

# TODAY'S CATHOLIC



## Vatican journalist gives papal preview



MATT CASHORE

Journalist John L. Allen Jr. speaks at Saint Mary's College March 25. Allen, who reports for National Catholic Reporter, CNN and National Public Radio, has covered the Vatican and the church for 10 years.

BY DON CLEMMER

NOTRE DAME — John L. Allen Jr., a reporter for *National Catholic Reporter* and the Vatican analyst for CNN and National Public Radio, spoke at Carroll Auditorium at Saint Mary's College on March 25, addressing the theme of the upheavals of 1968 and how they impacted the life and thinking of then-Father Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI.

Allen, one of the most respected journalists covering the church today, discussed how, in 1968, Ratzinger was the dean of the Catholic theological faculty at Germany's University of Tübingen, which Allen identified as "the eye of the European cultural storm." Throughout Europe, college campuses were on fire for revolution and reform. Emerging from this revolutionary spirit was a Marxist Christianity, which greatly alarmed Ratzinger in its replacing Christian truth with political action and is viewed by some as a turning point in his life.

"There is a mythology out there," Allen later told *Today's Catholic*, "that Ratzinger was a liberal at Vatican II and then steered sharply to the right, some would say because of '68, others would say, basically, for careerist reasons, that is, he wanted to move up in the church, and that was the way to do it. And I don't think either of those readings is correct."

In his talk, Allen quoted from Ratzinger's 1966 commentaries after the close of Vatican II. In these writings, he told *Today's Catholic*, "Much of what would be the heart of his alleged later conservatism is actually quite obviously there — his concerns about an overly optimistic reading of the modern world, his concerns about an overly horizontal reading of Christianity and, most specifically, his concerns about politicizing Christianity."

Allen maintains that 1968 was an important moment in terms of crystallizing some of the concerns

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## Edith Stein Conference speakers draw on dignity of women and men

BY DIANE FREEBY

NOTRE DAME — Controversy and shock factor were not needed to tackle the issues that imperil women in today's culture, where assault on the dignity of women is commonplace and her vocation in the modern world challenged.

The third annual conference, titled "The Edith Stein Project: Redefining Feminism" was held last Friday and Saturday on the University of Notre Dame campus. Edith Stein was a German Jew who converted to Catholicism at age 30, entered a Carmelite convent 12 years later, then was martyred in a Nazi concentration camp in 1942. Known in the Carmelite order as Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Edith Stein was proclaimed a saint by Pope John Paul II in 1998.

According to organizers, some 300 people attended the two-day conference, which placed a special emphasis on masculinity, fatherhood and the contemporary way that men and women are called to give and receive love.

Drawing upon Pope John Paul II's theology of the body, various speakers addressed chastity, sexual assault, contraception, reproductive health and marriage with an emphasis on God's design and plan for those created in His very image and likeness.

In his talk, "Blessed are the Pure in Spirit: The World, Youth and the Search for the Sacred," Father Martin Connor defined the sacred as "the human person." He discussed the divine ideal, explaining that God made our hearts "to contemplate, to behold,

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## EUCCHARISTIC PROCESSION



PROVIDED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

A eucharistic procession like the one seen here from 2007 is scheduled for Sunday, April 20 at the University of Notre Dame. Holy Cross Father David T. Tyson, provincial superior, Indiana Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross, will process with the Eucharist after the 11:45 a.m. Mass at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. A picnic lunch will be provided by the campus Knights of Columbus.

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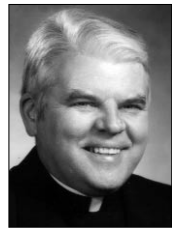
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# People will recognize if we 'have been with Jesus' in prayer



## NEWS & NOTES

BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

### A most sacred privilege

The days are so busy and the work so intense and at times demanding, that it is easy to lose sight of the beauty of the things to which a bishop is called and of the great sacredness of the responsibility. But some weekends are so profound and so filled with the presence of God and the activity of Christ that they require, like Mary, that a bishop "ponder these things in his heart."

That is what I thought as I sped towards Notre Dame, hoping not to be late, arriving at the beautiful Alumni Hall Chapel at 6:05. There was a festival in honor of Edith Stein. Edith Stein or St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, an extraordinary intellectual and philosopher, and a convert from Judaism, killed at Auschwitz. Some young women at Notre Dame and young men also were honoring her with an event that has become traditional these past few years. Among those supporting it has been the Our Sunday Visitor Institute. There were students and non-students and a number of religious from the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration and the Dominican Sisters of Nashville, Tenn. I celebrated Mass at Alumni Hall and spoke on the Resurrection.

Afterwards, following two slices of pizza with the young people, I was escorted into McKenna Hall. I sat there with a microphone in the middle; Fred and Lisa Everett were present although they had another assignment later. John and Nancy Cavadini stayed the entire time. John was the only faculty member. It was a question-and-answer event and it was a delight and a joy to see the goodness of the questions and the inspiration of the young people. They had to cut us off as the event drew close to 9 p.m. for another event, and I was off then to stay the night with the Franciscan Sisters. More on that later.

The next morning after breakfast with the sisters and some time in prayer, I tried to prepare my heart and mind for the great privilege of ordaining two Holy Cross deacons to the sacred priesthood. They are Father Stephen Lacroix, CSC, and Father Andrew Gawrych, CSC. Before that, however, I had a nice brunch with both of them and Father Patrick Neary, CSC, the rector and a good friend and exemplary priest who is also a strong Notre Dame football fan. Father John H. Pearson, CSC, assistant rector was also with us. Then at 2 p.m., we

gathered at the packed basilica for a most beautiful two-hour service.

The Scriptures were splendid. A bishop can leave out the instruction and present his own homily, but I never like to leave out the instruction because there is so much in there as to the nature of the ministerial priesthood. At the same time, I want to speak briefly to personalize the event and the Scripture readings of the day made that easy to do. In the Acts of the Apostles, as the church began its early suffering, we read that Peter and John were speaking with boldness and the leaders, elders and scribes "recognized them as companions of Jesus" — or as another translation puts it: "recognized them as having been with Jesus." This was the heart of my brief message to the two young men — that everything was secondary to this, namely that people recognized them as "having been with Jesus," which means prayer. People will recognize

for the new priests.

The laying on of hands to two young men was a great privilege. There were about 110 priests there, mostly from the congregation of Holy Cross. And, I hope the day strengthened my relationship with this band of missionary priests who are linked closely to the brothers and sisters of Holy Cross and also strengthen their historic relationship with this diocese. A delightful dinner came later, and it was my joy to sit with, among others, their religious superior, Father Peter Jarrett, CSC, and their provincial, Father David Tyson, CSC, both good friends.

A good sleep the next morning at the sisters was followed by a joyful breakfast and then a chance to work on an Easter homily for a confirmation at St. Pius X, Granger. The first post-Easter confirmation was for 110 people including some adults. St. Pius X had baptized about eight or nine at the Easter Vigil. Beautiful Easter music was led by Jeremy Hoy and a prayerful congregation.

Afterwards I had a chance to walk through their new educational center, which is expected to be ready for a new school year in August. Imagine, a new school in our diocese and already over 350 registered from K through seventh grade, another sign of the growing vitality of our diocese. Some have registered from other schools, but almost all the registrants are members of St. Pius Parish. Some have registered from public schools and private non-religious schools. There is no question this school will make a tremendous difference in the South Bend area and in our diocese. It is a great uphill journey to raise the funds, and I commend Father Schooler, especially, and also his parishioners for taking on this most demanding project. I look forward to the

dedication in August and to what it will mean in our diocese.

Back to Fort Wayne after a delightful dinner including some late theological reflections by Father Mike Heintz.

### About the sisters

For 23 years, I have been living in a small apartment at St. Patrick described by one of my Boston priest friends once as "adequate." The stay with the sisters this weekend brings an added spiritual dimension because of who they are and the access of a chapel with the Blessed Sacrament. The joy and goodness and love of sisters is special indeed.

I am looking forward to a young adult retreat this weekend and to several more confirmations and to the joy of another Easter season and, of course, to opening day, April 8, at the old ballpark near Kenmore Square.

See you all next week.

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if we "have been with Jesus" in prayer. I told them when this beautiful day is over and everybody has had a nice meal and there has been much joy and they have all gone, please return here to the basilica or to the chapel at the seminary to be with him and give thanks to him and offer your life and your ministry to him as you will do in a moment when you prostrate yourself before the altar.

I also told the people that an ordination was like a great catechism lesson about the nature of the church and the ministerial priesthood. I pointed out the Litany of Saints, which this year would include for the first time at a priestly ordination Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau, founder of the Holy Cross Congregation, and that the beatification of a founder was not only a declaration that he had lived a heroic life, but that this congregation had reached significant spiritual and pastoral accomplishment, for indeed it is a far flung missionary order.

Finally, the Gospel itself was a commission to preach and baptize, so appropriate

## EDITH

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to see him and his beauty in each other and in all creation."

Father Connor pointed to the book of Genesis and reiterated how God made both male and female to be beautiful. He discussed how sin, particularly the scourge of pornography, mars this beauty.

Pornography is a problem of great magnitude, said Father Connor. He pointed to these numbers: 72 million people visit Internet porn sites annually, and the revenue from this lurid industry is greater than what is made by the three traditional television networks, NBC, ABC and CBS combined.

Often viewed as a "man's problem," Father Connor talked about how women are the biggest victims. Not only are they objectified and demeaned, according to Father Connor, but more women are secretly visiting Internet porn sites as well. He described pornography in our society as a culture of distortedness.

"Pornography makes a lie of intimacy," explained Father Connor. "It leads not to intimacy, but to deeper isolation and alienation. This damages the very human qualities that make true intimacy even possible and cripples the user's ability to experience truly human contact."

Going back to Genesis and the creation of woman, Father Connor discussed the Trinitarian prefiguring (CCC 372) and Adam beholding Eve, being delighted in what he sees.

"God made Eve a person, not another animal or thing," said Father Connor. "This original unity was intended from the beginning to be divine reflection."

Eve's inherent beauty is what captivated Adam, and according to Pope John Paul II, "beauty will save the world." Today, however, beauty is distorted and very one-sided in our culture, according to Father Connor.

He defined sin as "all things contrary to God and to nature."



DIANE FREEBY

**Father Martin Connor gave the talk "Blessed are the Pure in Spirit" at the Edith Stein Conference.**

After the fall of Adam and Eve, everything changed.

"Adam is not what he is supposed to be. He denied his very nature and went passive. Where was he when the serpent approached Eve? Every man after him carries this same failure in his heart," said Father Connor.

Women, for their part, carry in their hearts the failures of Eve. This can be seen in the attack on the dignity of the human person as Father Connor observed in the culture of death. Woman is told by society that her value is in her body, not her relationships.

"She no longer waits to be seen, said Father Connor. "She no longer invites ... she goes for the counterfeit seduction. Men see their value no longer as the 'protector' but merely as the 'provider.' Culture frees him from responsibility and he will not fight for her any longer."

Father Connor asserted that spiritual warfare is real, and we are tempted to manage and distract ourselves from this brokenness and insecurity. He believes we medicate or attach ourselves to a compulsion or addiction, such as lust or Internet porn, alcohol, drugs, or becoming a workaholic.

Father Connor quoted author William Gurnall to illustrate the

reality of evil: "It is the image of God reflected in you that so enrages hell; it is this at which the demon hurls the mightiest weapons."

So we are clearly under attack, and must seek God's help to deal with both the causes and the results of those attacks. Father Connor pointed to the feelings of helplessness and depression that many people feel when they are caught up in the degradation of pornography and other immoral life choices. He says it is the enemy's plan to make us feel incompetent and inferior so we no longer feel loveable by others or even by God.

"But there is hope!" said Father Connor, quoting 2 Corinthians 1: 3-4. "We read, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.'"

Father Connor also offered some practical guidelines for fighting the enemy's attacks on purity. He suggested keeping computers in public places, to "bring darkness to light." There are also things men, women and couples can do.

"Men need to cultivate strong relationships with their sons and teach them responsibility and accountability at an early age. It is necessary to have a Christ-centered education at all levels.

Women need to develop their integrated original beauty and to see themselves as a whole person."

Father Connor wrapped up his talk with the reminder to involve God in all things, especially when seeking unity as a couple.

"This unity is not something they can get on their own," he said. "Pray together and ask the Holy Spirit for that unity. It is the Lord's battle, not just ours. We have to involve him if we're going to win."

For more information Father Connor suggests visiting the Web site directed by Catholic family therapist Dr. Art Bennett at [www.unityrestored.com](http://www.unityrestored.com).

## Discussion, debate, prayer coincide with play

BY DIANE FREEBY

NOTRE DAME — As Catholics around the world continued to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, one of the most well-known Catholic universities in America opened the 2008 version of Eve Ensler's controversial play, "The Vagina Monologues."

Student organizers and University of Notre Dame administrators chose the middle of Easter Week to begin the three-day production, explaining it was their goal "to end violence against women and begin the healing."

Bishop John M. D'Arcy, in his most recently-issued statement, asked Notre Dame president Holy Cross Father John Jenkins to reconsider his decision to allow the sexually-explicit and morally-challenged play on the Catholic campus.

Despite a staged walkout by some 30 students after the first act and ongoing prayer in the grotto and before the Blessed Sacrament by students at a campus chapel, the much-debated production went on as planned March 26-28. In part of his written statement, Father Jenkins defended his decision in the name of academic freedom and discussion.

"My decision on this matter arises from a conviction that it is an indispensable part of the mission of a Catholic university to provide a forum in which multiple viewpoints are debated in reasoned and respectful exchange — always in dialogue with faith and the Catholic tradition — even around highly controversial topics," Jenkins said in the statement.

In order to categorize the play as an "academic event," one of the requirements was that a panel discussion take place immediately following the performance. While the DeBartolo Hall auditorium was nearly full during Wednesday's opening night, a 15-minute intermission afterward resulted in many people leaving before the panel discussion began.

The make-up of the four-person academic panel was different each night, with the exception of diocesan representative, Lisa Everett, who was present for all three evenings. Lisa Everett, along with her husband Fred Everett, co-directs the Offices of Family Life for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

In her opening statement, she addressed one of the central problems of Ensler's play: "Sex is intended by God to be the most intimate sign of the mutual gift of self that a man and woman make to one another in marriage," said Everett. "Sex, then, is not meant to be a monologue ... it is designed to be a dialogue between a man and a woman who have made a total gift of themselves to one another, a dialogue in which they say to each other through the language of the body what they said aloud on the altar on their wedding day: I accept you completely as the gift that God created you to be, and I give myself to you completely in return."

Everett went on to address the premise under which Ensler claims to be writing: empowering women who have suffered sexual abuse. In doing so, Ensler offers various scenarios that offend church teaching on morality.

Mainly, the monologues illustrated ways for women to "heal" by masturbation ("The Vagina Workshop"), sex outside of marriage ("Because He Liked to Look at It") and lesbian seduction by an adult upon a minor ("The Little Coochi Snorcher That Could").

"Contemplate for a moment what a desecration it would be to take what God designed as an expression of total self-giving and make it instead a means of self-gratification?" challenged Everett. "This is the essential evil of rape and incest and sexual abuse of any kind, which Eve Ensler and decent people everywhere rightly deplore, and which the church has always condemned."

Yet Ensler's play serves to wound women a second time, beyond the first abuse, according to Everett.

"We can be desecrated by others," she explained, "but we can also desecrate ourselves, and a desecration we freely choose violates our dignity much more deeply than a desecration that is forced upon us."

Everett pointed out that Catholic teaching on sexuality seeks to protect the intimate center of the person and refuses to unveil what should remain hidden. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2521)

"The church stands, not for prudery, which prevents one from speaking about sexual matters in an appropriate context, but for reverence for the gift of sexuality as God designed it," said Everett.

While some Notre Dame students and faculty argued for the need to allow "The Vagina Monologues" on campus, other students were clearly disturbed by the university's decision to permit the play. The roughly 30 students who staged the walkout during the first act of the play made their way over to the grotto where a rosary was being prayed. Student protesters said they prayed at that time for their university and for those who would be misled by the Monologues' message.

"I feel this was a peaceful way to get our message across," said Sarah Khanjian, a freshman from Wyckoff, N.J. "I was extremely disappointed in Father Jenkins' decision to allow the play. I come from a very Catholic family, and when I heard the play was going to be permitted, I called my favorite teacher from high school, a religious sister. She encouraged me to do something."

Mary Forr, a freshman from Altoona, Pa., talked about better ways to support women and speak out against violence.

"The Edith Stein Conference (also held last weekend at Notre Dame) accomplishes the same thing in a more Catholic way," she said. "We took part in the walkout

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## Barbara Nicolosi tells captive audience 'what's left to do'

BY THERESA THOMAS

NOTRE DAME — Barbara Nicolosi's eyes darted around the auditorium.

