



The

Criterion

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Joyful Witness

No matter the situation, there's a saint for that, writes columnist Kim Pohovey, page 12.

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Pope sets special day to honor, study, share the Bible

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The newly established “Sunday of the Word of God” is an invitation to Catholics across the world to deepen their appreciation, love and faithful witness to God and his word, Pope Francis said.



Pope Francis

By papal decree, the third Sunday in Ordinary Time—on Jan. 26 this year—is to be observed as a special day devoted to “the celebration, study and dissemination of the word of God.”

A day dedicated to the Bible will help the Church “experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world,” the pope said in the document establishing the special Sunday observance.

Dioceses and parishes have been invited to respond with creative initiatives, helpful resources and renewed efforts for helping Catholics engage more deeply with the Bible at church and in their lives.

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, said added emphasis on the importance of the word of God is needed because “the overwhelming majority” of Catholics are not familiar with sacred Scripture. For many, the only time they hear the word of God is when they attend Mass, he told Vatican News on Sept. 30, 2019, when the papal document, titled “*Aperuit Illis*,” was published.

“The Bible is the most widely distributed book, but it’s also perhaps the one most covered in dust because it is not held in our hands,” the archbishop said.

With this apostolic letter, the pope “invites us to hold the word of God in our hands every day as much as possible so that it becomes our prayer” and a greater part of one’s lived experience, he said.

See BIBLE, page 8

A promise made in high school is kept, helping a friend through a tough time

By John Shaughnessy

The promises we make to our best friends in high school are well intentioned and straight from the heart.

Forged by the good times, the tough times and the crazy times we share, we vow, “You can count on me. I’ll always be there for you. Whenever you need something, *anything*, just let me know.”

That’s the way it was for Norah Kinderman, Patty Belden and Kelly Duggins—close friends from the class of 1999 at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville.

Then the different directions of life separated Norah from Patty and Kelly for years, and their friendship became tucked away like a high school yearbook on a shelf.

Yet on a November day in 2019—as Norah struggled through a time that threatened her life and tested her faith—the promises that were made 20 years earlier were lived out in an unforgettable way.

‘I just felt their love’

In April of 2019, Norah was a mother of two young sons who was finally pursuing her dream—becoming a nurse who would care for and touch the lives of people dealing with medical setbacks.

That’s when Norah was diagnosed with an aggressive breast cancer that required a double mastectomy and follow-up treatments that continue today. Then in October, her husband Scott suffered a heart attack that led to quadruple bypass surgery.

Recalling those harsh realities, Norah said, “My faith has been tested.”

At that point, Patty and Kelly intervened. After having reconnected with Norah a few years ago, they took their friendship to a new level by organizing a benefit for Norah’s family.

“They were my best friends in high



During a difficult period in her family’s life, Norah Kinderman, center, and her family have been blessed by the caring efforts of her former high school classmates, including Patty Belden, left, and Kelly Duggins. (Submitted photo)

school, but as we got older, we kind of drifted apart,” Norah recalled. “Then our kids ended up going to the same school—Our Lady of Perpetual Help [in New Albany.] We’d get together and talk and reminisce. When they called and said they wanted to do a benefit, it was amazing. Scott and I were both out of work, and our medical bills were piling up.”

Norah paused as the emotion of that moment overwhelmed her again.

“I can’t even describe the feeling I had when I heard about the benefit from

them. I just felt their love, and I needed it at that point.”

‘I will always be grateful’

The benefit was held at the school—a “family barbecue” featuring games, music, a bounce house, face painting and meals that included barbecued pork sandwiches and hot dogs.

Families from the school came. So did Norah’s family, classmates from Providence’s class of 1999, and classmates from her grade school

See PROMISE, page 8

Texas Catholic leaders oppose governor’s plan to reject the resettlement of refugees

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Texas Catholic leaders were quick to take a stand against a Jan. 10 announcement by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott that the state would no longer resettle refugees.

The governor’s decision, announced in a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, makes Texas the first state to reject refugee resettlement after last year’s executive order by President Donald J. Trump requiring governors to publicly say if they would accept refugees after June 2020.

To date, governors in 42 states, including Indiana, have said they will accept more refugees. Governors from five remaining states that accept refugees—Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi and South Carolina—have yet to respond to the Jan. 21 deadline.

See TEXAS, page 8



Displaced Syrian children who fled Turkish violence sit in a bus waiting to go to Dohuk, Iraq, on Oct. 25, 2019. (CNS photo/Ari Jalal, Reuters)



Pope Francis kisses a child as he baptizes one of 32 babies during a Mass on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican on Jan. 12. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Baptism is first step on path of humility, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In asking to be baptized, Jesus exemplifies the Christian calling to follow along the path of humility and meekness rather than strutting about and being a showoff, Pope Francis said.

Addressing pilgrims in St. Peter's Square on Jan. 12, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the pope said that Christ's humble act shows "the attitude of simplicity, respect, moderation and concealment required of the Lord's disciples today."

"How many—it's sad to say—of the Lord's disciples show off about being disciples of the Lord. A person who shows off isn't a good disciple. A good disciple is humble, meek, one who does good without letting himself or herself be seen," Pope Francis said during his midday *Angelus* address.

The pope began the day celebrating Mass and baptizing 32 babies—17 boys and 15 girls—in the Sistine Chapel. In his brief homily before baptizing the infants, the pope told parents that the sacrament is a treasure that gives children "the strength of the Spirit."

"That is why it's so important to baptize children, so that they grow with the strength of the Holy Spirit," he said.

"This is the message that I would like to give you today. You have brought your children here today so that they may have the Holy Spirit within them. Take care that they grow with the light, with the strength of the Holy Spirit, through catechesis, through helping them, through teaching them, through the examples that you will give them at home," he said.

As the sounds of fussy children filled the frescoed chapel, the pope repeated his usual advice to mothers of infants, encouraging them to make their children comfortable, and to not worry if they start to cry in the chapel.

"Don't get upset; let the children cry and scream. But, if your child cries and complains, perhaps it's because they feel too hot," he said. "Take something off them, or if they are hungry, breastfeed them; here, yes, always in peace."

Later, before praying the *Angelus* with pilgrims, Pope Francis said that the feast of the Lord's baptism "reminds us of our own baptism," and he asked the pilgrims to find out the date they were baptized.

"Celebrate the date of your baptism every year in your heart. Do it. It is also a duty of justice to the Lord who has been so good to us," the pope said. †

Summer ministry needs college students eager to share the faith

The archdiocesan Office of Catechesis is recruiting to fill its team for Totus Tuus ministry this summer.

Totus Tuus (Latin for "totally yours") is an initiative in which a small team of college students—or recent college graduates or spiritually mature incoming college freshmen—goes from parish to parish conducting an energizing catechetical program similar to a vacation Bible school. The program includes the rosary, daily Mass and additional Catholic content, delivered in a fun way.

Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, said team members receive a modest stipend in return for about

nine weeks of life-changing work as missionaries of faith.

Besides planting seeds to recruit prospective team members, Ogorek is encouraging members of the Church in central and southern Indiana to pray for the success—especially via Mary's intercession—of this summer's Totus Tuus ministry.

(To register to be a 2020 Totus Tuus missionary, go to www.archindy.org/totustuus. For more information, contact Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, at kogorek@archindy.org, or call 317-236-1446, or toll free at 800-382-9836, ext. 1446.) †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

January 18 – 28, 2020

January 18 – 5 p.m.

Mass and blessing of St. Theodora Guèrin Shrine at American Martyrs Church, Scottsburg

January 19 – 9:30 a.m.

Morning Prayer and Mass at Bishop Simon Bruté Seminary, Indianapolis

January 19 – 12:45 p.m.

Ribbon-cutting and blessing of new space at St. Jude Church, Indianapolis

January 19 – 6 p.m.

Christian Unity Prayer Service at Zion Evangelical United Church of Christ, Indianapolis

January 21 – 10:30 a.m.

Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

January 22 – 10:30 a.m.

Respect Life Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church, Indianapolis

January 22 – 12:15 p.m.

March for Life, Indianapolis

January 23 – 10 a.m.

Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

January 23 – 3 p.m.

Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Commission meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

January 25 – 4 p.m.

Mass and annual benefit dinner at St. Catherine Academy in New Haven, Ky.

January 27 – 2 p.m.

Pastoral Planning Committee meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

January 28 – 1 p.m.

Council of Priests meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

(Schedule subject to change.)

Bishops require mail balloting to OK assessment increase for 2021

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. bishops, nearly two months after the issue was presented to them at their fall general meeting in Baltimore, approved a 3 percent increase in their diocesan assessment for 2021.

"Yes" votes were recorded by 130 bishops—exactly the number of votes needed to pass the measure.

On Nov. 11, the first day of their Baltimore meeting, the bishops had given their OK to a budget nearing \$22.69 million for 2020. That vote, 211-11 with one abstention, required a majority of bishops present and voting.

But the diocesan assessment increase required instead a "yes" vote from two-thirds of diocesan and eparchial bishops for it to pass. With 195 such bishops, two-thirds represents 130 bishops.

The final vote was 130 bishops voting yes, 62 voting no and three abstentions.

Chieko Noguchi, director of public

affairs for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), confirmed the results in a Jan. 10 e-mail to Catholic News Service, adding the bishops have been notified of the results.

The original vote on Nov. 11 was inconclusive, 111-55 with three abstentions. Under USCCB statutes, bishops not present are mailed ballots to help generate a final tally.

The bishops had voted for 3 percent assessment increases to take effect in 2017 and 2019, representing revenues of \$339,000 and \$349,000, respectively. The 2021 increase is expected to generate close to \$480,000.

"For the majority [62 percent] of dioceses, this will mean an average monthly increase of less than \$150," Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati, USCCB treasurer, told the bishops in a message prior to the November meeting. The last time a special assessment was approved, he added, was for the 2007 budget. †

Official Appointments

Effective Immediately

Rev. Michael Hoyt, pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, granted a leave of absence.

Rev. Todd Riebe, pastor of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, appointed temporary administrator of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis until a new pastor is named, while remaining pastor of Christ the King Parish.

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



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ICC supports proposal aimed to help families in poverty

By Victoria Arthur

A lifeline exists for the poorest in Indiana to lift themselves up in the toughest of times, but outdated guidelines keep most of them from taking full advantage of it.



The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program in Indiana has not been updated in more than 30 years. That includes its \$288 maximum monthly payout for families in deep poverty, which went a much longer way in 1988 than it does today.

Once again, state lawmakers and advocates for the poor—including the Catholic Church—aim to change that.



Sen. Jon Ford

Senate Bill 111, authored by Sen. Jon Ford (R-Terre Haute), would bring TANF in line with current economic realities.

Among other provisions, the bill would increase monthly payment amounts and modify them annually using

Social Security cost-of-living adjustment rates. It also would update eligibility guidelines to enable more Hoosiers to take advantage of the program, which includes intensive job training assistance to help lift people out of poverty for good.

“It’s time we updated this program to meet the needs of the modern family,” Ford said. “TANF is a great tool not only to help people financially, but to get the skills they need to improve their lives.”

Ford backed a nearly-identical bill in 2019, Senate Bill 440, which easily passed the Senate but did not get a

hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee. Last year’s Indiana General Assembly was tasked with passing the state’s biennial budget, and Ford said that his bill “was held up on budget concerns in the House.”

The lawmaker, who was heartened by the fact that his proposed legislation last year had full support of the Senate, said he is “very hopeful” about the outlook for Senate Bill 111 in this session.

So is the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), which always aligns itself with the most vulnerable in society.

“Crushing poverty can be an assault to a person’s dignity,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. “In keeping with the Church’s practice to promote the common good as well as demonstrate charity, the Indiana Catholic Conference wholeheartedly supports Senate Bill 111. We are promoting an avenue that can truly uplift the person.”

The goals of TANF are two-fold: to provide a cash benefit so families experiencing extreme financial hardship can meet their basic needs until their situation improves, and to offer support through programs and case management to help parents find and keep jobs. Under this temporary assistance program, an adult has a 24-month lifetime limit for receiving benefits. Children can receive benefits up to a total of 60 months. TANF funds flow from the federal government through block grants to the states.

But in Indiana, only a fraction of those living in poverty take advantage of the program because of antiquated guidelines that Senate Bill 111 is designed to change. According to Jessica Fraser, program manager for the Indiana Institute for Working Families in Indianapolis, a mere 6 percent of poor families statewide



‘Crushing poverty can be an assault to a person’s dignity. In keeping with the Church’s practice to promote the common good as well as demonstrate charity, the Indiana Catholic Conference wholeheartedly supports Senate Bill 111. We are promoting an avenue that can truly uplift the person.’

—Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana

are benefiting from the federal program. One of the reasons is that Indiana set its income requirements to qualify for TANF in the mid-1990s, when welfare reform was signed into law by then-President Bill Clinton. Those eligibility guidelines have not been adjusted for inflation since then.

Because of these outdated rules, Indiana has the fourth-lowest eligibility for TANF in the country, Fraser said. This equates to staggering number of missed opportunities to help the most vulnerable in the state, the majority of whom are children. Under state current law, TANF serves families and children who are living under 16 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Senate Bill 111 would increase the level of eligibility to 50 percent of those guidelines.

“We have fewer than 5,500 families in the program right now,” Fraser said. “The changes proposed by Senate Bill 111 would mean that many more Hoosiers in deep poverty would be eligible for assistance.”

In addition, if the bill became law, the maximum monthly TANF payout for a family of three would jump to \$513 from the \$288 set 32 years ago.

As Fraser meets with legislators to advocate for modernizing TANF, she

points out how much has changed since 1988, when the average rent was \$420 and a dozen eggs cost about 70 cents. She also uses a powerful visual to underscore her message: a photo of herself from that year, when she was in second grade.

“It’s time for these changes,” said Fraser, a lifelong Catholic and a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, who expressed appreciation for the ICC’s consistent support on the issue.

“We have been so grateful to have the Catholic Church as a partner in this mission,” Fraser said. “It’s important to bring the voice of faith to the discussion.”

No hearing has been set yet for Senate Bill 111, but the ICC will closely monitor and report on developments.

To follow Senate Bill 111 and other priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church’s position on key issues. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

Love is never indifferent to suffering of other people, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Most Christians would agree it is wrong to hate someone, but it is also wrong to be indifferent, which is a camouflaged form of hatred, Pope Francis said.

Real love “must lead you to do good, to get your hands dirty with works of love,” the pope said on Jan. 10 at morning Mass in the chapel of his residence, the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Commenting especially on 1 Jn 4:19-21, Pope Francis said the Bible “does not mince words.” In fact, he said, the Bible tells people, “If you say you love God and you hate your brother or sister,

you’re on the other side; you’re a liar” (1 Jn 4:20).

If someone says, “I love God, I pray, I enter into ecstasy, and then tosses aside others, hates them, doesn’t love them or simply is indifferent to them,” the pope noted, St. John doesn’t say, “You’re wrong,” but “you’re a liar” (1 Jn 4:20).

“The Bible is clear because being a liar is the devil’s way of being. He is the Great Liar, the New Testament tells us; he is the father of lies. That’s the definition of Satan the Bible gives us,” the pope said.

