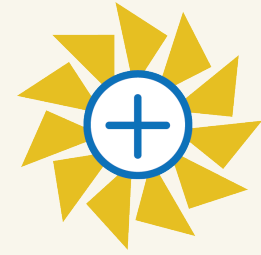




The

Criterion

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Evangelization Supplement

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Then-seminarian José Neri, left, kneels in prayer on Aug. 9, 2021, in the chapel of Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. Neri, who was ordained a transitional deacon in 2022, will be ordained a priest for the archdiocese on June 3 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (Criterion file photo by Sean Gallagher)

‘I want to share my life with others’

Deacon José Neri travels a challenging and joyful journey to the priesthood

By Sean Gallagher

ST. MEINRAD—Transitional Deacon José Neri’s road to the priesthood has been a long and arduous one—geographically, culturally and spiritually.

Born in southern Mexico, he moved with his parents and five siblings to Indianapolis in 2004 when he was 12.

Deacon Neri traveled culturally from what he described as an “Hispanic bubble” in which he lived for the first 18 years of his life, including his first six years in

Indianapolis, to one dominated by English speakers.

And spiritually, he went from living in a town in Mexico where a priest would only come occasionally to celebrate Mass and the sacraments to Indianapolis where the sacraments were readily available, and he soon fell in love with the faith.

This long and challenging journey will culminate at 10 a.m. on June 3 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral when Archbishop Charles C. Thompson will ordain Deacon Neri and transitional Deacon Jack Wright as priests for the Church in central and southern Indiana.

See NERI, page 8

Pope, Ukrainian leader discuss humanitarian situation provoked by war

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—After literally hundreds of public prayers for peace in Ukraine and 443 days after Russia launched an all-out war on the Eastern European country, Pope Francis welcomed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to the Vatican.



Pope Francis

The topics of the conversation on May 13 included “the humanitarian and political situation in Ukraine caused by

the ongoing war,” the Vatican press office said.

Pope Francis assured the president of “his constant prayers, evidenced by his many public appeals and continuous invocation to the Lord for peace,” the statement continued.

“Both agreed on the need for continued humanitarian efforts to support the population,” the Vatican said. And “the pope particularly stressed the urgent need for ‘gestures of humanity’ toward the most fragile people, the innocent victims of the conflict.”

Zelenskyy, in a tweet after the meeting, said he was grateful for the pope’s “personal attention to the tragedy of millions of Ukrainians.”

But he also said he asked the pope “to condemn Russian crimes in Ukraine. Because there can be no equality between the victim and the aggressor.”

Earlier that morning, in a speech to new ambassadors to the Vatican, Pope Francis seemed to indirectly address criticisms, including by many Ukrainians, of his attempts not to demonize and isolate Russia.

Having no “political, commercial or military aims,” the pope said, the Vatican operates on the world stage “through the exercise of a positive neutrality. Far from being an ‘ethical neutrality,’ especially in

See UKRAINE, page 15

Seymour Deanery Catholics celebrate love for the Eucharist in Columbus

By Sean Gallagher

COLUMBUS—Love for Christ in the Eucharist brought together some 600 Catholics from across the Seymour Deanery for a May 7 bilingual Mass, outdoor eucharistic procession and Benediction at St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.

Cathy Lampton, St. Bartholomew’s youth minister, was excited to see so many people come to

See SEYMOUR, page 14

Father Christopher Wadelton carries the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance at the head of a May 7 eucharistic procession on the grounds of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Bishops with bordering dioceses reaffirm humanitarian commitment

(OSV News)—Eight Catholic bishops in the U.S. whose dioceses share a border with Mexico reaffirmed their commitment to promoting human dignity and their cooperation with government officials as the Church and its partner organizations provide humanitarian aid.



Bishop Daniel E. Flores

“Daily, we witness the human consequences of migration, both its blessings and its challenges,” the bishops said in a

May 12 statement released by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). “As pastors of border communities, we minister to migrants and native-born persons alike. Our congregations include asylum seekers, enforcement officers, landowners, and elected officials, who come together, not as strangers or adversaries but as sisters and brothers, equal in dignity and worth before the Lord.”

Signatories were Cardinal Robert W. McElroy of San Diego; Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller of San Antonio; Bishop Peter Baldacchino of Las Cruces, N.M.; Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas; Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas; Bishop Michael J. Sis of San Angelo, Texas; Bishop James A. Tamayo of Laredo, Texas; and Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger of Tucson, Ariz.

Bishop Flores is chairman of the USCCB Committee on Doctrine, and Bishop Seitz is chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration.

The statement came the day after the May 11 expiration of Title 42, a federal U.S. public health law granting the

federal government some authority to implement emergency action to prevent the spread of contagious diseases by prohibiting some migrants from entry. It expired in tandem with the end of the federal public health emergency declared in 2020 for COVID-19.

With the end of Title 42, U.S. immigration policy defaults to a set of laws known as Title 8. While the status of some migrants not eligible for U.S. entry under Title 42 may change, recent Title 8 policy updates suggest those migrants may face new hurdles. Both Title 42 and Title 8 have been criticized by Catholic immigration advocates as insufficient, especially for migrants seeking asylum.

The bishops did not specifically refer to U.S. immigration policy in their statement.

“Since our nation’s founding, Catholics across this country have been at the forefront of efforts to welcome newcomers of all faiths and nationalities,” the bishops said. “As Christians, we are called to see the face of Christ in those who suffer, those who lack the basic necessities of life, and we judge ourselves as a community of faith by the way we treat the most vulnerable among us. We are each bound by a universal call to serve one another and to protect the sanctity of human life in all its forms.

“Therefore, we remain committed to supporting the efforts ongoing within our dioceses and beyond to promote the God-given dignity of every person, including those who have recently arrived in our communities. Further, as a Church committed to the common good, we always cooperate in the administration of humanitarian aid with local, state, and federal officials, frequently in partnership with faith communities and like-minded secular organizations.” †

Wanted: Your nominations for Excellence in Catechesis award

Criterion staff report

Do you think your parish catechetical leader (PCL) is awesome? Would you like to nominate him or her for an award?

The Archbishop Daniel Buechlein Excellence in Catechesis honor has been awarded by the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis since 1996. To nominate someone, take a few minutes to provide brief answers to the questions below:

- How do your nominee’s efforts help parishioners grow as disciples of Jesus, experiencing intimacy with him and enjoying participation in his holy, Catholic Church?

- In what ways does your nominee’s ministry encourage parishioners to bridge the gap that can be present between knowledge of our faith and practicing it in everyday life—making religion a way of life and a virtue that benefits communities?

- Providing meaningful experiences of formation for catechists helps bring about excellence—by God’s grace! How does your nominee encourage and motivate those who teach the faith with ongoing affirmation in the form of certification, recognition and commissioning?

Brief answers—two or three sentences—are sufficient to let us know the reasons you are nominating your parish catechetical leader. If you’d like to provide additional information, feel free to do so.

Please include the name of the nominee; his or her parish; your name; and the best way of contacting you. Each nominee’s pastor, administrator or parish life coordinator will be contacted to affirm nominations. Call 317-236-1446 or e-mail catechesis@archindy.org for more information on nominating your PCL for this honor.

The deadline for nominations is June 2. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

May 19–25, 2023

May 19 – 1 p.m.
Senior Mass at Oldenburg Academy at Sisters of St. Francis Chapel, Oldenburg

May 20 – 9 a.m.
Graduation at Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

May 20 – 5:30 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, Greenwood, and St. Martin of Tours Parish, Martinsville, at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Church

May 21 – 1 p.m.
Graduation at Cathedral High School, Indianapolis

May 21 – 6:15 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Patrick Parish, Indianapolis, at St. Patrick Church

May 22 – 9 a.m.
Mass for the students of Holy Cross Central School at Holy Cross School gym, Indianapolis

May 23 – 1 p.m.
Council of Priests meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

May 23 – 7 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Simon the Apostle Parish, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

May 24 – 9:30 a.m.
Catholic Center Department Gathering at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

May 24 – 2 p.m.
National Eucharistic Revival Congress Board meeting, virtual

May 24 – 7 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Pius X Parish, Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

May 25 – 10 a.m.
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center

May 25 – 5:30 p.m.
Becket Law Group Annual Canterbury Medal Gala, New York, N.Y.

Parishes change Mass times due to holiday weekend, Indy 500 race

Several parishes in the Indianapolis West Deanery will change their Mass schedule for the Memorial Day weekend on May 27-28 due to the annual Indianapolis 500 race on May 28.

Holy Angels Parish/St. Rita Parish, Indianapolis: There will be Mass at 4 p.m. at Holy Angels Church, 2710 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St., on May 27. There will be no Mass at Holy Angels on May 28. There will be Mass at St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., at 6 p.m. on May 27 and at 11 a.m. on May 28.

St. Anthony Parish, 337 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis: Mass schedule remains the same. It will be celebrated in English at 4 p.m. and Spanish at 6 p.m. on May 27, and at 8:30 a.m. in Spanish and 11:30 a.m. in English on May 28.

St. Christopher Parish, 5301 W. 16th St., Indianapolis: Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on May 27. No Mass will be celebrated on May 28 or May 29.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis: A bilingual Mass will be celebrated at 3:30 p.m.; in English at 5 p.m.; and in Spanish at 7 p.m. on May 27. There will be no Masses on May 28.

St. Michael the Archangel Parish, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis: Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on May 27. Mass will be celebrated at 7 a.m. on May 28. Parking for the Indy 500 is available for \$10.

For information about Mass changes at other parishes in the area, call the parish offices. †



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NEWS FROM YOU!

Do you have something exciting or newsworthy you want to be considered to be printed in *The Criterion*?

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A warning, a dream and a gift: stories of our readers' favorite verses

(Editor's note: The Criterion has invited our readers to share a favorite Bible verse or a favorite quote that helps remind them of God's presence in their lives and/or helps center them in their relationships with other people. Here is part six of their responses.)

By John Shaughnessy

Marty Brown's favorite Bible verse is so much a part of his life that his wife Lauren had it embroidered on a journal for him as a gift.

Brown also sees the verse every time he attends Mass or prays at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis.

"My favorite Bible verse is Mark 8:37," he notes. "My favorite translation is the one on the back wall at St. Joan of Arc: 'What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'"

The verse has become a touchstone for Brown, the father of 6-year-old Alison and 4-year-old Camille.

"This verse is a call to humility and magnanimity at the same time. I've reflected on this verse through many seasons and challenges of my life. It clarifies my priorities every time.

"For example, times when I've unknowingly drifted away from being the best father or husband or son I could be, that verse will come to mind, and it jars me back to my 'better angels.' Similarly, there have been times when I've become too concerned with work and professional status, and this verse has reminded me what is most important to focus on."

Brown also says there is a historical perspective on why this verse is featured so prominently on the back wall of St. Joan of Arc Church. In their book, *Every Heart an Altar*, parish historians Brenda Henry and Jean Zander included this note about the parish's pastor, Msgr.

Maurice O'Connor, when the church was built in the 1920s:

"In recognizing the pitfalls of the excesses of the Roaring 20s, Monsignor O'Connor directed that the Scripture from Mark 8:37 be painted on the back wall for all to see upon exiting Mass and going out to their daily activities."

Brown adds, "It's applicable today as well."

The inspiration for a dream

Bob Teipen was on a pilgrimage in Ireland when he heard the Bible verse that changed his life and captured the essence of a dream he had.



Bob Teipen

The verse is from Romans 12:12, "Rejoice in hope, ensue in affliction, persevere in prayer."

Teipen's dream was to create a Catholic radio station in the Indianapolis area that would continue to grow and help share the Catholic faith, all with the goal of bringing people closer to Christ.

"I selected [that verse] as a theme for a venture inspired by the Holy Spirit—Catholic Radio Indy," says Teipen, a member of St. John Vianney Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

Since starting the radio station in 2004, the frequencies for the radio station have grown to the point that Catholic Radio Indy now reaches more than 1 million people.

As for the continuing influence of that verse, Teipen says, "I had the verse painted on a bulkhead as you enter the Catholic Radio office."

When Francis Ziegler came upon his

favorite quote for the first time, it resonated so completely with him because he had already seen it being lived out by some of the heroes in his life.

It's a quote often attributed to St. Francis of Assisi: "Go and preach the Gospel. Use words if you must."

"This quote came into my world upon our present pope taking the name Francis," says Ziegler, a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. "I had never heard that saying about St. Francis prior, but it has stuck with me since that time. I have had great mentors who did just that and preach every day."

His mentors include his father James, "an excellent example of preaching the Gospel with his daily actions."

Ziegler says he also benefitted from the example of his late uncle, Father Ambrose Ziegler, a priest who



Marty Brown's favorite Bible verse from the Gospel of Mark helps guide him to be in touch with his "better angel" in his relationships with his wife, Lauren, and their children, Alison and Camille. (Submitted photo)

served the Lafayette Diocese.

"I was also taught 12 of my 16 years of Catholic education by Franciscan priests and sisters who lived that example.

"I try and live the same, as our Pope Francis wants us to evangelize through our daily actions." †

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Luke (a true Irishman) from Brendan Vacations, will be holding an informational webinar on July 3, 2023. If you are interested in this trip, please send an email to landandseaexecutive@gmail.com and you will receive the detailed itinerary and the cost (the more people; the cost goes down!). Please put "IRELAND TRIP" in the subject line. Don't miss out on this once in a lifetime custom designed tour of Ireland!!

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Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, *Publisher*
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Editorial

Survey reminds us of importance of encouraging, praying for vocations

While most students are eagerly preparing for the summer as the 2022-23 school year ends in the coming days, others are readying for their next chapter in life.

High school seniors are readying themselves for college, vocational school, service in the military or taking on a full-time job. College students—if they're not continuing their education in hopes of earning an advanced degree—are also preparing to begin their respective careers. We pray the Spirit guides them as they look to leave their mark in today's world.

It is also a time when many dioceses across the U.S. and around the world are looking forward to the priestly ordination of seminarians. In the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, transitional deacons José Neri and Jack Wright will be ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson at 10 a.m. on June 3 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. The public is invited to attend.

Both Deacons Neri and Wright were formed for the priesthood at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. An article about Deacon Neri is included in this week's issue of *The Criterion*. Deacon Wright's vocation story will be published in *The Criterion's* May 26 issue.

As you read about our future priests, you will learn what led to their vocations, how they spent time in prayer discerning where they felt the Spirit was leading them, and how they answered God's call. Both men's testimony offers a beautiful witness of faith, and we pray their ministry in the Church in central and southern Indiana bears much fruit.

At this time each year, the Center for Applied Research (CARA) at Georgetown University releases its annual "Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood," a report made directly to the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The report offers a useful snapshot of the lives of the soon-to-be ordained priests. The online survey, which CARA has overseen since 2006, was completed by 334 of the 458 total ordinands from both dioceses and religious orders who were invited to participate.

Jesuit Father Thomas Gaunt, CARA's executive director, told OSV News the age of men set to be ordained this year has "started to level out," with "more consistently younger men entering seminary and beginning their theological studies in their early 20s—basically after having finished college—and then being ordained four to five years or so later."

Some of the other highlights of the survey included:

- Overall, this year's ordinands are on average 33 years old, with ordinands from religious institutes generally four years older than their diocesan counterparts.

- The data showed a "steady increase in Hispanic ordinands year over year," Father Gaunt noted, with 16% of the 2023 class identifying as Hispanic/



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson ritually lays his hands upon transitional Deacon Michael Clawson during a June 4, 2022, Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis in which he and transitional Deacon Matthew Perronie were ordained priests. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Latino—a trendline set to rise to about 20% by 2028.

- White ordinands accounted for 64% of the 2023 class, with 10% Asian and Pacific Islander, 6% Black or African and 3% representing other ethnic backgrounds.

- A significant number of the 2023 ordinands (25%) were born abroad. After the U.S., the most common countries of birth were Mexico (5%), Vietnam (3%), Nigeria (3%) and Colombia (2%).

- Regular eucharistic adoration figured heavily in the pre-seminary prayer practices of the class of 2023, cited by 73% of the survey participants. Following adoration was the rosary (66%), prayer group or Bible study (45%), high school retreats (37%) and *lectio divina* (35%).

- Survey respondents listed among their pre-seminary activities parish youth groups (52%), Catholic campus ministry (27%), Boy Scouts (25%), parish young adult groups (23%) and the Knights of Columbus (23%).

- A majority of the 2023 ordinands, 72%, had been altar servers, 51% had been lectors, 40% extraordinary ministers of holy Communion and 33% catechists.

- Most (63%) cited parish priests as those who most encouraged their vocation, followed by parishioners (44%), friends (40%), mothers (37%) and fathers (29%).

As we reflect on that final statistic, it's worth asking: Are you among those who encourage others to consider a vocation?

Hearing and answering God's call in today's chaotic world is no easy task.

Let's make time each day to pray for more vocations and continue to plant seeds. And please Lord, may those petitions continue to bear fruit.

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/Sr. Constance Veit, L.S.P.

Stay close to the seniors in your life and see the blessing for them and you

The COVID-19 public health emergency has officially ended and summer promises happier times in the months ahead.



And yet our surgeon general, Dr. Vivek H. Murphy, has just issued an advisory signaling a new public health threat in our country.