"Here I am, at this conference, with all these academic and holy people. I feel a little like that Sesame Street song, "One of These Things is Not Like the Others," she quipped, and the audience laughed. Nicolosi was present to offer her talk "Hollywood and the Sexual Revolution: What's Left to Do?" as part of the University of Notre Dame's third annual Edith Stein project, on Saturday, March 29.

While unique in style and presentation, Nicolosi was indeed very much like the other high quality, spiritual and academic speakers

brought on campus to offer an optimistic perspective on the future of feminism. Speaking to about 200 people in McKenna Auditorium at the Center for Continuing Education at Notre Dame, Nicolosi began by stating what she would not talk about.

"I'm not going to talk about Act One," (the organization she founded which trains and mentors Christians of all denominations for careers in mainstream film and television), she said, "and I'm not going to talk about 'Behind the Screen,'" her book of 17 essays of Christian writers of film and television, "or how to start a career in the entertainment industry."

Although there has been recent attention and controversy surrounding the performance of "The Vagina Monologues" on the Notre

Dame campus this year, Nicolosi also said she was not going to address that topic at length either. She did briefly challenge the mostly young, female audience, "If you don't like it (VM), write something better. If we want cultural influence we have to create culture." Then she dug into the topic at hand.

First, Nicolosi began, Hollywood matters. This is a self-evident truth. Hollywood matters because art matters; stories matter; entertainment matters. Hollywood is all part of the culture that influences people.

Second, she said, America needs inspirational role models on the big screen. She recounted that in 1977, just a few years after the

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# School merger, studies discussed at press conference

BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE — News media gathered for a press conference March 27 where Bishop John M. D'Arcy officially announced the merging of Msgr. Julian Benoit Academy with St. John the Baptist School in Fort Wayne. Audio of the conference is available at the diocesan Web site, [www.diocese-fwsb.org](http://www.diocese-fwsb.org).

After reading the statement, which ran in the March 30 issue of *Today's Catholic*, Bishop D'Arcy, Holy Cross Father Stephen Kempinger, Catholic Schools Superintendent, Father Daryl Rybicki, pastor of St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, and Joe Ryan, diocesan chief financial officer, fielded questions about the merger and the future.

When asked about transportation, Father Rybicki noted, that after meeting with the two school principals and St. Henry-Sacred Heart pastor Father Daniel Durkin, "Right now, all Benoit students, except for three, I am told, come by individual transportation. Only three ride the bus in East Allen."

Father Rybicki added, "The majority of the Benoit students at this point, live almost equidistant between the two schools. So our presumption is that if they were able to get there by private car to Benoit going a mile-and-a-half in one direction, then a mile-and-a-half in the other direction will not provide a significant hardship for most of those families."

Bishop D'Arcy noted Father Rybicki's experience with multicultural schools and parishes in South Bend, namely St. Adalbert and St. Augustine parishes.

"We very much want to bring

the minority children to St. John's," Bishop D'Arcy noted. "We think it will help St. John's, and we think it will help the young people."

When asked about the decline in enrollment at Benoit Academy over its 14-year history, Bishop D'Arcy said part of it was demographic — changes in population there.

Father Rybicki added, "Just in general we find that families are not as large as they used to be." He said looking back to 1994 at St. John's, the student population was about 450 students, and "in that same period of time, we've seen a drop as well. So from families that would send their children that had four and five students, there are now two and three (students)."

"We are having a study of all the south side (Catholic) schools under the direction of Father Steve Kempinger," Bishop D'Arcy told the reporters. "We are looking at the possibility of more consolidation. No decision has been made, but we're looking at that. But that would not be this academic year."

Bishop D'Arcy said, "We had a committee that looked at all the south side schools. We've been looking at them for a couple of years. ... This year we had a committee look at baptisms. What's the outlook for the future? (The committee) looked at first Communion, looked at the number of parishioners that are going to Mass in those parishes. And are we doing the best job educationally that we could be doing?"

"This would include south side schools, but also over into some of the smaller rural areas like Monroeville, Besancon, New Haven, Yoder and so forth. No decision is made, just going to



DON CLEMMER

**From left, Holy Cross Father Stephen Kempinger, the diocesan superintendent of Catholic Schools; Bishop John M. D'Arcy; and Father Daryl Rybicki, pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish, Fort Wayne, answered reporters' questions about the merger of Benoit Academy and St. John the Baptist schools at a press conference on March 27. Low enrollment, demographical changes and debt to the diocese at Benoit Academy precipitated the need to merge the school with St. John the Baptist.**

look at them," Bishop D'Arcy said.

"So many of (the students at Benoit) are non-Catholic, and we are happy with that," Bishop D'Arcy said. "I take the position of Cardinal Hickey, who was the cardinal of Washington, D.C., ... (who said) 'We don't do it because they're Catholic, we do it because we're Catholic.'"

The advantage of Benoit Academy's smallness is there is quite a spirit, a lot of warmth and love, said Bishop D'Arcy who added, "Educationally, this is ... better use of our finances. We can help more children and help them better."

The Christ Child Society, which tutors students at Benoit Academy, will be preserved at the St. John's merger.

When asked about plans for the Benoit building, Bishop D'Arcy told reporters there were not any plans. In the past there had been some interest in locating a charter school there.

Father Rybicki interjected that he was told by Father Durkin that St. Henry Parish, where Benoit Academy is located, had a committee that will "start brainstorming ideas on the use of the building."

When asked about the future of

St. Henry Church, Bishop D'Arcy said there are, "no plans at this time. We have a committee working ... looking at parishes all over the diocese for possible mergers. We're on the verge of merging two in the South Bend area. We've had consultations in those parishes."

He added, "But this committee is looking at others. No decisions

**"The big challenge is to keep the schools reachable for the less affluent. We just gave out \$800,000 from the Legacy of Faith. Benoit and St. Adalbert got the most."**

BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

at all on that at this time. I haven't even received the recommendations yet. But with the number of priests, that has to be considered."

"We're looking at how to strengthen our schools," Father Kempinger said of the school's committee. "What can we do planning ahead for the future? As an administrator, there will always be change. If you look at any school district in the state, there's always the idea of closing, the idea of building — we see that even in our own Allen County. Redistricting is the same thing, it can be very, very painful. So we have to take what is at present, and we have to look at what is down the road and project

what is going to be happening in five or 10 years with population and finances. ..."

"This is the year we looked at the south side," Father Kempinger said. "We're going to be looking at different sides in different areas in the diocese in the coming years ... not only in the sense of 'can we do better' by using good stewardship, and educationally by consolidations."

He added they are also looking into areas of the diocese where there is expansion of population. A new Catholic elementary school will open in August this year in Granger. Already, 350 students are registered. "That's where the population is, that's where the need is," Father Kempinger said. "The church is a living organism. We go where the people are. We go where we are needed."

That's part of the reason why the south side committee was formed, it was "that first step of looking at the whole general picture and see where we can strengthen, what we are doing right, and maybe some things that we may need to improve on."

Also, St. Vincent School is adding on and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, both in Fort Wayne, just completed their addition.

Bishop D'Arcy noted that despite cultural upheavals, a decrease in large families, he believes there is an extraordinary

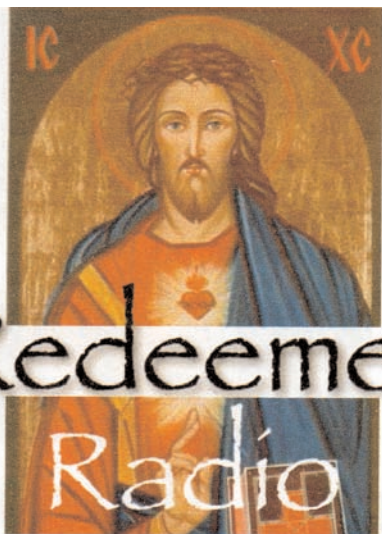
opportunity for the church. "The hunger for Catholic schools is as strong as ever," he said. He noted that St. Charles, St. Vincent and St. Jude schools in Fort Wayne are almost full.

It's more expensive because the schools, once

operated by religious, have been given over almost entirely to laity. So the financial strain is greater, especially with the increased teachers salaries.

"There's a reluctance to abandon, though, because this is the poor," Bishop D'Arcy said when talking about former urban schools such as St. Patrick and St. Henry in Fort Wayne. "The big challenge is to keep the schools reachable for the less affluent. We just gave out \$800,000 from the Legacy of Faith. Benoit and St. Adalbert's got the most," Bishop D'Arcy said. "They got to be helped by the central administration and that's what we're doing."

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# ALLEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Ratzinger had with the church and the world. These concerns would be addressed in his later career as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and in his social teachings as pope, but he says, 1968 was not the turning point for Ratzinger that many oversimplify it to be.

Following his talk, Allen spoke with *Today's Catholic*, offering further insights on the pope, his upcoming encyclical and visit to the United States. The following is a portion of that interview:

**Today's Catholic: What is the pope up to as he approaches his trip to the United States?**

**Allen:** You have to understand, when a pope travels, he has sort of two basic audiences in mind. There's the audience of the broad public of the country he's visiting, so ... Catholics

and non-Catholics. So, you know, he would have a kind of social-cultural message he wants to bring. And then he's got his message, the kind of

insider message for the Catholics, one which is usually sort of spiritual and pastoral. Now in addition, in this year of course, there's a third category because he's also coming here to address the U.N., which means that, in some ways, he's talking to the whole world. So I think you've got to think in terms of three levels.

I think, in terms of his message to the world, there are a lot of specific points he'll make, but the heart of it is that he wants to argue that the world needs a consensus on basic moral values that can serve as a foundation for the protection of human rights and human dignity. Because I think his diagnosis is that, given the increasing pluralism of the world and all that, you can actually hear people making the argument that the notion of human rights is just sort of a Western cultural imposition and all that. And so I think he wants to try to ... play a role in stimulating a conversation about what are those fundamental principles of human dignity that all of us can agree upon, and then, once we've agreed upon them, what are we going to do about it?

At the level of his message for the states ... I think the core of it will be a very positive note of gratitude for what he would see as a religious vitality of American society. And that's particularly in contrast to Europe. I mean, at the end of the day, for all of our problems, we are a culture in which ... religion is taken seriously. Our public officials are expected to talk about their religious beliefs. Churches are taken very seriously as players in public conversation, and this is all very unlike realities in contemporary Europe. So I think he is going to come to try and encourage that.

And then in terms of his message for Catholics in this country and for the church, again, lots of different things that he will say ... but I think that the heart of it is going to be kind of a narrative version of his basic project for the church, which is trying to restore a strong sense of Catholic identity. And that, of course, is in order to protect the church against assimilation to what he has called the dictatorship of relativism, meaning

his social message, basically, is that no society constructed as if God does not exist, that is, no society constructed on principles that don't involve and acknowledge religious truth, that no such society can be just, that in the end, it will go off the tracks somewhere. And this was his diagnosis of what happened in the 20th century.

As he said in Brazil when he was there last May, the failure of both Marxism and capitalism illustrate the dangers of trying to construct a society without reference to God. Basically, his argument is that only religious truth can provide an adequate basis and can provide an adequate foundation for a set of moral values, and further, that only the kind of spiritual strength that comes from religious devotion can provide the sort of personal wherewithal to live out those values.

Therefore, the Christian application of that would be, from the pope's point of view, that preaching Christ to the world, celebrating the sacraments, encouraging prayer and devotion, those things are not a distraction from working for justice.

In fact, they are working for justice. Because his social vision is that, ultimately, society is not going to be changed by baptizing mass movements or by encouraging

social revolution. Society is going to be changed from the inside out, one human heart at a time. And therefore, the foundational Christian mission in the world, even though advocacy for justice and all that is important, the foundational Christian mission has to be providing a model of holy, intentional Christian life.

I have no doubt that's going to be the heart. He will go on from there to strike all the notes you would expect him to strike. He will talk about the defense of human life and defense of the institution of marriage. He will talk about justice for the poor. He will talk about opposition to war — all of the well known social positions of the Catholic Church. But all of it will flow from this core, which is, at the end of the day, the most important contribution Christians can make to politics and to building a just society is to provide the world with a model of what life lived in the spirit of Christ looks like.

**Contributing to this story** is Susan Baxter.

**"He will talk about opposition to war — all of the well known social positions of the Catholic Church."**

JOHN ALLEN

this kind of highly secularized, relativized culture in the West.

So I think, in many ways, those are the three points that he'll probably circle around a great deal. Then he'll have messages for specific groups. I mean he's going to meet with educators. He'll have a message for them. He's going to meet with leaders of other religions. He'll have a message for them and all that. But I think all of the specific points are going to be applications of these three basic themes.

**Today's Catholic: Do these messages relate to the pope's upcoming encyclical? Can you speak definitively on such a thing?**

**Allen:** First of all, he is working on a social encyclical. That has been confirmed by Cardinal Bertone and has been confirmed by Cardinal Martino, so I mean, there's no doubt that that's in the works. Now Benedict pretty much writes his own stuff, so, as you say, the level of detail is difficult to anticipate. But I have no doubt that the heart of the encyclical will be the heart of his social message. And the heart of

# NICOLOSI

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"mess of Roe v Wade, gas lines and a prevalent ugly feminism," the movie "Star Wars" was released, and it inspired Americans to be better ... to fight evil ... to be heroes.

Nicolosi attended the Sexual Health in Entertainment (SHINE) awards in Hollywood several years ago — an event she labeled "one of the most mind-numbing crass events I have ever attended" — and recounted that organizers were raucously celebrating their radical sexual agenda successes, beginning with Lucy and Ricky Ricardo of "I Love Lucy" TV fame pushing their twin beds together and continuing with the television character Maude choosing abortion. SHINE organizers ended the event with the comment, "We have so much left to do." Nicolosi paused at this retelling, and stared intently and seriously at her audience. "No, we have so much work to do," she insisted.

Then Nicolosi spoke hopefully. According to her, Hollywood teems with Generation Xers who are dealing with the aftermath of the sexual revolution and are just now coming to power. She told of a lesbian writer who was seeking baptism in the Catholic Church for her partner's child because both women had grown up without religion or guidance, and wanted something more for the little girl.

Nicolosi stated that the young elite who are coming to power in

Hollywood now are the first generation that has grown up with absent or divorced parents, and are victims of the sexual revolution. Since they were hurt by their mother's abortions, parent's divorces surrounding them growing up, they are ready for something different. While speaking at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) recently, Nicolosi said that she asked for a raise of hands to determine how many were pro-life, pro-choice or undecided. An overwhelming majority of the audience (80 percent) self identified as pro-life.

What's left to be done, concluded Nicolosi, is to create beauty. She challenged her young audience to provide quality art in music, theater, film and writing, that illuminates Christian Catholic truth. "Please give your children 10 years of piano lessons and expose them to the arts," she pleaded. She challenged scriptwriters to assume an audience that is confused and ignorant of basic truths, and "show," not tell the stories.

She disagreed with the idea that movies should not contain sexual themes. Sex, adultery and homosexuality are addressed in the Bible. "It's not the topic that's the problem in storytelling," stated Nicolosi, "It's the treatment of it."

Finally, Nicolosi referred to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, (now Pope Benedict XVI)'s idea that sacred art, inspired by faith, both reflects and informs culture. "If you could do for God, what pagans do for money, we could change the world."

When asked what exactly he would tell the Notre Dame alumni, Nussbaum didn't have an exact answer, saying he would have to pray about it.

As Everett wrapped up the question-and-answer session, she addressed the argument that allowing the play was necessary in the name of academic freedom.

"Authentic freedom, academic or otherwise, is always linked to the service of truth and love," concluded Everett. "Like sexual pleasure severed from love and life, freedom exalted as an end in itself becomes an idol. Eve Ensler's play contributes to and deepens the desecration of women and their sexuality that is already so prevalent in our culture, and its performance is unworthy of a Catholic university, particularly one consecrated to the woman who was blessed among all women."

# PLAY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

to show our disgust for the university's decision. Bishop D'Arcy specifically spoke out against the Monologues, and Notre Dame still had them on Our Lady's campus during Easter Week."

As the panel discussion wrapped up, the president of Notre Dame's Alumni Association, Richard A. Nussbaum, stood up.

"I have deep concerns about the gap between Bishop D'Arcy and Notre Dame," said Nussbaum. "I appreciate Lisa's coming here and giving the church's perspective. I have had alumni clamoring for me to find out what's really going on, and I need to have something to tell them."

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## Vatican official: World has greater number of Muslims than Catholics

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A Vatican official said that, for the first time, the world's Muslim population is greater than the number of Catholics. Msgr. Vittorio Formenti, who heads the Vatican's statistics office, said the shift was the result of larger families among Muslims. According to statistics at the end of 2006, Muslims now represent 19.2 percent of the world population, while Catholics represent 17.4 percent, he said. "For the first time in history, we're no longer at the top. The Muslims have surpassed us," Msgr. Formenti said in an interview March 30 with the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. He noted that if other Christian denominations are taken into consideration, the global Christian population is about 33 percent of the total, still far greater than the Muslim population. Msgr. Formenti said the Catholic population continues to keep pace with world population growth. However, Muslims' families have more children and are outpacing the average growth rate, he said.

