

TODAY'S CATHOLIC

New Group Media produces documentary 'Jesus Decoded'

BY ANN CAREY

SOUTH BEND — When the documentary "Jesus Decoded" is shown on television stations across the nation in the coming weeks, local Catholics should be very proud, for the film was made by a production company headquartered in this diocese.

"Jesus Decoded" is an hour-long documentary film sponsored by the U.S. Bishops' Catholic Communication Campaign, and written and produced by New Group Media (NGM), a production company in South Bend. The film was made to explain the truth about Jesus and the first three centuries of the church, in response to the fiction about Jesus and the church found in the best-selling novel by Dan Brown, "The Da Vinci Code."

"Jesus Decoded" will be made available to television stations to air on May 21 or during the three months thereafter, in anticipation of issues raised for moviegoers by the May 19 release of "The Da Vinci Code" movie, starring Tom Hanks and directed by Ron Howard. Advance information about the movie indicates it will parallel the book closely and repeat the fictional claims that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene, with whom he had a child, and that the concept of the divinity of Jesus was created by the Emperor Constantine in the 4th century for political reasons.

The novel claims that over the centuries, the Catholic Church has engaged in an elaborate conspir-

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PROVIDED BY NEW GROUP MEDIA

New Group Media films shots for "Jesus Decoded" at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Douglas Thomas is at the camera with Christopher Salvador, right.

MATTHEW 25 BREAKS NEW GROUND



DON CLEMMER

Members of the Matthew 25 board of directors scoop the first shovels of dirt at the groundbreaking ceremony for the expansion of the Fort Wayne clinic. The new complex, totaling 20,260 square feet, will nearly triple the existing facility.

St. Aloysius students team with Louisiana school

Hurricane Katrina displaced students to be welcomed by Baton Rouge school

BY TIM JOHNSON

YODER — To many, St. Aloysius School in Yoder and St. Aloysius School in Baton Rouge, La., may seem like worlds apart. The Yoder school, with a student body of about 100, sits in the rich farming community of southern Allen County. Hints of urban sprawl and growth beckon at the doorstep. On the other hand, St. Aloysius in Baton Rouge is a large urban school basking in the shadow of Louisiana State University. The school has over 1,000 students.

What both schools have in common is a big heart.

After Hurricane Katrina displaced many New Orleans students, St. Aloysius in Baton Rouge opened its doors to 169 students.

"We currently have 38 displaced students still enrolled, and most of these have permanently relocated to Baton Rouge," said

Nancy Staid, curriculum and development director at St. Aloysius in Baton Rouge. "Some of our original Katrina students have relocated to other parts of the country. Most others have returned to New Orleans and the surrounding areas. Some have returned to their homes and some are living in alternative housing, trailers, apartments, etc."

Staid added, "Even though some may be in their homes, they are living on the second floors because the ground floors are uninhabitable until they are totally redone. While repairs are ongoing in New Orleans, there is such an incredible amount of work to be done, it will take a very long time."

But the children and staff at St. Aloysius in Yoder could not let the needs of the displaced students in Baton Rouge go unheard. When Principal Jane Sandor of St. Aloysius School in Yoder learned of the situation in Baton Rouge, she, the staff and students wanted to help.

First they gave proceeds from a fish fry held last fall to the students.

Next they held a dress down day. The 86 students at St. Aloysius, Yoder, quickly

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Mother celebrated

Our Lady of the Library and many other images of Mary displayed in library

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Faith and Fertility

Contraception and sterilization

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Decoding DaVinci

Feature explores fact from fiction

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The Young Voice

St. Anthony School highlighted

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CYO track

Season finale draws nearer

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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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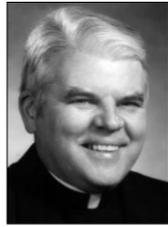
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Mother Guerin and Father Moreau had profound influence



NEWS & NOTES

BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

Two gifts for our diocese

How significant that word concerning both decisions came on the same day. I refer to the announcement that the way has now been cleared for the canonization of Mother Theodore Guerin, SP. She is to be declared a saint. The same announcement indicated that Father Basil Moreau, CSC, founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, has been approved for beatification, the first official, decisive step toward canonization.