The issue is loneliness.

It's actually not a new problem at all,

but an invisible epidemic that has been spreading through our society unchecked for many years.

In an essay in *The New York Times* in April, Murphy asserts, "We need to acknowledge the loneliness and isolation that millions are experiencing and the grave consequences for our mental health, physical health and collective well-being."

Murphy warns that loneliness is "more than just a bad feeling." It often leads to anxiety and depression—but that is not all.

It is also associated with increased risk of heart disease, dementia and stroke.

Loneliness carries with it a more significant risk of premature death than either smoking or obesity!

Murphy also noted that social disconnection is linked to reduced performance in the workplace and at school as well as diminished social engagement.

To combat this epidemic of loneliness, he proposes a three-pronged national framework aimed at rebuilding social connection and community.

The first point in Murphy's plan is to strengthen our social infrastructure through programs, structures and policies that support healthy relationships.

The second point is to renegotiate our relationship with technology—we need to learn to put down our devices in order to be more present to each other.

Third, each of us needs to reach out and rebuild relationships in our personal lives.

Although all three elements are important, I'd like to focus on the third point in this framework—our personal relationships—and I suggest that we begin by reaching out to the elders in our families and neighborhoods, many of whom suffer from a lack of meaningful relationships, though they have many gifts to share with others.

Summertime brings with it many opportunities for family-centered events—graduations, weddings, reunions, picnics and vacations—but do we always make the effort we should to include our elders, especially if they have mobility,

communication or memory issues?

The summer months can be a dangerous time for seniors, especially those below the poverty line and those who live alone.

Heat waves quickly become deadly for seniors who lack air conditioning as well as those who have chronic conditions that make it difficult for their bodies to acclimate to temperature fluctuations.

For example, rising temperatures can cause renal failure in persons with kidney problems and they exacerbate dehydration from medications like diuretics, which are commonly prescribed to older persons.

Twenty years ago, hundreds of seniors died in Paris and other French cities during a summer heat wave, seemingly forgotten by family members who were away on vacation.

French society was criticized for this obvious neglect of the elderly, but similar incidents have recently occurred in our country with seniors dying in their own homes due to a lack of air conditioning during periods of extreme heat.

Many cities in the U.S. have now set up public cooling centers and regulations for air conditioning in public housing.

But the first line of defense for vulnerable seniors should be the attentiveness of family members and kind neighbors.

For many years, Pope Francis has been challenging us to live in a greater spirit of solidarity by reaching out to those both near and far, especially those on the peripheries of society.

He often directs our attention to the needs of seniors, condemning neglect of the elderly and calling on us to strengthen bonds between the generations.

The first time he spoke publicly about the elderly was at World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2013.

This summer, Pope Francis will join young people for World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal.

He has intentionally linked this celebration, whose theme is focused on the Virgin Mary in the Visitation, to the third World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, which falls just a few weeks prior to the events in Lisbon.

As we prepare for these two celebrations this summer, let's stay close to the seniors in our lives, strengthening our emotional and practical bonds with them and remaining attentive to their well-being.

We will be blessed as we reach out to them, just as Mary was blessed in her encounter with her elderly cousin Elizabeth.

(*Little Sisters of the Poor* Sister Constance Veit is director of communications for the *Little Sisters of the Poor* in the United States and an occupational therapist.) †

Letters Policy

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

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

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

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

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

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

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



Christ the Cornerstone

The Lord is with us even as he ascends into heaven

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Mt 28:19-20).

Yesterday, May 18, was the traditional Ascension Thursday celebrated 40 days after Easter. Many dioceses, including the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, transfer this important feast to the following Sunday in order to allow a greater number of Catholics to participate.

This decision is not made lightly. We know that our secular culture makes it difficult for many Catholics to take time off from work, school or other obligations. We are also keenly aware of the sad truth that many Catholics today do not take seriously the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days. By transferring this feast from Thursday to Sunday, we hope to maximize the opportunity to communicate the meaning of this great feast and encourage better attendance at Sunday Mass.

Why is the Ascension such an important event in the life of Christ? What is the significance of Christ’s

ascension into heaven for the early Church and for the Church of today and tomorrow?

According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

“Christ’s Ascension marks the definitive entrance of Jesus’ humanity into God’s heavenly domain, whence he will come again [cf. Acts 1:11]; this humanity in the meantime hides him from the eyes of men [cf. Col 3:3]. Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, precedes us into the Father’s glorious kingdom so that we, the members of his body, may live in the hope of one day being with him forever. Jesus Christ, having entered the sanctuary of heaven once and for all, intercedes constantly for us as the mediator who assures us of the permanent outpouring of the Holy Spirit” (#665–667).

There are several important messages here. First, with the Ascension of Jesus into heaven, we have the first instance of a human body entering the heavenly realm.

We know from the post-resurrection Gospel stories that Jesus’ body was real, but transformed. He invited the disciples to touch his hands and feel the wounds in his resurrected body. He ate and drank with them.

In spite of the mysterious fact that he appeared and disappeared unexpectedly behind locked doors and was often unrecognizable to people who knew him well, Jesus remained a real human being in mind, body and soul.

Secondly, Jesus said he was going back to heaven “to prepare a place for us” (Jn 14:2). This is the basis for our belief in the resurrection of the dead on the last day. When that day comes, those who have been faithful to him will join Jesus—body and soul—in the joy of heaven. This teaching is a mystery. We may not understand how this will happen, but we take Jesus at his word that if we are faithful, we will dwell with him in the everlasting joy of heaven.

Third, the Ascension of Jesus celebrates the fact that although he seems absent, hidden from our view, he is actually closer to us now than he was to his disciples before he returned to his Father. This is a paradox, one more example of the “both/and” character of Catholic faith.

Jesus is both absent and present. He is both in heaven and on Earth. We encounter him in word, sacrament and service to others. He is especially present in the Eucharist, where he gives

himself to us really and truly in his body and blood, soul and divinity.

Finally, in addition to his continued presence among us, Jesus has also given us the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit, and he tells us that without this gift we would not be able to know, love and serve him intimately or to carry out his work in the world. The Ascension makes Pentecost possible. It gives us the opportunity to “let go” of dependence on the man Jesus and, paradoxically, to encounter and embrace him more profoundly in the Holy Spirit.

This is why the catechism tells us that the Ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven ensures us that we now have “a mediator who assures us of the permanent outpouring of the Holy Spirit.” Christ is with us. He has not abandoned us. On the contrary, he is closer to us now than he was when he walked the roads of the Holy Land.

Let’s celebrate the Ascension of the Lord with joyful confidence that he remains among us in word, sacraments and service. Let’s observe this special feast day with the conviction that he dwells within us by the power of the Holy Spirit. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

El Señor está con nosotros incluso durante su ascensión al cielo

“Por tanto, vayan y hagan discípulos en todas las naciones, y bautícenlos en el nombre del Padre, y del Hijo, y del Espíritu Santo. Enséñenles a cumplir todas las cosas que les he mandado. Y yo estaré con ustedes todos los días, hasta el fin del mundo” (Mt 28:19-20).

Ayer, 18 de mayo, fue el tradicional Jueves de la Ascensión que se celebra 40 días después de la Pascua de Resurrección. Muchas diócesis, incluida la Arquidiócesis de Indianápolis, trasladan esta importante fiesta al domingo siguiente para facilitar la participación de una mayor cantidad de católicos.

Pero esta decisión no fue tomada a la ligera. Sabemos que debido a nuestra cultura secular, a muchos católicos se les dificulta tomarse tiempo libre del trabajo, los estudios u otras obligaciones. Asimismo, somos muy conscientes de la triste realidad de que muchos católicos de hoy no le dan la debida seriedad a la obligación de asistir a misa los domingos y fiestas de guardar. Al trasladar esta fiesta del jueves al domingo, buscamos maximizar la oportunidad de comunicar el significado de esta gran fiesta y fomentar una mayor asistencia a la misa dominical.

¿Por qué la Ascensión es un

acontecimiento tan importante en la vida de Cristo? ¿Qué significado tiene la ascensión de Cristo al cielo para la Iglesia primitiva y para la Iglesia de hoy y de mañana?

Según el *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*:

“La ascensión de Jesucristo marca la entrada definitiva de la humanidad de Jesús en el dominio celeste de Dios de donde ha de volver [cf. Hch 1:11], aunque mientras tanto lo esconde a los ojos de los hombres [cf. Col 3:3]. Jesucristo, cabeza de la Iglesia, nos precede en el Reino glorioso del Padre para que nosotros, miembros de su cuerpo, vivamos en la esperanza de estar un día con Él eternamente. Jesucristo, habiendo entrado una vez por todas en el santuario del cielo, intercede sin cesar por nosotros como el mediador que nos asegura permanentemente la efusión del Espíritu Santo” (#665–667).

Aquí hay varios mensajes importantes. En primer lugar, con la Ascensión de Jesús al cielo, se da el primer caso de un cuerpo humano que entra en el reino celestial.

Sabemos por los relatos del Evangelio posteriores a la resurrección que el cuerpo de Jesús era real, pero transformado. Invitó a los discípulos a tocar sus manos y palpar las heridas

de su cuerpo resucitado. Comía y bebía con ellos. A pesar del misterioso hecho de que aparecía y desaparecía inesperadamente en lugares que estaban a puertas cerradas y de que a menudo resultaba irreconocible para las personas que le conocían bien, Jesús siguió siendo un ser humano real en mente, cuerpo y alma.

En segundo lugar, Jesús dijo que volvía al cielo para “preparar un lugar para ustedes” (Jn 14:2). Este es el fundamento de nuestra creencia en la resurrección de los muertos en el último día. Cuando llegue ese día, los que le han sido fieles se unirán a Jesús—en cuerpo y alma—en la alegría celestial. Esta enseñanza es un misterio. Quizá no entendamos cómo sucederá esto, pero le tomamos la palabra a Jesús de que, si somos fieles, moraremos con él en la alegría eterna del cielo.

En tercer lugar, la Ascensión de Jesús celebra el hecho de que, aunque parezca estar ausente, oculto a nuestra vista, en realidad está más cerca de nosotros ahora de lo que estaba de sus discípulos antes de volver a casa del Padre. Es una paradoja, un ejemplo más del rasgo del “tanto y el como” que caracteriza a nuestra fe católica.

Jesús está tanto ausente como presente; está tanto en el cielo como en la Tierra. Nos encontramos con Él en la

Palabra, los sacramentos y el servicio a los demás. Está especialmente presente en la Eucaristía, donde se nos entrega real y verdaderamente en cuerpo, sangre, alma y divinidad.

Por último, además de su presencia continua entre nosotros, Jesús nos ha concedido también el maravilloso don del Espíritu Santo, y nos dice que sin este no seríamos capaces de conocerlo, amarlo y servirle íntimamente ni de llevar a cabo su obra en el mundo. La Ascensión hace posible Pentecostés y nos da la oportunidad de “soltar” la dependencia a Jesús hombre y, paradójicamente, de encontrarlo y abrazarlo más profundamente en el Espíritu Santo.

Por eso el catecismo nos dice que la Ascensión de Jesucristo al cielo nos asegura que ahora tenemos un “mediador que nos asegura permanentemente la efusión del Espíritu Santo.” Cristo está con nosotros; no nos ha abandonado. Al contrario, ahora está más cerca de nosotros que cuando recorría los caminos de Tierra Santa.

Celebremos la Ascensión del Señor con la alegre confianza de que permanece entre nosotros en la Palabra, los sacramentos y el servicio. Celebremos esta fiesta especial con la convicción de que Él habita en nosotros por la fuerza del Espíritu Santo. †

Events Calendar

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

May 19-May 28

RISE UP! Daily Easter Reflections, one- to two-minute video reflections led by Father Jonathan Meyer, pastor of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, receive link via text or e-mail, text "Riseup" to 84576, free. Information: 812-576-4302, clairkeck.asp@gmail.com.

May-August

Marian University, 3200 Cold Spring Rd., Indianapolis. **Summer Youth Camps**, Innovation Through Engineering, Missionary Disciples Institute, theatre, Launch Your Future 21st Century Scholars, SYO Summer Music, athletic camps; age levels, final registration deadline June 12, fees vary. Information: 317-955-6102, camps@marian.edu, cutt.ly/mariancamps23.

May 25

Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Benedictine Room, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigrant Services Volunteer Information Session**, 10-11 a.m., refreshments provided.

Information, registration: cutt.ly/CCRIS or Laura Sheehan, lsheehan@archindy.org.

May 27

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk**, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in front of church. Information: holyrosary.prolife@gmail.com.

May 27, 28

Mary, Queen of Peace Church, 1005 W. Main St., Danville. **Bruté Weekend**, Sat. 5 p.m., Sun. 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., Masses celebrated by Father Andrew Syberg, Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary vice rector, talks on how the seminary forms future priests. Information: Ellen Sanders, 317-236-1501, esanders@archindy.org.

May 28

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Bluegrass Jam**, 5:30 p.m., free. Information: franciscansusa.org/bluegrass-jam.

May 29

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum,

9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Memorial Day Mass**, 11 a.m. Information: 317-574-8898, catholiccemeteries.cc.

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Memorial Day Mass**, noon. Information: 317-784-4439, catholiccemeteries.cc.

May 30

Virtual Come and See Retreat: Learn What it Means to be a Providence Associate, 7 p.m., sponsored by Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, free. Registration, information: PAComeandSee.SistersofProvidence.org.

May 30-June 1

Holiday Inn O'Hare, 5615 N Cumberland Ave, Chicago, Ill. **Catholic Writers Conference**, for new or experienced writers of any genre, manuscript feedback, pitch sessions with Catholic publishers and literary agents, CWG members \$100, nonmembers \$140, includes boxed lunch on Wednesday, register by May 29. Information: cutt.ly/CWGconference.

conferencechair@catholicwritersguild.com, 847-848-3799.

June 1-3

St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8155 Oaklandon Rd., Indianapolis. **Parish Festival**, Thurs. 5-11 p.m., Fri. and Sat. 5 p.m.-midnight, rides, live music, food, beer garden, rides, games, kids' zone, Vegas room (ages 21 and older), \$10 food/drink ticket per person or per family required for admission. Information: chair@saintsimonfestival.com, 317-826-6000, saintsimonfestival.com.

St. Jude Parish, 5353 McFarland Rd., Indianapolis. **Summer Festival**, 5-11 p.m., children's games, prizes, bands, food, Ferris Wheel, silent auction, bingo, Monte Carlo games, beer tent, Sat. evening live music with Josh Kaufman, free admission. Information: 317-786-4371.

June 2

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

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass 6 p.m. followed by adoration until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, msross1@hotmail.com.

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Friday Devotion**, 11:45 a.m., litany, consecration to the Sacred Heart, Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by noon Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

June 2-3

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **International Festival**, 5 p.m.-midnight, carnival rides, food, music, \$5,000 raffle, beer garden, free admission, prices for food, drinks and rides vary. Information: parish@stgabrielindy.org, 317-291-7014.

June 3

St. John Paul II Church, 2253 St. Joe Road W., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Devotion**, 8 a.m., rosary, litany, consecration to the Immaculate

Heart of Mary, confessions 8:10-8:30 a.m. followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass. Information: 812-246-2512.

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Day of Discernment Retreat**, 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m., sponsored by Our Lady of Greenwood Young Adult Ministry, geared for ages 18-39 but all are welcome, includes talks, discussion, Mass, adoration, confession, breakfast and lunch, \$20. Information, registration: 217-220-5744, cutt.ly/OLGDoD23.

June 4

St. Paul Parish, 814 Jefferson St., Tell City. **Parish Picnic**, 11 a.m., eat-in or carry-out dinners, music, cash/quilt raffles, free admission. Information: 812-547-7994, stpaulch@psci.net.

June 7

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605. †

Retreats and Programs

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

June 2

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center Foley Room, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Faith and the Arts**, 9 a.m.-noon, Indiana State University Professor Emeritus Dr. Arthur Feinsod presenting, \$25 includes materials and refreshments,

register by May 31. Information, registration: 812-535-2952, jfrost@spsmw.org, spsmw.org/events.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **How Do We Pray? An Introduction to Liturgical and Devotional Prayers**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. CT,

Benedictine Father Lorenzo Penalosa presenting, \$55. Information, registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

June 5, 12

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"The Chosen" Season 3: Discussion and Dinner Series**, 5:30-8:30 p.m.,

first two of eight Monday sessions (June 19, 26; July 10, 17, 31; Aug. 7), episode viewing and discussion, \$16 per session or eight sessions for \$115, includes dinner, popcorn and refreshments. Registration: ftr.retreatportal.com/events, 317-545-7681, lcoons@archindy.org.

June 7

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40, includes private room for the day and lunch; spiritual direction available for additional \$30, must be scheduled in advance. Information, registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Contemplative Prayer**, in person or via Zoom, 2-3:30 p.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind presenting, freewill donation. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, center@oldenburgosf.com, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org.

