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Certain forms of ridicule or extreme criticism can constitute an "unacceptable provocation," the Vatican said.

It said governments and their institutions cannot be held responsible for the offensive actions of an individual or a newspaper. Violent protests never reflect "the true spirit of any religion," it said.

The Vatican suggested, however, that where free speech crosses the line and becomes offensive to a religion, national authorities "can and should" intervene.

Freedom of expression does not mean offending religions

BY JOHN THAVIS

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The cartoons are considered blasphemous because, first of all, Islam does not allow depictions of Mohammed, and, second, they show Mohammed in a number of disrespectful ways. One cartoon, for exam-
Today’s Catholic ‘reflects the vitality of our diocese’

BISHOP JOHN M. D’ARCY

About this newspaper

Today’s Catholic, as you know, in recent years has received many awards for excellence. I think it is one of the best diocesan newspapers in the land. It gives an excellent mix of local and national news. I am not proud of it only because of these national awards, but because of its appearance, its newsiness and its substance. Recently, some new and creative things have been established, including a wider range of questions and answers about the faith. It reflects the vitality of our diocese.

As you may know, the bishop of this diocese is also the ex-officio chair of the board of Our Sunday Visitor. While this adds some responsibilities, Greg Erlanson and his staff, including Msgr. Owen Campion who is now a part of Today’s Catholic every week, do such an excellent job that I have not had to become involved in the everyday operation of that Catholic publishing house. Founded by the illustrious Archbishop John Noll, it is the largest Catholic publisher in the country.

By attending the meetings, I do learn a lot about Catholic publishing. For example, I learned that those in the newspaper business are every more aware that people do not read. The Internet has replaced the morning newspaper. Not for me. One of the joyful moments of the day is reading the newspaper, especially in the summer when you have box scores and the sound of the base ball can be heard in the land. When I grew up, there was baseball, and evening newspapers, I can remember my parents reading them, especially if there was news about the church or about Ireland or about American politics. New to the land and culture, the daily newspaper (2 cents) was part of their education.

A Catholic newspaper is special. We know that the Internet is a great instrument of knowledge. It also can bring dark images into our homes, which are destructive to our children.

Also demanding financially

Tim Johnson is an excellent editor. He is assisted by a wonderful staff, including Kathy Denice, who is in charge of circulation, advertising and the business aspect. Kathy and Tim tell me that almost every diocese in the country that has a newspaper has a mandate, meaning that every family in the parish must accept the newspaper and pay for it. If they do not pay for it, the parish pays for it.

I have always resisted this, as it brings a financial cost to our parishes. Our priests and their advisors work so hard on the Annual Bishop’s Appeal and on the recent Legacy of Faith that I wish to avoid what would be a sort of additional parish tax. But this places a great responsibility on every-
one, especially myself, to get more and more subscribers. If every subscriber would give one gift subscription this year, it would solve our financial problems. Our circulation is around 17,000. If we can get it to 20,000, I think we would be solvent. Why not give a gift subscription to Today’s Catholic?

On to the high schools

I am preparing for my visit to Marian High School this week, followed by a visit to Bishop Luers next week. I am proud of our four Catholic high schools. Three of them have begun to prepare for capital fund drives and expansion. I expect that the fourth will soon follow. With the cost of health insurance and the significant rise in teachers’ salaries the past several years, our high schools have become increasingly demanding financially. What makes it worthwhile is that the young people meet Jesus Christ in the sacraments and in prayer, and receive a solid religious education. That is the purpose of my visit — to see that these things are sound and growing.

The day is simple enough. There is a Mass at one and a half time, followed by an opportunity to go to confession. I usually visit two or three classrooms in religion, meet with faculty and students, and I always meet with those who are involved in the teaching of religion or, as it called, the theology department. We have the presence of a priest, or a number of priests, in each school. We had not been able to do this full-time; but the presence of a priest, even part-time in our high schools, is paying off. More and more young men from our high schools are inquiring about admission to the seminary.

And also confirmations

This past Sunday, I drove to South Bend for the first confirmation of the season at Holy Cross Parish, where Father Michael Mathews, CSC, has given such exemplary leadership, assisted in recent years by a wonderful young priest, Father Michael Wurtz, CSC. Next week I will be at St. Charles Borromeo. I will have some help from Bishop Bill Hock, a devoted bishop who helped us last year also.

Let us speak of St. Charles

This week, I visited with Msgr. Edward Hession, Msgr. Hession, who has been a priest for 64 years, had lived in a small apartment provided to him by a number of parishioners who had come to know and love him over the years at St. Charles. This week he accepted a transfer to Saint Anne’s Home, where he is receiving excellent care.

Ed Hession served in only two parishes in his lifetime — St. Patrick and St. Charles Borromeo, Fort Wayne. He was a native of Lafayette. He was a legendary athlete at St. Joseph College, Renssalaer; a pitcher in baseball, he was also a great football player, where he developed an art that has been lost — the kick drop. Above everything, he remains a priest to the core. His devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, to Our Lady and his strong priestly identity have been a source of inspiration to his parishioners and to all who know him. It was beautiful to have some private moments praying with him this week, first at the apartment where he has lived for almost 20 years, and then at St. Anne’s Home. Please keep him in your prayers.

Other priests who are infirm

Father Terry Fisher fell recently and injured his leg. He had serious surgery. He is the pastor of St. Anthony Parish, South Bend, and serves on many diocesan boards. The latest word indicates that he may out as many as six weeks.

Father Terry Place has had a serious illness, but he has improved and is celebrating Mass. The same is true of Father Leonard Chrobot. Father Andre Leveille, CSC, is recuperating at Holy Cross House on the campus of the University of Notre Dame after injuring his leg seriously and undergoing surgery. He expects to be there for several weeks.

Keep all these devoted priests who have given their lives to Christ in your prayers.

Another anniversary

I surely enjoy these anniversaries. Now I have begun my 50th year as a priest. On Feb. 2, it was a joy to celebrate the noon Mass at MacDoulag Chapel, followed by some wonderful cake and ice cream with my devoted staff.

Now comes Feb. 11. I will be a bishop 31 years — hard to believe. There were four of us at the Cathedral of Holy Cross in Boston. What a joy for my parents. They never expected anything like this. People came from Ireland and all over. It was a joy. Less than two years later, my dad was stricken with a severe cancer. But I give thanks to God that he saw this day.

The agony of defeat

I have watched and loved sporting events all my life. As a young priest at St. Mary’s, Beverly, I played touch football every afternoon with some of the young athletes, and performed reasonably well. However, I have never seen a sporting team go through the agony that the Fighting Irish of Mike Brey has experienced. Three games lost in overtime. Many games lost at the last minute, including Louisville this week with a three-point basket by a Louisville Cardinal with only seconds left. They are competing equally with some of the best teams in the nation, some of whom are far more athletic. They are in the fray. May good things come to them. Mike deserves it. So do his players.

See you all next week.
To respect life, people must remember God created it, pope says

VA锡TICAN CITY (CNS) — The more people set aside belief in God the creator, the greater the danger that they will lose respect for the value and dignity of human life, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Celebrating Mass Feb. 5 in the Vatican’s parish church, the Church of St. Anne, he said the pontiff said people will lose respect for human life the more they set aside belief in God.

Bishop regrets Notre Dame sponsorship

FEBRUARY 12, 2006

STATEMENT BY BISHOP JOHN M. D’ARCY CONCERNING THE ‘VAGINA MONOLOGUES’

February 2006

Once again, many Catholic universities and institutions of higher learning are allowing the presentation of something called “The Vagina Monologues.” Alas, our beloved Notre Dame is presenting it for the fifth successive year under the sponsorship of two academic departments. The bishop is the teacher in his diocese and has the serious responsibility of bringing the light of the Gospel of Christ and the teachings of the church to bear on the moral issues of our time. Such an obligation takes on a special seriousness when the souls of the young are in danger of being drawn into a state of moral confusion.

What is wrong with the text of this play? It distorts the beautiful gift of human sexuality, reducing its richness so it becomes merely the seeking of pleasure. Sexuality in the Catholic tradition is always related to the gift of self to another. “Sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person — body, emotions and spirit” and manifests itself in its utmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love. How opposite from our tradition which says, “A woman’s dignity is closely connected with the love which she receives by the very reason of her femininity. It is likewise connected with the love she gives in return.” — “On the Dignity of Women,” Pope John Paul II.

While some will find it hard to believe, it is true that this play depicts in an approving way a sexual relationship between an adult woman and a minor. Such an action, which is a crime in both civil and church law, is also considered a serious sin in Christian moral teaching. The play also contains explicit depictions of masturbation and lesbian sex, portrayed in a positive light.

In his encyclical letter, Pope Benedict XVI, theologian and pastor, speaking to this cultural phenomenon with striking clarity, said, “Nowadays Christianity of the past is often criticized as having been sexist, and that is quite true that tendancies of this sort have always existed. Yet the contemporary Church’s teaching on the dignity of human life is or is not of value, he said.

Reciting the Angelus after Mass, Pope Benedict said he wanted to focus attention on “the importance of the service of charity to support and promote human life.”

Even before organizing pro-life initiatives, he said, “it is fundamental to promote a correct attitude toward the other: the culture of life is, in effect, based on attention to others without exclusion or discrimination. “Every human life deserves and needs to be defended and promoted,” the pope said.

Too often, especially in wealthy societies, “life is exalted as long as it is pleasurable, but there is a tendency not to respect it any longer when it becomes ill or disabled,” Pope Benedict said.

When every human life is loved because it is created by God, then efforts to defend life whether the life of a newborn, the infirm or the dying — become effective, the pope said.

Pornography is a marked tendency to accentuate the sexual element as the only reason for life. Human life, or human life in a work of art, with the object of inducing the observer to be the author of a sexual act, is a sexual act. The sexual values are the only real values of the person, and that love is nothing more than the experience, individual or shared, of those values alone.” — “Love and Responsibility,” Karol Wojtyla.

The play, which is being sponsored, does not portray the whole truth about human sexuality and by this separation, it violates the truth about the body, the truth about the gift of sexuality, the truth about man and woman.

As the president of Providence College recently wrote when he explained his reasons for banning the play, “Any institution which sanctioned works of art that under mined and exploited the human image should not be inauthentic, irresponsible and ultimately self-destructive.”

As the president of Providence College, Brian Shanley, O.P., Ph.D., wrote, “We pray with our prayers, weighs its response to this question, the common good of the university and of the wider community, as well, should be considered.

A new development

For 21 years as bishop of this diocese, I have, entered into respectful dialogue with three presidents of Notre Dame. In that spirit, I have spoken to Father John Jenkins, C.S.C. on the matter at hand, always keeping in mind the instruction given to bishops and university presidents in the “Corde Ecclesiae”, which urges that there should be “close personal and pastoral relationships between university and church authorities, characterized by mutual trust and consistent cooperation and continuing dialogue.”

Father Jenkins, in an act of leadership, has chosen to go before the Notre Dame community to make a serious presentation on this matter. Those of us who are outside the governance of the university should view this decision with respect.

A final word

In preparing these remarks, I have consulted others, including women who are graduates of Notre Dame. One is the mother of seven children; along with her husband, she has worked with me for 20 years to promote the pastoral care of the family. Together, they have prepared hundreds of pamphlets for ministers. She shared with me these comments.

“I have been reflecting since we spoke and the one fact that is an enormous difference between exposing evil and endorsing it, and a Catholic university —”

The play would be wrong if it let this part obscure the rest of our teaching on marriage, and is what often happens in art . . .

To respect life, people must remember God created it, pope says

BISHOP JOHN M. D’ARCY
In this way, he said, the church evangelizes culture. The church is also enriched and shaped, just like Aquinas, it is ready and willing to learn about the truth from any source, he said.

Father Jenkins made his remarks at Rome’s Pontifical Lateran University, where the Notre Dame Board of Trustees conferred honorary degrees on Francis Rooney, the U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, and to Bishop Rino Fisichella, the rector of Lateran University.

In an interview Feb. 2 with Catholic News Service, Father Jenkins spoke about efforts to understand and promote the Catholic identity of church-run universities, which was emphasized under Pope John Paul II and is expected to continue under Pope Benedict XVI.

Father Jenkins said that while Catholic identity is not an easy thing to measure at a university there are some indications of success, including worship and liturgical life, a demonstration of generosity and Christian charity, and a vibrant intellectual life, particularly in theology.

If there is no real liturgical life, no generosity of service, and if the intellectual life does not reflect church teachings in some way, then it is silly to call a university Catholic, he said. Father Jenkins said if a university does not reflect church teachings in some way, then it is silly to call a university Catholic, he said.