Love “is expressed by doing good,” he said. †



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Editorial



A man holds shrapnel from a missile launched by Iran on U.S.-led coalition forces in the Iraqi province of Dahuk on Jan. 8. (CNS photo/Ari Jalal, Reuters)

Pursuing peace with justice in the New Year

“True peace, the peace that lasts, happens when we work for justice. It is the product of the hard work of civilization, the rule of law and the right-ordering of social structures. Peace requires fairness, respect for human dignity and the refusal to take advantage of another’s weakness. As Pope Paul VI said on the World Day of Peace in 1972, ‘If you want peace, work for justice.’ And that means this work must be done both here at home and around the world.” (Newark, N.J., Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin)

An attack on the U.S. embassy in Iraq, apparently orchestrated by Iranian officials, prompted a severe counterstrike by the U.S. which resulted in the death of a man believed to be the principal architect of Iranian terrorism.

Reactions at home and abroad are sharply divided along political lines. President Donald J. Trump’s defenders praise his decisive leadership. Those who oppose the president accuse him of recklessly putting our nation at risk and escalating tensions with Iran.

A few days later, Iran retaliated by firing missiles at U.S. forces in Iraq. Although there were no U.S. casualties in the attack, Iran later shot down a Ukrainian airliner, mistaking it for a U.S. cruise missile. All 176 passengers and crew were killed.

This is not a great way to begin a new year. In fact, it’s a continuation of the old patterns of rancorous division, and it’s a harbinger of bad things to come, especially during an election year. Are we doomed to spend the next 12 months bickering (and worse) at home while fighting our enemies abroad? Or is there a way to achieve true and lasting peace?

Newark, N.J., Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin has written that “true peace, the peace that lasts, happens when we work for justice.” Quoting St. Paul VI, the cardinal reminds us, “If you want peace, work for justice.” And Cardinal Tobin adds, “That means this work must be done both here at home and around the world.”

What does “working for justice” here at home and around the world mean?

Cardinal Tobin calls it “the hard work of civilization.” If we want to be more than people split into warring factions, the cardinal says we must dedicate ourselves to “fairness, respect for human dignity and the refusal to take advantage of another’s weakness.” We also have to be willing to forgive one another for past wrongs while agreeing to start over again in our efforts to build relationships based on justice and freedom.

Name-calling is antithetical to building strong relationships of trust. Whether it’s the president tweeting insults or his opponents making outrageous claims about him, the battle of words accomplishes nothing but further divisions and isolation. The same is true on the world stage. Calling America “the Great Satan” or retaliating with anti-Iranian propaganda only makes matters worse. Peace requires respectful dialogue. It cannot exist where “trash talk” has replaced genuine conversation.

Cardinal Tobin says that “the rule of law and the right-ordering of social structures” are necessary to achieve peace grounded in justice. We Americans pride ourselves on being a nation based on the rule of law. We rightly claim the kind of constitutional government that assures fairness, respect for human dignity and the protection of the most vulnerable members of society. And yet, we know that our laws and our social systems aren’t perfect.

Wise and compassionate leaders are required to execute our laws and administer our social systems with fairness and respect for human dignity. That’s why we must elect women and men who are mature adults dedicated to serving the needs of others rather than stroking their own egos. As Americans, we place a high priority on honesty, objectivity and servant leadership in choosing our government officials. Rhetoric and showmanship can never be an acceptable substitute for speaking the truth with integrity and respect.

The news and entertainment media have an important role to play in pursuing peace with justice in this new year. As Pope Francis has observed, the media can either serve to illuminate the issues we must address as individuals and as local or global communities, or it can distort these issues, enflaming passions and encouraging divisive attitudes and enmity among people who disagree with one another.

In this new year, to work for justice and thereby achieve peace here at home and around the world, we must talk to each other with courtesy and respect. This does not mean we should be naïve about the dangers we face. But it does mean that we should never make things worse by adding insult to injury, or by engaging in a war of words that simply enrages our opponents here at home or abroad.

Let’s pray for peace with justice in 2020. And let’s hold our tongues and refrain from accusing our enemies of things that will only cause further divisions. As Pope Francis would say, both at home and abroad, let’s build bridges rather than walls.

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Katie Prejean McGrady

Exercising my right to choose

I was cleaning the kitchen, the TV on in the background, the faces of glitz and glam celebrities flashing across the screen, the sounds of applause filling the room as the Golden Globes played.

I’m a sucker for awards shows. I



don’t know those celebrities, and we probably wouldn’t be friends, but I’ve watched their shows and movies, and I enjoy the fanfare of passing out trophies to millionaires.

But I don’t think I’ll be watching those award shows anymore. Not because the acceptance speeches are usually agenda-driven or because they’ve lost their luster and humor as the telecast has gotten longer.

I don’t think I’ll watch them anymore because most of the people in the room seem to think that I, and my husband, and any parents, really, are fools. Fools for choosing to be parents. Fools for not choosing secular success over family.

Michelle Williams, an actress I’ve long liked for her work in my favorite teen drama, “Dawson’s Creek,” accepted the award for best actress in a limited series. She stood in front of her colleagues and announced, with gusto and pride, that she was only able to achieve this honor and win this (or any) award because she had employed her right to choose.

“Choose what,” I first thought. Then I realized: She chose to have an abortion. She chose to end the life of her child. She is making the claim that pregnancy is something that happens “to you,” and therefore something that you are able to then choose to end, and this is a right all women should fight to keep. Because if the right to have an abortion doesn’t exist, then women would somehow not have the chance, or right, to be successful in any other area of life.

The crowd applauded her, and her friends in the audience wept with pride. She stood there beaming as she held a golden trophy and made it clear that in her opinion, any woman who wants to be successful and receive accolades

should avoid having children, because those babies will simply hold you back from your dreams and prevent you from achieving anything.

She stepped off the stage. I turned off the television.

How sad and demented that our world has fed us the lie that women are incapable of raising a family and having a career. How pathetic and lazy that our world proclaims that women must sacrifice motherhood if they want to work, or they must never work should they wish to be mothers.

For a world so determined to proclaim that women can do anything, and that women deserve everything, that world sure seems to think that “do anything” and “deserve everything” could never possibly apply to that woman when she is also a mother.

The world says we women can choose—but we have to choose either/or ... never both. We can choose—but that choice is offered to us with the line, “have the kid, but you’ll probably lose everything else.”

Michelle Williams exercised her right to choose. She chose to end the life of an innocent child ... her innocent child. I’m praying for her. Praying for her healing, because I’m sure there’s sadness there, whether she’s shown it or not. Praying for her conversion, that she come to recognize the evil of abortion. Praying she comes to see, in the words of St. Teresa of Calcutta, that it is a true pity to sacrifice the life of your child just so you can live as you wish.

And I, as a woman, also exercise my right to choose: to choose to find balance, to choose to find joy in both motherhood and my career, and to choose to recognize the value and goodness that children bring into women’s lives rather than see them as a burden or impediment to my dreams.

(Katie Prejean McGrady is an international Catholic speaker and author. She is project manager of Ave Explores from Ave Maria Press, and logs more than 100,000 travel miles a year speaking to audiences. She earned a degree in theology at the University of Dallas and lives with her husband and daughter in Lake Charles, La.) †

Be Our Guest/Hosffman Ospino

Breaking the chains of poverty through Catholic education

When I hear that a Catholic school closes or struggles to stay open, my heart aches. There are more than 14 million school-age Catholic children in our country, 8 million of them Hispanic.



If anything, we should be building Catholic schools, especially where Catholicism is growing. At the very least, we should keep those that exist open and primarily at the service of the new populations transforming the

Catholic experience in the U.S.

When I meet people like Father Mark Hamlet from the Diocese of Austin, Texas, a sense of hope invades me. He is impressive: a dynamic pastor, a passionate preacher, a blogger, a radio personality, an advocate and an entrepreneur. He is fluent in English and Spanish, and gets by in other languages.

He is also a family man. Literally. Father Mark is a widower, father of six children and blessed with more than a dozen grandchildren. After the passing of his wife, Cynthia, he went to the seminary and was ordained a Catholic priest in 2010.

Father Mark’s passion for Catholic

education is inspiring. During a recent trip to Austin, I met with him and learned about the organization he founded: Our Kids at Heart (ourkidsatheart.com), which serves largely as a tuition fund.

The organization was established to support mostly Hispanic Catholic children from Sacred Heart Parish in Austin, living in conditions of economic disadvantage, to attend Catholic schools.

More than 150 children currently benefit from this initiative. This is not just a scholarship program but a subsidy effort. In other words, the principle is to empower Catholic families to send their children to Catholic schools and pay the costs by giving them a boost.

This idea of “a boost” is what makes the initiative captivating. The fund cultivates partnerships in which everyone invests: families, schools, philanthropists, the parish community and the diocese.

The model challenges two often taken-for-granted assumptions. One, Hispanic families will only send their children to Catholic schools if it is completely free. Hmmm, yes and no.

Free is attractive, yet even in places where tax credits or vouchers are available, Hispanic families are not necessarily flocking to Catholic schools.

See OSPINO, page 10



Christ the Cornerstone

Christ shows us that love is sacrificial, not self-serving

John the Baptist saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain upon Jesus (Jn 1:32). "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me' " (Jn 1:29-30).

The Gospel reading for this weekend (the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time) features St. John the Baptist boldly proclaiming Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (cf. Jn 1:29-34). To those who doubted Jesus, John makes it clear that he is the one who "ranks ahead of me because he existed before me" (Jn 1:30).

The "Lamb of God" is a powerful image in sacred Scripture. In the Old Testament, the sacrificial lamb was a scapegoat, one who suffers innocently for the sake of others. In the Book of Revelation, the lamb is portrayed as lion-like. The lamb conquers the forces of evil. He saves us because of his sacrifice on the cross which is seen as an active choice—to do his Father's will—rather than the passive acceptance of a cruel fate.

The Lamb of God boldly proclaimed by John the Baptist is both an innocent scapegoat and a lion-like ruler who takes away the sin of the world. He is a paradoxical figure whose apparent weakness is his greatest strength. Jesus conquers sin and death not by confronting them, but by accepting them.

St. Augustine once asked: "Why a lamb in his passion? Because he underwent death without being guilty of any iniquity. Why a lion in his passion? Because in being slain, he slew death. Why a lamb in his resurrection? Because his innocence is everlasting. Why a lion in his resurrection? Because everlasting also is his might."

What is different about Jesus is that he leads by serving and, in doing so, he shows us that true love is sacrificial, not self-serving. The Lamb of God surrenders to his Father's will. He accepts that he must sacrifice himself for our salvation. And he faces his own ignominious death (accompanied by insults, cruel torture and, ultimately, crucifixion) without protest or complaint because he loves us—even his enemies.

In today's culture, love is presented

in a variety of ways and it takes on different meanings, depending on the context. But the most authentic representations of love in books, films and other forms of media are usually *sacrificial*. A mother chooses the life of her unborn child over her own life. A man refuses to participate in a shady business deal because he believes that his integrity is the greatest gift he can give his family. Martyrs succumb to religious persecution and death because they refuse to be intimidated by falsehood or state-sponsored idolatry.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, showed us that love seeks the good of others in the long run, not what feels good in the moment. Although he was innocent of any crime, he chose death on a cross rather than protesting the cruelty and injustice of his accusers. He was passive in the face of this great evil, but as St. Augustine says, he was lion-like in his passion, death and resurrection from the dead.

What does the sacrificial Lamb of God tell us about our own lives? How can we learn from him and grow in our understanding of the meaning of true love?

In the simplest possible terms, we

see in Jesus the supreme values of humility and self-surrender. While everything and everyone around us seem to urge us to be aggressive and self-serving, the Lamb of God shows us that we must surrender to God's will in order to win true happiness and life everlasting. We learn from him how to be gentle and accepting as lambs at the same time that we must be as bold and courageous as lions.

Love is sacrificial. Peace is gained through surrender. Happiness comes with and through sorrow. The truth of these paradoxical statements is expressed most fully in the example of Jesus, the lamb who was slain—willingly—for our sins and the sin of the world.

Let's join John the Baptist in proclaiming boldly: Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Behold the one who ranks ahead of us because he existed before us. He alone can save us from sin and death.

And let's pray together: *Agnus Dei, qui tolis peccata mundi, miserere nobis; dona nobis pacem (Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; grant us peace.) †*



Cristo, la piedra angular

Cristo nos enseña que el amor es sacrificio, no autosatisfacción

Juan el Bautista vio que el Espíritu bajaba del cielo como una paloma y permanecía sobre Jesús (cf. Jn 1:32). "Ahí tienen ustedes al Cordero de Dios que quita el pecado del mundo. A él me refería yo cuando dije: 'Después de mí viene uno que es superior a mí, porque él ya existía antes que yo' " (Jn 1:30-31).

La lectura del Evangelio de esta semana (el segundo domingo del Tiempo ordinario) presenta a san Juan el Bautista que proclama audazmente a Jesús como "el Cordero de Dios que quita el pecado del mundo" (cf. Jn 1:29-34). Para quienes dudaban de Jesús, Juan deja en claro que "es superior a mí, porque él ya existía antes que yo" (Jn 1:30).

En las sagradas escrituras, el "Cordero de Dios" es una imagen muy poderosa; en el antiguo testamento, el Cordero fue un chivo expiatorio, una figura inocente que sufre por el bien de los demás. En el libro del Apocalipsis, el Cordero se ilustra como un león: el Cordero que vence la fuerza del mal. Nos salva mediante su sacrificio en la cruz que se percibe como una elección activa (de cumplir con la voluntad de su Padre) en vez de la aceptación pasiva de un destino cruel.

El Cordero de Dios que proclama audazmente Juan el Bautista es

un chivo expiatorio inocente y un gobernante semejante a un león que quita el pecado del mundo. Se trata de una figura paradójica cuya aparente debilidad es su mayor fortaleza. Jesús conquista el pecado y la muerte no al confrontarlos sino al aceptarlos.

San Agustín hizo el siguiente planteamiento: "¿Por qué cordero en la pasión? Porque recibió la muerte sin haber delinquido. ¿Por qué león en la pasión? Porque habiendo sido matado por la muerte dio muerte a la muerte. ¿Por qué cordero en la resurrección? Porque su inocencia es eterna. ¿Por qué león en la resurrección? Porque su poder es sempiterno."

Lo que distingue a Jesús es que lidera a través del servicio y, al hacerlo, nos enseña que el amor verdadero es sacrificial, no autocomplaciente. El Cordero de Dios se entrega a la voluntad del Padre; acepta que debe sacrificarse por nuestra salvación y se enfrenta a su propia muerte ignominiosa (acompañada de insultos, una tortura cruel y, finalmente, la crucifixión) sin protestar ni quejarse porque nos ama a todos, incluso a sus enemigos.

En la cultura actual el amor se presenta de distintas formas y adopta

diferentes significados dependiendo del contexto. Para las representaciones más auténticas del amor que encontramos en los libros, las películas y otros medios normalmente entrañan sacrificio. Una madre elige la vida de su hijo que no ha nacido por encima de la suya propia; un hombre se niega a participar en un negocio turbio porque considera que su integridad es el don más grande que puede darle a su familia; los mártires sucumben a la persecución religiosa y la muerte por qué no aceptan sentirse intimidados por la falsedad o la idolatría que promueve un Estado.

