry at its annual fundraising dinner at the Knights of Columbus McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware St., in Indianapolis, from 6-9 p.m. on Nov. 7.

Gabriel Project serves any pregnant woman in crisis, helping them find the material, emotional and spiritual help they need and saving the lives of their unborn babies.

David Bereit, co-founder of 40 Days for Life, will deliver a keynote address, sharing his thoughts on the impact Gabriel Project and its volunteers and supporters

have had during the last 25 years of aiding women and families. In addition, the Gabriel Project's first-ever impact report will be shared, looking at such 25-year statistics as how many moms have been helped, how many diapers have been given away, how many women have received help with rent, and more.

There is no cost to attend the dinner, however attendees are asked to RSVP via e-mail at gpdinner2024@gmail.com by Oct. 17. Include the name, address, phone number and e-mail address of each attendee. †

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

INPEA leader for nearly two decades eyes retirement while seeking to fulfill vision for universal school choice in Indiana

By Victoria Arthur

Following a history-making tenure as the voice of Indiana's non-public schools, John Elcesser has announced that he will retire in 2025—but only after one more legislative session, which he and other advocates hope will result in passage of universal school choice for Indiana families.

Elcesser, who for nearly two decades has served as executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association (INPEA), said he based his decision on careful discernment and a desire to give his organization's board of directors ample time to search for his successor.

"I've always believed that leadership is for a season," said Elcesser, a former Catholic school principal and superintendent. "You bring your gifts and your skills to an organization and do the very best you can to leave it better than when you arrived. But then there's a time for a new vision and new eyes and a new skill set, and it just seemed like this was the right time."

Elcesser's season of leadership has been abundantly fruitful. In recognition of his influence and impact on education statewide, Elcesser received Indiana's highest honor—the Sagamore of the Wabash—at an INPEA event on Sept. 26.

"John has been a champion of non-public schools across our state," said Michelle Priar, superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese of Evansville and president of the INPEA board. "I'm so grateful for his dedication to INPEA and for advocating for families and children for so many years."

Along with his predecessor Glenn Tebbe, who went on to lead the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) for 16 years, Elcesser became a key player in the movement for school choice in Indiana.

In 2009, the INPEA and the ICC were among the advocacy groups instrumental in the Indiana General Assembly's passage of the Scholarship Tax Credit program, which built momentum for the major school choice legislation that would follow two years later. When the Choice Scholarship Program, more commonly known as the voucher program, was signed into law by then-Gov. Mitch Daniels in 2011, Indiana claimed the most comprehensive school choice program in the nation.

Since that time, the program has expanded further thanks to the advocacy efforts of the INPEA and others, culminating in the state legislature's passage of near-universal school choice in Indiana in 2023. Today, 97% of Indiana families are eligible to send their children to the school they believe is the right fit for them.

"Undoubtedly our vision is to attain universal school choice for Indiana,"

Elcesser said. "A significant part of my timing [for retirement] was making sure that I could be here for the 2025 legislative session, to continue the journey that we started in 2009 and even way before that.

"Our goals early on were to ensure that people who could not afford school choice could afford it, and we accomplished that. But now, other families are asking why they can't use a very small percentage of their tax dollars to be able to exercise private school choice without some major sacrifice in their life."

Elcesser's vast experience and ability to connect with school administrators, advocates and lawmakers will make finding his successor a challenging task, according to Priar, who is leading the search committee for the new INPEA executive director.

"John has made an extraordinary impact on so many levels," said Priar, who served many years as a teacher and principal before taking on her superintendent role in early 2023. "We will certainly miss John once his official retirement date rolls around, but he has left a legacy that will most definitely carry on for many years to come."

The INPEA, which is marking its 50th anniversary this year, represents the state's more than 400 non-public schools, including Indiana's 175 Catholic schools. Encompassing both faith-based and independent schools, the organization advocates for non-public schools at the General Assembly, the Indiana Department of Education and the Indiana State Board of Education.

One of INPEA's core messages is that school choice should not and does not come at the expense of public schools, which continue to receive the vast majority of state education funding and are vital to society. Colleagues say that Elcesser has been particularly effective at conveying that message and, in so doing, gaining respect and trust from educators at all levels throughout the state.

"John has always done a great job of helping people understand that school choice is about each individual child and family selecting the educational environment that is right for them, and having the state support that," said James McNeany, principal of Guérin Catholic High School in Noblesville, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, and a member of the INPEA board. "Even though John advocates for non-public schools, he never does it in a way that demeans public schools. John is about educating every child in Indiana, even those who are in schools that he does not represent from an INPEA perspective."

"From the Department of Education to the state legislature, people respect John's opinion because they know it's coming from a place of care for educating all students."

McNeany, who previously served as principal of All Saints School in Logansport, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese, has seen his 18-year career as a school administrator overlap with

happens to it and in it, and to reject state interference with her healthcare choices," McBurney wrote in the 26-page ruling.

The law, a so-called "heartbeat" ban called the LIFE Act, prohibits with some exceptions abortion after fetal cardiac activity can be detected. The law was signed by Gov. Brian Kemp in 2019, but it did not go into effect immediately because *Roe v. Wade* was the law of the land at the time it was passed.

McBurney's Sept. 30 ruling is expected to be appealed.

The Catholic Church teaches that all human life is sacred from conception to natural death, and as such, opposes direct abortion. †



John Elcesser, left, executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association (INPEA), receives the Sagamore of the Wabash award on Sept. 26 at an event marking the 50th anniversary of the INPEA. His INPEA predecessor Glenn Tebbe, himself a Sagamore recipient, presented the state award to his longtime colleague and friend. (Photos by Andrea Anderson)

Elcesser's tenure at the INPEA. He says that like so many others, he has come to rely on Elcesser for guidance and input on a wide range of matters.

"The first word that comes to mind when I think of John is wisdom," McNeany said. "He has so much experience working at so many different levels of non-public schools that when you reach out to him with a question, he will more than likely have a well-formed answer to be able to guide schools, principals and superintendents throughout the state."

Kyle Weener, who was only 27 when he became an Indiana non-public school administrator, echoed those thoughts.

"One of the first meetings I had with principals in my area was with John, and from the first moment I met him, I knew that he was going to be a tremendous resource not only for my school, but for all the schools within Lake County and the region," said Weener, principal and head of school for Highland Christian School in Highland, Ind. "For the last six years, I've found that to be true time and time again."

"John has such a heart for children and for schools," continued Weener, who serves as secretary of the INPEA board. "He also has an incredible ability to help align the resources that will make each and every non-public school be the best it can be. It has been an honor to work alongside him."

Now, with Elcesser's anticipated retirement in June, the INPEA is preparing

not only for a transition to a new leader, but potentially a new focus if universal school choice is indeed adopted in the 2025 legislative session.

"This new person is going to step into the role at a unique time, with a new chapter to write," said Andrea Anderson, communications and member relations director for the INPEA. "It will be critical for the new leader to steer us and chart a course for us for the next many years, hopefully in a post-universal school choice landscape."

Anderson, who calls Elcesser the best boss she has ever had in her career, says she will be grateful for his voice and his presence during another critical budget-year session of the Indiana General Assembly, set to begin in January.

"Universal school choice is what we're all working toward," Anderson said. "It motivates us all to work extra hard—obviously for all the families of Indiana—but also to get this done for John."

To learn more about the mission and the advocacy efforts of the INPEA, visit www.inpea.org.

For more information regarding the INPEA executive director job posting, contact searchcommittee@inpea.org.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus [Little Flower] Parish in Indianapolis, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

Georgia's 'heartbeat law' on abortion struck down again

ATLANTA (OSV News)—Judge Robert McBurney of Superior Court of Fulton County in Atlanta ruled on Sept. 30 that Georgia can no longer enforce its so-called "heartbeat law" on abortion, a six-week abortion ban that went into effect after *Roe v. Wade* was overturned in 2022.

With McBurney's ruling, abortions are now legally allowed in Georgia until about 22 weeks of pregnancy.

"A review of our higher courts' interpretations of 'liberty' demonstrates that liberty in Georgia includes in its meaning, in its protections, and in its bundle of rights the power of a woman to control her own body, to decide what

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

Mike Krokos
Signed: Mike Krokos, Editor

CYO

continued from page 1

“No big deal,” Price says with a smile as her eyes shine with joy. “I’m doing pretty good. I have more treatments to go. The cancer is still there. It’s a little bit active but not taking over. The bottom line for me is I don’t have any regrets. I don’t have any sorrows.

“From the very beginning, the diagnosis was not that great. And I immediately said to the doctor, ‘Hey, I don’t have any anxiety. Let’s just put a team together and let’s just go.’ Within two days, the doctors came together and said, ‘We’ll do this, we’ll do this.’ I’ve progressed very well with what I have. I had a 6 1/2-hour surgery, and the next day I’m out walking in the hallway. You keep going. You keep going.”

‘She brightens everybody’s days’

Ask Price what keeps her going, and she immediately starts praising everything and everyone connected with the CYO—the coaches, the volunteers, the children and youths who participate, and all the people she has worked with ever since Bill Kuntz, Sr., hired her in 1973.

“You make a lot of friends over the years. You touch a lot of lives,” she says. “That’s what keeps you going.”

At 73, Price has brought that same combination of making friends and touching lives to Franciscan Health Indianapolis, the setting of her surgeries and treatments.

“Bernie is just a burst of energy,” says Joan Himebrook, who works in the cancer center at Franciscan Health Indianapolis as the community outreach manager for the hospital’s oncology and cardiovascular units.

“She’s walking in here with cancer, and she brightens everybody’s day. As she’s walking back for her infusion, she will say, ‘I am so excited to come here and get this today. I’m so excited I get to fight my cancer.’”

Himebrook believes that attitude has helped Price in her battle with ovarian cancer, “one of the deadliest because there’s no test for it early on.”

“By the time you get an ovarian cancer diagnosis, it’s usually into a more advanced stage,” says Himebrook, who is also a close friend of Price. “She’s never let anything slow her down. She always speaks positively of healing. She just assumes she’s going to win, and, so far, it’s really worked for her.

