



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



Indiana Catholic Men's Conference

Men encouraged to take responsibility, walk with Christ, page 7.

CriterionOnline.com

December 7, 2018

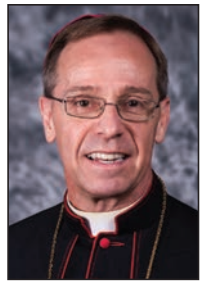
Vol. LIX, No. 10 75¢

Archbishop implores students to be witnesses to Christ

By John Shaughnessy

It was a rare and even magical moment to behold involving the seniors from 10 Catholic high schools across the archdiocese.

Their special Mass with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson had just ended, and as the closing song played, the nearly 1,400 students started singing, clapping and raising their hands together in a united moment of spontaneous joy.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

Seconds after being part of that memorable scene on Nov. 28,

Kate Bosley of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis still beamed as she said, "It was really cool seeing all the schools that normally are rivals come together like that."

Nathan Dickman of Seton Catholic High School in Richmond was equally effusive about the experience that occurred inside St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg.

"It was very incredible to see so many people in one church, let alone them all be young people, and all of us be together at one time with the archbishop and all the priests," Nathan said. "I could honestly feel the presence of Jesus like no other time before."

That's exactly the feeling that Archbishop Thompson hopes stays with the high school seniors now and in the future.

Coming together to live a life centered in Christ was the essence of the message the archbishop shared with the students from the Indianapolis Catholic high schools of Bishop Chatard, Brebeuf Jesuit, Cardinal Ritter, Cathedral, Father Thomas Seccina Memorial, Providence Cristo Rey and Roncalli, plus Seton Catholic in Richmond, Father Michael Shawe

See MASS, page 3



Nathalie Plum, left, a senior at Indiana University and a member of St. Paul Catholic Center, both in Bloomington, embraces Melia Davis, a resident of Golden LivingCenter in Bloomington, on Nov. 16. Plum is a volunteer with Never Alone: Ministry to the Elderly, a program of the campus ministry of St. Paul Catholic Center. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Serving seniors and seniors serving in central and southern Indiana

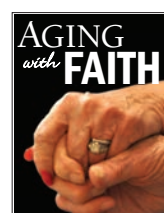
(Editor's note: The Criterion is running a series of articles on senior-related issues through the lens of the Catholic faith. This installment will focus on two parish ministries and one government program sponsored by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, all seeking to meet the needs of seniors and the elderly. To read the two previous installments of this four-part series, go to www.CriterionOnline.com.)

By Natalie Hoefler

There are as many parish ministries as there are needs in central and southern Indiana, spanning the myriad populations one might feel called to serve.

For some, it's the poor or homeless.

For others, it might be youths, or women in crisis pregnancies, or prisoners—or the aging and elderly.



Take Nathalie Plum and Matthew Neuman, college students who spend time with nursing home residents in Bloomington who have few or no visitors.

Or the members of Compassionate Visitors in Connersville and Liberty, who not only visit nursing home residents but also keep vigil at the bedside of the dying.

And sometimes those in their mid-afternoon or sunset years feel drawn to serving, like Sally Dreyer and Danny Wyrick, who joined the

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), which matches retired and senior individuals with volunteer opportunities to keep them active, involved and healthy.

Their stories speak to the need of seniors and the elderly for interaction, for kindness and for dignity. And their experiences reveal the beautiful truth of service: that those who serve benefit as much if not more than those whom they serve. As Dreyer says in the article about RSVP: "It's a 'win-win.'" †

See related stories and resource lists on pages 8, 9 and 14.

Archbishop Thompson issues decree regarding former church building

Criterion staff report

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson has decreed that the former St. Mary Church building in Greensburg be sold. In the terminology of the Church's Code of Canon Law, this is referred to as "relegation to profane but not sordid use."

This decision was made after Archbishop Thompson consulted with the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council. St. Mary had a new church built and

dedicated in August of 2016.

As noted in the decree published below, the decision to sell the St. Mary property was spurred by the fact that the building is in disrepair; the parish has funded and built a new church building on a new campus; the patrimony and sacred furnishings of the former church building have already been removed and used in the new church building; and St. Mary Parish has no use for the former church building. †

DECREE

Whereas Saint Mary Catholic Church in Greensburg, Indiana (1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way, Greensburg, Indiana), has built a new church and extended the parish campus on a 25-acre plot of land about 1.5 miles from the site of the original Saint Mary Catholic Church (208 S. East Street, Greensburg, Indiana); and,

Whereas the new church building was dedicated for worship by my predecessor, Joseph William Cardinal Tobin, on 13 August 2016, and,

Whereas the new church building incorporated the patrimony of the former site of worship including the stained glass, the main altar, side altars, statuary and other sacred items, and,

Whereas the former church no longer has sacred furnishings, and,

Whereas the parishioners of Saint Mary in Greensburg, Indiana, were consulted and agreed that the former church building of Saint Mary (208 S. East St.) be relegated to profane but not sordid use; and,

Whereas, on 1 October 2018, the pastor of Saint Mary Catholic Church (1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way), after consultation with both his finance and pastoral council, petitioned me to relegate the former church building of Saint Mary (208 S. East St.) to profane but not sordid use so that the proceeds of the sale of the church building might be used to fund the ministries of Saint Mary Catholic Church (1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way); and,

Whereas I consulted with the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council on 23 October 2018 on the question of the relegation of the former church building of Saint Mary (208 S. East St.) to profane but not sordid use; and,

Whereas in the consideration of the question of reducing the former church building of Saint Mary (208 S. East St.) to profane but not sordid use evaluated the following facts concerning the former Saint Mary Church:

- The church building on 208 S. East St. is not in good repair.
- The parish has funded and built a new church building on a new campus.
- The patrimony and sacred furnishings of the former church building have already been removed and used in the new church building.
- Saint Mary Catholic Church has no use for the former church building.

And whereas the Archdiocesan Presbyteral Council voted unanimously to recommend

that the former church building of Saint Mary (208 S. East St.) be relegated to profane but not sordid use; and,

Whereas I have concluded that the economic hardship of maintaining the former church building and its lack of usefulness to the parish of Saint Mary Catholic Church constitute a grave cause sufficient in law to support the relegation of the church building to profane but not sordid use;

I, Charles C. Thompson, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, having in mind my responsibility to best address the spiritual needs of the people of Saint Mary Catholic Church in Greensburg, Indiana, specifically, and the needs of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis generally, hereby decree:

1. The former church building of Saint Mary (208 S. East St.) in Greensburg, Indiana, shall be relegated to profane but not sordid use fourteen days after the date of the promulgation of this decree.
2. Saint Mary Catholic Church, in consultation with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, shall dispose of the church building in a manner that accords with Catholic faith and morals, and with its dignity as a former place of Divine worship.
3. This decree is to be published to the pastor of Saint Mary Catholic Church.
4. The parishioners of Saint Mary Catholic Church are to be given notice of this decree upon its receipt by the pastor of the parish. Copies of this decree are to be made available for inspection at the office of the parish, and the parishioners shall be given notice as soon as is possible after its receipt by the pastor.
5. This decree is to be published in the Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Criterion*.
6. This decree is to be posted to the website of the Archdiocese.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis on this 1st day of December 2018.

Charles C. Thompson

The Most Reverend Charles C. Thompson, D.D., J.C.L.
Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Annette "Mickey" Lentz

Annette "Mickey" Lentz
Chancellor

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Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

December 7 – 17, 2018

Dec. 7 – 5:30 p.m.
Little Sisters of the Poor Christmas Celebration at The Willows, Westfield

Dec. 9 – 1 p.m.
Mass at the Federal Correctional Institute, Terre Haute

Dec. 11 – 10:30 a.m.
Priest Personnel Meeting at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

Dec. 11 – 11 p.m.
Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass at St. Anthony Church, Indianapolis

Dec. 13 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team Meeting at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

Dec. 13 – 11:30 a.m.
Catholic Center Employee Luncheon at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

Dec. 16 – 9:30 a.m.
Mass at Holy Name of Jesus Church, Beech Grove

Dec. 17 – 5:15 p.m.
Serra Club Christmas Dinner at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis

(Schedule subject to change.)

Official Appointments

Effective January 9, 2019

Rev. Eric M. Augenstein, archdiocesan director of vocations, priest moderator and sacramental minister for St. Agnes Parish in Nashville, appointed pastor of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis while continuing as archdiocesan director of vocations.

Rev. Daniel J. Mahan, pastor of St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington and St. Jude the Apostle Parish in Spencer, appointed priest moderator of St. Agnes Parish in Nashville while continuing as pastor of St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington and St. Jude the Apostle Parish in Spencer.

Effective January 16, 2019

Very Rev. Joseph M. Feltz, V.E., vicar for clergy, religious, and parish life coordinators, vice-chancellor, priest moderator and sacramental minister of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Terre Haute and St. Mary-of-the-Woods Parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, appointed pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany.

Very Rev. Eric M. Johnson, V.F., pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany and dean of the New Albany Deanery, appointed vicar for clergy, religious and parish life coordinators, vice-chancellor and sacramental minister of St. Agnes Parish in Nashville.

Rev. Daniel E. Bedel, pastor of St. Margaret Mary Parish and St. Patrick Parish, both in Terre Haute, appointed priest moderator of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Terre Haute and St. Mary-of-the-Woods Parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, while continuing as pastor of St. Margaret Mary Parish and St. Patrick Parish, both in Terre Haute.

Rev. Darvin E. Winters, Jr., not currently assigned to parish ministry in anticipation of filling a full-time chaplain position at the Federal Corrections Facility in West Terre Haute, appointed sacramental minister of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Terre Haute and St. Mary-of-the-Woods Parish in St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

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

Don't be 'silent' about your Christmas song; tell us why it's your favorite



This year marks the 200th anniversary of "Silent Night," the Christmas song that was composed in 1818 and first performed on Christmas Eve of that year in a small parish church in Austria.

In recognition of this perennial Christmas favorite, *The Criterion* is inviting our readers to tell us their favorite Christmas song, and why that song resonates with such meaning for them. If there's a

personal story associated with the song or a preferred singer of the song, readers should also share these details.

Please send your responses to assistant editor 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 number where you can be reached. †

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MASS

continued from page 1

Memorial in Madison and Oldenburg Academy in Oldenburg.

At the beginning of the Mass, the archbishop told the seniors, "As we gather here today to celebrate all that you have accomplished and looking also to your futures beyond even high school, we remember we rely on God's grace, the grace that is provided here for us in word and sacrament."

While God's grace binds them, Archbishop Thompson also used his homily to remind the seniors of the tremendous gifts and the challenging responsibilities that are part of a Catholic education and the Catholic faith.

"When we live our faith, it will not always be received well. It will be rejected. And we may have to suffer for that faith."

The archbishop added, "Religion provides the conscience of society, and the world pushes back at that. Our schools are a ministry of our Catholic teachings, of our Catholic Church, of our Catholic faith. And we teach not just what is popular, not just what is easy, not just what is in vogue in the world. We teach what we believe to be bound by Scripture and tradition rooted in Jesus Christ."

That belief calls Catholics to put Christ first in their lives, the archbishop told the seniors.

"That's our calling—to be witnesses to Christ. And our Christ is one whose throne is a cross. Not power. Not an army. His victory was over sin and death—for our sakes, for our salvation.

"We must be Christ-centered in all we're about, in all that we do. And Christ-centered means that Jesus doesn't witness 'to live and let live.' Jesus witnesses to live for others, for the sake of others."

Archbishop Thompson also used the theme of a winning lottery ticket to remind the seniors of the great gift they've been given through a Catholic education.

"Everybody is always thinking if I win the lottery, here's where I'll go and here's what I'll do," he noted.

"You've all won it. Look around the world. To the rest of the world, you've won the lottery. What are you going to do with this formation and this education? Are you going to let it slip away to worldly values so you can be more popular? Or do you take what Jesus calls us to do and proclaim this Good News, this witness to others? Even to the point of sometimes being rejected."

Through it all, the archbishop encouraged the seniors to become "the people of God that you are called and meant to be."

He also stressed keeping their focus on "the end," of being reunited with God in heaven.

"What Jesus promises us is not an easy way, but the way to salvation. The way



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson shares a light-hearted moment with seniors A.J. Strange, left, Sarah Mattingly and Audrey Troxell of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. The archbishop met and talked with seniors from 10 Catholic high schools across the archdiocese following the annual Mass he celebrated for them on Nov. 28 at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

to true life, to true peace, to true joy. And you have what it takes to be a part of this mission, and not let the world transform us. But we, through our faith in Jesus, [will be] transforming the world, if we remain Christ-centered."

In closing his homily, Archbishop Thompson assured the seniors, "This is a day of looking with hope and joy. No matter what comes, God is always with you, Christ's love resides in you, and as he promises, he will give you what you need

if you stay rooted and centered in him each day, in each relationship, in each endeavor that you undertake."

That theme of hope and joy came to life in the seniors singing and rejoicing together at the end of the Mass.

"I'm just grateful to be here," said Allison Pena of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, summing up the feeling of many seniors. "I felt included in the Church community. It felt very cool being with all these seniors here." †

During Advent, make peace, not war, pope says at morning Mass

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Advent season is a time of preparation for the coming of the prince of peace and not a time of making war with those around you, Pope Francis said.

As Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, they must also reflect on what they do in their daily lives to become "artisans of peace," the pope said in his homily on Dec. 4 during morning Mass.

"What do I do to help peace in the world?" he asked. "Do I always make

some excuse to go to war, to hate, to talk about others? That's warfare! Am I meek? Do I try to build bridges?"

In his homily, the pope reflected on the day's reading from the prophet Isaiah.

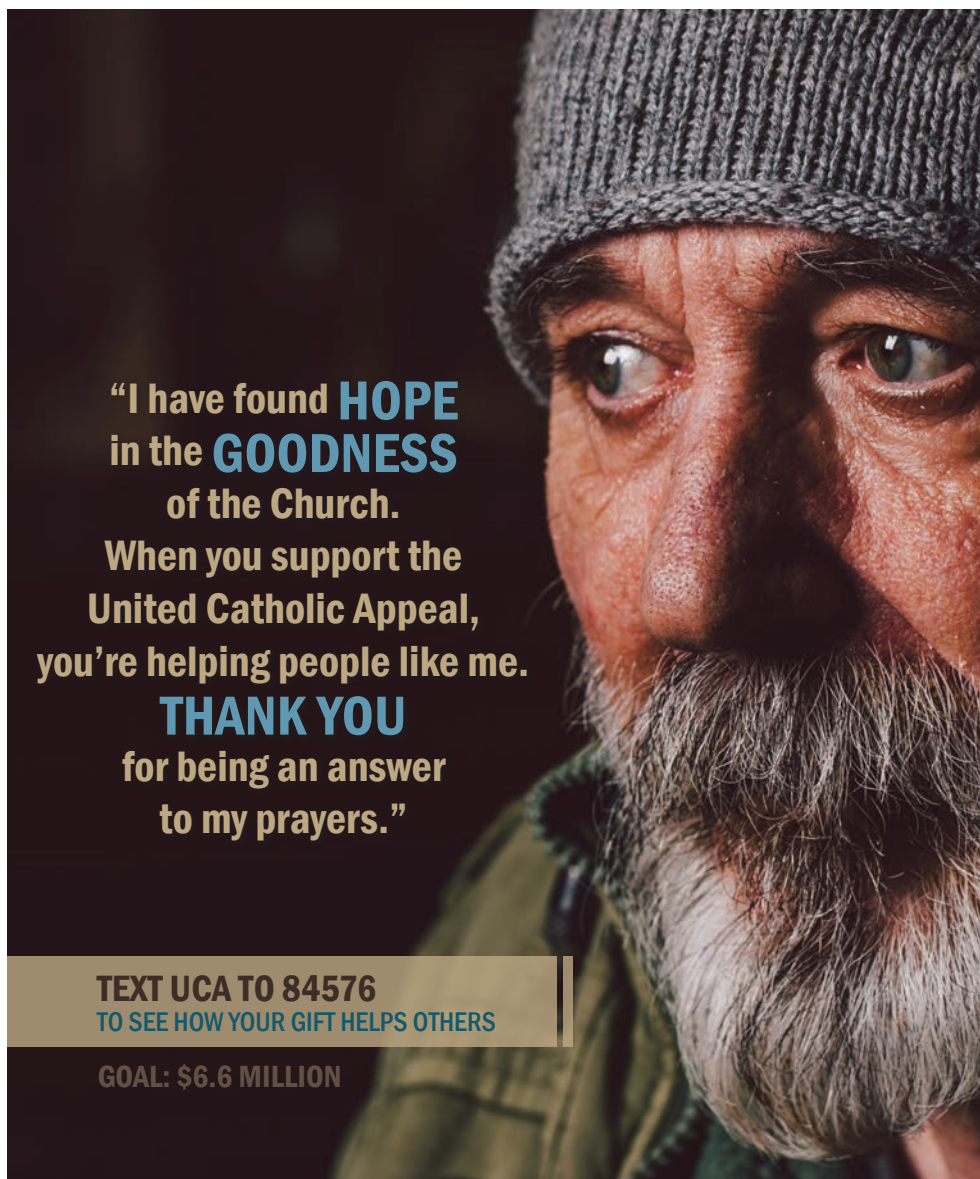
"Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. The calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them" (Is 11:6), the prophet writes.

Pope Francis said that while this vision often appears with a certain "rustic charm,"

the beautiful imagery encapsulates the power of Christ to bring about a peace that is capable of changing lives.

"May the Lord prepare our hearts for the Christmas of the prince of peace"

by preparing everyone to do their part: "to pacify my heart, my soul, pacify my family, school, neighborhood and workplace," and to become "men and women of peace," the pope said. †



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The Criterion

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Editorial



Pope Francis places an Advent candle during the *Angelus* prayer led from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Dec. 2. The pope lit the candle as he launched the Christmas campaign, "Candles for Peace in Syria," an initiative of Aid to the Church in Need. (CNS photo/Giuseppe Lami, EPA)

Step away from the chaos, make Advent a truly Christ-centered time

So, we're nearly a week into Advent, and the holiday chaos surrounding us is in full swing.

Upon reflection, we remember that many stores and businesses began a full-fledged assault of advertising the Christmas season to consumers right after Halloween, and since then, the noise has only increased.

And in that noise, many are sadly putting the Baby Jesus on the backburner, or even worse, trying to push him out of the equation all together.

What's a person of faith to do when many in the secular world have decided "Happy Holidays" or "Season's Greetings" are the appropriate responses for this special time of year, and "keeping Christ" in Christmas is not the way to go?

While many consumers are counting down the days left until Dec. 25, our faith teaches us to embrace Advent, and not to fall into a secularist mentality.

In the first Sunday of Advent's Gospel reading (Lk 21:25-28, 34-36), Jesus tells his disciples to be vigilant. And as we are reminded throughout Advent, it is a great liturgical season of vigilance, of waiting and watching.

What practically can we do during this season of vigil keeping? What are some practices that might bring alive the spirituality of Advent for us?

Those two questions were posed by Los Angeles Bishop Robert E. Barron in his "Advent Gospel Reflection" for Dec. 2 on Word on Fire Catholic Ministries, (www.wordonfire.org), the nonprofit global media apostolate that he founded and still leads.

In his reflection, Bishop Barron offered, "I strongly recommend the classically Catholic discipline of eucharistic adoration. To spend a half hour or an hour in the presence of the Lord is not to accomplish or achieve very much—it is not really 'getting' anywhere—but it is a particularly rich form of spiritual waiting."

He continued, "As you keep vigil before the Blessed Sacrament, bring to Christ some problem or dilemma that

you have been fretting over, and then say: 'Lord, I'm waiting for you to solve this, to show me the way out, the way forward. I've been running, planning, worrying, but now I'm going to let you work.' Then, throughout Advent, watch attentively for signs."

Bishop Barron added that when we pray before the Eucharist, we should allow our desire for the things of God to intensify, and allow our hearts and souls to expand. Pray, "Lord, make me ready to receive the gifts you want to give," or even, "Lord Jesus, surprise me," Bishop Barron said.

Our Advent practices could also include making time to receive the sacrament of reconciliation. As you'll read on page 15 of this week's issue of *The Criterion*, the opportunities to go to confession are plentiful throughout parishes in central and southern Indiana. Clip it out, or visit our Advent website at www.archindy.org/advent if you'd like the most up-to-date schedule.

Spiritual reading could be a wonderful practice to add to your daily Advent plans. Reflecting on the day's readings is a great option, and while you're at it, why not try to include attending Mass beyond Sunday—possibly even daily—during this liturgical season?

As St. John Paul II taught us in his 2003 encyclical "*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*" ("On The Eucharist"), receiving the Eucharist is the greatest gift of our Catholic faith. Wouldn't that be a beautiful way to prepare for the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ?

Our faith teaches us we are an Advent people. And though some in today's world are trying to tell us that we should keep our religion inside our church buildings, we cannot and will not do that.

As Pope Francis has shared with us consistently during his pontificate, we are missionary disciples called to live out our faith in all that we do—during Advent, on Christmas, and each and every day.

—Mike Krokos

Advent Reflection/John F. Fink

Visualizing the Trinity, planning for Christmas

During Advent, we should prepare ourselves for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. However, I can't help but realize that, well before Christmas, the most



important event in history has already taken place. God, the Almighty, had already humbled himself to become a human nine months before Christmas.

During Advent, we first read about that story this year on Dec. 20. That's when the Gospel reading at Mass is Luke's description of the appearance of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary to tell her that she would be the mother of Jesus. Of course, we read that Gospel several other times during the year, including nine months before Christmas, on the feast of the Annunciation on March 25.

Whenever I hear that Gospel, or meditate on the joyful mysteries of the rosary, I can't help but get a picture in my mind of God the Father telling his Son, "Well, I guess it's time to put our plan into effect to reverse the punishment we inflicted upon the humans on Earth after the sin of Adam. It's too bad that Adam and Eve didn't obey me."

It's silly because there's no such thing as time in the eternity of heaven, but I think of God as saying, "I've been busy with some of the other planets the past few hundred years, so it has taken me a while to get around to Earth." Might God have created other planets and tested other Adams and Eves, some of whom passed the test and some who didn't?

There are an estimated 100 billion galaxies in the universe and about 200 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy alone, each star perhaps with planets. It's difficult for me to believe that Earth is the only place where life has occurred. Perhaps somewhere in the universe there's a planet where its Adam and Eve didn't disobey God.

I'm hardly the first one to think about that. The great Christian apologist, novelist and storyteller C. S. Lewis used that

premise when he wrote one of his science fiction novels, *Perelandra*. He didn't go far into the universe, though; his *Perelandra* was the planet Venus just as *Malacandra* in his *Out of the Silent Planet* was Mars. So he stayed in our solar system.

His premise, as is mine, is that there might be some planet in the universe where a first couple underwent the same thing that Adam and Eve did here, but obeyed instead of disobeyed. What would that planet be like today?

Lewis told us what it might be like, later in his life in his book *The Seeing Eye*. If we reached other planets, he wrote, we might "find a race which was, like us, rational but, unlike us, innocent—no wars nor any other wickedness among them; all peace and good fellowship. I don't think any Christian would be puzzled to find that they knew no story of an Incarnation or Redemption, and might even find our story hard to understand or accept if we told it to them. There would have been no Redemption in such a world because it would not have needed redeeming."

Of course, that's not what actually happened on our planet Earth—unfortunately. So I visualize in my mind the three persons of the Trinity deciding what to do about it. God the Father decided that his Son would become human, teach the people about the kingdom of God, and then die a cruel but redeeming death. He had already selected a young woman, named Mary, to be his mother and had preserved her from original sin so the Archangel Gabriel could call her "full of grace." And a man, named Joseph, who would protect the family.

The Holy Spirit was to come upon Mary so she would remain a virgin while becoming pregnant and giving birth. Then the Holy Spirit would come upon the woman's relative, Elizabeth, and her unborn son John, and reveal to Elizabeth that Mary had conceived the Lord.

Was this something that had already been done in some other planet far, far away? Who knows? Perhaps so, perhaps not. Perhaps it's just my quirky imagination.

(John F. Fink is editor emeritus of *The Criterion*.) †

Letter to the Editor

Reader is thankful for columnists' words of wisdom and for her weekly newspaper

When I recently turned 70, I got to celebrate renewing my driver's license with that dreaded vision test!

I do have a lot to be thankful for, including my pen pal Debra Tomaselli whose "Emmaus Walk" column in the Nov. 23 issue of *The Criterion* helped me remember to count my blessings.

I am also thankful for Cynthia Dewes' "Cornucopia" column. In that same issue, she reminded me to "be still and let God speak to me." I shall truly miss

her "cornucopia of opportunities and challenges, joys and sorrows" and her wonderful way of accepting and carrying the crosses God has blessed her to carry.

And I am thankful for our wonderful Catholic weekly newspaper and all who make *The Criterion* something I look forward to each week.

God bless us everyone!

Alice Price
Indianapolis

Letters Policy

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

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

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

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

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

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



Christ the Cornerstone

Staying close to our mother Mary through her son Jesus

“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end” (Lk 1:30-33).

Traditionally, October and May are considered the two months of the year that are especially dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. However, the Church gives us two wonderful feasts in December to celebrate Mary’s role in the history of our salvation.

Tomorrow, on Dec. 8, we will celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a mystery of God’s grace that allowed Mary to enter our world without the burden of sin. Next Wednesday, on Dec. 12, we will rejoice in the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the sign of our Blessed Mother’s oneness with all the peoples of the Americas (and our unity with each other).

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception calls attention to the way

that Mary, who was born without original sin, is different from us.

But as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI once observed, “This privilege given to Mary, which sets her apart from our common condition, does not distance her from us, but on the contrary, it brings her closer. While sin divides, separating us from one another, Mary’s purity makes her infinitely close to our hearts, attentive to each of us and desirous of our true good.” Mary’s difference does not separate her from us; her holiness makes her more open and accessible to all of us, her children.