Jesús, el Cordero de Dios, nos demuestra que el amor a la larga busca el bien de los demás, no lo que se siente bien en el momento. Aunque era inocente de todo delito, eligió morir en la cruz en vez de protestar ante la crueldad y la injusticia de sus acusadores. Se mostró pasivo frente a una gran maldad, pero tal como lo describe san Agustín, fue semejante a un león en su pasión, muerte y resurrección de entre los muertos.

¿Qué nos dice el Cordero de Dios sacrificial acerca de nuestras propias vidas? ¿Cómo podemos aprender de él y ampliar nuestra comprensión de lo que significa el verdadero amor?

En términos sumamente sencillos,

vemos en Jesús los valores supremos de la humildad y la entrega. En tanto que todo y todos a nuestro alrededor parecen incitarnos a ser agresivos y buscar la autosatisfacción, el Cordero de Dios nos demuestra que debemos entregarnos a la voluntad de Dios para poder alcanzar la verdadera felicidad y la vida eterna. De él aprenderemos a ser amables y a aceptar como corderos, pero que al mismo tiempo debemos ser audaces y valientes como leones.

El amor es sacrificio; la paz se logra a través de la entrega; la felicidad viene con el dolor y a través de este. La verdad de estas afirmaciones paradójicas se expresa en mayor plenitud en el ejemplo de Jesús, el Cordero que fue asesinado—voluntariamente—por nuestros pecados y los del mundo.

Unámonos a Juan el Bautista y proclamemos con determinación: Ahí tienen ustedes al Cordero de Dios que quita el pecado del mundo. Ahí está el que es superior a nosotros, porque ya existía antes que nosotros. Solo él puede salvarnos del pecado y la muerte.

Y recemos juntos: *Agnus Dei, qui tolis peccata mundi, miserere nobis; dona nobis pacem (Cordero de Dios que quitas el pecado del mundo, ten piedad de nosotros; danos la paz.) †*

Events Calendar

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

January 26

St. Matthew the Apostle School, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Open House for Prospective Families**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Information or to request a packet: 317-251-3997, dsmock@saintmatt.org.

February 1

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteer Opportunity**, ages 12-18, sharing time and talent with retired Providence sisters, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Registration and parent/guardian waiver: www.spsmw.org/event/teen-volunteer-opportunity/all Information: Providence Sister Joni Luna, 361-500-9505, jluna@spsmw.org.

John Paul II Parish, St. Paul Chapel, 216 Schellers Ave., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Marian Devotion**, 8 a.m. rosary, meditation, prayer; 8:30 a.m. Mass with confessions prior. Information: 812-246-3522.

February 4

St. Christopher Parish, Damascus Room, 5301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis. **Scripture Study on the Gospels of Matthew and Luke**, 10 sessions through April 14 (except March 17), 7 p.m., all are welcome, \$50 payable in installments. Information: Lois Jansen, mlj@gmail.com, 317-241-6314.

February 5

Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6 p.m. Information: 317-243-0777.

February 7

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

February 8

St. Rose of Lima Church, 114 Lancelot Dr., Franklin.

Screening of The Story of Eva, documentary about Holocaust survivor Eva Kor, with discussion during the viewing facilitated by Jessica Chapman of WFYI Indianapolis. Doors open 9 a.m., presentation 9:30 a.m.-noon, free and open to the public. Information: Eileen Paige, epaige@stroselions.net, 317-738-3929, www.thestoryofeva.com.

February 9

St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 4625 N. Kenwood Ave., Indianapolis. **Haiti Prayer Service**, in honor of St. Thomas Aquinas' 30th anniversary of twinning relationship with St. Jean Marie Vianney Church in Belle-Rivière, Haiti, 4 p.m. Information: 317-253-1461.

Sisters of St. Benedict Ferdinand, Louisville House, 512 Breckenridge Lane, Louisville (Louisville Archdiocese). **Sundaes with the Sisters**, receive input on discernment, visit and meet with the sisters, 1-3 p.m. Information: vocations@thedome.org, 812-367-1411.

February 11

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

February 14-16

St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. **Black History Month Youth Revival**, Fri. 7 p.m. "Recipe for Revival"; Sat. 7 p.m. "Revival or Regret?"; Sun. 11 a.m. "No Revival Without the Spirit of Prayer," receptions to follow on Fri. and Sat., meal served on Sun., archdiocesan youth interested in presenting contact Anita Bardo, anita.bardo@sbcglogal.net, 317-313-6207, registration not required to attend, all are welcome, freewill offering. Information: contact Anita Bardo as listed above.

February 14-17

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods,

St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Used Book Sale sponsored by Linden Leaf Gifts**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., books not pre-priced but donations accepted. Information: Ryan Sheehy, 866-996-2947m rsheehy@spsmw.org.

February 16

St. Mary Parish Center, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. **"Adoption: Let's Talk About It and How to Promote Adoption over Abortion,"** sponsored by Jennings County Pro-Life, viewing of the movie *I Lived on Parker Ave*, panel discussion, opportunity for questions with adoption agencies, lawyers, mothers who have adopted and mothers who have chosen adoption, 6 p.m. dinner served, free. Information: 812-346-3604, jenningscountyprolife@gmail.com.

February 19

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

February 20

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

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

February 22

East Central High School Performing Arts Center, 1 Trojan Road A, St. Leon. **E6 Catholic Men's Conference: Putting on the Armor of God**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., speakers, adoration, confession, Mass, ages 26 and older \$40 for pre-registration or \$55 for walk-in, ages 16-25 \$25 for pre-registration or \$30 for walk-in, clergy and religious free, includes lunch and materials, free parking. Information and registration: www.ecatholicmensconference.com. †

Retreats and Programs

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

February 1

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Our Own Stories—Story Telling Workshop** with off-Broadway actor Barbara Smith, benefiting the Beacon of Hope Crisis Center, 2-4:30 p.m., \$50 includes dessert bar. Registration: www.benedictinn.org/retreats-programs. Information: benedictinn@benedictinn.org, 317-788-7581.

February 4, 11, 18

Providence Hall, Large Parlor, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **God at the Coffee House**, for ages 19-39, Providence Sister Jan Craven presenting, 7-9 p.m., free, coffee and snacks provided. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event.

Feb. 5, Feb. 6

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, Foley

Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Art to Lift your Spirit!**, choose between 9:30 a.m. first Wednesday of the month or 6:30 p.m. first Thursday of the month, Providence Sister Rosemary Schmalz presenting, \$30 membership fee to join group, \$5 per session after. Contact Jeanne Frost, 812-535-2952 to request a brochure. Registration and information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or www.spsmw.org/event. †

VIPs

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to bit.ly/2M4MQms or call 317-236-1585.



Larry and Margaret Ann (McDowell) Campbell, members of St. Anne Parish in Ruskin, Fla., will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 17.

The couple was married at St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 17, 1970. They have two children: Shaune Harlow and Casey Campbell. The couple also has 10 grandchildren. †



James and Helen (Lauer) Heffernan, members of St. Mary Parish in Mitchell, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 17.

The couple was married at St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 17, 1970. They have two children: Anne Simpson and Daniel Heffernan. The couple also has three grandchildren. †



Bell Award honoree

Fran Brown, center, poses with the WKLY Spirit of Louisville-sponsored Bell Award she received on Oct. 3 at the Omni Hotel in Louisville, Ky., for her volunteer efforts at St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany and elsewhere. Mark Casper, St. Elizabeth agency director, says the Bell Award "is recognized as the highest honor a volunteer can receive in the Louisville region. We were honored to nominate Fran for all the wonderful work she has done helping our agency and those we serve directly." He says Brown is involved in every aspect of St. Elizabeth and provides leadership, fundraising and direct client service. She also volunteers for a women and children's emergency shelter, her Louisville parish's home-bound prison ministry, and serves on the board of overseers for Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. Posing with Brown are Louisville's WLKY sports anchor Andrew Chernoff, left, president and general manager Glenn Haygood, and anchors Vicki Dortch and Rick Van Hoose. (Submitted photo)

Register by Feb. 1 and 2 for Valentine's Day dinner/dance events in Greenwood and Batesville

Two parishes in central and southern Indiana are offering Valentine's Day dinner and dance events, one at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood on Feb. 8 with a Feb. 2 registration deadline, and one with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson hosted by St. Louis Parish in Batesville on Feb. 15 with a registration deadline of Feb. 1.

On Feb. 8, the Celebrate Marriage Ministry will host a dinner and dance for married couples at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood, from 7-11 p.m. with the doors opening at 6:30 p.m. All married couples are welcome.

Business to formal attire is suggested. The cost is \$50 per couple or \$180 for a table of four couples. Beer

and wine will be available with the purchase of a \$5 wristband.

Registration is required by the Feb. 2 online at bit.ly/2Nbkd5s (case sensitive). For additional information, call 317-489-1557 or e-mail olgmarrriage@stlouisparish.org.

Archbishop Thompson will speak and offer a special blessing at a Celebration of Love dinner and dance hosted by St. Louis Parish at the Knights of Columbus Council #1461, 624 Delaware Road, in Batesville, from 5:30-11 p.m. on Feb. 15.

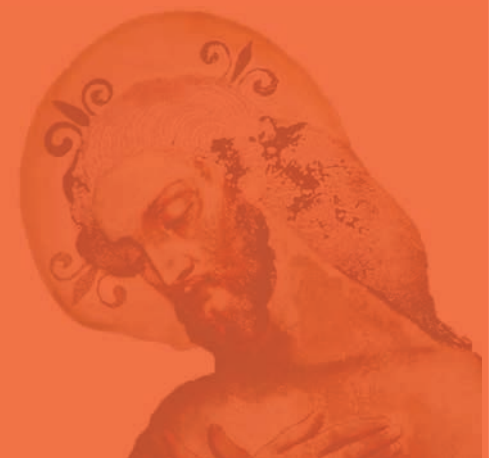
The cost is \$20 per person. Reservations are requested by Feb. 1 by calling the parish office at 812-934-3204 or e-mailing mwachsmann@st.louissschool.org. †

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events/submission, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Cindy Clark, or by fax at 317-236-1593.



The Face of Mercy

By Daniel Conway



Bringing peace is central to mission of Christ's disciples

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Mt 5:9). Making peace possible is central to the mission of those who choose to follow Jesus Christ.

In his World Day of Peace message a year ago, Pope Francis reflected on the responsibility that world leaders have for peacemaking. "Political office and political responsibility constantly challenge those called to the service of their country to make every effort to protect those who live there and to create the conditions for a worthy and just future," the pope said. "If exercised with basic respect for the life, freedom and dignity of persons, political life can indeed become an outstanding form of charity."

Respect for human dignity is essential if individuals, local communities and nations are to live together in peace. "One thing is certain," the Holy Father says, "good politics is at the service of peace. It respects and promotes fundamental human rights, which are at the same time mutual obligations, enabling a bond of trust and gratitude to be forged between present and future generations."

Pope Francis is not naïve. He knows that making peace is a complex and difficult responsibility, especially among

people who bear grudges for injustices (real or perceived) dating back centuries. Then there are obstacles that come from the sins of individuals and social systems. As the pope observes:

"Sadly, together with its virtues, politics also has its share of vices, whether due to personal incompetence or to flaws in the system and its institutions. Clearly, these vices detract from the credibility of political life overall, as well as the authority, decisions and actions of those engaged in it.

"These vices, which undermine the ideal of an authentic democracy, bring disgrace to public life and threaten social harmony. We think of corruption in its varied forms: the misappropriation of public resources, the exploitation of individuals, the denial of rights, the flouting of community rules, dishonest gain, the justification of power by force or the arbitrary appeal to *raison d'état* and the refusal to relinquish power," the Holy Father says.

"To which we can add xenophobia, racism, lack of concern for the natural environment," the pope continues, "the plundering of natural resources for the sake of quick profit and contempt for those forced into exile."

In the face of such obstacles, it's no

wonder that wars, civil unrest and various forms of tyranny and oppression are still common in today's world.

And yet, we Christians believe that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, has given us the spiritual tools we need to make peace.

Starting with the Beatitudes, and the moral principles that are the foundation for laws and social programs that respect the life and dignity of every person regardless of economic, social or political status, Pope Francis assures us that we are called to be "artisans of peace."

"Authentic political life, grounded in law and in frank and fair relations between individuals, experiences renewal whenever we are convinced that every woman, man and generation brings the promise of new relational, intellectual, cultural and spiritual energies," the pope teaches. "That kind of trust is never easy to achieve, because human relations are complex, especially in our own times, marked by a climate of mistrust rooted in the fear of others or of strangers, or anxiety about one's personal security."

Pope Francis believes that true peace is "the fruit of a great political project grounded in the mutual responsibility and interdependence of human beings." But it doesn't come easily.

[Peace] entails a conversion of heart and soul; it is both interior and communal; and it has three inseparable aspects, the Holy Father notes:

- Peace with oneself, rejecting inflexibility, anger and impatience; in the words of St. Francis de Sales, showing "a bit of sweetness towards oneself" in order to offer "a bit of sweetness to others;"
- Peace with others: family members, friends, strangers, the poor and the suffering, being unafraid to encounter them and listen to what they have to say;
- Peace with all creation, rediscovering the grandeur of God's gift and our individual and shared responsibility as inhabitants of this world, citizens and builders of the future.

Pope Francis's patron saint, Francis of Assisi, was a true peacemaker. His efforts didn't always succeed, but the spiritual tools he used still resonate throughout the ages, bringing love where there is hatred, forgiveness where there are bitter grievances, and joy where there is sadness and despair.

Lord, make us instruments (artisans) of your peace.

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

"Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God."

—Pope Francis, "Misericordiae Vultus" ("The Face of Mercy")



"Jesús de Nazaret con su palabra, con sus gestos y con toda su persona revela la misericordia de Dios."

—Papa Francisco, "Misericordiae Vultus" ("El rostro de la misericordia")

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

La paz es un elemento central de la misión de los discípulos de Cristo

En el Sermón de la montaña, Jesús dijo: "Felices los que trabajan en favor de la paz, porque Dios los llamará hijos suyos" (Mt 5:9). Lograr que la paz sea posible es un elemento central de la misión de quienes eligen seguir a Jesucristo.

En su mensaje en ocasión de la Jornada Mundial de la Paz, el papa Francisco reflexionó sobre la responsabilidad que tienen los líderes mundiales de fomentar la paz. "En efecto, la función y la responsabilidad política constituyen un desafío permanente para todos los que reciben el mandato de servir a su país, de proteger a cuantos viven en él y de trabajar a fin de crear las condiciones para un futuro digno y justo," expresó el papa. "La política, si se lleva a cabo en el respeto fundamental de la vida, la libertad y la dignidad de las personas, puede convertirse verdaderamente en una forma eminente de la caridad."