“She’s a source of strength for a lot of people when she should be the person wanting strength from others. That’s just a testament to the heart and the spirit that she has always carried with her.”

Even while getting the chemo treatments, Price has turned the sessions into moments of fun and joy. It’s how she has become known and crowned as the “Chemo Cheez-It Queen.”

The joyful and tough parts of the journey

During her first chemo treatment, Price was asked if there was a special kind of treat she would like to have.

“I said, ‘I really like Cheez-It,’” Price says. “So,

they brought me a bag and then another bag. I’m thinking this is great. They did it the next time and the next time. Just being funny, I sent Kellogg’s [which makes the snack] a picture of me holding Cheez-It at chemo. Their public relations department contacted me and said, ‘We want to follow your journey.’

“Then they started sending me all this Cheez-It swag. That’s how I got to be known as the Chemo Cheez-It Queen.”

Price’s eyes sparkle with delight as she mentions the Cheez-It blanket, baseball cap and earrings she has worn during treatments. It’s her way of stressing the joyful, positive side of life that she strives to make people focus on in this journey. Still, there are a few moments in a conversation with her when the tough moments of this journey surface.

“They had a prayer service at Good Shepherd for me. I was still bed-bound at that time, but they streamed it, and some of the Franciscan nurses came in and watched it with me. I thought, ‘Oh my God, look who they’re praying for! It’s me.’ But that was the only time I felt a little emotional about it. I could see some people were upset.”

The journey has also taken her back to thoughts of the one person who is always on her mind—her late husband, Jack Price.

For more than 40 years, Bernie was married to Jack, whom she has described as the person “who will always have first place in my heart and soul.” Then heartbreak struck. At 64, Jack unexpectedly collapsed on Dec. 21, 2011. He died three days later on the morning of Christmas Eve.

It was a time when the importance of her faith struck Price deeply, leading her to say, “You don’t get through every day and enjoy what you’re doing if you don’t have faith. I’ve always had faith, but the turning point where it hit me was when Jack passed away. He was so spiritual. If there’s one person in the world who was prepared to die, it was Jack.”

When the doctors initially told Price that she had ovarian cancer, her thoughts turned to Jack.

“I immediately thought about when Doctor Jack passed away suddenly, I became even stronger. I thought if I can handle that, I can handle this,” she says. “I thought, ‘Hey, he’s up there watching me. He’ll put

a little thumb on it.’ But really, not being disrespectful, I’m glad he’s not here to have to deal with this. I thought to myself, he would be concerned about me, but I would be concerned about his feelings. He’s in a good place, and I’m in a good place.”

That good place includes her relationship with God.

‘I talk to God quite a bit’

“At one point, I remember saying to myself, ‘God put this on you. I’m glad he didn’t put it on someone who couldn’t handle it.’ That’s been my attitude,” she says. “I talk to God quite a bit. I talk about everything. I thank him for watching over me.”

She smiles and adds. “I also told him, ‘God, even with the cancer, I’m still pretty good at making fun of a lot of people and a lot of things. And I really have to be honest, I don’t think that’s going to change. But in a good way.’ We joke back and forth.”

She also prays to him regularly.

“I do special prayers every evening. I’m praying for everything. I pray a lot for the young people, that they have good mentors, and they can continue on in a great world. I pray for all the people who have cancer and their families or people who are just dealing with problems.”



The staff of the archdiocese’s Catholic Youth Organization marvel at all the ways that Bernie Price, front and center, continues to touch their lives and others with her humor, faith, love and positive attitude even as her life has been touched by cancer. Here, she was asked to do something to make them smile even more, and she did. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

She is also there for people who have cancer when they want to talk, including Father Robert Gilday, pastor of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis.

“Right now, I am battling prostate cancer for the second time,” says Father Gilday, a longtime member of the CYO’s board of directors. “Bernie and I regularly update each other on our battles with cancer. From the beginning of her battle with cancer, I have been so impressed by Bernie’s positive, upbeat attitude. She has been a real inspiration to me during this time.”

That’s vintage Bernie

Price has about 2,000 “friends” on Facebook, and she is one of the rare people on social media who could claim a significant number of them as real friends—people who feel truly blessed by knowing her.

“When I post on Facebook, it’s mainly upbeat. I say, ‘Everyone is on my A team, and we’re going to keep the train moving forward.’ When I post something, I probably get—between ‘comments’ and ‘likes’—an average of 600 to 700 at a time. I read every one of them, and they’re all kinds of thank yous.”

In person, she routinely starts a conversation by flashing two thumbs up and saying, “I’ve got this! We’re doing great!”

The people who see her most often—the friends she works with at CYO—marvel at all the ways she continues to touch their lives and others with her humor, faith, love and positive attitude even as her life has been touched by cancer.

She serves as the chapter “mom” for the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity at Indiana University Indianapolis, a fraternity focused on service that Jack Price once oversaw. She’s the president of her neighborhood association, a group she started after an older veteran was the victim of a home invasion.

She’s also heavily involved in guiding and coaching the youths at Good Shepherd Parish, and she leads an annual fundraiser for Central Catholic School in Indianapolis.

“I’ve always been amazed at how involved Bernie is in so many different causes, and I have been inspired by all that she does to make a profound impact in people’s lives,” says Jack Schmitz, the executive director of the archdiocese’s CYO. “Following her diagnosis, she hasn’t slowed down one bit in her efforts to continually make this organization, and our community, a better place. Bernie’s spirit and attitude are simply incredible.”

Here’s one final story about Price. It’s the story of her involvement with the food pantry for cancer patients and their families at Franciscan Health Indianapolis.

“I started the food pantry last year,” Himebrook says. “I was sitting with Bernie during a treatment this spring. She said, ‘The folks at the Garfield Brewery want to do a fundraiser for me. I don’t need the funds. I’m good. I’m blessed. So, what can we do? Where do you see holes in outreach?’

“I told her I started a food pantry, and I need lots of things. She said, ‘We’re going to have this fundraiser, and all the money raised is going to go to that pantry.’ They raised almost \$7,000. I said, ‘Bernie, I’m naming this pantry after you. I named it the Right Price Pantry. Beyond that, she hooked me up to get a refrigerator for some fresh and frozen food for people.’

The people who know her well will say, “That’s vintage Bernie.” So is her request when she is asked about taking some photos of her to complement this story.

“I’m doing it with thumbs up,” she says with a laugh. Her smile comes easily as she strikes the pose.

“What else can I say except thumbs up, train moving forward.”

It’s the way she has always lived. †



Even during her chemotherapy treatments, Bernie Price’s desire for fun continues. Here, the self-proclaimed “Chemo Cheez-It Queen” shows off her Cheez-It swag as she shares a smile with her close friend, Joan Himebrook, who works in the cancer center at Franciscan Health Indianapolis as the community outreach manager for the hospital’s oncology and cardiovascular units. (Submitted photo)

Relief efforts underway in western N.C.; flooding devastates region

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (OSV News)—Relief efforts are under way to help communities across western North Carolina reeling from the impacts of Tropical Storm Helene.

Unprecedented flooding from the hurrican-turned-storm swamped municipal water systems, washed away roads and downed utility lines—leaving many mountain communities cut off on Sept. 27 and in critical need of emergency aid. At one point, authorities closed 400 roads deeming them unsafe for travel. AP reported on Sept. 30 that supplies were being airlifted to the region around the isolated city of Asheville.

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper said it was “one of the worst storms in modern history for parts of North Carolina.”

As of Oct. 1, at least 56 deaths were reported in North Carolina due to the storm, according to media reports, and search and rescue operations continued through the weekend to locate hundreds who remain stranded or unaccounted for.

“Power is out everywhere and cellphone towers are down—and water is out in some places, too,” said Margaret Beale, principal of Immaculata School in Hendersonville, which was flooded and remains closed. “This really is a disaster. People can’t get out of their homes and may not have food or water.”

Parishioners, clergy and staff across the Diocese of Charlotte are rallying to provide help—uniting in prayer, raising money and collecting and delivering relief supplies.

“We pray for everyone who has been affected, especially for those who have been injured or lost loved ones, and for the communities in western North Carolina that are seeing total devastation,” said Msgr. Patrick Winslow, vicar general and chancellor of the Diocese of Charlotte.

Msgr. Winslow and other diocesan leaders have been contacting pastors in the affected areas to survey parishes’ immediate needs and evaluate how best to help as the sheer scale of destruction becomes clearer.

The diocese has also organized a drive to take emergency supplies from Charlotte to affected areas. An initial truckload of supplies was delivered on Sept. 29 to Immaculate Conception Church in Hendersonville, where the community was in need of water, according to staff reports.

In Huntersville, some 400 St. Mark parishioners and surrounding community members quickly marshaled a drive for

supplies of diapers, nonperishable goods and water that were airlifted and carted in trucks and trailers over the weekend to parishes in Waynesville, Hendersonville and elsewhere.

In Concord, St. James the Greater Parish is organizing a supply through the Concord airport for delivery to western North Carolina as part of Operation Airdrop, a national organization that’s arranging aid relief for the region.

Other relief aid collections are being coordinated by local police and fire departments.

Catholic Charities of the Charlotte Diocese has launched an online appeal at ccdoc.org/helenerelief to support communities for what is expected to be a long recovery from this historic storm.

The aid agency is coordinating with local first responders and emergency relief agencies such as FEMA and the American Red Cross, and it has also requested disaster grant funding and other help from Catholic Charities USA and its Disaster Response Team out of Alexandria, Va.

“Our hearts are with all those suffering in the wake of Hurricane Helene,” said Gerry Carter, executive director and CEO of Catholic Charities. “While we’ll be there handing out water and providing food as soon as it is safe to do so, our real impact is on the longer-term restoration of lives. It’s important to remember that when you’ve lost everything, it can frequently take months, if not years, to be restored.”

“In addition to immediate financial assistance and the distribution of food, diapers and other essentials,” Carter added, “we’ll also be there offering case management services to help rebuild and restore lives.”

As of Sept. 29, power remained out, trees were down and water damage was reported at several churches and schools. In a statement, Duke Energy said a majority of customers are expected to have power returned no later than the evening of Oct. 4. However, repair efforts are so widespread that very few areas have been assigned estimated times of restoration, the company said.

