



TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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A salute to mothers

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Pope asks for prayers for Holy Land trip, peace for region's people

BY CINDY WOODEN



CNS PHOTO/ALI JAREKJI, REUTERS

A child stands next to a welcome poster for Pope Benedict XVI during a Mass in Amman, Jordan, May 2. The pope is scheduled to visit Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories during his May 8-15 trip to the Holy Land.

Preparing to visit the Holy Land, Pope Benedict XVI asked for prayers for his trip, for peace in the region and for the suffering Palestinian people.

Reciting the "Regina Coeli" prayer May 3 with thousands of visitors in St. Peter's Square, the pope said he would make the May 8-15 trip to Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories as a "pilgrim of peace, in the name of the one God who is father of all."

Pope Benedict said he wanted to show the region's people how committed the Catholic Church is to supporting everyone engaged in dialogue and reconciliation and working "to reach a stable and lasting peace with justice and mutual respect."

Addressing English-speaking visitors, the pope asked for prayers for "the afflicted people" of the Holy Land.

"In a special way, I ask that you remember the Palestinian people who have endured great hardship and suffering," he said.

Pope Benedict prayed that God would bless the Palestinians and all the region's people "with the gifts of unity and peace."

In his main talk, the pope said that in addition to

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Diocese offers precautions to the H1N1 influenza

BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE — Common sense is the approach the diocese is taking toward the North American human influenza A (H1N1), and the diocese issued a memorandum last week to parishes on how to deal with the influenza outbreak.

Indiana state officials reported the first confirmed case of often-referred swine flu was a student, who has now recovered, at the University Notre Dame.

"We have received communication from the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Divine Worship related to participation at Masses at this time of the swine influenza outbreak," Father Robert Schulte, vicar general and chancellor wrote in the memorandum. "In the course of a conference call with the vicars forane, officers of the Presbyteral Council and other diocesan leaders, recommendations were made, and Bishop (John M.) D'Arcy asks that these be implemented immediately."

The information was requested to be read at all Masses over the weekend of May 2-3 and encouraged the following points:

- Anyone who is seriously ill with a cough and fever should be reminded that they do not have an obligation to attend Sunday Mass. In fact, it would be better if they did not attend Sunday Mass and infect others.

- Anyone who feels ill at all should not receive holy Communion from the cup.

- Extraordinary ministers of holy Communion are asked to wash their hands before Mass begins and use a sanitizing cloth before communion distribution. They are reminded to wash their hands after Mass also.

- Some people will prefer not to shake hands at the sign of peace, and this should be respected.

- We encourage everyone including ushers and greeters to practice good hygiene, especially washing hands on a regular basis.

Father Schulte said, "We are not advocating any other changes at the present time, but will monitor the situation and recommend further changes if the situation seems to demand it."

LOOKING FOR GROTTOS

Today's Catholic is seeking photos and background information about parish grottos across the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The photos will be featured in a diocesan pilgrimage section in our June 7 issue. To have your parish grotto featured, please send a jpeg photo and background information before May 22 to Mark Weber, mweber@fw.diocesefwsb.org.



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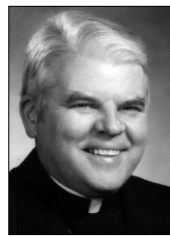
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Bishop further explains possible merging of parishes



NEWS & NOTES

BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

Plans for parishes

Last week, in this newspaper, I laid out some plans for the possible merging of parishes. I think you would agree it was an initiative marked by restraint, and took into account the love and affection that people have for their parishes. It also represents an effort by the bishop to govern the diocese well and give the best possible pastoral care. The media, in its reporting, has indicated that these difficult changes are proposed, because of the shortage of priests. There is only a partial truth here. In reality, they are proposed, because priests are not as well distributed as they should be. If the numbers in each parish are accurate as we receive them (in some cases, this is an uncertain assumption), then the shortage of priests is not as serious as it first appeared. If you try to keep a priest in all the parishes, including those with 100-200 families, then the shortage is made worse by not assigning priests more creatively and more fully taking into account the demographics. The plan, which I presented last week, is a step towards sound pastoral governance and pastoral care of our people.

Another reality

A further reality is the affection people have for their parish, and we have tried in most cases to preserve the church, even if there is to be only one Mass there a month. This also presents financial problems since the regular week-to-week income and the generosity of the people sustains the parish. So we cannot say these parishes without regular celebration of a full slate of Masses each weekend will go on forever.

When this would begin

It is my hope that we can begin at least a few of these necessary consultations with parishes this summer and with the Presbyteral Council in the near future as well.

A trip to Indy this past Sunday

It was a privilege to drive the three hours from South Bend to Indianapolis to take part in a magnificent celebration of the holy Eucharist. The occasion was the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Originally the Diocese of Vincennes, it was founded in 1844 and covered through the whole state. The event was

held at the new Lucas Oil Stadium. It seemed to me there were over 25,000 people present.

Three thousand received the sacrament of confirmation, something we have done in this diocese in the year 2000, and in our anniversary year of 2007. The renewal of marriage vows took place, and priests and religious renewed their promises. I along with the other bishops and many priests gave the anointing of the sacrament of confirmation, and the young woman who accompanied me to my place told me that I had confirmed her at St. Jude, South Bend, some years ago.

This magnificent afternoon of prayer and worship in this beautiful setting with very prayerful music was splendid in every way and a special moment. It showed a Catholic Church in our capital city and beyond filled with grace and prayer and very much unity, and it was a privilege to be part of it. Archbishop Daniel Buechlein, OSB, our metropolitan archbishop, deserves much credit for his pastoral leadership.

Bishop, you ought to get a driver

How many times I have heard that over the years? Yet, my independent streak kept me driving myself. However, this past weekend represented a turn in the road. On Saturday morning, I celebrated at the

comfortable, house in Fort Wayne a few mornings. I have completed 19 confirmations with about 12 to go. Three young men have been accepted to the seminary, and I have two still to interview. I am grateful for many pastors and parishioners who do not mind putting together confirmations for two or more parishes. I would prefer to go to every single parish, but it is just not possible. This week I will have a pastoral visit to Goshen College, which is a Mennonite institution, where there is a strong sense of faith and devotion to the cause of world peace.

Mother's Day

While the observance is secular, the focus is profound. I am reminded of Pope John Paul II and his words that, "God has entrusted the future of humanity to the woman." In another place he wrote, "The future of humanity passes by way of the family." Unselfishness, joy, interest in everything from politics to faith — that is some of which I remember most about my dear mother. I also remember how much the immigrants from Ireland who came later trusted her. She helped them all become American citizens, taking them through the various steps. She would be sensitive to the present crisis of immigration, which is among us. "Now you have to

live up to it," she would say after they had become citizens. She went back to Ireland about five or six years after arriving here, "to take care of my mother." But she would go only after becoming a citizen. She often said about coming into New York harbor how thrilled she was when the captain shouted out, "American citizens first." Like my father, she loved politics. It came with them from the old country. In 1940, she went

to Boston Garden, a few days before the presidential election with Mrs. Maloney, who lived a few houses away, and took public transportation to be present at a great Boston rally for Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Twenty years later, she went again to see the young Irish chieftain, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, at the same Boston Garden. She was 64 years old and loved every minute of it.

What I will remember of her most of all on Mothers' Day, is her final years, saying the rosary, missing my father, and celebrating Mass with me in her home. Mothers — such a gift.

Finally, I once again ask that everyone in the South Bend area stay away from the interlopers who have come here from outside to draw attention to themselves, who contribute nothing, except to divide us. Let us hope and pray that Notre Dame will have a quiet and peaceful graduation that the young people will remember positively.

I will see you all next week.

Such a beautiful time with flowers blooming everywhere.

I actually had breakfast on the back porch of my small, but comfortable, house in Fort Wayne a few mornings.

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception the baccalaureate Mass for the University of Saint Francis, as I have done every May for the past 24 years. Then, off in mid-afternoon to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart for 5 p.m. Mass. Among those present was the Midwest Bioethics Association — a group of doctors, including one from my hometown. Off the next morning for Indianapolis, for the anniversary celebration; and after a nice dinner with the bishops, back in the evening to Fort Wayne. That is a formidable two-day trip, so I enlisted the very capable Chris Lapp from St. Vincent Parish to help me out. Chris, a former student for the seminary from our diocese, is an exemplary young man. On Saturday night, hoping to watch the Boston Celtics, we slipped into St. Matthew Cathedral and saw the Celtics continue their storied record by beating the Chicago Bulls. You know who I was rooting for.

The month of May

Such a beautiful time with flowers blooming everywhere. I actually had breakfast on the back porch of my small, but

Seminarian Andrew Budzinski ordained to the diaconate

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A joyful Mass on the Third Sunday of Easter celebrated the ordination of three seminarians to the diaconate. Andrew Budzinski, from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend; John Eckert, from the Diocese of Charlotte; and David Miller from the Diocese of Charlotte, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Penn., were ordained in St. Turibius Chapel by the Bishop Peter Jugis of Charlotte on April 26.

Bishop Jugis was joined at the altar by priest-faculty of the seminary and by visiting priests from the deacon candidates' respective dioceses.

The rite of ordination began with the calling and presentation of the candidates. Each candidate was called by name, and answered by affirming his presence, readiness and willingness. At the request of the bishop, Josephinum rector and president, Msgr. Paul J. Langsfeld, testified to the worthiness of the candidates.

In his homily, Bishop Jugis spoke to the deacons' role in helping their respective bishops and priests in three special ministries: the ministry of the altar, as a "servant of the sacred liturgy"; the ministry of the word, "to proclaim and teach with conviction" the teachings of Christ and the church; and the ministry of charity, marked with "the indelible spiritual character, which configures him to Christ the servant."

Bishop Jugis urged the deacon candidates to "be men of good reputation, filled with wisdom and the Holy Spirit, as were those once chosen by the apostles."

Following the homily, the candidates made a commitment to permanent celibacy, and each stat-



PROVIDED BY PONTIFICAL COLLEGE JOSEPHINUM

Shown in the back from left are Father Michael Heintz, Deacon Jake Runyon, Matthew Coonan, Deacon Fernando Jimenez, Benjamin Muhlenkamp and Jacob Meyer. Front row left is Sister Mary Vianney and Sister Gianna Marie, who are sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration in Mishawaka, Bishop Peter Jugis, Deacon Andrew Budzinski and Terrence Coonan.

ed his willingness to perform what the church requires of her deacons — valid ordination, humble and loving assistance given to the bishop, proclamation of the mysteries of the faith as taught by Christ, a deepening commitment to ecclesial prayer and a continued renewal of life in the example of Christ. The Litany of the Saints followed, during which the candidates lay prostrate before the altar.

Bishop Jugis completed the act of ordination in a prayer of consecration after the laying on of hands, a scriptural gesture, which signifies a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, by which men are configured to Christ in holy orders. They were then presented with a Book of the Gospels, and were charged by the bishop: "Receive the Gospel of Christ,

whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe and practice what you teach."

The ordination to the diaconate traditionally takes place towards the end of the seminarians' third year of graduate study and marks the final stages of preparation for the priesthood. The deacons are authorized to baptize, proclaim the Gospel, preach, officiate at weddings and funerals, administer sacramentals and care for the dying.

Deacons Budzinski, Eckert and Miller will continue their studies during the 2009-10 academic year, after which they will be ordained to the priesthood upon completion of the master of divinity degree program.

Diocesan seminarians admitted to candidacy

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The liturgy of evening prayer marked a defining moment in the priestly formation of five seminarians at the Pontifical College Josephinum on April 25 when Bishop Peter Jugis of Charlotte admitted them to candidacy for holy orders in the seminary's St. Turibius Chapel.

The rite of admission to candidacy for holy orders is celebrated when a seminarian has reached a maturity of purpose in his formation and has demonstrated the necessary qualifications for ordination. In the presence of the bishop, he publicly expresses his intention to complete his preparation for holy orders and his

resolve to fully invest himself to that end, so that he will serve Christ and the church faithfully.

The Josephinum, as an international seminary, serves an average of 30 dioceses in the United States and abroad. The seminarians admitted to candidacy for holy orders this year are from four different dioceses: Matthew Coonan and Terrence Coonan from Fort Wayne-South Bend; Ryan Schmit from Columbus; John Wiltse from Alexandria, La.; and Joaquin Zermeno from Brownsville. The candidates will continue studies at the Josephinum for two additional years before being ordained to the priesthood.



PROVIDED BY PONTIFICAL COLLEGE JOSEPHINUM

Second-year seminarians Matthew Coonan and Terrence Coonan of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend were admitted to candidacy for holy orders this past weekend. Shown in the photo are from left, Father John Allen, dean of men and director of pastoral formation; Msgr. Paul J. Langsfeld, rector and president; Matthew Coonan; Bishop Peter Jugis of Charlotte; Terrence Coonan; and Msgr. Nevin Klinger, vice rector, school of theology.

Pope's pilgrimage will take message of peace to land of conflict

BY JOHN THAVIS

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI is set to begin a weeklong visit to the Holy Land, a pilgrimage in the footsteps of Christ and a journey through a political and interreligious minefield.

In many ways, the May 8-15 visit to Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories is the most challenging of the pope's foreign visits to date, one that will test his skills of communication and bridge-building in a region of conflict and mistrust.

After recent communications missteps at the Vatican, the pope can expect to find his every word and gesture under scrutiny by the world's media — especially when it comes to relations among Christians, Muslims and Jews and the Israeli-Palestinian crisis.

Although the world may measure the success of the visit in terms



CNS PHOTO/DEBBIE HILL

A camel rests in this view from the Mount of Olives showing the gold-covered Dome of the Rock at the Temple Mount complex in the Old City of Jerusalem April 6. Pope Benedict XVI will visit the Dome of the Rock during his May 8-15 visit to the Holy Land. The Islamic shrine holds significance to Muslims, Jews and Christians.

of international or interfaith diplomacy, Pope Benedict is going to the Holy Land first and foremost as a religious pilgrim.

"The priority is to witness to the truth of the Incarnation by visiting, as head of the church, the places where the events of our redemption took place. That's the point," Franciscan Father David Jaeger, an Israeli priest and adviser to the Vatican, told Catholic News Service.

The pilgrimage has a special focus on peace. The pope, in announcing the visit, said he would be going to the Holy Land to pray for "the precious gift of unity and peace for the Middle East and all humanity."

Father Jaeger said that's extremely important at a time when hopes for peace among the population are the lowest in many years.

"The worst thing that can happen is the loss of hope for peace. So for him to speak openly of the

possibility and the necessity of peace and reconciliation should thrust those values into the fore," Father Jaeger said.

"It's not a political negotiation of course; he's not going to produce a peace treaty or try to. But the fact that he keeps the value of peace in front of the people of the region, that will be a tremendous contribution by the church," he said.

The first leg of the pope's trip will take him to Jordan for a series of carefully chosen liturgies and encounters, including a visit to a mosque in Amman. That event, and the fact that Pope Benedict is spending several days in Jordan, reflects his aim to reach a wide Muslim audience.

In 2006, Pope Benedict prayed in a mosque in Turkey, a gesture that spoke volumes to the Islamic world. In Amman, the pope will

Obama says FOCA is not his 'highest legislative priority'

BY PATRICIA ZAPOR

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Barack Obama in his April 29 press conference said the Freedom of Choice Act was not his “highest legislative priority” and that he is instead focusing on reducing unwanted pregnancies.

“I believe that women should have the right to choose,” he said, “but I think that the most important thing we can do to tamp down some of the anger surrounding this issue is to focus on those areas that we can agree on.”

Some organizations that support legal abortion as well as some pro-life groups, including the Catholic Health Association and Democrats for Life, have said the Freedom of Choice Act, known by its initials as FOCA, was unlikely to move in Congress.

FOCA has not been introduced in the current Congress. Versions of it had been introduced in nearly every session of Congress for the last 20 years. Only once, in 1993, did the bill make it as far as being considered by committees. It has never reached the floor of either the House or Senate.

Obama said at the press conference that he wants “to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies that result in women feeling compelled to get an abortion or at least (are) considering getting an abortion, particularly if we can reduce the number of teen pregnancies, which has started to spike up again.”

Chicago Cardinal Francis E. George, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said in a May 1 statement that he welcomed the president's words that “the Freedom of Choice Act is not his highest legislative priority.”

The cardinal stressed that many people have been “working tirelessly to express their concerns about FOCA and FOCA-related legislation” and that “many people of different religious faiths or none will continue to work respectfully and insistently not only to reduce abortions, but to eliminate them.”

During the press conference, Obama said a task force operating



CNS PHOTO/LARRY DOWNING, REUTERS

U.S. President Barack Obama speaks during his 100-day anniversary news conference in the East Room of the White House in Washington April 29. President Obama said the Freedom of Choice Act is not an important legislative priority and that he wants to focus on reducing the number of “unwanted pregnancies” that lead to abortion.

under the Domestic Policy Council “is working with groups both in the pro-choice camp and in the pro-life camp to see if we can arrive at some consensus on that.”