Para que las personas, las comunidades locales y las naciones puedan vivir juntas en paz es esencial que haya respeto por la dignidad humana. "Estamos convencidos de que la buena política está al servicio de la paz;—afirma el Sumo Pontífice— respeta y promueve los derechos humanos fundamentales, que son igualmente deberes recíprocos, de modo que se cree entre las generaciones presentes y futuras un vínculo de confianza y gratitud."

El papa Francisco no es ingenuo: sabe que lograr la paz es una responsabilidad

compleja y difícil, especialmente entre aquellos que sienten resentimientos por injusticias (reales o percibidas) ocurridas hace siglos. Además, existen obstáculos que provienen de los pecados de personas individuales y de sistemas sociales. Tal como señala el papa:

"En la política, desgraciadamente, junto a las virtudes no faltan los vicios, debidos tanto a la ineptitud personal como a distorsiones en el ambiente y en las instituciones. Es evidente para todos que los vicios de la vida política restan credibilidad a los sistemas en los que ella se ejercita, así como a la autoridad, a las decisiones y a las acciones de las personas que se dedican a ella.

"Estos vicios, que socavan el ideal de una democracia auténtica, son la vergüenza de la vida pública y ponen en peligro la paz social: la corrupción—en sus múltiples formas de apropiación indebida de bienes públicos o de aprovechamiento de las personas—la negación del derecho, el incumplimiento de las normas comunitarias, el enriquecimiento ilegal, la justificación del poder mediante la fuerza o con el pretexto arbitrario de la "razón de Estado", la tendencia a perpetuarse en el poder,—dice el Santo Padre—la xenofobia y el racismo, el rechazo al cuidado de la Tierra, la explotación ilimitada de los recursos naturales por un beneficio inmediato, el desprecio de los que se han visto obligados a ir al exilio."

Frente a tales obstáculos, no es de sorprender que en el mundo de hoy en día todavía haya guerras, disturbios civiles y diversas formas de tiranía y opresión.

Y sin embargo, los cristianos creemos que Jesús, el Príncipe de la Paz, nos ha entregado las herramientas espirituales que necesitamos para alcanzar la paz.

Comenzando por las Bienaventuranzas y los principios morales que constituyen las bases de los programas legislativos y sociales que respetan la vida y la dignidad de cada persona independientemente de su situación económica, social o política, el papa Francisco nos asegura que estamos llamados a ser "artesanos de la paz."

"La auténtica vida política, fundada en el derecho y en un diálogo leal entre los protagonistas, se renueva con la convicción de que cada mujer, cada hombre y cada generación encierran en sí mismos una promesa que puede liberar nuevas energías relacionales, intelectuales, culturales y espirituales" nos enseña el papa. "Una confianza de ese tipo nunca es fácil de realizar porque las relaciones humanas son complejas. En particular, vivimos en estos tiempos en un clima de desconfianza que echa sus raíces en el miedo al otro o al extraño, en la ansiedad de perder beneficios personales."

El papa Francisco considera que la paz verdadera "es fruto de un gran proyecto político que se funda en la responsabilidad

recíproca y la interdependencia de los seres humanos." Pero esto no ocurre fácilmente.

La paz conlleva una conversión del corazón y del alma; es interior y comunitaria, y conlleva tres dimensiones inseparables, según lo explica el Santo Padre:

- la paz con nosotros mismos, rechazando la intransigencia, la ira, la impaciencia y como aconsejaba san Francisco de Sales teniendo "un poco de dulzura consigo mismo", para ofrecer "un poco de dulzura a los demás";
- la paz con el otro: el familiar, el amigo, el extranjero, el pobre, el que sufre...; atreviéndose al encuentro y escuchando el mensaje que lleva consigo;
- la paz con la creación, redescubriendo la grandeza del don de Dios y la parte de responsabilidad que corresponde a cada uno de nosotros, como habitantes del mundo, ciudadanos y artífices del futuro.

El santo patrono del papa Francisco, san Francisco de Asís, fue un verdadero pacificador. Sus esfuerzos no siempre tuvieron éxito, pero las herramientas espirituales que utilizó todavía resuenan en nuestra época, llevando amor donde hay odio, perdón donde hay injuria, y alegría donde hay tristeza y desesperación.

Señor, haznos instrumentos (artesanos) de tu paz.

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

PROMISE

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days at the former St. Mary School in New Albany. The parish men's club made and donated the sandwiches, and a deejay played the music for free.

The list goes on, a list of people that helped to raise \$10,000 for the family.

The benefit also raised the spirits of the Kinderman family.

"The love of our family and friends pulled us through a really rough time," said Norah, the mother of 9-year-old Mason and 3-year-old Lincoln. "Everywhere I turned, people were there for me, even strangers. It definitely restored that faith that was lost.

"I couldn't have made it through this time for Scott and myself without this community. They helped with my kids. They picked them up to take them to school and to bring them home. They fed us. They filled in the gaps, and I will always be grateful for that. It's unbelievable all the people who have come together to support us."

It's all part of the bond they formed in high school, says Norah's classmate Patty Belden. There's also another part of the bond that connects them.

'It gave us a feeling of hope and happiness'

"Norah is special to me," said Patty. "I know what it's like to be a mom, and to see her struggling emotionally, physically and financially, we just wanted to help her in some way. Our friend Kelly is a big part of this. She asked me, 'What can we do to help her?' It was a call to action. With the school, with the church and our class at Providence,

we knew we could do something."

While the benefit touched and helped Norah and her family, it also left an impact on everyone who took part in it, Patty said.

"It was an overwhelming feeling. Even though in the grand scheme of things, it was small, it made a huge difference to them. And it gave us a feeling of hope and happiness."

The effort also gave her and her husband Jonathan another reminder of what makes the Catholic community in southern Indiana so special.

"It just reiterates why we sent our kids to school at Our Lady [of Perpetual Help]. My husband and I both grew up here. We both graduated from Providence. We really appreciate the community that the deanery in southern Indiana has brought us. It reaffirmed our decision to send our kids to Catholic schools and to Our Lady."

That sentiment was shared by another one of Norah's Providence classmates—Steve Beyl, the principal of Our Lady of Perpetual Help School.

"We were taught at Providence to care and look out for others," he said. "It just so happens that this involved a classmate of ours, and that made it more special. Providence has a term that all graduates know, and it is 'Blue Pride.' At its heart, it means a pride in our school and community. That includes care and concern for one of our own."

'We come together as one'

Beyl has known that care and concern himself, from the time he was diagnosed with cancer in 2008, at the age of 27. Back then, he was a teacher at Providence and the father of a 6-month-old son.

"I remember how helpful my Providence family was to me then," said Beyl, who recently celebrated 10 years of being cancer-free. "That stuff really matters, I promise you. The students and staff had a special Mass in my honor. They organized meals to be delivered to my home. They stopped by to visit. All of that made me want to get better as fast as I could so that I could return to work."

He now fosters that sense of community at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, where Norah's son Mason is in the fourth grade.

"We all want students who excel with high test scores, but we have to keep in mind that we are being called to form our students in the spiritual sense," Beyl said. "Our community is at the heart of everything we do. We come together as one to live out the values of love, compassion and understanding. We want our students to develop a strong and sustained sense of empathy for others."

Norah has seen that approach come to life, thanks to the actions of some of her



Norah Kinderman, left, and her husband Scott pose for a family photo with their children Lincoln (in Norah's arms) and Mason. (Submitted photo)

closest friends in high school, and many others.

"We couldn't have picked a better place for our kids to go to school," she said. "Not just because of the education, but the sense of community and family. It's a perfect fit for us." †

BIBLE

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In his letter, Pope Francis wrote, "A day devoted to the Bible should not be seen as a yearly event but rather a yearlong event, for we urgently need to grow in



Pope Francis holds the Book of the Gospels as he celebrates Mass on the feast of Mary, Mother of God, in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Jan. 1. The pope has established the third Sunday in Ordinary Time as "Sunday of the Word of God." It will be celebrated for the first time on Jan. 26. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

our knowledge and love of the Scriptures and of the risen Lord, who continues to speak his word and to break bread in the community of believers.

"We need to develop a closer relationship with sacred Scripture; otherwise, our hearts will remain cold and our eyes shut, struck as we are by so many forms of blindness," he wrote.

Sacred Scripture and the sacraments are inseparable, he wrote. Jesus speaks to everyone with his word in sacred Scripture, he said, and if people "hear his voice and open the doors of our minds and hearts, then he will enter our lives and remain ever with us."

Pope Francis urged priests to be extra attentive to creating a homily each Sunday that "speaks from the heart" and really helps people understand Scripture "through simple and

suitable" language.

The homily "is a pastoral opportunity that should not be wasted," he wrote. "For many of our faithful, in fact, this is the only opportunity they have to grasp the beauty of God's word and to see it applied to their daily lives."

Pope Francis encouraged people to read the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, "*Dei Verbum*," and Pope Benedict XVI's apostolic exhortation on the Bible, "*Verbum Domini*," whose teaching remains "fundamental for our communities."

The pope also suggested pastors provide parishioners with the Bible, a book of the Gospels or other catechetical resources, "enthroned" the Bible in order to emphasize the honor and sacred nature of the text, bless or commission lectors of the parish and encourage people to read and pray with Scripture every day, especially through "*lectio divina*."

"The Bible cannot be just the heritage of some, much less a collection of books for the benefit of a privileged few. It belongs above all to those called to hear its message and to recognize themselves in its words," the pope wrote.

"The Bible is the book of the Lord's people, who, in listening to it, move from dispersion and division toward unity," as well as come to understand God's love and become inspired to share it with others, he added.

The celebration of the Sunday of the Word of God also "has ecumenical value, since the Scriptures point out, for those who listen, the path to authentic and firm unity," he wrote. The third Sunday in Ordinary Time falls during that part of the year when the Church is encouraged to strengthen its bonds with the Jewish people and to pray for Christian unity.

The document was published on the feast of St. Jerome, patron saint of biblical scholars and doctor of the Church, who said, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." The title, "*Aperuit Illis*," is based on a verse from the Gospel of St. Luke, "Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (Lk 24:45).

The pope said it is impossible to understand the Scriptures in depth without the Lord who opens people's minds to his word, yet "without the Scriptures, the events of the mission of Jesus and of his Church in this world would remain incomprehensible." †

TEXAS

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Texas bishops responded individually on Twitter to the governor's decision, urging him to reconsider. In a Jan. 10 statement, the Texas Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the state's bishops, said the move to "turn away refugees from the great state of Texas" was "deeply discouraging and disheartening."

The conference said it "respects the governor," but added his decision in this case was "simply misguided" because it "denies people who are fleeing persecution, including religious persecution, from being able to bring their gifts and talents to our state and contribute to the general common good of all Texans."

In his letter to Pompeo, Abbott, who is Catholic, emphasized the work that Texas has done in welcoming refugees, saying that since fiscal year 2010 "more refugees have been received in Texas than any other state."

"Texas has carried more than its share in assisting the refugee resettlement process and appreciates that other states are available to help with these efforts," the letter said.

Ashley Feasley, director of policy for Migration and Refugee Services of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, told Catholic News Service (CNS) that Abbott's decision is a "big deal" because the state has resettled 10 percent of refugees in the United States in the past 10 years.

She said the move does not mean that refugees can't come to the state, but they cannot be resettled there.

That decision, she said, is a problematic one. For starters, about 80 percent of the refugee cases are described as "follow to join," meaning these refugees, whose cases have been vetted, are looking to join a family member or friend in the community. Allowing them to resettle with people they already know is a request that resettlement agencies try to honor, she said, because it helps with the adjustment.

She also noted that Abbott's decision, and others to come by the remaining state

governors who have not weighed in, could be impacted by a federal judge's ruling on Trump's order expected on Jan. 17. The judge will rule on the lawsuit brought on by three refugee resettlement organizations that sought a preliminary injunction to block the executive order.

Texas bishops who responded to Abbott's Jan. 10 decision on Twitter were: Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller of San Antonio and Bishops Michael F. Olson of Fort Worth, Edward J. Burns of Dallas and Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville.

In a Jan. 10 statement, Bishop Burns said he was disappointed in the governor's decision and hoped he would reconsider it.

He said the Diocese of Dallas is "grateful for the outstanding, compassionate work done by Catholic Charities Dallas in partnership with the United States government to resettle men, women and children who are desperate to find safety and freedom. All of the refugees served in this way have been thoroughly screened and approved for resettlement by the Department of

Homeland Security Office of Refugee and Resettlement."

Bishop Olson, also in a Jan. 10 statement, said he "strongly and respectfully" disagreed with the governor's decision.

If the governor stands by this move, he said, "current refugee support services will have to replace the lost federal refugee funds with local dollars currently dedicated to social support services such as work programs and out-of-poverty programs."

The bishop said 96 percent of refugees being resettled in Fort Worth reach self-sufficiency and employment within six months of arrival.

"Catholic Charities Fort Worth and the Catholic Charities offices across our state have compassionately worked in partnership with the federal government, the state, and local officials and communities to help refugees make Texas their home, finding employment, learning English and integrating into our great state of Texas that they now call home," he added. †



Honor your father and mother

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, who grew up in New Albany, celebrates a Mass on Jan. 12 at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Clarksville in honor of his mother Margaret's 100th birthday, and she and his dad Frank's upcoming 73rd wedding anniversary later this year. Above, left, they are seated at the front of the congregation. Archbishop Lori gives his parents a special blessing at the conclusion of the liturgy. At right is Archbishop Lori with his parents. At a reception afterward, the archbishop presented his mom a papal certificate of congratulations, along with other honorary certificates, including a resolution from the City of Baltimore and a letter of congratulations from President Donald J. Trump. (Photos courtesy of John Gilkey Photography)

Residents fear what may come next after quakes, archbishop says

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Hurricane Maria was a body blow to Puerto Rico in 2017, one from which it has yet to fully recover.

Then came the series of 5-magnitude-and-higher earthquakes that began on Dec. 29—topped off by three such temblors in a 30-minute span on Jan. 7 and followed by a magnitude 5.9 quake on Jan. 11—that has resulted in only two confirmed deaths, but untold losses in property damage. And not only the

earthquakes, but their many aftershocks.

Archbishop Roberto Gonzalez Nieves of San Juan lives on the northern part of the island, which was spared most of the worst effects of the quakes. But on a Jan. 10 visit to the island's southern region in the Diocese of Ponce—what he could see of it—the damage was much worse.

"I got around by car," Archbishop Gonzalez said. "But I wasn't able to go everywhere I wanted to because a bridge here or there collapsed."

Driving around Ponce, the archbishop told Catholic News Service (CNS) in a Jan. 10 telephone interview from near San Juan, "I saw a number of people in Ponce now with their suitcases and looking for a place to find shelter.

"I can see lots of damage," he said.

Archbishop Gonzalez added, "I didn't see many buildings that had collapsed, but you see buildings with pieces of cement, pieces of the roof that have fallen off. It will take a while for structural engineers to make an assessment. The cathedral has been quite damaged. I say it might take a year or two to fix the cathedral."

People are sleeping in tents and spending most of their waking hours outside, he noted, fearing an aftershock might cause more of their homes to crumble.