Mother Theodore Guerin, SP

She can truly be said to be the foundress, along with Msgr. Julian Benoit, of the Catholic schools in this diocese. Fort Wayne was not just a stop on her journey. This extraordinary woman inspired so many young girls, in an area that was then close to the frontier, to give their lives to Christ in the work of education. She was only in Indiana for 18 years and spent much time in the eastern part, which now is the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, and in Terre Haute in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis where she is buried. I was privileged once to pray at her grave.

She came from France and was the foundress of the Sisters of Providence in this country. Many will remember late summers in the last century when many Sisters of Providence would descend on Fort Wayne, and others would leave. They staffed the storied Central Catholic High School and also schools at St. Patrick, St. John the Baptist and St. Jude parishes. Those who attended these schools prayed for her canonization. The Sisters of Providence were known as outstanding educators and exemplary women religious. They were truly her spiritual daughters, and their mark here can never be erased. We are in their debt, for they played a central role in building up the church in the Fort Wayne area.

Mother Theodore Guerin knew grave suffering during her lifetime: physical, psychological and spiritual. The diocese, when she came, was Vincennes, and it was here that Bishop de la Hailandière, like Mother Theodore a native of France and who had his own difficulties, made her journey and apostolate of education more difficult. Her fidelity to prayer and the apostolate never wavered.

I hope that her canonization will be seen as a moment for us to reflect on the extraordinary contributions of women religious to our diocese and, indeed, to the whole country.

There is no date set for the ceremony of her canonization. I hear it may be in the fall. I will certainly consider attending, as I was not able to go to the beatification. Father William Kummer who, at the time, was pastor of St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, represented our diocese, and considered it one of the great moments of his priestly life.

Father Basil Moreau, CSC

How can we possibly understand the extraordinary contribution to this diocese of this priest. From this man of exceptional piety and vision there came forth sisters, brothers and priests. Their educational reach has gone across the world — Africa, Latin America and Asia, as well as to the United States, Canada and Western Europe. They are a missionary congregation. I think especially of their spiritual tradition. Mary, under the title of Our Lady of Sorrows, is their patroness. Devotion to Our Lady, which surrounds the University of Notre Dame and Holy Cross parishes, is always evident. Central also is the feast of the Sacred Heart and the feast of St. Joseph.

Father Basil Moreau, with his emphasis on the education of the heart as well as the mind has been, through his spiritual sons and daughters, a profound influence on this diocese.

Sisters

The early presence of the sisters in South Bend is well-recorded in several histories. Almost immediately, they turned from the work of domestics to the task of education on all levels. Saint Mary's College remains an extraordinary legacy to them, as also is Saint Joseph Medical Center, South Bend. They taught in both our elementary and high schools across the diocese. They were commissioned by President Lincoln to care for the wounded during the Civil War, and were present at Gettysburg and on the hospital ships that moved up and down the Mississippi River. They have missions throughout the world — in parts of Africa and Asia, as well as Brazil and other Latin American countries. We are honored that their central headquarters remains on the grounds of Saint Mary's College in South Bend.

Brothers

The brothers have been remarkable educators. We know about Holy Cross College and its recent growth, but these are brothers working and teaching in places like Ghana; Peru; Austin, Texas and Chicago. Predominately educators, under the patronage of St. Joseph, their ministry to young people in this diocese has been exceptional. While we think of them in South Bend, they also taught for years in the educational institutions surrounding our cathedral in Fort Wayne.

When Father Sorin came to South Bend with his dream, it was the Holy Cross Brothers who were with him as part of that extraordinary party who worked in ways both practical and theoretical to begin the foundation of the University of Notre Dame.