The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe also emphasizes Mary’s closeness to us. In 1531, a “Lady from Heaven” appeared to St. Juan Diego, a humble Native American at Tepeyac, a hill northwest of what is now Mexico City. She wore native dress, and she let it be known to him, and to all of us, that she is one-with-us. “Do not be afraid,” the beautiful Lady said to Juan Diego. “Am I not here, your Mother?” To emphasize her oneness with the people of that region, Our Lady not only appeared in native dress, she spoke the language of the common people.

As we begin a new Church year, and prepare for Christmas, we are invited to stay close to Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother. Mary points the way to her son. She reminds us of the miracles Jesus works in our daily lives, and she invites us to respond with open hearts. “May it be done to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38), Mary responded when she was told that she was to bear a son by the power of the Holy Spirit. Her counsel to us is always to do as she did, submitting to God’s will for us.

Mary’s presence during the crucifixion of her son is one of the saddest moments in all of biblical literature. She follows him on the Way of the Cross, the *Via Dolorosa*, unable to do anything to assist or comfort him. Then she stands before the cross—supported by John, the disciple whom Jesus loved—and watches and waits.

“Woman, behold your son,” Jesus says. And to the disciple, “Behold your mother” (Jn 19:26-27). From that moment, Mary became our mother, the one who intercedes for us before the throne of God. She

is the one who shares with us her confident hope in the fulfillment of all God’s promises.

As she said to the servants at the wedding feast at Cana, Mary says to us now, “Do whatever he tells you” (Jn 2:5). She gives profound personal witness to the liberating power of saying “yes” to God’s will. “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord” (Lk 1:38), she says to the angel Gabriel (and to us).

We might say that by his death on the cross our Lord gave us two gifts. First and foremost, he gave us the gift of everlasting life. He sacrificed himself for us—dying so that we might live with him forever.

And then, in yet another sign of God’s abundant generosity, Jesus gave us his mother. She who gave human life to him by the grace of God now helps us say “yes” to divine life and follow her son on the way to happiness and peace.

Let’s use this Advent season of joyful expectation to grow closer to Mary, and through her to Jesus her son. Let’s follow her example and open our hearts to God’s holy Word so that we can always say “yes” and always do God’s will. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Mantengámonos cerca de María, nuestra madre, a través de su hijo Jesús

“No temas, María, porque Dios te ha favorecido. Concebirás y darás a luz un hijo, y le pondrás por nombre Jesús; él será grande y será llamado Hijo del Altísimo. El Señor Dios le dará el trono de David, su padre, reinará sobre la casa de Jacob para siempre y su reino no tendrá fin” (Lc 1:30-33).

Tradicionalmente, octubre y mayo se consideran los dos meses del año dedicados especialmente a la Santa Virgen María. Sin embargo, la Iglesia nos da dos maravillosas festividades en diciembre para celebrar el papel que desempeñó María en la historia de nuestra salvación.

Mañana, día 8 de diciembre, celebramos la Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción, el misterio de la gracia de Dios que permitió que María se encarnara en este mundo sin la carga del pecado. El miércoles siguiente, 12 de diciembre, festejamos a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, el símbolo de la unidad de nuestra Santa Madre con los pueblos de toda América (y la unidad entre nosotros).

La Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción resalta el hecho de que María, concebida sin pecado original, es distinta de nosotros.

Tal como señaló en una ocasión el papa emérito, Benedicto XVI: “Este privilegio otorgado a María, que la distingue de nuestra condición ordinaria, no nos distancia sino que, al contrario, nos acerca a ella. Si bien el pecado divide y nos separa, la pureza de María la coloca infinitamente cerca de nuestros corazones, atenta a cada uno de nosotros y deseosa de que alcancemos el verdadero bien.” Lo que distingue a María no la separa de nosotros; su santidad la predispone y la hace más accesible a nosotros, sus hijos.

La festividad de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe también hace énfasis en la cercanía de María con nosotros. En 1531 una “Señora del cielo” se le apareció a San Juan Diego, un humilde indígena en Tepeyac, en una colina al noroeste de lo que hoy en día es la Ciudad de México. Vestía un traje típico y le mostró a él y a todos que ella es una con nosotros. “No temas,” le dijo la hermosa Señora a Juan Diego. “¿No estoy yo aquí que soy tu madre?” Para hacer énfasis en su unidad con los pueblos de esta región, Nuestra Señora no solamente se apareció vestida con traje típico, sino que también hablaba el idioma del pueblo.

Durante esta temporada tan

especial mientras comenzamos un nuevo año litúrgico y nos preparamos para la Navidad, se nos invita a mantenernos cerca de María, la madre de Jesús y nuestra madre. María señala el camino hacia su hijo. Ella nos recuerda los milagros que obra Jesús en nuestra vida cotidiana y nos invita a responder con corazones abiertos. “Hágase en mí según tu palabra” (Lc 1:38), responde María cuando le dijeron que llevaría en su vientre a un hijo por el poder del Espíritu Santo. Su consejo es que siempre hagamos tal como hizo ella, quien se sometió a la voluntad de Dios por nosotros.

La presencia de María durante la crucifixión de su hijo es uno de los momentos más tristes de toda la literatura bíblica. Ella lo sigue en el Vía Crucis, la Vía Dolorosa, sin poder hacer nada para ayudar o aliviarlo. Entonces, se para frente a la cruz y, sujetándose de Juan, el discípulo amado de Jesús, observa y aguarda.

“Mujer, ahí tienes a tu hijo,” le dice Jesús, y luego, al discípulo: “Ahí tienes a tu madre” (Jn 19:26-27). Y a partir de ese momento, María se convierte en nuestra madre, la que intercede por nosotros ante el trono de Dios. Es ella quien comparte con nosotros su

esperanza llena de confianza de que las promesas de Dios se cumplirán.

Tal como les dijo a los sirvientes en las bodas de Caná, María nos dice ahora: “Hagan lo que él les ordene (Jn 2:5),” y nos da un testimonio increíblemente profundo del poder liberador de decirle “sí” a la voluntad de Dios. “Aquí tienes a la sierva del Señor” (Lc 1:38) le contesta María al ángel (y a nosotros).

Podríamos decir que con su muerte en la cruz nuestro Señor nos entregó dos obsequios: primero y principal, nos entregó el don de la vida eterna. Se sacrificó por nosotros y murió para que pudiéramos vivir para siempre con él.

Y después, como otra señal de la generosidad abundante de Dios, Jesús nos entregó a su madre, aquella que le dio vida humana por el poder del Espíritu Santo, ahora nos ayuda a aceptar la vida divina y a seguir a su hijo en el camino hacia la felicidad y la paz.

Aprovechemos la alegre expectativa de la época del Adviento para acercarnos más a María a través de Jesús, su hijo. Sigamos su ejemplo y abramos nuestros corazones a la Santa Palabra de Dios para que siempre podamos decir “sí” a la voluntad divina. †

Events Calendar

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

December 9-13

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Parish Mission**, presented by Fathers of Mercy Apostolate Louis Guardiola, 7-9 p.m. each evening. Information: 317-636-4478, jerry@holyroaryconferences.org.

December 11

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Monthly Taizé Prayer Service**, theme "That All May be One," 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild**, 12:30 p.m. Information: 317-223-3687, ylgmimi@aol.com.

December 14

Annunciation Church, 19 N. Alabama St., Brazil. Festival of **Advent Lessons and Carols**, presented by St. Ambrose *Schola Cantorum*. Free, all are welcome. For

more information call the parish office at 812-448-1901.

Granite City Brewery, 150 W. 96th St., Carmel, Ind. **Advent on Tap: Science and Our Advent Journey**, sponsored by SANCTUS Young Adult and Young Family Ministry of St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish, Zionsville (Lafayette Diocese), Dr. Chris Baglow presenting, ages 21-35 welcome, 7 p.m., donation of one pair of men's crew socks requested for admission. Information: 317-873-2885, ext. 511, hradabaugh@zionsvillecatholic.com.

December 14-16

St. John the Evangelist Parish, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Christkindl Village**, Fri. 5-9 p.m., Sat. 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., indoor and outdoor heated activities, live animal Nativity, kids' activities, alpine slide, German food, beer and wine, sacred music, caroling, Christmas Market, free admission. Information and list of activities: www.stjohnsindy.org.

December 15

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House Chapel, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Service of the Longest Night**, sponsored by Abbey Caskets, Benedictine Father Adrian Burke presenting, 6 p.m. CT, light refreshments to follow, Reservations requested: info@abbeycaskets.com, 800-987-7380.

December 18

Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **"Abide" Adoration Service**, sponsored by New Albany Deanery Catholic Youth Ministries, 7-8 p.m., every third Thurs. of the month, featuring guest speaker, praise band, silence and confessions, child care available. Information and child care reservations: Chris Rogers, chris@nadyouth.org, 812-923-8355.

December 19

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

December 20

St. Joseph Parish, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

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

December 21

Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Lafayette Bishop Timothy Doherty presenting, Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$15 members, \$21 non-members. Register by noon on Dec. 20. Information and registration: www.catholicbusinessexchange.org.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 1752 Scheller Lane, New Albany. **The Longest Night: A Mass of Consolation**, 7 p.m. Information: 812-945-2374, tyost@olphna.org.

December 22

St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus. **13th Annual Concert Series: Christmas Passion**, featuring Hot Horns, 7 p.m., free will offering. Complete list of all concerts: www.saintbartholomew.org (click on Music Ministry) or bminut@stbparish.net.

January 4

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., Father Andrew Dudzinski presiding, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, www.womenscarecenter.org.

January 8

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Monthly Taizé Prayer Service**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

January 20

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of

Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Sundays at the Woods: A Low Carbon Footprint**, Providence Sister Jeanne Hagelskamp and Lorrie Heber presenting, 2-4 p.m., free will offering, registration required by Jan. 18; space limited to 30. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event.

January 25

Immaculate Heart of Mary School, 317 E. 57th St., Indianapolis. **K-8 Open House**, for parents of prospective students, 1-2:30 p.m., private tours available. Information: Elise O'Brien, 317-255-5468, eliseobrien@ihmindy.org.

January 27

Immaculate Heart of Mary School, 317 E. 57th St., Indianapolis. **K-8 Open House**, for parents of prospective students, 10:30 a.m.-noon, private tours available. Information: Elise O'Brien, 317-255-5468, eliseobrien@ihmindy.org. †

Deadline for entries in "Try Prayer! It Works!" contest is Feb. 20

The deadline for entries in the 2019 "Try Prayer! It Works!" contest, a national competition encouraging children to express their faith through art, poetry, prose and video, is Feb. 20.

This year's theme, "Mary, Mother of the Church," helps families explore how Mary is the mother of Jesus and mother to all.

The contest is open to students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Students from Catholic schools, parishes,

home schooling and other Catholic organizations are eligible to participate.

The first-place winner in each category and their sponsors will each receive \$100.

For details or to download an application, log on to www.FamilyRosary.org/TryPrayer.

All entries must be postmarked by Feb. 20.

For questions, call Holy Cross Family Ministries at 800-299-7729. †

Crèches on display at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library through Dec. 28

An exhibit of crèches—or Nativity scenes—from around the world are on display in the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library, 200 Hill Dr., in St. Meinrad, through Dec. 28.

The crèches represent a variety of styles and media, such as porcelain, wood, glazed tile, glass, cloth, stone, metals and ceramic.

For library hours, call 812-357-6401

or 800-987-7311, or visit www.saintmeinrad.edu/library/library-hours. All times are Central Standard Time.

The exhibit is free and open to the public.

The library will be closed on Dec. 22-25.

Visitors may wish to arrive at least 30 minutes before closing to view the exhibit. †



This is a crèche from Mexico that is a part of a display of such Nativity scenes from around the world available for viewing at the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library in St. Meinrad. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

Corrections

For the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Margaret Mary Parish, 2405 S. Seventh St., in Terre Haute, will hold a rosary service at 11 p.m. on Dec. 11, and a Mass at 7 p.m. on Dec. 12.



A Christkindl encounter

In this photo from December 2015, Juan Aguilar, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish and now a seminarian at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, both in Indianapolis, smiles at a young visitor enjoying the live Nativity during the parish's annual Christkindl Village event. This year's event will take place on Dec. 14-16. See the Event List above for more information. (Submitted photo)

Vox Sacra (Sacred Voice) to hold Advent and Christmas concert on Dec. 21

Vox Sacra (Sacred Voice), the Schola Cantorum of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, along with the archdiocesan youth choir, will present its third annual concert of Advent and Christmas music at St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 Central Ave., in Indianapolis, at 7 p.m. on Dec. 21.

The concert will feature the works

of Bruckner, Gabrielli, Gallus, Parry and more.

There is no charge, although freewill offerings will be accepted.

For additional information, visit www.voxsacra.com or contact the archdiocesan Office of Worship at 317-236-1483, 800-382-9836, ext. 1483, or e-mail tuley@archindy.org. †



Robbie Falcone, right, and his sons Elijah and Jonah (partially obscured) of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond, attend Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis during the Indiana Catholic Men's Conference on Nov. 10. (Photo by Katie Rutter)

Men encouraged to take responsibility, walk with Christ

By Katie Rutter

Special to *The Criterion*

The sound was as powerful as it was deep and rich. Hundreds of men raised their voices in a hymn of praise that filled a ballroom in the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis.

"Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that you're my God," the attendees sang, kicking off the annual Indiana Catholic Men's Conference on Nov. 10.

All of the nearly 400 men gathered were aware that, outside these walls, a society was reeling from the pain and frustration caused by abuse and the evil actions of a few of their fellow men. As this group raised their voices to acknowledge God first and foremost, however, they took the first step toward healing the brokenness around them.

"Four hundred guys turned up on a Saturday when they could be doing something else," said Father Dwight Longenecker, one of the conference speakers and the pastor of Our Lady of the Rosary Parish in Greenville, S.C., in the Diocese of Charleston, S.C. "They're saying, 'Right, I care about my spiritual

life, I care about who I am and what God wants me to do.

"This is hugely encouraging," he added.

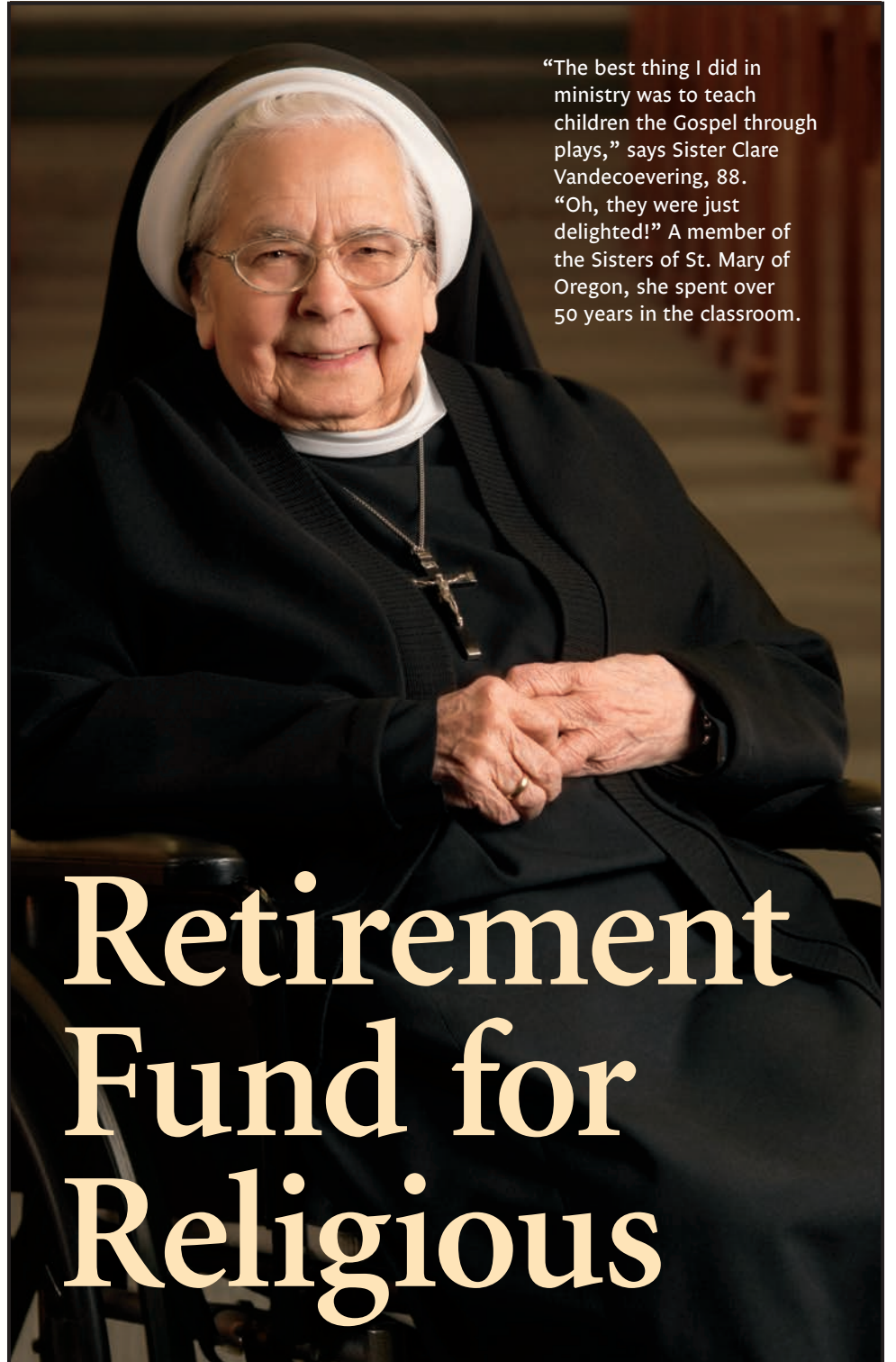
The daylong conference combined practical advice for living the faith, theological explanations and spiritual renewal. The event is sponsored annually by the Marian Center of Indianapolis in partnership with the archdiocese.

Father Longenecker, who served as an Anglican priest for 10 years before he and his family were received into the full communion of the Church, gave two presentations focused on restoring a fallen humanity through faith in God.

"A lot of the crisis in masculinity today is that we've got a Peter Pan syndrome. We've got too many lost boys who refuse to man up and grow up, and that simply means taking responsibility," Father Longenecker told *The Criterion*.

"It doesn't mean any kind of a macho, domineering sort of masculinity which goes around shooting people up and oppressing women, but it's a gentle, strong, taking responsibility and saying, 'Right, I'm gonna do something about this.'"

The theme of the conference was appropriately "Walking with
See CONFERENCE, page 10



"The best thing I did in ministry was to teach children the Gospel through plays," says Sister Clare Vandecoevering, 88. "Oh, they were just delighted!" A member of the Sisters of St. Mary of Oregon, she spent over 50 years in the classroom.

Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.



Sister Clare (top) is one of 31,000 senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who benefits from the Retirement Fund for Religious. Your gift helps religious communities care for aging members and plan for future needs. Please be generous.

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Photos: Meet them at retiredreligious.org/2018 photos.
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Compassionate Visitors visit the elderly, accompany the dying

By Natalie Hoefler

Sometimes involvement in a ministry reveals an even deeper need beyond the one being met.

So it was for Barbara Davis-Hinkle of St. Gabriel Parish in Connerville, who started a nursing home ministry several years ago in her parish.

“We bring the Eucharist to the home-bound and those in nursing homes every week, and we give Christmas and Easter gifts to the Catholic residents,” she explains. The ministry also arranges for the parish’s pastor, Father Dustin Boehm, to offer the sacraments at two local nursing homes.

But as she walked the halls of the nursing homes as a volunteer for her own ministry, “It became obvious that some residents were sitting alone with no one to visit them,” she says. “And then I noticed that a few were dying with no one to sit with them” in their final hours.

Davis-Hinkle “put the two scenarios together.” In May 2017, she began to develop a plan, and in March of this year, that plan came to fruition: a ministry called Compassionate Visitors.

‘They might know Jesus through us’

On the visiting side of the ministry, nurses at local senior homes keep Davis-Hinkle informed of residents with few or no visitors. She then assigns one or two residents for each volunteer to visit weekly.

Currently, her team consists of 20 weekly visitors and 12 vigil-keepers—including volunteers who serve in both capacities—from both St. Gabriel and St. Bridget of Ireland Parish in Liberty.

They range in age from their 20s to their 80s. There are even four married couples who volunteer as husband and wife teams.

While grateful for the volunteers participating in the ministry, Davis-Hinkle says there is plenty of room for more, noting that the ministry currently has five residents waiting for a visitor to be assigned to them.

“We visit Catholics and non-Catholics alike,” she says. “It doesn’t seem to matter what religion they are, if you pray the

Lord’s Prayer, they start to follow along. Even patients with dementia can follow along with some prayers.”

She recounts the story of one volunteer who visited a devout Baptist woman.

“There wasn’t a lot of conversation, but the visitor read Scripture to her,” Davis-Hinkle recounts. “She said you could tell by the look in [the resident’s] eyes and how [the resident] would pat her hand that she really appreciated it.”

She shares about another visitor assigned to a non-verbal man with dementia.

“She sings hymns to him, or reads Scripture or poetry, or pushes him in his wheelchair,” says Davis-Hinkle. “He seems to be more alert since she started visiting him.”

Abigail McFeely, a St. Gabriel member of Compassionate Visitors, notes that “people light up when you walk into their room. Sometimes just a pat on the shoulder can mean the world to them.

“For me, going to the nursing home, I’ve become a better person,” she admits. “It makes me humble—I’m no different than them.”

The ministry has also provided opportunities to evangelize, Davis-Hinkle adds.

“I’ve seen instances of people who’ve been away from the Church 30, 40, 50 years,” she says. “We have the opportunity to ask them if they want a priest to visit. They have a chance to reconnect with their faith, and we have a chance to serve as a bridge to help them do that.

“We get to give people the love God wants them to receive. We may be the only form of God’s love they ever know. They might know Jesus through us.”

‘Like earthly angels leading them to holy angels’

Some of the volunteers serve as visitors and also as vigil-keepers when a resident is dying. Others volunteer as only vigil-keepers. Such ministry is not one to which all are called, says Compassionate Visitor Georgia Lucas, also a member of St. Gabriel.

But for those drawn to “walk people home, it is not upsetting,” she says. “It’s a beautiful act of mercy.”



Compassionate Visitor volunteer Mike Fronckowiak, left, a member of St. Gabriel Parish in Connerville, walks on Aug. 3 with Earl Schneider, a resident he visits weekly at a nursing home in Connerville. (Submitted photo)

For residents whose families are comfortable with the service, nurses contact Compassionate Visitors when they sense a patient is in their last days or hours in this life. A vigil is then scheduled with volunteers taking two-hour shifts.

“It’s an honor to sit with them,” says Judy Sweney, who assists Davis-Hinkle in operating the ministry. “It’s inspiring. It’s a good feeling to know that you’re so close to something so beautiful.”

Davis-Hinkle agrees.

“You feel blessed to be with them so they know they’re not alone in their last minutes on Earth,” she says.

McFeely says keeping vigil “is like the hymn, ‘May the Holy Angels Lead You into Paradise,’ except we’re like earthly angels leading them to the holy angels.”

All Compassionate Visitors receive a one-day training and meet every other

month for educational opportunities and to share stories.

Additionally, vigil-keepers receive a package of items to help them accompany the dying. The kit includes a St. Benedict cross, scapular, votive candle holder, holy water, rosary, Divine Mercy chaplet card and a handbook of prayers to pray for a person who is dying—for after her or she has died and for the family members.

Whether visiting the elderly, keeping vigil with the dying or both, says Davis-Hinkle, “When you do service for others, you forget yourself. There’s something so uplifting about that. You gain a reward from the experience, maybe even more than the person you’re helping.”

(For more information on Compassionate Visitors, contact Barbara Davis-Hinkle at 765-825-9308, or Judy Sweney at 765-825-6672.) †

Placing, helping service-seeking seniors makes RSVP a ‘win-win’

By Natalie Hoefler

Sally Dreyer recalls her desire to volunteer after retiring four years ago at age 60.

“I was looking for something to do in the community,” she says.

Danny Wyrick says he “always wanted to give back to people—I just couldn’t figure out how because I’ve worked two jobs all my life.”

So when he retired in 2015, Wyrick was ready to volunteer.

Dreyer and Wyrick both turned to the same source to find volunteer opportunities: the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

‘An hour is just as significant as more’

RSVP is a national volunteer network for those age 55 and older. It is one of three programs offered through Senior Corps, which is overseen by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) agency.

Monica Woodsworth, director of RSVP of Central Indiana, describes the program as “a clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities.”

Her branch, which is sponsored by Catholic Charities Indianapolis, covers Hamilton, Hendricks, Johnson and Marion counties. Numerous branches cover many other counties in central and southern Indiana. (See related article on page 14.)

Although the central Indiana branch is housed at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis, says Woodsworth, “You don’t have to be Catholic. RSVP is non-denominational, so anyone over 55 can join”—good news for Wyrick, 69, who is not Catholic.

“Anyone” also means no upper age limit and includes those with limitations.

For instance, if someone lacks a car, Woodsworth says her staff researches public transportation, volunteer opportunities close to the person’s home, and in-home options using the phone or computer.

“Anyone” also includes those with only a limited time to serve.

“We tell the volunteers, ‘If you only have an hour once a week or every two weeks, that hour is just as significant to the person you’re helping as if you were able to give more,’” she says.

‘It’s nice to have a skill that’s needed’

Dreyer appreciates the program’s flexibility.

“One big concern I had going into this was what would happen if I needed to baby-sit my grandkids,” says Dreyer, 64, who is a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis with her husband Steve.

“They told me not to worry about it, that the organizations are flexible. They understand you’re retired and have family commitments.”

Dreyer moved forward with the application process, which starts with a background check and references, since volunteers “could work with our most vulnerable citizens, including the elderly and children,” says Woodsworth.

From there, Dreyer completed an inventory of her skills and interests. Then an RSVP staff member looked for a good match between her inventory and the volunteer options available, ranging from one time to short term to long term, from Catholic Charities to food pantries to community service, and a variety in between.