Complicating people's quest to find shelter is the weather. It has been raining on the island. Archbishop Gonzalez, during the interview, said it was raining heavily, and that the quake also has affected telephone and internet service on Puerto Rico.

Another fear is people not knowing where their next meal is coming from.

"There are many people without food," Archbishop Gonzalez told CNS. He mentioned one district where "there are at least 400 people homeless. Caritas has been doing their best to provide them with food. Yesterday [on Jan. 9] we purchased \$150,000 for our Catholic Charities for that group of 400 or so."

One difference that Archbishop Gonzalez noted between a hurricane and an earthquake: "One can prepare for a hurricane—'there's a hurricane on its way'—but you cannot prepare for an earthquake. It just happens.

"Every day there have been replicas"—the archbishop's word for aftershocks. "Those replicas continue to affect the structure of buildings. In the building, it

has a number of people. You come to this building, and it's traumatic. One becomes afraid—what's going to happen next?"

Archbishop Gonzalez disclosed something that perhaps few non-Puerto Ricans know: "The island shakes every day. We're in a seismic area that's very active—as active as California. but only shakes 2 points or 3 points [of magnitude], and you become accustomed to that and you don't feel it. I remember as a child there were maybe two or three significant quakes, but I'd never felt anything like this. It is quite a jolt. It affects everyone emotionally."

He recalled one morning receiving a call from a priest in Guanica, on the south side of the island. "I'm in the north, in San Juan, but they needed volunteers to organize the distribution of food from large trucks that had come from Caritas, from Catholic Charities. He asked if I would make calls to get volunteers. I spent an hour, an hour and a half, making calls. I had 100 volunteers going across the island to the town of Guanica to give help. It shows the spirit of solidarity, and the goodness among the people. It's very touching."

For people on the U.S. mainland, "first of all, we appreciate your spiritual solidarity and prayers, your awareness, your concern," Archbishop Gonzalez said. "Secondly, if you are able to make monetary donations to assist in the relief effort—I'm speaking mainly of food and shelter—that would be a big help."

Catholic Charities USA has established a Puerto Rico disaster relief fund that can be accessed online at bit.ly/30hHwQd. †



Archbishop Roberto Gonzalez Nieves



The destroyed Immaculate Conception Church in Guayanill, Puerto Rico, is seen on Jan. 7 following recent earthquakes in Puerto Rico. A magnitude 6.4 quake rattled Puerto Rico before dawn, killing at least two people and setting people on edge. (CNS photo/courtesy Diocese of Ponce)

Feb. 3 is deadline to register for Feb. 9 World Marriage Day celebration

Criterion staff report

World Marriage Day, celebrated this year on Feb. 9, is a wonderful opportunity to affirm the beauty of the sacrament of marriage.

To honor this day, the Annual Marriage Day Mass will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis at 2 p.m. on Feb. 9. Msgr. William F. Stumpf, archdiocesan vicar general, will serve as the principal celebrant of the liturgy.

After the Mass, all are invited

for a reception across the street at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in the Assembly Hall. Hors d'oeuvres will be served, and the floor will be open for dancing. Naptown Stomp Lindy Hop Society will serve as DJs for the event, and will even offer a 30-minute swing dance lesson.

All married couples of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, as well as all involved in any form of marriage ministry, are invited to celebrate the witness of love and perseverance by all those who are married in the Catholic



Marriage Day Celebration

Church in central and southern Indiana. Registration is required by Feb. 3 for this free event. To register online or to print a registration form to mail in, go to bit.ly/WorldMarriageDay.

For questions about the event, contact the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life by phone at 317-236-1521 or toll free at 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1521, or e-mail kcarroll@archindy.org. †

Bishops visiting Holy Land get look at complexities of Gaza Strip

JERUSALEM (CNS)—In addition to a sense of isolation, young people in the Gaza Strip are experiencing an unemployment rate of 70 percent, and most see emigration as their only solution, said Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese of the Military Services.

“This is a challenge for young people,” he told Catholic News Service (CNS) on Jan. 13. “They are facing uncertainty and insecurity about their future.”

Archbishop Broglio was one of 15 bishops—mostly from Europe and North America—taking part in the annual weeklong Holy Land Coordination visit to support the Holy Land’s local Christian communities. Several talked to Catholic CNS after visiting Gaza.

“The future for the young people is very tenuous,” Archbishop Broglio said. “Basically, the only solution they see is getting out. But that is very problematic, because once they do get out, there is no coming back [because of travel restrictions]. Leaving means an indefinite separation for families.”

Basics such as water and electricity are interrupted daily, he said.

The Gaza Strip has been under an air, land and sea blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt in 2007, when Hamas took control of the Palestinian area from

the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority. The 1.8 million Palestinian residents of the coastal Gaza Strip are cut off from the remainder of the Palestinian territory by the blockade, which also restricts their free travel access to the rest of the world.

The United States, the European Union, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Egypt, Israel and other countries list Hamas as a terrorist organization, charging that it is funded by Iran.

The bishops began their visit in Gaza and celebrated Mass with members of Holy Family Catholic Parish there on Jan. 12. They also met with local families and religious sisters working in Catholic charitable institutions and visited the Daughters of Charity, the Thomas Aquinas Training Center and the Caritas Medical Center.

With slightly more than 1,000 people, the Christian community in the Gaza Strip is very tiny, but the educational, vocational and health services it provides to the general population are highly regarded.

Archbishop Broglio said that slightly more than 10 percent of the 700 students attending Catholic school are Catholic; the majority of students are Muslim.

Irish Bishop Noel Treanor of Down and Connor noted that while the Thomas Aquinas Training Center provides advanced



Palestinians are seen in central Gaza Strip on Nov. 14, 2019. Fifteen bishops—mostly from Europe and North America—are taking part in the annual weeklong Holy Land Coordination visit to support the Holy Land’s local Christian communities. (CNS photo/Mohammed Salem, Reuters)

training for young people, the availability of good jobs is so minimal that often thousands of applicants vie for one position.

“Opportunities are so limited ... the current situation is not sustainable,” he said. “A solution must be found. Though the Catholic community is vibrant, the number of Catholics has gone down drastically ... and the fact so many people are leaving has an impact on the Christian population.”

But finding a solution to the situation in Gaza is no easy task, said Canadian Archbishop Richard J. Gagnon of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

“We need to try to educate people as to the situation here. It is a very complex issue, where you have the internal issue of Gaza and the approach and thinking by the current [Hamas] government, and there is a confrontational situation where there is tension between the Gaza territory and the government of Israel, and this also needs to be brought within context. It is very complicated.”

Since 2001, thousands of missiles have been launched from the Gaza Strip into

southern Israel border towns, sometimes resulting in Israeli retaliatory attacks that have caused overwhelming destruction in Gaza.

Still, despite the political complexity and economic difficulties people face in their daily lives in Gaza, Archbishop Gagnon said, he was struck by the real sense of joy and positivity he sensed within the Catholic community.

“They have a real sense of who they are and what their identity is,” said Archbishop Gagnon. “They provide wonderful opportunities for people in Gaza, both Christians and non-Christians, through their schools and charitable organizations.”

During their stay in the Holy Land, the bishops will also meet with young Palestinians in East Jerusalem; visit Holy Family Parish in Ramallah, West Bank; visit a kindergarten operated by the Comboni Sisters under the shadow of the Israeli separation wall in East Jerusalem; and tour the Jerusalem Old City Basin to review Israeli settler activity in the contested area. †



‘The future for the young people is very tenuous. Basically, the only solution they see is getting out. But that is very problematic, because once they do get out, there is no coming back [because of travel restrictions]. Leaving means an indefinite separation for families.’

—Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio

Amid threat of war, world must not give up hope, pope tells diplomats

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Hope is the virtue needed to approach the coming year, especially when the looming threat



Pope Francis

of war surrounds a humanity scarred by violence, Pope Francis said.

During his annual address to diplomats accredited to the Holy See, the pope said that with heightened tensions and acts of violence on the rise, the “new year does

not seem to be marked by encouraging signs.”

Nevertheless, acknowledging the challenges confronting the world today and courageously finding ways to resolve them open a path to hope, he said in his speech on Jan. 9.

“Precisely in light of these situations, we cannot give up hope,” the pope said. “And hope requires courage. It means acknowledging that evil, suffering and death will not have the last word and that even the most complex questions can and must be faced and resolved.”

Among the most “troubling” conflicts emerging, he noted, are the increasing tensions between the United States and Iran, which not only compromise the efforts to rebuild Iraq, but also set “the groundwork for a vaster conflict that all of us would want to avert.”

“I therefore renew my appeal that all the interested parties avoid an escalation of the conflict and keep alive the flame of dialogue and self-restraint, in full respect of international law,” he said.

In his nearly one-hour speech to the diplomats, the pope reflected on the foreign trips he made over the previous year, as well as the major events and issues that emerged in 2019.

While his visit to Panama last January for World Youth Day highlighted the joy brought by young people “brimming with dreams and hopes” for the future, the

pope said the Vatican summit on clergy sex abuse the following month painfully showed how young people can be robbed of that future.

Sexual abuse committed by members of the clergy and laity “are crimes that offend God, cause physical, psychological and spiritual damage to their victims and damage the life of whole communities,” he said.

The pope renewed the Church’s commitment to not only bringing to light past cases of abuse, but also to ensure that such cases are dealt with in “accordance with canon law and in cooperation with civil authorities on the local and international level.”

Young people, he continued, also have brought significant attention to the issue of climate change, which “ought to be a concern for everyone and not the object of ideological conflict between different views of reality or, much less, between generations.”

“The protection of the home given to us by the Creator cannot be neglected or reduced to an elitist concern,” the pope said. “Young people are telling us that this cannot be the case, for at every level we are being urgently challenged to protect our common home and to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development.”

He also addressed the political crises in Latin America, including Venezuela, where he said he hoped “efforts to seek solutions will continue.”

“Greater polarization does not help to resolve the real and pressing problems of citizens, especially those who are poorest and most vulnerable, nor can violence, which for no reason can be employed as a means of dealing with political and social issues,” he said.

Pope Francis also expressed concern for conflicts in the Middle East, particularly in Syria and Lebanon, where growing tensions risk “endangering the fragile stability of the Middle East.”

He also called the international

community to task for the “general indifference” toward the conflicts in Yemen and Libya, where intense violence “provides fertile terrain for the scourge of exploitation and human trafficking.”

Another sad consequence of such conflicts, he lamented, are the thousands of people requesting asylum who often risk their lives “in perilous journeys by land and above all by sea.”

“It is painful to acknowledge that the Mediterranean Sea continues to be a vast cemetery,” the pope said.

However, he said, the Church is hopeful of efforts “made by countries to share the burden of resettling refugees, in particular those fleeing from humanitarian emergencies.”

Turning his attention to Africa, the pope expressed his concern for the

“continuing episodes of violence” against Christians, especially in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria.

He also expressed hope for the resolution of conflicts in Sudan and the Central African Republic. The pope also said he hoped to visit South Sudan this year.

Recalling his final trip of 2019, which took him to Japan, Pope Francis renewed his appeal for a world without nuclear weapons because “true peace cannot be built on the threat of a possible total annihilation of humanity.”

“These weapons do not only foster a climate of fear, suspicion and hostility, they also destroy hope. Their use is immoral, a crime not only against the dignity of human beings but against any possible future for our common home.” †

OSPINO

continued from page 4

This assumption also feeds a model of economic dependence that falls short when philanthropic streams run dry.

Two, Hispanic families are not interested in Catholic education. Creative and collaborative initiatives like Our Kids at Heart prove otherwise. Work with Hispanic families, engage them, make the schools truly inclusive environments, and you will see the difference.

The organization introduces families, mostly immigrant, to the values of Catholic schools and invites them to send their children to these institutions. It is a process of conversion.

This is the biggest hurdle to overcome, according to Father Mark. Many Hispanic and immigrant families do not see Catholic schools as their own. They think that they are completely out of reach. They often feel that they are not welcomed.

When Hispanic families get involved, things change. Besides traditional philanthropic sources, Our Kids at Heart relies on the fundraising efforts of these families. Families pay first for their children’s education. The fund helps them. That creates a sense of healthy stewardship.

This is a way of returning Catholic education to the poor, says Father Mark. Poverty continues to chain the lives of many Hispanics. We cannot solve that problem with Band-Aids. The chains need to be broken. Catholic schools must serve as “chain cutters.” The image reminds us that Catholic evangelization is about freedom.

Yes, let us break the chains of poverty with the help of Catholic education. Nonetheless, make sure that Hispanic Catholic families participate in the process as active agents, not just as passive recipients.

(Hosffman Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.) †

Faith *Alive!*

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Gift of understanding unfolds by listening to those different from us

By Effie Caldarola

“I just can’t understand ...” How often do we utter those words in consternation, confusion and anger during these troubled times?

Often, what we don’t understand, or refuse to consider, is the behavior or attitude of another person, either a co-worker, a relative or a public person on the national stage. And often, our lack of understanding leads, not to a productive conversation, but to a refusal to communicate.

Turn the television off in anger, add a nasty note in the comments section, decide not to accept a dinner invitation, go to bed seething. Stop listening.

We Catholics love numbers. Twelve tribes of Israel, Twelve Apostles. Forty days in the desert, 40 days of Lent. And hopefully many of us recall learning about the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit in confirmation class. But if we gave a pop quiz at Mass this Sunday, how many could name all seven?

Here’s one gift of the Holy Spirit we could use more of today: the gift of understanding.

Of course, you might say, don’t the gifts of the Holy Spirit relate to things of God, not why my neighbor is committed to voting for the wrong person? But that’s where we fail to acknowledge the presence of God in all things.

St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, taught us that we “find God in all things.” God is not just sequestered away in a sanctuary somewhere. God permeates our world, our lives, our very existence. God is alive and present in each moment of our day.

God is also bigger than history and our small space in it. God invites us to a far bigger space.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit were



Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wis., anoints Alma Karina Ruiz with sacred chrism oil during a celebration of the sacrament of confirmation at St. Joseph Church in Wautoma, Wis. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, which include understanding, are strengthened by confirmation.

(CNS photo/Sam Lucero, *The Compass*)

strengthened in us at confirmation, but we are taught that like any gift, they need to be opened and acknowledged. We cooperate with these gifts or we leave them unused like a discarded Christmas gift at the back of the closet.

To cooperate with this gift, we pray to understand the meaning of God’s message for us in the life we live. We pray for insight, for an understanding of truth. We pray to be enlightened, to see the light.

That’s what the gift of understanding is about.

But how do we pray to understand old Uncle Al, who spouts racist invective at the family reunion? Or understand the person who won’t accept a legitimate source of fact-checking, but is committed to accepting the lie she prefers?

How do we understand the immense suffering of refugees today, or the taking of life from the unborn or those on death row? How do we understand the looming climate catastrophe and the failure to act?

Understanding is not about turning away from or putting a Pollyanna gloss on the issues of the day. Understanding asks us to go deeper.

Ultimately, the gift of understanding takes us above the petty squabbling and helps us to reach the source of life within us—God’s life. We react by working for justice, truth, life, but without anger and retribution against those with whom we disagree.