That issue came to public attention in late January, when Father Jenkins placed some restrictions on two highly controversial events at Notre Dame: performances of “The Vagina Monologues,” a play about female sexuality, and an annual festival that features movies with homosexual themes.

He also opened a university-wide dialogue to help decide whether the events should be held in the future.

These are not unimportant issues for Notre Dame, because they involve “what sort of institution we are and how we are fulfilling our mission about being a pre-eminent Catholic university,” Father Jenkins told CNS.

He said the issue was not academic freedom. Notre Dame can accept a diversity of views, events and artistic performances, including some that are not in accordance with Catholic teaching, he said.

“We want a diversity of views. That’s part of being a university,” he said.

But he said “The Vagina Monologues” had run for five years at Notre Dame, involving fundraising and a great deal of publicity, all of which raise the question: Is what we are sponsoring consistent with the sort of institution we are?

Father Jenkins said the question of Catholic identity means universities should make room for explicit reflection on their mission. The basic objectives of that mission should be respected by everyone working at the university, including non-Catholics, he said.

The 52-year-old priest, who has taught at Notre Dame since 1990, said he is generally impressed with the interest in the faith shown by young students today.

At the same time, he said, many of them come to Notre Dame confused about some of the fundamental truths of Catholicism. He said he is convinced that young Catholics today need basic catechesis more than sophisticated theology.

“They need to know what the central truths are, why they are taught and what they mean for human life, I think that’s the big challenge for the church,” he said.

Father Jenkins said he thought the election of Pope Benedict, who as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was a world-renowned scholar and theologian, would help focus attention on the role of Catholic scholar ship and universities.

Father Jenkins also pointed out an interesting historical note: In the 1960s, Notre Dame’s president, Holy Cross Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, offered then-Father Ratzinger a teaching position at the university. Had he accepted, his career as a distinguished theologian might have developed in a very different context.

Kathleen Anderson is one of more than 30 Barnes & Thornburg attorneys providing legal services to their fellow parishioners in the Diocese of Fort Wayne - South Bend.

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Informed consent legislation to reduce abortions advances

BY BRIGID CURTIS AYER

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana’s informed consent law may reduce abortions if a bill, which passed the Indiana House of Representatives (70-30), becomes law.

House Bill 1172, a bill the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) supports, requires that before an abortion, women be given information that the fetus may feel pain and that after 20 weeks an anesthetic for the fetus may be available. It also changes the informed consent statute to require written information about adoption alternatives and physical risks concerning abortion. Also the women must include the statement that life begins at fertilization.

Rep. Tim Harris (R-Marion), author of the bills said, “As more information has become available and agreed upon by those in the scientific and medical community, it becomes evident when you look at Indiana’s informed consent law, that it is lacking important evidence.”

“In making this difficult decision, a mother should have to know all the facts,” said Rep. Harris.

“There is evidence from fetal surgery that the baby feels pain. The hope is that when the mother does realize that, she may change her mind about the abortion.”

“The second important part of the bill requires that written information about adoption options be given to the women as well as physical risks to abortion. And the bill defines that human life begins at fertilization,” said Rep. Harris.

Rep. Eric Turner (R-Marion) who has co-authored the bill, said, “I think it is only important to provide this information to women who are considering an abortion, because choosing the procedural steps to have an abortion has many physical and emotional risks. I also hope that by providing this information women will understand that there are other options beyond ending the life of their baby.”

Rep. Robert Bischoff (D-Greendale) and Rep. Troy Woodruff (R-Vincennes) are also co-authors of HB 1172.

“The number one goal of this bill is education,” said Sen. Jeff Drizdor (R-Westfield), Senate sponsor of HB 1172. “People need to understand there’s a baby involved and the baby will feel pain.”

Sen. Drizdor said he is uncertain whether or not the bill will receive a hearing in the Senate. For this reason Sen. Drizdor said, “I would encourage your readers to contact their state senators and tell them they want HB 1172 to get a hearing, and they expect them to support the bill. This is an issue where legislators will respond to their constituents.”

Sen. Drizdor is a parishioner of St. Maria Goretti, Westfield. Sen. Mike Delph (R-Carmel) and Sen. Allie Craycroft (D-Selma) are cosponsoring HB 1172.

Last month, Glenn Tebbe, executive director for the Indiana Catholic Conference testified in support of HB 1172 before the House Public Policy Committee, said, “Because the effect may be to reduce abortion, ICC supports HB 1172. Support for the bill does not imply support or approval of the practice of abortion or that providing an anesthetic makes the practice acceptable. ICC abors the reason and necessity of the law — abortion itself. Each life is sacred and created in the image of God. All life is to be protected.

Groups that also testified in support of HB 1172 primarily based on moral grounds included Advance America, the Indiana Family Institute and Indiana Right to Life. Groups testifying in opposition to HB 1172 primarily based on the arguments of privacy and reproductive rights included Planned Parenthood, the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), Indiana National Organization of Women (INOW) and the Indiana Civil Liberties Union (ICLU).

Kristi Barnett, one of the Indiana regional coordinators for Silent No More Awareness Campaign (SNMAC), a ministry for post-abortion women said, “Silent No More does not have an official position on this bill, however my comments reflect my experience as a post-abortive woman and the wisdom gained from working with others healing from their abortion.

Barnett, who attends St. John the Apostle Catholic Church in Bloomington, said, “One of the most important components of this bill is the clause that requires the mother be informed that life begins at fertilization. I have heard countless testimonies from women that were told it was simply a ‘clump of cells’ and not a real baby. Many of them have stated that if they had only known that life begins at conception they would not have chosen abortion. This aspect of the bill would effectively undermine the abortion industry’s deceitful tactic of denying the humanity of the baby,” said Barnett.

In 2003, the Indiana State Department of Health reported there were 11,458 abortions performed. Mothers between the ages of 20 to 24 years old accounted for the largest percentage, 35.7 percent, or 4,087 abortions. Nearly 2,500 abortions or 21.6 percent were from mothers in the 25 to 29 age group. Sixty-three percent of the mothers in Indiana who had abortions were Caucasian, 27.4 percent African American. The data shows 6.4 percent were Hispanic and 3.2 percent of mothers their race was unknown. Nearly 80 percent of abortions were performed in Indiana. Mothers of the largest percentage, 35.7 percent, from mothers in the 25 to 29 age group. Sixty-three percent of the mothers in Indiana who had abortions were Caucasian, 27.4 percent African American. The data shows 6.4 percent were Hispanic and 3.2 percent of mothers their race was unknown.

Abortion resources

To view the full report of Indiana abortions from years 1999 to 2003 go to the Indiana State Department of Health’s Web page at www.in.gov/isdh/index.html click on “Data & Statistics,” then click on “Pregnancies” for abortion information. For more facts on abortion go to abortionfacts Web page at www.abortionfacts.com and Silent No More Awareness Campaign Web page www.silentnomoreawareness.org

How to contact your state legislator

The following Web site can help you identify your legislator and provide some easy ways of making contact:

www.in.gov/apps/sos/legislator/search/
Forever Learning Institute begins 30th year

SOUTH BEND — Forever Learning Institute, whose sole mission is to “empower the dignity and diversity of senior citizens’ quality of life through continual intellectual challenge, spiritual reflection and social interaction,” will open its doors for the 30th successive year on Feb. 20. Established by Father Louis Patz, CSC, who found retirement somewhat boring without any interaction, Forever Learning Institute has been an exemplary program for senior citizens in the South Bend area.

It has no room cards for its students, who pursue, in its over 70 classes, areas including history, theology, arts, language, finances, science, line dancing, painting and ceramics.

Joan Loranger, whose background includes a history of both administration and teaching, will begin her second successive year as executive director. Students can select their own types of classes, which will continue through May 12. Seniors who have not completed a high school education can take classes to complete honors for a GED.

Forever Learning Institute’s volunteer teachers range from professionals who have taught at the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary’s College and Indiana University at South Bend to civic leaders, politicians and priests.

Father Roman Ladowki, CSC, who grew up in South Bend and has served in several parishes, is the eldest of all the instructors and will teach in Global Connectedness. — EJD

South Bend Knights get worldwide attention

SOUTH BEND — A photograph of the Knights of Columbus, Santa Maria Council #553 has garnered world attention on the Knights of Columbus Web site in support of right to life.

Members of the council attended the annual Right to Life March in Washington, D.C., in January. A photo shows the Santa Maria Council #553 banner being carried in the march.

Council members who attended the march were District Deputy Vince Fekk, Terry Riordan, Art Lemen and Art Lemen Jr.

The photo may be viewed at www.kofc.org. — EJD

Saint Mary’s professor wins book award

NOTRE DAME — A book written by Sean Savage, political science professor at Saint Mary’s College, won a 2005 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title Award. CHOICE, which provides book reviews for academic libraries, honored fewer than 10 percent of the 6,964 titles reviewed in 2005.

Savage’s book, “JFK, LBJ, and the Democratic Party,” is a comprehensive account of John F. Kennedy’s and Lyndon B. Johnson’s leadership of their political party in the 1960s.

SCHOOL CHOIRS COMBINE TO SING NATIONAL ANTHEM

A group of 26 Catholic school students perform at the Quality Dining-sponsored You-Can-Lend-A-Hand night at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum on Jan. 22. The students sang the national anthem, directed by Lois Widner, principal of St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School in Fort Wayne, before the hockey game against the Rockford IceHogs at the coliseum.

Mission lecture to be held at Moreau Seminary

NOTRE DAME — The second annual Holy Cross Mission Lecture at Notre Dame will be held at the Moreau Seminary Auditorium, Notre Dame, on Sunday, March 5, at 7:15 p.m.

Father Carl Starkloff, SJ, will speak on “The Word of God is not Chained. Images for Mission in Cultures.” His talk will be followed by brief reflections from two respondents, a discussion with the speakers on the challenges of mission today and a reception.

Father Starkloff is professor emeritus of Regis College, Toronto, and has taught cultural anthropology and theology both there and at St. Louis University, where he was also vice president for Mission and Ministry. He spent several years as pastor and teacher among the Arapaho and Shoshone people of Wyoming and for 18 years he conducted ministry training programs for the native population in Ontario. His current interests include inculturation, inter-religious dialogue and a theology of mission in the context of pluralism. His latest book is “A Theology of the In-Between: The Value of Syncretic Process” (Marquette University Press, 2002).

The evening is planned to assist those who wish to deepen their reflection on the mission dimension of Christian life and service. All are invited. For more information or directions to Morere Seminary, call the Holy Cross Mission Center at (574) 631-5477.

St. Joseph, St. Catherine hold mission Feb. 19-22

ROANOKE — St. Joseph Parish, Roanoke and St. Catherine’s Parish, N. Scott, will be holding a Parish Mission Feb. 19-22. It will be from 7-8 p.m. each of these evenings at St. Joseph Catholic Church, 641 N. Main St., Roanoke.

Morning sessions will be Monday through Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. The theme of the mission is “Eucharist: The Everlasting Covenant” chosen in accordance with the diocece’s centennial. The Year of the Eucharist until June and the belief in Christ’s everlasting covenant with his people.

Speakers will be:
• Father Daryl Rybicki from St. John the Baptist in Fort Wayne speaking on “Table of Real Presence” on Sunday, Feb. 19.
• Father Ronald Redler, OFM, Cap, from St. Paul in Huntington speaking on “Table of Unity and Love” on Monday, Feb. 20.
• Father Edward Epselding from St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel speaking on “Table of Forgiveness” on Tuesday, Feb. 21. The sacrament of reconciliation will also be available that evening.

The mission will conclude with the celebration of holy Mass with Bishop John M. D’Arcy on Wednesday, Feb. 22. A social will be served each evening following the talks except the evening of reconciliation. Babysitting will be available.

Morning sessions will begin at approximately 8:45 a.m. following Mass at 8 a.m. Ginny Kohrman from the Office of Spiritual Development-Evangelization will be the speaker at these sessions.

Knights, Masons hold Lenten event series

SOUTH BEND — The traditional Lenten breakfasts cosponsored by the Scottish Rite Masons and the Knights of Columbus will be a series of events this year, two at the Masonic temple and two at the Santa Maria Council 553 in downtown South Bend.

The first will be at 9 a.m. Saturday at the Masonic temple. Others will be March 18 at the K of C Council, and Saturday, March 24, at the K of C and Saturday, April 1, at the Masonic Temple.

Special speakers and Scripture readings will be featured at the events. The two fraternal organizations have gathered together for nearly 59 years for these fellowship events, which will see 200 attendance.