June 8

Virtual Guided Meditation Retreat, 6:30-7:30 p.m., sponsored by Sister of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Providence Sister Corbin Hannah presenter, registration required, free. Information, registration: Events.SistersofProvidence.org, 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

June 8-July 20

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, Pump House Studio, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **New Horizons: Emerging Artists Exhibit**, opening reception June 8, 6 p.m.; gallery hours: Mon. and Wed. 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Thu. 4-7 p.m., featuring four local artists, free. Information: franciscansusa.org/event/new-horizons.

June 9

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$70 with spiritual direction. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, oldenburgfranciscancenter.org. †

Mass and pitch-in honoring Africa Day will be held at St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis on June 4

A Mass and pitch-in in honor of Africa Day will be celebrated at St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., in Indianapolis, at 2 p.m. on June 4.

Africa Day, officially celebrated on May 25, is the annual commemoration of the foundation of the Organization of African Unity in 1963.

The Mass will be celebrated in English and French, along with at least six African vernacular languages.

The Mass will be followed by a reception in the gym. All are invited to bring a favorite dish, dessert or drink to share with the community.

All are welcome to the Mass and meal.

For more information or to indicate what item you'll bring for the pitch-in, contact Dabrice Bartet at 317-523-4193 or Pearlette Springer, archdiocesan coordinator of Black Catholic Ministry, at pspringer@archindy.org. †

Join Msgr. Svarczkopf on pilgrimage to France, Portugal, Spain on Sept. 17-26

All are invited to join on a pilgrimage sponsored by Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood to visit Marian shrines and other holy sites in Portugal, Spain and France on Sept. 17-26. Retired Msgr. Mark Svarczkopf will serve as spiritual director on the pilgrimage.

Pilgrims will visit Marian shrines at Fatima, Portugal; Avila, Spain; and Lourdes, France. Stops also include Santarem, Portugal, site of a 13th-century eucharistic miracle; Lisbon, Portugal, birthplace of St. Anthony of Padua; Loyola, Spain, birthplace of

St. Ignatius of Loyola; and more.

The \$4,499 cost includes airfare from Indianapolis, double-room occupancy, daily breakfast and dinner, admission fees, air-conditioned motor coach, daily Mass and spiritual activities. Msgr. Svarczkopf will also be available for spiritual direction. A single room occupancy price is also available.

The deadline to register is June 15.

For more information, contact Val Bendel at 317-414-9063 or vsperka@gmail.com, or Greg Bendel at 317-893-6547 or insulationfirestop@yahoo.com. †

Wedding Anniversaries

TOM AND SALLY (WILSON) BOGEMANN, members of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on June 1.

The couple was married in St. Vincent de Paul Church in Shelby County on June 1, 1963.

They have four children: Lisa Allen, Teresa Bowlby, Thomas, Jr., and Timothy Bogemann.

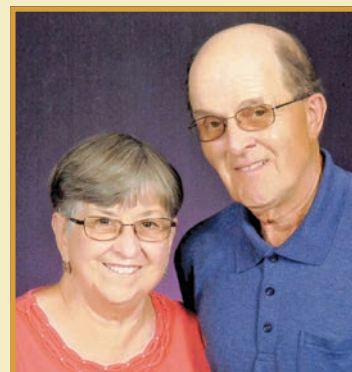
The couple also has seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.



DENNIS AND LINDA (MORMAN) MANN, members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on May 4.

The couple was married in St. Patrick Church in South Bend, Ind. (Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend), on May 4, 1968.

They have two children: Darlene Goughler and Laura Mann.



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



The Face of Mercy

By Daniel Conway



Unity and transparency are essential to Church's mission

This public entrustment of responsibility, which has been passed on to [St. Peter's] successors, is shared in varying degrees by all those who directly or indirectly assist the pope in fulfilling his mission. (Pope Francis, address to members of the Papal Foundation, April 21)

On Friday, April 21, Pope Francis met with members of the Papal Foundation, a group of lay men and women who assist the pope in his worldwide ministry, especially through their financial contributions.

In his address to the group, the Holy Father expressed his gratitude for the foundation's work. He also challenged the members to bear in mind two important aspects of their participation in the Petrine ministry: unity and transparency.

It's no secret that some Catholics in the United States, and in other parts of the world, are uncomfortable with the current pope's emphasis on poverty, migrants and people who live on the "peripheries" of social acceptance. It's safe to assume that some of those who are at odds with Pope Francis are current or former members of the Papal

Foundation. With this in mind, the pope's words take on an added significance.

In his address to foundation members, the Holy Father said:

Sadly, we see more and more in our own day how the unity of the Church is wounded by division. And the devil is a specialist in fighting against unity; he is a specialist! This is often caused by the influence of ideologies and movements that while at times well intentioned, end up fomenting parties and criticism, with each one developing a certain superiority complex when it comes to insight into the authentic practice of the faith.

Pope Francis strongly rejects what he calls "a superiority complex" which he equates with hypocrisy—the attitude assumed by Pharisees and other religious leaders in the Gospels. Jesus did not tolerate smugness or self-righteousness in his day, and Pope Francis regularly rebukes those clergy, religious and lay people in the Church who portray themselves as "holier-than-thou" instead of showing the same understanding and compassion that Jesus asks of all his disciples.

The pope's call to foster unity in our increasingly divided Church and world demands a degree of tolerance

and understanding that does not mean anything goes, but rather challenges us as missionary disciples who follow Jesus Christ to be merciful and non-judgmental.

In addition to fostering unity, Pope Francis says that transparency is an essential feature of papal ministry. For the past 10 years, Pope Francis has worked to make the Vatican more accountable in its finances and in its decision making. The pope is the first to admit that while progress has been made, much work remains.

His address to members of the Papal Foundation underscores the importance of transparency in the Church's ministry:

As you are aware, the Holy See has been making strides in these past years to guarantee that the services provided to the universal Church and to society in general by its various dicasteries, institutions and offices is carried out with appropriate transparency.

This is especially important in its service of charity, which relies on the good will and generosity of so many people around the world. While not comparable to the immense harm resulting from the failure to protect the most vulnerable from various forms of

abuse, financial scandals caused by a lack of oversight and transparency also damage the good name of the Church and can call into question the credibility of the faith itself, even if such thinking is always misguided.

Financial scandals, which have happened in parishes and dioceses as well as in the Vatican, can also destroy the Church's credibility as a responsible steward of resources entrusted to the Church's care.

Here Pope Francis praises the Papal Foundation for its efforts to help the Church be more accountable.

In this regard, I thank and commend the Papal Foundation for its ongoing commitment to maintain appropriate measures of transparency so that the funding of scholarships and projects truly benefits those in need and contributes to the building up of the kingdom of God on Earth.

Unity and transparency are not easy to achieve or maintain. That's why Pope Francis calls on the Holy Spirit to accompany him, and all who work to assist him, in carrying out his ministry as pope.

(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 unidad y la transparencia son esenciales para la misión de la Iglesia

Este mandato público de responsabilidad, transmitido a sus sucesores [de Pedro], es compartido en distinto grado por todas las realidades que, directa o indirectamente, asisten al Papa en el cumplimiento de su misión. (Discurso del Santo Padre Francisco a los miembros de la Fundación Papal, 21 de abril de 2023).

El viernes 21 de abril el Papa Francisco se reunió con los miembros de la Fundación Papal, un grupo de hombres y mujeres laicos que ayudan al Papa en su ministerio en todo el mundo, especialmente a través de sus aportes financieros.

En su discurso al grupo, el Santo Padre expresó su agradecimiento por la labor de la fundación y exhortó a los miembros a tener en cuenta dos aspectos importantes de su participación en el ministerio petrino: la unidad y la transparencia.

No es ningún secreto que algunos católicos ricos de Estados Unidos, y de otras partes del mundo, se sienten incómodos con el énfasis que el actual Papa le da a la pobreza, los inmigrantes y las personas que viven en las «periferias» de la aceptación social. Podemos suponer con cierto grado de certeza que algunos de los que están en desacuerdo con el Papa Francisco son miembros actuales

o anteriores de la Fundación Papal. Teniendo esto en cuenta, las palabras del Papa adquieren un significado adicional.

En su discurso a los miembros de la Fundación, el Santo Padre dijo:

Lamentablemente, vemos también en nuestros días cómo la unidad de la Iglesia está herida por la división. Y el diablo es especialista en la lucha contra la unidad, ¡es un especialista! Esto a menudo es causado por influencia de ideologías y movimientos que, incluso teniendo a veces buenas intenciones, terminan por fomentar partidos y críticas, donde cada uno desarrolla un cierto complejo de superioridad cuando se trata de comprender la práctica de la fe.

El Papa Francisco rechaza tajantemente lo que denomina "complejo de superioridad," el cual equipara con la hipocresía: la actitud asumida por los fariseos y otros líderes religiosos en los Evangelios. Jesús no toleró la petulancia ni el fariseísmo en su época, y el Papa Francisco reprende sistemáticamente a los clérigos, religiosos y laicos de la Iglesia que se presentan como "más santos que tú" en lugar de mostrar la misma comprensión y compasión que Jesús pide a todos sus discípulos.

El llamamiento del Papa a "fomentar la unidad" en nuestra Iglesia y nuestro mundo, cada vez más divididos, exige

un grado de tolerancia y comprensión que no es sinónimo de que "todo vale," sino que nos desafía, como discípulos misioneros que seguimos a Jesucristo, a ser misericordiosos y no juzgar.

Además de fomentar la unidad, el Papa Francisco afirma que la «transparencia» es una característica esencial del ministerio papal. Durante los últimos 10 años, el Papa Francisco se ha esforzado para que el Vaticano sea más responsable en sus finanzas y en su toma de decisiones. El Papa es el primero en admitir que, aunque se han hecho progresos, aún queda mucho por hacer.

Su discurso a los miembros de la Fundación Papal destaca la importancia de la transparencia en el ministerio de la Iglesia:

Como sabéis, en los últimos años la Santa Sede ha dado pasos significativos para garantizar que los servicios prestados a la Iglesia universal y a la sociedad en general por sus diversos dicasterios, instituciones y oficinas se lleven a cabo con la adecuada transparencia.

Esto es particularmente importante en el servicio de caridad, que confía en la buena voluntad y la generosidad de tantas personas en todo el mundo. Aunque no sean comparables al inmenso daño que deriva de la incapacidad

de proteger a los más vulnerables de varias formas de abuso, los escándalos financieros causados por la falta de vigilancia y transparencia dañan el buen nombre de la Iglesia y pueden cuestionar la credibilidad de la misma fe.

Los escándalos financieros, que se han producido tanto en parroquias y diócesis como en el Vaticano, también pueden destruir la credibilidad de la Iglesia como administradora responsable de los recursos confiados a su cuidado.

Aquí el Papa Francisco elogia a la Fundación Papal por sus esfuerzos para ayudar a la Iglesia a ser más responsable.

Al respecto, doy las gracias y aprecio a la Fundación Papal por el constante compromiso para mantener medidas adecuadas de transparencia, para que la financiación de becas y proyectos vaya verdaderamente en beneficio de quien lo necesita y contribuya a la edificación del Reino de Dios en la tierra.

La unidad y la transparencia no son fáciles de conseguir ni de mantener. Por eso el Papa Francisco pide al Espíritu Santo que le acompañe, y a todos los que trabajan para ayudarlo, en el desempeño de su ministerio como Sumo Pontífice.

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

NERI

continued from page 1

As he has approached this pivotal day through years of priestly formation, Deacon Neri hasn't allowed himself to imagine too much what it will be like for him to celebrate the Eucharist and the sacraments for the first time.

"It comes to mind every now and then," he said in an interview with *The Criterion* at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, where he has been a seminarian for the past five years.

"I try not to think too much about it. It can be overwhelming. It's going to be awesome."

'You began this'

When Deacon Neri was a boy growing up in the southern Mexican state of Guerrero, his family was not very active in their Catholic faith.

He received the sacraments of initiation—baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist—but he rarely went to Mass.

That was in part because there was such a priest shortage in the region that one only came to his town occasionally.

Lay-led prayer services would be held at his parish's church on Sundays, but his parents rarely took Deacon Neri and his siblings to them.

His maternal grandmother Angela was a bedrock model of faith for him, though.

"I learned from her what it means to be a Christian," Deacon Neri recalled. "She has a calm demeanor. She's always nice to people. She's humble. She's poor, but whatever she had, she would contribute it to the Church. I remember going to her house and she'd be on the front porch reading her Bible."

He enjoyed going from time to time with her to the Sunday prayer services in the town church.

"Even then, I had an interest in the Church," Deacon Neri said.

That interest grew over time to the point where he discerned that God was calling him to be a priest. Through it all, he never forgot his grandmother, who still lives in Mexico, and the role she played in his life.

"When I was ordained a deacon last year, I wrote to her and sent her a picture of me being ordained," he said. "I told her, 'You began this.'"

'A whole new world'

When Deacon Neri was 12, his parents and five siblings moved to Indianapolis where he had relatives living.

Nearly overnight, he went from living in a town where the Mass was hardly ever available to a city where multiple Masses were celebrated daily only a short drive from home.

His family soon became members of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.

Shortly afterward, Deacon Neri saw a friend from the public school he attended assisting as an altar server at a Mass celebrated in Spanish at St. Monica.

"That caught my attention," he recalled. "I thought it was cool."

He soon became an altar server himself. This led him to want to be involved in the parish in other ways.

"I joined the choir, even though I'm a horrible singer," Deacon Neri said. "I was looking for a different way to

serve. I enjoyed it."

Six years after moving to Indianapolis, Deacon Neri's faith had grown enough that he became an archdiocesan seminarian and entered into priestly formation as a freshman at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary and Marian University, both in Indianapolis.

At the same time, his knowledge of the vocation to the priesthood was limited.

"What I knew about the priesthood was that priests say Mass on the weekend," Deacon Neri said. "That was it."

The hurdle of his limited knowledge of the vocation he was discerning combined with cultural and linguistic obstacles he faced when he moved into Bishop Bruté made life as a seminarian difficult initially.

"I had been learning English, but I was in a Hispanic bubble," Deacon Neri explained. "At home, we'd only speak Spanish.

Most of my friends were Hispanic, and we'd only speak Spanish. My family and I were going only to a Spanish Mass. I was going to an Hispanic youth group."

Bishop Bruté "was a whole new world."

"I was living with 'Anglo' people," Deacon Neri said. "I was praying in English. That was new to me. I had to learn the responses in English because I didn't know them. It was a lot of learning."

These challenges led Deacon Neri to discern out of the seminary after his sophomore year. Two years later, he earned a bachelor's degree at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI).

"I got overwhelmed by the whole thing," he remembered. "But I never ruled the priesthood out, even when I left."

From 'if' to 'how'

While a student at IUPUI, Deacon Neri went on a retreat. There, he experienced a turning point while praying.

"I heard God saying in the back of my mind, 'Be a priest,'" Deacon Neri said. "It's always been those words: be a priest, be a priest, be a priest. Those words were so loud in my mind."

So, after a year of working in a business owned by an uncle, Deacon Neri became an archdiocesan seminarian again and entered priestly formation at Saint Meinrad.

For his first three years there, he still wasn't sure if the priesthood was his vocation.

"During those three years, I would tell people, 'If God wants me to be a priest, I'll be a priest,'" Deacon Neri said. "There was always a question mark."

That changed by the end of that third year, when ordination as a transitional deacon was a year away.

"I went from, 'If God wants me to be a priest,' to 'How am I going to be as a priest, because God wants me to do this?'" he said. "It wasn't a question of 'if,' but a question of 'how.'"

After overcoming cultural and linguistic challenges at Bishop Bruté as a teenager, Deacon Neri at Saint Meinrad has helped his fellow seminarians whose first language is English prepare to minister in Spanish.

One of those seminarians is Aaron Noll, in his second year of formation at Saint Meinrad.

"I've been practicing my Spanish with José, either in random small conversations or on Tuesdays here at Spanish tables where we have

Transitional Deacon José Neri

Age: 31

Parents: Apolinar Neri and Maria Lopez

Home Parish: St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis

Education: North Central High School, Marian University and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, all in Indianapolis; Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad



Favorite Scripture verse/passage: John 3:16

Favorite saint: St. Augustine of Hippo and St. Teresa of Calcutta

Favorite prayer/devotion: adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Favorite movie: *For Greater Glory*

Favorite authors: St. Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Merton

Hobbies: Reading biographies and history, watching TV, outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, bonfires and swimming, spending time with friends.

conversations in Spanish while we eat lunch," said Noll, a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. "He's helping form me for ministry in that way, to continue to broaden how I can do ministry by knowing Spanish."

Transitional Deacon Bobby Vogel, a member of St. Mary Parish in North Vernon who expects to be ordained a priest for the archdiocese next year, has grown in his proficiency in Spanish with Deacon Neri's help. He also appreciates his friend's happiness in his vocation.

"He's one of the most joyful men here," said Deacon Vogel. "You can tell his laugh from across the room. And it's very common to hear it. He's a very genuine person, very agreeable, amiable. He's willing to talk with anybody. He makes you feel welcome."

"He's just continually going outside of himself in the community to help people," Noll said. "He doesn't have to help people with their Spanish. He's not the Spanish professor. It's not his job. But he does it anyway."

'I want to share my life with others'

Building relationships in Christ and in service has attracted Deacon Neri to the priesthood more and more as he has progressed in seminary.