Sally Dreyer, a volunteer through the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, checks a client in at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry in Indianapolis on Nov. 6. (Still shot from Catholic News Service video by Katie Rutter)

Dreyer knew she wanted an ongoing, consistent volunteer opportunity. She was matched with a four-hour-a-week position checking clients in at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry in Indianapolis.

The role was also suggested because Dreyer listed on her inventory having a “working but not fluent” ability to speak Spanish.

“I didn’t think my Spanish would help,” she says. “But I get to use my Spanish every time I’m there. I love that I get to practice it, and it’s nice to have a skill that’s needed.”

Had Dreyer become unsatisfied with the opportunity, RSVP would be there to help.

“We follow up with both the organization and the volunteer to make sure it’s working,” Woodsworth explains.

If for some reason the volunteer is not happy, RSVP staff help them identify the problem so it can be avoided in the future.

“Then we work with them [on finding something else],” says Woodsworth. “Just because one opportunity didn’t work out, that doesn’t mean other opportunities aren’t still there.”

But no such efforts were needed for Dreyer. After four years, she continues to enjoy her role at the food pantry.

‘There’s no pressure’

Wyrick was also matched with a position at a food pantry. For two years, he volunteered monthly at Gleaner’s Food Bank.

“I hope to get back to it in the spring,” he says, noting he had to take a break from volunteering to have two knee surgeries. “I really have fun at Gleaners. I like talking to the clients. They’re really friendly.”

Bloomington ministry to elderly ensures they are ‘never alone’

By Natalie Hoefler

BLOOMINGTON—Indiana University senior Nathalie Plum looks forward to visiting her friend Melia Davis.

“We talk about everything under the sun,” she says.

“But I have to watch out for her—I brought my boyfriend once and she tried to steal him,” she adds with a pout.

Davis giggles. The World Wrestling Entertainment posters adorning her walls are another sign of the 86-year-old woman’s youthful, playful spirit.

“I try to rub some of my orneriness off on her,” she says with a grin toward the petite, blonde 20-year-old Catholic.

The unlikely pair’s fondness for each other began earlier this year through Never Alone: Ministry to the Elderly (NAME), a program of St. Paul Catholic Center’s campus ministry in Bloomington. Through the outreach, Catholic students studying at Indiana University make weekly visits to residents at nearby Golden LivingCenter nursing home who have few, if any, visitors.

Plum’s and Davis’ closeness is just what Dominican Father Joseph Minuth, associate pastor of St. Paul, says he had in mind when he founded NAME: a ministry where college students “don’t just go to do good work, but to have a relationship with people” in the nursing home.

‘Most have visitors weekly or monthly’

Father Joseph founded NAME several years ago at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind. Ironically, the ministry branched out of a program he started to help those on the opposite end of the age spectrum: Mentoring At-Risk Kids, or MARK.

“The whole idea was for students who might not be interested in going to church but might like service work,” he explains. “It was a way to minister to them on how to live out their spirituality and charisma, and to get to know students active in the Church.

“At one point, a girl discerning a call to serve as a Little Sisters of the Poor [order, which ministers to the poor elderly] said, ‘Why don’t you do the same thing for the elderly?’ And that’s how NAME got started.”

When he began serving at St. Paul two years ago, Father Joseph started MARK first, then started developing NAME last fall. The ministry launched in January.

Father Joseph says the model is “easy to reproduce.” Three days a week, different groups visit the retirement center “so students find the time that works for them,” he explains. Each day has a group leader to coordinate logistics and encourage volunteers’ participation and faith.

The ministry highlights the Church’s emphasis on service, he adds, noting

that the Golden LivingCenter staff “appreciates that we’re there consistently, not just at Christmas for caroling and gone the rest of the year.”

Alexandra Makris, campus ministry intern for St. Paul, notes that such appreciation stems from the low number of visitors most residents receive.

“After a full year of doing this ministry at this particular nursing home, my experiences point to the fact that most of the people at this center do not receive regular visitors,” says Makris, the current NAME coordinator. “The more connected ones will get family members coming in sometimes daily, but most residents only have visitors weekly or monthly.

“Because of that, we do not assign students to residents, and we encourage them to cultivate relationships but also to be open to the needs of the residents they don’t visit with weekly. ... It’s beautiful to see how God is opening their hearts to seeing the needs of people around them.”

Makris notes that, while the students “can’t be everywhere with everyone, they can be present to one or two people and make a big difference in their day.”

It’s the building of these relationships and the desire for ongoing service that are the “greatest fruits of the ministry,” says Father Joseph.

“That’s what keeps the students coming back. It’s not just service, but a friendship. It’s not just ‘I’m going to the retirement center,’ but ‘I’m going to see Doris.’”

‘We just sit here and we talk’

Plum can relate to the idea of the ministry moving from service to relationship.

“Our connection is such a gift,” she says of her relationship with Davis. “Sometimes it can feel like a task beforehand because of my schedule, but I always feel better afterward. Our conversation here is so much more important than anything I have going on.

“Coming here is therapy itself. We laugh a lot.”

As she talks, Davis’ roommate wheels her chair forward and peeks around the curtain that divides the shared room. Plum waves and gives her a smile. The older woman, who is nearly deaf, breaks into an ear-to-ear grin, her face lighting up the room.

“You can joke about a lot of things, but respect for every life is serious,” Plum says, giving the still-smiling woman another wave.

Davis sets aside her joking and playful attitude when asked to comment on her feelings about Plum’s visits.

“Nathalie is just wonderful,” she says of the Cincinnati native. “I just love her to death. Me and my daughter were talking.



In Bloomington, a few of the Never Alone: Ministry to the Elderly (NAME) volunteers of St. Paul Catholic Center’s campus ministry, serving the students of Indiana University, pose outside of the Golden LivingCenter where they visit the elderly once a week. The volunteers are, front row: Zoey Fields, left, Corinne Maue, Raleigh Johnson and Yahilin Vera; back row: Matthew Neuman, left, and Matthew Peisen. (Submitted photo)

I said, ‘Today is Friday!’ She said, ‘That’s right, you get visitors, don’t you?’ I told her we shoot the breeze about everything. It’s never anything special. We just sit here and we talk.”

For all their simplicity, Plum says the relationships are long-lasting. She points to a letter Davis received from a NAME volunteer who visited her last spring before graduating. And Plum tells of a woman she used to visit who moved to a different nursing home.

“I ran into her at Goodwill the other day,” she says. “She gave me her number so I can call her. That was a little divine intervention that I went to Goodwill that day. I definitely want to stay in touch with her.”

‘I’ve learned to see Christ in them’

While Plum spends most of her time with Davis, she talks to “random people” on her way to Davis’ room. Fellow NAME volunteer Matthew Neuman says he does the same on his way to visit Doris.

“I visit her every Monday,” says the college senior whose home parish is St. Mary (Immaculate Conception) in Rushville. “I’ve been visiting her for a year. Sometimes she still forgets my name, but that’s OK. You just roll with the punches.”

Neuman also visits residents in the facility’s Alzheimer’s unit, where “you meet all kinds,” he says.

“One guy believes he is a world-renowned author, but he isn’t,” he says. “This other guy claims he is a world-renowned musician. I checked with the nurse, and it really is true! He’s actually a really interesting person.”

His experience visiting residents in the Alzheimer’s unit proved beneficial to another very special senior outside of Golden LivingCenter, and to Neuman as well.

“I always struggled to connect with my grandma [with Alzheimer’s] because she always thought I was my grandpa,” he shares.

But after visiting with residents in the Alzheimer’s unit last semester, “I had a better relationship with my grandma before she died this summer,” he says. “I was able to just hold her hand and let her ramble. It wasn’t disconcerting anymore when she forgot my name.”

Neuman admits that conversation with some residents can be difficult, or their attitudes can seem “bitter.” But in such cases, he says, compassion is the rule.

“You meet people who had a lot of joy, but also a lot of pain, and they spend their time thinking about that,” he says. “You need to just sit there and listen. You need to say, ‘That must have been so hard for you. I’m sorry you had to go through that.’ They appreciate having someone to tell their stories to.

“Sometimes it’s difficult,” he admits.

Still, he knows the value of taking the time to visit the elderly who others might have forgotten.

“I’ve learned to see Christ in them and in others.”

(For more information on NAME, contact St. Paul Catholic Center campus ministry intern Alexandra Makris at 812-339-5561 or alexandra@hoosiercatholic.org.) †

RSVP

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By volunteering once a month, Wyrick is available for other service opportunities that come along through RSVP. He’s participated in several one-time volunteer jobs at other food pantries, sorted food for the United States Post Office’s annual food drive, and even cleaned out a pantry-turned-closet at a school.

“It’s nice to be able to do those one-time jobs,” he says. “Sometimes Monica will contact me about something specific and say, ‘Do you think you’d be interested?’ If I’ve got something else going on or think I wouldn’t be the best at it, I can say no. You can volunteer when you want. There’s no pressure.”

Both Wyrick and Dreyer appreciate the monthly RSVP newsletter.

“They keep in contact, but they don’t bug you,” says Dreyer. “You can see all the volunteer opportunities. The one-time or short-term ones are good for snowbirds” who live in warmer climates during the winter months, she says.

Wyrick also notes the helpful information contained in the newsletters, including information on how to obtain

the local Area Agency on Aging resource guide for people who are aging or of any age with a disability.

‘They can keep their life ... and still help.’

“We like to give out information that can potentially help [the volunteers], in addition to the people they’re helping as they volunteer,” says Woodsworth.

Such information is also provided at the annual Senior Corps luncheon. In recent years, the event has included sessions on disability and inclusion, baby boomers as caregivers, and a presentation by a staff member of the Social Security Administration.

Help for RSVP volunteers goes beyond providing useful information. Because all of the volunteers are at least 55, says Woodsworth, “we know that more than likely they’ll end up being a family caregiver at some point.”

In such situations, she explains, continuing to volunteer, even if for less time, “can give them a sense of self-continuity throughout the caregiving. And when the caregiving ends, they haven’t lost everything.

“We don’t want those caring for loved ones to completely isolate themselves into that role. We want caregiving to be about

making all the connections within the community that could possibly support them, as well as staying connected to volunteering if that has been a part of their life.”

To help all caregivers—not just those volunteering—the central Indiana RSVP branch offers caregiver support.

“We have support groups, we do simple home modifications,” Woodsworth says. “Anything we can to support any caregiver in the best possible way—which may or may not include volunteering—and still help the person who needs them.”

‘It’s a win-win’

Neither Dreyer nor Wyrick have had to turn to RSVP’s caregiver support, a fact for which both are grateful.

For now, they simply enjoy helping their community and reaping the rewards that come to those age 55 and older who volunteer.

According to literature published by the CNCS, studies show that people in that age range who volunteer gain many benefits—improvements in quality of life, physical and mental health, independence and self-esteem, and decreases in chronic pain, depression and anxiety, to name a few.

Such benefits make sense to Wyrick, who notes that volunteering is “better than sitting around watching Jerry Springer and eating McDonald’s every day. It’s healthy to get out and talk to other people, if nothing else than to be grateful and thankful you have the limbs and strength and know-how to help others.”

Dreyer agrees.

“It’s easy to sit and do nothing,” she says. “I’ve got a favorite room with floor-to-ceiling windows and a comfy recliner. I could sit in there and read for hours.

“But that’s not good for your health or your brain. It’s important to communicate with the world, to not get stuck in a mode and cut off.

“And the organizations are so grateful for the help. It’s really a win-win.”

(For more information on the Catholic Charities of Indianapolis’ branch of RSVP covering Hamilton, Hendricks, Johnson and Marion counties, contact Monica Woodsworth at 317-261-3378, or e-mail her at mwoodsworth@archindy.org.) †



Above, Father Douglas Hunter, administrator of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis, leads a eucharistic procession with the participants of the Indiana Catholic Men's Conference outside the Indiana Convention Center on Nov. 10. (Photos by Katie Rutter)



Above, nearly 400 men listen to Father Todd Riebe's homily during Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis during the Catholic Men's Conference.



Left, Father Todd Riebe, pastor of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, hears the confession of an attendee during the Indiana Catholic Men's Conference at the Indiana Convention Center on Nov. 10.



Right, a conference attendee prays at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis during the Indiana Catholic Men's Conference on Nov. 10.

CONFERENCE

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Christ and the Cross." Mike Fox, the conference director and a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, explained that organizers chose the theme to encourage participants through any challenges that they face.

"Christ walked with a cross, so we walk together," he said, "but we have to go to Christ to really help us through a lot of these challenges, and there are many today." Participants ranged in age from high school students to others in post-retirement. While men of each age group shared that they had unique challenges, all agreed that living the faith required a courage and gentle strength found only in God.

"It's especially hard to evangelize because when you challenge people with their own personal views they become very defensive," explained Will Smith, 23, a member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis. "It's all about that caring—caring and making sure that they feel they're loved," he added.

"It seems to be more and more difficult to really talk about your religion these days," explained retiree John Hanagan, a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. "None of us should be afraid to go out and talk to others about what we believe."