Harold Mabold of the Masons and Kent Hizer are serving as cochairmen. — EJD

Correction

Due to a photo editing error in the Feb. 5 issue, a photo in the sesquicentennial series described an event that actually took place at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Elkhart is actually from the Blessed Sacrament Adoration Chapel at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Elkhart.
MICHIGAN CITY — Indiana death row inmate Marvin Bieghler joined the Catholic Church and received the sacraments at the Indiana State Prison in Michigan City Jan. 26, about eight hours before he was executed Jan. 27.

Hours before his execution, Bieghler joins Catholic Church

BY MARY ANN WYAND

A shackled Marvin Bieghler speaks during his clemency hearing at Indiana State Prison in Michigan City Jan. 20. While on death row Bieghler joined the Catholic Church and received the sacraments at Indiana State Prison Jan. 26, about eight hours before he was executed Jan. 27.

Bieghler admitted that he was a drug dealer, but denied killing the 58-year-old Marine Corps veteran — who fought in the Vietnam War — during the evening of March 4. This event promises to be an evening full of family fun, complete with authentic Irish music, dancing and cuisine. The idea for the event is that of Father Patrick Manning, the Josephinum’s vice rector. He realized that, although the seminary was able to provide its students with basic necessities such as food and heat, it had no discretionary funds to meet more personal needs.

“For example,” Father Manning said, “a seminarian may need some help buying textbooks for the semester or assistance in buying vestments for when he ministers at Mass. Wouldn’t it be great if the seminary itself had a way to address this or other unforeseen needs?”

Commenting upon the diversity of dioceses represented at the Josephinum, Father Manning added, “We have students from all across the United States, and as far away as South America and Asia. Distance shouldn’t keep them from being able to get home for Christmas or even a family emergency.” That’s why the festival will be devoted to collecting funds specifically for seminarians in need.

The Irish Fest has been envisioned not only as a fundraiser, but also as a community-builder and a way that the Josephinum can open its doors to the surrounding neighborhood by organizing and hosting a one-of-a-kind celebration.

Already the seminarians have experienced a deepening brotherhood as they’ve worked with people in the community planning, publicizing and preparing decorations and music for the festival.

“We’ve got guys painting benches, writing articles, lined up to move tables and chairs and collect tickets … We’ve even got the guys in the Irish band practicing,” said Bill Egan, a sensor from the Diocese of Cincinnati.

Will is a member of Easter Rising, the seminary’s own Irish band. Along with Easter Rising, appearing at the Irish Fest will be three outstanding bands: The Kells and The General Guinness Band. As an added attraction, The Shanahan Irish Dancers have volunteered their time and talents; dressed in authentic Irish costumes, their presence will surely bring a bit of the Emerald Isle to the seminary grounds.

For those interested, free ceilidh dancing lessons will be offered by Jim Keenan from 3-4 p.m. Saturday afternoon. Similar to American square-dancing, Irish ceilidhs combine traditional folk songs, called commands, and couples in lines and short sets. With knowledge of a few basic steps, anyone can enjoy this traditional dance.

Mass, presided over by the Josephinum’s rector, Msgr. Paul Langsfeld, will be celebrated at 5 p.m. in St. Turibius oratory, the main chapel at the Josephinum. The music, while respecting the solemnity due to the first Sunday of Lent, will bear a noticeably Celtic character.

The festival itself begins in the seminary’s gymnasium at 6 p.m. The Kells, a Celtic trio, will start the evening out on a fine note. Easter Rising performs at 7:30 p.m., and The Shanahan Dancers and The General Guinness Band take the stage at 8 p.m. Speaking of Guinness, this most Irish of drinks will be available along with other food and drink.

Tickets are now on sale, $12 prepaid or $15 at the door, but space is limited. For those wanting to spend the night, special rates are available from hotels nearby. Please make your reservations today by calling (614) 885-5585.

Bob J. Lengerich is a third-year seminarian at the Pontifical College Josephinum. He has played an active role in the planning of Irish Fest.

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio, will host its first Irish Festival on Saturday, March 4. This event promises to be an evening full of family fun, complete with authentic Irish music, dancing and cuisine. The idea for the event is that of Father Patrick Manning, the Josephinum’s vice rector. He realized that, although the seminary was able to provide its students with basic necessities such as food and heat, it had no discretionary funds to meet more personal needs.

“For example,” Father Manning said, “a seminarian may need some help buying textbooks for the semester or assistance in buying vestments for when he ministers at Mass. Wouldn’t it be great if the seminary itself had a way to address this or other unforeseen needs?”

Commenting upon the diversity of dioceses represented at the Josephinum, Father Manning added, “We have students from all across the United States, and as far away as South America and Asia. Distance shouldn’t keep them from being able to get home for Christmas or even a family emergency.” That’s why the festival will be devoted to collecting funds specifically for seminarians in need.

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Postulator says French nun’s cure could be miracle for Pope John Paul II

ROME (CNS) — The Polish priest charged with shepherding Pope John Paul II’s sainthood cause said he believes the healing of a French nun suffering from Parkinson’s disease could be the miracle needed for the pope’s beatification.

Msgr. Slawomir Oder, postulator of the cause, announced on Italian radio in late January that he had chosen the case of the French nun from among the many apparently miraculous healings people from around the world had reported to him. He told Catholic News Service Jan. 31 that the case involved a French religious who had been diagnosed with Parkinson’s when she was “very young; it was a precocious onset.” Pope John Paul II had suffered from Parkinson’s, a progressive disease that attacks the nervous system.

Polish bishops say Pope Benedict to visit in May

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Polish bishops’ conference announced that Pope Benedict XVI would visit Poland May 25-28.

Vatican Radio reported Feb. 1 that the bishops would visit Warsaw; the Marian shrine at Czestochowa; Wadowice; Krakow, including the former Nazi concentration camp; and Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, a 400-year-old shrine dedicated to Christ’s Passion and Mary’s compassion. Pope John Paul II was born in Wadowice and served as an auxiliary bishop and archbishop of Krakow before being elected pope.

TheKalwaria Zebrzydowska shrine, located about 30 miles outside Krakow, was a place the future Pope John Paul visited as a boy with his father.

Cardinal promises change in sex abuse policies after new cases

CHICAGO (CNS) — A contrite Cardinal Francis E. George promised change Feb. 2 at a meeting of the Chicago Archdiocese of Chicago handles allegations of sexual abuse by priests after removing two pastors from their parishes in the past month. The archdiocese pledged to find a way to temporarily take priests who are accused of sexual abuse out of parish situations before officials even evaluate whether the charges are credible and to work with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services every time a priest is accused — even if the abuse allegedly occurred decades earlier.

The cardinal said at an earlier news conference that the archdiocese had no mechanism to remove Father Daniel J. McCormack as pastor of St. Agatha Parish after police launched an abuse investigation against him because the alleged victim did not make a statement to church officials. The cardinal said at the Jan. 28 news conference that he will ask other bishops for input on what to do in such situations at the March meeting of the Catholic Conference of Illinois and bring it up to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, which he serves as vice president. Another Chicago priest, Father Joseph Bennett, pastor of Holy Ghost Parish in South Holland, was temporarily withdrawn from his parish in early February while the archdiocese’s independent Professional Responsibility Review Board continued its inquiry into his alleged sexual misconduct 35 years ago with minor girls.

U.S. Archbishop Foley has nonmalignant tumor, kidney removed

ROME (CNS) — U.S. Archbishop John P. Foley, president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, underwent surgery Feb. 3 to remove a nonmalignant tumor, but said that, “unfortunately, they also had to take out my kidney.” The archbishop, who was to remain at Rome’s Gemelli hospital at least until Feb. 8, told Catholic News Service Feb. 6 that although he felt “a little bleak” right after the surgery, he was improving quickly. The most surprising thing, he said, was how much attention the operation got on Catholic news sites and blogs, or Web logs. Archbishop Foley, 70, said a blood test he had in the United States showed something wrong, but it was only after further tests and a CT scan that the kidney tumor was diagnosed. A native of Philadelphia, he had been editor of the Catholic Standard & Times, the archdiocesan newspaper. Pope John Paul II named him an archbishop and president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications in 1984.

Jordan’s king talks Islamic moderation to evangelical Christian group

WASHINGTON (CNS) — King Abdullah II of Jordan took his efforts to promote moderation in Islam to the evangelical-dominated National Prayer Breakfast in Washington Feb. 14, during a standing ovation with a speech that quoted the Bible as much as the Quran and warned of the dangers of faith to witness to its positive role in public life by being an example of “the principles transgressed by those who oppose us.” “In every generation, people of faith are tested,” King Abdullah said. “In our own case, the greatest challenge comes from violent extremists who seek to divide and conquer. Extremism is a political movement under religious cover. Its adherents want nothing more than to pit us against each other, denying all that we have in common,” he continued. “We must therefore heed the words of the New Testament: ‘Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.’”

Prayers, support asked for Bishop Sheridan after sister is killed

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (CNS) — The vicar general of the Colorado Springs Diocese asked Catholics to join him in prayer and support for Bishop Michael J. Sheridan after the bishop’s only sister was killed in an apparent murder-suicide. “The circumstances surrounding her tragic death compound the sorrow and sense of loss for our bishop, his mother, nephews and their families,” said Father Donald F. Dunn in a Feb. 2 statement. “Our pledge to Bishop Sheridan is our prayer and support, not only in the present moment, but in the time ahead.”

The bishop has made no public comment about the deaths of his sister, Susan Lockrem, and her ex-husband, Lauren Lockrem, in Indianapolis Jan. 28. According to a report in The Indianapolis Star daily newspaper, police said Lauren Lockrem, 61, killed Susan Lockrem, 57, with a machete and a box cutter, then suffocated himself by putting a plastic bag on his head. The two reportedly had been divorced about six months.

Intelligent design belittles God, says Vatican Observatory director

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (CNS) — The director of the Vatican Observatory criticized intelligent design supporters as belittling God and making “her/him too small and paltry.”

Jesus Father George Coyne said that intelligent design is not science and its view of a designer God is totally different from the Judeo-Christian understanding of God as a creator in which “everything depends upon God, or better, all is a gift from God.” He called it “unfortunate that, especially here in America, creationism has come to mean some fundamentalist, literal, scientific interpretation of Genesis.” Using the Bible “as a source of scientific knowledge will undoubtedly complicate the debate over evolution,” he said. Father Coyne spoke Jan. 31 at Palm Beach Atlantic University’s interdenominational Christian university with 3,100 students in West Palm Beach. He has headed the Vatican Observatory since 1978. A text of his talk was posted Jan. 30 on the Web site of Catholic Online. In a telephone conversation with Catholic News Service, he said he regularly uses the terms “her/him” and “she/he” to refer to God.

St. Paul Church in Orlando Diocese named a minor basilica

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (CNS) — Orlando Bishop Thomas G. Wenski celebrated a special Mass Jan. 25 after receiving the history-making news that Pope Benedict XVI designated St. Paul Catholic Church in Daytona Beach a minor basilica. “It is a great honor for the parish community and the diocese,” said Father Robert W. Thomas, pastor, told The Florida Catholic, Orlando’s diocesan newspaper. Basilica, based on the Greek words for royal and king, “is a title bestowed by the pope on a church of historical and spiritual importance,” the papal document makes clear. The 60th church in the United States to be designated a minor basilica, it is the second church in Florida to receive the honor, after the Cathedral-Basilica of St. Augustine, designated in 1976. It is also the first basilica designated by Pope Benedict.

Ministers, teachers sound warnings about popular Web site

WESTFIELD, Mass. (CNS) — Most teenagers are more than familiar with the networking Web site MySpace.com, where teens post online journals, photos and thoughts and interests to share with others. As youth minister, this has made the 60-year-old author more aware of the growing Web phenomenon, many of them do not like what they see. Pat Sears, a youth minister in the Springfield Diocese, said that at the end of last summer, he was contacted by a student who knew he was acquainted with MySpace.com. An e-mail he received from a teen included a link to the site, which has a reported 50 million users, with another 130,000 being added each day. “The more I looked, the heavier my heart became. There was so much negativity. There were so many pictures that were inappropriate. They were very revealing,” he told The Catholic Observer, Springfield’s diocesan newspaper.

Sears, a father of four young sons, is familiar with the Web site through his youth ministry work and asked them to examine their own personal Web pages “through the eyes of faith.”