“Thousands of line workers are working tirelessly to assess damage and make repairs in response to the historic destruction from Helene,” the statement said. “Due to the severity of damage and ongoing flooding in the western Carolinas, we anticipate a multiday

restoration effort.”

In Swannanoa, a large oak tree fell onto the 88-year-old St. Margaret Mary Church, which announced on Facebook its “campus is closed indefinitely; no Mass or sacraments can be offered at this time, and we have no idea when our ability to have Mass may be restored.”

“It’s terrible. It looks like a war zone,” Roger Patton, a landscaper for the parish, said after checking on his clients’ properties in Black Mountain and Swannanoa.

“There’s no power and no water, and none of the stores are open. Almost everybody has some kind of damage. And everybody up here needs water—and we’re getting to the point where we’re going to need food, too,” he told the *Catholic News Herald*, Charlotte’s diocesan newspaper.

On Sept. 27, Patton said, he saw six people rescued from swift currents of the Swannanoa River, which had swelled beyond its banks to five times its size. “People were clinging to trees and debris piles, anything they could. The river washed away whole houses, and trailers just came apart. We’ve had floods before, but we’ve never seen anything like this.”

In Hendersonville, flooding and leaks from the roof and windows at Immaculata School inundated multiple classrooms, the gym and its new STEM lab. The adjacent Immaculate Conception Church also experienced water damage in the sacristy.

Immaculata School will remain closed this week, and officials will reassess the situation as soon as utilities are working again, the school announced.

Water leaks were reported at churches as far east as Winston-Salem, and trees were down at churches in Elkin, Shelby, Gastonia and Mooresville. Water damage from flooding was also reported in classrooms at St. Michael School in Gastonia.



A drone view on Sept. 29 shows a damaged area in Asheville, N.C., following the passing of Tropical Storm Helene. The storm made landfall at 11:10 p.m. on Sept. 27 in Florida’s Big Bend as a Category 4 hurricane and was downgraded to a tropical storm the next morning. (OSV News photo/Marco Bello, Reuters)

A diocesan Family Life Conference planned for Sept. 28 at St. Matthew Parish in Charlotte was postponed due to a power outage at the church late the day before; power was restored in time for Saturday morning Masses.

Charlotte Bishop Michael T. Martin lifted the Sunday Mass obligation in places impacted by the storm, but some churches held Sunday liturgies as usual—even without power.

“Stay strong,” St. Aloysius Parish in Hickory posted on Facebook Saturday, calling on its patron saint to “pray for us!”

“Friday was a tough day,” Immaculata’s principal Beale said, “and it’s really frustrating for a school that has gained so much momentum. But then you get on the other side of the storm and you see how horrific the damage is, you realize you are blessed. There isn’t anything that’s happened at our parish or school that can’t be repaired. We are such a strong community that we’ll come back from this.”

(Electricity, drinkable water, food, medical care and cellphone service are in critically short supply in western North Carolina in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Helene. Monetary donations are the fastest, most flexible and most effective way to support emergency relief efforts. Local responders on the ground can use the funds to help people with immediate as well as long-term needs. Give securely online at www.ccdoc.org/helenerelief.) †

HURRICANE

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St. Petersburg had evacuated clients from several residential programs and low-income housing facilities prior to the storm, and some of them will be in temporary living arrangements while repairs are made following flood related damages. In addition, some handful of her own staff are reporting significant damage to their homes and automobiles.

“Now it will be down to how we help our community in long-term recovery. In a market where there is already not nearly enough affordable housing, it will be an exponential need,” Rogers said. “The calls are still coming in because many people are just getting back to their homes, so I think the number is going to increase.”

The diocese has identified Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in New Port Richey, north of the St. Petersburg region, as a preliminary distribution center for that region.

Helene is being described as one of the largest storms in the Gulf of Mexico in the last century, with a wind field spanning roughly the distance between Indianapolis and Washington and with maximum sustained winds estimated at 140 mph at its highest point.

In Tallahassee, where it was feared the hurricane might have its greatest impact, Gabe Tischler, emergency management specialist for Catholic Charities of Florida Inc. said he spent the Sept. 28-29 weekend connecting emergency resources and supplies with requests for water, food, generators and more for placement throughout central and northwest Florida.

The dioceses of St. Augustine, Venice, Pensacola-Tallahassee and St. Augustine were all reporting hurricane-related impacts.

Over the weekend, Tischler said he was alerted to an

elderly couple living in rural north Florida in need of electricity for the husband’s oxygen machine and who were now facing two weeks of power outage.

Ironically, they were already living in temporary housing following last year’s Hurricane Idalia when Helene struck and left them in a new crisis. Tischler was able to locate a generator and have it delivered to the family through his Catholic Charities network of state and nonprofit emergency partners. The family is now back in their temporary housing with electricity for their oxygen machine.

In Florida, each of the seven dioceses have a mutual aid agreement to assist one another following a crisis.

“We have eight truckloads of water sent out, eight truckloads of MREs [meals ready-to-eat] and we are currently doing mobile distribution into heavy hit areas along the coast—accomplished through a partnership with sister organizations, mostly volunteer-based nonprofits, all relatively new and which have made excellent partnerships with Catholic Charities,” Tischler said.

“I am working with the state on getting housing for dairy farms where housing is damaged for the workers,” he added, noting that the rural areas are often overlooked by media coverage from the big population centers following storms.

At Catholic Charities USA, Katie Oldaker, senior director of disaster strategy, told OSV News last Friday that her agency’s network of agencies will be looking at past and future creative ways to leverage resources and assist far flung communities, especially following Helene, which has prompted calls for assistance in places such as Knoxville, Tenn.; Charlotte, N.C., and areas of Georgia, to name a few.

“We think we will have [distribution] hubs in Florida, Raleigh, N.C., and probably in south Mississippi or Louisiana,” Oldaker said.

“We don’t think anyone expected the level of

destruction and levels of rain—including the flooding in the St. Petersburg area where they are a little surprised,” she added.

“In the initial reports, we are seeing more damage associated with the eastern bands of the hurricane, which were carrying a ton of water.

“A lot of innovative ideas will be coming out of this disaster—and this one is pretty widespread. And we are looking at doing the hub and spoke model of [resource sharing and distribution].”

The Catholic Charities USA staff will also be looking for ways to remotely alleviate some of the emergency response and case management workload on local chapters that will be overwhelmed in the months ahead.

“This is definitely not a sprint, this is a marathon for long term recovery,” Oldaker said. “A lot of disaster work can take two, three and five years, so it’s good to have a solid plan.”

Many people are in shock now and grieving from such devastating loss, including some 15 Florida Gulf Coast churches with either flooding or roofing damage, according to Teresa Peterson, director of diocesan information and communications for the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

Based on initial assessments, seven schools have had some sort of damage in that diocese, she added.

Even St. Petersburg Bishop Gregory L. Parks had to leave his residence and take up temporary shelter elsewhere as a result of Helene.

“Our leadership is also working to help file insurance and FEMA claims, avert scammers and provide assistance to clergy, religious and employees,” Peterson said.

“Parishes that can are helping one another. One parish is on stand-by to be a longer-term Red Cross emergency shelter and another hosted a neighborhood clean-up,” she said. “Others are finding out what the needs are and trying to meet the needs.” †

Documentary emphasizes courage of Boys Town founder Servant of God Father Edward Flanagan

By Ann Margaret Lewis

At 7 p.m. on Oct. 8, Fathom Events will debut a new documentary on the life and work of Servant of God Father Edward Flanagan, the founder of Boys Town, at several theaters in the archdiocesan area. The documentary will only be shown for one night.

Servant of God—or venerable—is the title used in the Catholic Church to indicate that an individual is on the first step toward possible canonization as a saint.

Heart of a Servant—The Father Flanagan Story recounts Father Flanagan’s life of humble, spirit-led service, beginning with his childhood in a tiny, rural town in Ireland, to his priestly vocation to serve underprivileged youth from Omaha, Neb., as well as the entire world. In 1917 he founded Boys Town, an orphanage for boys near Omaha.

While some will know about Father Flanagan from the Academy Award-winning 1938 film *Boys Town* starring Spencer Tracy and Mickey Rooney, this documentary tells the detailed true story about his sickly yet spiritually vibrant childhood, as well as his charisma to care for young people.

The film is well-directed and produced using original recordings and period films to poignantly illustrate the story of Father Flanagan’s building of Boys Town, especially his heroic courage in facing the cultural bigotry against his practice of educating and caring for children of all races and creeds together as one community.

Actor Jonathan Roumie (“The Chosen”) narrates the film and served as one of the documentary’s executive producers. Serving with him as a fellow executive producer is former member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis Brandon Stanley, executive vice president of the Chicago-based Catholic media company Spirit Juice Studios.

“Growing up outside Indianapolis, the small-town roots of [Father Flanagan’s] work definitely strike a particular chord with me,” Stanley said. “I saw the heroism, the perseverance and the selflessness that drove him to give everything of himself and literally change

national and international policy in the process.”

Stanley, who grew up in Danville, added that he was glad he could tell these stories about Father Flanagan before they were lost to history. “So few people remain who had firsthand experiences with [Father] Flanagan, and that small number is likely to vanish within the next 10 years,” he said.