Speaker Tom Peterson, founder of Catholics Come Home and VirtueMedia, focused specifically on small ways to share the faith and to evangelize. He encouraged men to respond to the common question, "How are you?" with the confident, "I'm blessed."

Catholics Come Home has reached more than 250 million viewers in the past 20 years through commercials inviting inactive Catholics and others to take a closer look at the Church today to learn more about it. Peterson suggested that if a friend or acquaintance confides a problem, Catholics can ask if they can pray for the person, then say a short prayer with them right then and there.

The host of the "Catholics Come Home" series on the Eternal Word Television Network also emphasized that men should use their specific talents to serve God.

"I used to serve the poor with food and clothing and all that, and that's all good, but then God reminded me, 'Hey, I gave you talents in advertising for a reason,'" Peterson recalled.

"Use those God-given talents you've been given to bloom in the mission field where God has planted you. And be that child that he has wanted you to be with the talents and interests he has given you."

Conference participants had the

opportunity to witness to their faith in the midst of the event. Mass was celebrated across the street from the Convention

Center at St. John the Evangelist Church. Following Mass, the men participated in a public rosary and eucharistic procession.

Saying prayers aloud, they followed the Blessed Sacrament across the street, around the corner of the Convention Center and back through its hallways. Hundreds of people who were waiting

in the building for other events looked on.

"Being Catholic isn't just about going to church every Sunday, it's a whole way of life. You gotta pray. Don't be afraid to say rosaries in public," Smith explained.

The sacrament of penance was also offered through the afternoon. Even with several priests available, men still waited in a line to confess their sins and receive God's mercy.

Speaker Father Ben Luedtke, a missionary and evangelist, explained that embracing God's forgiveness was absolutely essential for men. He also credited it as "the only way" men will heal past abuses and move forward with a just society.

"Every man that I've ever seen go to confession, he's got a beautiful family, he's got a family that are devoted, children that are good, that have a chance of surviving," explained Father Luedtke, who was ordained a priest in 1982 by St. John

Paul II and has ministered in Brazil, Canada, Italy and the U.S.

"We need something to let [us] start over again," he noted.

Father Luedtke pointed to the husband and father as the leader, and therefore the example, for the rest of the family.

Conference participant Robbie Falcone, a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond who attended with his two teenage sons, Jonah and Elijah, also called on fathers to take that same leadership role in living out the faith.

"Parents have to want their kids to want to go to these things and maybe at times kind of give them a nudge," he said with a smile, explaining that it was difficult to wake his boys up at 6:30 a.m. to drive to the conference.

"Having more support with you helps you and encourages you to go to these things and become a stronger faith-filled person," Elijah Falcone agreed.

Conference organizers and speakers hoped that the event would help supply the strength, the knowledge and spiritual renewal necessary for these men to continue living their faith.

"God reminds us that he needs men that are heroes for the faith to bring their families along, to help pray with each other and love each other to heaven," Peterson said.

"Get up, man up, grow up," Father Longenecker challenged. "Get out and do stuff for God—and live your faith."

(Katie Rutter is a freelance writer and member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington.) †



Fr. Dwight Longenecker



Fr. Ben Luedtke



Tom Peterson

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Take steps during Advent to be alert to the coming of Christ

By Fr. Geoffrey A. Brooke Jr.

“Be watchful!” and “Be alert!” are two traditional spiritual commands often heard by Catholics during the Advent season in preparation for the birth of Christ at Christmas. To the contemporary Catholic, they can also present somewhat of a conundrum.

Being watchful and alert both imply a void, an emptiness, something lacking, an expectation to be fulfilled. On the other hand, the Advent season in today’s society seems to be an overflow of noise and images, these days all about Christmas.

It doesn’t take much to “be watchful” and notice that Christmas is all around us. Christmas songs on the radio, commercials on TV, posts abound on the Internet—it’s everywhere. It’s seemingly impossible to miss the fact that Christmas is coming. In a world such as this, being watchful seems at best redundant, and at worst, a distraction hiding one from Christ.

Depending on what part of the country a person is from, it used to be that alerts were exclusively for seriously inclement weather, such as tornados and other storms. Now alerts are a constant part of our life.

Between texts, e-mails, social media messaging, likes, comments, shares and sports scores, phones constantly ping with alerts. We’re so accustomed to hearing these alerts that now if a phone goes off in a room filled with a bunch of people, everyone must get their phone out to check and see if it’s their phone.

The constant flow of alerts only fuels our addiction to our phones. How are we supposed to “be alert” for the coming of Christ when we are constantly inundated with alerts? Does Christ not become at best just another ping, another alert or, at worst, the wolf in the story of “The Boy Who Cried Wolf,” completely missed due to so many other useless and superfluous alerts?

For some, the temptation this season to run and hide in a quiet, dark cave until Christmas to avoid all of the chaos and



Bishop William F. Medley of Owensboro, Ky., speaks to a National Catholic Youth Conference participant during the sacrament of penance on Nov. 17, 2017, in the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. Going to confession during Advent can help Catholics be more aware of the coming of Christ in their lives. (File photo by Sean Gallagher)

noise might not seem like such a bad idea. The more gregarious thrive on all the extra opportunities to socialize and enjoy the pandemonium of the season.

Yet all are still called to “be watchful” and “be alert” for the coming of Christ. These spiritual commands have not been excused by the current culture, though they have perhaps become more difficult to follow.

Consider these practical tips as ideas to jump-start our watchfulness

and attentiveness during these days of preparation for the coming of Christ. Be watchful!

- Go to confession. When we speak of being watchful, the natural inclination is to look outward, searching for Christ. But before we can begin to look out, we must first look inward.

By making a good examination of conscience and confession, we can be watchful of our sins, failings, shortcomings, burdens and struggles. These things all create an extra barrier, a sort of blindness that prevents us from looking outward for Christ.

It’s like trying to see through dirty glasses or a dirty windshield; sometimes we need a good cleaning or carwash before we can begin to see clearly.

- Turn down the volume. As fun as it may be to blast Christmas music on the radio every time we get into the car right after Thanksgiving, to be more watchful we ought to consider turning down the sound.

What if on the way to and from work or school there was no music in the car until Christmas? How might that help to build up a kind of holy anticipation for the coming of Christ at Christmas?

This might not mean a total ban on music, but at least some intentional silence each day as a reminder to be watchful for the coming of Christ and not just overwhelmed with tunes.

Be alert!

- Change notification settings on your mobile phone or other digital devices. Almost every time an app is downloaded onto a phone, a pop-up will appear asking about notification settings. Most users just click through it. The next thing they know their phone is making noises every couple of minutes with some supposedly valuable piece of information.

To be more attuned to the coming of Christ and less focused on our phones, an Advent practice could be to go into our phone settings and turn off the notifications and alerts. Is it really that necessary to know every time someone has liked a comment or tweet? By reducing notifications on our phones and tablets, Advent can be spent increasing alertness for Christ.

- Provide a phone bowl. When hosting a party for your family and friends, consider putting out a large box or bowl where everyone can store their phones during the party.

This way, if one of the guests hasn’t followed the advice above and his or her phone starts pinging with alerts, others won’t be interrupted or stop their conversations to look down at their phones too. It allows everyone to be more present to one another at the party, to enjoy each other’s company and, in turn, to be more alert to Christ’s coming at Christmas.

(Father Geoffrey A. Brooke Jr. is a priest of the Diocese of Jefferson City, Mo. His website is frgeoffrey.com and his social media handle is @PadreGeoffrey.) †

‘... the Advent season in today’s society seems to be an overflow of noise and images, these days all about Christmas.’



People use their smartphones to take photos in Paris, France, on Oct. 1, 2017. The frequent alerts that people can receive on smartphones and other digital devices can keep them from being alert to the coming of Christ in their lives. (CNS photo/Charles Platiau, Reuters)

Guest Column/Mike Carotta

In tough times, let's all stand committed to grace

While we expose the shameful, sinful and criminal, might we also acknowledge those who have been faithful?



Our meeting down the hall has ended. A separate group of priests who are on retreat here in Indianapolis have invited us to join them at their closing Mass.

Standing behind them in my pew in the back of the chapel, I

see that every head is balding. The little hair left is white or gray.

I knew a lot of these guys when they were in their prime. Now their shoulders droop a little. Their torsos are a bit thin. Time has wilted their bodies a bit, but not their hearts.

The Mass begins, and they sing deep and loud. It is unlike any other singing. Maybe it's the all-male voices of those who have sung through their lives.

I suspect it is way more than that.

The sound of their voices opens up your deepest inner space and massages it for you.

The visiting priest with a thick New York accent has been their retreat leader. During the homily, he tells them that he used to think that the biggest clerical sin was envy. "When one guy got a red hat [appointed a cardinal] the other guys would turn blue."

They chuckle quietly. "Then I thought it was hypocrisy. But not anymore. I think the biggest clerical sin is expedience. We choose to do what is expedient over doing what might be right. We choose to do what is expedient instead of what might be harder, slower, more helpful."

This is a challenging message. But what impresses me the most is that "the Fathers," as he calls them, listen to every word—like juniors on their high school retreat.

No one stirs, no one moves. No one glances away or checks their watch.

They absorb.

I am wondering why they are here. Best I can tell they are a few years short or long of 70.

They've heard every sermon, theological insight and moral directive ever spoken or written. What is it that makes them come away to yet another religious gathering?

They are here because they still seek.

They still find.

They have never stopped.

I remember the years they were vibrant men, mediating the changes in the Church, the birth of lay ministry, parish councils and RCIA groups.

Looking back now, I am struck by the great amount of patience and courage they needed to summon in those days of sweeping changes.

They were asked to close schools while

the beloved supporters cried out. They were asked to change the liturgy (twice). They watched their brother priests leave for married life.

What that must have felt like.

And then came the child sexual abuse scandal that scarred innocent lives and discredited their calling.

We stopped seeking their counsel.

And their company.

Suddenly it is time for us to kneel at the consecration. But these good men remain standing, concelebrating from their pew.

And it becomes clear to me.

They have always stood up.

They stood to baptize our babies. They stood to witness us exchange wedding vows with the one we loved. They stood to help us bury our parents and friends.

They stood to help us welcome new life, promise a shared life and see loved ones into the next life.

They stood with us in times of great hope, optimistic love and gut-wrenching grief.

As I look upon the backs of these men—and the women religious whose commitment is just as great—I say let us take note.

Let us promise to do the same thing now.

With humility and gratitude.

Stand with them.

(Mike Carotta is a nationally recognized religious educator, consultant and author.) †

A More Humane Society/
Richard Doerflinger

Inspiration from the comics

"America is in mourning. Deep, deep mourning for a man who inspired millions to, I don't know, watch a movie, I guess."



Thus wrote political humorist Bill Maher on the recent death of Stan Lee, beloved creator of the "Marvel Universe" featuring superheroes like the Avengers and Spider-Man. Maher said

comic books are for kids, and grown-ups should move on to "big-boy books without the pictures." This complaint is from someone who makes his fortune wisecracking on television.

My response requires a spoiler alert, as I will comment on the latest episode of the Netflix series "Daredevil," featuring one of Marvel's more complex heroes. Daredevil is the alter ego of attorney Matt Murdock, who was blinded—but had other senses greatly heightened—by a childhood accident.

He is angry over his blindness, the death of his father, his unhappy childhood in a Catholic orphanage and the urban injustices he can't fix legally. He becomes a vigilante by night, with a moral code—based in his Catholic upbringing—against deliberately taking human life.

That code is tested to its limit in season three, which begins with Daredevil damaged physically and spiritually by an explosion that has killed the woman he loved and turned him against God.

In the finale, having prevailed over nearly impossible odds at great cost, he ponders what his parish priest said years ago when he asked how a loving God could make him blind.

"He told me: God's plan is like a beautiful tapestry. And the tragedy of being human is that we only get to see it from the back, with all the ragged threads and the muddy colors. And we only get a hint of the true beauty that would be revealed if we could see the whole pattern on the other side—as God does." If not for his accident, he would never have become Daredevil and saved the lives he has been able to save.

"So, maybe it is all part of God's plan," he concludes. "Maybe my life has been exactly as it had to be."

Daredevil is not the only Marvel hero reflecting on the human condition.

Before he considers fighting crime as Spider-Man, Peter Parker hears from his beloved Uncle Ben that "with great power must also come great responsibility." At first he ignores that advice, leading to his uncle's death at the hands of a criminal Peter could have stopped. He remembers this whenever he is tempted to stop using his gifts to help others.

Captain America, surviving in a frozen state since World War II to be revived in the present, retains his old-fashioned sense of honor and personal moral responsibility—and the conflict between his value system and that of pragmatic technocrat Tony Stark (aka Iron Man) is key to the dramatic tension in the Avengers movies. The film *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* warns against placing too much power in one person or organization, or letting a utilitarian ethic drive our efforts to improve the world.

In these and other ways, comic book movies have given us some very positive messages about the human spirit. Negative messages are easier to find among politicians and the late-night comedians who comment on them.

(Richard Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.) †

It's All Good/Patti Lamb

Most important food we will eat is at the table of Jesus

It's only early December, but I'm already envisioning the table at my sister's house when we celebrate



Christmas with my family. I can almost taste my brother-in-law Joe's perfectly marinated turkey, and Aunt Karrey's famous homemade Christmas cookies and fudge. (I can't leave out dessert, which I admittedly sometimes consume

before the dinner buffet line begins.)