## Young adult Catholics are interested in church ministry, study finds

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Although many young adult Catholics are interested in church ministry they find it difficult to connect their career plans or talents with available ministries, according to a survey released this year. The survey, "Young Adult Catholics and Their Future in Ministry," was commissioned by the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project, a joint project involving six national Catholic organizations and funded by the Lilly Endowment Inc. A preliminary report on the survey of young adult Catholics will be the topic of an upcoming National Ministry Summit April 20-23 in Orlando, Fla. The summit, initially planned for 1,000 participants, recently was expanded to accommodate all who wish to attend. "The waiting list kept growing," said Christopher Anderson, executive director for the National Association for Lay Ministry, one of the sponsoring groups of the project. He said the interest in discussing the survey's results shows that it "struck a chord with the people who minister and those who plan for future ministry in the Catholic Church."

## Cardinal: Liberalized use of Tridentine Mass already is bearing fruit

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI's outreach to traditionalist Catholics by liberalizing the use of the Tridentine Mass already is bearing fruit, said Cardinal Dario Castrillon Hoyos. The cardinal, president of the Pontifical Commission "Ecclesia Dei," which coordinates care for traditionalist Catholics, said that thanks to the pope's action "not a few have asked to return to full communion, and some already

# NEWS BRIEFS

## POPE WAVES TO FAITHFUL GATHERED FOR REGINA COELI



CNS PHOTO/ALESSANDRO BIANCHI, REUTERS

Pope Benedict XVI waves during the recitation of the Regina Coeli prayer at the papal residence in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, March 30. The pope marked Divine Mercy Sunday and kicked off a week of festivities dedicated to the memory of Pope John Paul II, saying the merciful love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ, is what motivates the church in its sacraments, its charitable activities and its insistence on correct moral behavior.

have returned." In an interview published in the March 28 edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper, Cardinal Castrillon said 30 cloistered nuns in Spain have "already been recognized and regularized" and "there are cases of American, German and French groups" who have begun the process. He added, "There are individual priests and many laypeople who contact us, write to us and call us for a reconciliation and, on the other side, there are many other faithful who demonstrate their gratitude to the pope" for his July letter authorizing wider use of the liturgy from the 1962 Roman Missal. In his letter, the pope said the Mass from the Roman Missal in use since 1970 remains the ordinary form, while celebration of the Tridentine Mass is the extraordinary form.

## Popemobile shipped to U.S., scheduled to arrive in early April

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — While Pope Benedict XVI probably has not begun packing his bags for his April 15-20 trip to the United States, one big Vatican package was prepared just after Easter. The white, 2002 Mercedes-Benz popemobile has left the Vatican and will be delivered by an air cargo company in the first days of April, said Alberto Gasbarri, the chief organizer of papal trips. The Vatican has three popemobiles currently in use. One is a four-month-old, open-topped Mercedes based on the company's G500-series sport utility vehicle, used

almost exclusively in St. Peter's Square. The vehicle has an attachable, curved windshield that can protect the pope from rain and wind. Mercedes describes the color as "Vaticanmystic white." The other two are closed, white popemobiles, which are modified versions of the Mercedes-Benz ML430 off-road vehicle. The "glass" top is a cube made of advanced, bulletproof plastic. Both vehicles feature a high seat so the pope can still be visible. One of the ML430 models is being used for the U.S. trip, Gasbarri said.

## Maryland Legislature passes measure to set up study of death penalty

BALTIMORE (CNS) — Richard J. Dowling, executive director of the Maryland Catholic Conference, praised the Maryland General Assembly for passing legislation to establish a commission that will study the death penalty in Maryland. The Catholic conference is the legislative lobbying arm of Maryland's Catholic bishops. The House of Delegates passed its version of the bill March 21 on an 89-48 vote, and the Senate passed its version a day later on a 32-15 vote. The two versions are expected to be reconciled soon, and Gov. Martin J. O'Malley is likely to sign the measure into law, Dowling said. The commission will be made up of people on both sides of the issue, and it is expected to include representatives from the state's religious community. "We're

hopeful this commission will help remove the residual doubts about whether our justice system can be best served by repeal of the death penalty," said Dowling. The commission is expected to hold regional hearings, and Dowling said he is "confident people and interests throughout the state will have their say."

## Vietnamese priest: Government loosens control of seminary admissions

NHA TRANG, Vietnam (CNS) — Permission for a third major seminary to recruit an unrestricted number of students is a sign that the Vietnamese government is loosening restrictions on religion, said the seminary's rector. Since Stella Maris Major Seminary reopened in Nha Trang Diocese in 1991, every other year it has accepted 10 students from each of the neighboring dioceses of Buon Me Thuot, Nha Trang and Quy Nhon, said Father Pierre Pham Ngoc Phi, rector. The seminary used to give a list of 40 to 45 candidates from those dioceses to government authorities, who would approve only 30, he told the Asian church news agency UCA News in mid-March. Recently, he said, the government has not limited the number of recruits, so last September the seminary admitted 44 students, instead of 30, from the three dioceses. He said that on Sept. 28 the seminary received permission to recruit annually from each diocese. The two major seminaries

based in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City received the same permission from the government, in 2005 and 2007, respectively. Six major seminaries train priests from 26 dioceses throughout the country.

## Cardinal Foley to receive special award from Christophers

NEW YORK (CNS) — U.S. Cardinal John P. Foley, grand master of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, has been named the recipient of the Christopher Leadership Award by the Christophers. Cardinal Foley, along with television shows, movies and books that are deemed uplifting, will be honored April 10 at a Christopher Awards dinner in New York. Ordained a priest in 1962, Cardinal Foley has been involved in Catholic communications in its many forms. He served as editor of *The Catholic Standard & Times*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and for 23 years was president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Social Communications, a post he held until 2007. Named an archbishop in 1984, he was made a cardinal last November. In his current position, he guides the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher in the organization's support of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and its response to the needs of Catholics in the Holy Land.

## Vatican spokesman says no decision yet on whether to move JPII's tomb

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A Vatican spokesman said no decision had yet been made on whether to move the tomb of Pope John Paul II to a more prominent place on the main level of St. Peter's Basilica. The spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, said March 30 that "no decision on the matter will be made before beatification" of the late pope. He denied reports that a Vatican commission already had met to determine the tomb's new location. The pope's tomb, visited by millions of people every year, is located in a papal burial area in the grotto underneath the basilica. According to a detailed report March 29 by the Italian news agency ANSA, the plan to move the pope's tomb has been studied and approved by a Vatican commission led by Cardinal Angelo Comastri, archpriest of St. Peter's Basilica. ANSA said the plan foresaw two options: a stone monument without display of the body, or a glass casket through which the pope's body could be viewed. In the latter case, his face would be covered by a light protective wax mask. Cardinal Comastri told the Italian newspaper *La Stampa* that relocation of the tomb was "plausible" after the beatification process is concluded. According to the newspaper, the new tomb site would be in the Chapel of St. Sebastian, located on the right aisle of the basilica just after the chapel housing Michelangelo's statue of the "Pieta."

## Kendallville parish to host four-day mission April 13-16

KENDALLVILLE — Immaculate Conception is preparing for a four-day parish mission, April 13-16, to provide an opportunity for spiritual renewal of its parishioners.

The mission with the theme "United in heart and spirit" will offer four evenings of prayer, Scripture readings and music with reflection by guest speakers at 7 p.m. each evening.

The mission includes the following speakers and themes:

- April 13 — Father Daryl Rybicki, United in Faith
- April 14 — Father Mark Gurtner, United in Prayer
- April 15 — Father Tim Wrozek, United in Reconciliation, and includes a penance service
- April 16 — Father Tom Shoemaker, United in Love, closing Mass.

Morning presentations by Ginny Kohrman of the diocesan office of spiritual development will be available at 8 a.m. They are intended to enhance what participants hear in the evening sessions and for those not able to attend the evening sessions.

Father Lourdino Fernandes, pastor of Immaculate Conception, noted, "We hope this parish mission draws the whole parish together, recharges the congregation, provides the parishioners time for the truly important things like wonder, mystery and prayer. We hope that people reconcile, faith is awakened, vocations are discovered (and) families are healed. We pray that lives are forever changed and that the parish discovers afresh its ultimate calling and meaning. We pray that miracles of the heart may happen."

## Law School's Carozza elected chair of human rights commission

NOTRE DAME — Paolo Carozza, associate professor of law in the University of Notre Dame Law School, has been elected chairman of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) for 2008.

IACHR promotes the observance and defense of human rights in the 35 nations that are members of the Organization of American States (OAS). It is currently processing more than 800 cases brought by individuals or non-governmental organizations alleging human rights violations.

"The essential elements of representative democracy include respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including in particular those such as freedom of expression and the press, freedom of association, political participation, and access to justice," Carozza said. "The effective administration of justice, and access to effective judicial guarantees of human rights, remain always among the most pervasive obstacles to the realization of human rights in the Americas."

Carozza joined the Notre Dame Law School faculty in 1996. Active in the Center for Civil and Human Rights, he serves as director of its doctor of jurisprudence

# AROUND THE DIOCESE

## FORT WAYNE MAYOR VISITS ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL



MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

Just before spring break kicked off, Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry paid a visit to the students of St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel School during Anti-Apathy Week. Students were assembled for an academic pep session on pajama day. Mayor Henry was greeted by a standing ovation and addressed the students, challenging them to "continue learning every day of their lives because they will be the future leaders of our city." The second-grade students sang a song for the mayor and presented him with a poster signed by the entire school. The mayor handed out citizenship awards before leaving.

program in international human rights law. He also is a fellow of Notre Dame's Kellogg Institute for International Studies, the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, and the Nanovic Institute for European Studies.

## OSV conference brings Catholics together to invigorate stewardship

HUNTINGTON — Parishes looking to invigorate their faith communities are making plans to attend the Living Catholic Stewardship conference Sept. 14-16 at the Crowne Plaza-Anaheim Resort in California. The fourth in a series of successful, hands-on conferences offers practical resources and planning strategies for parishes and dioceses seeking to adopt or strengthen stewardship practices.

Sponsored by Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., a leader in Catholic stewardship initiatives, the Living Catholic Stewardship conference allows attendees to encounter national and local experts in face-to-face discussions and breakout sessions. Innovative workshops provide opportunities to network with other Catholics and learn about youth stewardship, strategic planning, multicultural parishes, evangelization, and more while gathering practical ideas that can

be readily implemented at the parish or diocesan level.

Julie Kenny, stewardship services manager in the Offering Envelope Division of Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., says the conferences are designed to bring Catholics together to share success stories about stewardship. "We find that people are looking for ideas about what works when it comes to stewardship. Our conferences bring those resources together so that everyone goes home with solutions and a plan of action."

The Living Catholic Stewardship conference in Anaheim features several well-known and respected Catholic leaders, including keynote speakers: Bishop Sylvester Ryan and Dr. Charles Zech, professor of economics at Villanova University. Bishop Ryan is the former bishop of Monterey, Calif., and past chair of the USCCB ad hoc committee on stewardship. Zech is the author of the groundbreaking book "Why Catholics Don't Give ... and What Can Be Done About It" and the soon-to-be released, "Best Stewardship Practices."

Early bird registration rate is \$450 through June 27. After that date, the cost is \$550 per person. Parishes sending three or more attendees save \$50 per person. For registration information, call OSV customer service, toll-free, at

(800) 348-2886, or visit us online at [www.osvenvelopes.com](http://www.osvenvelopes.com)

## Bishop Dwenger High School takes part in Festival Disney

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Bishop Dwenger High School's advanced choir from Fort Wayne took the stage at Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort on March 14, during the fourth annual Festival Disney. During the event, the ensemble participated in an adjudicated performance, personalized feedback clinic and a high-energy awards ceremony.

Ensembles from as far away as Japan, have packed their sheet music, instruments, flags and dance shoes to travel to the Walt Disney World Resort and take part in the largest single site Disney-produced music festival each weekend until May 10, 2008..

The festival series schedule includes two days of adjudicated performances, where band, choral, dance, auxiliary, jazz and concert ensembles receive valuable written and recorded feedback from nationally recognized music educators. To conclude the event, groups are invited to the Festival Disney Awards Ceremony. All ensembles receive an exclusive Festival Disney Award, and every participant receives a Festival Disney Medal to commemorate their par-

ticipation. Competing groups will vie for Best in Class and Festival Disney Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards.

## Vocation retreat for Precious Blood rescheduled

CARTHAGENA, Ohio — Witnesses of Hope, a vocation discernment retreat for women and men considering a religious vocation, will be April 25-27 at St. Charles Center and at the Maria Stein Center. This is a new date for the March 7-9 retreat that was postponed due to a winter storm.

This retreat is co-sponsored by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood and the Sisters of the Precious Blood. The religious society of priests, brothers and lay associates and the women's religious congregation share a common spirituality and work in a variety of ministries in the United States and internationally. In the spirit of their Precious Blood spirituality, both the Missionaries and the Sisters of the Precious Blood work to foster healing and reconciliation wherever they serve.

The weekend is designed for women and men completing high school, of college age and older who are discerning a vocation to religious life as a priest, brother or sister. The scriptural theme of the retreat offers participants a chance to reflect on their own calling to be witnesses to hope among God's people.

Retreatants will spend the weekend in personal and communal prayer, in Scripture reflection and conversation with the religious communities and with fellow participants to learn more about life as a priest, sister or brother. The weekend begins Friday evening with dinner and concludes early Sunday afternoon. Meals are included, and there will be an opportunity to participate in Mass on Sunday morning at St. Charles Center.

There is no cost for the retreat but reservations are requested by Monday, April 21. For more information or to register, men may contact Father Ken Schnipke at (937) 228-6224 or [vocation@cpps-preciousblood.org](mailto:vocation@cpps-preciousblood.org). Women are invited to contact Sister Carolyn Hoying at (937) 231-1244 or [vocations@preciousbloodsistersdayton.org](mailto:vocations@preciousbloodsistersdayton.org).

## Bishop Luers High School invites all to LuersKnight 'An Enchanted Evening'

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Luers High School invites Luers families, friends, alumni and the community to participate in LuersKnight, "An Enchanted Evening," on Friday, April 18.

The setting is staged in the South Pacific with entertainment by the Bishop Luers Minstrels, followed by dinner with an excerpt from the play.

Corporate, family and alumni tables are available.

There will be auction items. Attendees should not be surprised if they see waterfalls and a volcano in the gym.

Tickets are \$140 per person and are available in the Bishop Luers development office.

Preview the auction on Thursday, April 17, from 7-9 p.m. A \$5 admission is all it takes to enjoy an evening of fun.

# Victory Noll's Helen Espinosa honored with lifetime volunteer award

HUNTINGTON — For the past 21 years, Helen Espinosa has contributed her time, her compassion and her love to Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters (OLVM), serving the community in whatever way she could, from nursing duties to helping in the missions in Arizona, California and Bolivia.

For her years of giving, Espinosa was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award during the 2008 Governor's Conference on Service and Volunteerism awards luncheon Tuesday, March 25, in Indianapolis. The awards were presented through the Indiana's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The keynote speaker for the event was Henry C. Lozano, director of the USA Freedom Corps.

"Helen has made a positive impact on the lives of many sisters through her volunteer efforts," said Victory Noll Administrator Madonna Jeffers. "She is always willing to help out wherever needed. Her willingness to go to a sister in need, wherever

the sister lives, is commendable. She is very deserving of this award."

Since 1985, Espinosa has been a member of Victory Noll's Covenant Associates, a group of men and women who share, in their own setting, the spirit and mission of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters. They have the opportunity to belong to a group of people who share a common vision to live simple, just, prayerful lives in mutual loving service to the poor and oppressed, and to each other.

"The sisters have touched my life deeply, and I want to give back to the sisters by being a dedicated volunteer," said the 76-year-old Espinosa.

A single parent who raised 10 children, Espinosa volunteered in East Chicago, Ind., working in religious education and with youth groups. At the age of 50, she studied and became a registered nurse. Later, she was a volunteer at Victory Noll's mother-house.

Espinosa was involved as a translator for the Hispanic com-

munity with social services in East Chicago, and also helped drive people to doctor's appointments and other needs.

Espinosa had served on the planning committee for the Victory Noll Center for the past seven years, assisting the director with the Hispanic Community.

During her time working with the Victory Noll Sisters, Espinosa spent 10 months in the OLVM mission in Bolivia, serving as a nurse in a clinic and also working in an orphanage.

Other areas where Espinosa has served Victory Noll as a volunteer are in the food service department and as a receptionist. She also helps the grounds crew with planting and weeding of flowerbeds. She is a member of Victory Noll's Cherish the Earth Committee.

She continues her work with the Hispanic community, inviting parish groups to attend bilingual programs at the Victory Noll Center.



Victory Noll's Helen Espinosa, center, was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award during the 2008 Governor's Conference on Service and Volunteerism awards luncheon Tuesday, March 25, in Indianapolis. Presenting the award are keynote speaker Henry C. Lozano, right, director of the USA Freedom Corps, and Ike Randolph, executive director for the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, left.