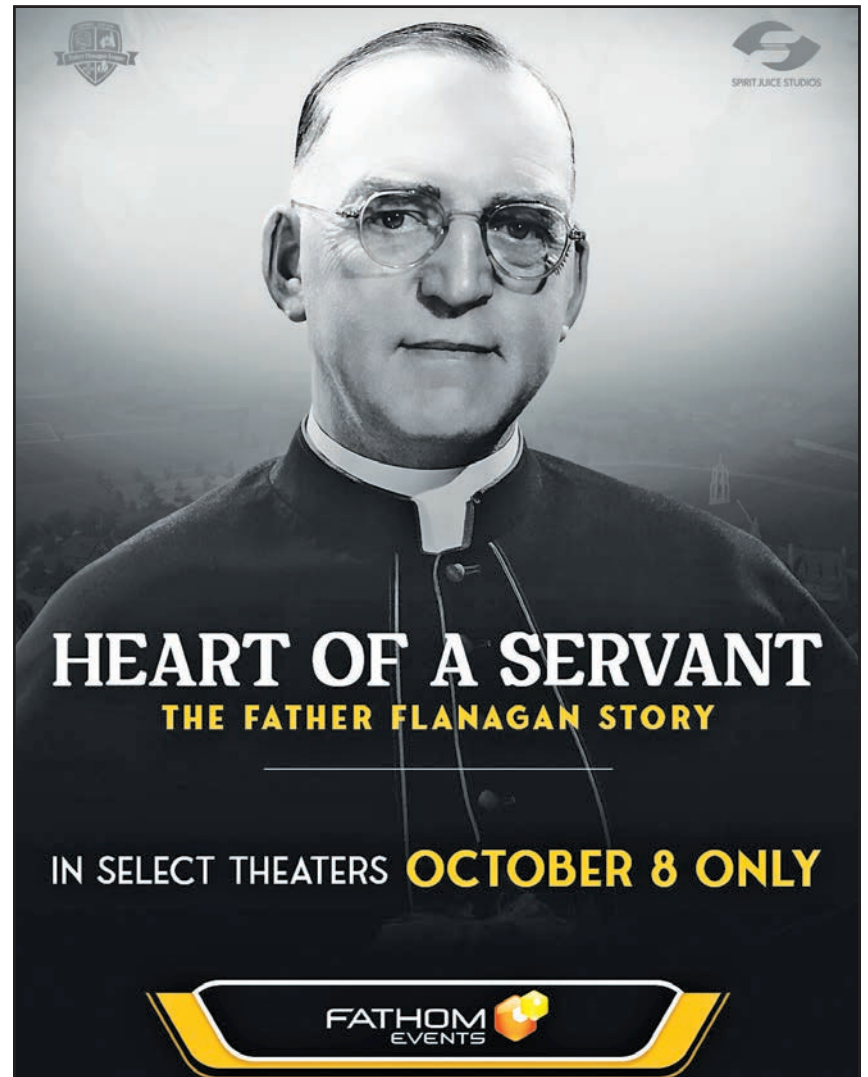
Heart of a Servant is therefore well worth a viewing, especially for those familiar with the classic Spencer Tracey film, as it tells a whole new story. Audiences will learn more about this courageous and virtuous servant, who believed “there is no such thing as a bad boy.”

The film can be seen at 7 p.m. on Oct. 8 at the following cinemas around the archdiocese:

- AMC Indianapolis 17, 4325 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis.
- AMC Castleton Square 14, 6020 E. 82nd St., Indianapolis.
- AMC Perry Crossing 18, 380 Cinema Blvd., Plainfield.
- Regal UA Galaxy Indianapolis, 8105 E. 96th St., Indianapolis.
- GQT Brownsburg 8 GDX, 1555 N. Green St., Brownsburg.
- AMC Classic Terre Haute 12, 3153 S. 3rd Place, Terre Haute.

It can also be viewed at these locations surrounding the archdiocese:

- Emagine Noblesville, 13825 Norell Road, Noblesville.
- Cinemark Wester Hills 14, 5870 Harrison Ave., Cincinnati.
- Cinemark Florence 14 and XD, 7860 Mall Road, Florence, Ky.
- Cinemark Tinseltown Louisville, 4400 Town Center Dr., Louisville.



(Image courtesy of Spirit Juice Studios)

- Cinemark Preston Crossings 16 and XD, 9700 Preston Crossing Blvd., Louisville.
- To view the trailer or to purchase tickets, visit the film’s website at fatherflanaganfilm.com. †

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SIMPLY CATHOLIC

Being pro-life without exceptions is a call to show love, compassion

By Irene Maria DiSanto

(OSV News)—How would you define “pro-life?” Many of us would say it is simply the defense of life from conception to natural death. However, when talking about abortion, some pro-life supporters add the often-repeated exception “in cases of rape, incest or when the mother’s life is in danger.”

That amended clause, as compassionate as it may sound to some, can damage the women concerned and the pro-life ethic.

There are some who, while fervently believing that life begins at the moment of fertilization, would take away the right to life if conception occurred through rape or incest. But how can a human being become disposable because of the circumstance of conception?

The child is still created in the image and likeness of God, just as any other human being. Yes, the woman has been victimized—a devastating, life-changing event—but the child is not the criminal. Should we destroy this new, innocent life and increase the violence by making the child a second victim?

We should all be appalled that a woman has suffered the outrage of rape or incest. A man has used her as an object, without recognizing that she was created by God in his image and likeness. Fists shaken in anger by sympathetic people slam down at the thought that she might have to give birth to the perpetrator’s child. Without doubt, the offender bears the moral responsibility for the barbaric abuse endured by this woman.

But the child cannot be identified as an enemy. The only criminal in this case is the victimizer, not the baby.

The woman has been violated; however, she must not violate the rights of the human being growing within her. When fertilization takes place, a new person springs into being, and this new individual remains apart from the man. And although in the woman’s body, the child is a separate person developing within her. Even when conceived through an immoral, criminal act, the child is as much the image and likeness of God as anyone else.

Those pro-life supporters who insist on the exception clause send a double message: A baby is definitely a precious life—except when he or she isn’t. The difference centers on the circumstances of conception. However, circumstances cannot change the fact that this new life is a human being. To deny this individual’s right to life produces an incoherent logic where how the child was conceived takes precedence over the child.

In an attempt to come to the mother’s aid, well-meaning individuals can default to the deception of abortion. However, the exception clause dismisses the woman herself, as if, in destroying the new life, the

woman can then return to her daily routine. But abortion cannot rid her mind of the memory of the attack or of incest’s entrapment. Abortion is never an answer to any problem, and it does not restore the woman to her former life.

The woman deserves our compassion, and abortion has nothing to do with compassion. Her pain seeks release through psychological and spiritual healing from the trauma itself. It calls for the moral response that involves caring people who are committed to reaching out to embrace her in her brokenness.

True pro-life advocates respect both the woman and the child, and they walk with her through this difficult time, helping her to find therapy from a suitable pro-life psychologist as she grapples with a difficult past. Carrying a child is time-limited, but who knows how long she might carry the vicious memory of the aggression if she fails to receive the proper help?

A few trusted pro-life supporters can journey with her during this process, as well as during her discernment about whether to raise the child herself or entrust the baby to adoptive parents. She might be navigating through the rapids of pressure from family, husband or boyfriend to abort the child. Those who are pro-life must serve as a safe harbor and reliable contact for her. The importance of relationship imbues our Catholic Christianity.

Our faith is incarnational. God was born into our world and related to the human race by taking on a bodily form. Through baptism, we are brought together into his mystical body. Because of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are saved. We must ask: What can I do to prevent an abortion and to aid in this woman’s healing? It is as important to respond to the woman’s problems and respect her life as much as we respect the child’s.

The most troubling phrase referenced in the exceptions clause is “when the mother’s life is in danger.” We must recognize that two lives—possibly both in peril—are patients. The imperative requires that everything be done



A pregnant pro-life demonstrator is pictured in a file photo outside the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington. Being pro-life without exceptions calls advocates to care for expectant mothers, especially those who are victims of crimes, with love and compassion. (OSV News photo/Kevin Lamarque, Reuters)

to save both mother and child. Physicians must consider them equally as their patients, meting out their medical skills with equity so that both survive. Both lives are of equal dignity and worth.

The child cannot be aborted. There are times when in performing surgery on the mother, the baby will die, but the death results from an effort to save the mother, not to provoke abortion. There must never be any intention or direct action to kill the child.

Healing begins with love. Abortion is not the response to a woman’s emotional wounds. Our love and caring perhaps can bring her to the ability to rise from her victimization. Defying the death of her innocence with the determination to overcome the horror that assailed her, she can turn toward life and with unselfishness decide to allow the child to live—and this can begin her own healing.

(Irene Maria DiSanto writes from Florida.) †

Abortion remains widely accepted even as knowledge of unborn life expands

By Jessica Keating and Amy Welborn

(OSV News)—Centuries ago, a young pregnant woman set out on a journey. She was probably nervous and scared, because her pregnancy was unexpected, scandalous and mysterious. The young woman arrived at her cousin’s home, where she hoped she would find welcome and understanding. And she was welcomed not only by her cousin, but also by another who “leapt in her [cousin’s] womb” with joy.

The first person to rejoice in the presence of Jesus was an unborn child. (See Lk 1:39-56.)

Ironically, as abortion has become commonplace in American life, our insight into the reality of life within the womb has grown. Parents can watch their children move, sleep and suck their thumbs in the womb, in real time, thanks to four-dimensional ultrasound technology.

The survival of an infant outside the womb is possible at increasingly earlier stages of pregnancy—as early as 21 weeks in some cases—with new treatments to ensure the health of these tiny children being developed all the time. In recent years, surgery on children still *in utero* to correct spina bifida, hydrocephalus, breathing obstructions and other problems has become more common, sophisticated and safe.

Our culture’s sensitivity to the effects of a mother’s lifestyle on her preborn child has grown as well. Expectant mothers are discouraged from smoking, drinking alcohol or taking drugs, and parents are encouraged to interact with their unborn child through talking and music.

It’s worth thinking about long and hard: What kind of society goes to such great lengths to care for unborn children, but at the very same time declares that they have no right to life?

The Catholic Church teaches today what it has for 2,000 years: Human life begins at conception, and any deliberate participation in the killing of that defenseless life is a mortal sin.

Abortion is the willful and intentional destruction of human life in the womb. Sometimes miscarriages are referred to as “spontaneous abortions,” but they are different from what we usually call abortion. A miscarriage occurs without human intervention of any kind. When a preborn child’s life is deliberately taken by another human being, that is an “induced abortion.” When people say “abortion,” this is what they mean. In fact, statistical reporting on abortion excludes miscarriages.

Abortions are procured in a number of ways. A chemical abortion results from taking medication prescribed to terminate a human pregnancy. The drug RU-486

is one of the most common forms of chemical abortion and is administered in early pregnancy. Abortion by medication accounts for more than half of all abortions in the United States.