"I want to share my life with others and allow others to share their lives with me—in Christ," he said. "Sharing our lives in Christ gets me excited."

As enthused as Deacon Neri is about his faith, he knows that isn't the case with everyone.

"I've seen people who have faith but struggle to understand and to be fed spiritually," he said. "Knowing that God is using who I am and my talents to help these people—that excites me."

Deacon Neri has grown in his understanding and love of the priesthood through having summer ministry assignments where he has served alongside a variety of archdiocesan priests.

One was Father Todd Goodson, who leads Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, where Deacon Neri will serve as parochial vicar beginning in July.

"He cares for what he does, and he cares for people," Deacon Neri said of Father Goodson. "He gave me the freedom to do things and respected what I did."

Deacon Neri also lived for a summer with archdiocesan vocations director Father Michael Keucher at St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, where Father Keucher serves as pastor.

"He allowed me to see what a priestly life is really like," recalled Deacon Neri. "It was really helpful. Whatever he did, he would take me with him—visiting friends, going to a hospital, going to a store to get something for the parish."

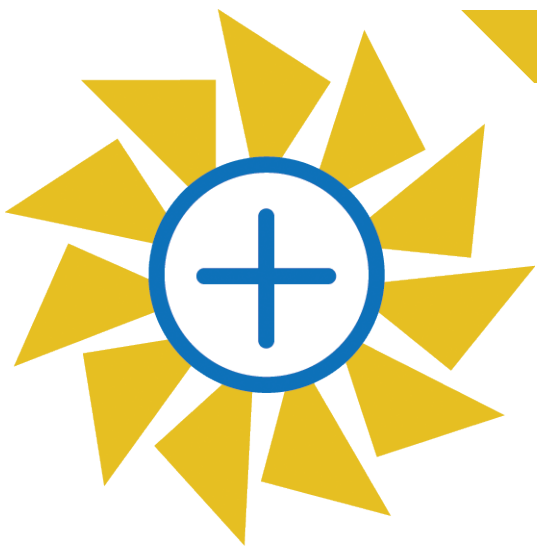
As he approaches being ordained a priest, Deacon Neri encourages young men to prayerfully consider the priestly vocation to which God has called him.

"I'd say what Jesus says so many times in the Gospels: Do not be afraid," Deacon Neri said. "Give it a try. I've been through it. There are so many questions. And we want the answers before we go to the seminary. But you don't need them. Just go and give it a try."

(The public is invited to attend the priestly ordination of Deacon José Neri and Deacon Jack Wright, which will be at 10 a.m. on June 3 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis. For more information on a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit www.HearGodsCall.com.) †



Transitional Deacon José Neri, left, assists Archbishop Charles C. Thompson at the altar of the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in St. Meinrad during the April 23, 2022, Mass in which he and four other men were ordained as deacons. Deacon Neri will be ordained a priest for the archdiocese on June 3 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)



2023 Evangelization Supplement



Steve Dawson believes two-minute conversations with strangers about his Catholic faith can lead them closer to God. Here, the founder of St. Paul Street Evangelization talks about the difference Christ has made in his life with two women on a street corner in Bloomington in 2016. (File photo by John Shaughnessy)

Walking in faith, my purpose

By Anita Bardo

Sometimes evangelization is as simple as sharing your story. When did you first become aware of Jesus' presence in your life? Is there a



moment when that awareness deepened significantly leading to a stronger relationship with Christ? Here is an example:

My relationship with God had been pretty consistent, but I knew there was something missing.

Then in 2010, my oldest grandson was born. He was born with a few complications, but nothing we felt we could not handle. Through his first few months of life, he went through several surgeries.

Elijah is his name, and he was the joy of our lives. He had his own personality he shared with us individually. Elijah was on the mend and healing—so we thought.

Then, at 4 months old, we were given the news that none of us expected: Elijah was diagnosed with stage four neuroblastoma, a childhood cancer. This news broke my spirit and my heart and devastated my daughter.

While sitting in a moment of silence, I thought, "How could a newborn have stage four cancer?" I never asked why, I simply asked God for guidance and understanding. I reached out to my family, my spiritual director and close friends asking for prayer, more so for my daughter than for me.

The days became gloomy, frustrating and sad. All we could do was make Elijah comfortable, singing to him and staying fervent in prayer. On July 8, 2010, Elijah was called back home to God. He was perfect and peaceful, and we were grateful for those five months and four days of his life. He brought a change in our lives that will forever be remembered.

In reflecting on how things transpired, I asked God what this meant, and these answers continually came to mind: Your life is going to change, your faith will become stronger, and your outlook on life will be promising.

Weeks, months and years passed, and my life did begin to change. My spiritual maturity increased, and I began to understand how my life would begin to shift. I thought at this moment, "What is my purpose?" At that very moment, I prayed for direction. I looked at Scripture to give me a better understanding. I reflected on Isaiah 30:21: "And your ears shall hear a word behind you: This is the way; walk in it, when you would turn to the right or the left."

Last August, I was laid off from a job of 22 years. Then on Nov. 3 last year, I was offered a job I was not looking for but prayed for, working in evangelization ministry for the archdiocese. Love of my neighbor was present. The invitation of God to take a leap of faith was present. I'm forever grateful for my true purpose in life—ministering to the local Church—and the satisfaction of being OK with God's plan.

Our stories that we share open doors to reach others in ways that we may not know. But it's what God is calling each of us to do: to be vulnerable, to be uncomfortable, to be authentic in who we are and in following Christ as a disciple.

Being hope for others, being a resource for many—that truly is my walk with Christ.

(Anita Bardo is coordinator of evangelization and discipleship for the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization.) †

'Keep it simple' when either starting or jump-starting parish evangelization teams

By Natalie Hoefler

We're all called to evangelize, the Church teaches.

While true, that "all call" can become "no call."

"There's an old saying that evangelization is everyone's job," says Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis. "But a lot of us have experienced the reality that, when something is everyone's job, it quickly becomes no one's job."



Ken Ogorek

Parish evangelization teams can turn that tide, he notes. His office created a guidebook for starting—or re-igniting—such teams (see sidebar on page 13 for link), and the Office of Evangelization is "more than happy" to work with parishes in building their evangelization efforts.

Archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship Anita Bardo says those efforts are "steeped in prayer."

"The first step, when someone thinks they want to start an evangelization team, is discerning from the Holy Spirit," she advises.

"I think there can be a risk of, 'Well, we need this, so I should do it.' You have to know you're working

through the urging of the Holy Spirit."

After discerning a call to start a parish evangelization team, the next step is reaching out to your parish priest.

What evangelization is—and isn't

It starts with a simple conversation—no plans, just discussion, says Bardo.

"First, ask if there is already a team you can join," she says. "If not, then discuss what you discerned about to start a team.

"Once that conversation happens and the decision is made to pursue forming a team, that's when you announce the effort to the parish and consider what to look for in potential team members."

The announcement "doesn't have to be a huge splash," says Ogorek. "It's OK to start small with simple goals."

One goal is for team members to first learn what they will eventually help parishioners learn: what evangelization is and what it is not.

"Some people confuse evangelization with proselytizing," says Bardo. "They think evangelization is yelling on a street corner or forcing your views on someone else. That is *not* what evangelization is!"

Rather, she says, evangelization is simply "telling your faith story."

And what does that look like?

"Talk about what was your life like before you encountered Christ,"

says Ogorek. "How did you encounter him? How did you come to a deeper awareness of the role that Jesus plays in your life? And how is your life different now? Then ask if they'd like to hear more.

"People can argue about teachings. But nobody can argue with your witness, because it's just your story. That in some ways is liberating, I think. It should give us encouragement to share our witness."

Once team members understand what evangelization is and are comfortable sharing their own stories, it's time to develop a plan to engage parishioners and take the good news throughout your parish's boundaries.

While there is no one-size-fits-all plan, Bardo and Ogorek recommend starting small.

"A good place to consider starting is by forming discipleship groups," always under the care and support of the evangelization team, says Bardo.

These groups start with parishioners who have been prayerfully discerned and invited to be trained as leaders, who then invite a limited number of people to grow together in faith.

"We are called not only to know things about Jesus, but truly to know him, deeply and personally, and to become like him," notes the archdiocesan guidebook on evangelization teams. "Discipleship groups are centered around coming to know the person of Jesus, and when

See TEAMS, page 11



Parishes use a variety of initiatives to share the Gospel

By Sean Gallagher

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has 126 parishes spread across 39 counties reaching from the plains of central Indiana through the hills in the southern part of the state to the banks of the Ohio River.

All of those faith communities are outposts of the Church spread across cities, small towns, rural farmland and rolling hills.

It is from these parishes that the faithful go forth to carry out the Church's mission to proclaim the Gospel to all creation.

Four archdiocesan faith communities are taking a multi-pronged approach to the task of evangelization, seeking to strengthen the faith of its members, inviting back Catholics who have walked away from the faith and reaching out to people with no church home.

Members of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis, St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Fortville and St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County are all making efforts online, through mail and person-to-person to share the Gospel.

'The message is Jesus'

Little Flower Parish on Indianapolis' east side isn't located on a main thoroughfare, but is embedded in the middle of a neighborhood.

Members of the Indianapolis East Deanery faith community's Invite Commission are working to build up the connection between the parish and its non-Catholic neighbors.

Cindy Woods, who helps lead the commission, grew up in the parish decades ago at a time when the divide between Catholics and non-Catholics seemed set in stone.

"We want to be a part of the community and let people know that it's a good place for them to come to," said Woods. "We want them to know about Jesus. The message is Jesus."

This happens in many ways, Woods noted.

"We've been trying hard to put ourselves out there," she said. "For three or four years, we've had food drives and get the neighborhood involved. We're trying to [interact] with non-Catholics in the neighborhood to invite them to come to the parish and to its festival."

At Little Flower's annual summer festival, the commission has a table where they meet visitors, give them crucifix necklaces and ask if they have any prayer needs.

"Sometimes, people will just pray with us right there and talk with us about Jesus," Woods said.

Despite the challenge Catholics face in the increasing secularization of contemporary culture, Woods has confidence in the future.

"It's all going to work out," she said. "Everything's going to be OK because of Jesus. That is contagious. All the members of the commission have that feeling."

Helping the Holy Spirit touch hearts

For much of its 154-year history, St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Fortville was a faith community in a small town in the midst of farmland in northwestern Hancock County.

In recent years, however, new housing developments have been constructed on many of those fields, attracting many people to Fortville who work in nearby Indianapolis and the quickly growing towns of Hamilton County.

That has led Kevin Sears and other St. Thomas parishioners to let newcomers to the area know about St. Thomas and the Gospel it offers.

One way they do that is through distributing yard signs he hopes "can get people connected with us and that send



Kevin Brady, a member of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Fortville, mans a booth for the Indianapolis East Deanery faith community at an ecumenical event in the town in northwestern Hancock County. (Submitted photo)

the basic message of where they can encounter Jesus."

"To those that grew up in the faith but fell away, maybe the Holy Spirit can work through such a simple reminder," Sears said.



Kevin Sears

He and other parishioners have also put up booths at community events to meet and interact with people from beyond the parish.

At the booths, they offer books and pamphlets about the faith, rosaries and other items. For those who stop to speak with the parishioners or take some of the material they offer, Sears says the parishioners there were "making it easier for the Holy Spirit

to move in their hearts."

"A woman stopped by, asking about who to contact to have her baby baptized," he said. "If we weren't out there, no one would even be reminded about their faith if they had fallen away."

Thus far, St. Thomas has set up booths at events just in Fortville. But Sears takes seriously the mission of sharing the Gospel throughout the geographic boundaries of the parish, which stretch across the northern half of Hancock County.

He hopes to have booths from the parish at community events in all the area's small towns.

"That's a lot of rural ground to cover when we're tucked away in the northwest corner of the county," Sears said. "Not only do we have a small parish, but we are responsible for the souls within a large physical boundary."

Indeed, he recognizes a duty to people beyond northern Hancock County, namely young adults from St. Thomas who have gone away to college. So Sears and others have made an effort to send care packages to them.

"It's important to make sure we find ways to stay connected to our parishioners that have headed to college," Sears said. "They need to know that they will always have a parish family at St. Thomas. We want to encourage them to find a Catholic church and Newman Center, to get connected with fellow Catholics to help them stay grounded with Mass and the Eucharist."

'Organic evangelization'

St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and nearby St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County have taken similar approaches to evangelization as those used at Little Flower and St. Thomas.

In reaching out to inactive Catholics, though, they go out to meet them—at their homes.

Franciscan Sister Joan Miller, St. Vincent's parish life coordinator, and members of St. Joseph Parish go to homes of registered parishioners who haven't been to the faith communities for a time.



Sr. Joan Miller, O.S.F.

"I didn't know how I would be received," said Sister Joan. "But people have thanked me. ... I got to learn more about people, what's going on in their lives, especially if they've been sick."

"I'm glad to do that. It's good to see the people. They're not just names on paper."

"People are grateful for a personal encounter," said Father Michael Keucher, St. Joseph's pastor. "The personal encounter, face-to-face, person-to-person, is how Christ encountered people."

"When people realize that they are missed, they're loved, they're wanted and that their Church cares enough to come visit them—that makes a big difference. They do come back."

The two parishes also reached out to inactive Catholics by sending them postcards at the start of Lent. One featured an image of ashes, a Palm Sunday palm, an invitation to return to Christ and the parish, and the website address for both parishes.

Another offered a Lenten prayer, instructions on the *lectio divina* form of prayer, and a list of Scripture passages to mediate upon.

Father Keucher has also posted daily "Father Mike Minute" videos on St. Joseph's YouTube channel that explain aspects of the Church's beliefs and worship and offer spiritual reflections.

"The more people know, the more they will love," said Father Keucher.

Whether it's through mail, in person-to-person encounters or through online videos and social media, Father Keucher said the members of St. Joseph and St. Vincent are starting to get an "organic evangelization" mindset.

"Evangelization is becoming more a part of who are across both parishes," he said.

Father Keucher spoke of how teenage St. Joseph parishioners recently took prom dates to the parish's perpetual adoration chapel after the dance and prayed with them there.

"How beautiful is that?" Father Keucher said. "It's not an official evangelization program or campaign. It's just something that organically happened where people get the idea in their mind and heart that they're supposed to make disciples of all nations and they're going to start with their friends."

"Hopefully the parish-wide initiatives are not just fruitful in and of themselves, but will breed a change of culture and a change of heart inside each of our members, that they'll want to evangelize." †



This is the image on a postcard sent out before Ash Wednesday to inactive Catholics by St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County as part of their multi-pronged evangelization efforts. (Submitted photo)



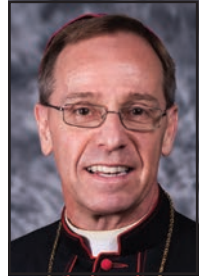
From local to nearby to national, evangelization resources abound

By Natalie Hoefler

Evangelization, sharing the good news of salvation through Christ. That's a task for others, right?

By our baptism, the answer is no, says Archbishop Charles C. Thompson.

"Every baptized Christian is called to holiness and mission," he told *The Criterion* in a recent interview. "And that mission is evangelization and catechesis. We're individually called by our baptism to evangelize."



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

That call might seem overwhelming. How do individuals evangelize? How do parishes evangelize? What does evangelization look like?

The answer is actually quite simple, says Ken Ogorek, director of the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis. "Evangelization is telling your faith story," he says.

Keeping that one action in mind, there are many resources available to help individuals learn how to share their faith story most effectively in different cases. And there are many tools available to aid parishes in helping parishioners become story-telling evangelizers.

Below are five tools offered by the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, Franciscan University of Steubenville and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to help individuals and parish evangelization teams in their mission to share the good news of Christ's love, mercy and salvation. For more information on these tools, see the related sidebar.

Archdiocesan Office of Evangelization

First and foremost, the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis is ever-ready "to assist parishes in starting or re-starting parish evangelization teams," says Anita Bardo, archdiocesan coordinator of evangelization and discipleship.

"We can come out and train parish evangelization teams, we offer workshops, and we have tools available on our website.

"But those tools may not fit in every situation—evangelization is not 'one size fits all.' So we're just a phone call away to discuss each parish's situation, brainstorm ideas and recommend other resources that might help the parish."

Still, the resource page on the office's website is a good place to start, particularly the guidebook, "How to Start (or Jumpstart) Discipleship Groups at Your Parish," available in English and Spanish.

"The guidebook is to help existing or new evangelization teams by giving them a method that they

can start with," explains Ogorek, who helped create the straightforward, 28-page tool.

"Frankly, very few of our parishes have a core group of people who are being prayerfully strategic about reaching the unchurched and the alienated," says Ogorek. "They're doing things here and there that are evangelizing in nature. But we would like to see every parish to be a little bit more intentional and focused on strategic evangelization to make sure we're not missing opportunities to share the good news."

The office also offers an annual workshop to help individuals learn how to evangelize. The next opportunity is set for Aug. 5 at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood.

St. Paul Street Evangelization is conducting the workshop—but don't let the name fool you, says Ogorek.

"The workshop isn't just about street evangelization. It's really just helping people gain confidence in telling their story and witnessing to particular types of people in a non-confrontational way.