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# Computer programmer Tim Cooper creates Catholic database forum with Faith Deposit Box

## Seminar classes to be offered at Allen County Public Library

BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE — One could easily call Tim Cooper a resourceful person: a computer programmer with business savvy, the kind of fellow many would like to have on their parish board. But Cooper, a parishioner at St. Charles Parish in Fort Wayne, has taken his computer programming skills and created the Faith Deposit Box, a CD database filled with Catholic resources — an encyclopedia of Catholicism that includes church history, papal encyclicals, the writings of the fathers and doctors of the church with links to Scripture. All one really needs is the disk and link to the Internet. Cooper has done all the background work.

The software database Cooper developed over the years, the Faith Deposit Box, will be demonstrated in a computer lab at the main Allen County Public Library on Tuesday, April 15, in a free seminar Cooper calls "Studying the Scriptures Through the Eyes of the Church Using New Media."

Cooper told *Today's Catholic*, "We will have three or four half-hour sessions (at the library) during that (7-9 p.m.) time frame. We can accommodate 18 attendees for each half hour, meaning we have a limit of 72 attendees."

For those attending the seminar, the Faith Deposit Box may be purchased for \$5 off the regular price of \$30 through the Cathedral Bookstore. Religious receive a free copy of the software just for attending. Cooper said, "There is no obligation to purchase the software, and we welcome those who already have a license."

Because space is limited, registrations are being handled by the Cathedral Bookstore, which can be reached at (260) 422-4611. Registrants need to provide their name, phone number and which half hour they prefer.

Cooper, who grew up in a fundamentalist home in Indianapolis, converted to Catholicism five years ago. One year later, a series of three miracles within a three-week period left Cooper with another "profound conversion."

In February of 2004, Cooper's wife was diagnosed with stage-3 melanoma cancer. "The prognosis wasn't very positive," Cooper said. "She had two surgeries."

After the diagnosis from the doctor, Father Chris Smith gave her the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. Cooper said a peace came over his wife after the sacrament. She was able to sleep again that night. The next morning his wife told him, "God told me everything is going to be okay."

"That was my first witness of something supernatural going on," Cooper said.

Cooper said this precipitated a mid-life crisis for him and "got me thinking about our mortality and eternal things. It made me reevaluate my priorities."

He felt he had a moment where God asked, "What have you done for me?" Cooper's response at the time was, "Well, basically nothing."

After the second conversion, Cooper got very involved in his parish — Christ Renews His Parish, Bible study, Disciples in Mission — and it precipitated a Bible study based on the teachings of the Fathers of the Church.

Again, Cooper felt challenged to do more for God. "But what could I do?" he asked. "I'm not a particularly eloquent speaker or writer, but I know how to program. I'm a computer programmer. I've been doing that for 30 years now."

"I thought, 'this is one thing I can do for God.' I can program," Cooper said. "I got this idea connecting the Bible, Scriptures with the early church fathers. ... I looked up quotes of the early church fathers with Scripture, linked them together, and then I put it altogether on a CD and gave it to the Bible study group."

The idea is, one can look up a Bible verse, and then click on the references to that and see what the church fathers say about that Bible verse.

"I gave a copy to Father David Voors, and he said, 'This is really cool.' He said he really liked it and started using it for his homilies," Cooper said. "I thought, 'What if we expanded this? What if we added the doctors of the church?'"

Cooper was then on a quest on the Internet to look up the writings of the 33 doctors of the church. "As a programmer I have written utilities that download (information) from the Internet and put it into a searchable database forum," he said.

"That's basically what I put together. It's a library of Catholic theological books that covers 2,000 years of teachings, and it's all connected with Scripture," Cooper said.

On the computer, the information takes about a gigabyte of space and can be updated for up to a year at no extra charge.

Cooper gave the CD to a couple of other priests, friends and Protestant ministers and then wondered if there was some way he could market this. A neighbor and fellow Christ Renews His Parish friend, Jerry Suelzer, formed a limited liability company and the two started marketing the CD.

Cooper considers this a side business, an apostolate — he is a full-time programmer for Smith Brothers in Berne, a career he is very comfortable with. "But if God has other plans, I'm happy with that," he added.

At \$30 per CD, "we're not here to get rich," Cooper added. And they generally give it away to priests and seminarians.

Cooper and Suelzer met Jerry Usher at a Redeemer Radio share-a-thon. They entered a partnership with Usher to advertise and distribute the CD.

"Finally I can say, 'I'm contributing, doing something positive,'" said Cooper.

The CD is available at Cathedral Bookstore and All Saints Bookstore in Fort Wayne, but "we hope to get it in other bookstores." It can also be ordered on the Internet at [www.faithdepositbox.com](http://www.faithdepositbox.com).

## DONATION MADE BY GIRL SCOUTS



PROVIDED BY CHERYL HEISE

The Girl Scouts of St. Vincent De Paul held their annual Lenten retreat on March 15. Father Jason Freiburger, associate pastor, presented 66 religious medals to the girls who earned them. The Scouts also collected items for the Samaritan House, a home offered to families whose loved ones are at Parkview Memorial Hospital in Fort Wayne. The troops made Baskets of Hope, which contained hospitality items. In the photo are Hannah Branam, Lindsey Sutter, Samaritan House Director Tim Foster and Kendra Martin. In the four years they have been open, Foster noted, this is the largest donation they have ever received. The troops that took part were, Brownie Troops 60, 200, 302; Junior Troops 525, 650, 766; Cadette Troop 3; Senior Troop 412 and some Juliettes from St. Vincent Church.



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# La Primera Comunion

**Latino culture brings festive, family flair to the sacrament**

BY DON CLEMMER

In some ways, a Latino first Communion ceremony is like a wedding.

"They have very elaborate, long dresses for the girls," notes Gisela Feil. "Sometimes you think it's little brides coming in there."

Feil works for St. Patrick Parish in Fort Wayne, where she prepares young people and their families for first Communion, or la primera Comunion, as it is known in Spanish. All across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Latino youth and their families pack their parishes

on first Communion day, with recent class sizes including 98 at St. Patrick, 71 at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Warsaw and over 100 at St.

Adalbert in South Bend. The parishes often divide the class over several Masses to accommodate the numbers.

"It's very much a family event. And when I mean family, it's extended family," Feil says emphatically. Not only are parents involved, but each first communicant has two sponsors, called padrinos.

"It's a family member who wants to help the family with the celebration," Feil explains. Padrinos are similar to godparents and confirmation sponsors,

but they are also likely to take care of the financial end of the celebration, perhaps by purchasing gifts or the dress.

This can become a large role as, traditionally, a Latino family marks the occasion with a big fiesta at their home, complete with music and traditional food.

"One of the great things that the Hispanic culture brings to us is this appreciation for the special day that it is," says Holy Cross Father Chris Cox, pastor of St. Adalbert.

But Gisela Feil notes that, like a wedding, all of the pomp and expensive celebration can detract from the appreciation of the sacrament itself. This is why Feil takes a family-oriented approach to her job, involving parents in the preparation their kids are making for the sacrament. This includes a day-long retreat for families and a bi-lingual series of

**"It's very much a family event."**

GISELA FEIL

first Communion books that allow the kids to study with their parents what they have learned, often a great benefit for parents.

"Through the children, they get to know the real meaning of Communion," says Feil. "It's a family event."

Of course, the real meaning of first Communion is also evident in some of the other traditions Latinos bring to the ceremony. Father Chris Cox notes that Latinos light a candle at first Communion.

"In a very particular way, it hearkens back to the profession of faith made by their parents and godparents on the day of their baptism," says Father Cox. "Some families even save the baptismal candle, and they use it



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY JORGE AGUILAR

**Holy Cross Father Chris Cox, back row with glasses, stands with some of the 2005 first Communion class at St. Adalbert Parish in South Bend. St. Adalbert is one of 13 parishes in the diocese with a Spanish-speaking community. First Communion classes at St. Adalbert usually have over 100 children.**

on that day."

Father Cox says that the use of the candle does more than root first Communion in the initiation begun at baptism.

"There's both a beauty and a power to it," he notes, so much so that the tradition has crossed cultural lines and is used by the Anglo and African American first communicants at St. Adalbert.

But it isn't unusual for customs to rub off from one culture to another, adds Father Cox.

"There are ways in which the Irish immigration has fundamentally shaped the church," he

notes. Today, facing another influx of immigrants, the dominant culture of U.S. Catholicism could shift again. Just as Irish Catholicism prompts a big observance of St. Patrick's Day, Father Cox says, "Some years from now, the celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be, I would suggest, more than just a big Mass here at St. Adalbert and the 13 parishes that speak Spanish, but something that will be done on a pretty heavy scale at every parish in the diocese."

This shift was already evident in February's "U.S. Religious

Landscape Survey" conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life that showed the Catholic Church experiencing the greatest erosion in membership among U.S. churches in recent years and that only the influx of predominantly Latino immigrants has buoyed the Catholic numbers.

And seldom are these numbers more evident than among the many first communicants, parents, padrinos and other extended family who turn out to celebrate first Communion, the future and present faces of a vibrant and changing American church.



**A family stands with a first communicant at St. Adalbert. First Communion is a day of great celebration with family in Latino culture.**



**Holy Cross Father David Scheidler, associate pastor of St. Adalbert, gives first Communion to a young girl. St. Adalbert's first Communion classes usually exceed 100 children a year.**



**A first communicant at St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend prays while holding his candle.**

# Preparing first communicants with special needs

BY JEN OCHSTEIN

GRANGER — Anna Pearson, 8, has been disappointed during the last several Masses she's attended at St. Pius Catholic Church.

It's not that she doesn't like the homily or participate in the liturgy.

In fact, the congregation often sees her twirling and dancing to the music in the front row, her mother, Susan Pearson, said.

Rather, Anna's disquiet has come from a much deeper longing: her desire to receive the Eucharist.

But all that changed during a Saturday Mass at the church.

Anna and two other children diagnosed with Down syndrome received their first Communion after months of preparation.

Anna's mom, Susan Pearson, said before Anna's experience that she's relieved her daughter can now experience the Eucharist.

"Every time we go to Mass, she wants to receive, and I have to keep telling her not this week," Pearson said. "She gets quite upset when I tell her no."

St. Pius pastoral associate Amy Schlatterbeck began working with the children after they expressed interest in wanting to participate in the Eucharist.

"We teach the basics — prayer — and we practice receiving so they know how to do that," Schlatterbeck said. "They're excited. It's been difficult at Mass for them to have to wait, but the longing is good. So, they're very ready."

Pearson said the students, including Matthew Speheger, 9, Brian Hendricks, 16, Kaitlyn Revell, 11, and Anna, have been preparing all year for their first Communion. Schlatterbeck said Brian would not be taking first Communion with the other children because a family member is out of town, and he wants to wait until the entire family is together.

"I spoke with the other moms, and we are all in agreement that this is very precious to us because we thought it would never happen," Pearson said. "As you can see by our children's ages, some of them fell through the cracks. As a parent of a child with special needs, you are in a quandary about what to do. If your child isn't ready at the age all the other children are moving forward, there are no other options. This is why we were so overwhelmed with gratitude at being given this opportunity. Our children's lives will be forever changed because St. Pius was open and willing to work on a curriculum, which would reach our children."

And she said Schlatterbeck has provided the type of environment in which the children have flourished.

She explained that children with Down syndrome are visual learners, and Pearson thought the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program offered at St. Pius would help Anna along with her religious education because of her short attention span.

Schlatterbeck worked with Anna one-on-one last year. But instead of moving her into the mainstream catechetical classes



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY SUSAN PEARSON

Father Bill Schooler, St. Pius X, Granger pastor, and first communicant Anna Pearson share joy after the first Communion celebration at the church last weekend.

when she was ready, Pearson said she and Schlatterbeck decided to continue in the same way except other children with Down syndrome were invited to join.

"Children with Down syndrome can do many of the same things their peers can, it just takes them longer," said Pearson.

She added later that the children's families are grateful to St. Pius for the opportunity the children to be given religious education.

"This program has brought so much hope to our families," she said.

Indeed, Schlatterbeck said the children felt they were ready to receive Communion "and take their next step in faith."

"They expressed an interest in receiving the Eucharist, so we felt they were ready," Schlatterbeck said.

She said she's been working with them so they understand that the bread they take is "different from regular bread. It's transformed into the body and blood of Christ."

She's taught them to show reverence upon receiving the Eucharist, teaching them to genuflect and bow as well as Mass etiquette — being quiet, good listeners and participating. These are the same issues about which Schlatterbeck talks with all the children.

"If it weren't for this program, our children wouldn't be making this journey," Pearson said. "I am hoping that this will be an inspiration for other families."

Because of her own love of the Catholic faith and her belief in Catholic education, Pearson said having Anna receive religious education is special. And Anna's reception of the Eucharist "is a monumental day for me," she said.

Despite Anna's first Communion, Pearson said her daughter will likely have one dis-

appointment. Anna loves going to what she calls "church school," and is disappointed when she doesn't go.

"I don't know what I'm going to do now that classes are over until next fall," she said.

Pearson said each of the children participating in the class have shared their own thoughts about their first Communion.

She said that Cheryl Speheger

was "blown away" when Matthew accepted the Eucharist because of sensory problems, causing him to refuse food much of the time.

Lori Hendricks, Brian's mom and a Special Olympics coach, never thought her son would take first Communion, and because it's such a monumental event for their family, Brian is holding off until his sister can witness the event as well, Pearson said.

"Anne Revell, Kaitlyn's mom, shared that she feels our children are true blessings and instruments of God," Pearson said. "Our children have taught us acceptance, unconditional love and patience. Through their innocence and love they have a true connection to God, more than we can ever comprehend."



The special needs first Communion class poses with Father Bill Schooler, St. Pius X, Granger pastor, and the altar servers, including one who has Down syndrome.

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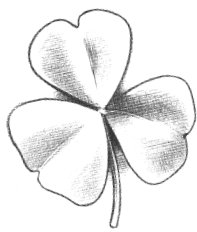
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**TODAY'S CATHOLIC**

# Jesus Day celebrated in preparation of first Communion at Little Flower

BY MICHELLE ARTUSI

SOUTH BEND — At Little Flower Parish in South Bend, the first holy Communion is family-based. In addition to all the good things happening in their homes, children study in classroom-type settings with catechists while parents come to sessions for updating and sharing.

In preparation for the day when each child will come to the Lord's table for the first time, all children preparing for this sacrament participated in a retreat called Jesus Day. Since what goes on at home and what goes on in church at Sunday Eucharist are closely united, the themes of a eucharistic celebration were unpacked in age-appropriate stations at the retreat. In both settings one sees gathering, listening, preparing gifts, remembering, sharing and giving ongoing thanks.

The day began with a children's Mass. Although a children's Mass is celebrated every Sunday morning when the children's faith formation classes are held, this Mass was a teaching Mass with Holy Cross Father Cornelius Ryan as presider. It set the emphasis for what was to follow: children learned about prayer with emphasis on listening well to Scripture. The children prepared small gifts as faith-filled actions to be handed out in gestures of kindness to others and concluded with the reception of a loaf of bread made for the first communicants by another parishioner.

Families were encouraged to use this loaf of bread to "break bread" later in the day and to discuss the happenings of the retreat. Bakers of the bread wrote notes to the children in which they reminisced about the day of their first Communion or the day of their child's first

Communion as well as the important role that Jesus plays in their lives.

Since the word Eucharist means "thanksgiving" or "to give thanks," children wrote notes thanking their bakers and perhaps even invited them to their upcoming special day — first Communion.

St. Paul writes that because the bread (Jesus) is one, we, though many, are one body because we all partake of the one loaf.

While the celebration of Mass is over for the weekend, Catholics continue their eucharistic celebration by the way they live. Christians love and serve the Lord by loving and helping one another.

It was St. Augustine who reminded the fourth century crowds: "If then you are the body of Christ and his members, it is your sacrament that reposes on the altar of the Lord. Be what you see and receive what you are."

# Second graders at Denver Catholic school re-enact Last Supper

BY ROXANNE KING

DENVER (CNS) — It looked amazingly like the Leonardo da Vinci painting of the Last Supper — only the faces seated around the long table were those of 7 and 8 year olds.

For some 15 years, Karen Merten has had her second-graders at Blessed Sacrament School in Denver re-enact the Last Supper to deepen their understanding of what took place on Holy Thursday when Christ instituted the Eucharist. The exercise not only helps them prepare for Easter, but also for their first Communion in May.

Merten's class held a dress rehearsal of the play they were to present it for parents on Holy Thursday. As narrators set the scene of Jesus celebrating the Passover meal with his Twelve Apostles, the action began.

"Today I come to celebrate a meal," proclaimed Jesus, otherwise known as Paul Meaney. "Who will eat this meal with me?"

"I am Simon, a fisherman. I will be called Peter and will become the first head of the church on earth," responded Eli Bartlett as he stood. "I will eat this meal with you."