A key to understanding is to listen. We pause in our aggressive defense of our own understanding of the truth to be quiet and listen to how another comprehends the same truth. We may not change our mind—or theirs—but we just might grow in love and respect for another person’s

struggles and life story that has brought him to this point.

Understanding helps us to recognize why people believe the way they do. Understanding reaches out and narrows the chasm between people by committing to listening.

Prayer is central to realizing any of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the beginning and the end of our quest. Prayer should be our habit when we arise, and our refuge in the lonely night. Prayer continually invites God who continually invites us.

When seeking that interior light that leads to truth, Scripture is a primary resource. But there may be other aids that help you reach an interior spot of peace and clarity.

Is there music that especially soothes and uplifts you? It may be a hymn or something from your personal playlist. Another source of insight and grace is poetry. Poetry can take you away from the day’s anger and invite you to the eternal.

Poets of nature have a particular ability to lift you above the fracas. Wendell Berry, Jesuit Father Gerard Manley Hopkins, Seamus Heaney, Mary Oliver—these are some poets who guide us to understanding. The beloved Irish poet Seamus Heaney said it well: “I can’t think of a case where poems changed the world, but what they do is they change people’s understanding of what’s going on in the world.”

The late Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh, who served as president of the University of Notre Dame for 35 years, told audiences that there was one prayer that never failed him: “Come, Holy Spirit.”

May the Holy Spirit, through the gift of understanding, lead us to a search for justice that guides us in prayer, peace and love.

(Effie Caldarola is a freelance writer and a columnist for Catholic News Service.) †



John Welch and David Shaheed enjoy a conversation during lunch at Shapiro’s Delicatessen in Indianapolis on Jan. 11, 2019. In 1997, Welch, a longtime member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis and the Catholic lay movement Focolare, started sharing lunch with members of the Nur-Allah Islamic Center in Indianapolis, including Shaheed. Understanding as a gift of the Holy Spirit can help people with significant differences to respect and listen attentively to each other.

(File photo by Sean Gallagher)

Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

No matter the situation, there's a saint for that!

Years ago, I walked into my then-parish on New Year's Eve and was greeted at the door by a parishioner asking me



to pick one of the small pieces of paper in her basket. Not familiar with the tradition, I asked for further explanation. Apparently on the verge of the new year, parishioners picked a saint. The idea was

to randomly select a saint, learn more about he or she, and then pray for this saint's intervention throughout the coming year.

Recalling the tradition, I decided to adopt a saint for 2020. Where else to turn in modern times for a saint but the Internet? I visited the Saints Name Generator website (saintsnamegenerator.com/index.php), clicked a button and found my guy this year is St. Vitus.

I assumed there would be some sign that this was divinely inspired. However, I was disappointed to find I had no connection to what he is a patron—comedians, actors, entertainers, dancers, epileptics. However, when I arrived at the end of the list, I understood. St. Vitus is also the patron saint of oversleeping. Immediately, I felt a kinship. If he is also the patron saint of

not hitting the snooze button, then we will have a long and fruitful relationship.

We are all aware of the more traditional saints and their causes. When we have yet again lost an item, who else but St. Anthony could save the day? To be kept safe while traveling, we turn to St. Christopher. Wayward children? St. Monica has been there, done that and will intercede for your brood, too.

With more than 10,000 saints recognized by the Catholic Church, there is literally a saint for every cause, activity, person, place or thing. While I loved to read about the more traditional lives of the saints when I was growing up, today I am fascinated by the saints of more obscure causes and their back stories.

Take St. Drogo, the patron saint of unattractive people, who was stricken with a disease that caused gross deformities. St. Gummarus was wed to a woman known for her abusive behavior, and is therefore regarded as the patron saint of difficult marriages. And St. Barbara, the patron saint of fireworks, is such because after her own father had her beheaded, he was immediately struck by lightning and killed.

Proving that it's never too late for redemption, there are patron saints for arms dealers, murderers and repentant thieves. On the more random side, there

is a saint against wasps, one to keep spelunkers safe and yet another who is both the patron saint for and against rain. (I'm not sure if he's actually any help when you need a sunny day for your upcoming party).

All joking aside, I love stories about saints. Clearly, they are interesting. But what I love most about them is that they were once ordinary people like you and me. They were children, they were parents, they were laborers who dealt with everyday life while trying to answer God's call to faithfulness. Albeit many met with unfortunate deaths—beheadings, crucifixions and at least one died by a swarm of wasps—they stand as Christian models for us to emulate.

As I researched saints, I came across the following: God is busy, so the Catholic Church has recruited patron saints to act as "receptionists" to sort through your requests. While I thought it funny at first, I rather like the idea of the saints helping God sort.

As you begin 2020, I hope you find the saint that will help God answer your prayers.

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of mission advancement for Archdiocesan Education Initiatives.) †

Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

Catholic Charities aims to change people's futures

Catholic Charities seeks to break the cycle of poverty with comprehensive programming. Breaking the cycle of



poverty requires more than just solving one "crisis." It takes addressing the whole person. Catholic Charities programs do just that.

Our approach is to offer comprehensive anti-poverty programming to help struggling families connect with resources they need to break from the cyclical nature of poverty. Since January marks Poverty Awareness Month, I thought I'd introduce to you an amazing woman, Kimberly, who lived in poverty for most of her life.

Kimberly said as a child, she remembered the smell of mold and mildew. She would watch as her most valuable possessions were destroyed by them. She remembered being cold and being in houses with no heat or hot water. Her stepfather would use gray duct tape to wrap around the cords of the heaters when they burned out; that way they could keep using it. Yes, it was a fire hazard, but who cared—the heater was keeping them

warm. Despite her his efforts, they were still cold.

Kimberly told me that her "scars run long and deep"—they will always be there. The long-lasting effects of trauma stick with you.

She said her family never had a working kitchen. Kimberly's mom would cook food at her parents' house, and then take the food back to wherever they were staying. Most of the places they lived in had no running water and were very unsanitary. She and her siblings would go to their grandparents' house to take baths. People who are raised like this simply pass it on down the line. And you grow up thinking that it's OK to live like this.

As for food, they didn't starve. But they were hungry. They ate whatever they could afford. This is where the past affects the present. Today, Kimberly describes herself as "somewhat of a food hoarder"—afraid of not having enough food for her and her daughter.

Kimberly knows what it feels like to be hungry. She must constantly remind herself that she no longer lives that way. But it's the only way she has ever known. This kind of living goes back in time, too. She said, "I'm now in my thirties, and I'm still haunted by the trauma and food insecurity."

Yes, the long-lasting effects of trauma

stick with you. But Kimberly refused to let her past dictate her future because she had Catholic Charities to walk with her when she was a teen and young adult. She was shaped not by the commonly accepted "fact" that since she grew up in poverty, she'll always live in poverty. Instead, Catholic Charities helped her realize that while she can't change the past, she can change the future.

Today Kimberly is far from her childhood of mold, cold and hunger. But even though she has healed much and doesn't have to live that way anymore, the effects of early poverty and trauma are still a part of her being. She says they have shaped her into the woman she is today—a woman who is motivated and works hard to make sure that her daughter will have more opportunities than she had growing up.

"Catholic Charities help me take what I saw and experienced as a child," Kimberly said, "and use that to drive me to be a better person for myself, for my family, and for others who live through the trauma of poverty."

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

A More Human Society/Richard Doerflinger

Catholic judges living their faith are under a microscope

Catholics wanting to serve our country in the legal system are coming under intense scrutiny.



In 2017, University of Notre Dame law professor Amy Coney Barrett was grilled by members of the Senate Judiciary Committee about her Catholic faith. Sen. Dianne Feinstein told Barrett that "the dogma lives loudly within you, and

that's a concern."

This sparked a public backlash, and a cottage industry in selling "The Dogma Lives Loudly Within Me" T-shirts to proud Catholics. Barrett was confirmed as a federal judge, supported by 52 Republicans and three Democrats.

Then in 2018, Sen. Kamala Harris and

Sen. Mazie Hirono objected to confirming Brian Buescher as a federal district judge because he belongs to the Knights of Columbus, the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization.

Their problem: The Knights defend Catholic teaching on abortion and marriage. Sen. Hirono asked Buescher if he would leave the Knights if confirmed, "to avoid any appearance of bias." Buescher was confirmed, with every Democrat present voting "no."

And in recent weeks, there was an unsuccessful effort to block confirmation of Sarah Pitlyk as a federal judge. A native of Indianapolis, she was a member of St. Monica Parish and graduated from the parish's grade school. Pitlyk also graduated from Cathedral High School in Indianapolis. She was opposed by all Democrats and one Republican, Sen. Susan Collins.

Some said she lacked trial and litigation experience. But Sen. Tammy Duckworth launched a different attack: Pitlyk had expressed "extreme" views against *in vitro* fertilization and "surrogate motherhood," views consistent with Catholic teaching.

Sen. Duckworth said she was offended by Pitlyk's stand because her own children were conceived by *in vitro* fertilization. She harshly attacked the attorney for what she called a "cavalier willingness to substitute her own ideological opinions in place of facts." But Sen. Duckworth herself ignored some facts.

Pitlyk's chief offense was that when she worked for the Thomas More Society, a nonprofit public interest law firm, she submitted a brief to the Supreme Court on behalf of Catholic and secular organizations with expertise in medicine and medical ethics. (Full disclosure: I am

See DOERFLINGER, page 15

Twenty Something/Christina Capecchi

Christina Capecchi

The story of our lives

I'm beginning the new year with a clean office. It seems a good place to start, a practical way to set me up for any other resolutions I make.



My office used to be meticulous.

Early in our marriage, my husband surprised me with a u-shaped mahogany desk he'd found on Craigslist. It conferred dignity as it housed

all my material: two computer screens in front of me, notes at my side, shelving behind me for journals and magazines.

In its fold, I felt capable, equipped. And the hours flew by here: late-night drafts, early-morning revisions.

But over time, the desk became a catch-all, piling up paperwork and books, covering dust bunnies and power strips.

I decided to make like Marie Kondo, the Japanese personal organizer whose best-selling book spawned a Netflix series. Her advice is unflinching: Discard almost everything. (And if someone else in your house won't let you, purge when that person is gone.)

"By doing this," Kondo writes, "you can reset your life and embark on a new lifestyle."

I set to work in my office, one pile at a time. Pictures, newspapers, insurance forms.

With each patch of desk that emerged, I felt better. Lighter, clearer-headed.

Then came the bulk of the build-up: dozens and dozens of legal pads. Hasty black cursive sprawled across the pages, unfettered by the lines. Names that conjure hazy faces—people I had interviewed at the mall, at the coffee shop, at the baseball game, in the movie theater. Auctions, ordinations, trials, protests.

The story of my journalism career is here in the stories of strangers. It's what I made of their accounts, what happened between the handwritten interview notes and the published newspaper articles.

Certain sources stand out. Some present golden nuggets of wisdom topped in red velvet bows. Art Fry, the Post-It inventor, articulated the value of failure, of making mistakes and trying new things. Kim Smolik, CEO of Leadership Roundtable, said good leaders practice self-care.

Mark Shea, the prolific Catholic author, offered advice on writing that applies to living: "The real trick is to cultivate interest in everything."

A year before his death, Archbishop Emeritus Harry J. Flynn described the place for faith amid uncertainty. "Life is a great mystery, and we can't figure it all out," he said. "Lean into the mystery."

Other sources linger in my mind because of what they do not disclose. Last month, the manager of a fast-food restaurant answered all my questions for a story but left me wondering about his story. The 50-year-old has never married and has had 11 children with eight women. Yet I am sure he is good and kind.

I remember the unemployed mom who bundled up and went to the Minneapolis library to scan help-wanted ads when it was 15 below. "I see a little sunlight," she told me, "and I always come out."

I believe our stories are sacred. They are worth telling and re-telling.

I believe it is our Christian calling and our human duty to listen to others' stories.

A journalist gathers information using the five W's: who, what, when, where and why. The latter unlocks many doors. Why did you marry her? Why did you vote for him? Why do you live here? Why are you Catholic? Why did you pursue this profession? Why did you become a parent?

See CAPECCHI, page 15

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, January 19, 2020

- Isaiah 49:3, 5-6
- 1 Corinthians 1:1-3
- John 1:29-34

The Book of Isaiah furnishes the first reading for Mass this weekend. There is the overtone of relief and joy. There



is the promise of a bright future. It was all because of the fact that after the humiliation and anguish of being conquered by Babylon and then after generations of exile in Babylon for many, God's people

were entering a new day of return to their homeland and hopefully to lives of prosperity and security.

Lest anyone think this fortunate turn of events was the mere outcome of changing politics or luck, the prophet eloquently insists that the plight of the people is improving because of God's direct and merciful intervention into human affairs. God brings their relief. He had promised to protect and sustain the people, despite the misfortunes that might befall them. They were God's people.

In turn, the Hebrews, God's people, human instruments on Earth of the divine will, had been faithful during their years of trial.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend selects a passage from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. Today, the Apostle Paul ranks among the greatest religious figures of all time, and certainly he stands as a most extraordinary figure in the development of Christianity in the crucial time of the first century.

Attaining this distinction was not without personal cost for Paul. He contended with converts to Christianity who were not always loyal to the Gospel. The culture in which they lived not only surrendered without a whimper to human instincts, but also elevated these instincts literally to the level of the divine, delighting in lust, gluttony, drunkenness and so on.

Such was the case with the Christian converts in Corinth, then one of the major cities of the Mediterranean world.

Another burden for Paul was that his

credentials to preach the Gospel were questioned. He had to insist that Jesus had called him to be an Apostle.

The last reading is from St. John's Gospel. The author of this Gospel was attracted to John the Baptist, to say the least, possibly coming from a group influenced by him. Among John the Baptist's qualities was his absolute intellectual and religious honesty. He was fearless. He thoroughly believed that God had called him to be a prophet.

So St. John's Gospel presents John the Baptist in admiring terms.

Here in this reading, John the Baptist sees Jesus in the distance and acknowledges Jesus as the Redeemer. The element of sacrifice is present. John identifies Jesus as the "Lamb of God" (Jn 1:29).

Finally, treasured Old Testament symbols testify to the identity of Jesus. The dove descends from the sky, from heaven to rest upon Jesus. God and Jesus are one.

Reflection

At Christmas, the Church excitedly told us that Jesus was born. Son of Mary, Jesus was a human as are we. The shepherds adored Jesus, representing all humanity.

At Epiphany, the Magi found Jesus after searching for God. To assist them, God led them and protected them. In Jesus, they found God.

At the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan celebrated last week, the Church introduced us to Jesus as the Savior of doomed humankind. In Jesus, humans would have access to eternal life.

Now, continuing the process, John the Baptist, so reliable and insightful, proclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God. In all these settings, the Church carefully puts before us the person of Jesus the Lord and tells us about him.