According to White House spokesman Shin Inouye, various White House offices — the Domestic Policy Council, the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the White House Council on Women and Girls — have been “working together on developing strategies to reduce unintended and teenage pregnancies, support maternal and child health and reduce the need for abortion.”

“As part of their work,” he said in an April 30 e-mail to Catholic News Service, “they are conducting outreach to stakeholders on all sides of these issues.”

An analysis of the most recent version of FOCA by the USCCB legal counsel warned that it would wipe out existing state restrictions on abortion and impede states' ability to regulate abortion.

According to a fact sheet distributed by the National

Committee for a Human Life Amendment, which has ties to the USCCB, the legislation as introduced in the 110th Congress “declares that it is the policy of the United States that every woman has the ‘fundamental right’ to terminate a pregnancy.”

“The act prohibits government at every level (federal, state and local) from ‘interfering’ with a woman’s right to choose, and from ‘discriminating’ against the exercise of this right,” it adds.

A nationwide postcard campaign against FOCA and other abortion-related issues was sponsored earlier this year by the USCCB. It asked members of Congress to “oppose FOCA or any similar measure, and retain laws against federal funding and promotion of abortion.”

Many pro-life organizations have focused their concerns about FOCA on a reply Obama gave to a question during a July 2007 campaign appearance before a Planned Parenthood group, when he said signing the bill would be “the first thing I’d do as president.”

In response to the question at the April 29 press conference about that comment, Obama also elaborated on his views on abortion.

“I think abortion is a moral issue and an ethical issue,” he said. “I think that those who are pro-choice make a mistake when they — if they suggest — and I don’t want to create straw men here, but I think there are some who suggest that this is simply an issue about women’s freedom and that there’s no other considerations. I think, look, this is an issue that people have to wrestle with, and families and individual women have to wrestle with.”

“The reason I’m pro-choice is because I don’t think women take that position casually,” Obama said. “I think that they struggle with these decisions each and every day, and I think they are in a better position to make these decisions ultimately than members of Congress or a president of the United States — in consultation with their families, with their doctors, with their clergy.”

Catholic churches take preventive measures against spread of flu

BY DAVID AGREN

MEXICO CITY (CNS) — Catholic officials in several countries have issued guidelines for celebrating Mass during the outbreak of the swine flu, which is spread by human contact.

In Mexico City, the epicenter of the outbreak, preventive measures outlined by the church have included instructions to both priests and parishioners on church behavior during a public health outbreak. The recommendations urged priests to limit homilies to five minutes and wear masks while hearing confession. Parishioners were advised to not bring young children and the elderly to Mass, to wear face masks and to wait to put money in the collection plate until after they receive Communion.

The Archdiocese of Mexico City also announced that weddings, “quinceaneras” and baptisms would be postponed, but could be conducted in private if a priest deemed that adequate health safeguards were being taken.

Some Catholic churches across Mexico City reopened for Mass, despite admonishments from the local government for residents to avoid large gatherings to prevent the spread of swine flu. In other parts of the country, however, churches remained closed and pilgrimages

were canceled.

As cases of swine flu were confirmed in various countries, Catholic officials issued cautions.

In New Zealand, the bishops temporarily suspended the reception of Communion on the tongue and from the chalice and shaking hands at the sign of peace. In an April 30 statement, the bishops called these restrictions precautionary and said they would issue an update if stronger action was needed.

Various bishops in the United States issued similar guidelines.

In England, the Diocese of Lancaster published an online booklet called “Sustaining Pastoral Presence: Influenza Outbreaks,” with information about the swine flu and preventive measures. The diocese said the booklet was designed to “ensure that Catholic parishes and chaplaincy teams maintain their presence as agents of pastoral care during a flu epidemic or pandemic in a way that both protects those engaged in pastoral ministry and protects those who need their help.”

Contributing to this story was Gavin Abraham in New Zealand.

TRIP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

going to encourage peacemaking he wanted to follow in the footsteps of Pope Paul VI, who visited the region in 1964, and Pope John Paul II, who made his pilgrimage in 2000.

Pope Benedict said he would visit the “principal holy sites of our faith” and, as the successor of the apostle Peter, he would “confirm and encourage the Holy Land’s Christians, who face difficulties every day.”

The pope also spoke about his trip May 2 when he met donors from the U.S.-based Papal Foundation.

Today’s world, he told foundation members, is in need of God’s peace, “especially as it faces the tragedies of war, division, poverty and despair.”

Telling foundation members that he wanted to be “a pilgrim of peace” in the Holy Land, the pope explained that “for more than 60 years this region — the land of Our Lord’s birth, death

and resurrection; a sacred place for the world’s three great monotheistic religions — has been plagued by violence and injustice.”

“This has led to a general atmosphere of mistrust, uncertainty and fear — often pitting neighbor against neighbor, brother against brother,” he said.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told reporters May 4 that for several reasons the trip is taking place in “a context not easy in terms of peace and serenity.”

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Gaza Strip occurred just five months ago, Israel has a new government, members of the Palestinians’ Fatah and Hamas factions have been negotiating for months without success to form a new unity government, and the new U.S. foreign policy of Barack Obama has just begun to take shape, Father Lombardi said.

It is such a complex situation, he said, “the pope’s trip presents itself as an act of hope and of trust that he can make a contribution to peace and reconciliation. It seems to me to be a decidedly courageous act.”



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Notre Dame won't give Laetare Medal, after Glendon rejects honor

BY CHAZ MUTH

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The University of Notre Dame announced April 30 it will not award its prestigious Laetare Medal during the May 17 commencement ceremony after Mary Ann Glendon, former U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, turned down the honor.

Glendon cited growing controversy over President Barack Obama's presence at this year's event as the reason for her rejection of the award.

Instead, the Catholic university announced that its 1984 recipient of the medal — Judge John T. Noonan Jr. — will deliver an address during the school's 164th commencement ceremony.

This year will mark the first time the Indiana university has failed to bestow the Laetare Medal — presented to an American Catholic for outstanding service to the Catholic Church and society — since it was established in 1883, said Dennis Brown, a spokesman for Notre Dame.

Glendon told Holy Cross Father John I. Jenkins, Notre Dame's president, in an April 27 letter that she had changed her mind and decided not to participate in this year's graduation ceremony because of the university's decision to give Obama, the scheduled commencement speaker, an honorary degree.

She described Obama — who was a student at Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Mass., while she was a professor at the school — as “a prominent and uncompromising opponent of the church's position on issues involving fundamental principles of justice” and said the decision to present him with an honorary degree violated the U.S. bishops' 2004 request that Catholic institutions not honor “those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles.”

Obama supports legal abortion and his administration recently proposed new regulations that would expand the use of federal funds for embryonic stem-cell research. Both are in direct conflict with church teaching.

“In thinking about who could

bring a compelling voice, a passion for dialogue, great intellectual stature and a deep commitment to Catholic values to the speaking role of the Laetare medalist — especially in these unusual circumstances — it quickly became clear that an ideal choice is Judge Noonan,” Father Jenkins said in a statement posted on the university's Web site April 30.

“Since Judge Noonan is a previous winner of the Laetare Medal, we have decided, upon reflection, to not award the medal this year,” he added.

A former professor at Notre Dame, Noonan was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit in 1985 by President Ronald Reagan and has been a consultant for the Presidential Commission on Population, the National Institutes of Health, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the American Law Institute, and served on the Eisenhower administration's National Security Council.

He is the author of numerous books, including “A Church That



CNS PHOTO/LARRY BURGESS, UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

Judge John T. Noonan Jr. is pictured in an undated photo. Noonan, the University of Notre Dame's 1984 recipient of the Laetare Medal, will deliver an address May 17 during the school's 164th commencement ceremony.

Can and Cannot Change: The Development of Catholic Moral Teaching,” “Contraception: A History of Its Treatment by Catholic Theologians and Canonists” and “Power to Dissolve: Lawyers and Marriages in the Courts of the Roman Curia.”

Born in Boston, Noonan, 82, received a law degree from Harvard Law School and a doctorate from The Catholic University of America in Washington. He has also served as a law professor at the University of California Law School at Berkeley, Boston College, Harvard Law School, the University of California at Los Angeles and Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

Since Noonan has served as a consultant for several agencies in the Catholic Church, including Pope Paul VI's Commission on Problems of the Family and sev-

eral U.S. bishops' committees, Father Jenkins said he would send Notre Dame graduates “into the world with sound advice and affirmation.”

Since announcing March 20 that Obama would speak at the commencement, the university has been criticized by some U.S. bishops, including Fort Wayne-South Bend Bishop John M. D'Arcy, leader of the diocese where Notre Dame is located, who announced plans to boycott the event.

Other clergy, alumni and conservative Catholic organizations have mounted a campaign seeking to have the university revoke the president's invitation.

Anti-abortion activist Randall Terry has vowed to protest Obama's scheduled address every day leading up to the May 17 ceremony and has suggested that protesters may disrupt the commencement.

Following published reports that Bishop D'Arcy had refused to meet with Terry April 29 to discuss the upcoming event, a spokesman for the bishop said late April 30 that “his schedule would not allow” such a meeting. Asked for a response to Terry's demands, Bishop D'Arcy said, “As you know, we have distanced ourselves from him.”

The bishop reiterated that he had asked “Catholics and others of good will not to join in unseemly protests, which attack the president of the United States or Father Jenkins or the University of Notre Dame.”

The spokesman said Bishop D'Arcy “has urged everyone to cooperate, so Notre Dame will have a peaceful graduation.”

Though some Notre Dame students have participated in campus protests about Obama's scheduled appearance, others have voiced their enthusiasm and support of the president's upcoming commencement address.

POPE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

deliver a speech outside the mosque to Muslim leaders, diplomats and rectors of the University of Jordan. The audience and the setting make it likely that the pope will revisit the themes of his speech in 2006 in Regensburg, Germany, but this time making sure his remarks on reason and faith do not unintentionally offend his listeners.

For Jordan's Catholic faithful, who number about 75,000 in a population of 6.2 million, the big event will be the papal Mass in an Amman soccer stadium May 10.

Two smaller papal events in Jordan should not go unnoticed. His first appointment in Amman is at the Regina Pacis center, a special needs facility that has inspired Christian-Muslim dialogue and collaboration. Here the pope is likely to emphasize the importance of the “dialogue of life” and social cooperation among followers of the Abrahamic faiths.

The pope also will lay the cornerstone of the University of Madaba, which is being built by the Latin patriarchate; blessing cornerstones is a common activity in papal visits, but establishing a Catholic-run university in a predominantly Muslim country makes this one special.

Much of the pope's itinerary follows in the footsteps of Pope John Paul II's Holy Land pilgrimage in 2000. Pope Benedict, for example, will pray at Mount Nebo in western Jordan, where Moses glimpsed the Promised Land before dying. And, like his prede-

cessor, he will visit the Jordan River where Jesus was baptized — the setting of the opening chapter of Pope Benedict's book, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

The pope travels to Jerusalem May 11 and later that day visits the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, in what Vatican aides view as a central event of the trip. When Pope John Paul spoke at the memorial in 2000, Israelis reacted with warm appreciation; many considered it a turning point in his pilgrimage.

Pope Benedict has spoken eloquently about the Holocaust, and as a German has recalled growing up as a witness to the brutality of the regime that targeted Jews for extermination. Vatican sources said, however, that the pope will not be going to Yad Vashem to apologize as a German, but to invoke a wider lesson on the dangers of racism and anti-Semitism.

On May 12, his first full day in Jerusalem, the pope visits sites sacred to Islam, Judaism and Christianity. He begins at the Dome of the Rock, one of Islam's holiest shrines, and proceeds to the Western Wall, sacred to Jews. The two sites lie adjacent to each other and in the past have been the scene of bitter skirmishes between Palestinians and Israelis. The same day the pope will meet separately with the city's two chief rabbis and the grand mufti.

The pope will make a daylong visit May 13 to the West Bank city of Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus and today a key administrative city of the Palestinian Authority, whose officials will welcome the pontiff at the presidential palace. The main religious event of the day is a Mass in Manger Square.

That afternoon, the pope will

visit the Aida Refugee Camp, where some 5,000 Palestinians live. The visit is already politically charged. Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal of Jerusalem said recently that the camp, which has a giant key installed atop one of the camp's gates, symbolizes the “right to return,” the principle that Palestinian refugees have a right to return to the homes in Israel that they have been forced to leave at various times since 1946, when the war for Israeli statehood began.

In addition, Israel has objected that the platform being built to host the Aida event is too close to the Israeli separation wall, which Israel has designed as a 400-mile-long security barrier through the West Bank and which Palestinians see as an instrument of repression.

The pope will celebrate Mass May 14 in Nazareth, the city where Jesus grew up, and later visit the Grotto of the Annunciation and hold a prayer service with Catholic leaders of Galilee. Like his Mass earlier in the week in the Josafat Valley near the Garden of Gethsemane, these liturgies are central to the pope's pilgrimage, offering moral support to the dwindling Christian population in the land where the church was born.

U.S. Cardinal John P. Foley, grand master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, said the pope's visit would underline the importance of maintaining the Christian presence in the Holy Land.

“He will do what Peter always does: encourage the faithful, recognize them, give them a renewed sense of worth and let them know how much the universal church appreciates them and the importance of their faith,” the cardinal said.

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Search Committee • St. Christopher Parish
5301 West 16th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46224

or via email to

info@saintchristopherparish.org

Poll shows Catholics have mixed reaction to Obama's ND invitation

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In a nationwide poll, half of U.S. Catholics overall supported the University of Notre Dame's decision to invite President Barack Obama to address college graduates while 28 percent opposed it. But when the Catholics polled were divided into categories of those who attended weekly Mass and those who did not, the numbers shifted. Thirty-seven percent of those attending weekly Mass supported the Indiana university's decision while 45 percent opposed it. The poll, conducted by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, was released April 30. It was based on telephone interviews April 23-27 with 2,003 adults and has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. The overall Catholic response to the survey was similar to the nationwide views on the issue: 48 percent approved, 25 percent disapproved and 27 percent said they didn't know. Of Catholics who attended Mass less than once a week 23 percent found fault with the university's decision and 56 percent favored it.

Financial crisis cannot lead to neglect of the poor, pope tells donors

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — With finances tight everywhere and a global financial crisis making life difficult even for those with money, people can be tempted to worry only about their own situation and that of their family, Pope Benedict XVI said. "At moments such as these it is tempting to overlook those without a voice and think only of our own difficulties," the pope told members of the U.S.-based Papal Foundation. "As Christians we are aware, however, that especially when times are difficult we must work even harder to ensure that the consoling message of Our Lord is heard," the pope said during the meeting May 2 at the Vatican. The Papal Foundation was established in 1990 and, in the name of the pope, has given more than \$54 million in grants for the building of churches, seminaries, schools, hospitals and other projects for the care of the poor around the world. In the midst of the financial crisis, the pope told the benefactors, "rather than turning in on ourselves, we must continue to be beacons of hope, strength and support for others, most especially those who have no one to watch over or assist them."

Freedom commission recommends U.S. monitor Venezuela, Cuba

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A U.S. government commission has recommended that President Barack Obama's administration place Venezuela and Cuba among the

POPE ORDAINS 19 NEW PRIESTS AT MASS AT THE VATICAN



CNS PHOTO/MAX ROSSI, REUTERS

Pope Benedict XVI places his hands on one of 19 new priests he ordained in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican May 3. The Mass marked the annual celebration of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The new priests, who will serve in the Diocese of Rome, included 13 from Italy and six from other countries on four continents.

countries that should be monitored closely for their violations of religious freedom. In its annual report, released May 1 in Washington, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom also recommended that 13 countries — including Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, China and Pakistan — be designated as "countries of particular concern." This designation is reserved for countries with the most egregious violations of religious freedom and for governments that tolerate such abuses. The commission, an independent body, makes its recommendations to the president, secretary of state and Congress. During the press conference to release the report, Talal Eid, an imam from Boston and a member of the commission, said Venezuela has steadily increased its tolerance of abuses against Catholics, Jews and U.S.-based Protestant groups in the country. Although there are no official restrictions against religious freedom, he said, the Venezuelan government's "strong rhetoric" and impunity have created a "hostile environment" for Catholic and Jewish citizens.

Souter's court legacy mixed on abortion, First Amendment cases

WASHINGTON (CNS) — As Justice David Souter prepares to retire this summer after 19 years on the Supreme Court, he leaves a mixed legacy of jurisprudence: not so friendly to pro-life perspectives on cases involving abortion, but

sometimes strong for religious interests in First Amendment areas. Souter, 69, plans to retire in late June, various news organizations reported April 30. His departure would create the first vacancy on the court since 2005, when Chief Justice William Rehnquist died shortly after Justice Sandra Day O'Connor announced her retirement. Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito replaced them. When Souter was nominated to the court by President George H.W. Bush in 1990, many observers predicted he would be a conservative vote on issues such as abortion restrictions, government aid to public schools and religious expression in schools and public places. His actual record turned out to be different from those predictions.