"Participants will not only hear about good evangelization techniques, but will also have opportunities to practice them that day."

Ron Greulich has attended the workshop. The member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis called it "a real eye-opening day."

"The main thing we learned was how to assess where a person might be—non-believer, non-Christian, non-Catholic or a Catholic who left the Church," he says. "They gave us examples of how to tailor our story in each of those cases. Then we got to practice what we learned—that took it to a whole new level!"

"I recommend [the workshop] so highly for anyone who has a desire to share Jesus. Just take the leap of faith—you'll learn so much."

Franciscan University of Steubenville

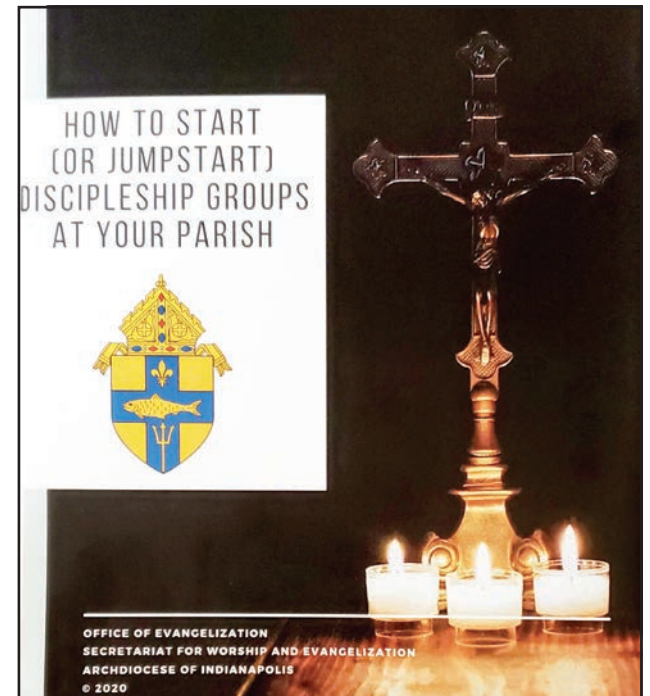
To help evangelization team members, catechists and interested individuals learn and grow, the Office of Catechesis recommends—and utilizes—the annual, four-day St. John Bosco Conference for Evangelization and Catechesis at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio.

"It's like no other," says Tim Seman, pastoral associate of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Augustine parishes in Jeffersonville.

He describes the conference as "a place to learn from the best people in the field, to grow, to meet other people in the same field as you, doing the same work you do and discussing successes and ideas."



Tim Seman



The conference, held each year in June, offers a variety of workshops and talks.

"Although most people who go work for the Church, any Catholic is going to find something beneficial to them," says Seman. "It's very much like a retreat as well, with Mass, confession and adoration," he adds.

He also recommends another Franciscan University resource: Franciscan at Home, offered through the university's Catechetical Institute.

The archdiocese has partnered with the Institute to make this online tool available to parishes in central and southern Indiana.

"It's really an extension of the St. John Bosco Conference," says Seman, who worked for the Institute for two years. "Not only are a lot of the talks from the conference available, but it has a wide variety of tracks made up of a number of workshops, each with videos and guides you can print out.

"The workshops for each track are so formative that you really can't find anything else better, outside of going for a degree."

USCCB

As the chairman-elect of the USCCB's Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis, Archbishop Thompson has been familiarizing himself with the committee's mission, efforts and resources.

The group's website offers nearly a dozen topics and tools under its "Resources" tab.

See **RESOURCES**, page 12

Evangelization versus proselytization

"Evangelization goes out to others and listens to them; proselytization excludes others and simply talks at them.

"Evangelization is a proclamation

of Jesus, allowing people to have an encounter with Christ; proselytization is proud and convinced that it has all the answers.

"Evangelization trusts in the Holy Spirit as the true evangelist, as the one who makes converts; proselytization believes it's up to us, to the force of our

arguments and persuasive power." —points from homily by Pope Francis on Aug. 5, 2013, summarized by Chris Sparks at Inkiy.in/definitions

TEAMS

continued from page 9

we experience an authentic encounter with him, the living Word of God, we are transformed."

After a time, members of a discipleship group go on to create their own group, and so on, creating a multitude of disciples.

'The primary purpose is love'

Parish evangelization leaders don't have to go it alone. The Office of Evangelization's guidebook can be printed from their resource page, and the staff is just a phone call or email away.

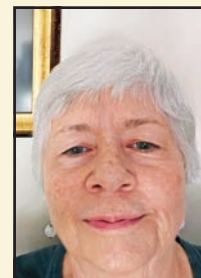
But it can also be beneficial to learn and discuss ideas in a group setting with other like-minded Catholics.

To that end, the office offers an annual workshop on creating or jump-starting parish evangelization teams.

The most recent one was held on April 29 at St. Agnes Parish in Nashville. Nearly 40 people from 15 parishes in central and southern Indiana participated.

"Some who came were inquiring about what an evangelization team even is, as well as how to get started," notes Bardo.

"I really felt like it fleshed things out better," says Terry Thixton of St. Patrick Parish in Salem. Creating a team "just seems much more doable."



Terry Thixton

Thixton, who is helping her parish start an evangelization team, appreciated the "suggestions for recruitment, traits for good team members and hearing ideas implemented by evangelization teams in other parishes."

During the workshop, participants practiced sharing their witness story.

"I've been shy about sharing my past not-so-great things," she recalls. "But it seemed like in the eyes of the people I was sharing with, there was empathy and compassion.

"When someone tells about dark parts of their life, I think they're very brave. I'm reminded that God is very merciful. I think if we all gained that courage to share from our regular experiences, that our evangelization would be planting a seed.

"I really loved that they said the

primary purpose of evangelization is love."

Thixton says she is "very grateful" for both the workshop and those from the Office of Evangelization who presented it.

"I just got an email from Anita sent to the participants saying, 'Let's have a webinar and share what we're doing,'" she says. "I like having a community of evangelization teams. You learn from each other, and you come to not feel like strangers."

Like Thixton, Kathy Sleva of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Bedford



Kathy Sleva

was especially struck by the sharing of witness stories during the workshop. "That is where the inspiration and excitement came from for me," she says.

Sleva described the different steps and advice discussed during the day. But amid the practical tips and suggestions, one message stuck with her.

"Anita Bardo was especially emphatic about keeping it simple, and don't assume that you have to be the

best disciple to bring others to Jesus," she says. "We're all on a faith journey, and we all have a story to tell. You don't have to be a saint to become a disciple or to bring others as disciples to Jesus."

'Don't overthink it'

Ogorek offers these final words of advice for those starting or reinvigorating parish evangelization teams.

"Don't overthink it," he says.

"It's really pretty simple. You can start doing some simple basic evangelization activities in your parish pretty easily. If you're paralyzed or at a loss for ideas, you're probably overthinking it.

Sometimes that paralysis "is the work of the enemy," Ogorek notes. "That's why prayer is such an important part of all these efforts. They have to flow from prayer and be peace.

"And then, before too long, we're offering prayers of thanks to God for the work he is doing."

(For more information on forming or redesigning parish evangelization teams, contact Anita Bardo at 317-236-1466 or abardo@ardchindy.org.) †



For Hispanic Catholics and for all Catholics, 'we're called to come together as one' in Christ

By John Shaughnessy

The eyes of Felix Navarrete sparkle when he recalls one of his favorite moments from the past few months—a moment that gives a view of the Church when it's at its best.

The moment unfolded on the evening of April 18 at a gathering of people from different Indianapolis parishes.

As the coordinator of Hispanic Ministry for the archdiocese, Navarrete was invited to speak at the gathering about the multi-year National Eucharistic Revival that will soon place its emphasis at the parish level from June 2023 to July 2024.

Yet before his talk at St. Ann Church in Indianapolis, Navarrete joined the group for eucharistic adoration, a group that included people who speak different languages—English, Spanish and French.

"Seeing all these people together in the church was just beautiful," Navarrete says. "I was just speechless. I really felt the presence of Jesus, and I felt he was feeling so happy to see all this diversity of cultures and skin colors all together in the church.

"In that moment, I thought, 'OK, this is what the Lord wants us to do.'"

That feeling for Navarrete was enhanced by what happened next—a simple yet significant gesture for the Spanish-speaking group that was made by Father Jude Meril Sahayam, the administrator of St. Ann Parish.

After eucharistic adoration, Father Sahayam divided the groups by their language, sending the English-speaking and French-speaking groups to rooms outside the church while inviting the Spanish-speaking group to stay in the church to hear their talk. That invitation deeply touched many of the Hispanics.

"At the end of the gathering, a lot of the people expressed to me how they felt so welcomed. Some of them said, 'Hey, Felix, most of the times we're the ones who need to move to a different room. And this priest invited us to stay in the church.'

"In the last couple of months, it's been one of the best moments I've shared with the Hispanic community. I was able to see in their faces that they had a special moment with Jesus in the Eucharist. And they were so grateful for that moment in the church. I was so happy. I got home and I was telling my wife about all that had happened, and she said, 'Well, that's the Holy Spirit!'"

Those combined scenes capture the essence of what the Catholic faith means to many Hispanics, Navarrete says. At the same time, those two scenes offer an understanding of how evangelization efforts can be tailored to Hispanic Catholics, whether in predominantly

Hispanic parishes or in parishes where they are in the minority.

'You see the humanity of someone'

"They live their faith in a simple way," Navarrete says. "They feel moved by devotions, especially devotion to Our Lady. And it's very important for them to have an encounter with Jesus, especially in the Eucharist. Something that's very helpful in the mission of evangelizing our Hispanics is creating spaces for them to have these personal encounters with Jesus. They feel very comfortable attending spiritual retreats."

He recalls the impact of a retreat for Hispanic Catholics that occurred earlier this year.

"It was very fruitful, seeing all these people coming together and praying together, having this encounter with Jesus.

Something very special happens in that moment. You see it in their faces. They're crying. You see the humanity of someone who is probably facing some struggle or illness or whatever. You are offering them this moment of encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist. And they realize the whole presence of Jesus is there. It's someone embracing them.

"That's the moment I feel we are really instruments of God, helping others to get closer to him. To be part of building these relationships makes me feel special. It also makes me feel more engaged in the Church, in the way I need to do things better and give a personal testimony, as well in the way I act and the way I speak. If we can help them create those spaces and help them get closer to Jesus, that's part of our mission as leaders."

That mission and that hope arise against the backdrop of some sobering statistics about U.S. Latinos who

are Catholic. A recent study by the Pew Research Center noted that the percentage of Hispanic adults in the U.S. identifying as Catholic decreased from 67% in 2010 to 43% in 2022.

"It's concerning," Navarrete says about the results of the Pew study. "Something has happened in this change of life coming from Latin America to the United States. In Latin America, the Catholic people live their faith in a very simple and devotional way. Devotions are a key for Hispanic Catholics.

"When they come here and they don't find that specific ingredient that helped them have that closeness to God, then they tend to look for another experience and going to a different denomination. That's pretty sad. We as leaders are living very challenging moments in the Church.



Members of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis work together during a gathering at St. Ann Church in Indianapolis on April 18 for talks about the multi-year National Eucharistic Revival. (Submitted photo)

We need to be aware of these particular situations that Hispanics are going through in the United States."

Creating that connection to the Church for people from all backgrounds is the work of all Catholics—and an emphasis that parishes are especially asked to embrace during this upcoming parish phase of the National Eucharistic Revival.

'We're called to come together as one'

"We really need to think intentionally about how we can grow our faith community together. It's all nationalities," says Anita Bardo, coordinator of evangelization and discipleship for the archdiocese. "When we have things like eucharistic adoration or the rosary, we can all come together because we know it's all the same. And that's what we're called to do. We're called to come together as one."

The Eucharistic Revival has the great potential for fostering that unity among the faithful of the Church—an emphasis that's particularly meaningful to the way that Hispanic Catholics celebrate their faith, Navarrete says.

"I believe this is the moment we have to reignite ourselves in our faith—to get back to our beginning, to our first love, to our first encounter with God," he says. "This Eucharistic Revival is giving us an opportunity to make a new chapter in our faith journey."

Bardo agrees.

"It's important that we're widening our thoughts and our concerns because we're all growing together in faith. And the eucharistic revival is going to get us there," she says. "It's going to make a difference if we're not just to ourselves, but we're reaching out to our sisters and brothers. We have Hispanics, we have Burmese, we have Africans, we have French-speaking people," as well as Catholic communities from the Philippines, South Korea and Vietnam.

"Though we may be different, we're still one. It's important to see everyone come together and then to know that everyone is welcomed. We should embrace the different cultures. The more that we have an understanding of what we're called to do—to be bonded in Christ together, to be one in Christ—then I think we'll all be better." †



Members of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis and their pastor, Father John McCaslin, pose for a photo with Felix Navarrete, far right, coordinator of Hispanic ministry for the archdiocese, during an April 18 gathering at St. Ann Church in Indianapolis about the National Eucharistic Revival. (Submitted photo)

RESOURCES

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In 2017, the committee published "Living as Missionary Disciples." Different from the how-to nature of the archdiocese's guidebook, this 38-page document lists points for parishes to consider when forming an evangelization team. It also addresses the nature of what St. John Paul II called "new evangelization."

"That doesn't mean we're saying anything new," Archbishop Thompson explains. "Our message is always the Gospel, Christ, the good news of salvation.

"The new evangelization means

finding new ways to proclaim it. How do we proclaim the message to our particular time and culture? What are the different ideologies and the agendas that we're facing today? What new tools do we have to help in this mission?"

The document also offers questions for reflection on the four "cultures" a parish evangelization team needs to nurture for effective discipleship: encounter, accompaniment, community and sending.

"It addresses how do we create those cultures, both for individuals and communities," says the archbishop. "How do we create a culture where individuals and parishes encounter Christ? How do we prepare them for a culture of accompaniment? How do

parishes reach the variety of people that make up their community? How do they prepare them to be sent out to witness?"

Another USCCB evangelization resource deals specifically with outreach to the "unaffiliated"—those who claim no religious affiliation.

While the "Outreach to the Unaffiliated Discussion Guide" and "Field Guide for Leaders" were written for bishops, "both can be helpful to parish leaders," says Archbishop Thompson.

"I think for this and a lot of these documents is the bottom line that there's not a one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to evangelizing. You have to look at your community, your parish. I think that's important."

Finally, Archbishop Thompson notes

the connection between evangelization and the National Eucharistic Revival.

"In fact, it's a sub-committee of Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis," he says.

The coordinating organization for the three-year revival "is creating resources and putting them on the website all the time," he adds. "They've done some very nice stuff."

In addition to a podcast, the site offers numerous videos—including one that featured Archbishop Thompson, and another in the works that includes him.

The connection between evangelization and the revival is direct, he says: "The Eucharist is the core of who we are and what we do, so it is the source of evangelization." †



Para los católicos hispanos y para todos en general: ‘estamos llamados a la unidad’ en Cristo

Por John Shaughnessy

Los ojos de Félix Navarrete brillan cuando recuerda uno de sus momentos predilectos de los últimos meses que nos brinda una visión de la Iglesia en su máximo apogeo.

Ese momento se produjo la tarde del 18 de abril en una reunión de distintas parroquias de Indianápolis.

Como coordinador del Ministerio Hispano de la Arquidiócesis, Navarrete fue invitado como orador del encuentro sobre el Renacimiento Eucarístico Nacional plurianual que entre junio de 2023 y julio de 2024 hará énfasis en la instancia parroquial.

Sin embargo, antes de su charla en la iglesia de Santa Ana de Indianápolis, Navarrete se unió al grupo de adoración eucarística, en el que había personas que hablaban distintos idiomas: inglés, español y francés.

“Ver a toda esta gente reunida en la iglesia fue algo hermoso—recuerda Navarrete—. Me quedé sin palabras. Realmente sentí la presencia de Jesús, y que él estaba muy feliz de ver toda esa diversidad de culturas y colores de piel reunidos en la iglesia.

“En ese momento pensé: ‘Esto es lo que el Señor quiere que hagamos.’”

Ese sentimiento se vio reforzado por lo que ocurrió a continuación: un gesto sencillo pero significativo para el grupo hispanohablante que realizó el padre Jude Meril Sahayam, párroco de Santa Ana.

Tras la adoración eucarística, el padre Sahayam dividió a los grupos por idioma; envió a los grupos de habla inglesa y francesa a salones ubicados fuera de la iglesia e invitó al grupo de habla hispana a permanecer en la iglesia para escuchar su charla. Esa invitación conmovió profundamente a muchos de los hispanos.

“Al final de la reunión, muchos expresaron que se sentían sumamente bienvenidos. Algunos dijeron: ‘Oye, Félix, casi siempre somos nosotros los que tenemos que cambiarnos de salón, pero este padre nos invitó a quedarnos en la iglesia.’”

“Los últimos dos meses, han sido de los mejores que he compartido con la comunidad hispana. Pude ver en sus rostros que vivieron un momento especial con Jesús en la Eucaristía. Y se sentían muy agradecidos por haber tenido ese momento en la iglesia.

“Estaba muy feliz. Llegué a mi casa y cuando le conté a mi esposa todo lo que había pasado, me dijo: ‘Bueno, ¡ese es el Espíritu Santo!’”