The bishop of Hawaii leads a procession to St. Francis Church for Mass in Kaluapapa, Hawaii, Jan. 22, the eve of the feast of Blessed Mother Marianne Cope. The nun, who cared for leprosy patients in a remote part of Molokai island, was beatified at the Vatican May 14. Pictured in front from left are altar server and Kalaupapa resident Randall Watanuki; Sacred Heart Father Joseph Hendriks, pastor of St. Francis; Honolulu Bishop Larry Silva; and Sacred Heart Father Khahn Hoang.
Managing the resources
God has provided: Tips on budgeting

The New Year is well under-way. Many people have made resolutions to tame or improve their finances. Like all New Year resolutions, getting started is often the hardest part. The key to budgeting is to recog-nize and internalize the true need for budgeting finances.

As Catholics, we are foremost called to manage our money in a way that will help us achieve eternal salvation. God is always with us and can be trusted in every situation. The value of these principles will remain with us through the budgeting process of our personal finances when we have children, face health challenges, or are simply trying to retain our financial status by monitoring and controlling our expenses as well.

Personal budgeting can be accomplished by following these simple steps:

1. List all sources of income and expenses.
2. Create a monthly budget by subtracting expenses from income.
3. Stick to the budget and review regularly.
4. Adjust spending as needed.

By KEITH E. DAVIS

The Knechts have 20 grandchildren and three great grandchildren, which includes a little girl adopted from China.

Monica was born in the home in which she currently resides on Ronick Road. Her parents were Justin and Emma Lomont. She was the 10th child of her mother’s 11 pregnancies, with a baby sister, Carolyn Ann, who is eight years younger.

Monica (“Mick”) attended St. Louis Academy, now Central Catholic High School. She went on to St. Joseph School of Nursing and joined the Cadet Corps. She had plans to join the Navy, but did not have to serve because the war ended. She worked at Adams County Hospital and on and off at various companies in occupational health while raising her family.

She was a member of St. Henry Church and St. Jude before moving back to St. LouisBS in 1975. Her youngest three children attended the academy.

Monica is a member of the St. Louis Academy rosary sodality, and her husband, Joe, can still be seen volunteering on electrical (or any other) projects around the church.

Over the years, Knecht has traveled to California, Hawaii, Oklahoma, and Bermuda, to name it a few. She always thought it would be nice to visit England, but her traveling days are through except for visits her and grand children who live all over the United States: Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maine, Massachusetts, Chicago and Indianapolis.

Today’s Catholic begins a new feature in the family section to help parents “brush up” on Catholic vocabulary and strengthen its identity. The following words are taken from the list prepared by the Office of Catechesis. For additional reading, see “The Catechism of the Catholic Church.”

Words associated with the Bible


Apostles – In the New Testament, Jesus had 12 apostles. An apostle is a person who is sent forth to preach the Gospel and others become close followers of Jesus.

Bible – The Bible is a book that contains, in writing, God’s word. Because it contains many smaller books, it is like a small library. It is divided into the Old Testament (46 books) and the New Testament (27 books). In the Old Testament are the stories of our covenant relationship with God. The Ten Commandments can be found in either the Book of Exodus (Ex 20:2-17) or the Book of Deuteronomy (Deut 5:6-21). There is also the Book of Psalms, prayer poems prayed by Christ and still used today.

The New Testament has the four Gospels that tell about the life and work of Jesus. There is also the Acts of the Apostles written by Luke. It also has many epistles (letters), some of which are written by the Apostle Paul and the Book of Revelation.

Commandment – A commandment tells people how they should behave. God gave us the Ten Commandments, his law, to tell us how to live. The first three tell us how we should love God and the other seven are about loving our neighbor.

Covenant – A covenant is an agreement between God and people in the Old Testament. One example is the love and partnership God made with Moses and his people. In the New Testament, Christ’s life, death and resurrection began the new covenant. The people who follow Jesus Christ believe God’s laws keeps this covenant relationship. God is eternally faithful. People, who have free will, can break this covenant with God by not obeying God’s will.

By MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

NEW HAVEN — Monica Knecht became the school librarian at St. Louis Academy in 1981 after her husband, Joe Knecht, “volunteered her” at a HASA meeting. Her sister-in-law, Charlotte Giant, was retiring, and Joe thought now that their 10th child, Kathryn, had graduated from eighth grade, Monica might need something to keep her busy.

Twenty-five years later, Knecht is still helping students “check out their books” each week, which is the part he loves most about her job. She has had many good helpers by her side, including Mary May for many years, Theresa Oberley and now Joanne Oberley. Knecht says they quit doing things because “we aren’t here everyday to keep track of the books, and some of the students would grab back on the shelves without telling us.”

Knecht admits she “knew nothing” when she started this job and “has learned so much.”

Monica lost her first husband, Joe “Jake” Giant, in an automobile accident in 1952. She had four young children at the time. The oldest, Ann, was just three years old. She said she had to rework it “much easier” today recalling those tough years raising babies with no indoor plumbing.

She then married her other, special Joe who was also a widower with little two boys. Their blended family of six grew by four more, and they will celebrate their 46th wedding anniversary this year.

The Knechts marks 25 years as Besancon librarian
Conversing with your friend the Lord God

BY LISA M. PETSCHE

The start of another calendar year is traditionally a time for new beginnings. In our family, though, it turned out to mark another heartache.

My husband’s mother, who had appeared fine on New Year’s Eve and was to join us for a special dinner the next evening, suddenly fell ill on New Year’s morning. By mid-afternoon she was in a hospital intensive care unit. A long, sleepless night followed, our emotions alternating between hope and despair. Unbelievably, Jean died, shorty before dawn, the victim of an insidious infection that had slowly crept throughout her body. We won’t forget.

The fifth of eight children, she grew up during the Great Depression. Tough times were in her family’s bloodline. Her passing has left a hole in our hearts. We are to develop our prayer life by talking to God with our children during the course of the day in the same way we would talk to a friend. When good things are happening, tell God of your gratitude. When you see someone suffering, bring their needs before God in that moment. Each time you begin any task, offer it to God and pray for his guidance.

Finally, St. Alphonsus says it is a big mistake to “enter God’s presence like a slave who, ashamed and full of fear, comes trembling with terror into the presence of a prince.” God desires we come to him with confidence and an open heart — in short, with a great, unself-conscious first graders in Mrs. Grell’s class.

The struggle to speak openly with God is as close to you as your pillow. When you are lying awake at night, and you can tell us if we reveal our deeper side? Is it crazy to talk freely to God? Or

Mrs. Grell explained that she wanted the children to grow up knowing they could tell God anything — and the phone was one way to accomplish this end. When you are worried, she told them, you can talk to God about it, but you are worried when you are hav- ing a wonderful day, talk with God about it. Even if there is something you feel you cannot tell your mother or daddy, you can still confide in God. I was particularly moved by the story Mrs. Grell han- dled the upset of the class on a day when the name-calling, pushing each other and tattling got out of hand on the playground. After dis- cussing what happened, she would gently but firmly sug- gest the phone sometimes in the afternoon to tell God what happened and what they might do differently next time. I suspect many of us adult Catholics might learn something from the spontaneity and simple trust of these first graders. Often we are afraid to let God know our true feelings. Will God really love us if we reveal our deeper side? Is it crazy to talk freely to God? Or somehow disrespectful?

My husband and I, along with his sister and her spouse, have derived some comfort from knowing Jean touched the lives of many people — evidenced by the funeral home turnout and the volume of cards and letters we’ve received. If you could say only one thing about Jean, it would have to be that she generally always came first with her.

The fifth of eight children, she grew up during the Great Depression. Tough times were the hallmark of Jean’s life. She learned at an early age the importance of stick- ing together as a family and sup- porting one another.

As a young, married woman, she returned every Sunday evening to the farm where she grew up, to reconnect with her mother and siblings while her children spent quality time with their cousins.

The lakefront summer cabin that purchased for her wedding — Jean’s little corner of heaven in vacation country — was another gathering spot for family members over the years. (Amazingly, almost everyone at her funeral had spent time there.) She had an open door policy at home, too, welcoming anyone who stopped by with a seat at the kitchen table and a cup of coffee or a cold drink.

As Jean’s world gradually shrunk due to her husband’s death, the sale of the cabin and, most recently, vision loss, rela- tionships took on even more sig- nificance.

She delighted in simple pleas- ures such as a cup of tea in her white; a phone call from an overseas relative; her favorite movie or one of the numerous board games she had on hand. These were the things that made her days worthwhile. She was eager to maintain her independ- ence and remain in her home.

She passed last night, in many ways. In oars, it’s a passing one.

Grandma lived a mere block away from us, we were over at her place all the time. Every spe- cial occasion was celebrated there, too. We’re reminded every day as we drive by her house. Last fall I wrote an article prompted by the death of Jean’s older sister, reflecting on Sunday evenings spent with her and other relatives at the farm. It con- cluded: “Aunt Marjorie’s recent death marks the end of an era. We will sorely miss her presence. Sundays will never be the same.”

Now another gathering spot is gone. Now no day will ever be the same. It’s an ending we weren’t ready for.

It’s also a new beginning for Jean, who has left behind worldly cares and is reunited with her husband, who predeceased her 15 years ago.

It’s also a new, albeit reluctant, beginning for our family. We must learn to live without mom’s and grandma’s tangible presence and find ways to keep her alive in our minds and hearts instead. We won’t forget.

Peace. Jean. Until we meet again.

Lisa M. Petsche is a mother of three and a freelance journalist specializing in family life.
Tips for a happy Catholic marriage

• Pray together. “It takes three to make love,” states Fulton Sheen, one of the best-known Catholic apologists, referring to God. “What binds lover and beloved together on earth is an ideal outside both. As it is impossible to have rain without the clouds, so it is impossible to understand love without God.”

• Give 100 percent effort. Marriage is not a 50/50 proposition, reminds Father James Seculoff, pastor of St. John Parish in South Bend. It requires 100 percent effort on both sides. Don’t keep track of what your spouse is giving, just give your all. Make his favorite dinner. Help her fold the laundry. Mother Teresa advises “Love until it hurts.” Give yourself totally, and you will find true happiness.

• Follow the church’s teachings and reject artificial birth control. Artificial birth control is antithetical to the dignity of the human person. According to the Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning (NFP) is 99 percent effective when practiced properly, God’s laws are meant to bring us to personal fulfillment. Their seeming restrictions actually bring freedom and happiness. For a schedule of NFP classes near you, follow the diocesan link www.diocesefwsb.org/FAMILY.

• Read the writings of the church regarding marriage and the family. “CASTI CANNUBI” (On Christian Marriage), “Humanae Vitae” (“On the Regulation of Human Births”), and “FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO” (“The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World”) are all available at most Catholic book stores or online. They are beautiful documents which can help couples grow in love for one another.

• Make up any disagreements before the day is over. Do not mention the ‘D’ word (divorce), even in jest, says Father Seculoff.

• Listens to one another. This includes giving your spouse your undivided attention. Show your attentiveness with your body language. Sitting up straight, leaning forward and making eye contact all say, non-verbally, “What you are saying is important to me.”

• Look out together. True love does not simply look inward, but reaches outward towards others. When couples raise children they give of themselves and work for a common goal. Some married couples choose to continue reaching out to others after their children are grown through volunteer or charity work. Many childless couples do the same.

• Laugh and have fun together. “Gladness of the heart is the very life of man, cheerfulness prolongs his days.” — Sir 30:22.

• Take care of yourselves. Remember your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. A wife’s body is probably not going to look the way it did before she had children. Nevertheless, she should care for it by eating right and exercising. Likewise, a husband should not “let himself go” either. He should treat his and his wife’s body with respect.

• Recognize that there is tribulation in life. Not every moment of marriage is going to be divine. Love is a choice, and one that must be made over and over. Some scientists say that the love that drove Bonnie and Irv to the altar was not something sublime, but a simple pre-conditioning of wiring of the human species to mate. A recent article in National Geographic even suggests that falling in love may merely be a chemical reaction to various stimuli.

• Apparently, novelty, among other things, triggers dopamine in the brain, which stimulates feelings of attraction. Oxytocin, a hormone that promotes a feeling of connection and relationship, occurs during hugging and repeated positive exposure to another. According to researchers, oxytocin has high levels of oxytocin, mate for life. The article suggests that oxytocin is a major reason that humans mate for life as well. Despite the trappings of romance, is that all that was going on with Bonnie and Irv 43 years ago when they said, “I do”? Are humans basically just like all animals?

The Catholic Church responds with “No.” There is an incomparable difference between the simple “pair bonding” of animals such as prairie voles and the marital union between two human beings. Inherently, Marriage is different. Catechesis of the Catholic Church clearly states that humans have dignity as they are made in the image and likeness of God (CCC 1700). While human may be bound by certain bodily characteristics, which make them similar to physical response to mammals, (oxytocin very well may affect feelings and emotions in humans, for example) men and women have free will, can choose to love and have immortal souls that will live forever, qualities that animals do not share. The dignity of the marriage of two people like Bonnie and Irv far surpasses anything in the mere animal world.