Bishop Morin installed as third bishop of Biloxi

BILOXI, Miss. (CNS) — Pledging to follow his episcopal motto to "walk humbly and act justly," Bishop Roger P. Morin was installed as Biloxi's third bishop April 27 at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cathedral. "My prayer is always to build a foundation in living according to the Gospel by hearkening back to the words of the prophet Micah," he said in his homily. "Walk tenderly after acting justly and ever walking humbly with consciousness of the wonder and marvel of the unique God-given gifts possessed by each person." Seven archbishops — including Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic

nuncio to the United States; Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi of Mobile, Ala., Bishop Morin's predecessor in Biloxi; and Archbishop Philip M. Hannan, the retired archbishop of New Orleans who ordained Bishop Morin to the priesthood in 1961 — were among those concelebrating the liturgy. Bishop Morin, a 68-year-old Massachusetts native, went to New Orleans in 1967 as a young seminarian to engage in social ministry and was eventually ordained a priest for the archdiocese. He had been auxiliary bishop of New Orleans since 2003.

Sebelius confirmed, sworn in as Health and Human Services secretary

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Senate confirmed Gov. Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas as secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services by a 61-35 vote April 28, and she was sworn in to the post hours later. During the Senate debate, Sen. Chris Dodd, D-Conn., who is Catholic, attributed the delay in confirming Sebelius to "petty politics" and praised the Obama administration for its commitment to base department decisions "on the best available science, not the political ideology of the moment." But Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., expressed fear that the health care reform plan promoted by President Barack Obama and Sebelius would lead to a government-run health system and reduce consumer choice. "Americans need to be assured that they will not lose

the private health coverage that they want to keep or that their treatment options will have to be approved by a government bureaucrat," McCain said. "While I respect the right of President Obama to nominate Gov. Sebelius to be the next secretary of HHS, she has failed to provide us with those assurances, and I regret that I cannot support her confirmation."

U.S. cardinals, other church leaders gather for annual dinner, Mass

HOUSTON (CNS) — A standing-room-only crowd greeted eight U.S. cardinals for the Mass April 24 at Houston's Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart prior to the annual dinner benefiting The Catholic University of America. Proceeds from the dinner fund scholarships for students attending the school in Washington. In addition to Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, the Mass and dinner were attended by Cardinals Francis E. George of Chicago; Roger M. Mahony of Los Angeles; Sean P. O'Malley of Boston; Justin Rigali of Philadelphia; William H. Keeler, retired archbishop of Baltimore; Adam J. Maida, retired archbishop of Detroit; and Edward M. Egan, retired archbishop of New York. In his homily at the Mass, Vincentian Father David M. O'Connell, president of Catholic University, said Catholic higher education should work a miracle in its students similar to Jesus' miracle of the loaves and the fishes.

Clergy, religious offer perspectives on Postville raid aftermath

POSTVILLE, Iowa (CNS) — Reverberations from the immigration raid in Postville last May are still being felt in the town and throughout the Archdiocese of Dubuque, of which Postville is a part. Archbishop Jerome G. Hanus of Dubuque said he takes comfort in "the recognition of Christ in the visitor" when thinking about the church's response to the raid, which led to 389 arrests, immigration and identity-theft charges against more than 300 of those arrested, and the deportations of scores of immigrants, most from Guatemala and Mexico. The archbishop said he also finds hope in Chapter 25 of Matthew's Gospel: "I was a stranger, and you welcomed me." Since the raid, "I preach on this (theme) every other homily. I'm catechizing," he said in an April 20 interview in Dubuque with Catholic News Service. Sister Mary McCauley, a Sister of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary who had been doing pastoral ministry at St. Bridget Parish in Postville, was scheduled to retire from active ministry last July. But because of the raid and the continuing needs as hundreds of lives were disrupted in its aftermath, she stayed on until last October. "I'm going everywhere I can to talk about the anniversary," she said in the same April 20 interview.

Holy Cross College takes flu precautions

NOTRE DAME — Following the April 29 announcement that a University of Notre Dame student has tested positive for swine flu, Holy Cross College has made further efforts to remind students of the importance of taking common sense precautions to avoid contagion.

"The student bodies of the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary's College, and Holy Cross College mix freely on a daily basis, therefore, we understand that flu on one campus could quickly affect us all. As of last Monday, we began notifying students by e-mail, and by word of mouth through dorm supervisors of the potential for infection, how to prevent it, and what to do if an individual begins to feel flu-like symptoms," said Dan Cochran, dean of students. "We have also posted around campus CDC information on flu prevention techniques. These are clearly visible in open areas where students congregate, near sinks and on restroom doors. In addition, our housekeeping service has been notified to take extra precautions in cleaning and disinfecting door handles, desks, exercise equipment, and common areas," he continued.

Study abroad students in Mexico to return early

NOTRE DAME — Eight University of Notre Dame students studying in Mexico at Universidad de las Américas in Puebla and the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (the Tec) in Monterrey, returned to the U.S. at the end of last week.

Due to the swine flu epidemic, the Mexican government cancelled classes in all schools and universities until May 6, which was to be the last day of classes, so the cancellation effectively ended the semester.

Notre Dame's Office of International Studies worked with Anthony Travel to arrange for the students to return by the end of last week. Final papers and exams will be completed on campus.

World's oldest Benedictine monk dies at Saint Meinrad Archabbey

SAINT MEINRAD — Father Theodore Heck, OSB, the world's oldest Benedictine monk, died on Wednesday, April 29, at the age of 108.

A monk and priest of St. Meinrad Archabbey, St. Meinrad, Father Theodore was a jubilarian in profession and priesthood, the senior member of the Swiss-American Congregation in profession, priesthood and age, and the senior in age of the entire confederation of Benedictine monks throughout the world. He was also a participant in the Rush Religious Study on Aging and Alzheimer's.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

BLESSING OF THE BIKES DRAWS THOUSANDS TO ARCOLA



PROVIDED BY TOM PITZEN

The 20th annual Blessing of the Bikes was held on April 18 at St. Patrick's Parish of Arcola. A beautiful, sunny day led to its largest turnout ever. Thousands of motorcycles from across the area descended on this small rural church in northwest Allen County. After a few readings, Father Cyril Fernandes sprinkled each bike with holy water.

Legacy of Faith funds disbursed for parish catechesis and youth ministry

FORT WAYNE — Bishop John M. D'Arcy has approved recommendations for disbursement of Legacy of Faith funds to be used for parish catechesis and Youth Ministry programs and resources.

A total of \$48,881 in grants were disbursed to the following: St. Adalbert, South Bend, \$3,000; St. Augustine, South Bend, \$5,000; St. Joseph, Garrett, \$2,886; Antioch, Mishawaka, \$6,045; St. Jude, Fort Wayne, \$6,950; St. Joseph, Bluffton, \$12,500; St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Fort Wayne, \$12,500.

The goal of Legacy of Faith is to "strengthen the life of faith among us and strengthen the church for the future." In keeping with this spirit, the Legacy Catechesis/Youth Ministry Endowment Committee evaluates all funding requests based on need and fulfillment of one or more of the following criteria:

- Programs or activities that focus on youth, child or family catechesis and respond to the ongoing need to learn about our Catholic faith;
- Programs or activities that educate young Catholics about the importance of personal vocations as married or single persons, priests

and religious;

- Programs or activities that contribute in concrete ways to the evangelization and the teaching of the Catholic faith;

- Programs or activities that teach, model and integrate the principles of stewardship into the daily lives of all Catholics;

- Programs or activities that promote the understanding of sacred Scripture, the Catholic creed, the sacramental life, morality and prayer.

St. Jude coordinates Habitat building project

FORT WAYNE — St. Jude Parish in conjunction with Our Lady of Good Hope, St. John the Baptist, St. Charles, St. Vincent de Paul and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception are participating in the Apostle Build Project, a Habitat for Humanity housing project for a refugee family of a single father with four young daughters from the Congo. The father is required to complete 400 hours of volunteer work with Habitat to be eligible for the home.

Volunteers for the project have been organized with a project start date of May 12. The program has received \$32,000 of the \$50,000 necessary for project completion and is seeking donations for this worthy cause.

To donate, make checks payable to "Apostle Build Habitat For Humanity" and send to St. Jude Catholic Church, 2130 Pemberton Dr., Fort Wayne, IN 46805 or any of the participating parishes.

Devin Tracy places in essay contest

WABASH — Devin Tracy, a sixth grader at St. Bernard School, recently won second prize in the fifth and sixth grade category of the 14th Annual "ATTITUDE" Essay Contest sponsored by the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Indiana, Inc. Devin was one of nearly 500 participants this year. He was awarded a check for \$75, a certificate and a small token to remind him of his accomplishment.

Forever Learning Institute holds spring festival

SOUTH BEND — The Forever Learning Institute, located at 54191 Ironwood Rd., will hold its spring festival on May 12 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., to celebrate the close of the spring semester. The festival will include demonstrations of line and Hawaiian dancing, a violin performance by class members and class project displays with informa-

tion about the program. Refreshments will be served. Students, teachers and the public are invited to this free festival.

Katie Hackman named Carson Scholar

DECATUR — St. Joseph School, Decatur, eighth-grade student, Katie Hackman, was recently named a Carson Scholar through the Indianapolis Carson



KATIE HACKMAN

Foundation. She is one of 531 scholarship recipients this year from across the country, a repeat honor roll student and is the second St. Joseph School student to win a Ben Carson scholarship in the past three years.

The Carson Scholars Fund is a nonprofit organization founded in 1994, by Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin Carson. The \$1,000 college scholarship is awarded to students who excel academically and are active within their communities. The scholarship is open to fourth through 11th graders and is renewable for each of the students' subsequent school years as long as they continue to excel.

Winners of the annual Hannah's House quilt raffle announced

SOUTH BEND — Hannah's House has announced the winners of the 2009 Quilt Raffle Drawing. This year's queen-sized quilt was created by the Riverbend Quilters Guild.

The first prize winner of the beautiful quilt is Kristi Wozniak. The second prize winner of a salon makeover for two complements of Salon Fusion is Rachel Potts. Kent Beehler won the third prize of a \$50 Macy's gift card.

Proceeds will benefit Hannah's House, a maternity home that provides shelter, programming and support for the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of pregnant women. To donate to Hannah's House or to volunteer please call (574) 254-5309.

Eric Genuis to perform at Arcola

ARCOLA — Eric Genuis will be in concert on Sunday, May 17, at 6:30 p.m. at St. Patrick Church located at 12305 Arcola Rd. Doors open at 6 p.m. with open seating.

A free will donation will be accepted at the door and canned food items will be collected for local families.

Genuis will be accompanied with guest performers. William Pfund is president of the International Trumpet Guild has played for Brass Quintets, the United States Army Band, Philharmonic Orchestras. Contemporary vocalist Linda Easter and violinist Alexandra Early will also appear.

For more information, contact the parish at (260) 625-4151.

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, MONROEVILLE, STUDENTS HOP FOR DONATIONS



009

PROVIDED BY ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, MONROEVILLE

St. Joseph School, Monroeville, students participated in the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) Hop-athon by hopping for two minutes. They received pledges for each hop or a flat donation and raised a total of \$823. The students worked as a pair, as one student hopped, the other student counted.

Dedicated to young, faith and learning, St. Jude School blessed with addition

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

FORT WAYNE — The economy may be waning, but the spirit of generosity at St. Jude School has not tapered off.

Last month, the school completed a project, which includes a new main entrance and larger office space for the administrative staff. The addition is both aesthetically pleasing and functional.

"The architectural beauty compliments and enhances the rest of the Spanish architecture of our school," said St. Jude Principal Sister Kathleen Marie Knueven, a Sister of Notre Dame. "The landscaping with flowers, shrubs and trees adds a special beauty to our school and grounds."

Sister Kathleen noted the project was much needed, as the secretaries had been working in cramped quarters and needed more space. The addition translates to a higher sense of security

for the students, as the secretaries are located by the main office to better monitor visitors.

Indeed this addition is proof that St. Jude Parish is alive and well. "St. Jude Catholic School and Parish is a strong community of faith," Sister Kathleen said. "Through the generosity of our people this building addition was made possible. We plan to continue educating and sharing God's good news with the children for many years to come."

The project started Sept. 30 and was completed April 24. On April 25, Bishop John M. D'Arcy concelebrated a dedication Mass with Father Tom Shoemaker, St. Jude pastor.

Referring to St. Jude Parish as a "family of families," Bishop D'Arcy offered words of gratitude at the Mass.

"I want to commend and thank you for your generosity to make (this addition) possible, despite hard economic times," he said. "So we should have great thanksgiving for this new addition."

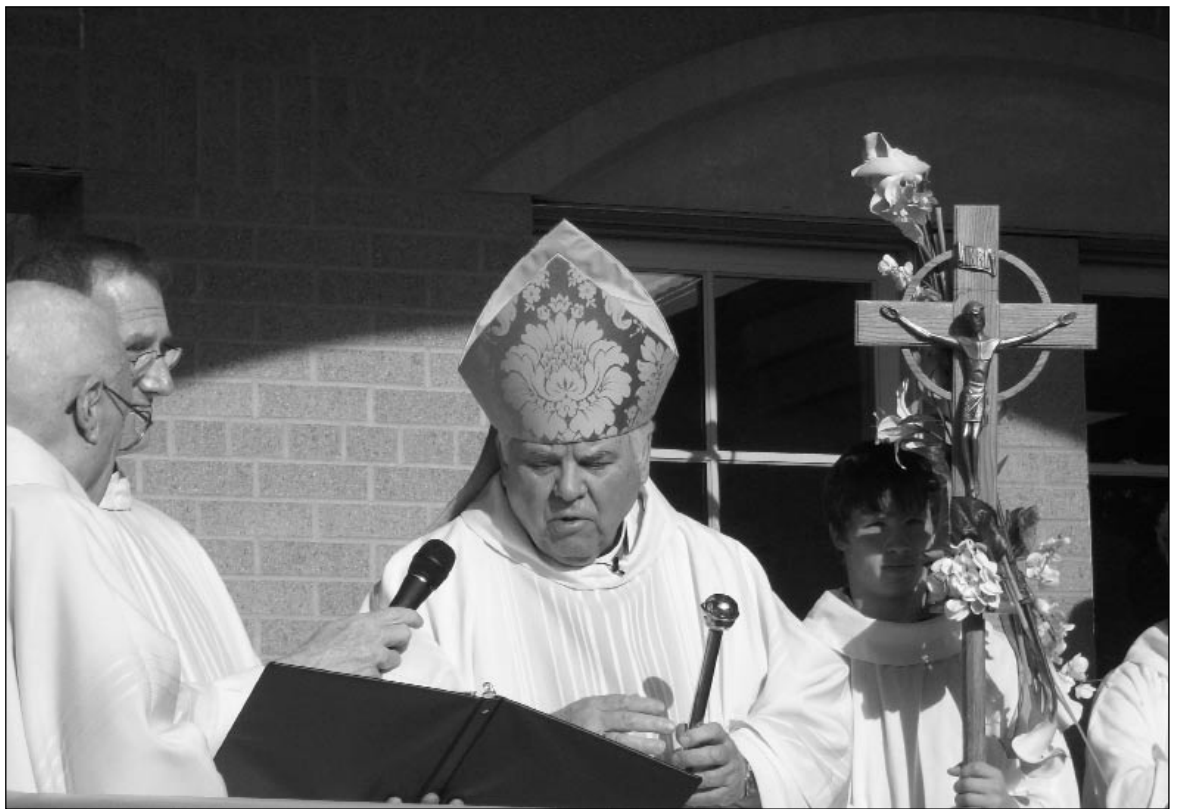
Following the Mass, Bishop D'Arcy invited the faithful to a dedication ceremony at the site. St. Jude students led the procession in song.

Once all gathered, the bishop blessing the facility, referenced a New Testament metaphor: "You are the light of the world," he told the children present. He then called on the Holy Spirit to bless and enlighten their minds.

"Today we ask the blessing on this new addition ... this blessing shows that the Catholic Church is dedicated to young people, faith and learning," he said. "Faith and learning, ... there's never one without the other."

Following the blessing, parishioners were welcomed inside to explore the addition. The school also celebrated April 27 with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

To view photos of the building's progress, see www.stjudefw.org/school/building_project.htm.



HEATHER CISZ

Bishop John M. D'Arcy celebrated Mass and blessed an addition to St. Jude School, Fort Wayne, which has included office space.

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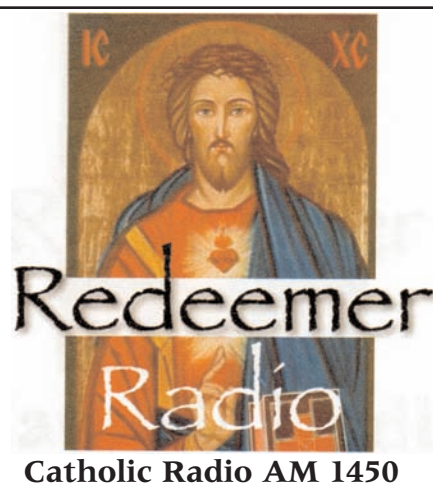
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Feticide, childhood poverty commission, charity gaming adjustment among ICC legislative successes

INDIANAPOLIS — April 29 marked the close of the regular session of the Indiana General Assembly. Upon adjournment each year, lawmakers' action and inaction brings success and disappointment for many of the Indiana Catholic Conference's legislative priorities. This year is no different.