Priests

First in our diocese was Father Edward Sorin, CSC, the intrepid French missionary priest with his strong devotion to Our Lady and his trust in the providence of God. Not only did he found University of Notre Dame, beloved by so many, but also many parishes in South Bend, such as St. Joseph, St. Patrick and others. The Holy Cross priests are also spread across the world in Chili, Uganda, Nigeria, Bangladesh and other places. Archbishop Cacciavillan, who served with them in both Africa and Asia,

told me that they worked in some of the most difficult and challenging missions in the world. The Holy Cross priests continue to serve in this diocese, where they care for many parishes.

As bishop, I join with them, and urge all our diocese as well to join, with gratitude and appreciation for this blessed news about their founder, Father Basil Moreau, CSC. It must be remembered that Father Moreau, like Mother Theodore, walked in this diocese. He visited Notre Dame a number of times, and one can read accounts of this in the extraordinary biography of Father Sorin, written by Marvin O'Connell, professor of history at Notre Dame.

At the center

Remember, people are canonized for holiness of life. Saints are raised up so we all may learn from them and pray to them. We must read and study about these two consecrated religious and from them learn to give ourselves more to prayer and the service of Christ and his people. A blessed moment for us all.

Uncle John's friend

That is what he calls me. "Whose friend are you?" I ask him. He tells me, "Uncle John's friend." I refer to my nephew, Hugh D'Arcy Sheridan. We call him D'Arcy. He has been called D'Arcy since he was a child. D'Arcy turned 40 this week, and he also received a significant award from a group that assists the handicapped in the greater Boston area. I do not think I had ever heard the word autism until his mother, my sister, Joan, and her husband, Hugh, told me that was the diagnosis. Joan and Hugh are heroes because of the devotion they have given to him, helping him to be mainstreamed in school and to obtain a job.

I will go to Falmouth on Cape Cod this summer and pick D'Arcy up in a market where he works bagging groceries. I hope when he turns and sees me for the first time in many months, he will simply say, "Uncle John." He and I will take our traditional walk this summer along the Atlantic Ocean. He will run ahead of me until I call him back. He will arrive back home before me where his mother will ask, "Where is Uncle John." He will say, "He's coming." Even those few words mean so much to us. We never know what is in his mind, because he cannot tell us. We do know that it is pure, good and holy. One of the great things in heaven "where all tears will be wiped away," will be to talk to D'Arcy and listen to him, for I believe there he will carry on an intelligent conversation with us. For the first time, he will thank his mother and father for their heroic devotion to him. He will also be able to tell his brothers, one a lawyer and the other a teacher, how he loves them, although he already tells them in other ways. I hope he will have a word for his uncle. Happy Birthday, Hugh D'Arcy Sheridan.

And now the real baseball season begins as the Yankees and the Red Sox prepare to do battle.

See you all next week.

SWISS GUARDS, INCLUDING VETERANS, MAKE THEIR WAY TO VATICAN



CNS PHOTO/CAROL GLATZ

Swiss Guards, former and present, make their way up the main road leading to the Vatican May 4 in Rome. They joined a re-enactment of the 1506 arrival of 150 Swiss soldiers at the request of Pope Julius II. The Swiss Guard is marking its 500th anniversary this year.

Orthodox, Vatican leaders say modern challenges need moral guidance

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Europeans risk being completely unprepared to face modern-day challenges if they are not guided by a solid sense of moral responsibility and Christian ethics, said a statement from a Vatican official and a Russian Orthodox leader.

The statement by Cardinal Paul Poupard, head of the pontifical councils for Culture and for Interreligious Dialogue, and Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, head of external and ecumenical relations for the Russian Orthodox Church, came at the end of a landmark, three-day meeting between the two churches.

Dozens of members of the Vatican's culture council and the Moscow Patriarchate's ecumenical department met May 3-5 in Vienna, Austria, to find ways the two churches could work together to build communities that respect human dignity and promote justice and peace. The meeting's theme was "Give a Soul to Europe: The Mission and Responsibility of the Churches."

The Vatican council released copies of the final statement and some texts of participants' speeches to Catholic News Service.

A lack of moral education in society can lead to "disastrous consequences such as the growth of all kinds of extremism, the decline of the birthrate, pollution of the environment, violence and humiliation of human dignity," the statement said.