Likewise, a sacramental marriage is elevated from a mere civil union. A sacramental marriage between two baptized persons gives the couple special graces that are not present in non-sacramental marriages, according to Father James Seculoff, pastor at St. John Church in South Bend, who has been a priest for 43 years and has counseled many married couples.

He says, “Sanctifying grace makes a couple’s souls beautiful in the eyes of God. Sacramental grace helps a couple to live their vows. In other words, when the husband or wife starts acting dumb or the kids start to act self-righteous, sacramental grace helps the spouses to say and do the right thing and not feel sorry for themselves. For Catholics, this is the only marriage there is — a sacramental marriage.”

Father Seculoff continues, “Secular marriage would be two non-Catholics. That is a contract that may or may not be broken. It is a legal contract whereas sacramental marriage is not just a contract but a covenant, between you, your spouse, and God.”

No wonder the bond between Bonnie and Irv has strengthened over the years. They are buoyed by the graces that were poured forth as early as their first evening together.

“We started driving to our honey- moon destination — Niagara Falls — at 11 p.m. at night,” says Irv. “On our way to the hotel, we said our first family rosary together. We prayed the glorious mysteries.”

Since then, the Kloskas have prayed many family rosaries as their family grew. The adoption of one, a miscarriage, life-threatening illnesses of two children, the death of another, and a chronic illness of one, which still challenges Irv today.

“Those concerns were the farthest things from my mind,” says Irv. “I added it up once. We have given, our children 200 years of Catholic education. You can’t do that without grace.”

The catechism plainly addresses the topic of grace in a sacramental marriage. “This grace ... is intended to perfect the couple’s love and to strengthen their indissoluble unity. By this grace they ‘help one another to attain holiness in their married life and in welcoming and educating their children’ ... Christ gives (couples) the strength to take up their crosses and to follow him...” (CCC 1642).
Liturgical considerations before marriage

For couples planning weddings, the Office of Worship publishes “Liturgical Norms and Planning Guide: Music for use During the Catholic Rite of Marriage.” These books are available for those in marriage preparation and may be obtained through the parish.

The following are important considerations for couples:

Q. Who sets the rules or rubrics for the rite of marriage?
A. The rubrics contained in the rite of marriage, as approved by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, are normative in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Q. Our wedding coordinator has some great ideas of music that she has heard. But our music director at the parish where we will be married says the music is not appropriate for a Catholic wedding. Who is responsible for determining the music?
A. Commercial wedding coordinators and/or photographers have no jurisdiction in determining the music, what happens ritually or the use of the worship space. The rites and their execution are determined by the norms contained in the rite of marriage, as approved by the Sacred Congregation for Worship and the Disciplines of the Sacraments, and are the responsibility of the local ordinary.

Q. What is involved in marriage preparation?
A. Catechesis for marriage should include the teachings on marriage and the family, on the sacrament itself and its rites, prayers and readings. (Rite #75) This would be the appropriate time to discuss the kind of music acceptable for use at a sacramental rite.

Q. “Our song” is a pop tune. Why can’t we incorporate it in our wedding?
A. Secular music is not acceptable before, during or after the rite within the sacred space. It should be reserved for other settings during the wedding festivities. (See Music in Catholic Worship #23)

Q. What kind of music can we use?
A. The music customarily used at the Sunday Eucharist is illustrative of the kind of music appropriate for the wedding rites. (cf. Music in Catholic Worship #82) A list of hymns suitable for the rite of marriage can be found in most hymnals.

Q. Could we get married on a Sunday?
A. If the marriage is celebrated on a Sunday or solemnity, the Mass of the day is used with the nuptial blessing and the special final blessing according to circumstances. (Rite #11) Adequate catechesis must be given beforehand to the assembly as well as the wedding party to assure that the prayerful quality and precedence of the Sunday Eucharist remains intact.

Q. We want to get married during Lent.
A. When a marriage is celebrated during Advent or Lent or other days of penance, the parish priest should advise the couple to take into consideration the special nature of these liturgical seasons. (Rite #11)

Q. Can a soloist sing everything, including the hymns during the Mass?
A. The music chosen should be accessible to the majority of those present and allow “full, active and conscious participation.”

Q. What decorations are allowed?
A. Enhancing the liturgical setting by the use of appropriate flowers, trees and floral arrangements is to be encouraged, but this, too, should be done in keep-
LITURGY
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

ing with the nature of the setting as liturgical space and with full awareness and respect for the liturgical season. (Rite # 11)

Q. Can we tape the wedding?
A. Video taping should also be done in the spirit of the ceremony as a sacramental rite and should be mindful of the atmosphere of prayer surrounding these rites. It must not be obtrusive or take away from the spirit of reverence and worship.

Q. Why haven’t we seen the unity candle recently at Catholic marriage rites?
A. Since the Eucharist is the source and center of unity, the use of the unity candle should be downplayed. It is not a part of the Catholic rite of marriage, but it could be used effectively at the reception.

Q. Our family has Catholic hymns from our heritage. What does the church say about using them?
A. Just as the great liturgical music of the past is to be remembered, cherished and used, so also the rich diversity of the cultural heritage of the many peoples of our country today must be recognized, fostered and celebrated...liturgical music today must be as diverse and multicultural as the members of the assembly. (Liturgical Music Today, #44-55)

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Online marriage preparation helps couples who can’t attend classes

BY WAYNE LAUGENEN

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (CNS) — Andrew and J’ana Rogers wanted a Catholic wedding, and Colorado Springs Bishop Michael J. Sheridan wanted them well prepared.

But the bishop’s rigorous marriage preparation requirements were a problem for the couple, who could not find a way to attend marriage preparation retreats and classes without J’ana quitting college or Andrew going AWOL — absent without leave.

“Andrew was in the military, and I was working and attending college,” said J’ana Rogers, a student at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, who married Andrew a year ago.

They could have opted for a service with a justice of the peace or a wedding at Andrew’s Methodist church. Instead, they enrolled in CatholicMarriage PrepOnline.com for intense Catholic marriage preparation by correspondence.

The $50 course enabled the couple to set aside several hours on Sunday nights to have serious, heart-to-heart discussions that were essential to answering the essay questions posed by the Web site.

“The fact is, many couples today are separated by hundreds or thousands of miles until they are married, and there are other factors that make it impossible for some couples to attend classes and weekend retreats,” Bishop Sheridan said. “This is much better than giving someone a pass, or having a couple give up on the idea of a Catholic marriage.”

Founded by Christian and Christine Meert, who were hired recently to direct the Office of Marriage and Family Life for the Diocese of Colorado Springs, the online curriculum is catching on in a world where challenges of war, work, college and geographical location sometimes keep young couples from receiving any marriage preparation at all.

“What impresses me most is that this program doesn’t approach marriage preparation exclusively from a psychological and practical perspective,” Bishop Sheridan said. “It takes very seriously the need to teach couples about the divine institution of marriage and the meaning of marriage as a sacrament.”

Using the Web site, couples are required to discuss issues such as sex, contraception, children, drugs, alcohol, extended families, religious beliefs, prayer and communication skills. In writing, they answer questions and share their discussions so that the Meerts and other marriage prep instructors can assess them and offer feedback.

The online classes follow the same format as the live classes the Meerts developed and continue to teach for the Archdiocese of Denver and the Diocese of Colorado Springs. The classes are rooted in Scripture, church teachings and the theology of the body.

The Meerts became involved in marriage preparation in Denver at a time when the archdiocese was expanding and strengthening marriage preparation requirements. Couples in Denver, and now Colorado Springs, spend roughly a year meeting marriage preparation requirements by attending classes and retreats.

Christian Meert said the idea for online marriage preparation came about after a couple in a remote area of Colorado were told by their pastor to go to Denver to do their marriage preparation.

“It was a four-hour drive each way, so we started working with them by e-mail,” he told The Colorado Catholic Herald, newspaper of the Colorado Springs Diocese. “The results were good. They were sharing together in depth, answering questions and reporting on their discussions. They really opened their hearts and examined their spiritual journey.”

Quickly, the Meerts realized they could provide high-end marriage preparation curriculum to five other couples who were not able to be in the Denver Archdiocese long enough or frequently enough to satisfy marriage preparation requirements.

“Working with them online, the results were very encouraging.
so we decided to build a Web site to facilitate real online classes for the masses,” Christian Meert said.

They contacted LogicFocus Inc., whose CEO, James Mackin, is a Catholic who specializes in building Catholic Web sites. “We wanted to work with a Catholic developer who understood what we were trying to achieve and knew how important it was,” Christian Meert said. “This was much more than some e-commerce site for selling widgets.”

Christine Meert said hundreds of couples from all over the world have been granted approval by local church authorities to use the online course to satisfy marriage preparation requirements.

The program has become particularly popular among New York City cops—who find that overtime and erratic schedules interfere with marriage preparation schedules—and soldiers in the Middle East who are planning to wed when they return.

“We’re very pleased that it was available, and our marriage is probably better because of it,” J’ana Rogers said. “He’s Methodist and I’m Catholic, and we didn’t even think that was a big deal until marriage prep online forced us to take a serious look at it, and how it might play out when we have children. It really got us to know each other better before we got married.”

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Church must be the dwelling place of love

Our Holy Father, Benedict XVI, recently issued his first encyclical letter, “Deus Caritas Est” (“God is Love”). In this letter, he shows himself to be a man with his finger on the pulse of the world because what the world is starved for, maybe more than any other time since the coming of Christ, is love, authentic love, God’s love.

Two examples from the encyclical demonstrate how a lack of community is a sign of the broken heart of society. That broken heart has disturbed the life of the human community. First, the Holy Father warns that when love is reduced solely to mean “sex,” then love “has become a commodity, a mere ‘thing’ to be bought and sold, or rather, man himself becomes a commodity...” On the contrary, he now considers his body and his sexuality as the purely material part of himself, to be used and exploited at will.

Is this not one of the most glaring problems in Western society, the exploitation of God’s gift of sexuality, an exploitation that reaches far and wide in our culture? Our Holy Father wishes to help the world understand that the power of passionate love is meant to be integrated and transformed within us as a vehicle to bring us to greater self-giving and sacrifice.

Second, the Holy Father points out that in an era of totalitarian regimes in which various states have attempted to control and “provide” for all human needs, the state cannot provide the one thing that really needs to be deeply, namely, love. The state, which would provide everything, absorbing everything into itself, would ultimately become a mere bureaucracy incapable of guaranteeing the very thing which the suffering person needs — every person — to be human and a personal community. Even the failure of Nazism, communism and various other forms of totalitarianism, we still live in a world where totalitarian states exist. Indeed, all the encyclical points out, the church must be the dwelling place of love, true love, authentic love, God’s love.

Within the Christian family, all should be loved and cared for, and beyond this, the very nature of the church demands that she reach out to the whole human family with our monthly Disciples in Mission pieces, or informative publication, but we also want to provide a hope-filled and share with others.

Today’s Catholic welcomes letters from readers. All letters must be signed and include a phone number and address for verification.

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Tim Johnson, Vince La Barbera and Msgr. J. William Lester.
FEBRUARY 12, 2006

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The 110 wax candles used once a year to light up a sculpture behind the main altar in St. Peter’s Basilica have led some people to think the Vatican really has a feast day for a chair.

Not that it’s just any chair, but the Feb. 22 feast of the Chair of St. Peter, Apostle has much more to do with the symbolism of a chair than with the chair itself.

The distinction, however, is lost on most tourists. However, it is told that Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s famous sculpture in theapse of St. Peter’s Basilica hides the remains of a chair in which St. Peter himself sat.

An official guide to the basilica, edited by Daniele Pergolizzi of the office that oversees the care of the church, said the Vatican hired two archeologists to examine the chair in 1867, but the last time it was displayed publicly. The lay archeologist determined that the acacia frame of the chair could date back to the time of St. Peter, but the oak, iron and ivory date to the ninth century. However, the Jesuit archeologist said the entire chair was from the ninth century.

The debate was not settled until Pope Paul VI set up a new commission in 1967 to study the chair. The commission members agreed with the Jesuit.

But the feast, Pergolizzi said, “has nothing to do with that chair.”

“The institution of the feast clearly was not because Peter sat on that chair; rather the chair is a symbol of the fact that he sat here in Rome as bishop,” said Father Diego Ravelli, an official in the Vatican archivist’s office who is writing his thesis on the feast of the Chair of St. Peter.