Bills to enhance penalties for feticide, create a child poverty commission, and adjust charity gaming rules will become law this year and were legislative successes of the Indiana Catholic Conference.

Senate Bill 236 authored by Sen. James Merritt (R-Indianapolis), a father of twins, said this proposal would enhance the penalty for a person who commits murder or attempted murder where the unborn is concerned. In the case of the bank teller tragedy, it would have subjected the offender to an additional term of imprisonment of six to 20 years because two unborn twins were lost. SB 236 also increases the penalty for feticide from a Class C felony to a Class B felony, Merritt said.

"Many of my constituents are customers of the Huntington Bank and frequent the neighborhood where the holdup and shooting occurred," Merritt said. "Plus, as the father of twins, this story really hit home with me."

Current law allows murder charges to be filed only if the fetus has reached seven months gestation. The twins carried by bank teller Katherin Shuffield of Indianapolis were only five months gestation when they were killed.

Nationwide, 37 states have feticide laws, and 18 of those consider the killing of a fetus at any age to be murder, Merritt said.

"It's time Indiana catches up with the rest of the country on this important issue," Merritt said.

Senate Bill 236 defines feticide as the termination of a human pregnancy. The bill passed the Senate 40-9. The House

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

BY BRIGID CURTIS AYER

passed the bill 96-0. Since the bill was amended by the House, the Senate had to vote on or concur with the House amendments. The Senate concurred by a 44-2 vote. Gov. Mitch Daniels is expected to sign the bill into law.

Lawmakers passed a measure to create a childhood poverty commission to conduct an in-depth study of childhood poverty in Indiana. The 23-member panel will be composed of child poverty experts from governmental agencies, nonprofit advocacy groups, faith-based community groups, and area academia from Indiana University; the University of Notre Dame; and Purdue University.

Sen. Dennis Kruse, (R-Auburn), author of the proposal, which passed the Senate, 41-7, said that the purpose of the bill is to keep the issue of children in poverty before the Indiana General Assembly.

"Poverty has been with us since the beginning of man and will probably always be with us, but that doesn't mean we ignore it or accept it. I think we have an obligation for our generation to do what we can do to reduce childhood poverty," said Kruse.

"The commission will be an effort in Indiana to reduce childhood poverty by 50 percent by the year 2020. There are roughly 20 other states that have similar commissions in place to address the problem," he said.

Kruse said that Indiana ranks 30 out of the 50 states in childhood poverty. "Indiana has more than the national average of children in poverty," said Kruse. This is something Sen. Kruse hopes to

change through the commission. The original bill to create the commission died, but the contents of the bill were added to SB 365, which passed.

A bill to adjust a charity gaming regulation also passed this year thanks to the efforts of three Catholic lawmakers Reps. Mark Messmer (R-Jasper), Matt Bell (R-Avilla) and Sen. Jean Leising (R-Oldenburg) who authored a proposal to allow festival workers to participate in activities other than the game they are working.

Senate Bill 414 passed the House unanimously on April 15. The bill allows charity gaming workers at festivals to participate in gaming activities. The current charitable gaming law does not allow workers who work for only part of an event to partake in activities at multi-day or multi-game events, such as church festivals.

"I think the unanimous support for this bill proves that the reasoning behind the legislation is sound and uncontroversial," said Messmer. "The bill does nothing to expand gambling in our state, it merely clears up an oversight in existing code that didn't allow these volunteer workers to take part in gaming activities."

Rep. Messmer co-chaired the Holy Family Catholic Church's Parish Picnic for the past two years. Having worked on this event, Messmer said. "I have seen the way that this oversight in our law is a financial drain on these organizations. Even more, it took some of the fun out of these festivals for the folks who volunteered their time to work."

The Senate concurred on the House amendments by a 39-7 vote, and the governor is expected to sign the bill.

Because the Indiana General Assembly did not agree on a budget by the April 29 adjournment deadline, lawmakers will reconvene when called. Gov. Mitch Daniels is expected to call lawmakers back in June. Lawmakers must agree on a budget, which will go into effect July 1, or the state will not have an operating budget.

Bill requiring abortion doctors to obtain admitting privileges fails

A proposal requiring abortion doctors to obtain hospital privileges for better follow up care for post abortive women failed in conference committee when lawmakers were unable to reconcile differences between the House and Senate version of the bill.

Sen. Patricia Miller (R-Indianapolis), author of the proposal SB 89, was "very encouraged that the House passed the bill," but knew there would be challenges if the bill went to conference committee. One of the challenges was an irreconcilable difference on a breast and cervical cancer screening amendment offered by Rep. Craig Fry (D-Elkhart), which passed overwhelmingly in the House.

"The sticking point of the bill was the provision which provided breast and cervical cancer screening for uninsured women," said Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference executive director. "Senate conferees would not agree to this provision because of the estimated \$23 million price tag and the issue was ruled as not germane to the original bill."

Lawmakers to reconvene in June to pass biennial budget, scholarship tax credit may be included

The Indiana General Assembly is expected to reconvene in June, when called to do so by Gov. Mitch Daniels, to complete budget negotiations and pass a biennial budget, which goes into effect July 1 this year.

"The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) will be actively lobbying for the scholarship tax credit, which was amended into the budget bill, and we hope will be part of the final budget plan," said Glenn Tebbe, Indiana Catholic Conference executive director.

"We have had an overwhelming

response from our Indiana Catholic Action Networkers (I-CAN) this year on the scholarship tax credit, and I encourage everyone to continue contacting lawmakers on this issue. While the regular session has adjourned, we still have a chance for the scholarship tax credit proposal to be added into the budget," said Tebbe.

The proposal, SB 528, the scholarship tax credit bill, authored Sen. Carlin Yoder (R-Middlebury) would offer a 50 percent tax credit incentive to corporations or individuals for donations made to qualified Scholarship Granting Organizations (SGO's). These SGO's would then provide grants to lower income families for school tuition or other school related costs, at the public or private school of the parents' choice.

The tax credit would allow individuals and corporations who contribute to a qualified scholarship program to deduct 50 percent of the amount of that donation from their state tax liability. For example, a donor who gave \$5,000 to a participating scholarship program would be able to claim a \$2,500 credit against what they owed in state income tax liability. The SGO program received \$5,000 in the private donation, which would then be used to fund scholarships for lower-income students. A \$2,500 state tax credit helped leverage \$5,000 in private scholarship donations.

Tebbe said that another issue that went unresolved this year because the budget failed is the sales tax exemption for energy assistance. The effort to extend this program was cut short when HB 1081 did not get a hearing in the Senate. The program, which provides a sales tax exemption for heating assistance for low income households will expire July 1, unless it is added to the new budget bill. "I am hopeful that this too can be included in the final budget plan," said Tebbe.

For a complete report on the fate of ICC's legislative agenda go to www.indianacc.org.

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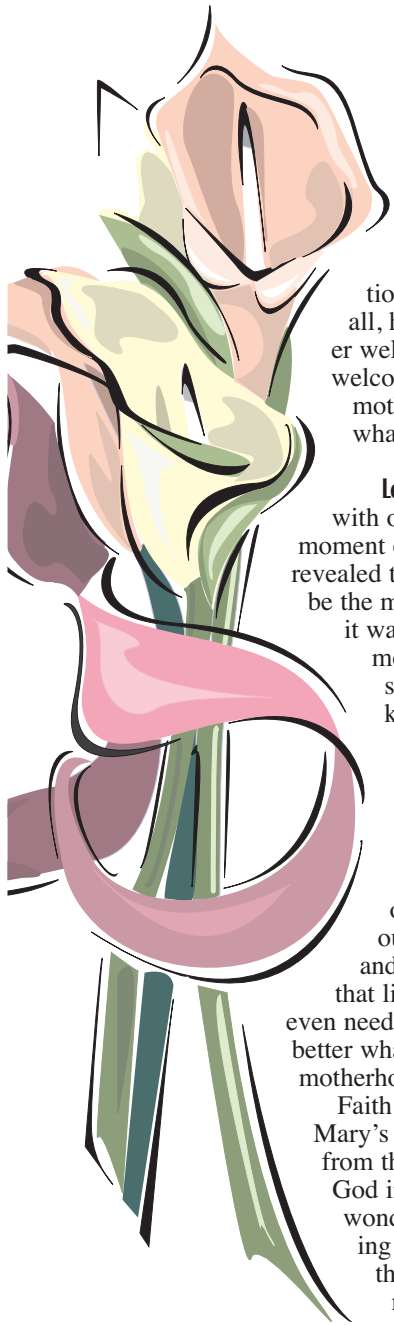
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MOTHERHOOD 101: LESSONS FROM OUR LADY

BY LISA EVERETT



While Mary's motherhood was, of course, unique in history, those of us who are mothers can learn from her life of faith and find inspiration for our own vocation. After all, her Son assured us that whoever welcomes a child for his sake, welcomes him. Let's ponder the motherhood of Our Lady and see what she has to teach us.

Lesson No. 1: Trust God totally with our motherhood. At the moment of the Annunciation, it was revealed to Mary that she was meant to be the mother of the Son of God, but it was not revealed to her what that motherhood would mean. All she knew — all she needed to know — was that the Lord was with her, and that he would provide whatever she needed to fulfill the vocation he had asked her to assume.

So it is with us. When God asks us to accept the gift of a child, we might think that our circumstances are not ideal, and we certainly do not know all that lies ahead. Like Mary, we may even need clarification to understand better what God is asking of us in our motherhood.

Faith seeks understanding, and Mary's question to the angel arose from the depth of her desire to please God in all things. She sincerely wondered how what God was asking of her was compatible with the commitment she had already made to him to remain a virgin. Like Mary, once we understand what God wants of us, with unwavering trust in his goodness, we must entrust ourselves and our motherhood completely to him: "Fiat. Amen. Let it be. Yes."

Lesson No. 2: Support each other as mothers. After receiving the astonishing news of the aged Elizabeth's pregnancy, Mary set out in haste to help her. God used this gesture of generosity on Mary's part to confirm her own vocation. In the days before pregnancy tests and doctors' visits, Elizabeth's inspired greeting assured Mary of the presence of the child growing within her — the child who was not only her own flesh and blood, but the Word become flesh for us.

Most of us know from our own experience how fulfilling it can be to spend time in the company of other mothers, especially those who are trying to raise their children in the same faith. Whether sharing the ups and downs of motherhood with those in the same stage we are, arranging play dates or prayer time together, asking advice from moms who are more "seasoned," or helping each other out in various concrete ways, we crave the companionship and support of other women who share the same vocation and the same faith. And both we and our children benefit from this fellowship.

It was almost certainly a group of mothers who brought their children to

Jesus to be blessed by him, a gesture that earned a stern rebuke from his disciples, but high praise from the Master himself: "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them. The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Lesson No. 3: The most important thing we can do for our children is to lead them to God. We mothers are entrusted with our children in a special way, and are called to give of ourselves for their good — physically, emotionally and spiritually.

The highest good, and therefore our most important goal as mothers, is to help our children form a personal relationship with their heavenly Father, out of which flows the desire to do his will always and everywhere. Think of Our Lady presenting her newborn in the Temple, showing her small Son how to pray, teaching him the Torah, taking him to the synagogue in Nazareth, planning the yearly pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover. And then at age 12, when a young Jewish man was considered bar mitzvah, a "son of the commandments," Jesus remained behind in his Father's house, the Temple of Jerusalem. Surely Mary experienced a reverse "separation anxiety" during those few days of searching, only to hear her Son remind her, gently but firmly, that he was no ordinary young man who would spend his life in Joseph's workshop, but had to begin to be about the business of his heavenly Father.

So do we mothers present our children for baptism, show them how to pray, take them to Mass every Sunday, prepare them for the sacraments, teach them the faith and model for them a moral life. Like Mary, we should do all we can as mothers to lead our children to the Father's house — and not be surprised when they decide to stay.

Lesson No. 4: Motherhood means letting go. Our bond with our children is so deep that it can be tempting to cling to them, to keep them for ourselves. But Our Lady teaches us that our children are gifts, not only for ourselves, but for others. Childbirth is simply the first step in the painful process of letting our children go. As soon as Jesus was born, Mary had to share him with others, and the intimacy of the Holy Family was interrupted by the arrival of the shepherds and later the Magi. Then, at the Temple in Jerusalem, Simeon took the tiny child from Mary's arms and told her that he would be a sign that is contradicted. This Son of hers will suffer for the sake of others, that they might one day dwell, with him, in his Father's house.

Lesson No. 5: The sacrifices we make as mothers can help others on the way to salvation. Simeon not only told Mary that her Son would suffer, but that a sword would pierce her own soul.

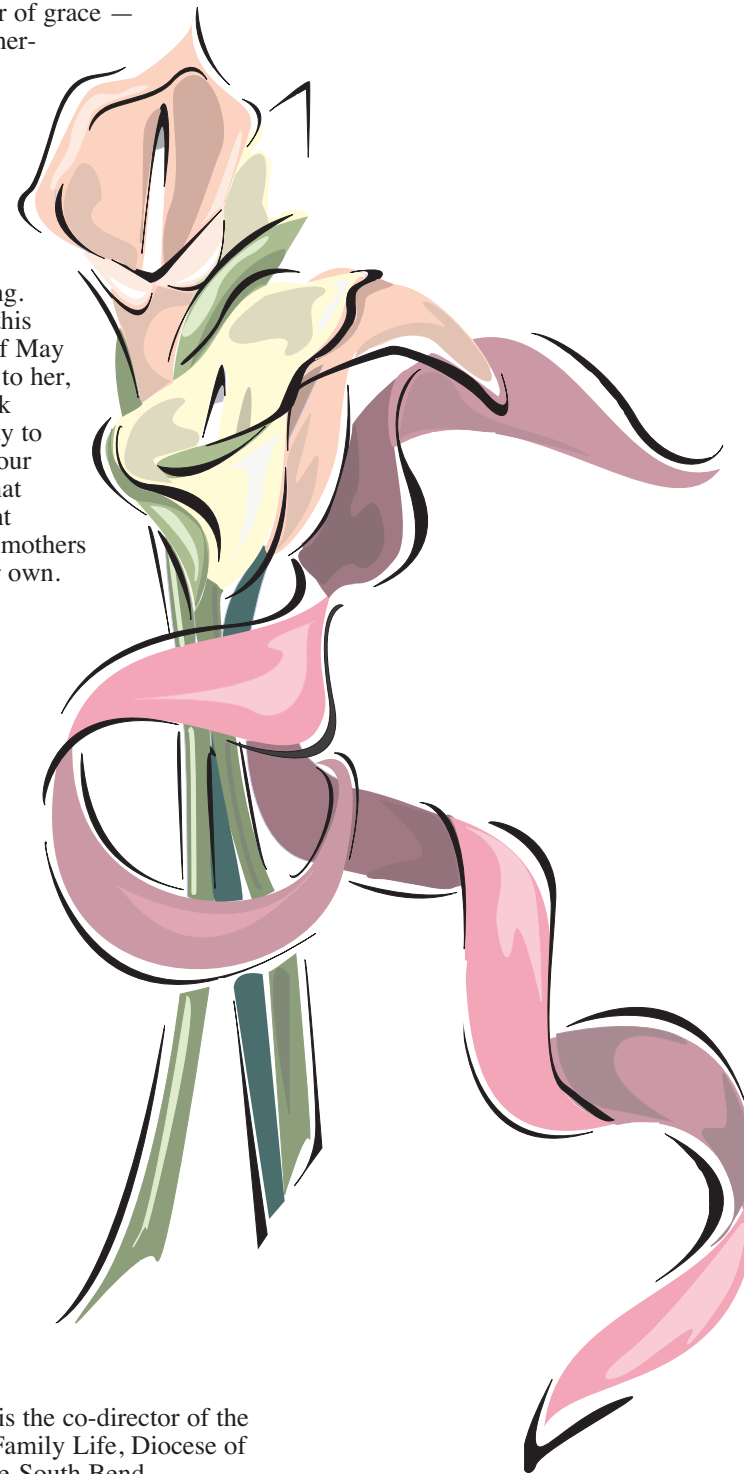
As mothers, we suffer and make sacrifices for our children, which when offered prayerfully in union with Christ, continue his work of salvation, both in the lives of our own children, and in the souls of others. Like the widow's mite, the small daily sacrifices of motherhood

may seem insignificant to the ordinary onlooker, but in the eyes of the Lord, who looks at the heart, they acquire enormous value: "She out of her poverty put in everything she had."

Like Our Lady, we must strive to ponder prayerfully in our hearts all that happens to us, and put everything we experience as mothers in the hands of God, who dwells within us more intimately than a child developing in our womb, and who multiplies our meager efforts and makes them bear abundant fruit for the salvation of souls.