Individuals are not born with the automatic desire to do good;

"one has to learn to think and do good," the statement said.

Offering people a Christian, moral education is key, the statement said, and communities will benefit if their citizens are grounded in "a solid combination of the principles of freedom and moral responsibility."

Nations must meet the moral demands of their people and reflect their countries' moral traditions in their laws and public policies, it said. The principles of moral responsibility and freedom should be "embodied in all spheres of human life," including politics, the economy, education, science and mass media, the statement added.

Msgr. Peter Fleetwood, a member of the Pontifical Council for Culture and deputy general secretary of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, said in his presentation May 5 that Christians should be delivering the Gospel message directly to individuals, not trying to overthrow or radically change political or social structures.

Whenever, "as churches, we consider getting involved on the political scene," people should remember that the "prime beneficiary of pastoral teaching and action is not a group but a single person," Msgr. Fleetwood said.

When an individual experiences "interior conversion" and his or her actions are guided by love for God's will, then social change will come about, he said. Jesus asked people to love one another here and now, not wait until the world became more conducive to the Christian message, he said.

Another speaker at the Catholic-Orthodox meeting was

John Haldane, professor of philosophy at Scotland's University of St. Andrews and member of the board of advisers of the Center for Ethics and Culture at the University of Notre Dame.

He said in his presentation May 4 that Christians should not insist so much on Europe returning to some nostalgic sense of its Christian roots, as much as they should "win the case for their beliefs, including their social theology."

The churches should not just blame modernity for today's ills, he said; they should face the various points postmodern critics make.

"Reform and renewal" are continually needed in any living tradition, he said, so "before we try to finesse older ways of thinking we need first to show that they are not bankrupt."

The re-evangelization of Europe then demands imagination and "cultural sensitivity" in carrying it out, he added.

Cardinal Poupard told Catholic News Service May 5 that the Vienna meeting was so positive and fruitful that he has invited Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow to send representatives to the Vatican council's next plenary assembly in March 2008.

Because the two churches share similar ideas concerning the root causes of the religious and moral crises that Europe faces, the French cardinal said he thought the presence of a Russian Orthodox delegation would further enhance the council's work as it plans to tackle the problems of secularism in its 2008 meeting.

STATEMENT OF BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

Regarding an ordinance to amend the South Bend Municipal Code to establish special rights on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity

May 8, 2006

The South Bend Common Council, on very short notice to the community, is this month considering whether to establish special rights on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The proposed ordinance — which is being promoted by groups of "Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Transgendered Persons" — would add sexual orientation and gender identity to the standard list of characteristics protected from discrimination, namely those based on race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry and familial status.

While I do not question the good intentions of those involved in this effort, my concern as a Catholic pastor is that this ordinance appears to be more about validating in law homosexual lifestyles and behaviors than it is about addressing unjust discrimination. The main reason for this assessment is based on the fact that the way in which sexual orientation and gender identity are defined goes beyond simply an individual's "self-identity" or "self-image" to also include "appearance, expression or behavior." In other words, homosexual activity as well as a homosexual orientation is being given special status and special protection.

While the proposed ordinance specifically excludes religious organizations from having to comply with these special rights, what about the right of conscientious citizens who have principled objections to these types of lifestyles and behaviors? For example, it appears that a family in a duplex that is renting the other side of their home would, if this law is approved, be legally forced to lease to an openly homosexual couple or to an unmarried heterosexual couple regardless of their deeply-held moral convictions. Why, as well, should an employer be legally forced to accept the cross-dressing habits of an employee? What, in fact, if this employee is a grade school teacher of young children in one of our public schools?

In addition, there is no reason to believe that the matter will stop here. Efforts such as these have been followed in other communities by efforts to have public school children indoctrinated — even as early as second grade — to accept homosexual lifestyles and behaviors as normal. Often, those who have principled objections to this are labeled as prejudiced or "homophobic." Instead of building greater tolerance, this ordinance may actually be helping to build greater intolerance of those who, on the one hand, believe every person should be treated with dignity, but also are deeply opposed to homosexual activity and to the gay lifestyle. For example, in some communities, the Boy Scouts have been banned from public facilities because of their principled decision not to have homosexual Scout leaders. Is this the type of community we want to build here?