Father Ravelli said that already in 534, the year in which the “Chronographia Romana,” a calendar of civic and religious observances, was written, a liturgy for the feast was listed in the “Chronographia Romana,” a calendar of civic and religious observances.

Adapted from an ancient Roman memorial service honoring the head of an important family or clan, it was, for centuries the feast celebrated “the beginning of the episcopacy of St. Peter.”

However, the pope, as the temporal power of the pope grew and as the church suffered divisions, “the focus slowly transferred to the primacy, the authority of Peter” and, therefore, of the pope as his successor.

THE VATICAN LETTER
(INDY WOODEN)

Father Ravelli said primacy and authority are naturally part of the idea of celebrating a chair, if the term is thought of like a chair at a university, held by a particularly intelligent and wise professor. But he said his research showed that the primary focus of the feast for centuries was on the role of St. Peter and his successors as the servants of the unity of the entire church.

The pope’s role as servant is emphasized both in Bernini’s sculpture and in prayers for the feast day liturgy written after the Second Vatican Council, Father Ravelli said.

While the Gospel reading for the Mass has remained the story of Jesus giving the “keys of the kingdom” to St. Peter, the second reading, according to Ravelli, is more important to understanding the readings.

As did leprosy, sin leads to misery. Jesus, the dominant form of Christianity in that area now?

Jesus heals what separates us

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

SGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Mc 4:40-45

This week Jesus and the Galilean crowd get into a heated discussion about who was the greatest of the Jewish leaders. When the question is raised of the importance of public recognition, Jesus uses the example of the sower to illustrate that the truly important thing is faith in God. Just as the sower shared his seeds with all the birds, the truly great person will be judged according to how he or she has shared God’s love with others.

Jesus teaches us to look beyond human recognition.

CATEQU’IZ’EM

By Dominic Campiljson

In February, the church remembers Sts. Cyril and Methodius, “Apostles to the Slavs.” This quiz takes a look at Christianity amongst the Slavs.

1. Cyril and Methodius ministered to Eastern Europe. When was this?
   a. the 9th century b. the 10th century c. the 11th century

2. Although this area is dominated by Slavs, it is not a completely accurate description of the population. Why?
   a. The word Slav can only be used for converts from Islam. b. The term Slavic cannot be used for the non-Christs. c. Some of the peoples, e.g. Romanians and Hungarians, are not Slavs.

3. What is the dominant form of Christianity in that area now?
   a. Catholicism b. Orthodoxy c. Anglicanism

4. Church historians say that general umbrella (answer to number 3) generally recognizes the pope only as?
   a. Supreme Head of the Church b. Leader of the Western World c. First among equals

5. Rather than looking to Rome, they (q. 4) often recognize the historical role of this patriarchy?

6. What is the current name and location of that (q. 5) city?
   a. Sofia, Bulgaria b. Istanbul, Turkey c. Bratislava, Slovakia

7. These churches have counterparts that are in communion with Rome. What term was formerly used of these latter churches?
   a. Renegade b. Old Believers c. Uniate

8. What is significant about the liturgy of these Eastern churches in communion with Rome?
   a. They use the western (Latin) liturgy but in Greek. b. They use a liturgy very similar to that used by their Orthodox counterparts. c. They use the Tridentine liturgy (Latin Mass) but in the national language.

9. Similar to the Orthodox, Eastern Catholic Churches use these much more than statutes to decorate their churches:
   a. icons b. dirges c. vestments

10. Eastern Catholic priests (in the East) often differ in one significant way from their Latin Rite brothers:
   a. They are bilingual. b. They are uneducated. c. They are married.

11. In most of the Eastern Christian areas, the faithful were persecuted by these twin horses of the 20th century:
   a. fascism and communism b. inflation and indifference c. materialism and ecumenism

12. Catholic and Orthodox relations, historically troubled, were made worse by the communist practice of:
   a. forcing Orthodox Christians to become Eastern Rite Catholics b. forcing Eastern Catholics to become Orthodox c. forcing Eastern Orthodox Christians to become Catholic

13. What event in the 80s and 90s signaled a rebirth for many Eastern Churches?
   a. the fall of Constantinople b. forcing Eastern Catholics to become Orthodox c. The Term Slavic cannot be used for the non-Christs.

14. However, since this event (question 13), the Catholics in many Eastern nations have had difficulties:
   a. getting a liturgy approved by Rome. b. getting their property, such as churches, back. c. getting people to attend Mass in Latin.

15. Both Orthodox and Eastern Catholics have recently faced another threat in their homelands:
   a. aggressive proselytization by evangelicals flooding in to newly available territories b. lack of affordable property to build churches c. The high cost of vestments and a ban on wine in Muslim areas

ANSWERS:

1. a, 2.c, 3.b, 4.c, 5.b, 6.b, 7.c, 8.b, 9.a, 10.c, 11.a, 12.b, 13.c, 14.b, 15.a

609X57
Consecrated or dedicated, churches are for sacred use

The new Code of Canon Law speaks of consecrations and dedications. Consecrations are sacramentals, similar to blessings, but they are of greater importance. A sacrament is instituted by the church to induce us to receive the sacrament. A sacrament, however, is instituted by Christ and cannot be substantially changed or abolished. The church, though, can create new sacramentals and suppress old ones.

Sacramentals may be things or actions, such as holy water, palms, ashes, candles, scapulars, blessings, dedications, consecrations. Clerics, such as bishops or deacon, are the ordinary ministers of sacramentals. However, a lay person may be an extraordinary minister of certain sacramentals in the absence of a cleric, or by assisting a cleric with a large crowd of people, in the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday.

Canon Law now uses the word “consecrate” or “sacramental” that are persons or things, such as the consecration of virgins or the consecrations of chis, i.e., the oil used in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and holy orders. The consecration of chis belongs exclusively to the bishop. The minister for the consecration of virgins is the bishop who is the local ordinary.

Although persons and things are consecrated, places, such as churches and altars, are dedicated. The Commentary on Canon Law says the places that are dedicated must be solely and permanently destined for assembling the people of God and carrying out sacred functions. The ordinary minister of dedications, but a priest may perform a dedication in certain situations.

Concerning the dedication of a church, Canon 1214 defines a church as a sacred building designated for divine worship with which the faithful have the right of entry for the exercise of divine worship. The most common places of churches are cathedrals and parish churches, and they are subject to the authority of the diocesan bishop. Distinct from churches is the oratory for the benefit of a community or group of faithful and the private chapel. A sacred place is the benefit of one or more physical persons.

With the church, the faithful have a right to go there. After a new church has been built, it is to be dedicated as soon as possible, before it is used for divine worship. The commentary says this brings out fully the symbolism and meaning of the rite of dedication, because, without a dedication or blessing, it is not a sacred place. Although the Roman Code now speaks of the “dedication” of a church, the Eastern Code uses the term “consecration” of a church, rather than dedication. Canon 1210 speaks of sacred and profane uses of the dedicated church. It says only those things, which are in a way promotion or promotion of worship, piety, or religion, are permitted in a sacred place. A pastor could give permission for the church to be used for a concert of sacred music, a sacred drama or a retreat conference.

Benedict XVI and the divine love story

G erman journalist Peter Hoenig once posed a question to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger: why is the Catholic faith so popular in certain parts of the world? The answer, he says, is a “yes” to humanity, most dramatically revealed in the Incarnation, when God entered the human world in order to redeem it. If the church has to say “no” sometimes, that “no” is in service to a higher “yes.”

The theologian of the encyclical is in its first part, however, and here, four ideas seemed particularly striking.

First, Pope Benedict teaches that God’s relationship to the world is best understood as a love story, not as a relationship of power that expresses itself in a contest of wills. The God who comes into history in search of man does so precisely to draw men and women into a communion of love — with each other and with the Triune God in Christ. As God’s love enters ever more deeply into our lives, the pope writes, “self-abandonment to God increases and God becomes our joy.”

Second, the pope suggests that the image of God in a culture will have a profound effect on that culture’s image of man. The fundamental condition of a culture is not derived from its family patterns, its way of doing politics, or its methods of allocating goods and services. Rather, cultures take their basic direction from what they worship: from the way in which a culture imagines the divine, thinks of the divine (if it imagines that the divine can be “thought”), and relates to the divine. To believe in and worship a God who is love “all the way through” (as Thomas More puts it in “A Man for All Seasons”) gives Christian cultures a distinctive view of the human enterprise in all its dimensions.

Which brings us to a third point Benedict makes, if briefly: warped ideas of God lead to warped ideas of human, warped understandings of human relationships and, ultimately, warped politics. When Pope Benedict speaks of “a world in which the name of God is sometimes associated with vengeance or even a duty of hatred and violence,” it is not difficult to imagine at least one of the primary referents of the phrase. In that sense, jihadism Islam in mind here is also suggested by his address to the diplomatic corps at the Vatican on Jan. 9, when he spoke of a danger that had been “rightly” described as “a clash of civilizations.”

Finally, the pope neatly links the two great commandments, reminding us that one can love our neighbor because we have been first loved by God. Love of neighbors is thus not the experience of love by which God has first graced us, rather than one obedi ece to an order from an external authority. A great teacher and an acute cultural analyst sits in the Chair of Peter.

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

GEORGE WEIGEL

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Finally, the pope neatly links the two great commandments, reminding us that one can love our neighbor because we have been first loved by God. Love of neighbors is thus not the experience of love by which God has first graced us, rather than one obedient to an order from an external authority. A great teacher and an acute cultural analyst sits in the Chair of Peter.

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

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Brain dead means dead

A few months ago, during a CNN interview segment dealing with the Terri Schiavo case, a reporter asked me a defining question. He wondered why Catholics have to do everything possible to keep people alive who are basically brain dead. He took it for granted that Terri Schiavo was an instance of this and seemed perplexed that she had to be fed at all.

Wrapped up in his line of questioning was a double error. First, of course, Terri was not a brain dead individual. She was suffering from a serious brain injury—a person with a disability. Second, whenever somebody is in fact brain dead, they are dead, and we do not have an obligation to “keep them going.” All machines can be turned off at any time after the declaration of brain death, because brain-dead individuals are corpses, not patients. This is the harsh reality.

One can choose to keep the life-support machines running a little while longer so as to sustain organs for transplantation, but such a decision is optional, not obligatory. Brain death is well understood by the general public, but four points can help clarify some of the more common misconceptions.

• First, brain death refers to the fact that both the higher and lower centers of the brain have died. The individual has undergone a traumatic event resulting in the complete and irreversible cessation of all brain functions. Those portions of the brain that allow a person to breathe on their own have also ceased to function. If somebody were to declare that a patient who was breathing on his own was brain dead, such a claim would necessarily be false. Brain-dead people are unable to breathe on their own and always require the support of a ventilator.

• Second, brain-dead people cannot be kept on machines forever. In fact, there is usually a period of only a few days that it may be possible to extend the functioning of their organs by keeping them on a ventilator. Whenever the technical-scientific determination of the brain-stem, so blood pressure, electrolyte levels, temperature regulation, and other systems will soon get all “out of whack.” Disinheritation will inevitably set in. Heart contractions will typically cease in brain-dead individuals after a few days despite continuing ventilator support.

• Third, brain death is altogether different from a persistent vegetative state (PVS). A PVS often involves brain death, but never death of the whole brain. Genuinely brain-dead individuals never “wake up.” Patients in a PVS occasionally do. The higher centers of the brain may be compromised in PVS patients, while the lower brain centers that control breathing and other basic physiological functions are probably still intact. A PVS patient is not in the healthcare arena even begin to know how to search for answers.

• Fourth, defining brain death as the irreversible cessation of all functions of the brain-stem, is compatible with a Christian understanding of the true nature of man. Pope John Paul II once put it this way during his address to the 18th International Congress of the Transplantation Society: “Here it can be said that the criteria currently adopted in more recent times for ascertaining the fact of death, namely the complete and irreversible cessation of all brain activity, if rigorously applied, does not seem to conflict with the essential elements of a sound anthropology.” He went on to conclude: “In this regard, it is helpful to recall that the death of the person is a single, consistent, and total disintegration of that unity and integrated whole that is the personal self. . . . The death of the person, understood in this primary sense as economic and scientific method can identify directly. Yet human experiences show that once death occurs certain biological signs inevitably follow, which medicine has learned to recognize with increasing precision. In this sense, the ‘certified with ascertaining death used by medicine today should not be understood as the technical-scientific determination of the exact moment of a person’s death, but as a scientifically secure means of identifying the biological signs that a person has indeed died.’”

In conclusion, both healthcare professionals and the lay public can benefit from a clear understanding of the criteria for brain death and of the misconceptions associated with this end-of-life situation. Armed with this knowledge, they can more effectively participate in final decision making on behalf of brain-dead individuals and their families.