When Judas Iscariot spoke, announcing that he would eventually betray Jesus, one apostle, the only one played by a girl, Elaine Matucan, protested: "I don't get that."

"You don't get what, Elaine?" Merten patiently asked.

It turned out Elaine didn't feel it was right for Judas to be at the Last Supper because he was a traitor. For second-graders, the moral code is black and white, never gray.

The play continued. To include everyone — the class has a dozen



CNS PHOTO/JAMES BACA, DENVER CATHOLIC REGISTER

**Paul Meaney, center, portrays Jesus during the Last Supper as re-enacted by second graders at Blessed Sacrament School in Denver. Second-grade teacher Karen Merten has her classes re-enact the event as preparation both for Easter and for their first Communion in May.**

boys and six girls — females serve as narrators and play biblical characters important to Jesus' life, including Christ's mother, Mary. The extra characters explain that while they were not at the Last Supper they played integral roles in Christ's life.

As Jesus started to wash the apostles' feet, a few giggles slipped out. After instituting the Eucharist and exhorting the apostles to "Do this in memory of me," Jesus concluded by giving them a new commandment: to love

one another.

The children prayed the Our Father, then sang a lively reggae-style song describing Christ's resurrection, "Glory Be to Jesus."

After the play, the children shared their thoughts about it.

"I like doing it," announced Eli. "It's fun — we get to drink grape juice and we're going to eat French

bread."

Explaining what the play is about, Paul said: "It's about the Last Supper, the last time Jesus was with his disciples, the last dinner he would eat with them. And it was the first Communion."

One boy who knew a great deal about his character — that he was the youngest apostle and took care of Mary after Jesus' death on the cross — admitted a bit of confusion nonetheless.

"My character is John, brother of Jay-mez. I don't know which Jay-mez, because there's two Jay-mez," confessed Lorenzo Marquez, referring to James the Lesser and James the Greater.

Reliving the Last Supper with the children renews her own appreciation for the sacrament of the Eucharist, said Merten.

"The children at this age are so faith-filled that they help me renew my own faith," she said, noting their innocence and openness. "They have a way of bringing you back down to what everything is about."

# Families treasure their journey to first Communion

BY JENNIFER MURRAY

FORT WAYNE — First Communion is a time of bringing the family together as parents help their children to understand the meaning of the holy Eucharist and the gift they are receiving. But for two families at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Fort Wayne, this spiritual journey has truly been a shared one as both children and their parents learn about this mystery of faith.

In the Bair family, Missy, who had grown up Catholic and her husband, Mike, did not share the faith. He saw her Catholic faith as a part of her girlhood, not their married life together. Missy went to the Catholic Church on holidays but there were not a lot of Catholic parishes where they were living in Bloomington, and none of them felt like home to her. She started going to churches of other denominations as the family searched for a church they could attend together.

But as her children were getting older, Missy felt a very strong desire that they receive Communion in the Catholic Church.

"I really missed the Catholic tradition, receiving Communion," she said.

When they had the opportunity to move back to Fort Wayne, Missy made a decision that they would attend St. Elizabeth's and she would enroll her children in faith formation classes so Megan, and later, Isaac could receive their first Communion.

But to Missy's surprise, as Megan began preparing for her first Communion, Mike became interested in learning about the Catholic Church and began to attend some RCIA classes.

Missy said, "I never forced him to go. I really wanted him to go. I never even asked him because I didn't think he would."

Missy didn't really believe her husband would join the church and at first she didn't ask him about his experiences. But after Megan received her first Communion, Mike continued to attend Mass with them and inquire into the Catholic faith.

This year he continued to attend RCIA classes while his son, Isaac, began preparing for his first Communion. Now Missy asks Mike about what he learns in his classes, and she has discovered a lot.

She admitted, "Most of my knowledge was from Sunday school. He has taught me a lot."

Mike has enjoyed attending RCIA classes. "The good thing about RCIA is it allows me to

grow, to learn in incremental ways."

Missy said, "RCIA has been an influence on not just him, but on the whole family."

The children too have taught the family a lot about growing in their spiritual journey.

"I expected we would just go to church on Sundays," Missy said. "(The children) are being a good influence on me to be more

Melanie remembered, "Most of our experiences were going to new churches or offshoots, so the emphasis was on bringing in new Christians, not feeding (the ones already there)."

"You felt like you weren't progressing," said Randy.

As Randy became more and more drawn to the Catholic Church, he began taking RCIA classes. At the time,

their three children were pretty

young, so it was easier for him to attend alone. Melanie had not yet made the decision to become Catholic; however, she did support his decision.

Since then, they moved to Fort Wayne and began attending St. Elizabeth's. Although Randy was now a Catholic, they had not yet decided if their children would be raised Catholic.

Melanie explained, "I had to want it for myself first before I committed it to my children, to do this as husband and wife together."

She began learning about the faith and signed up for RCIA classes while Maddie, their oldest daughter, began taking classes to prepare for first Communion this year.

Melanie had to ask herself, "Do I recognize and believe in the sacraments and tenants of the Catholic faith on a personal level? When I started the RCIA process, I was already there. One of the things that I was drawn to ... was the way Communion takes place in the Catholic Church, the way it is experienced as a community."

Together Melanie and her daughter Maddie learned about the richness of the faith.

Melanie said, "It has been a

lot of fun before Mass begins to talk about what is in front of the church, why things are where they are. I think the more (Maddie) learns about it, she doesn't get bored at Mass. Maddie really gets that sense of community. That sense of family and community is different than you get in evangelical traditions.

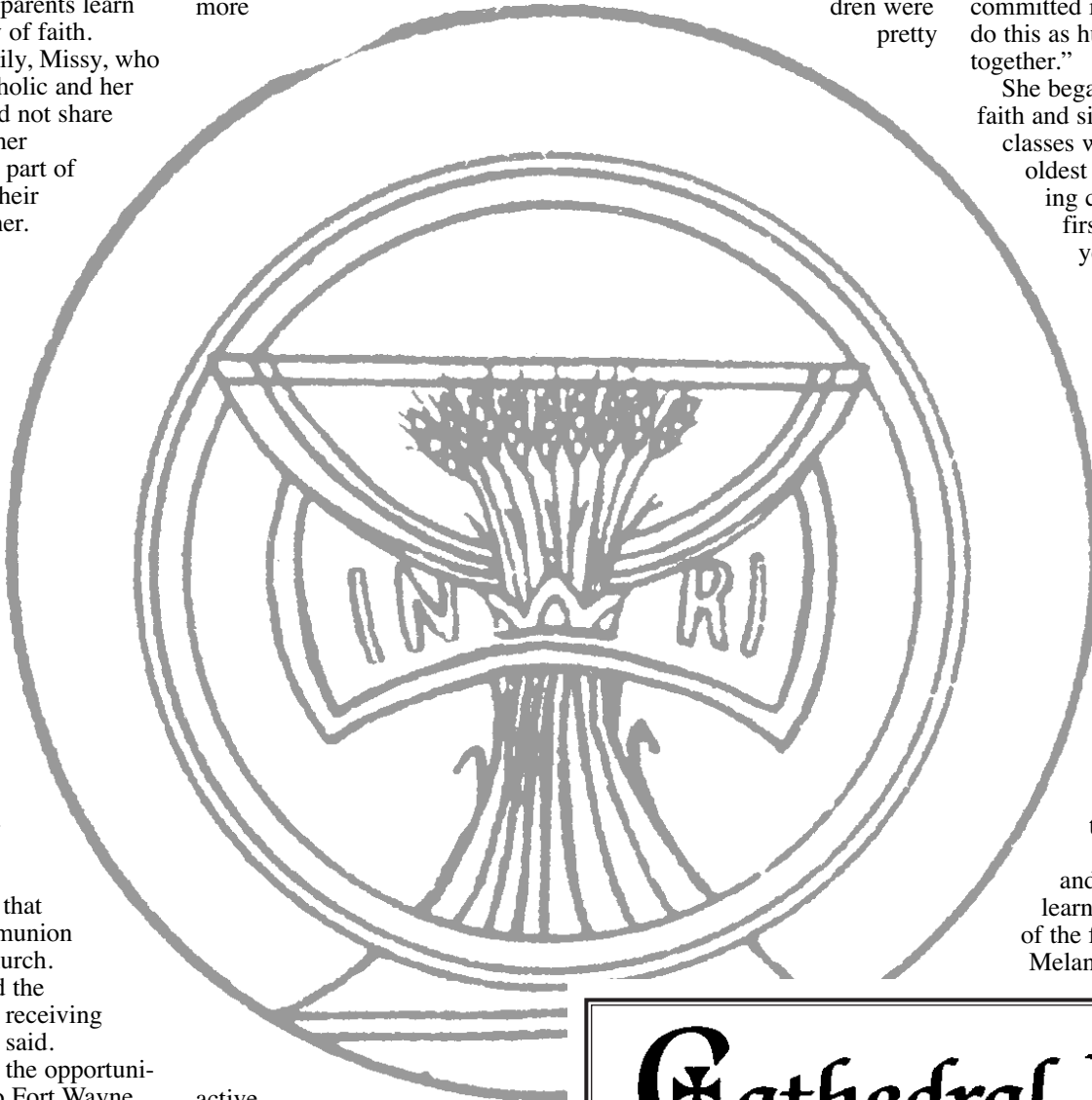
As a family, they continue to grow in the faith. The twins, Eiji and Elizabeth, who are now three, were baptized this past fall and are very proud that they can take part in the family ritual of prayer by making the sign of the cross.

Bedtime prayer has become an important part of the Minovie's spiritual practices, but Randy says they are also teaching their children gratitude as a way of prayer. "They are more thankful for things. We try to be thankful for each day."

Holidays have also taken on a special meaning for the family. Melanie said, "Holidays this year ... have a whole new meaning for us. It's not just one day. It was a journey to Christmas and Easter."

It has also been a journey for this family to be united in the Eucharist and as Maddie receives her first Communion this year, just one month after her mother received hers, she will know that her family has embraced the faith together.

First Communion, always a special moment, will be treasured especially by these two families who will know in the Eucharist, the mystery of unity.



active, more accountable to the church."

If they miss church on Sunday morning, Megan and Isaac remind their parents so that they can go in the evening.

This year will mean a lot to the family. First Mike was received into the church on Easter Vigil, nearly a year after his daughter received her first Communion, and now Isaac will be receiving his first Communion just a month after his dad.

For the Minovie family, the journey into the Catholic faith was an unexpected one. Randy and Melanie came out of the Baptist tradition. While living in Minnesota, Randy worked with a man who had three passions: NASCAR, hockey and the Catholic faith. As Randy learned more about the Catholic faith, he found the spirituality appealed to him.

Randy explained, "For me it was more a universality of the church: the ability, if you wanted, to attend church every day."

Melanie and Randy had gone to various Protestant churches, searching for the one where they belonged. Randy said, "It always seemed the focus was on the strength of the pastor ... instead of the body of the church."

## Cathedral Books & Gifts

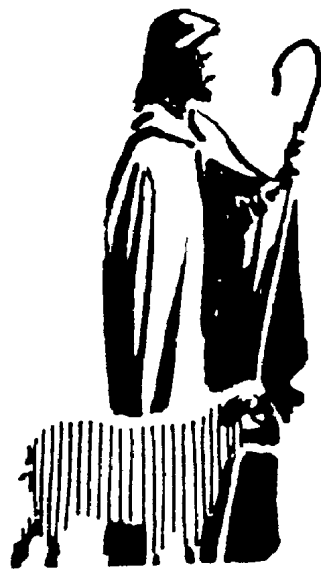
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## EDITORIAL

## Catholic education goes where the people are

It is with sadness and yet with anticipation that we note the merging of Msgr. Julian Benoit Academy and St. John the Baptist School in Fort Wayne. Demographic changes in southeast Fort Wayne have meant that the Catholic population, in general, has often relocated to other parts of the community. As family size decreases, less religious teach in schools, lay teachers and administrators create additional financial responsibilities. These trends are evident in most urban and rural schools.

The diocese is taking a look at these challenges as it explores options. Benoit, with 73 students and debt, will merge with St. John the Baptist School, which is about three miles west. Interestingly, in reviewing where the Benoit students lived, most resided in a part of the city of Fort Wayne, which was about equidistant to either school. And St. John, closer to St. Patrick Parish with a large Latino population, has already been working to welcome those students into the school. With the Benoit merger, the result will be an even larger multicultural diversity at St. John the Baptist, something more closely reflective of the universality of the church.

Even before the merger was announced, St. John had already scheduled workshops for the teachers and staff on multiculturalism.

But the newly merged St. John the Baptist and Benoit Academy will serve as an anchor to Catholic education in south Fort Wayne. It will allow Catholic education to serve the community in a more efficient and cost-effective way.

Competent leadership, bringing the two studentbodies together yet this school year, and strong communication with the parents at both Benoit and St. John will make the merger go smoother and hopefully unite the two communities.

At last week's press conference, it was noted by Catholic Schools Superintendent Holy Cross Father Stephen Kempinger and Bishop John M. D'Arcy that the hunger for Catholic schools is as strong as ever. Parish schools, for example, like St. Charles, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and St. Jude in Fort Wayne continue to thrive with large enrollments.

St. Pius X Parish in Granger will open a new school this school year. Already 350 students are enrolled.

"We go where people are," noted Father Kempinger at the press conference. "We go where we're needed."

This does not mean neglecting the less affluent communities of our cities and towns, but rather that, by reconfiguring schools, the diocese can more effectively serve the educational needs of every background.

The merging of the two schools comes after a study that involved rural and south side Catholic schools. Although it was stated at the press conference that no additional consolidations will be named this academic year, other areas and possible consolidations are being studied for the future keeping in mind this question that Bishop D'Arcy pointed out, "Are we doing the best job educationally for our children?"

Let us do all we can to strengthen Catholic education across the diocese and be supportive of our schools as they assist bringing about the new evangelization with great fervor and ardor.

### The Eucharist

This week's issue explores first holy Communion, and April is the month of the Eucharist. Consider how often we take the Eucharist for granted these days. In places like China, Catholics worship in "underground" churches. In Iraq, Catholics put their life at risk by going to Mass or a church function. The archbishop of Mosul was recently kidnapped and later killed after he completed devotions, the Stations of the Cross.

We can only be reminded of the words last week in the Easter coverage, "The pope said that by becoming human, dying and rising from the dead, Jesus restored full dignity to humanity, a dignity that must be claimed, defended and promoted for all people."

Jesus gives himself to us in the Eucharist. There are many who risk life and limb to receive him.

The next time we receive our Lord in the Eucharist, let us think of all the people who yearn for the Eucharist in this special way and those who are denied Jesus through religious oppression or intolerance. Let us be renewed in our gratitude for the Eucharist and God's presence to us today and always.

**Today's Catholic editorial board** consists of Bishop John M. D'Arcy, Ann Carey, Don Clemmer, Father Mark Gurtner, Father Michael Heintz, Tim Johnson and Vince LaBarbera.

# COMMENTARY

TODAY'S CATHOLIC welcomes letters from readers. All letters must be signed and include a phone number and address for verification. Today's Catholic reserves the right to edit for clarity and length. Address letters to: Today's Catholic • P.O. Box 11169 • Fort Wayne, IN • 46856-1169 or e-mail to: editor@fw.diocesefwsb.org

## STDs and sex education

Despite the millions of dollars being spent each year on sex education, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that one in four teenage girls ages 14 to 18 has a sexually transmitted disease (STD). What has gone wrong?

Planned Parenthood, a private sex education, family planning and abortion conglomerate, lays the blame on the teaching of abstinence-only sex education in schools; basing that claim on a 2007 Surgeon General's report that abstinence-only sex education is ineffective. But that report appears to be seriously biased, based on the fact that Planned Parenthood helped produce the document.

There are numerous credible reports refuting the Surgeon General's findings.

In 1999, a study was commissioned by the Consortium of State

Physicians Resource Councils based in Washington, D.C., *The Declines in Adolescent Pregnancy Birth and Abortion Rates in the 1990s: What Factors Are Responsible?* It was written by Jeffrey M. Jones, MD, PhD, and 10 other medical doctors. While the study focused primarily on pregnancy, birth and abortion, its findings are applicable to sexually transmitted diseases because condoms are the primary tools used to prevent both pregnancy and STDs in teens.

In January of 2001, the physicians consortium released a study entitled "A Perspective on the Medical Implications of the Virginity Pledge among Teens" by Dr. John R. Diggs Jr. and three other doctors. The 2001 study concludes with the following: "As a group of more than 2000 physicians who deal daily with the ravages of STDs and teen pregnancy, we see a simple solution: abstinence until marriage with an uninfected partner and monogamy thereafter. This is the lifetime prescription for optimal

sexual health." It goes on for some length but includes this passage: "Groups that attempt to discredit abstinence until marriage as a religious message apparently ignore a vast body of science."