Lesson No. 6: Motherhood never ends. Mother Teresa once said that prayer enlarges the heart until it is capable of containing God's gift of himself. Prayer enlarged Mary's heart until it could contain, not only Christ, but the entire human race, which her Son entrusted to her from the cross.

Just as her motherhood in the order of nature was ending, Mary's motherhood in the order of grace — her motherhood of the church, of all of us — was just beginning. During this month of May devoted to her, let us ask Our Lady to enlarge our hearts that we might become mothers after her own.



Lisa Everett is the co-director of the Office of Family Life, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Traveling Madonna brings families together

BY KAY COZAD

WABASH — Upon entering St. Bernard Church you may not see the brightly colored statue of Our Lady of Grace that sometimes adorns the side altar of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She may be traveling — traveling home. The statue has become a symbol of prayer and hope for the families of this humble parish.

The traveling Madonna, as the statue has become known, came to St. Bernard Church from Rome, Italy, according to parish secretary Ann Unger. Sister Dominique, sister to Father Polycarp Fernando, gifted the parish with this exquisite statue in 2003. Father Fernando is a friend of Father Sextus Don, pastor of St. Bernard's.

The statue, which stands a mere 18 inches tall, began its travels in May, the month of Mary, in 2003, in an effort to encourage parishioners to pray together as families. Father Don says, "When I was growing up, we said the rosary as a family. That is what's lacking here."

By November, the Madonna had visited so many homes that the statue was showing some wear, with several fingers that had broken off. So St. Bernard parishioner of 66 years, Walter Rose Sr., was asked to craft a wooden travel box, lined in red fabric, that would keep the Madonna safe as it traveled. It took Rose, who has worked with his hands his entire life, over two weeks to finish the special box. The box holds printed instructions on how to remove and replace the statue to minimize wear.

A sign-up sheet is available for anyone who wishes to keep the statue for a week and is offered to any parishioner, but especially to families who are facing difficult times. "It is another opportunity to pray," reflects the pastor, adding, "I tell them to pray the

rosary together at least once while the statue is in their home."

The designated family picks the traveling Madonna up on Sunday and takes it to display in a prominent area of the home. During the week, it is hoped that the family will gather around the statue as much as possible to pray together. Father Don trusts each family who takes the Madonna will "get in the habit" of praying through this practice in faith.

There are many benefits, spiritual and otherwise, to praying before the Madonna, says Father Don. Children begin to ask questions about prayer and faith, as the ritual of the family rosary takes place. The pastor has seen special efforts made by spouses who have welcomed the statue in their home as well.

"Sometimes there is tension in the families, especially between the spouses. After they pray together, I've seen them make an effort to come together to a church service," he reports. He believes that some need a symbol or image to help them come together. And the traveling Madonna is the perfect fit.

"I'm encouraging more prayer to Mary," says Father Don, adding, "When you pray the rosary, you are reflecting on Jesus, too."

Pat and Monica Klein and their six children have hosted the traveling Madonna several times since they came to be members of St. Bernard Parish in 2002. "We sign up if we have trouble in the family or if there is a special request or need," says Monica.

The family gathers by the fireplace mantel area where the statue is displayed each day to pray the rosary together. "We are blessed in ways we may never know," says Monica of praying the rosary consistently.

The youngest children use rosary picture books to keep their attention during family prayer time, that sometimes includes a Bible reading or devotion.

Monica reports, "We're encouraged to pray to Our Lady. She takes our efforts and sacrifices to Jesus. So we should have her in our home as well." She adds, "We've been blessed by her presence in our home."

Kay Trautvetter, with husband Ron, who hosted the traveling Madonna recently during this past Lenten season, says, "She has always been a source of strength and comfort in our devotions and daily Scripture readings together. ... Mary, Our Lady of Grace, is the one who truly brings us to her Son when we pray to her in earnestness and desire."

St. Bernard's bulletin announcement for the traveling Madonna states that "the Blessed Virgin Mary is the perfect companion during the holy season of Lent and Easter." The parishioners of the church are adding many miles to the travels of their beloved traveling Madonna and they are being blessed. As Father Don says, "I truly believe that a family that prays together, stays together."



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Isaac and Elise Gottschalk gather around St. Bernard's traveling Madonna statue with their dog Lucy.



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A 'meant to be' family: Moms of adopted children thankful to birth mothers

BY MICHELLE DONAGHEY

SOUTH BEND — This Mother's Day, moms Teresa Oross and Elizabeth Kirk will be especially thankful to God, not only for the gift of their children and for their husbands, but for the special moms that gave birth to their children.

"We see our children as such gifts," said Teresa of her daughters Hannah, 9, and Catie, 6, little girls who God brought into the Oross family through adoption. "(The birth mothers) put their children first, thinking of the children's best interest over their own pain and dreams. They should be truly honored on Mother's Day."

"You are my heroes," said Elizabeth Kirk sharing words she would speak to the mothers of her two sons, Will, who just turned one and Benedict, who is three months old.

While both are adoptive mothers, each family has a different story to tell. The way they were united with their children was "meant to be," said Teresa of the common belief that God was there with them throughout the adoption process that sometimes takes time, effort and, of course, plenty of prayer.

Oross family

Teresa explained that she and her husband, Andy, parishioners of Christ the King Parish, South Bend, both wanted children right after they married but "it just didn't happen. We wanted children very badly, so we looked into Catholic Charities."

There, they decided to go through the process of a home study in order to get into the adoption book, which gives birth mothers information concerning parents who would like to adopt.

"They give you step-by-step instructions what you have to do. It really depends on how fast you want to go through with it. If you get on the ball, you can get in the book within six months. They only choose a few parents they would like to meet," said Teresa. The couple was in the book for 18 months, which, she noted, "wasn't a long time, but we were chomping at the bit, having those doubts about whether or not it were ever to happen."

During the time just before their lives would change, Teresa, who was teaching at Bishop Dwenger High School, was invited to go to Israel. "I didn't want to go without Andy, but he said I should go."

The day after she left, the phone rang saying that they had been chosen.

Andy didn't call her with the



PROVIDED BY THE OROSS FAMILY

Hannah Oross lovingly puts her arm around her sister, Catie.

news as he knew she would leave right away for home. So he waited until their anniversary, which was eight days into the trip.

"I had been praying all along to Mary, please let it happen, let me be the best wife, best teacher. Little did I know that it happened when I was there. I am sure (the Blessed Mother) would be chuckling," said Teresa, who thinks it is a wonderful coincidence that her final adoption took place on the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

"Catie is a entirely different story. We never gave up and put our names in the book right away and then had a couple of false alarms and disappointments," said Teresa. The couple had been very close to adopting a baby, meeting the mother but then having her change her mind.

"It was a very devastating experience to build up your hopes. I wanted something more predictable," said Teresa going on to explain that the couple decided to talk to Catholic Charities about adopting a child from the Philippines through a program that brings children to the U.S. who cannot receive the medical treatment they need in the Philippines.

"It was an entirely different process than Hannah because of international process," explained Teresa who added that the advantage is that the child is home rather than waiting.

Catie had club feet, a dislocated knee and hips.

"To be honest, I don't think we knew what we were in for, which was a blessing," said the mother, who remembers having what she believes is a sign from God that they were doing the

right thing when they were going to pick up their daughter.

"We saw Bishop (John M.) D'Arcy at the airport, who was going to a priest's funeral in Boston," said Teresa. Catholic Charities, local, and Catholic Charities in Baltimore facilitated the adoption of Catie.

Catie was two and Hannah five. "They took to each other pretty quickly," she said adding that "other than orthopedic issues, her health was good."

After surgeries to correct her medical issues, she is now in kindergarten and goes only once a month for consultation therapy.

"The biggest thing with Catie is that we have been made to learn to trust God. We both teach theology and teach faith, but we



PROVIDED BY THE KIRK FAMILY

The Kirk family is shown in this photo.

really had to put it in action with the big picture that God had chosen us to be a family with these two girls," she said.

The Kirk family

Elizabeth and her husband, Bill, parishioners of St. Matthew Cathedral Parish in South Bend, chose to adopt through a law agency in Indianapolis.

Elizabeth explained that after two years of treatment at the Pope Paul VI Institute they began discerning adoption and preparing their home study. They interviewed a few different agencies deciding to choose the Indiana law firm of Kirsh & Kirsch adding that they facilitate around 90 adoptions a year.

After being placed in the book, they were told that their letter was chosen after being active only three weeks. Will was

born only four months later.

Just before Will turned one year old, the Kirks decided to again look into adopting another child. Benedict is only 16 months younger than his brother Will. He was born seven weeks early, but today is a healthy child.

Elizabeth recalls how God was there during the process recalling her special request for a sign that the couple was doing the right thing.

"I don't test God or look for signs. But in this case, I asked for a clear answer, and I gave God a deadline of the end of the work day on Monday," she said recalling how the day came and she wondered if the answer was no.

"Monday came and at 4:53 p.m. I got a call that we had a child."

For the birth mothers who decide adoption is the best choice, Elizabeth has these words: "We are so grateful to our two birth mothers."

For those considering what they should do, she also has something to say.

"I would say to the young woman that she should pray about what is best for her and her child. And if she concludes that she is not ready to be a parent, to know that there is another option. To encourage that kind of self-awareness and humility does a great service to her and her child — and it means that unlike the decision to choose abortion, it is a decision the young woman is more likely to be proud of down the road."

Misconception

Elizabeth Kirk thinks there is a misperception that a woman "gives up" her baby for adoption to a couple she knows nothing about, only to never see her baby again.

"This feeds the mentality that it is easier to have an abortion than to choose adoption. Modern adoption practices are much different than this common misperception. Adoption is a positive choice in which the young woman has a great deal of power and control. She can pick the adoptive family, and if she so desires, can receive updates about her child or even have contact with her child," says Elizabeth.

Mother of nine offers fourth book on nutrition and fertility

BY KAY COZAD

FORT WAYNE — Marilyn Shannon, author of "Fertility, Cycles and Nutrition," holds a master's degree in human physiology with a minor in biochemistry from Indiana University's Medical Sciences Program. She is a part-time tenured instructor of biology at Indiana University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne, but holds her full-time mother status as her most important role in life.

Happily married to her graduate school sweetheart for 32 years, Shannon and her husband Ron are raising nine children, ranging in age from three to 30. Of the nine children, seven are biological and two are adopted, Shannon's last pregnancy at age 47 produced their eighth child, who falls between the two adopted children. An advocate for choice in child birth, she delivered four of her children at home.

This homeschool mom proudly reports on the gifts of her children, including oldest son John, who will be ordained into the holy priesthood this year in the Fraternal Order of St. Peter, and second child Rosemary assisting with research for the most recent edition of her fertility book.

The first five of the Shannon children have graduated from high school and been admitted with honors to universities. "They are an important part of who I am," says their mom.

Fort Wayne residents for the past 27 years, Shannon says the family moved to the Summit City

to experience a small town atmosphere. They live on a farm with a large garden and a lively menagerie of animals, including dairy goats, chickens, bees and more. The family members are active parishioners at Sacred Heart Parish where they enjoy the Latin Mass.

Shannon's interest in fertility and nutritional health stems from her background in biology and experience as a Natural Family Planning (NFP) instructor, but she also has a personal stake in the ever-changing research literature.

"We are self taught on natural planning. I made my own plan to use with Ron," says Shannon. The Shannons became involved as a teaching couple with Couple to Couple League following their move to Fort Wayne and have instructed over 400 couples on NFP since 1982.

The first edition of her informative fertility book was published in 1990 by the Couple to Couple

League after she was

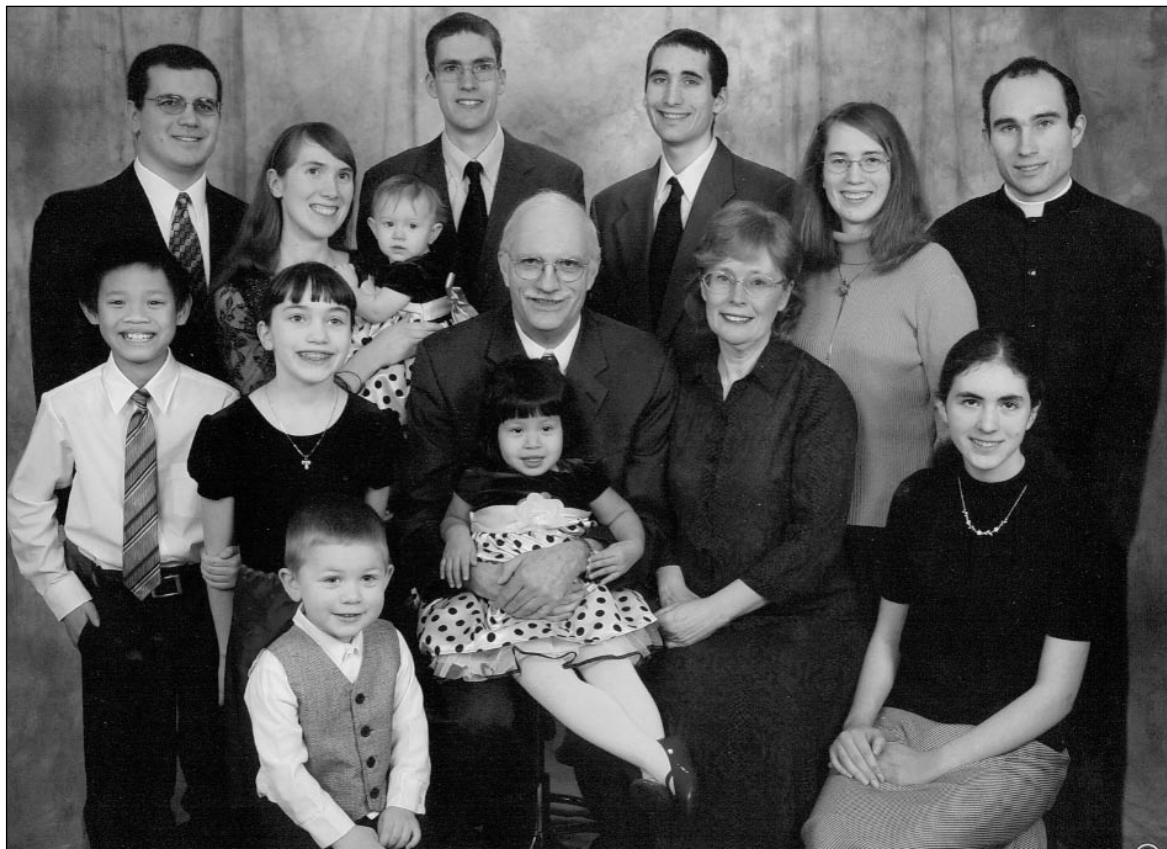
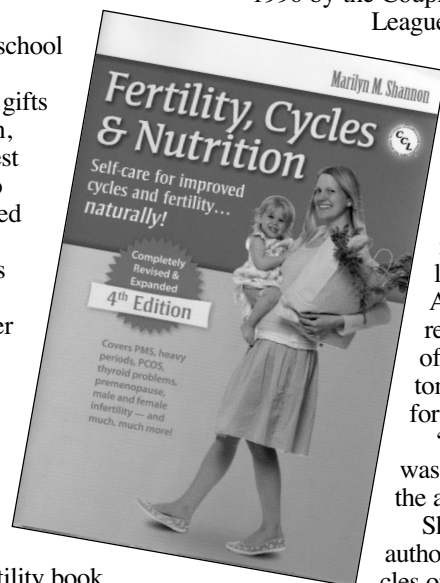
asked to develop a pamphlet containing information she had presented at a nutritional meeting for the league in 1986. After much research, she offered a 200-page tome to the league for publication.

"The research was so vast," says the author.

Shannon has also authored several articles on nutrition and fertility for the Couple

to Couple League's Family Foundations, and speaks widely on the topic.

"Fertility, Cycles and Nutrition," the fourth edition, published by the Couple to Couple League and coming out soon on Amazon.com, offers cutting edge



The Shannon family includes the following: front, left to right, Thomas (grandson), 2, Lucia, 3; middle, Vahn, 11, Monica, 8, Ron and Marilyn, Ellen, 15; back, Michael Imrick (son-in-law), Rosemary Shannon Imrick with daughter Felicity, 9 months (granddaughter), Stephen, Greg, Regina and John.

scientifically researched and referenced information on important women's health issues in 16 chapters, including PMS, irregular cycles, pregnancy and nutrition, thyroid problems, male and female infertility, menopause, general nutrition information — with 10 rules for better nutrition — and more. The 335-page book, includes not only a question-answer chapter but an extensive list of resources and an index. An appendix lists recommended supplements and their contents for ease of use.

Personal experience such as having a stillborn at age 40 makes Shannon a perfect candidate for authoring this book. Writing from her heart and faith, she adds personal anecdotes that breathe life into the science of nutrition.

As a mother of nine and teacher of many, Shannon has an easy style and presents the nutritional and fertility information she is so passionate about in an easy-to-read format. "I have a heart for infertility issues," she says, adding that the book closes the "information gap" between natural family planning and nutrition for reproductive health.