It is an invitation to follow Jesus. Hearing these Scriptures of this season, we know Jesus. He is no stranger, however, since truly knowing the Lord depends upon our willingness to respond to this invitation. †

Daily Readings

Monday, January 20

St. Fabian, pope and martyr
St. Sebastian, martyr
1 Samuel 15:16-23
Psalm 50:8-9, 16-17, 21, 23
Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday, January 21

St. Agnes, virgin and martyr
1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 89:20-22, 27-28
Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday, January 22

Day of Prayer for the Legal
Protection of Unborn Children
1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51
Psalm 144:1b-2, 9-10
Mark 3:1-6

Thursday, January 23

St. Vincent, deacon and martyr
St. Marianne Cope, virgin
1 Samuel 18:6-9; 19:1-7
Psalm 56:2-3, 9-13
Mark 3:7-12

Friday, January 24

St. Francis de Sales, bishop
and doctor of the Church
1 Samuel 24:3-21
Psalm 57:2-4, 6, 11
Mark 3:13-19

Saturday, January 25

The Conversion of St. Paul the
Apostle
Acts 22:3-16
or Acts 9:1-22
Psalm 117:1-2
Mark 16:15-18

Sunday, January 26

Third Sunday in Ordinary
Time
Isaiah 8:23-9:3
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14
1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17
Matthew 4:12-23
or Matthew 4:12-17

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Catholics are required to confess serious sins at least once a year

QIn one of your recent columns, you stated: "Strictly speaking, one is obliged to go to the sacrament of penance



only for serious sins—although it is certainly a good idea to confess regularly even for lesser sins and imperfections."

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, however (#1457), that all Catholics should go to confession at least

once a year. If this is actually a precept of the Church, my understanding is that all of the precepts must be obeyed under penalty of mortal sin. Can you explain your position on this and why it differs from the catechism—or was it just an oversight? (Indiana)

AI stand by my recent answer, and it is consistent with Catholic teaching. The section to which you refer (#1457) in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, referencing the Church's *Code of Canon Law*, actually says this: "After having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year."

Again, though, I make a plea for much more frequent confession, even for venial sins. The introduction to the Church's *Rite of Penance* states: "Frequent and careful celebration of this sacrament is also very useful as a remedy for venial sins. This is not a mere ritual repetition or psychological exercise, but a serious striving to perfect the grace of baptism so that ... his [Christ's] life may be seen in us ever more clearly" (#7b).

QSince it is now known that incense is medically harmful—causing asthma, contact dermatitis and lung cancer—why does the Church continue to use it? I am severely asthmatic, and a fairly large number of our elderly parishioners are oxygen-dependent. Our pastor will not make

concessions, which means that a number of us have no way of attending Mass. (Oregon)

AAt least once a year someone submits a question to this column about the potential for health hazards caused by the use of incense in church—or at least raises the complaint that it is bothersome to the writer personally. The frequency of the question inclines me to think this issue merits a serious study—perhaps outsourced by the Church to medical authorities.

Incense, an aromatic substance made from the resin of certain trees, has been used in religious rites as far back as the 15th century B.C. in Egypt. Its use was common in Jewish worship and was carried over into Christian practice, where the smoke of the incense has been viewed as a symbol of the prayers of worshippers rising to heaven.

A *U.S. News & World Report* article in 2008 made note of a study that linked long-term incense exposure to an increased risk of respiratory cancer, and I uncovered one reference to an Environmental Protection Agency concern about the nexus between incense smoke and lung inflammation.

But I would think more research needs to be done for a link between the occasional use of church incense and medical problems to be established definitively. I do remember a 2014 Catholic News Service article, where the Diocese of Allentown, Pa., suggested the use of a certain hypoallergenic incense to prevent worshippers from developing headaches or breathing problems.

All of which leads me to recommend that a pastor be especially solicitous to parishioners' concerns: Incense is not mandated by the Church at any particular Mass. Why make it harder for people to come to church?

(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

Heaven's Grace

By Sandy Bierly

The sound of running water,
Reminds me of Heaven's grace,
Where simple bread and wine,
Become the Body and Blood of Christ.

The sound enters my ears,
Penetrating to the depths of my soul,
Telling me that God's presence,
Is here in this sacred space.

This moment of grace enfolds me,
Filling me with unending love,
Heaven's floodgates are surely open,
As I rest in my Savior's arms.

(Sandy Bierly is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. Photo: Christ's baptism by St. John the Baptist at the Jordan River is depicted in a stained-glass window at the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph in Brooklyn, N.Y. The feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which was celebrated on Jan. 12, marks the end of the Christmas season.) (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)



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 date 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.

CARL, Scholastica, 95, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Dec. 21. Mother of Donna Candy, Theresa Cunningham, Agnes Hobson, Rose Ann Just, Kathy Piroozi, Laura Smith, John and Robert Carl, Sr. Sister of Donald Hoppenjans. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 15.

CAVA, Pete, 73, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Dec. 18. Husband of Molly Cava. Father of Nancy and Andy Cava. Grandfather of one.

DALE, Norman S., 85, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Dec. 14. Husband of Margaret Dale. Father of Tom Dale. Brother of Carolyn Chambers and Barbara Jean Peed. Grandfather of 14. Great-grandfather of 30. Great-great-grandfather of one.

DIERCKMAN, Marie R., 87, St. Louis, Batesville, Dec. 23. Mother of Joyce Kessens, Ginny Lows, Ed, Jerry and Ron Dierckman. Sister of Theresa Eckerle, Frances Hartman, Ruth Messerschmidt, Rose Roell, Rita Struewing, Albert, Arthur, Bernard and Joe Schneider. Grandmother of 16. Great-grandmother of 28.

EBERHARDT, Rosemary, 84, St. Mary, Greensburg, Dec. 19. Mother of Sue Adams, Marianne Kritzer, David and Jeff Eberhardt. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of four.

ENDRIS, Morris D., 84, St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, Dec. 15. Husband of Linda Endris. Father of Craig, David, Luke and Ned Endris. Brother of Sue Graves, Dinah Hook, Toody Leggio, Carl, Louie, Mike, Paul and Vince Endris. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of one.

GIBBONS, Donald E., 87, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Dec. 21. Husband of Joyce Gibbons. Father of Patricia Adkins, Melanie Koetter and Leaha McCrite. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of 11.

HALL, Joan M. (Schramm), 94, Prince of Peace, Madison, Dec. 22. Mother of Leslie

Kucek, Christopher, Matthew and Thomas Hall. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of eight.

HEUBI, Betty Jo, 93, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Dec. 11. Stepmother of Dr. James and John Heubi. Sister of William Brown. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of three.

HIGGINS, Viola (Mader), 93, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 9. Mother of Julie Biddle, Teresa McQueen, Diana Mover, Dennis, Jeff, Kevin and Tim Higgins. Grandmother of 21. Great-grandmother of 15.

HOUSE, Anna M., 68, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, Dec. 21. Mother of Christine Gordon and Rose Siders. Sister of Joan Kimbley, Donn, Jack and Mark Proctor. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of three.

KENTER, Jeanette L. (Chesterson), 83, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Dec. 21. Wife of Tom Kenter. Mother of Susan, Jim, Tim and Tom. Sister of Jody, Ruth Ann and Ed. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of three.

KOERBER, Mary E., 94, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Dec. 13. Mother of Donna Strom, Wanda Wixson, Bob, Chuck and Gary Koerber. Sister of Pat Alexander and Rita Ellenbrand. Grandmother of 18. Great-grandmother of 30. Great-great-grandmother of one.

KRAMER, Nancy, 66, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Dec. 18. Wife of Frank Kramer. Mother of Angela Hoffmeier. Stepmother of Kathleen Lenning and Frank Kramer, Jr. Sister of David, Michael and Thomas Haarmeyer. Grandmother of four.

LAGRANGE, Janet M., 81, Holy Cross, St. Croix, Dec. 25. Wife of Jerry LaGrange. Mother of Bradley LaGrange.

LAMBERT, Joseph E., 91, St. Louis, Batesville, Dec. 18. Husband of Bernice Lambert. Father of Judy Bordner, Dale, Gene and Tim Lambert. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of six.



Fallen firefighter

Firefighters from the Horsley Park Rural Fire Service carry the casket of volunteer firefighter Andrew O'Dwyer following his funeral Mass at Our Lady of Victories Church in Sydney, Australia, on Jan. 7. O'Dwyer died on Dec. 19 when the truck he was traveling in rolled off the road after a tree fell in the town of Buxton. (CNS photo/Dean Lewins, AAP via Reuters)

LAWLER, Myron, 89, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Dec. 21. Father of Cathy Skinner, Julie Stiens, David, Ron and Tom Lawler. Grandfather of 13. Great-grandfather of five.

LYNN, Thomas R., 72, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Dec. 25. Husband of Nancy Lynn. Father of Megan Dettle and Adam Lynn. Brother of Linda Moore and Ron Lynn. Grandfather of seven.

MARION, Pamela, 66, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 18. Mother of Elizabeth Stephens and Justin Marion. Sister of Mary Box, Patricia Rice, Bob, Eugene, Tim and Tom Bowman. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of one.

MARTIN, Helen E., 89, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, Dec. 16. Mother of Dawn Frakes, Denise Hammer, Debbie LaCour, Diana Roberts, David Barlow and Douglas Martin. Grandmother

of nine. Great-grandmother of six.

MARTINI, Donna J. (Kennett), 79, All Saints, Dearborn County, Dec. 24. Wife of Leo Martini. Mother of Brenda Jonas, Rhonda Sizemore and Donald Martini. Sister of Dorothy Cox, Denver and Ron Kennett. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 13.

MOLLOY, Rosalie H. Cremer, 85, St. Luke the Evangelist, Dec. 10. Mother of Charles III, John and Joseph Cremer. Sister of Gretchen Coogan, Hugo and Joseph Hoerdemann. Grandmother of eight.

NADDY, William, 94, St. Matthew the Apostle, Dec. 23. Father of Julie Danielson, Lisa Goertemiller, Carmel Harr, Therese Severin, Carol Sparhawk, Mary Ann, Patrice, John and William Naddy. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of three.

NAVILLE, Earl J., Jr., 91, St. Mary, Navilleton, Dec. 21. Husband of Bonnie Huber-Naville. Father of Pamela Briles, Peggy Emerson, Patricia Kirchgessner, E. Joseph, Jr., Gerald, Sr., James, Jason, Jeffrey, John, Julian and Justin Naville. Brother of Elizabeth Blessing, Naomi Brockman, Eugene and Herman Naville, Jr. Grandfather of 42. Great-grandfather of 52.

PHILLIPS, Gregory, 49, St. Mary, Greensburg, Dec. 19. Husband of Dana Phillips. Father of Logan and Parker Phillips. Son of Garrett and Phyllis Phillips. Brother of Brian Phillips.

RANFT, Jill A., 76, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Dec. 22. Mother of Tami Howard, Lynn, Derek, Matthew, Michael and T.J. Ranft. Sister of Jack and Ronald Holmes. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of one.

RITTER, Irene M. (Traylor), 92, Prince of Peace, Madison, Dec. 21. Mother of Julia Barber, Mary Margaret Nantz, Dwight, Julius and Steve Ritter. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of five.

RUCKER, John, 92, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Indianapolis, Dec. 16. Father of Janet McFarland and John McIntyre. Grandfather of one.

SANDLIN, Steven W., 77, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Dec. 10. Husband of Paula Sandlin. Mother of Sarah Muncy, John, Matthew and Michael Sandlin. Brother of Kenny and Tom Sandlin. Grandfather of 15. Great-grandfather of three.

SANNEMAN, Linda S. (Elkins), 75, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Mother of Andrea and Scott Sanneman. Sister of Rita Gladding, Leesa Lyles, Debra Napier, Barbara Schneider, Sheila and Kenny Elkins. Grandmother of three.

SCHAEFER, Edward A., 95, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County, Dec. 21. Father of Susan Kerber, Dwight, Edward, Jr., Greg and Mark Schaefer. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of 16.

SQUIBB, Peter E., 77, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Dec. 25. Husband of Patricia Squibb. Father of Ann Coleman, Jane Lee Hartwell, David and Nathaniel Squibb. Brother of Judith Ann Squibb Plaatje. Grandfather of 13.

SOMMER, Zana L. (Hardesty), 90, St. Paul, Tell City, Dec. 23. Mother of Carolyn Beams, Brenda Hubert, Donna James, Patty Lynch and Don Cooper. Sister of Ruth Ann Hugley, Rowena Niswonger and Pauline Presley. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 13.

STREIT, David C., 62, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Dec. 15. Brother of Sue Hirt and Mary Rose Lee. Uncle and great-uncle of several.

WAGNER, Michael, 73, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Dec. 19. Husband of Darlene Wagner. Father of Nicole Robison and Debbie Steck. Grandfather of four.

WEIR, Mary E. (Schenkel), 110, St. Thomas the Apostle, Fortville, Nov. 19. Mother of Mary Drake, Peggy Hunt, David and James Weir. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 11.

WENNING, Ruth, 92, St. John the Baptist, Osgood, Dec. 19. Mother of Rosalie Calhoun, Susan Youngman and Frank Wenning. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of 15. Great-great-grandmother of two. †

Franciscan Sister Helen Eckrich ministered in Catholic education and administration

Franciscan Sister Helen Eckrich, formerly Sister Augustine, died on Jan. 6 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 90.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 10 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Helen was born on Aug. 28, 1929, in Wilmington, Del., and she and her family later moved to Indianapolis. It was while she was a student at Marian University in Indianapolis that she discerned a call to religious life as an Oldenburg Franciscan.

Sister Helen joined the Sisters of St. Francis in 1951 and professed final vows in 1957. She was dispensed from her vows in 1979, but re-entered the community in 1991 and professed final vows in 1994. She earned a bachelor's degree in history at Marian, a

master's degree in French from the College of St. Rose in Albany, N.Y., and a doctorate in French at Fordham University in New York.

During 57 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Helen ministered in Catholic education at the high school and college levels, and in administration in her community.

In the archdiocese, Sister Helen served as an educator at Father Thomas Sceccina Memorial High School from 1956-62, as an educator and campus minister at Marian University from 1962-79 and as president of the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg from 1994-95. From 1995 until her retirement in 2000, she ministered as the director of human resources for her community.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †

Providence Sister Patricia Fillenwarth served as an educator, missionary and counselor

Providence Sister Patricia Fillenwarth, formerly Sister Joseph Monica, died on Jan. 7 at the Gibson Family Center for Hospice Care in Terre Haute. She was 79.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 11 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Patricia was born on Sept. 1, 1940, in Indianapolis where she grew up as a member of the former Holy Cross Parish. She entered the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Jan. 6, 1958, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1965.

Sister Patricia earned a bachelor's degree in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, a master's degree in education at Indiana State University in Terre Haute, and a master's degree in

communications and family at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago.

During her 62 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Patricia served for 26 years in Catholic schools in Illinois, Indiana and Washington, D.C. She also served as a missionary at the Colegio San Jose in Arequipa, Peru, from 1971-76.

She was also a leader in her community's Chicago-based St. Joseph Province. After becoming a certified counselor, she began Providence Family Services in Chicago, serving in it from 1994 until her retirement in 2018.

Surviving is a sister, Providence Sister Joseph Fillenwarth, and a brother, John Fillenwarth of Greenwood.