Planned Parenthood and many other sex-education organizations promote condom use for "safer" teenage sex. But how much safer is sex using condoms? A study by the National Institutes for Sexual Health on condom effectiveness states that even with consistent and correct use Chlamydia, the number one bacterial STD, is found to be prevented only 50 percent of the time. In Human Papilloma Disease (HPV), the leading viral STD, which can cause cervical cancer, condoms provide little or no protection. At the 2002 National STD Prevention Conference it was stated that condoms are only 60 percent effective in preventing genital herpes, an incurable disease that infects one in five Americans age 12 and older.

Edward Linder  
Decatur

## The Gaza I live

BY TOM GARAFALO

Most Americans think of Gaza as a place of suffering and militancy, but the reality is that Gaza is home to some of the most inspiring and creative people in the Middle East. For the past two years, as the area's representative for Catholic Relief Services, I've traveled there as much as I can. I see what the front-page newspaper photos don't show you: this tiny sliver of land on the Mediterranean is a place of energy and dynamism, of humor and warmth and unbelievable hospitality, of delicious fish and crabs and the romantic fragrance of apple tobacco.

But these days, heartbreakingly, it is a place of fear and pain. In mid-January, Gazans took matters into their own hands and tore down the wall separating them from Egypt. After a few days of freedom, the borders were closed and they returned to life on a strip of land usually cut off from supplies and short on opportunity; 40-50 percent of Gazans are unemployed and 80 percent of the population relies on humanitarian aid. In March, after Gazan militants fired homemade rockets on Israel, Israeli airstrikes killed over 100 people in Gaza.

These realities are grim, and solutions to the conflict are hard to come by. Yet as I watch the news, I wish others could experience the Gaza that I do. On the wall in my place in Jerusalem, I've hung a beautiful still life of a Gazan cafe table, replete with brilliant reds and pinks and yellows, painted by a Gazan artist named Raed Issa. I imagine Raed sitting in his studio

in Gaza wishing he could buy paints, which may not be available due to the border closures that started in June 2007. Or maybe he's in Egypt, looking for that special yellow hue that made my painting so vivid and so real and so full of Gaza's beauty. I hope he finds it and makes it home safely.

I think always of the stories of the great Palestinian filmmaker Rashid Masharawi, whom I met last year. We had dinner at a friend's house, and he entertained all of us with nonstop stories about growing up in the Beach refugee camp in Gaza. I laughed so hard I cried as he told stories of family life — the love of family for each other that makes me recall my own childhood in New Jersey with such fondness.

In early January, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick insisted on going to Gaza on the very day that President George Bush was visiting President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah. The situation is always a bit tense when such visits happen, but the cardinal wanted to go and check in with a local Gaza parish and the projects CRS runs with young people, Christian and Muslim. We met with 20 young people, university students of both sexes, and their message was sad despite their smiles and their thankfulness for our visit. "We have very little hope for change right now," said one young man. "All I really have hope for today is that I'll have electricity when I go home from our meeting, so my mother can have light to cook by and we will have heat at night." Young people need the capacity to hope for so much more.

A week after the March airstrikes, I had another chance to

connect with young people in Gaza because CRS has recently begun another youth initiative there. The college-age Gazans described their options as being increasingly limited. Mostly, they're limited to volunteer work with organizations like CRS, or military activity. Often, in fact, the latter isn't paid either — though it does provide steady work, if little future. These young people have known death too intimately; it seeps through their words and thoughts.

What struck me were the words of two of the students — a young woman named Amani from Beit Hanoun (where the homemade rockets are launched and the Israeli missiles strike in response), and a young man named Sari. Amani said that the most pressing need in Gaza was openness: the opportunity to have a broad discussion about their society, to challenge ideas and question everything. Sari said that Gaza's youth need to draw from the strength and health of their community, without being corrupted by politics. Right now, they said, it is too hard for young people to engage each other and the society around them to build their lives and act in the world. Like Raed Issa and Rashid Masharawi and so many of the other people that make Gaza Gaza, these young people want to be creators. I am proud CRS can help them get a bit closer to that dream and I pray that they will make it.

Tom Garafalo is country representative for Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza at Catholic Relief Services.

# Tobacco-free zone? Pope urged to stomp out butts in Vatican City

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Papal visits tend to bring out special interest groups, and one already has surfaced in the United States.

Physicians and Nurses Against Tobacco, a Rhode Island-based organization, is asking Pope Benedict XVI to support its campaign for a tobacco-free society.

The group's petition, posted online, appeals to the pope not only to denounce the sale and use of tobacco during his April 15-20 visit to the United States, but also to declare Vatican City the world's first tobacco-free state.

"We hope to convince him to make this gesture as an example to other religious and political leaders and policymakers," the petition says.

Some might dismiss the initiative as a publicity grab, but there is no denying that tobacco is a serious health issue.

The World Health Organization says tobacco kills 5.4 million people a year, and with smoking rates on the rise in developing countries, the death toll could rise to 8.3 million over the next 20 years.

The Vatican used to be known as a safe haven for cigarette smok-

ers. That changed dramatically in 2002, when Vatican City prohibited smoking in offices and public places.

But employees and visitors continue to puff away in outdoor areas of the 109-acre state, and turning the Vatican into a totally smoke-free zone would probably not go down well.

On a recent morning, one employee sat outside the Vatican's health care center, taking a cigarette break. The butts on the nearby cobblestones indicated this as a smokers' meeting ground.

"If you smoke inside, it's a 30 euro (US\$47) fine — or so they say," the employee said.

A Vatican police officer said it's possible for workers to be suspended from their jobs if they persist in smoking in office areas. But like others, he said banning smoking outside would seem too draconian.

"We're not in Singapore," he remarked, an allusion to Singapore's strict laws on things like gum-chewing and littering.

In St. Peter's Square one can light up with no problem. No one tries to enter St. Peter's Basilica

## THE VATICAN LETTER

JOHN THAVIS

with a lit cigarette, but smokers — including ushers on break — can be seen on the basilica's steps.

One Brazilian tourist visiting Rome in March leaned against the facade of the basilica and finished a cigarette as his wife and daughter toured the inside.

"Naturally, I'd never smoke inside," he said quickly.

Bishop Renato Boccardo, secretary general of the Vatican City governor's office, is proud of the fact that smoking has been drastically curtailed.

"It's changed a lot. For a while, even after the no-smoking rule, people still smoked. But now it's entered into the general mentality,"

LETTER, PAGE 16

# God does not leave us as wanderers



## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

### 3rd Sunday of Easter Lk 24:13-35

The Acts of the Apostles provides this weekend's first reading. Speaking in behalf of all the apostles, Peter preaches to an audience in Jerusalem.

He is much to the point. God is the creator. Humans sinned and thereby offended God. Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus came into the world to bring divine forgiveness. Jesus was crucified but rose from the dead.

It is interesting that the apostles felt themselves bound to speak of Jesus. They believed wholeheartedly in the divinity of Jesus, in the saving effects of the mission of Jesus on earth, in their role as instruments to continue the mission of Jesus, and in Peter's place, first among them, as having been constructed by Jesus.

None of the apostles went off on his own. All sought to follow as exactly as possible the preaching of Jesus. All sought to repeat the merciful deeds of Jesus.

The First Epistle of Peter supplies the next reading. Scholars debate the authorship of this epistle. Was Peter the author? Or, did someone write in Peter's name? Or, did someone wish to transmit what Peter had said or had seen?

Regardless, this epistle, and all

the rest of the New Testament, show how much the first Christians relied upon Jesus. Even after the Ascension, the earliest Christians wanted never to keep the Lord only as a distant memory, or a mere example, they wanted instead to be as close to the Lord as possible.

They believed that they still could relate to Jesus, and Jesus could relate to them.

St. Luke's Gospel supplies this Easter weekend with the third reading. It is one of the best known, and best loved, of the Resurrection narratives, a story unique to Luke's Gospel. It is the story of the risen Lord's walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus with two disciples.

One way to read the story is that these two disciples simply are on a trip to Emmaus, for whatever reason. Some scholars, however, see in the story these disciples' exit from the Christian band in Jerusalem.

Abandoning this group, they are confused, not understanding the meaning of all that occurred in Jerusalem with the trial and execution of Jesus.

Jesus joins them on the road. He teaches them, even interpreting the words of Moses, God's principal prophet of the Old Testament. Then, in the "breaking of the bread," they realize that they are in the presence of Jesus. It is an illusion to the Eucharist. The New Testament often refers to the Eucharist as the "breaking of the bread." It is the banquet of the risen Lord.

### Reflection

Throughout the year, certainly during Lent just completed, the church invites us to turn to Jesus

and to allow Jesus to enter our hearts.

On this weekend, it gives us the story of the walk to Emmaus from the Gospel of Luke. We may put ourselves in the places of the disciples. We may be confused about what God means to us. We may walk away on our own, in the process walking away from Jerusalem, the city of God.

God does not leave us as wanderers. Just as Jesus joined these disciples as they walked away, Jesus will join us as we walk away, in whatever form our walking away takes, indifference, confusion or outright rejection of God through sin.

If we open our hearts to Jesus, the Lord will speak to us and guide us. Finally, enlightened and led by the Lord, we will find God, most especially in the "breaking of the bread."

Jesus comes to us in words we can hear, and in sights we can see, such as through the apostles, and their successors in the church.

As the second reading insists, Jesus is life. He is everything.

### READINGS

**Sunday:** Acts 2:14,22-33 Ps 16:1-2,5, 7-11 1 Pt 1:17-21 Lk 24:13-35

**Monday:** Acts 6:8-15 Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30 Jn 6:22-29

**Tuesday:** Acts 7:51-8:1a Ps 31:3cd-4,6, 7b,8a, 17, 21ab Jn 6:30-35

**Wednesday:** Acts 8:1b-8 Ps 66:1-3a, 4-7a Jn 6:35-40

**Thursday:** Acts 8:26-40 Ps 66:8-9, 6-17, 20 Jn 6:44-51

**Friday:** Acts 9:1-20 Ps 117:1bc, 2 Jn 6:52-59

**Saturday:** Acts 9:31-42 Ps 116:12-17 Jn 6:60-69

## CATEQUIZ'EM

By Dominic Camplisson

In April, the church remembers the founder of the Minims, a Catholic religious order. This quiz takes a minimalist view of him and other issues.

**1. The Minims founder, Francis, was born at Paola, and eventually chose this style of religious life:**

- a. papal jester
- b. hermit
- c. deacon to the King of Italian Sardinia

**2. He was credited with being able to see**

- a. into men's minds
- b. dead people
- c. only in black and white, except at the liturgy

**3. He founded a community that became known as the Minim friars. Where did the name come from?**

- a. It is thought to have selected by the pope.
- b. He had a vision of Minimi an angelic being.
- c. He wore only a curtailed or mini habit as he was too poor to buy much cloth.

**4. One rather peculiar miracle attributed to Paola was that he had been able to sail without one of these:**

- a. a compass
- b. a crew
- c. a boat

**5. Francis added a fourth monastic vow. What was it?**

- a. The monks vow to never eat meat unless ordered by a physician.
- b. The monks vow to never drink wine unless ordered by a physician.
- c. The monks vow to always be very, very nice to physicians.

**6. Why do the Minims have that name?**

- a. It is because they only allowed in monks who were "Mini Decem" at least 10 years old.
- b. It is thought to relate to their concept of themselves as being the "least" of the faithful.
- c. It is because the vows are not for life but for a minimum period, usually 20 years, after which the community may not support them.

**7. They also had some local names or nicknames. In France, because of their humble life, they were referred to as**

- a. Les pauvres
- b. Les bons hommes
- c. Les Uriahs de Heap

**8. In Spain their title was grander, for after the defeat of the Malaga Moors the Minims were called**

- a. Los Padres de la Victoria (Fathers of the Victory)
- b. Los Pobres Ricos (the Poor Rich)
- c. Los Grandes de Paola (the Great ones of Paola)

**9. Now onto other "mins" — "minister" is a term common to churches. Its origin is**

- a. Hebrew
- b. Greek
- c. Roman

**10. A minor canon is**

- a. a cleric attached to a cathedral to assist with the services but who is not part of the Cathedral Chapter
- b. a law (from the Code of Canon Law) that is advisory but not compulsory
- c. a cleric who is promoted to a higher rank, without having received the previous one

**11. Minor orders are**

- a. obsolete so we cannot even mention them
- b. obsolete in the west, not in the east, below that of deacon
- c. orders of monks who take no vows and wear no habit, but may have a cassock

**12. Who were the minor prophets?**

- a. same as the major ones, but their prophesies did not come true they got demoted
- b. certain Old Testament prophets such as Joel, Hosea, Amos etc
- c. All the prophets who predate the Babylonian captivity

**13. The term minster (from monastery) is commonly found linked to churches in this country:**

- a. Ireland
- b. England
- c. Lapland

**14. What, in Christianity, are Minorites?**

- a. converted mosques (because of the of minarets)
- b. Eastern Catholics of the Cretan "Minoan": rite
- c. an obsolete name for the Franciscan Friars Minor

### ANSWERS:

- 1. b, 2. a, 3. a, 4. c, 5. a, 6. b, 7. b, 8. a, 9. c, 10. a, 11. b, 12. b, 13. b, 14. c

# Jesus offers closer relationship through the power of Holy Spirit

**In John's Gospel account after the Resurrection, Mary Magdalene is weeping at the tomb. Mary notices Jesus, and he tells her, "Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father." If that is the situation, why is Thomas told to put his fingers into Jesus' wounds? The risen Christ seems to be sending mixed signals as far as his disciples touching him. Anonymous**

Jesus' words to Mary Magdalene are certainly cryptic. There are many attempted explanations by many different biblical scholars. The church, as far as I know, has no official word on the matter. However, the best explanation that I have heard is that Mary Magdalene, because of her great devotion to the Lord, wants to cling to the Lord Jesus. Certainly there is nothing wrong with that, but her desire for intimacy with the Lord Jesus is too limited in its scope. She is seeking an intimate relationship like good friends would have on

earth. Rather, Jesus wants to offer her much more than simply an earthly-type relationship. He wishes to offer her, and all of us, a deep, intimate relationship of love that comes by the power of the Holy Spirit. When Mary Magdalene meets Jesus here, he has not yet ascended and the Holy Spirit has not yet come. So, Jesus is saying to her that she should not desire to cling to him in an earthly-type manner, as good as that might be, but that once he ascends to the Father, she will become closer to him than she could have ever imagined which will happen by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**During the Easter Vigil, a young person in second grade was baptized, confirmed and made his holy first Communion. Is this the norm even at this age? Anonymous**

Yes, this is the norm for anyone who is to be baptized who is of the age of reason, that is, any-

## THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION

one who is about seven years old or older. When someone of the age of reason is baptized, they are to receive confirmation and first holy Communion at the same time. For someone below the age of reason who is baptized, first holy Communion generally happens in second grade and confirmation happens at a later age still.

The reason for this difference is catechetical. The idea is that an infant who is baptized receives ongoing catechesis (Catholic teaching) from his or her parents, from Catholic schools and reli-

gious education programs, and from their continuing participation in parish life especially the Sunday Mass. Someone who comes to baptism over the age of reason receives a more concentrated form of catechesis to prepare them for baptism, confirmation and Eucharist, and so they receive these sacraments all at once.

Incidentally, the more ancient practice of the church is to receive these sacraments all at once even for an infant. This still remains the practice of the Orthodox Churches.

**During the preparation of gifts, some priests recite the offering out loud and the people respond "Blessed be God forever." Other times, it's not recited**

**out loud. Is there a norm here? Anonymous**

The answer to this one is simple. If there is an offertory song being sung, the preparation prayers are to be said by the priest inaudibly, and the people do not respond. If there is no offertory song being sung, then it is the priest's choice whether he says these prayers audibly or not. If he says them audibly, then the people are to respond with the "Blessed be God forever." If he does not, then nothing is said by the people.

**Father Mark Gurtner, pastor of Our Lady of Good Hope answered this week's questions.**

## A parental advisory

Hoosier Jen J. seems respectable enough. Her name appears on an Internet 2006 Guide to the Indiana General Assembly as a contact person. She writes serious editorial pieces for reputable Indiana newspapers, and she holds a bachelor of fine arts degree from a well-regarded university. She is young and articulate, and some would say pretty. But Jen has another side. She insists she has a wife. She is project contributor for the Bilerico Project, which is self-described as "daily experiments in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender" issues.

She splatters radical, anti-religious propaganda on various homosexual blog sites. There she slams Catholic beliefs, peppering a sentence with profanity. Perhaps scariest of all, however, is the fact that Jen is currently director of advocacy for Planned Parenthood of Indiana. Her full-time job is to influence our children.

Jen's agenda seems to reflect Planned Parenthood's in general. A quick perusal of Indiana Planned Parenthood's Web site shows strong ties to Indiana University's infamous Kinsey Institute where critics legitimately have accused Alfred Kinsey of child molestation and abuse, and where Kinsey notoriously normalized and mainstreamed homosexuality and homosexual behavior using pedophiles as supposedly legitimate researchers. Across Indiana, Planned Parenthood joins arms with the Kinsey Institute to promote their mutual plan — sex of any kind, for any age, with anybody, without guilt.