Then, when we host Christmas at our house for my husband's family, I'll get to enjoy my mother-in-law's cranberry relish, Aunt Melissa's green bean casserole and Uncle Aaron's buttery mashed potatoes.

If your family is anything like mine, when you get together, there's usually a meal. Many family members make their own signature dishes, which I look forward to as I think about the holidays. Even when I meet up with my girlfriends, it's usually over appetizers.

I can't pinpoint the source, but there's a quote I like that goes like this: "Whether it's served on fine china or a paper plate, food brings us together and stimulates conversation. We feast to wed, mourn,

celebrate, strengthen friendships, and to simply be hospitable. Good eating is one of life's greatest pleasures."

Now that I think about it, a lot of Gospel stories involve Jesus having meals with people. Sometimes, he ate with friends like Mary and Martha, and other times he ate with tax collectors.

When we gather to eat, we not only nourish our bodies since food is critical for our survival. We also nourish our relationships. We bring each other up to speed on what's been going on in our lives. We talk about what we pray for, and about what keeps us up at night. Bonding happens over spaghetti and meatballs at the dinner table, or tea and a scone with a friend at the coffee shop.

Food brings us together.

That's why I was saddened recently when I ran into an old family friend at the grocery, and he told me why I hadn't seen him at Mass.

He explained that he's mad at the Catholic Church. He's disappointed in recent realities that have been brought to light in the news.

"I don't even know if I'll go [to Mass] at Christmas," he said.

I responded with the fact that our Church is run by human beings, and anything run by humans will be flawed. Humans are sinners. Plus I pointed out

that the Church has never had a perfect track record. Jesus built his Church upon a rock, but that rock was a human being.

The next week in *The Criterion*, I saw an answer to a question from Father Kenneth Doyle in his "Question Corner" column. Father Doyle responded to a writer inquiring whether he's sinning by not attending Mass with this quote: "Why punish yourself because of the infidelity of some clerics? Why deprive yourself of the benefit of the Eucharist, of the comfort that is offered from the closeness to Christ, of the strength for daily living that comes from being nourished at the table of Jesus?"

I cut out the quote and mailed it to my friend, with this handwritten note: "Dear Friend-o-Mine, I think you're encountering a 'faith valley,' and I'm enclosing some wise words I wish I'd thought of when we last saw each other. When I receive the Eucharist, that's when I feel closest to God. It's food for this bumpy journey of life, and it leads to eternal life. It's the most important 'food' we'll ever encounter. I'm praying that you find your way back to his table. Come back to the Feast!"

(Patti Lamb, a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, is a regular columnist for *The Criterion*.) †

Living Well/Maureen Pratt

Let's work to offer a full welcome for all in our community

I was a weary stranger when I entered the steeply raked lecture hall at the Pontificia Università Urbaniana in Rome.



Still jet-lagged and achy from hours of travel, I snagged a nearby seat and began to settle in.

Snippets of conversations in verbal and signed Italian, English, Spanish and French jumped like popcorn

around the room, which filled quickly. Three women from France sat in my row and smiled. I was delighted to use my French.

Soon, swapping stories and witness, I was no longer a tired stranger, but

re-energized with like-minded brothers and sisters in Christ about to participate in a remarkable event—the Vatican-sponsored conference, "Catechesis and Persons with Disabilities: A Necessary Engagement in the Daily Pastoral Life of the Church."

Hosted by the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization and chaired by Archbishop Rino Fisichella, the conference in October 2017 brought together more than 400 people, many with disabilities, from five continents. Its purpose was to share stories and best practices of welcoming people with disabilities into full participation in the Church, especially by catechesis—education in the faith.

The timing of the conference could not have been better: My health was in a

relatively quiet period, and I was deep at work on my next book, *Salt and Light: Church, Disability, and the Blessing of Welcome for All*, a resource for parishes, clergy and people with and without disabilities who wish to better understand and affect full welcome in our Church communities.

There are many highlights from the conference, but one point stands out: Welcome for all is a collaborative effort involving all members of the body of Christ—with and without disabilities.

In the United States, societal and legislative changes have enabled a kind of revolution in the lives of people with disabilities. Although we still carry health and other burdens, we are also

See LIVING WELL, page 15

Second Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, December 9, 2018

- Baruch 5:1-9
- Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
- Luke 3:1-6

The Book of Baruch, the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend, is relatively brief, only five chapters.



It also is among the books called by Protestants scholars the Apocrypha, by Catholics the Deutero-Canonical. As such, it is not included in Protestant Bibles.

It is not found in Jewish translations of the Scriptures. Indeed,

while some of the ancient Fathers of the Church knew about Baruch and quoted it, St. Jerome did not include it in his Latin translation of the Bible, which is known as the Vulgate.

For Catholics, however, most important is the fact that the Church officially long ago recognized it as divinely inspired.

Regardless, when Baruch was written, great problems beset God's people, not a rare circumstance. This book encouraged those who were suffering, reassuring them that God would not forsake them, and that his justice and mercy would prevail in the end.

Always, in good times or bad, some people were lukewarm in their religious devotion. Baruch calls the indifferent to piety.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians furnishes the next reading. The Apostle sent the letter to the Christians of Philippi, an important city in the ancient Roman Empire, urging the Philippians loyal to the Lord to be steadfast in their faith, come what may, until his second coming.

As often predicted elsewhere in the New Testament, this reading says that one day, but at a time unknown, Jesus definitely will come again in triumph and judgment. Evil finally will be defeated, once and for all.

St. Luke's Gospel is the source of the last reading.

This reading centers upon Jesus, although highly visible in the reading is John the Baptist. Carefully constructed, the Gospel presents the coming of Jesus

as uniquely important in the course of human affairs.

The Lord's coming was so important, in fact, that preceding this coming was John the Baptist's proclamation of God's majesty and of human responsibility before and to God.

John was a prophet and a holy man. Ancient Jews thought that holiness gave people special wisdom. God used such people to reveal truth to other humans. Through John, God was revealing the person and mission of Christ.

Also, to emphasize the importance of the Lord's coming, this Gospel passage takes pains in setting the presence of John, and the coming of Christ, at an exact moment in history, namely by stating that it all occurred when Tiberius was emperor, Pilate his governor in Palestine, and so on.

Jesus came in human time and space.

He came, in God's mercy, as fulfilling the hopes of the prophets of old who had yearned for the Redeemer who would destroy evil and death. When this Messiah would come, all would be made right. The rough ways for people would be made smooth. Now, as John the Baptist declared, with such conviction, the Redeemer at last had come.

Reflection

Times were bad for the Jews when Baruch was written. When Philippians and the Gospel of Luke were written, times were hard for Christians.

On this Second Sunday of Advent, the Church speaks to us. Times are hard. Bloodshed has come to be common. So has addiction. Today's drift from God is spinning a deadly web. Sin still cripples us and dooms us to eternal death.

All will be right, joy and peace will prevail, however, if we admit Jesus into our lives. He will come to us, but we must invite him into our lives sincerely. With the help of his grace, we can reform ourselves, renounce sin and give ourselves totally to God. The call of John the Baptist is spoken to us. †

Daily Readings

Monday, December 10

Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 85:9ab-14
Luke 5:17-26

Tuesday, December 11

St. Damasus I, pope
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 96:1-3, 10a-c, 11-13
Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday, December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe
Zechariah 2:14-17
or Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
(Response) Judith 13:18b-19
Luke 1:26-38
or Luke 1:39-47

Thursday, December 13

St. Lucy, virgin and martyr
Isaiah 41:13-20
Psalm 145:1, 9-13ab
Matthew 11:11-15

Friday, December 14

St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 48:17-19
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday, December 15

Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Sunday, December 16

Third Sunday of Advent
Zephaniah 3:14-18a
(Response) Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:10-18

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Priests cannot place restitution as a condition for absolution of sins

QI am an old-time Catholic. We were taught that, to be forgiven in confession, we had to: 1) be truly sorry; 2) resolve firmly never to commit the sin again; and 3) make it right (e.g., give stolen money back, tell people that the gossip was a lie, etc.).



On television and in the movies, sometimes a murderer confesses to a priest who is unable then to break the seal of confession. My question is this: Are murderers forgiven if they do not turn themselves in to the police and serve prison time for the crime? Or is the sin forgiven with no strings attached? (Wisconsin)

AWith regard to the conditions for forgiveness, you learned your catechism well. In fact, the present-day *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says: "Many sins wrong our neighbor. One must do what is possible in order to repair the harm [e.g., return stolen goods, restore the reputation of someone slandered, pay compensation for injuries]" (#1459).

You are right, too, about the seal of confession; a priest is bound to absolute secrecy. The Church's *Code of Canon Law* could not be more clear: "The sacramental seal is inviolable; therefore it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray in any way a penitent in words or in any manner and for any reason" (#983).

A later canon stipulates that a priest who would violate the seal is to be excommunicated (#1388). (In 2017, when an Australian government commission recommended that Catholic priests become mandatory reporters on child sexual abuse, the Catholic Church strongly objected as applied to the sacrament of penance.)

As to your specific question, forgiveness in the sacrament is contingent on a person's genuine sorrow and sincere resolve not to commit the sin again. Beyond that, a priest has no power to condition absolution on the sinner's turning himself in to the police.

The confessor can encourage, plead with, urge the penitent to do exactly that. He might even offer to accompany the penitent to a police station. But having judged the penitent to be truly sorry, the absolving priest has no authority to impose this further step as a prerequisite to absolution.

QRecently in your column you answered a parishioner who had a foreign-born priest preaching homilies with less-than-suitable English skills. An approach that was used in our own parish was to have the homily printed and left in the pews, so that parishioners could read along as the celebrant spoke.

I believe that the nominal cost of this was far outweighed by what the congregation was able to retain. I was also wondering—although this was not done in our parish—whether it would be permissible in a case like this for a parishioner to read the priest's homily from the lectern in place of the priest. (I do think that our parish has benefited greatly from the cultural diversity of our priests and deacons.) (Indiana)

AA printed homily in the pews, in that situation, strikes me as a good idea. It would fill out and reinforce the bits and pieces the congregation might be able to understand from the pulpit.

As to your question, I shouldn't think it a problem to have a parishioner read aloud the priest's written words; it is, after all, the celebrant's own homily. (Liturgical regulations call for a homily to be preached by a bishop, priest or deacon.)

I might add that some parishes publish the text of Sunday homilies on their website. This not only permits shut-ins to benefit, but allows Churchgoers to reflect on the homily at their leisure once they return home.

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

My Journey to God

An Advent Hymn

By Patrick Harkins



Down curtains hang the season's bells
That play a song when shaken. So
Colorful and glad, like Rameau
At the harpsichord, play these bells.

Much green contrasts with winter's scene
Bleak trees mourn their lost leaves. Cold is
The once bright burning bush's reds,
A room transformed to Advent scene.

A table lifts a church and sleigh,
Snow fixed on fir trees. A gold light
Shines through a steeple window bright
As the old days with horse and sleigh.

Too much we think what is to come.
What will be will be. What has been
Has been, so contemplate the Incarnation.
Hear the bells and what is to come.

(Patrick Harkins is a member of St. Joseph University Parish in Terre Haute. Photo: A bell is rung at the Cathedral of the Assumption in Leon, Nicaragua, on July 24, 2011. The cathedral had recently been named to the World Heritage List maintained by UNESCO, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization.) (CNS photo/Oswaldo Rivas, Reuters)

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367 or e-mail to nhoefler@archindy.org. †

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.

BARR, Orville E., Jr., 91, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Nov. 21. Husband of Bernice Barr. Father of Patricia Beilly, Susan Warner, James, Orville III and Paul Barr. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of 10. Great-great-grandfather of two.

CAITO, Thomas A., 86. Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, Indianapolis, Nov. 21. Father of Mary Ann Caito. Stepfather of Shelly and Robert Breeden. Brother of Frances Navarra and Gus Caito. Step-grandfather of five.

HARPRING, Rollin H., 82, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 23. Husband of Marcie Harpring. Father of Chris Harpring. Brother of Marlene Harsin and Melvin Harpring. Grandfather of three.

HEUSER, Shirley S., 93, Holy Family, New Albany, Nov. 14. Mother of Sharie Buchanan, Carol Dearing, Pam Hayes, Debbie Jinks, Jan Quick, Patricia Wright, Linda and George Heuser. Grandmother of 22. Great-grandmother of 34.

HORNING, Gloria S., 83, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 17. Wife of James Horning. Mother of Michele Horning Dippel and Matthew

Horning. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of three.

JAMES, Clarice M., 105, St. Augustine, Leopold, Nov. 15. Mother of Janet Schepers, Charles, Joseph, Linus and Tiger James. Grandmother of 20. Great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother of several.

KUEHR, Irene H., 88, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 18. Mother of Julie Armstrong and Karen Dewar. Grandmother of four.

LUTHER, Anna, 82, St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, Nov. 17. Mother of Teresa Dunagan, Christina Hauk, Mary Neal, Katherine Romie, Michael Metz, Edward and Thomas Luther. Sister of Chester and Jerry Woodridge. Grandmother and great-grandmother of several.