Surgical abortion, meanwhile, involves crushing or dismembering the child in the womb. The practice called “partial-birth abortion,” which involves suctioning out the brain of a child pulled partially out of the womb, was banned in a 2003 federal law, but other means of late-term abortion, such as saline abortions, are still legal.

Regardless of what stage of pregnancy at which an abortion is performed, there are physical consequences. Decades of medical research indicate that induced abortions may be associated with higher incidence of infertility and problems in future pregnancies.

There are emotional consequences, too. The death of a child is one of the most devastating experiences any parent can endure. Whether the loss occurs through miscarriage, stillbirth or after a child is born, the grief borne by survivors is deep and painful. Abortion has the same effect, with the added dimension of guilt for one’s role in the death of a child. Sooner or later, mothers, fathers, grandparents and friends are confronted with the loss of a child they will never know.

In any of these situations, we all need the sure knowledge of God’s love and

mercy. When we or those we love are confronting these feelings of grief and guilt, we should know that Christ is ready to welcome us through his Church, through programs such as Project Rachel and through his presence in the sacraments, especially reconciliation and, once we have been reconciled, the Eucharist.

Most of us know the basic facts about unborn life and abortion. In our hearts, we know it’s a tragic, terrible thing. We don’t like to see photographs of the remains of aborted children. We don’t even really like to say the word “abortion” or bring it up in polite conversation. We know all this, but sometimes fear, shame, pride and hopelessness discourage us from doing what we know is right.

How can we dig deeper and find the courage to live out our convictions? Jesus has the answer. Many things seem impossible for us to do alone, but there is no doubt that with God “all things are possible.” When we see seemingly impossible situations through God’s eyes, we find the courage to choose life.

(Jessica Keating is the program director for the Notre Dame Office of Life and Human Dignity in the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana. Amy Welborn is an author and freelance writer living in Birmingham, Ala.) †

Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

Sacred scribbles: piece by piece, page by page, bring work to life

Opal Whiteley was 6 years old when she began keeping a diary, scrawling with a crayon in tightly spaced, phonetically spelled words.



She recorded her wanderings and wonderings in the woods of her Oregon logging community. She was prodded by her mother's admonition to write about what, where, when how and why, and she was grasping at the transcendent, describing a "Cathedral" of cedars.

"I hear songs—lullaby songs of the trees," Opal wrote. "I am happy, listening to the twilight music of God's good world. I'm real glad I'm alive."

Opal stored her diary in a hollow log in the forest, maintaining it for six years. She felt a duty to document nature's music, whispered by the wind "to folks to print for other folks."

But heartbreak came at age 13, when her destructive younger sister found the diary and tore it to pieces. Opal collected the shreds and put them in a hatbox, tucked out of sight and mind for years.

As a young woman, Opal tried to launch a writing

career and one day visited the Boston office of the prestigious *Atlantic Monthly*. Charmed by her personality but unimpressed by her writing samples, the editor asked if Opal had kept a diary.

The hatbox was delivered promptly—some scraps as large as a half-sheet of notebook paper, many the size of a thumbnail. Opal spent nine months reassembling the diary, an undertaking the editor called "enormous" and "methodical."

"First, the framework of a sheet would be fitted and the outer edges squared," the editor wrote. "Here the adornment of borders in childish patterns and the fortunate fact that the writer had employed a variety of colored crayons, using each color until it was exhausted, lent an unhelped-for aid."

The entire process guts me: the destruction, the restoration. Pain-staking, bleary-eyed work.

Beginning in March of 1920, the first two years of Opal's diary were serialized in the magazine, billed as "a revelation of the spirit of childhood" and a balm for Americans disillusioned by the recent war in Europe.

It was a hit.

Come September, the excerpts were published as a book.

Opal had heeded advice that I think of often—as a Catholic, as a writer, as a seeker of wonder—three "instructions for living a life" from the poet Mary Oliver: "Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it."

That is our work this season, when each falling leaf gives permission to change, to weep, to let go. "Behold!" we proclaim. "God makes all things new" (Rv 21:5).

We send postcards from the road. We share revelations from the back pew. We light candles and we kneel, we confess and we listen.

When I think of the cornerstone Catholic belief that all people have inherent dignity, I picture Opal's diary, reassembled piece by piece. A story worth telling. A little girl who still matters.

This is what our heavenly Father does for each of us: taking our discarded bits and piecing them together, making a masterpiece of our scraps. This is what Catholics are called to do for each other: encountering a mess and seeing the promise, taking great care with the smallest of parts.

It is hard, holy work.

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

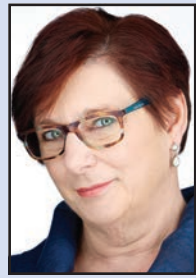
Called to Holiness/Jaymie Stuart Wolfe

We cannot follow Jesus and sidestep the cross in call to discipleship

The crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth was a historical event occurring in a particular time and place. But the cross casts a long shadow, one that stretches across all of history.

As Christians, we believe that the narrative of human destiny is the story of redemption in the cross of Christ.

It stands at the center of time; everything before the cross leads to it, and everything that comes afterward flows from it.



Marking the intersection of time and eternity, the cross is both the point of inflection and the point of convergence. All things—and all people—meet at Calvary.

Before his election to the papacy, Pope Benedict XVI contemplated an even more mystical notion. In his book, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger taught that the shape of creation itself is cruciform: "The sign of the cross is inscribed upon the whole cosmos" (p. 123).

Reflecting on the work of St. Justin Martyr, the Church's first philosopher, Cardinal Ratzinger takes this even further. He says, "The Cross of Golgotha is foreshadowed in the structure of the universe itself. The instrument of torment on which the Lord died is written into the structure of the universe. The cosmos speaks to us of the Cross, and the Cross solves for us the enigma of the cosmos" (*Spirit of the Liturgy*, p. 124).

For Cardinal Ratzinger, however, the cross of Jesus Christ is not merely a static reality, or even the key to understanding the universe. The way of the cross leads us into authentic worship. The cross itself is the way, the road we travel to our final destination in God.

This rings true when we consider the common patterns of growth in the spiritual life. Before we follow Christ, most of us do everything in our power to avoid the cross in all its forms. We run from suffering and keep a safe distance from those who suffer. But that changes when we begin to pursue our faith. It cannot be otherwise, for the Lord's invitation is clear:

Mature disciples understand that offering our suffering to Jesus leads us to something much deeper: the grace to bear some of his. For the saints, this spiritual disposition can take a mystical form as it did for St. Teresa of Avila when her heart was pierced by the word of God in prayer.

"Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me'" (Mt 16:24).

We cannot follow Jesus and sidestep the cross. At first, we learn to surrender whatever we suffer to him. We see that the incarnation is not simply a great theological mystery. It opens up for us the possibility of sharing our lives with Jesus, because he came to share his life with us. So, we begin to accept our daily burdens and ask the Lord to carry them with us. Christ becomes part of our life.

As we embrace discipleship more fully, things change again. We learn to offer our crosses up, to unite all that we suffer with the sufferings of Christ. We follow St. Paul in "completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions" (Col 1:24) by adding ours to his. Through this, our lives become his.

But as we grow deeper in faith, we see that the suffering we experience comes with a hidden gift. Our crosses give us an opportunity to bear a splinter of the cross of Christ. This doesn't mean we are (or should be) masochists. It does mean that we learn to follow Jesus, not despite the way of the cross, but because of it. It means that we are capable of seeing all things—even what we suffer—as God's gifts.

Mature disciples understand that offering our suffering to Jesus leads us to something much deeper: the grace to bear some of his. For the saints, this spiritual disposition can take a mystical form as it did for St. Teresa of Avila when her heart was pierced by the word of God in prayer. It can also take a physical form, in martyrdom. Or, as it did 800 years ago, when a seraph gave St. Francis of Assisi the stigmata, the wounds of the crucifixion in his own body.

There is no salvation apart from the cross of Christ. The sign of the cross is a summary of the Gospel. It is God's signature on creation. The road of discipleship is the way of the cross. Embracing it

is the secret path to holiness—and there is no other.

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

Guest Column/Richard Etienne

Worriers: trust in God, don't let the future rob the energy from your present

Are you a worrier? Do you imagine all kinds of scenarios where your plans could be seriously affected with various outcomes—mostly negative?



I have found that there are certain lessons that I must return to over and over again and continually relearn in my life.

One of these is dealing with too much worry and anxiety about every possibility in the future.

A group of my friends liken me to a meerkat, which is known to constantly be attentively watching for danger and seeing that no one in their group is somehow lost or hurt.

My spiritual director refers to this syndrome as "the

future robbing [or draining] the present."

In this situation, a person basically takes much of the energy that was meant for today and uses it to imagine all of those things that may go wrong in the future. This can eventually stop any individual from taking any action, which effectively paralyzes them in the present moment.

In the Gospel of Matthew, we read, "... do not worry about your life, what you will eat [or drink], or about your body, what you will wear. ... Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your lifespan?" (Mt 6:25, 27)

These are words that I have heard many times in my life, but it seems I have great trouble putting into practice.

What percentage of your waking hours would you guess are spent worrying about the next meal, your

clothing, or how to avoid the high probability of your own death before Jesus' return? If statistics are to be believed, it seems that most Americans spend a great deal of time on each of these issues.

Yes, a person must plan for the future. One must also be realistic about various outcomes and plan for them. But eventually, one has to trust that there is a larger plan (God's will) and not "overdiscern" repeatedly until, again, he or she becomes paralyzed.

Is worrying an issue in your own life? What steps could you take to begin the process of reducing its influence in your daily routine?

(Richard Etienne has a degree in theology from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad and resides in Newburgh, Ind.) †

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

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, October 6, 2024

- Genesis 2:18-24
- Hebrews 2:9-11
- Mark 10:2-16

The Book of Genesis is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. Among the first five books of the Bible,



Genesis reveals important facts. God is the creator of all. He gives life.

God created humanity in the genders of male and female. God willed that the two genders, united in one male and one female,

complement each other and enrich each other's lives.

The Scriptures at times are accused of belittling women. Certainly, the Scriptures were developed within varying cultural contexts, often different from today. To an extent, they were influenced by these cultural contexts.