This year, a fundraiser for Indiana Planned Parenthood will commence at the Westin Hotel in Indianapolis. Called "Gathering of Gods and Goddesses," the fundraiser invites participants to experience wine, revelry, massages and ... psychic readings.

In early June of this year, Planned Parenthood will sponsor its annual Sexual Attitude Reassessment retreat at Waycross



EVERYDAY CATHOLIC  
THERESA A. THOMAS

Episcopal Conference Center in Morgantown, Ind., near Indianapolis. According to its promotional Web site "participants will be exposed to a wide spectrum of images of sexual behavior ..." Let's just say that the topics include some which I, a married woman for 21 years, never knew existed. Sexually explicit videos will be utilized. The Web site states college students get a 15 percent discount and can earn college credit through IU.

Speaking of college kids, the Kinsey Institute has created a blog just for them (and advertises that Planned Parenthood is giving away free birth control. It recommends students pick some up on their way to spring break). There's a link to the "Kinsey Art Gallery" on the blog, which contains everything you might imagine it would.

These are the people who want to "educate" our children. In fact, they've so convinced the public that they're legitimate that even the American Academy of Pediatrics, Indiana chapter, has pledged its support of Planned Parenthood's "Get Real" campaign, which states, among other things that "Comprehensive sex education is absolutely necessary for our youth."

What's going on? Apparently, nothing new. STOPP International, an arm of the American Life League, has been warning parents of the dangerous agenda of Planned Parenthood for years, but many have been lulled into complacency, thinking "Not here. Not my kids. They can't reach them."

A young teenage girl recently confided to me that she personally knows four girls in her grade that have had abortions this year. Four. In one year. In one grade. In a

Catholic school. If we are merely putting a couple extra dollars in the second collection basket on Sunday for the Women's Care Center, or attending a once a year Right to Life dinner, we are simply not doing enough to keep our children safe. There are thriving abortion clinics in both South Bend and Fort Wayne.

I pass a sleek, attractive Planned Parenthood billboard every time I take Lincoln Way West in South Bend. "Take Care of Yourself" it says in large print, next to an attractive girl. The small print coos, "Talk to us in confidence. With confidence." Do you know what Planned Parenthood is really saying? "We will help you be sexually active. We will procure drugs to prevent pregnancy. And if you become pregnant, we will help you take care of that too. Your parents don't have to know."

So, let's get back to Jen J. She's tirelessly spending her time and energy writing articles, creating plans, lobbying for homosexual and abortion "rights" and an anything-goes mentality. She spends her days strategizing how to reach our children. What are we doing? And is it enough?

**Theresa Thomas, parishioner of St. Matthew Cathedral Parish in South Bend, is the mother of nine children and wife of David. Visit her Web site at [www.theresathomas.typepad.com](http://www.theresathomas.typepad.com).**

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH

By Patricia Kasten

Gospel for April 6, 2008

Luke 24:13-35

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Third Sunday of Easter: the seven miles to Emmaus. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

VILLAGE	MILES	RECOGNIZING
WALK ALONG	PROPHET	BEFORE GOD
CRUCIFIED	THIRD DAY	EARLY
A VISION	ANGELS	ALIVE
ENTER	GLORY	MOSES
URGED HIM	EVENING	OPENED
BURNING	ELEVEN	APPEARED

### ON THE ROAD

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## LETTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

he said.

Bishop Boccardo made waves a few years ago when, as a papal trip planner, he shut down smoking on the plane that took the pope on his foreign visits.

For years after Alitalia instituted a ban on in-flight smoking, members of the papal entourage and journalists continued to light up on the pope's chartered plane. They were encouraged by the fact that Alitalia gave every passenger a free carton of cigarettes.

"I just didn't understand why, especially with the pope aboard, we were making an exception to

this law. So we said, 'Enough. No more smoking on this plane,'" Bishop Boccardo said.

Some have pointed out that, even though the Holy See has expressed support for a World Health Organization convention on tobacco control, the Vatican continues to sell tobacco products to its employees at a discount.

"We've noted to the proper Vatican officials that this seems to be a contradiction," said Bishop Jose Redrado Marchite, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers.

Certain steps are being taken in that regard. For one thing, the price difference between cigarettes sold at the Vatican and in Italy has been reduced, and so there's less demand.



# Sports

**COUGARS KICK OFF SPRING FOOTBALL DRILLS** University of Saint Francis Coach Kevin Donley opened spring practice March 28 to fill a number of openings as well as determine the progress made during workouts in the off-season. There are a number of players returning from the 2007 team that finished No. 4 in the NAIA Top 25 ranking and produced an 11-2 season, the Cougar's sixth consecutive double-digit win season. "That's what makes spring football so interesting. Who has matured? Who has put in the time working out in the off-season to get stronger?" Donley said.

## Wrestlers compete in ICCL-CYO invitational

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — The Catholic Youth Organization, CYO sponsored sport wrestlers competed at Bishop Luers High School on March 15 in the 2008 Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL)/CYO invitational. Both Bishop Dwenger and Bishop Luers feeder-schools were represented in the show-down of fifth through eighth graders in each weight class.

In his rookie season, as head coach at Bishop Luers, Dan Carlson held a three-week camp for youth grades K-8.

"Teaching basic techniques is the main focus of the camp," said Carlson. Grades K-4 held a few small tournaments against each other at the end of the season while fifth through eighth graders concluded at the invitational.

"It was a lot of fun for me to see all the enthusiasm at the younger level and get back to teaching the basics vs. training the older kids," summarized Carlson. In an effort to continue building the wrestling program, Carlson is in the early stages of planning a middle-school season from November-March next year while keeping the camp for K-4.

The Bishop Luers varsity wrestlers were small in numbers this season, but ended up with four regional qualifiers. Sophomore Tony Lovejoy went on to finish in seventh place at the state level.

Coach John Bennett from Bishop Dwenger also ran a similar program open to CYO feeder schools, public school kids and home school students. Their camp ran for three weeks practicing four times a week with nearly 90 youngsters in attendance. In his 10th season with the Saints, Coach Bennett estimated that this wrestling camp tradition has been going on since the mid-1980's. He feels it is a great way for young wrestlers to learn the sport. His varsity Saints won the SAC this

season and had a state qualifier in Dan Nix.

The ICCL season's most valuable player was Alex Zielinski of Holy Family. The ICCL tournament most valuable player was Dillon Gohn of St. Joseph, Mishawaka. The ICCL 2008 team champion was Holy Family.

The top four finishers in each weight class from the 2008 South Bend-Mishawaka-Fort Wayne ICCL and CYO invitational from March 15 at Bishop Luers High School, Fort Wayne, are listed below.

### Fifth and sixth grade results

**73 pounds:** 1) Sam Lovejoy, Fort Wayne; 2) Zach Bessesen, Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne; 3) Joshua Derse, St. Joseph, Mishawaka; 4) Noah Sizemore, St. Monica, Mishawaka

**80 pounds:** 1) Derek Glon, Corpus Christi, South Bend; 2) Jake Burnham, St. Jude, South Bend; 3) Caleb Horban, Corpus Christi, South Bend; 4) Brice Woenker, Fort Wayne

**90 pounds:** 1) Jordan Kazmierczak, Holy Family; 2) Scott Warner, St. Jude, South Bend; 3) B.J. Koehl, Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne; 4) Greyson Radvansky, Corpus Christi, South Bend

**100 pounds:** 1) R.J. Norris, St. Monica, Mishawaka; 2) Payton Kimes, Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne; 4) Devin Williamowski, St. Monica, Mishawaka

**110 pounds:** 1) Norm Hezlep, Holy Cross, South Bend; 2) Patrick Ernst, St. Matthew, South Bend; 3) Riley Delaney, St. Jude, Fort Wayne; 4) Lucas Fisher, St. Charles, Fort Wayne

**120 pounds:** 1) Quinton Gardner, Fort Wayne; 2) Austin Hillman, St. Vincent, Fort Wayne; 3) Ike Skwarcan, Holy Family, South Bend

**150 pounds:** 1) Peter Wiegand, Holy Cross, South Bend; 2)

Matthew Bubb, Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne; 3) Scott Beamon, St. Charles, Fort Wayne

### Seventh and eighth grade results

**87 pounds:** 1) Riley Wolff, Holy Family; 2) Mark Rymysza, Christ the King; 3) Quito Lepper, Fort Wayne

**108 pounds:** 1) Joseph Ernst, St. Matthew, South Bend; 2) Gage Willis, Holy Family, South Bend; 3) David Wild, Fort Wayne; 4) C. Charais, Fort Wayne

**115 pounds:** 1) Chad Douglas, St. John, South Bend; 2) Tyler Nixon, St. Joseph, Mishawaka; 3) Nic Hoeffel, Fort Wayne; 4) Paul Lohmuller, Precious Blood, Fort Wayne

**125 pounds:** 1) Nick Snowball, Fort Wayne; 2) Michael Zehr, St. Vincent, Fort Wayne; 3) Michael Kazmierczak, Holy Family; 4) Max Carroll, Fort Wayne

**136 pounds:** 1) Robert Martin, Fort Wayne; 2) Jeremiah Briggs, Holy Family, South Bend; 3) Jacob Kazmierczak, Holy Family, South Bend; 4) Dominic Kinney, Fort Wayne

**140 pounds:** 1) Alex Zielinski, Holy Family, South Bend; 2) Ryan Mayfield, Holy Family; 3) Gunner Dahm, St. Vincent, Fort Wayne; 4) Nolan Cassoday, Holy Family, South Bend

**152 pounds:** 1) Carter Delaney, Fort Wayne; 2) Dillon Gohn, St. Joseph, Mishawaka; 3) Joseph Walter, St. Joseph, Mishawaka; 4) Dan Wood, St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne; Joshua Bessesen, St. Charles, Fort Wayne

**170 pounds:** 1) William Hilger, Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne; 2) Shawn Ryan, Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne; 3) Matt Wood, St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne; 4) Evan Eaton, St. Jude, South Bend

**Over 175:** 1) Corey Ng, St. Jude, Fort Wayne; 2) Calvin Zielinski, Holy Family, South Bend; 3) Sergej Stjepic, Fort Wayne; 4) Marc Cotter, Fort Wayne

## Grinding for God: Pope to get 'official papal skateboard' from youths

BY BETH GRIFFIN

NEW YORK (CNS) — When Pope Benedict XVI returns to the Vatican, he'll be toting a gift not generally associated with an 81-year-old pontiff. He'll take home the "official papal skateboard," a gift from the youths of New York.

The gift and a contest to design it started with a remark made by a teen member of the skateboard club at St. Elizabeth Parish in Washington Heights, a hilly neighborhood in northern Manhattan.

Father Peter Pomposello is a skateboarder and the parochial vicar at St. Elizabeth. As he recalled it, he was talking about the papal visit with the club members and they began to ask him questions about why the pope was coming and what he would do in New York.

"I said, 'We pray with him and we give him gifts,'" he said, "and one kid, without missing a beat, said, 'Let's give him a skateboard!'"

Father Pomposello secured the necessary permissions and began to advertise online a contest to design the underside of the skateboard. It was open to youth ages 11 to 18 who live in the Archdiocese of New York. The rules limited the colors to papal gold, black, red and white and encouraged the use of symbols such as the papal visit logo and the visit's motto, "Christ Our Hope."

Father Pomposello hoped the winner would be announced April 6; entries were being judged on the basis of creativity and originality. The winner will get three tickets to the papal youth rally April 19 at St. Joseph Seminary in Yonkers.



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# SIRIUS Satellite Radio to cover papal visit and archives

NEW YORK — SIRIUS Satellite Radio has announced that, as part of its extensive coverage of Pope Benedict XVI's upcoming visit to the United States, April 15-20, it will launch the Papal Archives Channel, featuring seldom heard papal recordings from the past, including the earliest known audio of a pope.

The Papal Archives Channel will air Monday, April 14, through Sunday, April 20, exclusively on SIRIUS channel 119, showcasing rare archival recordings of Masses and speeches from historic papal visits — which will include Pope John Paul II's visits to the U.S. in 1979, 1987 and 1995 and Pope Paul VI's visit to the U.S. in 1965. SIRIUS listeners will also hear the earliest known audio of a pope's voice, an extremely rare recording of Pope Leo XIII, the pope from 1878-1903, singing Ave Maria at the Vatican circa 1902.

The Papal Archives Channel will be one of three SIRIUS channels dedicated to papal coverage when Pope Benedict XVI makes his historic visit to the U.S. from April 15-20 and is a production of SIRIUS' The Catholic Channel, SIRIUS 159, which is the flagship station for coverage of the first visit to the U.S. by a pope since 1999, broadcasting all the major papal events and hourly updates with the latest news and information on the pope's activities during his visit. Additionally, Papal Playback, SIRIUS 143, will offer

rebroadcasts of key moments and events from Pope Benedict's current trip, allowing listeners multiple chances to hear his Masses and public addresses.

The Catholic Channel, an exclusive collaboration between SIRIUS and the Archdiocese of New York, will offer the most comprehensive coverage available as Pope Benedict journeys to Washington, D.C., and New York City. The Catholic Channel will carry all major papal events and speeches live, including the Masses from Nationals Park in Washington, D.C., Yankee Stadium and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, the youth rally at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y., and Pope Benedict's visits to the United Nations and Ground Zero.

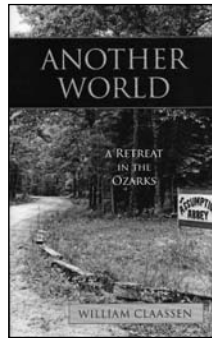
In addition to broadcasting the events, hosts from The Catholic Channel will broadcast live, on-site at every public event with pre and post-event coverage and expert guests.

The Catholic Channel launched in December 2006 and airs nationally seven days a week, 24 hours a day exclusively on SIRIUS. The lifestyle radio channel features contemporary daily talk shows focused on Catholicism in the 21st century, live daily Mass from St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, plus Notre Dame football and basketball games. For more information, visit [www.sirius.com/the-catholicchannel](http://www.sirius.com/the-catholicchannel).

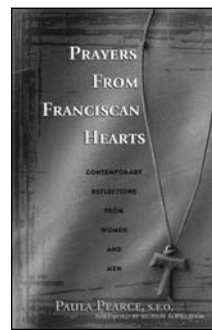
## New books from the editor's desk

The following are recent releases that have been sent to *Today's Catholic* in recent weeks.

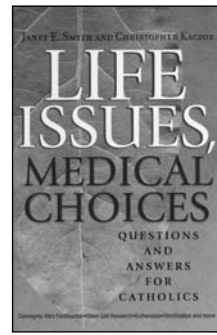
**"Another World, A Retreat in the Ozarks,"** by William Claassen, explores day-to-day life in a small Trappist monastery tucked away in the Ozark foothills. Interweaving memoir with conversations with the monks, observations of community life and relationships with other visitors, Claassen provides a window into contemporary monastic life. Each chapter describes a day in the monastery. Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, ISBN: 978-1-58051-222-0.



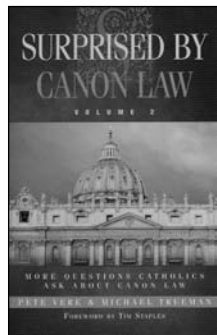
**"Prayers From Franciscan Hearts: Contemporary Reflections from Men and Women,"** by Paula Pearce, a Secular Franciscan, helps modern-day followers of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi, seek spiritual inspiration in a variety of places and forms. Pearce has collected prayers and reflections from Franciscans in several countries and compiled their diverse contributions. Pearce organized the contributions around pilgrimage stations dear to Franciscans and that mark significant stages on the saints' journeys back to God, such as San Rufino, the Porziuncola and La Verna. St. Anthony Messenger Press, ISBN: 978-0-86716-741-2



**"Life Issues, Medical Choices: Questions and Answers for Catholics,"** by Janet E. Smith and Dr. Christopher Kaczor, "presents bioethical issues through the lens of Catholic teaching, with admirable clarity and reasonableness," cites University of Dallas theology professor Mark Lowery. "The authors ask not only good questions but provide good answers — often to questions the magisterium hasn't made a definitive judgment on, thus making a real contribution to bioethics," added Dr. Mark S. Latkovic, theology professor from Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit. Servant Books, ISBN: 978-086716-808-2.