Esas escenas, en conjunto, captan la esencia de lo que significa la fe católica para muchos hispanos, afirma Navarrete. Al mismo tiempo, esas dos escenas nos ayudan a entender de qué manera los esfuerzos de evangelización pueden adaptarse a los católicos hispanos, ya sea en parroquias predominantemente hispanas o en parroquias donde son minoría.

“Ves el lado humano de la gente.”

“Viven su fe de forma sencilla—asegura Navarrete—. Las devociones los



Miembros de la comunidad hispana/latina del Decanato Oeste de Indianápolis posan para una foto con el padre John McCaslin, párroco de Santa Mónica en Indianápolis, y Félix Navarrete, coordinador del ministerio hispano de la Arquidiócesis, (en la primera fila inmediatamente debajo del crucifijo), durante una reunión sobre el Renacimiento Eucarístico Nacional celebrada el 18 de abril en la Iglesia Santa Ana en Indianápolis. (Foto enviada)

conmueven, especialmente la devoción a la Virgen. Y para ellos es muy importante tener un encuentro con Jesús, principalmente en la Eucaristía. Algo que ayuda mucho en la misión de evangelización de nuestros hispanos es crear espacios para que tengan encuentros personales con Jesús. Se sienten muy cómodos en los retiros espirituales.”

Recuerda el impacto de un retiro para católicos hispanos que se hizo a principios de este año.

“Fue muy productivo verlos a todos reunidos y rezando juntos, en un encuentro con Jesús. En ese momento ocurre algo muy especial y lo vemos en sus caras. Lloran. Ves el lado humano de alguien que probablemente enfrenta alguna tribulación o enfermedad, o lo que sea. En la Eucaristía hallan ese momento de encuentro con Jesús y se dan cuenta de que la presencia de Jesús está allí, de que alguien los abraza.

“Es en ese momento en el que siento que somos verdaderamente instrumentos de Dios y que ayudamos a los demás a acercarse a Él. Formar parte de la creación de estas relaciones me hace sentir especial. También me hace sentir más comprometido con la Iglesia, en cuanto a que debo hacer mejor las cosas y dar un testimonio personal, así como en mi forma de actuar y de hablar. Ayudarlos a crear esos espacios y a acercarse a Jesús forma parte de nuestra misión como líderes.”

Esa misión y esa esperanza surgen con el telón de fondo de algunas estadísticas aleccionadoras sobre los latinos católicos

de Estados Unidos. Un estudio reciente del Pew Research Center señaló que el porcentaje de adultos hispanos que se identifican como católicos disminuyó del 67% en 2010 al 43% en 2022.

“Resulta preocupante—comenta Navarrete sobre los resultados del estudio de Pew—. Algo ha ocurrido en ese cambio de vida al venir de Latinoamérica a Estados Unidos. En América Latina, el pueblo católico vive su fe de forma muy sencilla y devocional. Las devociones son esenciales para los católicos hispanos.

“Cuando vienen aquí y no encuentran ese ingrediente específico que les ayudó a mantener esa cercanía con Dios, entonces tienden a buscar otra experiencia y pasarse a otra denominación. Y eso es muy triste. Como líderes, estamos viviendo momentos muy difíciles para la Iglesia. Debemos de ser conscientes de estas situaciones específicas que viven los hispanos en Estados Unidos.”

Crear esa conexión con la Iglesia para gente de diversos orígenes es tarea de todos los católicos, y es un énfasis que se pide que adopten sobre todo las parroquias durante este próximo período del Renacimiento Eucarístico Nacional.

‘Estamos llamados a la unidad’

“En verdad debemos pensar intencionadamente en cómo podemos hacer crecer juntos nuestra comunidad de fe. Para todas las nacionalidades—afirma Anita Bardo, coordinadora de evangelización y discipulado de la

Arquidiócesis—. Cuando tenemos actividades como la adoración eucarística o el rosario, todos podemos unirnos porque sabemos que en cualquier idioma es igual. Y a eso estamos llamados: a la unidad.”

El Renacimiento Eucarístico es un enfoque que tiene un gran potencial para fomentar esa unidad entre los fieles de la Iglesia, un énfasis que también es particularmente significativo para la forma en que los católicos hispanos celebran su fe, asegura Navarrete.

“Creo que es el momento de reavivar nuestra fe, de volver a nuestros orígenes, a nuestro primer amor, a nuestro primer encuentro con Dios—afirma Navarrete—. Este Renacimiento Eucarístico nos da la oportunidad de escribir un nuevo capítulo en nuestro camino de fe.”

Bardo concuerda:

“Es importante que amplíemos nuestros pensamientos y nuestras inquietudes porque todos estamos creciendo juntos en la fe. Y el Renacimiento Eucarístico nos va a llevar hasta este punto—expresa—. Marcará la diferencia si no nos limitamos y les tendemos la mano a nuestros hermanos y hermanas. Tenemos hispanos, birmanos, africanos, tenemos francófonos.

“Y aunque seamos diferentes, seguimos siendo uno. Es importante verlos a todos reunidos y saber que todos son bienvenidos. Debemos acoger a las diferentes culturas. Cuanto más comprendamos lo que estamos llamados a hacer, es decir, estar unidos en Cristo, ser uno en Cristo, creo que todos estaremos mejor.” †

Evangelization resources

Below are links to evangelization resources listed in the article beginning on page 11:

Archdiocesan Office of Evangelization

• “How to Start (or Jumpstart) Discipleship Groups at Your Parish,” evangelizeindy.com/resources (available in English and Spanish).

• Archdiocesan Evangelization Workshop, Aug. 5 at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, conducted by St. Paul Street Evangelization, stpaulse.com/greenwood-bet (tracks in English and Spanish).

• Other resources: evangelizeindy.com/resources.

For more information on these resources or to discuss how the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization can help your parish’s evangelization efforts, contact Anita Bardo at 317-236-1466 or abardo@archindy.org.

Franciscan University of Steubenville

• St. John Bosco Conference (held this year on July 17-20), steubenvilleconferences.com/events/sjb.

• Franciscan at Home online workshops, contact Ken Ogorek at 317-236-1446 or kogorek@archindy.org.

USCCB

• “Living as Missionary Disciples,” Inkiy.in/usccbdiscipleship (available in English and Spanish)

• “Outreach to the Unaffiliated Discussion Guide” and accompanying “Field Guide for Leaders,” Inkiy.in/unaffiliated (Guide is available in English and Spanish).

• National Eucharistic Revival, www.eucharisticrevival.org/learn-resources.

Additionally, Pope Francis started offering a weekly series of talks on evangelization earlier this year. To read his messages in English, Spanish, French and several other languages, go to Inkiy.in/popseries. †

SEYMOUR

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her parish from across the deanery, which stretches geographically from Franklin near Indianapolis to Madison on the Ohio River.

But many of the Latino Catholics at the event came to the deanery from many countries across the Americas.

"I'd never seen them before, but they instantly felt a bit like family," she said. "They were in my church, celebrating the way I do and honoring the Eucharist the way I do."

José Morales also shared that love for the Eucharist. He came to Columbus for the event from his home in Seymour where the husband and father of three is a member of St. Ambrose Parish.

"The Eucharist is what is most important to me," he said. "It's our God on Earth—and I get to receive [him]."

Irving Luis wasn't used to such large gatherings of Catholics from so many ethnic backgrounds, said the 16-year-old member of Holy Trinity Parish in nearby Edinburgh.

"It's not something I get to see every Sunday," he said. "It was one of the few moments in my life when I got to see a big congregation showing our faith and who we are."

At the same time, Irving knew in his heart that it was natural, or perhaps supernatural, for Catholics to gather for worship like this.

"Our faith goes around the whole world, as it should," he said. "God is the Creator of everything."

The event was the last of a series of deanery-based events tied to the National Eucharistic Revival that took place in the 11 archdiocesan deaneries throughout Lent and the Easter season.

As the first year of the revival, focused on dioceses, comes to a close and with the

second year, focused on parishes, beginning next month, the deanery events were planned as a way for leaders of faith communities across central and southern Indiana to explore possibilities for how the revival can be observed at the local level.

Father Christopher Wadelton, pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish, was glad to see so many come to his faith community on the north side of Columbus, not knowing in advance how many people would take part.

"We were overwhelmed and pleasantly surprised," he



Father Michael Keucher preaches a bilingual homily during a May 7 Mass at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus that was part of a Seymour Deanery event for the National Eucharistic Revival. Father Keucher is pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and the archdiocesan vocations director.



Adriana Galicia, left, Amy Morales and Maribel Aparicio, all members of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour, kneel in prayer during a May 7 bilingual Mass at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus that was part of a Seymour Deanery event for the National Eucharistic Revival. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

said. "It gave me joy in my heart."

Father Michael Keucher, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and archdiocesan vocations director, preached a bilingual homily during the Mass that started the event.

He described for his listeners a conversation he had with children who recently received their first Communion at St. Joseph in which he asked them about the diesel fuel needed to make the parish bus run.

"I said, 'What if I had lemonade and said that the lemonade was a symbol of diesel. If I put it in the bus, would it work?'" he recalled. "They said, 'No, Father. Of course not.' It needs diesel, not a symbol of it."

The same is true, Father Keucher went on, for humanity's need for Christ in the Eucharist.

"Our souls and bodies were designed to run on God," he said. "And if you put anything else in there, it doesn't work. It needs the real thing. It needs the real Jesus. We need Jesus. We run on Jesus. Nothing else works."

"That's what we have in the Eucharist. I think that's why God, in his beautiful wisdom, has given us the eucharistic revival. It's so beautiful. We need to be reminded in our heads and in our hearts that we need God. We run on God. Nothing else works."

With Jesus fueling faith in the hearts of people, Father Keucher said, they can go forth to do the works of Christ and even greater things, which Christ promised his believers in the Gospel reading proclaimed at the Mass.

"Every time that we come into the presence of the Eucharist, we enter into heaven and heaven enters into us," he said. "Jesus, the God of the universe, joins forces with us, creating a kingdom of love on Earth, a kingdom of peace, holiness and blessing."

Catholics can build such a kingdom in this world, Father Keucher said, because "we run on God. He's doing it in us. That's the secret."

At the end of the Mass, Father Wadelton carried the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance in a procession along the border of the parish grounds. Hundreds of Catholics followed behind, publicly showing their love for Christ in the Eucharist and in song.

"It was beautiful to bring Jesus outside of the walls of the church," said Lampton. "That's our mission. So physically doing it was really cool. I also felt really proud."

Father Wadelton, encouraged to see



Father Christopher Wadelton elevates a chalice during a May 7 bilingual Mass at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus that was part of a Seymour Deanery event for the National Eucharistic Revival. Father Wadelton is pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish. Concelebrating at left is Father Christopher Craig, pastor of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison.

so many people putting such value in the Eucharist in their daily lives and the life of the world, experienced a "revival feeling" in the event.

"We're not healthy if our life isn't centered on the Eucharist," he said. "When we look at the world around us, we see a lot of problems with sickness and unhealthy behavior."

"We need to get Christ in our lives, in our hearts and in our bodies. The Eucharist is the source of that. This speaks to what our community needs and what our world needs."

The parish year of the National Eucharistic Revival will culminate in 2024 in the National Eucharistic Congress, to be held in Indianapolis from July 17-21. Some 80,000 Catholics or more from across the country are expected to take part in the event.

Envisioning potentially thousands of Catholics during the congress taking to the streets of Indianapolis in a eucharistic procession excites Morales.

"That would be a dream come true for me," he said. "It'd be more people to join us and to be able to enjoy with me what I enjoy so much."

Father Wadelton shares high hopes for the congress.

"What a great public witness that will be when Catholics are out there in those numbers, from all ages, gathering together to celebrate the Eucharist," he said. "If we can get the message out that this is what heals our families and our communities, who knows where it could go from there?"

(For more information on the National Eucharistic Revival in the archdiocese, visit eucharisticrevivalindy.org. For information on signing up to take part in the National Eucharistic Congress and for information about the eucharistic revival, visit www.eucharisticcongress.org.) †

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UKRAINE

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the face of human suffering, this affords the Holy See a certain standing in the international community that allows it to better assist in the resolution of conflicts and other matters.”

Zelensky also tweeted that he spoke to the pope “about our ‘peace formula’ as the only effective algorithm for achieving a just peace,” and he said he asked the pope to support it. Among other things, the formula insists on the withdrawal of Russian forces from all of Ukraine’s territory and proposes Russia pay reparations for the damage inflicted on Ukrainian infrastructure.

As he often does with formal visits in the afternoon, the pope met with the president in his studio at the back of the Vatican audience hall rather than in the library of the Apostolic Palace.

While the Vatican did not allow live coverage of the visit, a Vatican video clip showed Zelensky placing a hand on his chest and telling the pope, “It’s an honor.”

Once they were in the studio, the pope told Zelensky, “Thank you for this visit.”

The Vatican press office said the pope and president spoke privately for 40 minutes before they were joined by Zelensky’s entourage for the presentation of gifts.

The president gave the pope a poster resembling a Marian icon, but with a dark figure where the child Jesus would normally be. Titled “Loss 2022-58,” it commemorates the 243 children who died during the first 58 days of the war, said an accompanying explanation. In addition, Zelensky gave the pope a collage painted on the bullet-dented plate of a soldier’s bulletproof vest.

Pope Francis gave the president a bronze olive branch. The accompanying note referred to the biblical story of Noah and the flood, referring to the olive branch as a symbol of peace and of renewal after destruction.

Pope Francis and Zelensky had spoken on the phone at least twice in the first month of the war, which began on Feb. 24, 2022, but had not seen each other in person since early 2020.

The president and members of his government repeatedly have invited Pope Francis to visit Kyiv, but the pope consistently has said he would not visit the Ukrainian capital unless he also could visit Moscow on a mission of peace. Russian officials continue to

say the time is not right.

Zelensky also met in Rome with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and President Sergio Mattarella, thanking them both for their support of Ukraine and for the military assistance Italy is providing.

Pope Francis has consistently condemned the arms trade, including in remarks since the Russian invasion, leading many to think he opposed the efforts of the European Union and NATO to help Ukraine defend itself.

But, when asked specifically about Ukraine buying or receiving weapons, he said in September, “This is a political decision, which can be moral—morally acceptable—if it is done according to the conditions of morality, which are manifold. ... But it can be immoral if it is done with the intention of provoking more war or selling weapons or discarding those weapons that are no longer needed.”

A few hours before Pope Francis welcomed Zelensky to the Vatican, a message on Pope Francis’ Twitter account read: “May #OurLadyOfFatima, the mother of Jesus and our own mother, help us create paths of encounter and dialogue that lead toward peace, and grant us the courage to trod them without hesitation.”

May 13 is the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, the anniversary of the day in 1917 when three Portuguese children said they first saw Mary. In the monthly apparitions, which continued until Oct. 13, 1917, Mary encouraged the children to pray for peace and, they said, for the conversion of Russia.

Pope Francis, at his general audience on May 3, said, “I recall the request of Our Lady of Fatima to the three shepherd children: ‘Pray the rosary every day for peace in the world and an end to the war.’ I, too, ask you to pray the rosary for peace.”

The meeting between the pope and Zelensky came two weeks after Pope Francis told reporters the Holy See is working on a project related to peace



Pope Francis and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky shake hands after their meeting at the Vatican on May 13. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

between Russia and Ukraine, but he could not talk about it yet.

“There is a mission underway that is not public yet; when it is public, I will tell you about it,” Pope Francis told reporters traveling with him from Budapest, Hungary, back to Rome on April 30.

Ukrainian and Russian officials denied knowing anything about it. But Cardinal Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, insisted they did. And, speaking to reporters on May 10, he said progress was being made, “but of course at the confidential level. However, the thing I think has been explained, and I think it will go forward.”

Pope Francis has said the Vatican has been involved in successfully mediating prisoner-of-war exchanges between Ukraine and Russia and, in late April, when Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal visited the pope at the Vatican, he asked for the Vatican’s help in returning to Ukraine children taken by force to Russia.

The Ukrainian government’s “Children of War” website claimed, as of May 13, that 19,393 children had been forcibly removed from Ukraine and taken to Russia.

Zelensky, in his tweet, also spoke to the pope “about tens of thousands of deported Ukrainian children. We must make every effort to return them home.” †

Catholic schools: Education for life and eternity

By Brian Disney

The 2023 Indiana state legislature passed the biennial budget and several bills that demonstrated their commitment to parental rights and responsibilities to choose the best education for their children.

By eliminating barriers and increasing income eligibility for the Indiana Choice Scholarships (vouchers), more Hoosier Catholic families can use a portion of their Indiana tax dollars to send their children and grandchildren to Catholic schools for the 2023-24 school year.

Our Catholic schools provide an excellent education for life and for eternity by implementing the nine defining characteristics of Catholic schools as taught by the Holy See and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. I invite all Hoosier Catholic families with children and grandchildren in preschool through 12th grade to prayerfully discern if a Catholic school education is best for their child.

The 2023 Indiana state legislature simplified and expanded the Indiana Choice Scholarship program. There are now only three requirements for families to access Choice Scholarships for their children in kindergarten through 12th grade.