The culture surrounding the development of Genesis was not strictly Hebrew. Rather, it was enveloped by paganism. In this paganism, women were little better than animals.

Genesis takes pains to declare the dignity of women equal to that of men. This is the meaning of the story that Eve was created from Adam's rib. Adam and Eve, man and woman, were one in their nature—a revolutionary, fundamental basis for the time and place in which Genesis emerged for looking at both men and women.

Both genders possess equal dignity, because all are created by God and infused with an eternal soul.

Ultimately, every person, regardless of everything else, holds the supreme status of being God's own, created uniquely by God, each a physical and spiritual earthly sign of God.

This reading is a powerful testament to the historic Jewish and Christian concept of marriage. Ordained by God, marriage should never be defiled.

For its second reading, the Church offers us a passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews. It also reaffirms the dignity of each human.

According to the reading, humans who love God and are faithful to him will one day rejoice in his presence. They will be with God. The key to attaining a place in God's presence is Jesus.

Because Jesus is human as well as God, he loves all people as brothers and sisters.

St. Mark's Gospel provides the third reading. It is a familiar passage. The question centers upon the legality before God of divorce itself, not the grounds for divorce.

It is often assumed that this question put to Jesus opened an entirely new debate, and that in replying, Jesus set aside the law of Moses.

The debate was vigorously underway at the time of Jesus among people learned in the tradition of the law of Moses.

No universal agreement pertained as to what this Jewish legal code meant in this regard.

By settling the question, by ending the debate, Jesus appeared in the role of the divinely constituted and divinely empowered representative of God the Father.

Jesus set the question in its proper place. Marriage is God's creation. It is subject to his will. Ideally, marriage reflects God's love in the hearts of the spouses.

In the same passage, though on another occasion, Jesus blessed children. Like children everywhere and always, these children were innocent and vulnerable, but with great potential, not simply to succeed in a material sense in this life but to live with God in eternal life.

Reflection

Fundamentally, these readings call us to a divinely revealed truth so often and so outrageously ignored in the world. Each human being is God's precious child, his priceless masterpiece of creation. No one, and no society, has the right to demean or compromise this dignity.

The agonizing problems of our day all spring from the refusal to honor all human beings as God's own. So, terror and prejudice reign.

Marriage, like human dignity, also comes from God. It is fully and absolutely within the overall purpose of God, namely, to enable men and women better to know, love and serve God and then finally to be with him in the wonder of heaven along with the angels. †

Daily Readings

Monday, October 7
Our Lady of the Rosary
Galatians 1:6-12
Psalm 111:1-2, 7-10
Luke 10:25-37

Tuesday, October 8
Galatians 1:13-24
Psalm 139:1-3, 13-15
Luke 10:38-42

Wednesday, October 9
St. Denis, bishop, and companions, martyrs
St. John Leonardi, priest
Galatians 2:1-2, 7-14
Psalm 117:1-2
Luke 11:1-4

Thursday, October 10
Galatians 3:1-5
(Response) *Luke 1:69-75*
Luke 11:5-13

Friday, October 11
St. John XXIII, pope
Galatians 3:7-14
Psalm 111:1-6
Luke 11:15-26

Saturday, October 12
Galatians 3:22-29
Psalm 105:2-7
Luke 11:27-28

Sunday, October 13
Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Wisdom 7:7-11
Psalm 90:12-17
Hebrews 4:12-13
Mark 10:17-30
or *Mark 10:17-28*

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

Most modern uses of leprechauns, fairies and other fantasy figures are not considered to be demonic

Listening to a Catholic radio station one day, it was mentioned that leprechauns and fairies are demonic.



This shocked me. St. Patrick's Day celebrations always include leprechauns. Fairies are loved by little girls and big girls alike. I myself made a small fairy garden for me and my granddaughters.

We also have many other fairy items. Are we now supposed to get rid of these, I thought, playful items? (Rhode Island)

No, I don't think it's a problem for Catholics to use leprechaun or fairy imagery in a clearly imaginative or make-believe way.

The Church does not have any current official teaching on fairies or leprechauns. However, in traditional folklore, fairies and leprechauns were not the sweet and playful creatures that they tend to be in our modern depictions, and they have an association with pre-Christian European paganism.

So, while the Church does not formally teach that today's fantasy fairies are demonic, I suspect that fairies' roots in pagan folklore are what prompted these comments on the radio.

It hopefully goes without saying that Catholics should not practice paganism or adopt any directly pagan practices. But there is a historic tradition of Catholic missionaries "baptizing" some of the more benign forms of pagan imagery and culture in order to make Christianity more accessible to the peoples who were being evangelized.

One somewhat legendary example of this is the Celtic cross; there is a story that St. Patrick combined the Christian cross with a pagan symbol for the sun in order to communicate the importance of the cross in Christian life.

And at times, the Church has tolerated pagan imagery in non-religious contexts. For instance, our English-language days of the week are mostly derived from the names of Norse pagan gods. But this does not prevent the Church from using terms such as

"Holy Thursday" or "Good Friday."

If a person is interested in fairies or leprechauns because they seriously believe in these creatures and actually wish to attempt literal magic or otherwise become involved with pagan or "New Age" practices, then this would be spirituality dangerous and incompatible with Catholicism. But I don't think this concern would apply to the vast majority of mainstream fairy or leprechaun imagery we see today.

As a parallel, we can enjoy fantasy stories, such as *The Lord of the Rings*, that have wizard characters in them without it becoming a slippery slope for our seeking to attempt wizardry ourselves. In a similar vein, I think it's fine to do things like create a "fairy garden" for the fun of creating an arts and crafts project.

Does the Church have a teaching on the ultimate fate or eternal destination of Barabbas, the one let go instead of Jesus? (Indiana)

No, the Church does not have any formal teaching on what happened to Barabbas.

For background, Barabbas is mentioned in all four Gospels, with St. Luke's Gospels specifying that "Barabbas had been imprisoned for a rebellion that had taken place in the city and for murder" (Lk 23:19).

Various legends tell us opposite things about the fate of Barabbas. Some stories say he converted and eventually became a disciple of the risen Christ; others say he was killed in another insurrection attempt soon afterward.

Still, Scripture does not provide us with any further details on the rest of Barabbas' earthly life outside of his brief role in Christ's Passion, and we do not have any kind of consistent venerable tradition to help fill in these gaps.

In terms of Barabbas' ultimate destiny, keep in mind that the Church generally avoids commenting on where any particular person's soul went after death. The one exception—which does not apply to Barabbas—is canonized saints who, through a careful process of discernment, are determined to be already in heaven and able to intercede for us. And note that the Church does not have "reverse canonization," i.e., souls are never proclaimed to be in hell.

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

My Journey to God

Walking in Mary's Shoes

By Debbie Hess

Let's walk in the shoes of Mary
And see all that she endured
When she answered the Angel Gabriel
"Be it done unto me, according to Thy Word"

Mary was called to be the mother
Of the Babe whom she laid in the hay
And gave Him the name of Jesus
As we recall on Christmas Day

"A sword of sorrow will pierce your heart,"
Simeon said at the Presentation
Mary walked away sad but knew
God would give her consolation

Joseph's dream told them to flee
So as to protect the Christ Child
Herod wanted to kill her Son
So Mary walked the extra mile

Once after Passover in Jerusalem
Mary's heart grew sad and glum
Three days she walked and searched
For her Divine 12-year-old Son



Years later Mary walked beside Jesus
And watched Him be nailed to a cross
She saw the pain in His eyes
But knew not all had been lost

Mary walked to the tomb of Jesus
And there He was laid to rest
On the third day He arose again
For this we will always be blessed

Jesus gave His mother to us
She walks along our way
And asks us to pray the Rosary
To reflect on Christ's life each day.

(Debbie Hess is a member of St. Paul Parish in Tell City. The Church dedicates October to the Holy Rosary.)

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.

AMBERGER, William H., 79, St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County, Sept. 15. Husband of Elaine Amberger. Father of Kris Baumer, Katrina Lampert, Kateri Paul and Doug Amberger. Brother of Millie Blanken, Rosemary Gander, Ann Gutzwiller, Dee Linkel, Mags Thielking, Albert, David and John Amberger. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of five.

BEIER, Ardella, 92, St. Boniface, Fulda, Sept. 13. Mother of Lee Anne Hoffman, Ruth Mullen, Diane and Carma Berg, Allen, Jim, Kenny, Larry and Tom Beier. Grandmother of 32. Great-grandmother of 56. Great-great-grandmother of six.

BLITZ, Michael A., 71, St. Michael, Brookville, Sept. 10. Brother of Laura Tebbe. Uncle and great uncle of several.

BUNJAN, Stephen J., 89, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Aug. 25. Husband of Rose Marie Bunjan. Father of Sherry, Stephanie, Samuel, Stephen and Stewart Bunjan. Brother of Robert Bunjan. Grandfather of six.

CARIC, Robert A., 70, St. Jude, Indianapolis, June 6. Husband of Ann Caric. Father of Andrea Sloan and Patrick Caric. Brother of Amy Amico, Susie Burge, Judy Dalton and Mary Hines. Grandfather of two.

CLARK, Larry, 81, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Aug. 26. Husband of Judy Clark. Father of April Bradley, Dale Clark and Jason Terrell. Brother of Karen Smith and Wayne Clark. Grandfather of one.

COFFEY, Kathy, 61, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, Sept. 12. Mother of Tammy Coffey.

COOL, John M., 82, St. Anne, New Castle, Sept. 15. Husband of Julianne Cool. Father of Kirsten Adkins, Liesel Nicholson, Rachel Volis, Greta, David, Jeremy, Michael, Ryan, Todd and William Cool. Brother of Judy Beaty, Linda Fouts, Jennifer Reum, Bill, Greg and Joe Cool. Grandfather of 24. Great-grandfather of 17. Great-great-grandfather of one.

CUNNINGHAM, Martha J. (Walker) Skirvin, 84, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Aug. 31. Mother of Andrew, Benjamin, Michael and Theodore Skirvin. Sister of Cathy Headdy, Janet Wadzinski and Joseph Walker. Grandmother of six.