MCKENNA, James J., Jr., 78, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 18. Husband of Sally McKenna. Father of Jennifer McKenna Weinbaum and Brian McKenna. Brother of Tom McKenna. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of 11.

MERIWETHER, Bradley, 34, St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County, Nov. 15.



Supporting persecuted Christians

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington is seen at dusk on Nov. 26. The exterior of the shrine is illuminated red to call attention to Christians around the world enduring persecution. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

Husband of Vanessa Meriwether. Son of Nicky and Rhonda Meriwether. Brother of Kasey Meriwether. Grandson of Emily Meriwether. Uncle of one.

NIESE, Clifford O., 73, St. Louis, Batesville, Nov. 21. Husband of Elizabeth Niese. Father of Deborah Garbarini, Keith and Kevin Niese. Brother of Viola Billman, Lucille Honnert, Pat Schrank, Dale, Jim and Virgil Niese. Grandfather of seven.

RAY, Mary Ann, 75, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 14. Sister of M. Sue Dawson. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

STAMM, Bob, 83, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Nov. 18. Father of Christopher, Matthew, Michael and Timothy Stamm. Grandfather of eight.

SWIFT, Terry L., 68, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Nov. 21. Husband of Marilyn Swift. Father of Catherine Blakely, Michelle Revaldelo, Mary Walden, Monica, Terry II and Wilfred Swift. Son of Francis Swift. Brother of Cheri Harker, Shirley Walker, Brenda, Gerri, Francis, Marvin, Rick and Ronald Swift. Grandfather of 14.

VANDE WATER, Thomas J., 65, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 13. Husband of Sharon

Vande Water. Father of Kristen Vande Water Hamilton, Meghan Vande Water Teske and Ryan Vande Water. Brother of Barb Manaugh, Sue White, Jane, John, Marty, Pat, Richard and Steve Vande Water. Grandfather of 10.

VAUGHN, Donald J., 84, Prince of Peace, Madison, Nov. 20. Husband of Martha Vaughn. Father of Jo Vaughn Nolasco, Julia and Donald Vaughn. Brother of Michael, Raymond and Richard Vaughn. Grandfather of four. Great-grandfather of three.

VECERA, Rocco E., 85, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton,

Richmond, Nov. 23. Husband of Mary Rose Vecera. Father of Linda Cason, Rita Clapp, June Peer, Joseph, Rocky and Vincent Vecera. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of six.

WATSON, Stella L., 100, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Nov. 19. Mother of Howard and Jerry Watson. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of 11.

WOLFE, Leo W., 90, Holy Family, New Albany, Nov. 11. Father of Daniel, David and Stephen Wolfe. Brother of Esther Book, Ruth Missi and Mary Rosenberger. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of seven. †

Continued from pages 8 and 9.

Secular agencies help seniors, too

Criterion staff report

In addition to parish and Catholic-based ministries, several secular agencies throughout central and southern Indiana offer vital help to seniors as well. Two such services are the Retired Senior and Volunteer Program (RSVP) and local Area Agencies on Aging.

The Retired Senior and Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a national volunteer network for those age 55 and older. It is one of three programs offered through Senior Corps, a service of the federal Corporation for National and Community Service agency.

The program partners with community non-profits and public agencies to offer opportunities for its volunteers to meet community needs. Volunteers have the flexibility to decide which organizations to serve and how frequently.

Area Agencies on Aging were created by a federal law in 1974 to help seniors and their caregivers live quality lives with independence and dignity.

Following is a list of RSVP branches and Area Agencies on Aging located throughout central and southern Indiana, listed alphabetically by sponsor.

RSVP

- Area 10 Agency on Aging, covering Monroe and Owen counties: www.area10agency.org/rsvp, 812-876-3383.
- Catholic Charities Indianapolis, covering Hamilton, Hendricks, Johnson and Marion counties: bit.ly/2QAGV9W (case sensitive), 317-261-3378.
- Dearborn County Social Council Inc., covering Dearborn, Ohio and Ripley counties: www.myrsvp.org, 812-539-4005.
- Hope Southern Indiana, covering Clark, Floyd, Harrison, Jefferson and Scott counties: bit.ly/1KIYGOe (case sensitive), 812-948-9248.
- Interlocal Community Action Program, covering Hancock, Henry and Rush counties: www.icapcaa.org/rsvp, 765-529-4403.

- Lincoln Hills Development Corporation, covering Crawford, Perry and Spencer counties: 800-467-1435, ext. 230.
- Western Indiana Community Action Agency, covering Clay, Putnam and Vigo counties: www.wiccaa.org/senior.html, at 812-232-1264.

Area Agencies on Aging

- Public Service Area 7, covering Clay, Parke, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo counties: Area 7 Agency on Aging and Disabled West Central Indiana, westcentralin.com/area7.htm, 812-238-1561.
- Public Service Area 8, covering Marion, Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan and Hendricks counties: CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions, cicoa.org, 317-254-5465.
- Public Service Area 9, including Wayne County: LifeStream Services, Inc., www.lifestreaminc.org, 765-759-1121 or 800-589-1121.
- Public Service Area 10, covering Monroe and Owen counties: Area 10 Agency on Aging, area10agency.org, 812-876-3383.
- Public Service Area 11, covering Bartholomew, Brown, Decatur, Jackson and Jennings counties: Thrive Alliance, www.thrive-alliance.org, 812-372-6918.
- Public Service Area 12, covering Dearborn, Jefferson, Ohio, Ripley and Switzerland counties: LifeTime Resources, Inc., lifetime-resources.org, 812-432-5215.
- Public Service Area 14, covering Clark, Floyd, Harrison and Scott counties: LifeSpan Resources, Inc., lsr14.org, 812-948-8330.
- Public Service Area 15, covering Crawford, Lawrence, Orange and Washington counties: Hoosier Uplands/Area 15 Agency on Aging, hoosieruplands.org, 812-849-4457.
- Public Service Area 16, including Perry and Spencer counties: SWIRCA and More, swirca.org, 812-464-7800 or 800-253-2188. †

Parish and faith-based ministries in archdiocese offer help for seniors

Criterion staff report

Most parishes in the archdiocese offer a ministry to bring the Eucharist and visit with Catholics who are homebound or living in a nursing home.

But many other parish ministries and Catholic organizations throughout central and southern Indiana offer other services to meet the needs of all seniors, regardless of their faith background.

Two such ministries are featured in this issue of *The Criterion*: the Compassionate Visitors ministry of St. Gabriel Parish in Connersville and St. Bridget of Ireland Parish in Liberty, and the NAME ministry of St. Paul Catholic Center's campus ministry in Bloomington. (See pages 8-9.)

Other parish or Catholic-sponsored services helping seniors in central and southern Indiana are listed below. This list is not comprehensive, but provides a starting place for seniors seeking assistance or for those wanting to volunteer to help seniors.

Bloomington

- Mental Health Services through Bloomington Catholic Charities: Mental health professionals located in offices throughout Bloomington offer a comprehensive, integrated continuum of quality care for children and adults of all ages struggling with a range of life issues, including anxiety, depression, grief and loss, life adjustments, stress and more. All are welcome. Most health insurances are accepted, and a sliding fee scale is available. For more information go to bit.ly/2QbSyVq (case sensitive), or call 812-332-1262.

Indianapolis area

- A Caring Place Adult Day Services, 4609 N. Capitol Ave.: Therapeutic, safe day care for adults, including seniors, with cognitive and physical impairments.

For more information, go to bit.ly/2Ua7PV9 (case sensitive), or call 317 466-0015 for more information.

- Caregiver Support, Indiana Interchurch Center, 1100 W. 42nd St., and St. Mark the Evangelist School, 541 E. Edgewood Ave.: Monthly caregiver support groups, identification of community resources and small-scale home modifications are available for adults age 60 and older. For more information, go to bit.ly/2AN860c (case sensitive), or call 317-261-3378.

- Senior Companion Program: Volunteers age 55 and older assist older adults through regularly scheduled home visits to help prevent feelings of loneliness and social isolation, while improving self-esteem. For more information, go to bit.ly/2Ua7PV9 (case sensitive), or call 317-236-1565.

New Albany

- Outreach Counseling Program through St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities: Open to residents of the southern Indiana and Louisville areas. Some major insurances accepted, including Indiana Medicaid, and a sliding scale based on income and family size is available. Faith may be incorporated into counseling services if client wishes. For more information, call St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities at 812-949-7305 to be directed to the counseling program.

Tell City

- Emergency Assistance through Tell City Catholic Charities: Allows those in financial crisis to alleviate some struggles through financial assistance with utilities, rent/mortgage, gasoline for out-of-town medical needs, prescription medicines and more. Information is taken at time of contact to determine eligibility. For more information, call 812-547-0903. †

Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Advent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
- Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
- Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County
- Dec. 14, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at St. Martin Campus of All Saints, Dearborn County
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
- Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Campus of St. Catherine of Siena, Decatur County
- Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville

Bloomington Deanery

- Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
- Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
- Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer
- Dec. 20, 6 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington

Connersville Deanery

- Dec. 13, after 6 p.m. Mass at St. Mary (Immaculate Conception), Rushville
- Dec. 18, 6 p.m. at St. Mary Campus of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond
- Dec. 19, after 6 p.m. Mass at St. Gabriel, Connersville

Indianapolis East Deanery

- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower)
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. for St. Rita and Holy Angels (Indianapolis West Deanery), at St. Rita
- Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Greenfield
- Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville
- Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Philip Neri

Indianapolis North Deanery

- Dec. 9, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist
- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Luke the Evangelist

Indianapolis South Deanery

- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Jude
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. for St. Ann and St. Joseph (Indianapolis West Deanery), at St. Ann
- Dec. 12, 7 p.m. for St. Barnabas, St. Mark the Evangelist and St. Roch, at St. Roch
- Dec. 15, 9 a.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

- Dec. 10, 7 p.m. for Holy Angels and St. Rita (Indianapolis East Deanery), at St. Rita
- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. for St. Joseph and St. Ann (Indianapolis South Deanery), at St. Ann
- Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville
- Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg
- Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas More, Mooresville
- Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Monica
- Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
- Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel

New Albany Deanery

- Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
- Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
- Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
- Dec. 15, following 8 a.m. Mass at Holy Family, New Albany
- Dec. 16, 1 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight
- Dec. 16, 4 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany
- Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul Campus of St. John Paul II, Sellersburg
- Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
- Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Jeffersonville

(Additionally, the following New Albany



St. Philip Neri traffic safety patrol

In this photo, the traffic safety patrol of St. Philip Neri Parish in Indianapolis appears with their pastor, Msgr. Raymond Noll, in 1933. The squad was begun in 1922 by previous pastor Father George Smith in response to increased traffic on the streets surrounding the school.

(Would you like to comment on or share information about this photo? Contact archdiocesan archivist Julie Motyka at 800-382-9836, ext. 1538; 317-236-1538; or by e-mail at jmotyka@archindy.org.)

Deanery parishes offer recurring opportunities:)

- Dec. 12 and 19, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County
- Dec. 12 and 19, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany
- Dec. 12 and 19, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
- Dec. 13 and 20, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier, Henryville

Seymour Deanery

- Dec. 11, 7 p.m. for St. Ann, Jennings County; St. Mary, North Vernon; and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Mary
- Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. at St. Patrick, Salem

- Dec. 13, 6 p.m. at Church of the American Martyrs, Scottsburg
- Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Ambrose, Seymour
- Dec. 20, 7 p.m. for St. Bartholomew, Columbus, and Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, at St. Bartholomew

Tell City Deanery

- Dec. 9, 2 p.m. CST at St. Paul, Tell City

Terre Haute Deanery

- Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph University, Terre Haute
- Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
- Dec. 20, 1:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus, Terre Haute †

LIVING WELL

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more mobile, educated, aware and aspirational than ever before. We bring this reality everywhere we go, especially to Church, where we seek to deepen our relationship with God and our faith community.

We—or our caregivers or parents—have a responsibility to respectfully communicate the accommodations we need, and then work to be truly one with those with whom we share baptism, embracing and reflecting Christ's love for us—a discernment process (and an exercise in the virtue of patience) that can seem daunting, but is not impossible!

For those without disabilities, it is sometimes difficult to grasp how “ability” and “disability” translate to Church life. Most understand that by our baptism we are all equal members of the body of Christ. But questions can arise about how much accommodation is “enough,” or whether “normal” ministry or religious education

programs should be “adequate.”

Or there might even be reluctance to make changes, physical or otherwise, to the routines and buildings that are comfortably familiar to all. Moving from an attitude of “us and them” to just simply, “us,” we open up wonderful opportunities for growth

in faith and numbers that bring great blessings.

My new book includes a list of published and other resources for parishes and individuals working toward full welcome.

I was so very weary when I walked into the lecture hall in Rome. But soon,

encircled by wonderful fellowship and conversation, I was revived. The more we welcome and are welcomed, the more blessings flow!

(Maureen Pratt writes for *Catholic News Service*. Her website is www.maureenpratt.com) †

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Questions: Contact Kim at 317-236-1568.

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