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

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carlahill@archindy.org

CNN settles lawsuit with Catholic student from viral video

WASHINGTON (CNS)—CNN reached an undisclosed settlement on Jan. 7 with Nick Sandmann, a Kentucky Catholic high school student who sued the cable news outlet for defamation over its coverage of an incident that occurred after last year's March for Life.

Sandmann, a junior last year who was at the center of the viral video controversy, sought \$275 million in damages in his lawsuit filed against CNN last March. He has also sued *The Washington Post* and NBC Universal. A federal judge let part of the suit against *The Post* continue after the paper filed a motion to dismiss it. Trial dates have not yet been set for these two cases.

Sandmann's attorney, Todd McMurtry, declined to comment on the dollar amount or other elements of the settlement with CNN. He told news outlets that lawsuits against "as many as 13 other defendants will be filed in 30 to 40 days."

Among them are ABC, CBS,

The Guardian, *The Huffington Post*, NPR, *Slate*, *The Hill*, and Gannett which owns the *Cincinnati Inquirer*, as well as miscellaneous other small outfits, according to McMurtry.

After the announcement, Sandmann tweeted: "Yes, We settled with CNN," which gained more than 82,000 likes by the next day and hundreds of comments, primarily of support.

Sandmann sued media outlets for what he claimed was biased coverage of what transpired at the Lincoln Memorial on Jan. 18, 2019. That day, Sandmann, wearing a "Make America Great Again" hat, smiled just inches away from Nathan Phillips, a Native American leader, as Phillips chanted and beat a drum.

The day after that encounter, clips from a video of that encounter went viral almost immediately, which showed students surrounding Phillips while appearing to be mocking him. The clip caused immediate

outrage, particularly on social media. But by the next day, extended footage of how the situation unfolded revealed that another group had taunted the students and some responded back. Phillips said he had walked over to the students and the group as an intervention.

After the initial video went viral, Sandmann said in a statement that he had "received physical and death threats via social media, as well as hateful insults."

Sandmann's school and the Diocese of Covington initially condemned the students' behavior, but then backed down as more information came forth and they called for a third-party investigation into the situation.

The conclusion of that report, released by the Covington Diocese on Feb. 13, 2019, found no evidence that the students had issued "offensive or racist statements" that they had been accused of doing.

In a letter to parents of Covington Catholic High School last year, Bishop



Nick Sandmann, a junior at the time at Covington Catholic High School in Park Hills, Ky., and other students from the school stand in front of Native American Nathan Phillips near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington in this still image from video on Jan. 18, 2019. CNN has reached a settlement with Sandmann, who had sued the news outlet saying it defamed him. (CNS photo/Kaya Taitano, social media via Reuters)

Roger J. Foys of Covington said his hope was that the investigation would "exonerate our students so that they can move forward with their lives." †

DOERFLINGER

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affiliated with two of those organizations, the National Catholic Bioethics Center and Charlotte Lozier Institute.)

The brief urged the Supreme Court to hear the case of *M.C. v. C.M.* A woman, Melissa Cook, had agreed to be a "surrogate mother," gestating a child conceived by *in vitro* fertilization using the sperm of Chester Moore Jr. and eggs donated by a young woman. When Cook became pregnant with triplets, Moore demanded under the surrogacy contract that she abort one child.

Cook refused on moral grounds, and later filed suit to ensure that Moore would be assessed for fitness as a father and

would not get custody of the "extra" child he had wanted killed.

Pitlyk's brief cited numerous medical journal articles and other secular sources to argue that a law demanding enforcement of such contracts against a birth mother was harmful to the health and well-being of women and children.

According to Sen. Duckworth, Pitlyk's brief "cruelly implied" that children conceived by *in vitro* fertilization are "inferior." She had said exactly the opposite, that these children have the same rights as other children and should have those rights respected.

Is Pitlyk's view extreme? Surrogacy contracts have been criticized by secular feminists, who understand that a coerced abortion is not "pro-choice" and that commercial exploitation of

women's bodies demeans their dignity. *In vitro* fertilization, which treats human procreation as a manufacturing process, has long been criticized by Leon Kass and other non-Catholic ethicists.

But the brief was written by a Catholic and was consistent with Catholic teaching, so Pitlyk was attacked for holding extreme "personal beliefs."

Some senators, especially Democrats, should recall that under our Constitution "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States."

(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.) †

CAPECCHI

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

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Retired pope wants his name removed as co-author of book on celibacy

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—At the request of retired Pope Benedict XVI, his name will be removed as co-author of a book defending priestly celibacy, said Cardinal Robert Sarah, the Vatican official who coordinated work on the book.



Cardinal Robert Sarah

“Considering the polemics provoked by the publication of the book, *From the Depths of Our Hearts*, it has been decided that the author of the book for future editions will be Cardinal Sarah, with the contribution of Benedict XVI,” Cardinal Sarah tweeted on Jan. 14.

“However,” he said, “the full text remains absolutely unchanged.”

The tweeted announcement came only a few hours after Cardinal Sarah had issued a formal statement accusing people of slandering him by saying that while Pope Benedict may have contributed notes or an essay to the book, he was not co-author of it.

Archbishop Georg Ganswein, personal secretary to Pope Benedict, phoned several German news agencies and spoke with the Reuters news agency on Jan. 14, saying the retired pope had requested that his name be removed as co-author of the book, its introduction and its conclusion. The archbishop confirmed that the book’s first chapter, attributed to Pope Benedict, was the work of the retired pope.

Since marriage and priesthood both demand the total devotion and self-giving of a man to his vocation, “it does not seem possible to realize both vocations simultaneously,” retired Pope Benedict wrote in his essay.

The French newspaper *Le Figaro* published excerpts of the book late on Jan. 12 and, almost immediately, some people began questioning just how much of the work actually was written by the 92-year-old former pope.

The introduction and conclusion were attributed jointly to the retired pope and to Cardinal Sarah, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments; the book has two other chapters, one attributed to each of them alone.

The book was to be published in French on Jan. 15 and in English on Feb. 20 by Ignatius Press.

Given Pope Benedict’s declining health and energy, many questions were raised about just how much of what was attributed to him was written by him and about the decision to list “Benedict XVI” as co-author of the book, rather than

“Joseph Ratzinger/Pope Benedict XVI,” the form he used for his series of books on Jesus of Nazareth.

At the end of a day of questions and accusations posted on Twitter, Cardinal Sarah tweeted early on Jan. 14: “Attacks seem to imply a lie on my part. These defamations are of exceptional gravity.”

And, as “the first proofs of my close collaboration with Benedict XVI to write this text in favor of celibacy,” he tweeted photographs of correspondence from the retired pontiff.

In the first letter, dated Sept. 20, Pope Benedict said that before receiving a letter from Cardinal Sarah dated Sept. 5, he already had “begun to write a reflection on priesthood. But while writing, I increasingly felt my energies would no longer allow me to edit a theological text.”

“Then your letter arrived with the unexpected request for a text precisely on priesthood with particular attention to celibacy,” the retired pope continued. “So, I took up my work again and will send you the text when it is translated from German into Italian. I will leave it up to you to decide if these notes, whose inadequacy I strongly feel, can have some usefulness.”

In a brief note posted by Cardinal Sarah and dated Oct. 12, Pope Benedict wrote that “finally I can send you my thoughts on the priesthood. I leave it up to you if you can find some usefulness in my poor thoughts.”

In a formal statement released on Jan. 14, Cardinal Sarah said that after meeting Pope Benedict on Sept. 5, he wrote to the retired pope saying that with debate about mandatory priestly celibacy already begun before the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon, he realized Pope Benedict might not think the timing was right for him to intervene on the subject because of “the polemics it could provoke in the newspapers.”

Nevertheless, the cardinal said, he believed a contribution from Pope Benedict would be a gift to the whole Church and “could be published at Christmas or at the beginning of 2020.”

Cardinal Sarah said Pope Benedict gave him “a long text” on Oct. 12, and he realized that rather than publishing it in a journal or magazine, it would be more appropriate as part of a book.

“I immediately proposed to the pope emeritus integrating his own text and mine for the publication of a book that would be an immense good for the Church,” the cardinal said.

After several exchanges, he said, on Nov. 19 he sent “a complete manuscript to the pope emeritus comprising, as we had decided by mutual agreement, the cover, an introduction and a common conclusion,

the text of Benedict XVI and my own text.”

The cardinal tweeted a photo of a letter dated Nov. 25 in which Pope Benedict thanked him “for the text added to my contribution and for the whole elaboration you have done.”

“For my part, the text can be published in the form you envisaged,” Pope Benedict added.

The chapter attributed to Pope Benedict is about 25 pages long, including a six-page reprint of the homily he gave at the chrism Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica in March 2008 on the meaning of “being a priest of Jesus Christ,” specifically in standing in the presence of God and serving him. The homily did not mention celibacy.

In a chapter originally attributed to both the retired pope and the cardinal, they said the book resulted from an exchange of “ideas and our concerns,” particularly related to the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon, which heard repeated calls for considering the ordination of married elders to serve far-flung communities and provide greater access to the Eucharist and other sacraments.

Pope Francis’ response to the requests of the synod is expected early in the year. Observers noted how unusual it was for the retired pope to intervene publicly on an issue the reigning pope is considering.

Cardinal Sarah and Pope Benedict seemed to recognize how unusual the move was, but the introduction said, “*Silere non possum!*” I cannot be silent!”

The introduction said the two offered their reflections “in a spirit of love for the unity of the Church,” and in “a spirit of filial obedience to Pope Francis.”

In a separate interview with *Le Figaro*, Cardinal Sarah said: “If this book is a cry, it’s a cry of love for the Church, the pope, the priests and all Christians. We want this book to be read as widely as possible. The crisis facing the Church is striking.”

According to the published excerpts, the chapter signed by Pope Benedict noted how today many people assume the gradual adoption of the discipline of priestly celibacy was a result of “contempt for corporeality and sexuality.” The error of that thinking, he said, is demonstrated by the Church’s high view of the sacrament of marriage.

And while acknowledging that celibacy has not always been a requirement for priesthood, he said that married priests were expected to abstain from sexual relations with their wives.

Renouncing marriage “to place oneself totally at the disposition of the Lord became a criterion for priestly ministry,”



Pope Francis visits his predecessor, retired Pope Benedict XVI, at the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery at the Vatican in this Dec. 21, 2018, file photo. Pope Benedict has defended priestly celibacy in a new book by Cardinal Robert Sarah to which he contributed. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

he said.

The published excerpts did not discuss the continuing practice of ordaining married men in the Eastern Catholic Churches nor the exceptions granted by St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict to married former ministers of the Anglican Communion and other Christian denominations who become Catholic.

Last January, speaking to reporters flying back from Panama with him, Pope Francis said, “Personally, I believe that celibacy is a gift to the Church.”

“I’m not in agreement with allowing optional celibacy,” he said. “A phrase St. Paul VI said comes to mind: ‘I would rather give my life than to change the law on celibacy.’”

However, he did say “there could be some possibility” of ordaining married men in very remote locations where there are Catholic communities that seldom have Mass because there are no priests. But, even for that situation, much study would need to be done.

Responding to journalists’ questions on Jan. 13, Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, said, “the position of the Holy Father on celibacy is known,” and he quoted the pope’s comments to journalists last January.

But Bruni also included Pope Francis’ statement that “some possibility” could exist for exceptions in remote areas “when there is a pastoral necessity. There, the pastor must think of the faithful.”

In addition, Bruni noted that when Pope Francis addressed members at the end of the synod in October, he said he was pleased that “we have not fallen prisoner to these selective groups that from the synod only want to see what was decided on one or another intra-ecclesial point” while ignoring all the work the synod did in analyzing the problems, challenges and hopes on the pastoral, cultural, social and ecological levels. †

Former cardinal moves from Franciscan friary in Kansas to new location

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Theodore McCarrick, the former cardinal who was laicized by the Vatican in 2019 after numerous claims of abuse by him were substantiated, moved on Jan. 3 from the Capuchin Franciscan friary in Kansas



Theodore McCarrick

where he had been living since late 2018. McCarrick made the move on his own accord, according to a spokesman for the Capuchin Franciscan province that oversees the friary.

The former prelate had stayed a little more than a year at St. Fidelis Friary, operated by the Capuchin Franciscan order in Victoria, Kan., in the Diocese of Salina in the northwestern part of the state.

While his new residence has not been publicly disclosed, one diocese vociferously declared that McCarrick was not within its territory.

“Rumors that the former cardinal Theodore McCarrick has moved to Jacksonville and is staying at a priest

retirement facility in the Diocese of St. Augustine are absolutely false. The diocese has made no arrangements for McCarrick to stay at any of its Church-owned properties,” said a Jan. 8 statement from Kathleen Bagg, diocesan communications director for the northeast Florida diocese.

“The diocese does not know the whereabouts of McCarrick, and it is not our responsibility to keep tabs on his movements,” Bagg added. “It is important to note that McCarrick was laicized in February 2019, therefore like any person, he can travel where he wants without reporting his presence in a location within any diocese where he may visit.”

The statement was in response to a posting by the website Church Militant that the diocese had arranged for McCarrick to move there.

The election of a new provincial for the Denver-based Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Conrad had no influence on McCarrick’s decision to leave, according to Capuchin Father Joseph Mary Elder, director of communications and vocations for the province, which also has a friary in San Antonio within its boundaries.

“There was nothing on our part” that

suggested McCarrick leave, Father Joseph Mary said. “Our provincial was very clear with him.”

Nor was space an issue. Fewer than 10 Capuchins live at St. Fidelis.

“It’s a huge place. We have our meetings there, and we have enough room for almost everybody,” Father Joseph Mary said told Catholic News Service (CNS) in a Jan. 10 telephone interview.

“There may have been concern on his part on the report coming from Rome” stemming from the allegations that first surfaced in 2018, Father Joseph Mary added. “But that is just conjecture on my part. He was free to stay as long as he wanted to.”

McCarrick’s life at the friary was uneventful, save for an interview in *Slate*.

But “he had to be supervised at all times,” Father Joseph Mary told CNS. “The friary is a big building that adjoins a church,” and behind the church was a school, he added.

Wherever McCarrick moved to, he kept his own counsel on the matter.

“The only knowledge we have is that he made plans to leave, and we were privy to his plans,” Father Joseph Mary told CNS. “That was the first time I heard any

plausible location to where he might be.”

McCarrick had served as archbishop of Washington and archbishop of Newark, N.J., and was founding bishop of Metuchen, N.J. He also was a New York archdiocesan priest and auxiliary bishop.

Media interest in McCarrick has followed him since he stepped away from all forms of ministry at the Vatican’s request in the summer of 2018.

He was quickly and quietly moved to Kansas after a *Washington Post* reporter unsuccessfully tried to track him down in late 2018 at the priests’ retirement community in the District of Columbia where McCarrick had lived.

That move took place before McCarrick, now 89, was removed from the clerical state.

Then, last summer, a reporter from the online journal *Slate* was able to conduct a brief interview with McCarrick inside St. Fidelis.

After a query from CNS, Paula Gwynn Grant, secretary of communications for the Archdiocese of Washington, said in an e-mail: “We understand that Mr. Theodore McCarrick has moved. As he is now a layperson, he is responsible for his own actions.” †