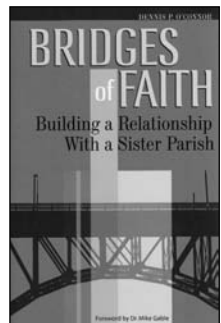


**"Surprised by Canon Law: Volume 2: More Questions Catholics Ask About Canon Law,"** by Pete Vere and Michael Trueman, is a followup to their first "Surprised by Canon Law: 150 Questions Catholics Ask About Canon Law." In the new book, Vere and Trueman tackle the following topics: Can someone be denied a church funeral? Under what circumstance might a priest be removed from his role? How do parishes merge, and what happens to their property? What is excommu-



nication, and how is it applied? What is the procedure for the election of a pope? What is the process for declaring someone a saint? Servant Books, ISBN: 978-0-86716-749-8

**"Bridges of Faith: Building a Relationship With a Sister Parish,"** by Dennis P. O'Connor, serves as a source and guidebook for members of church, schools and other faith communities who



would like to establish a faith-based partnership with a "twin" parish in another region or country. The book provides detailed accounts of how individuals and parishes have become involved in and initiated their own partnerships and what they have experienced in these fruitful and spirit-filled relationships. St. Anthony Messenger Press, ISBN: 978-0-86716-884-0

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

**WHAT'S HAPPENING** carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. Send in your announcement at least two weeks prior to the event. Mail to: Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or e-mail: fhogan@fw.diocesefwsb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

## MISC. HAPPENINGS

**Fish fry**  
South Bend — Our Lady of Hungary, 735 W. Calvert, will have a fish fry on Saturday, April 5, from 5-7 p.m. Adults tickets \$7 day of sale or \$6.50 presale, purchased before Masses, or at the rectory, \$4.50 children 6-12 and children under 6 free. Carry-out available.

**Rummage sale**  
Kendallville — Immaculate Conception Church will have a rummage sale Friday, April 4, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, April 5, from 9-11:30 a.m. \$1.50 bag sale on Saturday.

**Rummage and bake sale**  
Walkerton — St. Patrick Parish will have a rummage and bake sale on Saturday, April 12, from 8-10 a.m. \$1 bag sale from 10-11 a.m.

**Luncheon card party planned**  
South Bend — The Saint Anne Society will have a luncheon card party Sunday, April 13, at noon in the Our Lady of Hungary School auditorium, 735 W. Calvert St. Donation of \$5 at the door. Please bring your own cards.

**Holy Cross Village announces grand opening events**  
Notre Dame — Andre Place independent living apartments will offer a senior health and fitness fair on Wednesday, April 23, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. On Thursday, April 24, information

on moving and real estate will be offered from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call (574) 251-2235 for information.

**Right to Life prayer dinner April 22**  
South Bend — Saint Joseph County Right to Life will have an ecumenical prayer dinner Tuesday, April 22, at The Landing, 2801 S. Michigan St. The featured speaker will be Chris Godfrey, founder of Life Athletes and Super Bowl-winning offensive lineman for the New York Giants. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the opening prayer at 6:45 and Polish buffet dinner at 7 p.m. All priests and ministers are invited at no expense. Donations of \$20 per plate will be accepted. Make reservations to (574) 232-LIFE.

**High school teens announce events**  
New Haven — St. John the Baptist Parish is having a program for high school teens Sunday, April 6, from 6:30-8 p.m. in the community center. Young priests and nuns from the diocese will be available for discussion. This is an opportunity to get acquainted with the religious of our community. They will share some personal stories and are open to any questions.

**Golf outing supports soup kitchen**  
Fort Wayne — Our Lady of Good Hope and the Knights of Columbus Council 12417 are sponsoring a charity golf outing to be held on Sunday, June 29, at Riverbend Golf Course. Proceeds will benefit the St. Mary's Soup

Kitchen. To learn more, register for the event or to become a sponsor, visit the Our Lady of Good Hope Web site: [www.home.catholicweb.com/ourladyofgoodhope](http://www.home.catholicweb.com/ourladyofgoodhope).

**Passion performed by Bach Collegium**  
Fort Wayne — The Bach Collegium will be performing the St. John Passion by J.S. Bach on Sunday, April 13, at 4 p.m. at St. Peter Church, 518 E. Dewald St. The performance will be sung by the collegium and soloists and will be accompanied by instrumentalists using baroque instruments. Ticket information is available at [www.bachcollegium.org](http://www.bachcollegium.org) or by calling (260) 485 2143.

## DEVOTIONS

**First Saturday devotions**  
Saturday, April 5, devotions will be held at the following locations: St. Joseph, Fort Wayne, 7:15 a.m.; St. Rose, Monroeville, 8:10 a.m.; St. John, New Haven, 6:55 a.m.; St. Charles, Fort Wayne, 8 a.m.; Sacred Heart, Fort Wayne, 7:30 a.m.; St. Patrick, Arcola, 7:15 a.m. Call (260) 749-9396 to have your list-

## REST IN PEACE

<b>Fort Wayne</b> Isabelle A. Card, 82, Our Lady of Good Hope	Ferdinand Baldini, 78, St. Monica	Frank S. Bielejewski, 96, Holy Cross
Mary Z. Wilhelm, 90, St. Patrick	Robert L. Nellans, 80, St. Joseph	Thomas J. Wesolek, 60, St. Hedwig
David W. Noll, 64, Most Precious Blood	<b>Notre Dame</b> Maryanne E. Gearhart, 82, Our Lady of Loretto	Catherine A. Kieffer, 60, St. Joseph
Bette Oglesby, 85, Most Precious Blood	<b>Plymouth</b> Geraldine M. Wendel, 78, St. Michael	John D. Austgen, 74, St. Anthony de Padua
<b>Granger</b> Betty J. O'Reilly, 74, St. Pius X	<b>Rome City</b> James T. Ehinger, 81, St. Gaspar del Bufalo	Lucille Krol, 86, St. Adalbert
<b>Huntington</b> John Nelson Sutton, 83, St. Mary	<b>South Bend</b> Dorothy P. Jaske, 85, St. Stanislaus	Roy E. Rice Sr., 87, St. John the Baptist
<b>Mishawaka</b> Marie Wagner, St. Bavo	Josephone Jankowski, 89	Mildred E. Martin, 93, St. John the Baptist
		<b>Wabash</b> Margaret Schuler, 80, St. Bernard

## DIRECTOR - Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities of Northwest Indiana is currently taking resumes for the position of Executive Director. Must possess working knowledge of the social teachings of the Catholic Church and have experience in providing oversight of programs and service of a charitable agency. Must have a graduate degree in Human Service/Mental Health or a related field. Resumes will be accepted through May 5, 2008. A complete job description is available upon request. Salary and benefits are commensurate with experience. Resumes should be sent c/o

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or via email [hr@catholic-charities.org](mailto:hr@catholic-charities.org) **EOE**

## DIRECTOR Campus/Young Adult Ministry

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend seeks a full-time director for the Office of Campus/Young Adult Ministry. The Director reports to the bishop and is responsible for implementing the U.S. Bishops' vision for ministry to Catholic students and parish young adults, ages 18-40; for managing a staff of five persons, who serve seven college campuses and in all parishes within the diocese; and for coordinating all diocesan efforts related to these ministries.

**Qualifications:** Bachelor or Masters degree in an educational, theological or pastoral area. Solid pastoral and/or administrative experience a must. The religious or lay practicing Catholic must possess good foundational knowledge of the Catholic faith; strong leadership, managerial and communication skills and a demonstrated ability to relate to college students and young adults.

Applicants can apply via email by April 15, 2008, to the office of Bishop John M. D'Arcy:

[mshcott@fw.diocesefwsb.org](mailto:mshcott@fw.diocesefwsb.org) or by US mail to:

Bishop John M. D'Arcy P.O. Box 390 - Fort Wayne, IN 46801

## TV MASS GUIDE FOR APRIL

DATE	FEAST	FORT WAYNE CHANNEL 33 - WISE 10:30 A.M.	SOUTH BEND CHANNEL 16 - WNDU 10:30 A.M.	"Catholic Comment" airs Sundays at 7:05 a.m. on WOWO 1190 AM in Fort Wayne and at 7:30 a.m. on WSBT 960 AM in South Bend.  "Radio Rosary" airs M-F at 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday at 7:30 a.m. on Redeemer Radio WLYV 1450 AM
April 6	Third Sunday of Easter	Father Jim Stoyle Cathedral of Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne	TBA	
April 13	Fourth Sunday of Easter	Msgr. Owen Campion Our Sunday Visitor Huntington	Father Michael Heintz St. Matthew Cathedral South Bend	
April 20	Fifth Sunday of Easter	Father Tony Steinacker St. Charles Fort Wayne	Father Bernard Galic Holy Family South Bend	
April 27	Sixth Sunday of Easter	Father John Stecher University of Saint Francis Fort Wayne	Father Edward O'Connor, CSC Corby Hall Notre Dame	



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# Lessons learned about religious freedom in Asia

BY FATHER TOM SHOEMAKER

*This is a follow-up to the March 23 article by Father Tom Shoemaker, pastor of St. Jude Parish, Fort Wayne, on his November trip to Mongolia. This installment reflects on another leg of Father Shoemaker's journey, his time in Japan, China and Tibet, a journey that carried with it lessons on the value of religious freedom.*

An old friend from Minnesota, Father Steve Daigle, joined me as we began our trip with a flight to Nagasaki, Japan. During the 1500s, the Japanese were very suspicious of foreigners and they allowed foreign traders only around Nagasaki. It was here that St. Francis Xavier and other missionaries introduced Christianity to Japan. It was here that Christianity grew, and also here that great persecutions began in the late 1500s.

A small museum in Nagasaki contains artifacts from some of the tortures endured by the Catholics in those days. The best remembered was the martyrdom of Paul Mikki and his companions. On Feb. 5, 1597, 26 Christians were killed on a hill outside Nagasaki. Some were priests and brothers; some were lay people and parents; some were teenagers. One was 12 years old. As a form of mockery, they were killed by crucifixion.

Sitting on that same hill, Father Steve and I chose a rock, which

would serve as an altar. I carry a tiny Mass kit in my pocket. We offered a Mass on the very place where these martyrs died. They were killed for taking part in this sacrament.

We also visited the site where the atomic bomb fell in Nagasaki in August of 1945. There, we celebrated a Mass and prayed for God's gift of peace in our world.

After our stop in Japan and our 10 days in Mongolia, our travels also took us to China.

We had seen evidence of suffering caused by religious intolerance in Japan centuries ago; we had also read of grave problems in China today. The communist Chinese government officially embraces atheism, but does allow people to practice religions. However, religions that pledge allegiance to a foreign leader and religions that speak out against government policies are not allowed.

Catholics, of course, offer allegiance to the pope. Catholics also speak out against many government policies, most notably the one-child-per-family policy. Families are severely punished for bearing a second child, and there are reports that forced abortions are not uncommon.

It is estimated that there are 8 million Catholics today practicing their faith in an "underground church." They are subject to harassment and arrest. In fact, in July, just a few months before we arrived in China, newspapers carried stories of four priests who were arrested for distributing the



**Father Tom Shoemaker and Father Steve Daigle visit the Great Wall of China in November. His experiences in Asia gave Father Shoemaker a first-hand view of religious oppression in the world.**

latest papal encyclical.

While these Catholics are practicing their faith under great adversity, there has also arisen a "Patriotic Chinese Catholic Church," which is permitted by the government. The 5 million Chinese who practice in the Patriotic Church do receive valid sacraments, but there are concessions. New bishops are chosen not by Rome, but by local Chinese with the backing of the communist party.

Just weeks before we traveled, the Pope made a monumental move. The Patriotic Church, endorsed by the Communist party, chose a priest to become the new Archbishop of Beijing. Subsequently, the pope announced

that he ratified that choice. Clearly, the pope is doing everything he can to unite the church, to help ensure the safety of Catholics and their liberty to receive the sacraments.

Father Steve and I visited the church in Beijing and offered a prayer for our Catholic brothers and sisters in China who are not free to practice their faith.

Visitors who travel to China are required to fill out documents and pay a fee for a visa. The visa asks visitors for their occupation.

Knowing that I am fully in union and in sympathy with the underground, illegal church, I thought it best to avoid asking for attention. I filled in the document honestly, listing my other, pre-priesthood, occupation: "dentist." I did, however, wear a crucifix and carry my Mass kit and breviary wherever I went. My friend and I celebrated many Masses there, probably illegally.

The final destination in our adventure was Tibet.

For much of the last 50 years, Tibet was off-limits for foreigners as the Chinese government has tried to make Tibet a peaceful district of China following their 1951 takeover, which drove the Dalai Lama into exile. During that time, the communists destroyed great numbers of Buddhist monasteries and shrines. Monks and nuns were driven out, imprisoned and put into "re-education camps."

It wasn't until the 1980s that the Chinese began to allow foreign visitors, with many restrictions. A special Tibet tourist permit was needed

for foreigners. It is costly and it is available only from within China. The conditions for this permit vary depending on the degree of unrest in Tibet, and the permit is not offered to monks, journalists or writers. Tourists were not allowed to enter on their own, but only in a tour group. The permit allowed limited travel within Tibet, and we found road blocks checking credentials.

The Chinese government has made great efforts to meld Tibet into China. Chinese people are encouraged to immigrate into Tibet, diluting the numbers of native Tibetans. Pictures of the Dalai Lama are banned, as is the Tibetan flag, and homes are searched for those banned items.

In recent weeks, Tibet has been very much in the news as there have been reports of uprisings and riots by those demanding independence from China and the freedom to practice their religion freely. Chinese leaders are denying many of the reports and blaming the Dalai Lama for stirring up violence. Tibet is again closed to outsiders.

I came home from the trip wondering about human nature. It doesn't seem like a difficult proposition for peoples of different religious beliefs and practices to live side-by-side in peace. And yet, a look at the world shows us that that the challenge can be enormous. Maybe it helps if we get to know one another. And maybe too, it will help to pray. Lord, help us to live in peace with our brothers and sisters of other faiths. Help us to see the worth of every person

## Today's Catholic

# BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB

*This month's featured selection:*

**Thomas Merton's "Seven Storey Mountain"**

This month features Thomas Merton's spiritual journey in "The Seven Storey Mountain"

As we bask in the glow of beautiful Easter celebrations across the diocese, it is a good time to read "The Seven Storey Mountain" by Thomas Merton for April's book of the month selection.

Published in 1948, "The Seven Storey Mountain" was an instant success. The original edition sold over 600,000 copies in the first year, and now total sales have reached the multiple millions. What makes Mountain so compelling?

It is a unique spiritual autobiography of Thomas Merton. It reflects the growing restlessness of a brilliant and passionate young man whose search for peace and faith lead him, at the age of 26, to take vows in one of the most demanding religious orders, the Trappists in the Abbey of Gethsemani in remote Kentucky.

Merton was born in France in 1915, but his parents moved to Long Island when Merton was only one year old. He was educated in France and England, however, and was imbued with hostility toward Catholicism by his grandfather. In "The Seven Storey Mountain," we learn that Thomas did not live his early years like a man suited for, or even interested in, religious life. He was the son of artists, and traveled extensively in his youth. Before his conversion to Catholicism, Merton enjoyed a life divided between intellectual discussion and drunken

revelry. But his quest for a life of true freedom led him away from a secular world and toward a spiritual one.

Merton's goal to live a contemplative life was an ongoing struggle, but his book remains a clear example of someone who learned that only the rewards of a spiritual life would be enough to satisfy him.

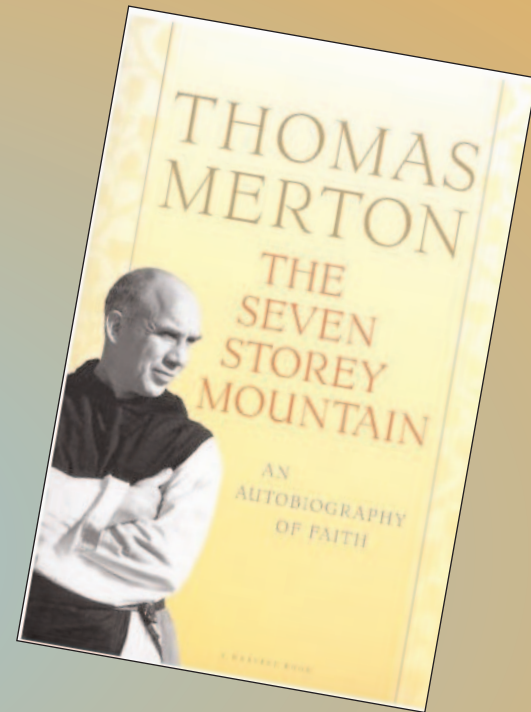
### About the author

Thomas Merton was born in France and was educated at Cambridge and Columbia. He entered a Trappist monastery in Kentucky in 1941. He lived as a monk at the Abbey of Gethsemani for 27 years, but died in a tragic accident in Thailand in 1968. He was well known for not only his contemplative prayer life, but for his interest in social activism. In the 1960s he became an advocate for peace, racial tolerance, social equality and non-violence.

### Questions for meditation and discussion

Why do you think that Merton made such a drastic lifestyle change?

Do you think that Merton could become a good monk, considering his background?



Visit [www.diocesefwsb.org/blog](http://www.diocesefwsb.org/blog) for discussion on this book.

Do you think that darker times in our lives ultimately bring us back to God?

Have you ever gone on a retreat? If so, what was it like? If not, how do you think that you might benefit from it?

Do you allow any quiet time in your day for contemplation or prayer? If so, how does it help?

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