As a Catholic, Shannon extends a quiet confidence in the natural science of God's creation and offers the information "in kindness." Each chapter begins with a touching, personally chosen Scripture that lends itself to the topic to be explored.

Though Shannon says she utilizes Catholic teachings in her text she offers the information to all denominations. The introduction of the

book states clearly, "The new 'Fertility, Cycles and Nutrition,' like the old one, has an inherently Catholic outlook. ... But whether or not you are Catholic or Christian, you will still find it a gentle, encouraging and practical book. ..."

"Fertility, Cycles and Nutrition," is a remarkable handbook of information and resources for those interested in natural nutritional health and fertility. Shannon says, "I'm not an expert. I just evaluate others' books."

But this humble author's text is a welcome addition to the available literature and the only resource linking nutrition with natural family planning. Shannon's hope for the readers — "I hope to encourage them to have all the children God has in store for them."

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EDITORIAL

She was never anything but 'Yes'

Pope John Paul II once described the Christian life as a great pilgrimage to the house of the Father, and we make that pilgrimage by faith. Following the will of God has been compared to driving at night with the headlights on — only a little patch of the road is illuminated at a time. Faith is our willingness to be led, little by little, confident that Christ knows where he is going, that he is taking us to his Father's house, where he has prepared a place for us. Faith is our willingness to follow, even when we cannot see where we are going, even when the going gets tough, even when our pilgrimage passes by way of the cross.

French priest and spiritual writer Michel Quoist summed up the fear many of us have of this kind of faith in a poignant prayer which admits: "I am afraid of the 'Yes' that entails other 'yesses.'"

Perhaps, then, it should have come as no surprise that the first words of Karol Wojtyla when he greeted the world for the first time as Pope John Paul II were "be not afraid!" Four years later on the feast of the Annunciation, he reflected on the meaning of this first joyful mystery in the chapel of the Roman seminary:

"One must accept the call, one must listen, one must receive, one must measure one's strength and answer "Yes, yes." Fear not, fear not because you have found grace. Do not fear life, do not fear your maternity, do not fear your marriage, do not fear your priesthood, for you have found grace. This certainty, this consciousness, helps us as it helped Mary."

Think for a moment about all the other "yesses" that that first "Yes" of Mary's entailed:

- "Yes" to the visit in haste to the hill country to help her elderly kinswoman, Elizabeth;
- "Yes" to watching Joseph's anguish when it became apparent that she was pregnant and to his intention to divorce her away quietly so as not to expose her to shame;
- "Yes" to waiting until God, in his good time, revealed to Joseph in a dream that he should take Mary into his home because the child in her womb had been conceived by the Holy Spirit;
- "Yes" to what the villagers in Nazareth must have thought when she returned home visibly pregnant from her visit to the hill country;
- "Yes" to civil authority in the census commanded by Herod, and to the difficult journey to Bethlehem by donkey when she was so close to giving birth;
- "Yes" to being away from her own mother and the village midwives in Nazareth at such an important time in the life of a young woman;
- "Yes" to the lack of decent shelter in which to rest after the difficult journey to Bethlehem, and in which to deliver her baby;
- "Yes" to the Mosaic law and its command to present their first-born son in the Temple, and to the prophecy that Simeon spoke to her about a sword that would one day pierce her own soul;
- "Yes" to her husband, Joseph, when he told her he had a dream in which the Lord commanded him to take her and the baby to Egypt to escape the envy of Herod — how her dreams of returning to their own village of Nazareth to settle down with her new baby must have been dashed;
- "Yes" to the daily duties of a mother in first century Palestine, the ordinary, hidden life of taking care of her husband and son, year after year;
- "Yes" to the yearly pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and to the anxious search for her 12-year old son who stayed behind to be about his Father's business;
- "Yes" to Jesus leaving home and beginning his public ministry; "Yes" to the death of her beloved husband, Joseph; "Yes" at the foot of the cross;
- "Yes" to being entrusted with the whole human race; "Yes" to praying in the midst of the disciples for the coming of the Holy Spirit; "Yes" to the moment when Christ called her to join him in his Father's house.

Mary's whole life was a pilgrimage of faith in perfect imitation of her Son, the Son of God, who St. Paul tells us was not alternately "yes" and "no" — he was never anything but "Yes." By the grace of God, may the same be said of us.

Today's Catholic editorial board is Kay Cozad, Fred and Lisa Everett, 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

No need to eat animals

I whole heartily agree with the catechism about treating animals with respect. However, I do believe strongly that there is no need to eat them. Recent studies (Milton Mills, M.D.) suggests that it is healthier

for us and the environment if we don't eat them. They compared our anatomy with other animals, and our anatomy is the same as a simple stomach herbivore.

It may be true that Christ may have eaten meat in his time and that was their custom, but Christ was humble and told his followers to be perfect like the Father in heaven.

He quoted, "Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is a brother or sister to me." He never declared himself to be as perfect as much as the Father, and I just don't see an all loving Creator eating his own creations that feel pain.

Gregory J. Konger
Fort Wayne

Knights participate in Special Olympics

TERRE HAUTE — Members of the Indiana Knights of Columbus will be visible throughout the State of Indiana during the month of May giving away Tootsie Rolls at multiple locations. When you see the familiar yellow cans, remember Knights are raising funds for people with intellectual disabilities and this year an even greater emphasis is being placed with the Indiana Special Olympics. Indiana Special Olympics offers year-round programs of sports training and competition to children and adults.

These champions will gather in Terre Haute on the campus of Indiana State University June 5-7. All of these gifted athletes will compete for gold, silver or bronze, fulfilling personal dreams and goals developed through various Special Olympic programs. Nearly 10,000 athletes across the state of Indiana have participated in Special Olympics and some move on to the World Games. This year the World Games were held in Boise, Idaho, Feb. 7-13. Some 3,000 athletes attended these games from an estimated 100 countries.

Forty years ago, the first Indiana Special Olympics was held at Bush Stadium in Indianapolis. These Olympics gave a renewed self respect to those individuals courageous enough to step out and demonstrate their individual talents and skills for all to appreciate.

Recently at the 108th Annual Meeting of the Indiana Knights of Columbus held in Indianapolis, Jessica Crook, Special Olympics ambassador, addressed more than 600 Indiana Knights and their spouses regarding her experiences as an athlete and representative for her fellow champions. Jessica held her audience captive with her smile and courageous approach to life; lessons all took home. Jessica, in past competitions, excelled in swimming and explained to the Knights how important the event was in her life and how swimming gave her self-confidence in meeting the challenges of daily living.

Thousands of athletes have competed throughout the state in



THE INDIANA KNIGHTS

BY ROBERT HARTENSTEIN

various venues. These individuals will continue their journey this June looking for medals in individual and relay events in aquatics, bocce, bowling, cycling, horse-shoes, track and field, team and individual volleyball skills.

In 2008, more than \$34 million was raised internationally for Special Olympics and the Olympic torch was carried throughout all 50 states and 35 countries. Here in Indiana members of the Indiana Knights continue their efforts to raise money for the intellectually disabled with an emphasis on Special Olympics programs.

Indiana Knights and their families have the opportunity to participate in this year's summer games in various capacities as volunteers. To our knowledge, this is the first

time in the 40-year history of Indiana State Special Olympics that the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus have been a part of the opening ceremonies. This is indeed an honor for us.

This mission of the Knights of Columbus is charity, unity and fraternity with the hope of changing in a positive way the life on another. The Indiana Special Olympics is a life-changing program for all of its participants. All children and adults have skills, talents and individual strengths that can change our perception of these athletes, these children of God.

Robert Hartenstein is the director of communications for the Indiana Knights of Columbus.

Francis di Girolamo

1642-1716

May 11



Already a priest in Naples, Italy, Francis entered the Society of Jesus at age 28. From 1676 until his death, this Jesuit missionary, who wanted to evangelize in Japan, served in Naples and the surrounding countryside. A renowned preacher, he was said to be "a lamb when he talks and a lion when he preaches." He sought out sinners in prisons and brothels, and converted to Christianity a number of Moorish and Turkish prisoners. He also rescued children from dangerous situations, opened a charitable pawnshop and organized an association of workers to assist the Jesuits.

 **CNS Saints**

Symbols of spiritual maturing

The freshness of apple orchards delights us at this season; the fruit beacons us to enjoy its crunchy moistness. Each has its own beauty, perfection and uniqueness given it by God. Aren't we like this too? Apple trees do tell us about our own growth and maturing.

"The trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree." (Elizabeth Postern) The Father prepared the orchard of earth for Christ. In his adult life he could say that he was the vine and we the branches. So, to compare him and us to an apple tree and its fruit isn't so far fetched.

God loves gardens. He wanted to share his creativity and fruitfulness with everything into which he had breathed life and thus placed seeds in each plant so it could increase and multiply. Apple trees illustrate this truth. Some trees need little care; apple trees lots. In order to be fruitful, they need help: good ground, seasons, sunshine, pruning, fertilizer,

SPIRITUALITY OF MATURING ADULTS

SISTER ANGELITA FENKER

adequate water, insects to pollinate, spraying and mostly an attentive gardener.

Apple trees demand patient waiting so that abundance can happen cyclically. A lean year often produces a later harvest of plenty. In the meantime, the tree doesn't give up. It keeps growing and absorbing the richness from the soil in which it's planted; it reaches for sunlight, nourishing rain, snow, ice and wind. Because of these elements it grows stronger each day. Without these, its yield would be wimpy at best. Getting rid of things that could kill it, and pruning the dead away

so it doesn't drain off precious sources of life is vital. If the tree could speak, it might say, "Let me alone! Let me bear fruit without this pain and trouble. I'll do it my way!" Sound familiar?

Christ is our master gardener. He promised us life in abundance. — Jn:10:10. He never said it would be easy, but said he'd always be with us. His life, light, love and presence flow through us as does the energizing sap in the apple tree. He's our good ground, the sunshine of our love, our living water. He prunes us to bear more fruit, grafts us into a community and sends others to pollinate us with their gifts. We weather difficult times; each one offers possibility for deeper spiritual maturing. Our fruitfulness will be abundant or skimpy depending on us. Christ says, "I'm here. Fear not."

Of all the care an apple tree receives, I'm sure that, if it could talk, the smelly fertilizer is the

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Church offers fruit of God's vine



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

5th Sunday of Easter Jn 15:1-8

The Acts of the Apostles again this Easter season is the source of the first reading for Sunday.

This weekend's reading from Acts highlights Paul. In an earlier passage, not read in this liturgy, the intensely devoted Jew, Paul, after having persecuted Christians, experiences the presence of Jesus in a stunning way on the way to Damascus.

Paul completely converts to Christianity. Eventually, the Christian community accepts him, although, understandably given his previous hostility to Christ, some Christians had been nervous about accepting him into their midst.

As had happened, and as would happen again, Paul's new Christian intensity made enemies for him. Fellow Christians took him for his own safety to Caesarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, a place now in ruins on the outskirts of modern Tel Aviv.

From Caesarea, a seaport, the Christians sent him home to Tarsus, again to safeguard his personal security. It would eventually be the beginning of Paul's ministry.

For the second reading this Easter weekend, the church offers a selection from the First Epistle

of John. The Epistle refers to its readers as "little children." Obviously, adults composed the Epistle's audience, or most of the audience. Still, the Epistle employs this term of endearment.

Those who follow Jesus indeed are God's "little children." It is more than a term of affection, however. Humans, regardless of their age, are children of God. Moreover, humans, again regardless of their ages, are as naïve and inexperienced as children. It is not a foolish comparison. Humans simply are limited.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last reading. It too is a gem.

This reading has a deeply eucharistic undertone. In the sequence of events, at the supper he gave the Twelve the wine that miraculously had become, through the Lord's power, the blood of Christ.

Wine, of course, then as now, is the product of grapes. Grapes grow on vines. In this reading, Jesus says, "I am the true vine." God placed Jesus in the vineyard that is humanity.

Jesus warns that no vine can bear fruit if it separates itself from the true vine of God. Without God, humans are subject to confusion and finally to death.

Drinking the wine that is no longer wine, but the blood of Jesus, is the source of true strength and enduring life.

Reflection

In Acts, First John, and the Gospel, the church calls us to absolute faith in, and deep love for, God in Jesus. Easter celebrated the resurrection of Jesus, the divinity of Jesus, and the eternal life and power of Jesus.

Jesus is the cornerstone of our

faith and of our lives.

Part of the Lord's legacy is the church. The church does not, or should not, mean an earthly, visible entity that we can take or leave. If we are with Christ, if we follow Christ, then we are part of the church.

As the mystical body of Christ, a phrase so rich in its references to Paul's own thoughts, followers of Jesus are branches of the one, divinely planted vine that is Jesus the Lord.

This church offers us the fruit of God's vine, the wine that is the blood of Christ. As Pope John II recently said, the Eucharist is the heart and source of true Christian life, strength and growth.

On this weekend, the church again invites us to celebrate the fact that Jesus overcame death. He lives! However, he lives not afar and beyond our reach. If we drink the wine that has become in the Eucharist the blood of Christ, we are branches, intimately and inseparable a part of the divine vine that is Jesus, the Son of God.

READINGS

Sunday: Acts 9:26-31 Ps 22:26-27,28,30,31-32 1 Jn 3:18-24 Jn 15:1-8

Monday: Acts 14:5-18 Ps 115:1-5,15-16 Jn 14:21-26

Tuesday: Acts 14:19-28 Ps 145:10-13ab,21 Jn 14:27-31a

Wednesday: Acts 15:1-6 Ps 122:1-5 Jn 15:1-8

Thursday: Acts 1:15-17,20-26 Ps 113:1-8 Jn 15:9-17

Friday: Acts 15:22-31 Ps 57:8-12 Jn 15:12-17

Saturday: Acts 16:1-10 Ps 100:2,3,5 Jn 15:18-21

CATEQUIZ'EM

By Dominic Camplisson

In May, the church remembers Sts. Nereus and Achilleus, martyrs. In honor of St. Achilleus, this quiz brings questions to heel.

- In Genesis we learn how Jacob was born grasping this brother's heel**
a. Esau b. Udon c. Isaac
- In Gen 3, who will strike at humans' heels?**
a. a bee b. the serpent c. a fallen Seraph, Achilles
- Later in Genesis when discussing Dan, this time the target heel (though they don't exactly have heels) belongs to**
a. a legless lizard b. Nile alligators c. a horse
- Leviticus 14 discusses as part of the rite of purification after leprosy (skin disease) sprinkle this on the big toe of the right foot**
a. blood from a guilt offering
b. balm from Gilead
c. fat from the thanksgiving offering
- But later, in Lev 8, a similar ritual, this time of ordination including sprinkling on the toe, is performed by Moses for**
a. Mechizeldeck
b. Aaron and his sons
c. Hannah and her sisters
- In Rev 1, Jesus appears wearing an ankle length**
a. suit of Roman armor b. cloak c. robe
- According to Jos 3 as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant touched the Jordan, the waters did this**
a. washed them white as a lab
b. ceased flowing and backed up
c. became solid enough to walk on
- According to Mal 3 who will be trodden like ashes under the soles of your feet**
a. the wicked
b. pagans
c. those who blasphemed the word of God
- In Job 2, the wretched man is smitten with boils from the soles of his feet to**
a. his ears b. his knees c. the crown of his head
- In Job 18, the splendidly named Bildad the Shuhite describes how someone's heel is seized by this as he falls into a pitfall and is snared**
a. a rabbit hole b. a trap c. a pillar of salt
- Judges 1 recounts a very peculiar treatment of a prisoner. Adonibezek has his big toes**
a. cut off
b. tattooed with the sign (star) of the Lord so the Canaanites will reject him
c. anointed with blood from the lamb so he will convert
- Adonibezek's reaction to his treatment by the Israelites is rather unpredictable. He accepts it because**
a. Hammurabi said, "A toe for a toe, a thumb for a thumb."
b. He used to have 70 kings without big toes and thumbs beg at his table so he is repaid in kind.
c. He did not care about the lamb; he admitted his marriage to Miss Steak was an error.
- According to Jn 13, Jesus washes the disciples' feet but noted not all of them were clean. He cited Scripture that said, "The one who ate my food has raised his heel against me." This can be seen as a reference to**
a. Mark, who would deny him
b. Judas, who would betray him
c. Thomas, who would doubt him
- 2 Samuel 2 tells how Abner struck Asahel with the heel of this, not usually thought of as having a heel**
a. a wooden foot from the statue of Baal
b. a rabbit's foot
c. a javelin

ANSWERS:

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

Jesus and the southern journeys

Why did Jesus from Galilee in the north befriend Martha, Mary and Lazarus in Judea in the south?

St. Luke tells us that Jesus was traveling from Galilee toward Jerusalem and entered a village where Martha welcomed him to her home. Martha had a sister, Mary, who listened to the words of Jesus. Martha became upset because Mary was not helping her with the details of hospitality. Jesus told Martha She should not get so upset for it is important to listen to his words.