CUTTER, Mildred A., 91, St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County, Sept. 16. Mother of Judith Behlmer, Jill Beverage, Jennifer Moeller and James Cutter.

DOUGHMAN, Renee L., 48, St. Anthony of Padua, Morris, Sept. 9. Wife of Scott Doughman. Mother of Sara and Kurt Doughman. Daughter of Theodore and Diane Dierckman. Sister of Michelle Burkhead and Melissa Stephens.

EATON, John K., 61, St. Ann, Jennings County, Sept. 10. Husband of Kim Eaton. Father of April and Chris Eaton. Brother of Dot Laudermilk, Suzanne Spencer, Paul and Steve Eaton. Grandfather of two.

EBERT, James L., 81, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, Aug. 6. Father of Julie Becher, Jill Ebert-Lasher, Kim and Jeff Ebert. Brother of Diane Herbig, Elaine Keller, Betty Tretter and Fred Ebert. Grandfather of 11.

FARQUHAR, William, 86, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Aug. 20. Husband of Kitty Farquhar. Father of Sandy Biggs, Cindy Medlyn and Joe Farquhar. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of nine.

FLEBOTTE, Hilda A., 95, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Aug. 9. Mother of Linda Hitchings. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of three.

FULLER, Dorothy, 87, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Sept. 11. Mother of Allen, David and Steven Fuller. Sister of Carl and Ronald Drew.

Monastery anniversary



Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington (at left) prays as he celebrates a Sept. 22 Mass to mark the 125th anniversary of the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in Washington. He called the monastery a “splendid shrine” and “a reflection of the land many miles away that is most frequently called the Holy Land.” (OSV News photo/Mihoko Owada, *Catholic Standard*)

GARTENMAN, Cynthia D., 66, St. Louis, Batesville, Sept. 14. Wife of Ivan Gartenman, Jr. Mother of Amber Bedel and B.J. Gartenman. Daughter of Janice Wagner. Sister of Melody Jobst, Becky Weberding, Pam Weisenbach and David Wagner, Jr. Grandmother of four.

GLOWINSKI, Sr., Donald A., 86, Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, Sept. 16. Husband of Mary Glowinski. Father of David and Donald Glowinski, Jr. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of 12.

HAWSON, Agnes, 94, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Sept. 1. Mother of Andy Hawson. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of five.

HIPSKIND, Nicholas, 85, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Aug. 7. Husband of Sandy Hipskind. Father of Heidi Dolson and Nikki Huff. Brother of Sara Montgomery. Grandfather of 10.

MARKING, Anthony E., 92, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Sept. 6. Father of Cindy Short, Bridgett

Zakrzewski, Cheryl, Paula and Anthony Marking. Brother of nine. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of five.

MAYHUGH, Sr., Carroll B., 91, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Sept. 2. Husband of June Mayhugh. Father of Millie Bowen, Melanie Phistner, Jane Smith, Carroll, Jr., Douglas, Randall and Timothy Mayhugh. Grandfather of 26. Great-grandfather of 44. Great-great-grandfather of 11.

MULLEN, Donald, 64, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Sept. 7. Husband of Karol Mullen. Father of Tyler Mullen. Brother of Caroline Gerugthy, Debra and Paul Mullen. Grandfather of two.

MULLIS, Oscar H., 82, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad, July 22. Husband of Marilyn Mullis. Father of Linda Bueltel, Darrel, Jerry, Kurt, Scott and Tim Mullis. Brother of Mary Anne Troesch and Leroy Mullis. Grandfather of 15. Great-grandfather of 19.

PEETZ, Alice, 88, Holy Family, Oldenburg, Sept. 15. Mother of Mike

Peetz. Grandmother of two. Step-grandmother of four.

ROSENFELD, Richard P., 80, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Sept. 7. Husband of Cheryl Rosenfeld. Father of Sarah Hollington, Kristen Palmer, Lisa Payson and Matthew Rosenfeld. Brother of Jeanne Brown, Pat Cornett, Jim and Thom Herrman. Grandfather of four.

RYAN, Stewart, 82, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Sept. 7. Husband of Rita Ryan. Father of Beth Martin, Ellen Ryan-Vinciguerra, Kathleen and David Ryan. Grandfather of two.

SCHOTTER, Rella D., 90, St. Joseph, Crawford County, Sept. 8. Mother of Lou Ann Bowman, Amy, David, Jeffrey and Jon Schotter. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 21. Great-great-grandmother of two.

STEMMLE, Eugene, 83, St. Peter, Franklin County, Sept. 15. Husband of Janet Stemmler. Father of Theresa Hanavan, Lisa Keith, Teri Papania, Katy Spears,

Christina Vantrease, Charles Fozard, Ryan Oliver and William Stemmler. Brother of Dennis and James Stemmler. Grandfather of eight.

STROBEL, Leo A., 88, St. Paul, Tell City, Sept. 10. Father of Jeff and Jon Strobel. Grandfather of three. Great-grandfather of three.

STUMPF, Georgia A., 79, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Sept. 8. Wife of Chuck Stumpf. Mother of Ted Stumpf. Sister of Joni Dowling.

VILLARREAL, Alicia, 86, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Sept. 11. Mother of Sandra Spachholz, San Juanita Sanford, Jesse, Michael and Santiago Villarreal. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of eight.

WICKIZER, Daniel, 68, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, Sept. 18. Husband of Cynthia Wickizer. Father of Benjamin and Matthew Wickizer. Brother of Diane Barrick and David Wickizer. Grandfather of two. †

Cardinal urges day of prayer, penance on anniversary of Oct. 7 attack on Israel

JERUSALEM (OSV News)—Oct. 7 will mark a year since the brutal Hamas attack on Israeli communities and the no less brutal Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip that immediately followed.

The Latin patriarch of Jerusalem asked for a day of prayer, fasting and penance to mark “a date that has become symbolic of the drama we are experiencing.”

In a Sept. 26 letter to his diocese, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa said the region “plunged into a vortex of violence and hatred never seen or experienced before” as Hamas attacked Israel, killing 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in southern communities, taking almost 250 people hostage on Oct. 7, 2023. In the

subsequent Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, at least 41,467 people, including nearly 16,500 children, have been killed to date, its health ministry said.

“The intensity and impact of the tragedies we have witnessed in the past 12 months have deeply lacerated our conscience and our sense of humanity,” the cardinal said.

Violence in the region, the patriarch said, has caused not only “thousands of innocent victims” but also influenced social patterns.

“It has struck a profound blow to the common feeling of belonging to the Holy Land, to the consciousness of being part of a plan of Providence that wanted us here to build together his kingdom of peace and justice, and not to make it instead a reservoir of hatred and contempt, of mutual rejection and annihilation,” he wrote.

He said the patriarchate repeatedly condemned “this senseless war” in the

recent months, “calling on everyone to stop this drift of violence, and to have the courage to find other ways of resolving the current conflict, which take into account the demands of justice, dignity and security for all.”

Explaining the need for the day of prayer, fasting and penance, the cardinal said that “we need to pray, to bring our pain and our desire for peace to God. We need to convert, to do penance and to implore forgiveness.”

He noted that the month of October “is also the Marian month, and on October 7 we celebrate the memory of Mary Queen of the Rosary.” He invited everyone to pray the rosary “or in whatever form he or she sees fit, personally but better again in community, find a moment to pause and pray.”

The day before he issued the letter he was a guest in Fulda, Germany, where the German bishops’ conference had its plenary meeting.

The German Catholic news agency KNA reported that Cardinal Pizzaballa was skeptical about the negotiations for the release of hostages who were taken by Hamas during the attack on Israel. Ninety-seven people are still believed to be in the hands of Hamas. Three of seven American citizens among them are believed to be dead, NBC News reported on Sept. 23.

“The signs of a successful conclusion to the negotiations are very weak. That is why we believe—and we hope we are wrong—that the end of the conflict is not yet in sight, and that we will have to deal with this terrible situation for a long time to come,” Cardinal Pizzaballa told the German bishops.

A cease-fire deal most likely to bring the hostages out alive and end the soaring death toll among Palestinians has remained elusive.

Instead of ceasing, the war has intensified on the north front, since the escalation of Israeli strikes on Lebanon. †



Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa

ENVIRONMENT

continued from page 1

‘Not destroying ... but building up’

In his homily, the archbishop made frequent references to Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical “*Laudato Si’*: On Care for Our Common Home.” The document notes that “human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the Earth itself” (#66).

“God has to be the center, the priority for all those [relationships] to fall in place,” Archbishop Thompson said, noting that anything else as the center “causes us to lose proper perspective. ... Eventually, that which we allow to possess our innermost being is revealed in our behavior.”

Another danger of not having God at the center of our relationship with others and with the environment is that society “will continue to promote a so-called throwaway culture,” he said, one “where everything and everyone is objectified for one’s pleasure, comfort and personal agenda. ... It is only through a sense of relationship with God and others and creation that we are able to maintain a proper perspective on the meaning of life.”

Archbishop Thompson quoted “one of my favorite lines” from “*Laudato Si’*”: “Rather than a problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise” (#12).

“We need to recapture a sense of awe and wonder, gazing at creation through a sacramental lens of encountering the beauty, truth and goodness of the sacred in everyone and in everything around us.”

Such an encounter “prompts us into action [and] motivates us as disciples, as witnesses, as missionaries, carrying on the mission of Jesus—not destroying the kingdom of God, but building up that kingdom in our midst.”

‘There’s definitely a greater awareness’

The Season of Creation Mass is sponsored by the archdiocese’s Creation Care Ministry. Formed in 2015, the mission of the ministry is threefold: to provide education about creation care and outreach to the parishes, people and clergy of the archdiocese; to offer resources and programs that help parishes reduce their environmental impact; and to encourage and facilitate actions on the archdiocesan level in order to provide resources to parishes.

After the Mass, founding and current ministry member Benedictine Sister Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick reflected on the group’s impact in the nine years since it was created.

“There’s definitely a greater awareness” of the issue among members of the archdiocese, she said. “I think we’ve had a growing number of people that really see care for creation as something that the Church believes in and is really promoting.”