1. The student is an Indiana resident.
2. The student is at least 5 years old as of Oct. 1.
3. The student is a member of a household that meets the annual income eligibility criteria.

Even though these changes do not take effect until June 29, families should begin working with schools now to complete the Choice Scholarship applications.

In addition to the changes to the Choice Scholarship program for students in K-12, the state legislature made changes to the Scholarship-Granting

Organizations program (SGO) allowing schools to use SGO scholarships for their preschool students. Details of this expansion are forthcoming. A School Scholarship Tax Credit (50%) is available for individuals or corporations who donate to SGOs.

Catholic schools are the best choice for many families due to their excellence and affordability. Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, in Indiana and across the country are performing exceptionally in academics, performing arts, athletics and other extracurricular activities. These successes are evidence that our Catholic schools prepare our students for college, career and full participation in American society.

More importantly, our Catholic school students participate in daily prayer, regular school Masses, special prayer activities, religion classes and service-learning opportunities. These activities prepare our students for eternal life in heaven.

The achievements of our Catholic schools is directly related to the nine defining characteristics of Catholic schools. These characteristics guide our schools in their everyday work of educating and forming children for life and for eternity. The characteristics are:

- **Centered in the person of Jesus Christ:** Catholic school education fosters personal relationships with Jesus Christ and a communal witness to the Gospel message of love of God and neighbor.
- **Contributes to the evangelizing mission of the Church:** As a Church ministry where faith, culture and life are brought into harmony, Catholic schools participate in the local archbishop’s evangelization ministry.
- **Distinguished by excellence:** A Catholic school is characterized by excellence in every aspect of its programs, life and activities.

• Committed to educate the whole child:

Catholic schools are rooted in the principle that human beings have an eternal destiny. Therefore, Catholic schools develop the full human potential of students by forming them spiritually, intellectually, physically, morally, emotionally and socially.

• Steeped in a Catholic worldview:

A Catholic school, through its curriculum and instruction, fosters students’ growth as seekers of wisdom and truth, self-motivated learners, ethical and moral decision-makers and transformers of the world with Gospel values.

• Sustained by Gospel witness:

Catholic schools recruit educators who are practicing Catholics, understand and accept the teachings of the Church and demands of the Gospel and contribute to the school’s Catholic identity, including participation in social justice and evangelization.

• **Shaped by communion and community:** Catholic schools emphasize that the school is a community of learners and a community of faith. Catholic schools promote trust, collaboration and partnership between educators and parents (the primary teachers) in the formation of their children.

• **Accessible to all students:** Catholic schools strive to provide education to all people who desire a Catholic school education for their children.

Choice Scholarship Program Income Limits by Household Size	
Household Size	400% of Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility
	Annual Household Income Limit ¹
1	\$107,892.00
2	\$145,928.00
3	\$183,964.00
4	\$222,000.00
5	\$260,036.00
6	\$298,072.00
7	\$336,108.00
8	\$374,144.00
9	\$412,180.00
10	\$450,216.00
¹ Add \$38,036 for each additional family member.	

Catholic schools strive to provide programs and assistance to meet the needs of all children.

- **Established by the express authority of the bishop:** Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, in communion with the pastors, supports and enhances the work of Catholic schools and ensures that Catholic schools are educating students for life and eternity.

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis educate and form our students for life and for eternity. Thanks to the 2023 Indiana legislative session, our Catholic schools are more affordable for most Hoosier families. Please contact your local Catholic school or the archdiocese’s Office of Catholic Schools at 317-236-1430 if you have more questions. God bless our Catholic school students, families, educators and supporters!

(Brian Disney is the archdiocesan superintendent of Catholic Schools.) †

Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Jennifer Burger

See the light to encounter Jesus in every detail of life

I was recently walking the trails at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis, and the sunlight caught my attention through the leaves. I looked up and saw a Sycamore tree towering above the canopy of green, its white upper branches reaching upward to the blue sky.



I love Sycamore trees. I always look for them as I drive

along Fall Creek Road in Indianapolis, especially in wintertime when their alabaster limbs seem to glow in contrast to the colorless landscape. If not for their height and from the vantage point of being at a distance, it is easy to miss them this time of the year. So it is a wonder that this particular tree caught my attention at all, if not for the sunlight that moved my gaze in that direction.

This encounter reminded me of the saying, “You can’t see the forest through the trees,” which is how many of us go through life—getting caught up in the details so that we can’t see the bigger picture. However on this day, the

encounter was in the detail of this tree among the forest, which for me was an invitation to stay for a moment and study this beautiful creation.

One of the most notable characteristics of a sycamore tree is its bark. At the bottom of its trunk, the bark is brown, and unless you know what you are looking for, you might not notice it as being different than any other tree. Above this section, you will see patches of brown, green, gray and white that resemble army camouflage. And at the top of the tree, its branches herald pure white as they spread out toward the heavens.

I stood in awe, asking God what he was saying to me, and the words of the Psalmist came to mind, “They speak of the glory of your reign and tell of your great works” (Ps 145:11). This tree speaks to me of Christ, and I believe it has a message for us all:

“How do we encounter Christ?” Do we have the awareness to respond to God in such a way that we can stand before Christ? Do we stand in awe? What do we see? During Mass, do we remain at “ground level,” unmoved by the Eucharist as we see nothing out of the ordinary? Or do we stop our gaze, aware that the

Eucharist is important, but lose sight amid the “camouflage” of distractions around us or within us? Or do we look up at the elevated Eucharist above the altar and see the glory of God, brilliant in this white host, the Risen Christ?

Encountering Jesus is an extraordinary experience, and it might be easy to miss this due to his “hidden” nature. As we have been reading in the Gospel of John this month, even the first Apostles and those who followed Jesus seemed to have struggled with this at times. But like them, orientating our hearts and minds heavenward in the Resurrection, we find he is ever-present.

In Christ, we see the forest and the trees, for he is the “bigger picture”—and he is in every detail of our lives!

As we head into the parish phase of the National Eucharistic Revival next month, may God show you the light to an encounter with Christ—the true presence! Let us make it personal and look up to our Lord in awe and in gratitude for the gift of the Eucharist!

(Jennifer Burger is program manager at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis.) †

Guest Column/Melissa Alvarez

Anxiety is prevalent in all of us

Anxiety is rooted in fear of perceived danger, in the perception that something is about to go wrong or will go wrong in the future. But what Jesus teaches us is to come back to the present moment—to be where your feet are because tomorrow will have enough trouble. Although it is OK to be concerned about the future, we shouldn’t worry about it.



There is a difference between experiencing anxiety and having an anxiety disorder. Anxiety becomes a mental health concern when it starts interrupting your day-to-day functioning—when the distress is taking away from your ability to engage with people as a friend, or to engage in your job or any role you might have.

Not all anxiety is bad. For example, if you are going to confession, you may experience some anxiety, which is normal. Negative thoughts are normal, too, but not helpful. But just because we “think” something may happen or is happening does not make it fact. We have to identify and observe our thinking. We always have thoughts, but not every thought is accurate. Accepting a self-induced anxiety as reality can impact not only ourselves but also how we interact with others.

Many times, self-care can be hijacked by the marketing industry, encouraging you to “treat yourself” (and spend money on distractions). That is not what self-care is. Self-care is what feeds your soul—what fuels you and gives you energy.

What self-care is really depends on your personality. You might need something as simple as buying a cup of coffee, reading a book, going fishing, exercising or simply taking time for self-reflection in order to feel restored. For others, it may mean speaking to a therapist once a week.

Asking yourself, “What do I need?” might be seen as selfish by some, but it is actually selfless and important; we cannot give when we don’t receive. We cannot pour out from an empty cup. It first needs to be filled.

Our thoughts impact our perspective and our emotions. In turn, our actions are affected because our emotions are lived experiences within our bodies.

What does God tell us about anxiety? Look it up in Mt 6:25-34. Why do we not take God at his word? God is telling us, “I will take care of you.”

Consider starting your day by spending time with the Lord—not rather than rushing about in the morning, but setting aside some time for uninterrupted prayer to a means of feeling better. Grounded in the reality of Christ, we are able to encounter all the daily difficulties and be reminded that grace exists in the present moment.

One of the beauties of Catholicism is the grace we can encounter in the present moment. Our faith teaches us that while carrying our cross, Jesus gives us the grace to encounter difficulty. No one is happy all the time, no matter what social media tries to convey. Emotions are experienced all day, every day. They impact our thinking, decision-making, behavior, learning, creativity and performance. There is a physiological response to emotions. The more we try to get rid of them, the stronger they become. Being aware of our emotions helps us to be able to be more intentionally present. Emotions are meant to be indicators, and identifying your fuel is what will enable you to not run on empty.

So, become more self-aware, identifying and observing your thoughts. As the saying goes, “name it to tame it!”

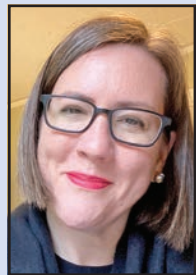
See BRISCOE, page 18

See ALVAREZ, page 18

Guest Column/Shemaiah Gonzalez

We’re not ‘that kind of parish’ should inspire change

On the last bitter morning of winter, with spring just threatening, my husband slipped on an icy pathway outside our home, detaching his quadriceps muscle from his knee. The next 12 hours were a whirlwind: emergency surgery, picking up our children from school, feeding them and leaving them with a neighbor before rushing back to the hospital.



When I brought my husband home late that night, it was clear we would need help during his three-month recovery. Exhausted, I posted to social media with a call for support. We live two states away from family, and I hoped a few friends

could pitch in, but I felt certain our parish and children’s Catholic school would support us—isn’t that what the body of Christ is for?

The next day, I received a call from my priest. As he is not on social media, someone from the parish had alerted him to my post. He offered prayers and said that he would alert church staff.

A few days later, I received an e-mail from the director of children’s ministries. I recounted my husband’s accident and gave her the link to the “meal train” calendar I had set up, so she could share it with the other families. She e-mailed to me a very welcome DoorDash gift card and let me know she would pray for us.

I did not hear from our church for the next two weeks. I set up a ground-floor bed for my immobile husband and scurried to keep up with the household tasks we used to divide as I cared for him. I attended Mass with my children, as my husband watched from home. The school never checked in with us. The parishioner who originally alerted my priest to my social media post never connected.

My priest went on a retreat and when he returned, he did check in with a text, to see how we were faring. I let him know that beyond the children’s ministry’s reach-out, we’d heard from no one. As active members of this parish for 17 years, this was the first time our family had really needed the Church, the body of Christ, to be his hands and feet—to walk with, assist and comfort us.

My texted reply read, in part: “We have monetary and spiritual resources but are still struggling. What about those who do not? It seems like a lost opportunity and a huge gap in the institution.” He agreed, but as a cathedral parish, with so many commuters, he texted back, “We just aren’t that kind of parish.”

He promised to bring it up at the next meeting, though, and again promised to pray for us.

Now, don’t get me wrong. I sincerely appreciate any and all prayers for my family, at any moment. Prayers are wonderful, and I am grateful. I believe in the power of prayer.

But especially when they lead to action.

We speak at church about helping others. My parish has amazing ministries serving the homeless, those who struggle with mental illness and women in crisis pregnancy. We have a vegetable garden to supplement our cathedral kitchen, which serves meals to hundreds of people a day. We’ve sponsored families escaping Afghanistan and Ukraine and helped set them up in new homes. But after nearly two decades as a parishioner, I couldn’t help wondering: Was there nothing in place to insure that someone could bring over a lasagna or take out our trash?

This isn’t about casseroles, though. We can, thankfully, afford to order from DoorDash, if need be. It is about feeling like a true part of a community; feeling really seen, supported, encouraged—dare I say it: loved. To feel Christ’s loving arms around us through his people as we walk a tough path.

There is a saying, attributed to St. Teresa of Avila, that goes: “Christ has no body but your body; no hands, no feet on Earth but yours.”

Lord, show me where I can be your hands and feet to those who sit in the pews next to me.

We are finding a rhythm in my husband’s recovery—and he will recover, thank you God. When he does, I want to live out what I say I believe. I want to make certain another family doesn’t ever feel this disconnected and unsupported as we sadly have during a difficult stretch.

(Shemaiah Gonzalez is a storyteller and essayist living in Seattle, Wash.) †

Guest Column/Fr. Patrick Briscoe, O.P.

Why Harrison Butker’s commencement address was a solid ‘goal’

“Anyone with eyes can see that something is off,” said Harrison Butker, addressing the crowd gathered for



commencement at his alma mater, Georgia Tech. “It would seem the more connected people are to one another, the more they feel alone,” the two-time Super Bowl champion said.

Directly addressing today’s loneliness epidemic, the Kansas City Chiefs kicker proceeded to offer the class of 2023 some powerful countercultural advice.

Butker pitted success against fulfillment, arguing that plenty of smart and talented people are successful but remain unhappy. “In the end, no matter how much money you attain, none of it will matter if you are alone and devoid of purpose,” he said.

But why was this such a great speech?

First, it was remarkable because Butker subtly referenced God and Scripture throughout his text. He insisted his talents were “God-given” and noted that all of our deeds, even those things done in darkness, will someday be brought to light. In an extremely inviting and uncompromising way, the frame of his speech used a Christian worldview.

In an address at a secular school, Butker winsomely encouraged those in attendance that Christians believe in the meaning and purpose of life bestowed on us all by our Creator.

In a world where professionals, teachers and coaches are discouraged from bringing their faith to bear in the public square, Butker’s humble example shows how to insist that Catholics don’t share the same account of the universe as nonbelievers. By insisting our gifts are God-given and alluding to Scripture, his speech was open to the transcendent truths of faith in a way that simply encouraging people to be the best version

The Ascension of the Lord/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 21, 2023

- Acts 1:1-11
- Ephesians 1:17-23
- Matthew 28:16-20

In many dioceses in the United States, including the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Church celebrates this weekend the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. Other dioceses observe this weekend as the Seventh Sunday of Easter. These reflections will refer to the biblical readings for the Ascension of the Lord.



The first reading is from the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. As with the Gospel of St. Luke, the author addresses Theophilus. The identity of Theophilus is unclear. Was Theophilus his actual name? Perhaps it was. Perhaps it was not. Theophilus also is a title, meaning “friend of God.”

In any case, this initial form of address helps establish that Luke’s Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles are inseparably linked. Acts simply continues the story first given in the Gospel. It is important to remember this.

As the New Testament was compiled into one set of Scriptures, and especially as the Church accepted St. John’s Gospel as part of the authentic word of God, the Gospel of John was inserted between Luke and Acts so as not to divide the four Gospels.

However, this process upset the perception of seeing Acts as the continuation of Luke.

Important in this reading is the identification given the Apostles, 11 in number since the defection and then suicide of Judas. Acts clearly states that the Lord chose the Apostles. His selection was not insignificant or casual. It was done with the power of the Holy Spirit.

They still need the wisdom of Jesus. They are confused about salvation and about the Savior. Will Jesus restore Israel to its old earthly might? Jesus clarifies what salvation means.

He also clarifies the place of baptism in the faith. Finally, Jesus ascends to heaven. The story ends on a note of promise. Two angels tell the Apostles, staring into the sky, that the Lord will return to them coming from heaven in much the same way as his ascension.

For its second reading, the Church offers a passage from St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians.

This reading is a prayer that all Christians might find true wisdom in Christ, the only source of truth.

St. Matthew’s Gospel provides the last reading. This passage, too, identifies the dignity and limited humanity of the Apostles. They are with Jesus. Even though they see Jesus gloriously alive after the crucifixion, some of them continue to have doubts in their hearts.

The Lord then commissions them to go into the world, excepting no place or anyone, and to bring all into God’s family by baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This passage not only underscores the role of the Apostles and their task of continuing to proclaim God’s mercy, but it also reveals the Holy Trinity.

Reflection

The site in Jerusalem believed by the first Christians and still venerated as the site of the Lord’s Ascension is only a small chapel, surprisingly. Though it is no grand basilica, it still commemorates a momentous event. Jesus bodily ascended into heaven.

At that moment, the Lord wonderfully reassured the disciples at the time and us as well that we will never be alone. He always will be with us.

Indeed, the Gospel of Matthew concludes with Christ’s reassurance, “I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Mt 28:20).

No human life is free of difficulty and distress. Conditions surrounding everyone can be vexing. Look at the Ukrainians. Look at people enduring chronic illnesses. Look at the poor.

The Lord’s words are consoling, and they are real. Jesus is with us in the strength of grace, in the hope of eternity with God. He is with us in the Church, begun by the Apostles after the Ascension. He is with us in the sacraments and in the Eucharist.

Before ascending, Jesus empowered the Apostles and then sent them out on mission.