St. John identifies this village as Bethany and says that Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, also lived there. St. John then relates another occasion when Jesus was at Bethany. Martha served the banquet and Mary brought a pound of costly perfume, anointed Jesus' feet and dried the feet with her hair. St. Mark and St. Luke place the beginning of the procession of palms at Bethany.

St. Matthew and St. Mark say that Jesus stayed overnight at

Bethany during his last week in Jerusalem. Bethany was Jesus' "home away from home" whenever he came up to Jerusalem.

R. Brownrigg says that Jesus had a connection with the people of Bethany, because the inhabitants of Bethany were also mostly Galileans. Therefore, when Jesus visited Martha, Mary and Lazarus at Bethany, he was staying with his compatriots. This fact may also explain the ease with which the disciples were able to procure the donkey for the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

We must also remember that the family and relatives of Jesus had connections with southern Israel. Jesus' mother Mary was raised in Jerusalem by her parents, St. Anne and St. Joachim. Jesus' foster father Joseph was a native of Bethlehem near Jerusalem. The relatives of Jesus, Zechariah and Elizabeth, along with their son, St. John the Baptist, lived at Am Karim, now a suburb of Jerusalem. Jesus himself was born in



FATHER RICHARD HIRE

Bethlehem and lived there until his flight into Egypt. Jesus also visited Jerusalem at the young age of 12.

Mary, the sister of Martha, is often called Mary of Bethany to distinguish her from the other Marys in the Bible, such as Mary of Magdala (also called Mary Magdalene), Mary, the mother of James and Joses, Mary, the wife of Clopas, Mary, the mother of John and Mark, and Mary, a member of the Christian Church at Rome.

Father Richard Hire is pastor of St. Martin de Porres Parish, Syracuse.

HIRE HISTORY

The imperative of fraternal correction

Every September, the Congregation for Bishops in Rome hosts a seminar for newly-ordained bishops from around the world; the seminar is widely known, at least "sotto voce," as "Baby Bishops' School." I have a modest suggestion for the curriculum: everyone attending the seminar should be given a copy of the classic World War II novel, "Twelve O'Clock High!," which is far less a story of B-17s over Europe than a lesson in paternal, masculine leadership.

About halfway through the book, when General Frank Savage has dramatically reversed the disastrous morale of the 918th Heavy Bombardment Group by ignoring an order and hitting a difficult target, a once-skeptical lieutenant (and Medal of Honor winner), Jesse Bishop, admits that he's misread the fiery commander and asks Savage if he'd "mind very much kicking me in the tail?" Bishop bends over, Savage obliges — and then asks the youngster to do him a favor: "All right, Jesse ... I want you to be the one guy in the group that doesn't believe I'm a general. That door is always open. Any time you think I'm not doing so hot, come in and tell me. Let me know what the boys are thinking. I need you plenty, and I'll count on you to keep me straightened out."

I hope it's not considered impious if I suggest that every bishop needs a Bishop. Or several Bishops.

Catholic bishops don't have wives. But like every other high-achievement male in the world, Catholic bishops need someone to keep them "straightened out," as Savage put it — especially when they're "not doing so hot." A bishop with a particularly close and open relationship with his pres-

byterate might find a Bishop or two among his priests, but the dynamics of contemporary clerical culture mitigate against that kind of frankness. No, bishops need to find Bishops among their brother bishops.

Father Thomas Reese, SJ, would appear to disagree. Several weeks ago, Archbishop Raymond Burke of the "Apostolic Signatura" gave an interview in which he suggested that some bishops in the United States were not doing all they might do to protect the integrity of the Eucharist, and the souls of those in their care, by not making it clear to pro-abortion Catholic politicians that they should refrain from receiving holy Communion. At a subsequent Washington press conference, Archbishop Burke's remarks were unfairly used by a pro-life activist to try and settle some scores with bishops of whom the activist disapproved. During the ensuing media fuss, Father Reese, who would not object to being described as on the far side of the Communion-for-pro-abortion-politicians debate from Archbishop Burke, saw his chance and took it. According to the Jesuit master of the Catholic sound-bite, Archbishop Burke "really violated ... episcopal etiquette. You don't criticize other bishops in public and you don't tell other bishops how to run their diocese."

One wonders precisely what "episcopal etiquette" is being evoked here. The "etiquette" of a Cyril of Alexandria, who wrote the Patriarch Nestorius and informed him that his sermons questioning Mary's title, "Mother of God," were dubiously orthodox? The "etiquette" of a Cyprian, who engaged in what the "Oxford Dictionary of the Christian



GEORGE WEIGEL

Church" calls a "violent correspondence" with Pope Stephen I over the validity of baptism administered by heretics and schismatics? Or the "etiquette" of a men's club in which it's considered bad form to confront a fellow member of the club, even if he's embarrassing himself and the club?

With an eye to the Frank Savage Rule of Fraternal Correction, I'll take the hard-knuckled but canonized Fathers of the Church — Cyril, who was right on the issues, and Cyprian, who in this instance was wrong — over Father Reese's genteel men's club. Catholic bishops need someone like Savage's Jesse Bishop to tell them when they're "not doing so hot." The likeliest candidates for administering such fraternal correction are a man's brother bishops. The privilege of fraternal correction, which is really an exercise of fraternal charity, should not be abused, and it's usually best done outside the media circus. But can anyone seriously doubt, after the debacles revealed in the Long Lent of 2002, that it's absolutely imperative?

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

Gospel for May 10, 2009

John 15:1-8

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for Fifth Sunday of Easter, Cycle B: Jesus' teaching about the vine and the branches. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

TRUE VINE	BRANCH	MORE FRUIT
WORD	CANNOT	BEAR IT
UNLESS	CAN DO	NOTHING
THROWN	WITHER	GATHER
FIRE	BURNED	MY WORDS
ASK FOR	WHATEVER	IT WILL BE
DONE FOR YOU	GLORIFIED	DISCIPLES

GOOD FRUIT

D G A T H E R E H T I W
E B L L I W T I J B D H
N A T O N N A C U O C A
O B E A R I T R N N N T
T R U E V I N E A N A E
H N M O R E F R U I T V
I C A N D O B I L W H E
N A N A R P K F E K R R
G H M Y W O R D S D O X
M R O F K S A D R O W D
F U A L L E S S E L N U
D I S C I P L E S B F R

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FENKER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

least appreciated. Yet, without it, the yield would be inferior. Tribulations can make us bitter or better. We can view them with a "poor me" attitude, or can treat them as "smelly fertilizer," knowing they enrich our spiritual maturing toward an improved harvest later on — if we allow it.

Each variety of apple tree develops differently and yields fruit only when it's ready. No two are the same. No variety claims to be better than another. Each is uniquely beautiful and has specific qualities. Some are best for pies, some for cider, others for taffy apples and many are best right off the tree. God must love apples; he created so many varieties.

All eating apples are believed to have come from a simple wild crab apple. Good trees are still grown by grafting a cultivated species onto a strong root-stock of a wild apple. Apple trees also need others near them to aid their maturing process. Each season of growth is essential for the apple tree; none can be skipped. Each is critical for a rich harvest.

Our spirituality is enhanced throughout our seasons too. We've been rooted in Christ and grafted onto him. "If the root is consecrated, so too are the

branches. ... You do not support the root; the root supports you." — Rom 11:16, 18.

As the energy-source for the tree, water, is not visible, neither is ours: Christ, our Living Water. Tree branches reach toward heaven, so does our spirit. As each apple holds the promise of legacy in its seeds, fruitfulness for the future is guaranteed. We also leave our legacy in the seeds we have produced as assurance that Christ's love will permeate future generations as he promised.

"Those of us who do good are like an orchard full of fruit of good works." — Hildegard of Bingen.

Reflect

1. How does the apple tree speak of your maturing?
2. How do you see Christ's presence permeating you as you bear good fruit?

Sister Angelita Fenker has been involved in education for over 60 years. Her doctorate is in spirituality with a focus on holistic family spirituality.

Sports

BISHOP DWENGER SENIOR TO PLAY FOR UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO'S FOOTBALL TEAM Bishop Dwenger High School senior Gus Springmann will be joining the University of Chicago's football team for the 2009-10 school year. Gus, an offensive tackle for Bishop Dwenger, was named 1st Team All-SAC, 1st Team All-Northeast Indiana, Honorable Mention A.P. All-State, and was Bishop Dwenger's Most Valuable Offensive Lineman. He will be studying political science.

CYO track and field is off and running

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — Track and field competition for the Catholic Youth League (CYO) teams finally got off and running on Thursday, April 30, for the 2009 season. After the first meet was cancelled due to scheduling changes from all the rainy conditions, the meets were run just before more showers hit the Fort Wayne area.

Long-time CYO powerhouse and the reigning track and field champions, St. John-New Haven, have won five out of the past 10 boys' city meets and the past three for the girls.

The Raiders are once again coached by Greg Lawrence this season. He and his assistants



Greg Wiehe, Scott Voelker, Wade and Linda Heddens, Stephen Wuest and Kayla Zink will have the teams to beat.

Coach Greg Lawrence has long been quoted as saying, "You can't coach desire," and despite graduating all of his city meet champs from a year ago and smaller girls' numbers this season, Lawrence is hopeful for positive results.

In the season opener at Bishop Dwenger, the St. Charles Cardinals did finish on top, however, in both the girls' and the boys' meets. The boys' teams from both St. Charles and St. John-New Haven each took first-place honors in four events, but the high jump event was not counted due to inclement weather making for an interesting 2009 city meet to watch this year. The team from St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth Ann

Seton scored in third place with first-place finishes in the 400-, 800- and 1,600-meter running events.

On the girls' side at Dwenger, St. Charles placed first in six events. St. Joe-St. Elizabeth placed second in the meet taking home three blue ribbons. At the Bishop Luers site, the lady Panthers from St. Vincent dominated winning eight of the 12 events. The St. Vincent boys did the same winning their first meet by placing first in both relay events, discus, shot put, hurdles, high jump, the 200- and the 400-meter dash.

Correction

In the soccer photo posted in the May 3, 2009 issue of *Today's Catholic*, Jake Britton and Adam McCarthy are from St. John the Baptist in New Haven. The CYO soccer photo incorrectly listed the players from St. John the Baptist in Fort Wayne.

ST. JOSEPH SIXTH GRADE GIRLS TEAM WINS ICCL CHAMPIONSHIP



BRIAN WEAVER

St. Joseph Grade School sixth grade girls' basketball team A-1 in South Bend won the Inter-City Catholic League championship game. The St. Joseph team has had back-to-back championships in the fifth grade last year and sixth grade this year. The team has only lost one game in the last two years.

ST. VINCENT GIRL SCOUTS EARN MEDALS



PROVIDED BY ST. VINCENT SCOUTS

FORT WAYNE — Following a Lenten retreat the St. Vincent Girl Scouts attended a special Mass where Father Jason Freiburger presented them with their earned religious medals.

The 28 second graders that earned the Family of God Medal are Emily Bietz, Erin Blackburn, Madison Butler, Olivia Byers, Amy Connolly, Elizabeth Davis, Kathryn Davis, Alyssa Dempsey, Jillian Gregory, Julia Hunnicutt, Kaylee Jakubowski, Katy Kaiser, Maggie Kelly, Maria Klingenberg, Jordn Lozano, Mariah Maddy, Gabrielle Moran, Alexia Mueller, Ellen O'Brien, Kaylee Sheehan, Mary Simcox, Mikayla Stump, Julianna Stureman, Kaleigh Thompson, Rebecca Weber, Mackenzie

Wilhelm, Kendall Willwerth and Gracie Winkeljohn.

I Live My Faith Medal was earned by 13 fourth graders and one fifth grader and include Megan Campbell, Sam Faulk, Erin Fosnaugh, Katie Fredbloom, Erin Jackson, Katherine Key, Karsyn Kitchen, Amber Lancia, Alexa Marasovich, Milena Symthe, Emily Tippman, Jackie Turner, Natalie Yehle and Audrey Lukemire.

Fourteen sixth graders earned the Marian Medal and include Jessica Beauchot, Sydney Blake, Gabrielle, Olivia Leazier, Kendra Martin, Erin McBride, Olivia O'Connor, Blessing Okendu, Tiffany Page, Geneviene Reith, Jessica Schowe, Rachel Swaim, Tracy Turner and Nora Weisz.

Four USF Track and Field athletes named All-MCC

FORT WAYNE — University of Saint Francis sophomore Jean Marqueling successfully defending her hammer throw title and led a contingent of four from the university named to the All-Conference team.

Marqueling a graduate of Bishop Dwenger High School was an automatic selection as an event champion. Nick Adams from Northrop High School, Matt Truttling from East Chicago High School and freshman Frank Wolfe III from Avon High School, were also All-MCC as at-large selections.

Marqueling won with a hammer throw of 49.90 meters. She also finished second in the discus with a throw of 38.95 meters.

Wolfe and Ian Brown from Taylor University finished with the same time in the 100-meter dash — 10.78. Wolfe finished fourth in the 200-meter dash at 21.88. Truttling finished third in the hammer at 47.88 meters, fourth in the discus at 41.79 meters and fourth in the shot put at 13.64 meters scoring 16 points. Adams finished second in the discus at 45.04 meters and hammer at 49.28 meters for 16 points.

STUDENTS COMPETE IN SPEECH COMPETITION AT BESANCON



PROVIDED BY ELLEN OBERLEY

St. Louis Academy-Besancon held a speech competition on April 22. Winners, in the front row, from left, included Ellen Robbins, third place; Jacob Van Horn, second place; and Sam Stein, first place. Judges includes Chuck Grimm, principal of St. Aloysius, Yoder, and St. Therese, Fort Wayne; Mary Keefer, principal of Bishop Luers High School; Cheryl Layton, principal of St. Louis Academy; and Dr. Janice Thompson, director of field experience for Indiana Institute of Technology.

Jobless, yet hopeful

BY GINNY KOHRMAN

Scripture reading: Mt 6: 25-34

At 5:30, last Monday, as my husband and I sat down for dinner, the phone rang. My 26-year-old son, with a Purdue University degree in landscaping architecture, called and said, "Mom, I have some bad news. I wanted you to be the first to know, that I just lost my job. It wasn't just me, but five others too." Just a week before, my husband, a manager of information systems for a local company for 34 years, was told that his firm would close at the end of the year.

The news reports warned of growing local job losses, but I did not expect it to affect our family so quickly. My son, worrying more about me than himself said, "Mom, I don't want you to be depressed about this. It will be alright." Shocked by his unfortunate news, I fumbled to reply optimistically. Fighting the motherly heartache I felt for him I said, "You know you can come home anytime, Chris. We'll all be okay."

The moment of fear — reality strikes

My son said, "It was hard for my boss to tell me, mom. I could see in his eyes that he didn't want to have to do it. He said it was

nothing I did or didn't do; it was just a financial thing. It feels like a punch in the gut, mom. I'll go back tomorrow to get my stuff." Hidden between the lines of his shock, I could sense his pain, "What will I do now, here alone in Ohio, without a job?"

For my husband, the reality of his termination has been more gradual, and in some ways more difficult. Waiting for the final blow, being at the mercy of corporate America has dampened the hopes and dreams of those anticipated less- hectic, financially-easier, close-to-retirement years. Somehow, it all seems so unfair. Being loyal, going to college to learn a degree or trade, working hard, doing everything right, at times does not appear to be enough in today's society. In the quiet prayers of the heart, with a sigh of disbelief and disappointment, we ask, "What has happened to our American dream? Why us Lord, your good and faithful servants?"

Dealing with the pain

Looking for positive, uplifting ways to help our family deal with the realities of unemployment, determined not to let it get us down, I began to surf the Internet. Virginia Bola, a licensed clinical psychologist who operated a vocational rehabilitation firm for more than 20 years, suggests seven supportive strategies for the unemployed from her book "The



Sharing Faith

More Shared Faith literature can be found at www.diocesefwsb.org/OSD

Wolf at the Door: An Unemployment Survival Manual." Taking her psychological tips and adding a spiritual perspective to them, can give hopeful hints in these most difficult times.

Steps 1-2: Create a schedule for your week and act as if you are still working

John Paul II in his encyclical on "Human Work," "Laborem Exercens" writes, "Created in God's image, we were given the mandate to transform the earth. By their work people share in God's creative activity... awareness that our work is a sharing in God's work ought to permeate even the most ordinary daily activities." Using this definition of work, unemployment can give us the opportunity to work in different ways. We can more faithfully start each day with prayer and schedule an extra Mass during the week. Slowing down, without titles or salary, we are free to realize more deeply how we share in God's creative work through our interactions with all creation. Showered, dressed and rested, we can call a neighbor or friend, go for a walk or invite someone in for coffee. We can even fix or

clean those areas of our house that have been neglected when we didn't have time. As our days and futures unfold, we are reminded to be grateful; thanking God for all that we are, as we walk this uncertain path with him.