Seven of the 10 members of the archdiocese’s Creation Care Ministry team pray aloud with the congregation a prayer for creation before receiving a blessing from Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during a Care for Creation Mass at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus on Sept. 24. Shown here are Joe Shierling, left, John Mundell, Sharon Horvath, Andy Pike, Julie Reyes, Benedictine Sister Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick and Andy Miller. Other members include Sarah Mundell, Laura Sheehan and Madeline Patterson Smith. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

She also sees an increased awareness of care for the environment “being more than just the doing but the interconnectedness, really seeing the cry of the Earth, the cry of the poor, the Gospel values and the interconnectedness, as the encyclical says, of the relationship with God, with each other, with creation and with ourselves.”

As awareness increases, Sister Sheila said she and the Creation Care Ministry team are eager to help parishes. “If a parish has a green team, or if they’re considering starting one, or if there are individuals that are saying, ‘How can we get started?’ we’ll be able to really support that effort.”

‘Archdiocese was one of first to sign up’

Another mission of the ministry is to encourage parishes to join the *Laudato Si’* Action Platform (LSAP), a Vatican-sponsored global initiative to increase the Church’s ecological practices. The director of this worldwide effort, John Mundell, is a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. Mundell, also a member of the archdiocesan Creation Care Ministry, attended the Mass.

“The archdiocese was one of the first to sign up on the global scale, and so Indianapolis is known for having its

programming be part of that push by Pope Francis to make this a worldwide kind of effort,” he told *The Criterion*.

The Creation Care Ministry seeks “to continue to engage and invite parishes to form green teams and to join [the LSAP], which means to create plans to become more sustainable, looking at their energy and their water and their waste and how they use their land,” Mundell explained.

He paused after the Mass to take a photo of a large mobile of origami paper birds hanging in the narthex. It was one of numerous creation-care themed works of art created by St. Bartholomew School students that adorned the church for the liturgy.

Mundell said those involved with the LSAP are “finding more and more young people that are very enthused” by care for the environment. “We’ve seen everything from tree-plantings to climate marches, to shared agriculture and gardens in the parish, to changing how they recycle.

“When you give young people the chance to show leadership, they do amazing things.”

(For more information about the archdiocesan Creation Care Ministry and the *Laudato Si’* Action Plan, go to ourcommonhome.org.) †

Recycling advice from a Creation Care Ministry team member

By Natalie Hoefler

In caring for the environment, knowing what, where and how to recycle can be overwhelming. Benedictine Sister Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick, a founding and current member of the archdiocese’s Creation Care Ministry, recently shared the following tips with *The Criterion*.

Decide ‘to learn a little bit more’

“With recycling, I think a lot of it comes down to knowing what is

recyclable and where you can go to recycle. So, it’s deciding to learn a little bit more, to do a little legwork to find out what’s the best way to do it, then do it the best you can. Before you throw it away, ask, ‘Can I recycle this?’ ”

Recycling services

“If people choose to pay into a service, then certainly work with the provider to understand what they pick up.

“Some communities have their own recycling through the city. And so it’s

working with the city to learn what can and can’t be recycled through their service.”

Local recycling

“If you decide to recycle on your own rather than through a service or if no service is available, search the internet for ‘recycling locations in,’ then put your town or city. Go to those sites to find out what they accept.

“You can also search online for local places that recycle specific things like cardboard, paper, electronics or other things

that might be a little out of the ordinary.

“Also, there is a lot of information [on the internet] about what is recyclable in general.”

Taking the extra step


“Another way you can help the environment is to try just using less. Or instead of throwing something away, I ask myself the question, ‘Can I compost it?’

“Part of caring for creation is choosing to be inconvenienced. It’s making that choice to say, ‘I’m going to take the extra step.’ ” †

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New prayer room is dedicated at Intercultural Pastoral Institute

Criterion staff report

While prayer has always been a key component for students attending classes at the archdiocese's Intercultural Pastoral Institute (IPI) in Indianapolis, there was no physical space dedicated for those who wanted to offer petitions to our Creator.

That changed on Sept. 12 when a prayer room was blessed at the former St. Andrew the Apostle School in Indianapolis, where IPI classes are held.

"It will provide a small space that will serve for reflection, meditation and prayer for students in their training as pastoral leaders and to strengthen their relationship with God in a space conducive to spiritual rest," said Dr. Carmen Hernandez, the coordinator of IPI.

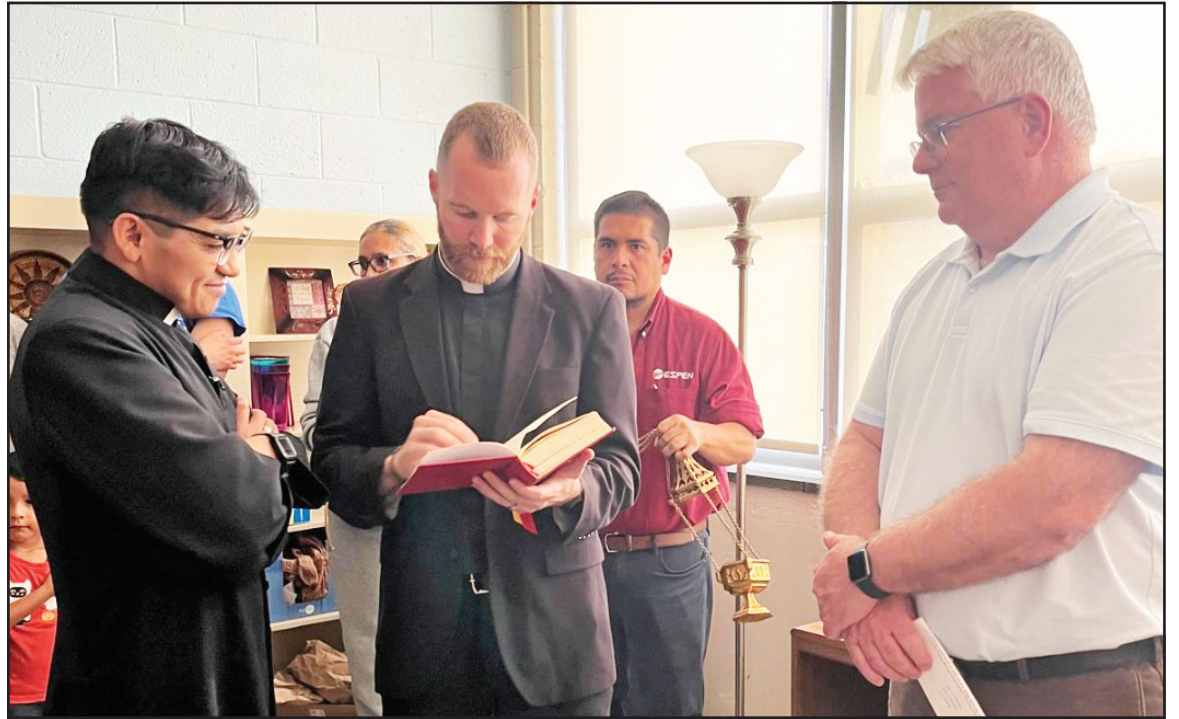
Father Vincent Gillmore, pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis and one of several priests who teaches classes at the institute, presided at the blessing ceremony.

During the event, a discernment course coordinated by Father Gillmore and Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director, was also initiated. Its aim is to engage and accompany young

Latino laymen who may be interested in pursuing a vocation to the priesthood, if it is God's will for them, Hernandez noted.

Also present at the gathering were Deacon Thomas Hosty, archdiocesan director of pastoral ministries, and several teachers, students and IPI graduates.

"We are very grateful to God for the blessing of this IPI [prayer room], which is a privileged place," said student Paula Escobar. "We extend blessings to Deacon Tom and Dr. Carmen [and] to the teachers and priests, who with their knowledge give us light to prepare us as pastoral leaders and continue to love God more every day, who is the giver of all that is good." †



Father Vincent Gillmore, pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, center, blesses the new prayer room for the Intercultural Pastoral Institute in Indianapolis on Sept. 12. Also shown are Father José Neri, left, parochial vicar at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, and Deacon Thomas Hosty, far right, archdiocesan director of pastoral ministries. (Submitted photo)

Nueva sala de oración dedicada en el Instituto Pastoral Intercultural

Reportaje del personal del *The Criterion*

Aunque la oración siempre ha sido un componente clave para los estudiantes que asisten a las clases del Instituto de Pastoral Intercultural (IPI) de la Arquidiócesis en Indianápolis, no existía un espacio físico dedicado a aquellos que querían ofrecer peticiones a nuestro Creador.

Eso cambió el 12 de septiembre, cuando se bendijo una sala de oración en la antigua escuela San Andrés Apóstol de Indianápolis, donde se imparten las clases del IPI.

"Contaremos con un pequeño espacio que servirá para la reflexión, la meditación y la oración de los estudiantes en su formación como líderes pastorales y para fortalecer

su relación con Dios en un espacio propicio para el descanso espiritual," dijo la Dra. Carmen Hernández, coordinadora del IPI.

El padre Vincent Gillmore, párroco de la parroquia de San Lorenzo de Indianápolis y uno de los varios sacerdotes que imparten clases en el instituto, presidió la ceremonia de Bendición.

Durante el acto también se inauguró un curso de discernimiento coordinado por el padre Gillmore y el padre Michael Keucher, director de vocaciones de la Arquidiócesis, que tiene como objetivo comprometer y acompañar a los jóvenes laicos latinos que puedan estar interesados en seguir una vocación al sacerdocio, si es la

voluntad de Dios para ellos, señaló Hernández.

También estuvieron presentes en la reunión el diácono Thomas Hosty, director arquidiocesano de ministerios pastorales, y varios profesores, alumnos y graduados del IPI.

"Estamos muy agradecidos con Dios por la bendición de esta sala de oración, que es un lugar privilegiado," expresó la estudiante Paula Escobar—. "Extendemos nuestras bendiciones al diácono Tom y a la Dra. Carmen, a los profesores y sacerdotes, que con sus conocimientos nos dan luz para prepararnos como líderes pastorales y seguir amando cada día más a Dios, que es el dador de todo lo bueno." †

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