He empowers us and sends us to refresh our world with the Gospel, confident that we are called, blessed and gifted. †

Daily Readings

Monday, May 22

St. Rose of Cascia, religious
Acts 19:1-8
Psalm 68:2-7
John 16:29-33

Tuesday, May 23

Acts 20:17-27
Psalm 68:10-11, 20-21
John 17:1-11a

Wednesday, May 24

Acts 20:28-38
Psalm 68:29-30, 33-36b
John 17:11b-19

Thursday, May 25

St. Bede the Venerable, priest and doctor of the Church
St. Gregory VII, pope
St. Mary Magdalene de’Pazzi, virgin
Acts 22:30; 23:6-11
Psalm 16:1-2a, 5, 7-11
John 17:20-26

Friday, May 26

St. Philip Neri, priest
Acts 25:13b-21
Psalm 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20b
John 21:15-19

Saturday, May 27

St. Augustine of Canterbury, bishop
Acts 28:16-20, 30-31
Psalm 11:4-5, 7
John 21:20-25

Vigil Mass of Pentecost

Genesis 11:1-9
or Exodus 19:3-8a, 16-20b
or Ezekiel 37:1-14
or Joel 3:1-5
Psalm 104:1-2a, 24, 35c, 27-28, 29bc-30
Romans 8:22-27
John 7:37-39

Sunday, May 28

Pentecost Sunday
Acts 2:1-11
Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-31, 34
1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13
John 20:19-23

Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

A crucifix is to be placed on or near the altar in the celebration of Mass

Our priest has recently stopped using the processional cross, and now we have no crucifix on the altar during Mass or at any other time.



I’ve always thought that there is supposed to be a crucifix on the altar to remind us all of the suffering and passion of Christ.

Yes, the “General Instruction of the Roman Missal,” the “instruction book” for how Mass is to be celebrated, specifically indicates that “on the altar or close to it, there is to be a cross adorned with a figure of Christ crucified” (#117).

Presumably, this is not only to remind us of Christ’s passion, but also to help call to mind how the holy sacrifice of the Mass is a re-presentation here and now of Christ’s original sacrifice of his life on Calvary.

The General Instruction in paragraph 117 goes on to tell us that a processional crucifix may also be used for this purpose. But either way, it is clear that a crucifix is required.

If it looks as though your own parish is not following this norm, the best thing to do would be to share your concerns directly with your pastor in a respectful way. Sometimes your local diocesan liturgy office can also be a good resource for these kinds of liturgical questions.

My Catholic grandmother used to say that original sin was a sort of stamp that all people since Adam and Eve have been born with. In original sin, God is still holding people guilty of Adam and Eve’s sin of disobedience even up through today. Unless this stamp is removed through baptism, people will automatically go to hell at death.

This seems a bit extreme to me and perhaps a bit “old

school.” Wouldn’t a more modern take on the subject be that all people, even up through today, are simply continuing in an exiled state from Eden—perfection—and that God through Jesus offers a return?

Thank you for this interesting question.

First of all, I’m not sure exactly what you mean by “a more modern take.” While through the centuries Catholic doctrine might be developed—that is, be explained in more detail and articulated with greater clarity—Catholic teaching itself doesn’t change in its substance.

So, what was true in your grandmother’s day is still true in ours, and will remain true even for your great-great-grandchildren. That being said, it is possible to explain unchanging Catholic teaching in new ways that could resonate better with different cultures and in different time periods.

Older catechisms often referred to the “stain” of original sin, and it’s not unreasonable to question whether this language may be potentially confusing or off-putting to younger generations. At face value, neither you nor your grandmother are incorrect in your descriptions of original sin, although perhaps your grandmother’s terminology requires some additional context.

Baptism does remove the “stamp” or “stain” of original sin, and this indeed makes it possible for us to live forever with God in heaven. But this is not because God would otherwise desire to punish us in some legalistic or vengeful way.

Additionally, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* readily acknowledges that original sin is not the same as a personal choice to commit some evil act on our part (#405).

Your description of original sin as exile is actually very “old school” as well. The book of Genesis itself describes Adam and Eve as being specifically “banished” from the Garden of Eden (Gn 3:23). And many of us are familiar with the traditional prayer “Hail Holy Queen” (an English translation of the Latin chant “*Salve Regina*”), in which we ask for our Lady’s intercession for us, the “poor banished children of Eve,” and then implore her to show us her son Jesus “after this, our exile.”

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

Sculpture blessing



Retired Father Wilfred “Sonny” Day blesses a new sculpture at St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities’ Holy Trinity Heritage Park in New Albany on May 2. The bronze sculpture, titled “Fruit of Thy Womb,” was created by world renowned Canadian artist Timothy P. Schmalz, whose religious and figurative sculptures can be seen around the world, including pieces installed in historical churches in Rome and the Vatican. This sculpture marks the second in Holy Trinity Heritage Park created by Schmalz through the help of donations from community partners and individuals. (Submitted photo courtesy of St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities)

Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

BARTON, Barbara R., 78, Christ the King, Indianapolis, April 27. Mother of Deanna, Marjorie and Neil Barton, Jr. Sister of JoAnn Clark and Frank Jeanne Pace. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of 10.

BATES, Shirley, 81, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, May 6. Wife of Jack Bates. Mother of Lara Owen, Lisa, Christopher and Paul Bates. Sister of Ron Matelic. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of one.

BLAKE-KING, Mary Helen, 92, St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville, May 8. Mother of Jan Blake-Pearson, Darius and Dean King. Grandmother and great-grandmother of several.

BRAUNECKER, Scott D., 56, St. Paul, Tell City, May 1. Husband of Kelli Braunecker. Father of Loren Braunecker-Roberts and Jacob Braunecker. Brother of Lee Ann Mullis, Chad, Darin and Duane Braunecker. Grandfather of two.

CORIDEN, G. Terrence, 76, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, April 25. Husband of Kathleen Coriden. Father of Erin Kendell and Tim Coriden. Brother of John and Kevin Coriden. Grandfather of four.

DEPPE, Mary Catherine, 89, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, April 29. Mother of Mary Elizabeth Bremm, H. Susan Chandler, Marilyn Herold, Catherine Kempf, Paulette Wolfe, Helen, Francis, Ralph, Jr., Robert and Steven Deppe. Sister of Therese Belvins, Jeanne Blackburn, Winnie Goelz, Amelia Rebello, Anthony, Charles, John and Joseph Sorg. Grandmother and great-grandmother of several.

EARLYWINE, Thomas C., 82, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, May 5. Husband of Mary Ann Earlywine. Father of Gina Brock and Tom Earlywine. Brother of Sharon Byrnes. Grandfather of two.

HAUSER, Janette, 80, St. Anne, New Castle, May 2. Wife of Charles Hauser. Mother of Loretta Forth, Lisa Hacker, Christine Marsee, Sherry Palin and Charles Hauser. Sister of Bryan and Dennis Spears. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of one.

HOWARD, Bernard W., 64, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, May 5. Son of William and Gayle Howard. Brother of Amy Ayer, Cathy McDonald, Andrew, Dan and Ted Howard. Uncle of several.

INGERSOLL, Karol J., 72, St. Anthony of Padua, Morris, May 2. Wife of Dennis Ingersoll. Sister of Patricia

Stenger, Greg, Tom, Richard and Robert Faust. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

KINNETT, James R., 70, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, April 20. Husband of Bebe Kinnett. Father of JR, Neil and Sean Kinnett. Brother of Kevin and Nelson Kinnett. Grandfather of five.

LIVERS, Teresa, 75, St. Bridget of Ireland, Liberty, April 18. Sister of Priscilla Newton, Alvina Stanton, Patricia and Tim Livers. Aunt of several.

MCCULLUM, Finnley A., 8, Holy Family, New Albany, April 19. Son of Sally and

Christopher McCullum. Grandson of Sheldon and Pat McCullum and Kathy Elam.

MCKENNA, Sally G., 82, Prince of Peace, Madison, May 3. Mother of Jennifer Weinbaum and Brian McKenna. Sister of Susan Burke, Jeannette Hertz, Mary Carol Lorton and Michael Scarff. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of 11.

METZ, Thomas, 93, St. Gabriel, Connersville, April 6. Father of Terrence Metz. Brother of William Metz. Grandfather of two. Great-grandfather of two.

SOBECKI, Duane F., 65, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, May 3. Husband of Jennie Sobecki. Father of Allison Tabaska and Greg Sobecki. Son of Arlene Sobecki. Brother of Dawn Fritschle and Dean Sobecki. Grandfather of two.

STEIGERWALD, Lawrence, 71, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, April 30. Father of Chelsie Shinkle, Ryan Howard and Swede Steigerwald. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of one.

SZENTES, Carl, 87, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, April 29. Husband of Pat Szentes.

Marian pilgrimage

Children and adults wait for a two-mile "Walk with the Children" pilgrimage to begin at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Champion, Wis., on May 6. Organizers of Walk to Mary, a 21-mile trek, began a walk for children in 2014 to allow more families to participate in the annual event. The shrine is the site of the only Church-approved apparition of Mary in the U.S. (OSV News photo/Sam Lucero)



BRISCOE

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of themselves or discussing vague values is not.

Second, he offered a dramatic personal witness about the joy of marriage and family life. Brandishing his wedding ring, Butker smiled saying, "This is the most important ring I have right here." Butker boasted of having kicked the game-winning field goal in both the AFC Championship Game and the Super Bowl. Noting that Super Bowl LVII was the most-watched football game of all time, he insisted, "And yet, all of this happiness is temporary," Butker said. "And the truth is none of these accomplishments mean anything compared to the happiness I have found in my marriage and in starting a family."

For Butker, his legacy is built in his marriage. Having children and raising them is what he believes will make the biggest impact on future generations. John Paul II warned, "As the family goes, so goes the nation, and so goes the whole world in which we live." By emphasizing family life, Butker is drawing from the long tradition of Catholic social teaching, encouraging the renewal of the core unit of society.

Finally, Butker emphasized investing in meaningful relationships. He lamented: "Sadly, we are encouraged to live our lives for ourselves, to move from one thing to another with no long-term commitment, to have loyalty for nothing but ourselves and sacrifice only when it suits our own interests." The loneliness many face is exasperated by attempts to achieve greater self-dependence and in prioritizing professional advancement. In the end, we are not liberated by shirking commitment. Rather, we become the slaves of our own autonomy, trapped without the aid of our responsibilities and our duties.

These relationships demand sacrifice. But they do not, as many people assume today, constrain us. The commitments we make are not obstacles but the very means for our fulfillment.

"Remember your purpose, focus on meaningful relationships and know that with or without the spotlight, your life has value and you are meant for more," he concluded. Butker's advice is sound not just for college graduates but for us all. In the end, what could matter more to us than God, our families and our friendships?

(Dominican Father Patrick Briscoe is editor of Our Sunday Visitor. Follow him on Twitter @PatrickMaryOP.) †

ALVAREZ

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Seek helpful tools and resources and be grounded in truth. Struggling and suffering are very real, so if you need help, reach out to a professional therapist, or call your

diocese or archdiocese to discover helpful resources within the Church.

(Melissa Alvarez is an assistant associate director with the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis and Ministry with Persons with Disabilities for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.) †

Online Lay Ministry Formation

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

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

For more information, please log on to www.archindy.org/layministry



REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

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

- 1 Ethics Point**
Confidential, Online Reporting
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2 Victim Assistance Coordinator**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410
317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548
victimassistance@archindy.org

It's unfair, humiliating if only the rich can build a family, pope says

ROME (CNS)—Starting a family and having children has become a kind of herculean task when instead it should be valued and supported by everyone, Pope Francis said at a meeting in Rome on Italy's severe decline in population growth.



Pope Francis

Today's culture "is unfriendly, if not hostile, to the family, centered as it is on the needs of the individual, where individual rights are continually claimed and the rights of the family are not discussed," the pope said at the meeting on May 12.

Women face "almost insurmountable constraints," he said, especially as they are often forced to choose between having a career and being a mother or caring for family members who are frail or need special care.

"Women are slaves to this norm of selective employment, which also hinders them from motherhood," he said.

The conference is an annual event that focuses on the general state of Italy's birthrate and demographics and seeks to bring all sectors of society together to pursue concrete ways to reverse the country's declining birthrate. Sponsored by the Foundation for Natality and the Italian Forum of Family Associations, the conference was held on May 11-12 at a Rome auditorium not far from St. Peter's Square.

According to the Italian National

Institute of Statistics, Italy registered a -3% population growth rate last year, and it reached a historic low birthrate with less than seven births per 1,000 people for a total of 393,000 births in 2022. There were more than 12 deaths per 1,000 people for a total of 713,000 deaths in 2022. Italy's fertility rate of 1.24 was only slightly higher than that of Malta (1.13) and Spain (1.19) last year.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who joined Pope Francis for the second day of the conference on May 12, said today it seems like "a revolutionary act" to talk about the birthrate, motherhood and the family.

It is time to have a country in which "being a father isn't uncool, but is a socially recognized value, in which the beauty of being parents is discovered once again, that it is a truly beautiful thing that takes nothing away and gives you so much," she said.

In his talk, Pope Francis said that bringing children into the world is often seen as a task the family should be dealing with on its own.

"This, unfortunately, influences the mentality of the younger generations, who grow up in uncertainty, if not disillusionment and fear," he said. "They experience a social climate in which starting a family has turned into a titanic effort, instead of being a shared value that everyone recognizes and supports."

"Feeling alone and forced to rely solely on one's own strength is dangerous: it means slowly eroding living as a community and resigning oneself to a lonely existence in which everyone has to

go it alone," he added.

The consequence of that, he said, is "only the wealthiest can afford, thanks to their resources, greater freedom in choosing how to shape their lives. And this is unfair, as well as humiliating."

Pope Francis highlighted the many challenges people in Italy face, such as "finding a stable job, difficulty in keeping one, prohibitively expensive houses, skyrocketing rents and insufficient wages."

These are problems that must be dealt with through public policies, he said, "because it is there for everyone to see that the free market, without much-needed correctives, becomes savage and produces increasingly serious situations and inequalities."

"A change in mentality is needed; the family is not part of the problem, but part of its solution," the pope said.

"We cannot accept that our society

stops being generative and degenerates into sadness," he said. "We cannot passively accept the fact that so many young people struggle to realize their dream about a family and are forced to lower the bar" of what they really wish for.

It's important that things like making money, concentrating on a career, traveling and valuing one's free time do not become "mediocre substitutes" or selfish aspirations, he said, but are "part of a larger generative project that foster life all around you and after you."

Increasing the birthrate, he said, "means repairing the forms of social exclusion that are hurting young people and their future. And it is a service to everyone: children are not personal assets, they are people who contribute to everyone's growth, creating human and generational wealth." †

Employment

Principal

St. Matthew Catholic School, Indianapolis

St. Matthew Catholic School in Indianapolis is seeking a principal for the upcoming school year. St. Matthew has an enrollment of over 340 students, from kindergarten through eighth grade as well as over 40 students in preschool. This school has been a vibrant part of the Indianapolis Catholic Community since 1958 and forms Catholic leaders for the twenty-first century.

Applicants must possess a valid administrator's license, have demonstrated ability to foster Catholic identity, possess a passion for education of all students, and be a practicing Roman Catholic. Applicants may apply online at <https://archindy.applicantpro.com/jobs/> and are asked to submit a letter of interest, resume, and professional references by May 25, 2023 to:

Anne Krieger, Office Manager
Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Office of Catholic Schools
1400 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
317-236-1444
akrieger@archindy.org

Mother Theodore Catholic Academy Maintenance Technician

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking to hire a full-time maintenance technician. The person hired for this job will train with the Archdiocese Catholic Center Staff but will become the primary maintenance technician for the Mother Theodore Catholic Academy (MTCA). The MTCA has four schools in Marion Co., Indianapolis. This person will be responsible for the maintenance of all four schools.

The major responsibility of the person in this position is to oversee the maintenance of our four MTCA schools. This is a hands-on position, but it also requires the oversight and management of subcontractors.

- The person in this job will need to be an independent thinker.
- Responsible for the maintenance and safety of the MTCA buildings.
- Good communication skills are required
- 10 years of experience in property management or commercial building maintenance.
- GED is required.
- A valid driver's license is required.

Interested candidates apply to Daniel Herbertz at Dherbertz@archindy.org.

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Youth Minister

Holy Spirit at Geist Catholic Church in Fishers

Holy Spirit at Geist Catholic Church in Fishers, Indiana is seeking candidates for the full-time position of **Youth Minister** (grades 9-12). Essential duties of the applicant:

- Coordinate the high school Confirmation program (instruction and reception of Sacrament)
- Participate in the recruitment, training, formation, supervision and empowering of core team members (adult and student)
- Build Christ-centered relationships with high school teens, their families, and volunteers
- Provide opportunities for teens to participate in retreats, service projects, mission trips, etc.
- Coordinate and implement weekly programming of the Life Teen curriculum

Applicant should be a practicing Catholic in good standing, have a thorough knowledge of Catholic teaching, have 3-5 years of experience in a related field, have experience with Microsoft Office applications, and supervisory experience with small groups and volunteers. Undergraduate degree in theology or related field preferred. Competitive salary commensurate with education and experience. Cover letter and resume should be sent to Mark Timko at: MTimko@parish.dol-in.org.



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The 156 members of the Trojan Class of 2023 have collectively earned more than \$24.6 million in college scholarships and grants.

The faculty, staff and administration of Bishop Chatard are very proud of all that these young men and women continue to accomplish. They've challenged themselves, embraced their faith, and are prepared to make their own unique impact in our world. The prayers and support of the entire Trojan community accompany them on their journey.



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