Steps 3-4: Get out of the house and actively nurture your relationships

Isolation is not the answer to our situations. We need to get out of the house, be with people, make personal connections and circulate resumes. Visiting God's house more often, talking with fellow parishioners and friends, can lift our spirits and keep us out of the doldrums. God may be directing us to that "dream job" by way of a simple conversation with another after Mass or during a prayer chain conversation.

Steps 5-6: List your abilities, skills on paper and maintain your self-esteem

We often equate our worth with our work. Remembering that our worth comes from our Creator, and our likeness to him, helps to dissipate feelings of stress, humiliation, panic and fear. Spiritual reading, ongoing

faith formation and the love of others in small faith communities can nurture our self esteem and the need for reassurance. Knowing that we are not alone in this situation should energize us to pray for others who are unemployed and perhaps less fortunate. Share your hopes and dreams for employment with the Lord.

Step 7: Be kind to yourself ... and others

Dr. Boyle says, "Actively look at yourself with the eyes of a concerned friend and give yourself the support, sympathy and goodwill that you would extend to anyone you love who had suffered the same fate." I might suggest that we look at ourselves with the heart and mind of Jesus who assures us in Matthew's Gospel, "do not worry about your life ... seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides."

Unemployment is unfortunate and challenging, but with a deep faith in God, we can minimize the unemployment blues and find hope.

McGurn encourages 'A Notre Dame Witness to Life'

BY DIANE FREEBY

NOTRE DAME — "The discord that this year's commencement has unleashed between Notre Dame and the bishops, between members of the Notre Dame community, between Notre Dame and thousands of discouraged Catholic faithful ... all this derives from an approach that for decades has treated abortion as one issue on a political scorecard. This is not the road to engagement. This is a route to incoherence."

William McGurn, a 1980 graduate of Notre Dame and writer for the *Wall Street Journal*, spoke on campus last month and called upon his alma mater to put aside political differences in the name of supporting the sanctity of human life. He referred to the turmoil that has surfaced since it was announced that President Barack Obama, whom many believe to be the most militantly pro-choice president in our nation's history, would be delivering the commencement address to the 2009 graduates.

McGurn's talk was sponsored by the Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture, directed by Associate Professor of Philosophy David Solomon. Both McGurn and

University of Notre Dame President Father John I. Jenkins are former students of his.

Adding further controversy, Notre Dame also plans to honor Obama with a doctorate of laws degree. Calling his alma mater to task for not giving a strong enough witness to life, McGurn spoke about the damage caused to pro-life efforts everywhere by this lack of witness.

"In a nation wounded by Roe," said McGurn, referring to the landmark judicial case *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion in this country, "in a country that sets mothers against the children they carry in their wombs, we come here tonight ... because however much our hearts ache, they tell us this: Our church, our country and our culture long for the life witness of Notre Dame."

McGurn discussed just what it means to be a witness to life.

"For a Catholic university in the 21st century, this requires that those placed in her most critical leadership positions — on the faculty, in the administration, on the board of trustees — share that position. We must see there is no guarantee that the young men and women who come here to learn will ascend to her witness, but we

must never forget the university will have failed them if they leave here without understanding it."

McGurn used writings of Pope John Paul II to describe abortion as "sinister" when promoted as a legal right.

"He states that all pleas for other important human rights are 'false and illusory' if we do not defend with maximum determination the fundamental right to life upon which all other rights are founded," explained McGurn. "Maximum determination. Ladies and gentlemen, the unborn child's right to life represents the defining civil rights issue of this day, and it ought to be a defining civil rights issue on this campus."

Yet Notre Dame, which McGurn referred to as "one of the few remaining institutions capable of providing a witness for life," still struggles to find a unified voice.

"I can tell you that this issue is really divisive on this campus," said Eric Jumper, an engineering professor at Notre Dame. "Having just a conversation in the student union building with a friend about abortion, I had people attack me and tell me it's none of my business, and I'm not a woman and I should stay out of it and keep my mouth shut. This is a Catholic uni-

versity, and that's the way people with an opinion on life are treated? It's outrageous."

McGurn admitted changing hearts and minds takes time, and he applauded the professor for standing up for life even when it meant taking heat from others.

Vince Friedwald, a 1963 graduate of Notre Dame is a cardiologist from Texas who teaches in the science department part of the year, has done much research on fetal heart development. The week Father Jenkins issued his invitation to Obama, Friedwald was testifying for a Texas bill that would require abortion providers to show women an ultrasound of their unborn baby, if they wanted to see it. Meanwhile, Friedwald's son, a 1998 graduate of Notre Dame, is the executive director of the Texas Pregnancy Network, a statewide agency that helps women who elect not to have abortions.

"He was staying up all night, every night, trying to fight for their appropriations ... and they didn't get them," explained Friedwald. "And here I am, testifying against the Planned Parenthood people. If you've never done that, it's quite an experience. But both of us, as graduates working outside (the university) like thousands of peo-

ple ... we both felt like we were stabbed in the back. I mean, literally ... by Notre Dame doing this, I can't tell you how this made us feel. It's made us both question what our future relationship with Notre Dame is going to be."

McGurn was asked where Notre Dame goes from here, seemingly at a crossroads of being challenged to witness more strongly for life. He doesn't believe revoking Obama's invitation is the answer, saying he'd still have problems with the university's basic lack of witness.

"I think there's a lot of things that they could do," said McGurn of university leadership. "At one point I had suggested, when the bishop makes a statement, why could not Notre Dame put that on its Web page? If the purpose is to have dialogue and debate, and the university is comfortable with its position, why is it not (posted)?"

As thunderous applause for that suggestion died down, McGurn continued. "Put it out there for people to read and make up their own minds. If we want a debate, bring a debate on. Otherwise, you get into a position where you're just against someone coming. And I think we're for something larger."

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.

FUNDRAISERS

Polish dinner raises funds

South Bend — Our Lady of Hungary will offer an authentic Polish dinner at the Skillet, 2212 McKinley Ave., with entertainment by alumni, Marge Dudeck Tuesday, May 5, and Wednesday, May 6. Dinner will be from 3-8 p.m. with entertainment from 4-7 p.m. Dinners are \$9.49 for adults (plus tax) and \$4.99 for children 10 and under (plus tax). Iced tea and lemonade provided. Carry-out available.

Rummage Sale

Fort Wayne — St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel, U.S. Hwy 27 South, will have a rummage sale in the school activity center on Friday, May 8, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, May 9, from 8 a.m. to noon. A \$3 sack sale will be held on Saturday.

St. Jude Eaglemania

Fort Wayne — St. Jude Parish will have Eaglemania Friday, June 5, from 5-11p.m. Children's games, food tent, talent show and beer garden.

Knights plan spaghetti dinner

South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a spaghetti dinner on Friday, May 15, from 5-7 p.m. Adults \$7, children (5-12) \$3. Dinner includes spaghetti, salad, garlic toast and coffee. Carry-out available.

Pancake breakfast supports Women's Care Center

Fort Wayne — The Knights will have a pancake breakfast Sunday, May 17, from 8 a.m. to noon at St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel on U.S. Hwy 27 South. Proceeds

will benefit the Women's Care Center.

Family style Polish dinner and dance

South Bend — St. Adalbert Parish will host a Polish dinner and dance Sunday, May 17, from noon to 4:30 p.m. Music by the Tim Deka Trio. Tickets are \$15 and available at the parish office (574) 288-5708. Advance sale only by May 11.

Rummage sale to benefit south side community center

Fort Wayne — The St. Henry Community Center, 3029 E. Paulding Rd., will have a rummage sale Friday, May 15, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, May 16, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. On Saturday, an International Food Festival will be held. Proceeds further the mission of outreach to the diverse population on the southeast side of Fort Wayne.

MISC. HAPPENINGS

Marriage Encounter plans refreshment
South Bend — A refreshment

REST IN PEACE

Arcola

Rachel Marie Ruppert, 5, St. Patrick

Auburn

Janet M. Gibson, 71, Immaculate Conception

Decatur

Patricia A. Minnick, 68, St. Mary of the Assumption

Elkhart

Sidney Quirin, 89, St. Vincent de Paul

Benedict J. Brewers, 75, St. Thomas the Apostle

Fort Wayne

John F. Hamm, Sr., 87, Queen of Angels

Berry E. Shaw, 48, St. Henry

Judith A. Hammer, 59, St. John the Baptist

Verdayne F. Parnin, 92, St. Jude

Granger

Thomas Robert O'Reilly, 79, St. Pius X

Mariana M. Hussey, 86, St. John the Evangelist

Mishawaka

David F. Galloy, 60, St. Joseph

Sue L. Metcalfe, 62, Queen of Peace

Alice S. DeBel, 84, St. Bavo

South Bend

Mary R. Chmielewski, 93, St. Adalbert

Henrietta J. Gerbasich, 82, St. Casimir

John R. Hahaj, Sr., 88, St. John the Baptist

Otto V. Horvath, 83, Our Lady of Hungary

Dorothy Brant, 82, Christ the King

Clement A. Cwidak, 88, St. Casimir

John E. Dragovich, 84, St. Joseph

Bertha Horvath, 90, St. Patrick

David L. Klimek, 48, Little Flower

Jose I. Mendez, 48, St. Adalbert

Muriel J. Lekarczyk, 74, St. Adalbert

Warsaw

Viola Sporer, 76, Sacred Heart

Marie C. Nyenhuis, 83, Sacred Heart

opportunity for all who have experienced a Marriage Encounter Weekend will be July 10-12 in the Hilton Garden Inn Conference Center on the edge of the Saint Mary's College campus. Join over 400 spouses and priests for the nine-state 2009 Worldwide Marriage Encounter Convention. Register at www.wmme-ni.org/2009convention or call Ron and Leanne Lee (260) 637-5124.

Harvest House announces Older American Day celebration

Kendallville — The Harvest House Council will have an Older American Day Thursday, May 14, at Immaculate Conception. Doors open at 10:15 a.m. with Mass at 11 a.m. A luncheon will be served and includes entertainment by a female barbershop group. Reservations are needed to Rita at (260) 347-4014 by May 9.




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We invite you to consider your burial needs thoughtfully and without pressure before the need arises, relieving others of those difficult decisions.

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Call Larry Fisher at 260.426.2044 for an appointment or visit the Cemetery Office at 3500 Lake Avenue from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.
www.catholic-cemetery.org

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Promotion ends June 1, 2009.

Visit www.diocesefwsb.org for a complete calendar of events in the diocese.

Generations of mother love

BY ANN B. THALLEMER

"May your heart, O Christian Mother, be ever as full of prayer to God as it is at all times full of love for your children."

— "Mother Love," by Father Pius Franciscus, OFM, Cap.

From the very beginning, when you bring your little infant home from the hospital, he or she understands your language and respond to it eagerly from its own heart. The gentle nuzzle, the hug, the holding of your baby closely to your own body assures comfort and protection.

My beloved grandmother "Momo" once told me that she thought it was very hard being a baby. Imagine not being able to tell when you are uncomfortable, need to have a scratchy collar turned down, need to say you really don't want any more of your bottle, need to tell that you are too warm to go to sleep, need to say that you are tired of laying in one position and just want to be rearranged a bit.

The little things that a mother notices and responds to without any words spoken are signs of

the silent language between the child and mother that never ends. A look across the room can relay a message of hurt or a smile can assure the mother that things are all right.

Momo was my hero and looking back I realize that she was the most quiet, gentle, religious and loving person that I have ever known. She always took time to listen and show me how to do things. Her patience was endless. The reprimands were gentle but firm.

Momo and Pawpaw's house was small but always a cozy haven. She lived across the street from the church and morning Mass was the way she started her day. Her children, including a stepchild, all loved her with a special love that can never be forgotten.

Her example lives on and often guides us when the road gets rough. She used to say, "God is always watching, he never leaves you and he helps you do the right thing because he loves you. He isn't in the sky, he



PROVIDED BY ANN THALLEMER

is right here beside you."

The length of your life can only define the joy of sharing both the hurts and the celebrations with your child or children. My own mother went to heaven much too soon, but she left a legacy that cannot be forgotten either. She was always there when we came home from school and often she had warm, iced

muffins or a homemade treat waiting for us. She made beautiful clothes for us out of practically nothing, even remade things to look brand new. She was the epitome of the philosophy that you can "make do" when you don't have just what you think you need.

There was no compromise with her; there was only the "right" way. Her faith carried her through many rough waters. Flowers were her passion, and she could coax any straggly plant to "showoff" as she said. Her love and pride were always there when her children reached a milestone. Her own brothers and sisters never forgot her fun-loving spirit and love for little children.

When our first-born daughter came into our lives, my husband was hundreds of miles away serving his country. I realized every day that this huge trust that your child has in you is not easily shouldered. They need you, they learn from you and they know you will protect them. The

lonely months of separation were forgotten and were replaced with tears of joy when father met his daughter for the first time.

My education was entirely spent in Catholic schools and that was the foundation for preparing me for somehow knowing what to do when I was faced with an important decision — which happened often while raising five active children. A nun at St. Joseph's Academy told me that she always remembered the "little children" in her prayers. She said she imagined that the mothers were often too busy to pray for them and she felt that was a special mission that she could easily do.

Our five children and their spouses produced 12 beautiful, talented and thoughtful grandchildren. The beat goes on. Four great-grandchildren are now in our lives and I count myself privileged to be able to still take an active part in helping to care for them when needed. The pleasure is all mine.

"Then your merit and reward will be truly great, if you refer to God alone all the honor your children bring you." — from "Mother Love."

Today's Catholic

BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB

This month's featured selection:

"Our Lady of Kibeho" by Immaculée Ilibagiza

Reviewed by Francie Hogan

Our Lady of Kibeho is a fairly unknown visitation to earth by the Virgin Mary, mother of God. That is until now. The latest book by Immaculée Ilibagiza, author of "Left To Tell," the accounting of the Rwandan massacre, leaves little doubt that Our Lady cares very deeply for us.

As the only girl in a family of four children Immaculée always had a deep devotion to Our Lady and would pray for long periods of time to her. When she was 11 years old she began to question her faith and doubted all the Bible stories she had heard for so long. A few weeks after this crisis of faith a teacher read to her class the story about the miracle at Fatima. Immaculée was overjoyed and wanted Mary to come to her town too — so much so that she and her friend would go to a mountain top and pray for Mary to visit their village.

Immaculée and her friend would be on their knees for long hours praying that Mary would come to visit, but to no avail. Months went by before word came that Mary had appeared in Africa — just not in Immaculée's village. Her pastor announced one day that Mary was visiting students at the school in Kibeho. Some people recorded the apparitions that left the visionaries spent after a visit from Our Lady. The visionaries were ridiculed and ostracized until one of the main people responsible for the ridicule became a visionary herself.

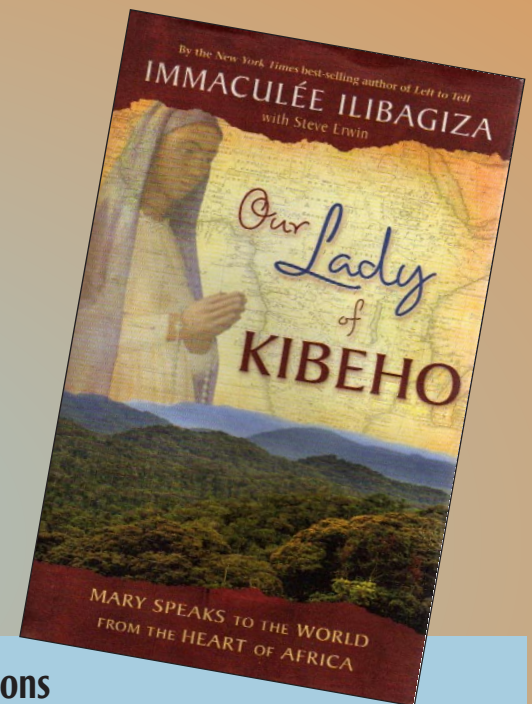
Many people began to travel to the school to see for themselves the miracle of Mary's visits. Soon a pilgrimage was made from Immaculée's own village and her father was able to go. After his return and detail of the trip, Immaculée wanted more than ever to see the holy woman.

Many years would go by before Immaculée was able to visit Kibeho herself. She made the journey when she was accepted into the national university. A prayer group organized a bus trip on which Immaculée and 40 other students took the long ride to Kibeho. Many trips followed over the years and Mary continued to appear asking for the people to repent, convert, pray and be saved. She warned of a terrible horror that would soon come to Rwanda.

As Mary has in so many places before, she came to warn the people she loves and help them prepare for the onslaught of man. It is not a coincidence that the places Mary appears have been areas of war and discontent.

There is an interesting section in the book regarding the rosary of the seven sorrows. The rosary recalls the seven major sorrows the Virgin Mary suffered during the life, trials and agonizing death of her son, Jesus Christ. She asks that it be prayed as often as possible.

This book is a gem for anyone who loves our Blessed Mother.



Questions for discussion

- Does Mary seem to appear in places at random or is it intentional?
- What does her message say to you?
- If Mary appeared to you what would you say to her?
- Do you have an image in your mind of what Mary looks like? Does she look like you?

Visit www.diocesefwsb.org/blog for discussion on this book.

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