Developing a good conscience

BY ROSIE LAHRMAN

M any people inquire about the proper way to develop a good conscience so that they can make good health care decisions — either for themselves or for others whom they care for. It is important to note that Health care technology is so vast and constantly making improvements and changing rapidly. Donor organ transplantation is not in the healthcare arena even begin to know how to search for answers.

In the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care (ERD) given to us by the USCCB, it says this in the introduction: “In times of new medical discoveries, rapid technological development and revolutionary change, what is new can either be an opportunity for genuine advancement in human culture, or it can lead to an injustice and to practices that are contrary to the true dignity and vocation of the human person.”

Health care treatment can do something, the bishops remind us here, doesn’t mean that we should, and it doesn’t necessarily mean that it is morally permissible either.

The ERD goes on to say that, “As new medical technologies and new technologies expand, each person must form a correct conscience based on the moral norms for proper health care.”

So, allow me to make an unreasonable medical situation. Let’s say a father of a family becomes ill with a disease — treatable, but not curable. It causes pain, and it is costly to treat. And let’s say that it was found to be genetic, and all of his children now carry the same disease.

His doctor suggests that he can heal everyone in the family if one of the family members would die for the purpose of healing the rest. He could require specific cells to line up to accurately discover the problem and then use the cells of a brain-dead family member to regenerate healthy ones for the rest of the family. Does the family should consider allowing the father or one of the children to sacrifice his life for the others? If you say no, you’ve also considered some form of good conscience. Here the situation is not recommended even for the other family member’s lives, but for their comfort and financial stability.

But, take one case, only the father aborts a baby in the womb for the sake of healing others — the human dignity of this baby is not at all simply because he/she is in the womb, is it?

No matter how important a person may be, or how precious the disease, injury or illness — the church remains consistent and relies on the principle of human dignity that not one human life should be taken for the sake of another. This principle of human dignity according to the National Catholic Bioethics Center “identifies the intrinsic value and dignity of each human being. The source of this human dignity is the person’s likeness in the image of God, Imago Dei.”

This is how the church responds to all of humanity — as one family. In the document “Declaration on Euthanasia” given to us by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (May 1980), it states: “Human life is the basis of all life. All people regard life as something sacred and hold that no one may dispose of it at will, but believers see in life something more precious than the gift of God’s love, which they are called upon to preserve.”

One cannot treat another as property or material for the benefit of one or more persons. Each of his or her rights are protected.

“Catholic health care ministry is rooted in a commitment to promote and defend human dignity, this is the key to our ethical approach in presenting the sacredness of every human life from the moment of conception until death.”

The purpose of the ERD is twofold: “First, to reaffirm the ethical standards of behavior in health care that flow from the gifting of human life and teaching about the dignity of the human person; second, to provide authentic guidance on certain moral issues that face Catholic health care today.”

There are many places we can turn to under the Church’s Papal documents, Catholic ethicists, the National Catholic Bioethics Center and Catholic Health Care Services to help us navigate the complex climate that surrounds the distribution of Communion. A proper distribution on the part of the recipient requires that he or she understand what he or she is receiving and the importance of deep reverence for the eucharistic elements. Anytime one transmits something from one person to the other, there is some health risk. Toppling the host from hand to hand has risks. At the same time, reception one from another. Fragile is the risk of transmitting saliva from one person to another.

MSGR. M. FRANCIS MANNION

How best to receive?

Question: Where did the present practice of receiving Communion in the hand come from? Is it found in the early church, or is it something recent? Is receiving on the tongue more reverent? Which way of receiving Communion is healthier?

Answer: For the first 1,000 years in the life of the church, Communion was received in the hands of the minister. It was commonly reserved for the eucharistic controversies near the turn of the millennium. Communion began to be received on the tongue. It met certain fear began to intermingle with respect for the Eucharist, so that people did not wish to touch the eucharistic host with their hands.

After the reforms that came from the Second Vatican Council, the practice of receiving Communion in the hand became an option. In the United States, the practice was approved in 1976.

The matter of a reverent attitude toward the Eucharist has been the topic of many discussions in recent years. In the fourth century, Cyril of Jerusalem offered a thought provoking reminder of the dignity of eucharist in the hands of the hand.

He wrote: “When you approach the altar, do not touch your open hands or having your fingers spread out, but make the left hand into a throne for the right which shall receive the King, and then cup your open hand and the body of Christ, reciting the “Amen.” Then sanctify with all care your eyes by touching the Sacred Body, and receive it. But be careful that no particles fall, for what you lose would be to you as if you had lost some of your members. Tell me, if anybody had given you gold do not touch it with all care, and watch lest some of it fall and be lost to you? Must you not hold it more carefully with that which is more precious than gold and diamonds, so that no particles are lost?”

He was not urging more intrinsically reverent about receiving either in the hand or on the tongue. Everything depends on the attitude of the one receiving and the general climate that surrounds the distribution of Communion. A proper distribution on the part of the recipient requires that he or she understand what he or she is receiving and the importance of deep reverence for the eucharistic elements. Anytime one transmits something from one person to the other, there is some health risk. Toppling the host from hand to hand has risks. At the same time, reception one from another. Fragile is the risk of transmitting saliva from one person to another.

MSGR. M. FRANCIS MANNION

PASTORAL ANSWERS

How to pray?

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D., earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a frequent speaker, wrote extensively on moral and religious topics, and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia.

FEBRUARY 12, 2006

COMMENTARY 19

BY FATHER TAD PACHOLCZYK

The most important thing is to remember that we are making a gift of our life and its elements to the Lord and the Church. This is a gift of love and gratitude to the source of all life and love. It is a way we reaffirm the dignity of every human life. It is a way we remember that we are called to be saints and not just respectable citizens.

When we go to Communion in the hand, we are not just handing over our body to the Lord, but we are also offering our hands. This is a sign of respect and reverence for the eucharistic elements. When we receive Communion in the hand, we are not just offering our body to the Lord, but we are also offering our hands. This is a sign of respect and reverence for the eucharistic elements.

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BY ELMER J. DANCH

SOUTH BEND — The two division leaders in the Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) managed to hold on to their top spots with undefeated Corpus Christi in the John Bosco West division and St. Jude in the Martin de Porres East division blazing undefeated paths as the league now enters the late stages of the campaign.

The Corpus Christi Cougars edged Christ the King in a 42-40 white-knuckle finish in which the lead changed hands in multiple fashion. Andy Klimek hit the winning points as time expired. He tossed in 13 points and received help from Michael Kendrickz with 12 points and from Matt Mackowiak with 11 points. Tim Bishop of the Kings posted 15 points and Adam Dyczko with 12 points led Christ the King.

The Kings remained only two games behind the top-ranked Cougars and remain confident of catching up with the leaders even though the season is now in the later stages.

St. Jude rolled over St. Michael of Plymouth, 39-23, to hold a one game advantage over St. John the Baptist. St. John rolled over St. Adalbert, 55-16, as Jacob Kuczynski threaded the nets for 21 points for the highest shared performance of the day. He has been the team’s leading point getter all season.

St. Bavo of Mishawaka beat sister city rival St. Joseph, 35-26, to hold a commanding three-game overall lead in the Martin de Porres East division. Jordan Milligan fired home 21 points for the victors to share high scoring honors of the day with Kuczynski. Aaron Bulger had 14 points for St. Joseph.

St. Thomas of Elkhart maintained its two game leadership in the John Bosco East division with a 42-39 win over St. Anthony in a fiesty skirmish down to the waning minutes. Joshua Rikonken led the Elkhart team with 11 points, including three at the finish.

In other games, St. Joseph of South Bend defeated St. Matthew, 49-37, with Matt Konkey collecting 13 points for the victors. Matthew Clark with 12 and Greg Weaver with 11 points paced St. Joseph.

St. Pius of Granger upended St. Monica, 39-21. St. Pius was led by Greg Janowski with 10 points. In the junior varsity Colors Division, Christ the King Blue defeated St. Jude Green, 34-19; Holy Family Blue downed St. Thomas Gold, 42-17; St. Joseph, South Bend, Blue beat St. Anthony Maroon, 43-41; St. Thomas White beat Corpus Christi Red, 37-29; and St. Thomas Maroon beat St. Matthew Black, 34-19.

Complete division and overall standings:

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For Information: Contact Mike Palmer for more information at (260) 747-6918

BISHOP LUERS BASKETBALL CAMP Bishop Luers High School will host a basketball camp for grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 beginning Sunday, Feb. 12, and ending March 26. The cost is $30.

Grades 4, 5 and 6 are from 4-5:30 p.m. and grades 7 and 8 are from 5:30-7 p.m. Contact Mike Palmer for more information at (260) 747-6918
Joan M. Bobay, sports writer, dies at 74

FORT WAYNE — Today’s Catholic sports writer Joan M. Bobay died Jan. 31 at Parkview Hospital in Fort Wayne. She was 74.

Bobay, a freelance writer for Today’s Catholic, covering Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) sports and high school athletics, was a pioneer in the media. She compiled her articles for Today’s Catholic in a scrapbook. Family reported that she wrote over 1,600 articles.

She explained to Today’s Catholic in a 2005 interview that her first job after graduating from Indiana University with a degree in language arts was at WKJG-TV Channel 33 (now WISE-TV) “just as they were preparing to go on the air. I hired on as a continuity writer,” and by the time she left, three years later, to get married, “I was public service director.”

Bobay’s father, Joseph Carlin, influenced her love for words and writing, as well as sports. Carlin enjoyed crossword puzzles, and soon Bobay was sharing that pastime with him. A native of Garrett, she attended St. Joseph School there.

She often told Today’s Catholic editor, Tim Johnson, her father insisted that she also get a degree in teaching. Bobay taught a few years and was a substitute teacher at St. Vincent de Paul School, Fort Wayne, which her children attended.

Back surgery about 11 years ago created mobility problems for Bobay. She wrote her stories from her home and used the telephone to contact coaches, often late into the evening on Sundays, to meet the Monday deadline. She also wrote for the Fort Wayne News-Sentinel and was editor of her subdivision’s newsletter. One of her proudest achievements was her involvement with the St. Vincent de Paul Parish history book. “I will miss Joan,” said editor Johnson. “I looked forward to her sports copy arrived in e-mail. Sports writing takes a special knack and a creative imagery of words. Joan had that skill. She also had a great love for the church, her family, our Catholic schools, her parish and community.”

When the TV Mass moved to the University of Saint Francis, Joan would attend with her family. Her son-in-law, Bob Nicola, and her son, John, are volunteers at the TV Mass.

“I consider her an inspiration,” added Johnson. “Despite her mobility difficulties, she found a way to pursue her love for writing, keeping in contact with coaches, athletic directors and, in general, having a keen awareness for CYO and high school athletics in the Fort Wayne area. She is also a pioneer. In college, Joan was told that women would not be able to write sports. I guess she showed those professors that women could be great sports writers.”

Survivors include son, Terry Bobay of Fort Wayne; daughter, Peggy (Bob) Nicola of Fort Wayne; son, John (Theresa) Bobay of Fort Wayne; three grandchildren, Elizabeth, Amy and Bobby Nicola; mother, Helen Carlin of Garrett; and brother, Bill Carlin of Garrett. She was preceded in death by her husband, Alfred, in 1996.

Mass of Christian Burial was Feb. 3 at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church. In lieu of flowers, memorials to televised Mass c/o Catholic Communications, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, 915 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802, was requested.
Books look at relationships from a Catholic perspective

“Real Life, Real Love, Seven Paths to a Strong and Lasting Relationship,” by Father Albert Cutie Berkley Hardcover, ISBN: 0-525-20542-8

Father Albert Cutie has become a recognized name in the Catholic Church and Latino market. He has been dubbed “Father Oprah” by his fans and reaches millions through his syndicated daily newspaper column, television talk shows and through internationally broadcast radio and television shows. He is the author of “Real Life, Real Love,” which discusses the following:

- Why some relationships are surviving, but not thriving; the intimacy of opinions – when relationships begin to be challenged; confidently sharing our feelings; the intimacy of faults, fears and failures and becoming free to be yourself; 10 reasons people don’t have great relationships; and designing a great relationship — what is your essential purpose?

- What about God? Do you think God has favorites? Does God love the holy, deeply spiritual people better than those of us who struggle and sometimes fall into sin? Does God favor Christians over Muslims, or Jews over Hindus? Do those who obey church rules perfectly fair better than those who sometimes find them difficult? Are there strings attached to God’s love? Will God love us only if we do certain things and act certain ways?

On the contrary, as St. Paul says somewhere in one of his letters, “God’s love shows no partiality.”

God loves every thing and every person he created. And the amazing part of it all is that God loves each of us individually and personally. God is interested in you and in me no matter what we are or what we do or fail to do. God’s love is not general. I actually think sin can be refusing to accept God’s love for us.

Related to this, despite what some people may believe or have erroneously been taught, we cannot earn God’s love. We don’t have to do anything to get it. Some people work so hard saying prayers and obeying all the rules that they forget this fact. There is no way we can earn our way to heaven. Jesus already saved us by the sacrifice of his life.

Does this unconditional love that God lavishes on us give us a license to sin? On the contrary, what we are called to do is to live in such a way that we show our gratitude for his love, which is ultimately expressed in the death and resurrection of Jesus. If we truly love God, then we will want to return that love by the lives we live. We can’t; nor do we need to earn God’s love, but like in all loving relationships, it is natural to want to reciprocate. We will want to show our love to him. God doesn’t need our love, but we need to share ours with him. And the best way to show God we love him is to love the people and things he created.

It is not uncommon for children to try to please their parents, thinking that will get them to love them more. Sometimes you hear one child ask which of his or her brothers and sisters a particular parent loves the most. As human beings, it is natural to like some people, even children, more than we like others. This is not true with God. He came to save all men and women.

When Jesus became a human being, we all became God’s favored ones. God revealed his love for us in Jesus and through Jesus to the world.

When someone is truly loved, that person usually wants to share that love with others. People who do not experience love in their lives usually have difficulty loving others. If we truly believe God loves us and experience God’s love, we will want to share that love.

Each one of us is God’s favorite, and God’s love is unconditional and a free gift. It is up to us to spread this message to those who do not know this. The best way to do this is by being a loving person ourselves, because the ordinary way God shows his love is through us. This is a big responsibility. Are you willing to accept it?

Maybe during this upcoming season of Lent you can think of concrete things you can do to be a more loving person — not just to your friends and family members but to others not in these categories. You won’t get any brownie points in heaven, but you will show God your gratitude for his unconditional love.

Sister Margie Lavonis, CSC, a former campus minister and vocation director, works for the Sisters of the Holy Cross communications department. mlavonis@csccsisters.org.

Ten individuals made their commitment as associates of the Congregation of Divine Providence at Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne on Feb. 5. Pictured from left to right are Mike Gibson, Elise Goodman, Debbie Leitner, Sarah Hendricks, Nathan Proulx, Steve Brown, Keri Peters, Jeannie Eiserle and Sister Gloria Ann Fiedler, CDP. Not pictured are Rose Henry and Janice Martin.

Goshen parish welcomes Catholics home

GOSHEN — St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Goshen is offering a six-week session, “Welcoming Catholics Home,” designed to reintroduce those who have been away from the faith to look again at the faith in a small-group setting. The next session begins Thursday, Feb. 16.

Topics of discussion include changes in the church since Vatican II. The sessions are for those who have been away from the Catholic Church for awhile and are considering returning. No matter how long they have been away, no matter the reason, the doors are open to welcome them back.

For more information or to sign up, call Marsha Meyer at (574) 537-0250.

Provided by the Office of Campus and Young Adult Ministry.

Young Adults Commit as Associates

Today’s Catholic February 12, 2006
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: flogan@fwdiocesefwbs.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 to purchase space.

FUNDRAISERS

Las Vegas night planned by NASA
South Bend — The St. Jude Home and School Association is sponsoring Las Vegas Night Saturday, Feb. 11, from 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. at the parish, 19704 Johnson Rd. Free admission, concession stand, cash bar, 50/50 raffle and gaming tables of all varieties.

Truck raffle supports school
Decatur — The second annual truck raffle award a new 2006 Chevy Silverado 1500 or Ford F-150, or $15,000 cash. $1,000 in cash prizes will also be awarded. (1-$500, 5-$100.) Tickets can only be sold to individuals who are 21 or older. The price for one ticket is $20 or 6-$100 (all six must be in the same name). The drawing will be held on April 23, the winner need not be present to win. Tickets are available from any St. Joseph School family and several local businesses, or by calling the school office at (260) 724-2765.

St. Aloysius Knights host raffle
Yoder — The St. Aloysius Knights of Columbus Council 11142 is hosting a raffle with proceeds used towards the loan on classroom and activity center addition. Total cash prizes add up to $30,000. Only 300 tickets will be sold. First prize is $10,000; second prize is $3,000; third prize is $1,000; fourth prize is $500. The drawing is scheduled for Feb. 26 if all tickets are sold. Tickets remain to be sold at that date, add 30 days for drawing. Tickets are $100 each. Additional rules on back of entry apply. For information, contact Tim Sorg at (260) 622-4861 or Steve Heckler at (260) 622-7796.

Fish and tenderloin dinner
Fort Wayne — St. Peter Church will have an Ed Fox fish and tenderloin dinner in the new pavilion on the corner of DeWald and Warsaw streets on Friday, Feb. 24, from 4 to 7 p.m. Adults $7, children 4-10 $4 and children under 4 free.

Family style dinner and dance
South Bend — St. Aidan/Parish will have a family style Polish dinner and dance on Saturday, Feb. 26, starting at noon. Tickets are $13 per person by advance sale only and are available from the parish office by calling (574) 288-5708 by Monday, Feb. 20.

Knights plan spaghetti dinner
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61522 S. Ironwood Dr., will have an all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner on Friday, Feb. 17, from 5 to 7 p.m. Adults $6, children (5-12) $3.

Cathedral youth group plans breakfast
Fort Wayne — The youth group of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception will have a pancake and sausage breakfast following the 7:30 and 9:30 a.m. Masses on Sunday, Feb. 12 and March 26. Proceeds will send youth to YCLI Camp. Adults $5, children under 10 $3, families $12.

Scouts plan breakfast
Fort Wayne — St. John the Baptist Boy Scout Troop is hosting a pancake and sausage breakfast on Sunday, Feb. 19, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. John’s PAC. Proceeds will be used to buy a new Scout trailer for Troop 19.

MISC. HAPPENINGS

Pilgrimage to EWTN
Fort Wayne — A pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Irondele, Ala., will be May 16-19. Pilgrims will attend the Wednesday evening live show and visit Mother Angelica’s Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Tickets start at $215. Several priests will be in attendance. For information call (260) 639-3788.

All class reunion committee to meet
Fort Wayne — The next meeting of the Central Catholic High School All Alumni Class Reunion Committee will be on Monday, Feb. 20, at 7 p.m. at Bishop Dwenger High School. The CCHS All Alumni Class Reunion will be Saturday, June 24, at the coliseum.

Teaching Mass and chili supper
Bluffton — A Teaching Mass will take place at St. Joseph Parish on Sunday, Feb. 19, at 3:30 p.m. A chili supper will immediately follow the Mass.

Baby shower helps Women’s Care Center
Fort Wayne — The women of St. Joseph Parish, corner of Brooklyn and Hale Ave., will host a baby shower on Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 7 p.m. in the church basement. Bring a baby gift as a donation. The gifts will be given to the Women’s Care Center.

REST IN PEACE

Joan M. Bobay, 74, St. Vincent de Paul
Helen L. Gratts, 90, St. Jude
Jane F. Bero, 80, Sacred Heart
Emmanuel D. Chavarria, 79, St. Patrick
Sara M. Moning, 84, St. Mary
Helen F. Plasterer, 84, St. Vincent de Paul
Garrett Paul J. Johnson, 83, St. Joseph
Mishawaka: Sister M. Elizabeth Marcus, OSF 83, St. Francis Convent
Victor G. Sergeant, Jr., 81, St. Joseph
Edna M. Febbo, 93, Queen of Peace
Notre Dame: Father John F. Lahey, CSC, 62, Basilica of the Sacred Heart

Culver
Sheila T. Hopkins, 70, St. Mary of the Lake
Decatur
Virginia A. Litchfield, 91, St. Mary of the Assumption
Theresa R. Teeple, 65, St. Mary of the Assumption
Donaldson
Sister Marien Platzke, PHJC, 92, Catherine Kasper Home
Elkhart
Brendan A. O’Mara, 86, St. Thomas the Apostle
Fort Wayne
Suzanne M. Beckstedt, 53, Queen of Angels
Robert A. Shouedel, 82, Vf. Charles Borromeo
John E. Vail, 84, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
Dolores A. Wells, 67, St. Vincent de Paul
George Furman, 55, St. Charles Borromeo

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Soaring to new heights

St. Adalbert is growing stronger every year. In 2001-2002, 98 students were enrolled in our school; now we have 155. Our students are involved in many activities. We have teams in nearly every ICCL sport. Middle school students work on the yearbook. Students in grades 5-8 make up the Hand Bell Choir, and students in grades 2-8 sing in the children’s choir every week at our all-school Mass.

Each year we see our students improve academically; much of this improvement is due to the good and gracious assistance we get from many tutors. The tutors come to us from the Christ Child Society as well as from the University of Notre Dame. They work with students one-on-one or in small groups to improve their reading and math skills.

The staff here is a supportive, compassionate, and energetic community. Teachers have embraced the 6+1 Writing Traits® and Four Blocks® as ways to structure their lessons in language arts, and are always looking for ways to improve their methods of instruction to meet the needs of every student. Teachers are willing to work together to share insights and problems, and faculty meetings may run longer when there is a discussion about student development because everyone has a passionate interest in our children. Every day after school, most of the teachers are here, working with students in activities or helping with homework.

We teach our children about the larger world when we take them on field trips. So far this year, students have been to “Christopher’s Christmas,” “A Christmas Carol,” Madrigal Dinner at Notre Dame, and “The Chronicles of Narnia,” Hester’s Farm and Pioneer Days. We also enjoy special visitors, like Ronald McDonald and the South Bend Symphony.

St. Adalbert School is a violence-free zone, and the efforts of the volunteers in the Take Ten® program help to keep it that way. Every week, students from Notre Dame and Saint Mary’s — trained through the Robinson Community Learning Center — come to our classrooms to teach the children about anger management, conflict resolution and self-esteem. Students learn to “Walk It Out, Talk It Out, Wait It Out” when they are faced with a difficult situation.

Our students and staff are blessed with great support from our pastor, Father Chris Cox, CSC, and associate pastors Father Eric Schimmel, CSC, and Father Mike Couhig, CSC. We enjoy our strong Catholic identity with weekly Masses as well as traditional events such as the Jesse Tree, Three Kings Mass, the Way of the Cross, May Crowning, rosary, celebration for Our Lady of Guadalupe and Las Posadas.

We are proud to be a multi-cultural community of faith and education, soaring to new heights, guided by the Holy Spirit.

Sixth grade religion

The sixth grade class at St. Adalbert School has been looking at the meaning of sin and conflict. We began with a look at the Old Testament stories of Adam and Eve and of Noah and the great flood. In both situations, we find that God has punished us with one hand but forgave us and lifted us back on our feet with the other. Next, the students looked for evidence of sin and suffering in our world today. Each child took time to explore how they can play a role in bringing peace to their families, their school and perhaps even to the world. In doing so, we needed to debate the question of peace and discover how and when people truly find a sense of peace.

This exploration took us to a fabulous movie, “The Same River Twice,” by Feature Films for Families and written by Scott Featherstone. This story helped to give the children a clear understanding of the need for forgiveness of others as well as forgiveness of self before we can achieve true peace of heart. As a final activity, the children created Scripture puzzles. Each student researched the Bible for a quote from Jesus expressing his love for us and our worthiness of forgiveness from the Father. Next, they designed and created a heart-shaped puzzle using the quote as a theme.

English as a second language (ESL)

The ESL classes were initiated in 2003 when it became evident that there were students who had some English deficiencies that prevented them from participating effectively in classroom learning activities.

Currently, the students in kindergarten through grade 8 attend sessions, which stress speaking, reading and writing English. Sister Mary Martinez endeavors to develop these skills in the students to insure future success in their studies.

Things we love by Kindergarten

love reading. (Mrs. Jones)
love Mrs. Jones. (Teresa)
love going to the pool. (Zara)
love sandwiches. (Katrina)
love staying up late. (Janet)
love Mrs. Segalini. (Samantha)
love playing in the snow. (Stephanie)
love making a snowman. (Jadyn)
love firefighters. (Jorge)
love to play with toys. (Eliana)
love brothers. (Tyran)
love everybody in my class. (Yvette)
love brownies. (Eriq)
love Miss Goby. (Dulce)
love pizza. (Lissette)
love my dad. (Erika)
love to watch Turtles. (Rainie)
love to play with my dog. (Marivel)