Without question, everyone deserves to be treated fairly and with dignity. Everyone should enjoy the same basic human rights. Along with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, I wish to deplore any type of violent action or hateful speech aimed at homosexual persons. Such activity is morally wrong. At the same time, we must be very cautious lest we validate in law lifestyles and behaviors to which many of our citizens are deeply in conscience opposed.

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As artist shapes statue of beatified nun, nun shapes artist

BY SEAN GALLAGHER

ST. MARY-OF-THE-WOODS (CNS) — Teresa Clark shapes clay into art, but she has found the subject of her latest work shaping her as well.

For a year now, she has been molding clay into a 6-foot likeness of Blessed Mother Theodore Guerin, the French-born, 19th-century foundress of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

Yet during that same time, it would seem that Mother Theodore and God have been refashioning Clark.

In studying the woman whose statue she was creating, Clark — who had attended a Mennonite church as a young adult but had never been baptized — developed a deep appreciation of the Catholic faith that was the bedrock of Mother Theodore's life.

As a result, Clark, 50, participated in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Terre Haute and was baptized and received into the church at the Easter Vigil April 15.

The next morning, at Easter Mass with the Sisters of Providence, she gazed at the portrait of Mother Theodore hanging in the church and thought about all that had happened in the artist's life.

"I was brought here, and I am creating her," Clark told *The Criterion*, Indianapolis archdiocesan newspaper. "But, in the process, Mother Theodore and God are creating me. That's what I felt when I looked at her painting that day."

On April 28 Pope Benedict XVI cleared the way for Mother Theodore's canonization by recognizing a miracle attributed to her intercession. The canonization could take place as early as this fall.

Clark said she first learned of Mother Theodore and the Sisters of Providence in 2000. There was a possibility that she might create a statue of her for a cemetery in Fort Wayne, where she lived at the time, so she came to St. Mary-of-the-Woods to learn about the nun and the community she founded.

Clark spoke with Providence Sister Marie Kevin Tighe, the vice postulator of Mother Theodore's canonization cause, read some of the foundress' writings and met several members of the community.

"I just greatly admired this woman and what she accomplished in her time," Clark said in an interview in her studio at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. "She battled health and conflict within the area, but she still persevered. And I see that strength here still."

The original commission fell through, but in 2005 the possibility of creating a statue of Mother Theodore resurfaced. The Sisters of Providence were arranging with officials of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington for the placement of a statue of Mother Theodore in a garden next to the shrine. Sister Marie Kevin approached Clark about the commission, and she accepted.

Clark said that when she did so problems in her own life that had been bogging her down began to be resolved. "I truly felt

that I was meant to be here, that something was nudging me this way," she said. "It just became clearer and clearer that maybe she was interceding."

While Clark believes that Mother Theodore may have been praying for her, she also learned much from the example of her life.

"Maybe that's why I admired what she did, because I could see in my life that there were all these things I wasn't dealing with well or was having problems with," she said. "And what persevered with her was her faith. That's what gave her strength. Maybe that was what was missing in my life."

Molding the statue became "a spiritual journey," Clark said. "Using your hands to create someone, an individual who was a woman of faith — one kind of feeds the other. I almost feel her presence at times when I'm working."

Sister Marie Kevin, a Sister of Providence for 64 years, said she has gained a greater appreciation of her community's foundress through Clark's artistry.

"I've looked at pictures of Mother Theodore all my life," she said. "But I'd never had the same feeling as I do when I look at the statue because it's more than a physical likeness. The statue exudes the spirituality of Mother Theodore, which is strength and peace and trust in God."

After officials from the national shrine approve Clark's clay statue, a fiberglass mold of it will be made and sent to a sculptor in Ohio, who will replicate her work in the final limestone version.



CNS PHOTO/SEAN GALLAGHER, THE CRITERION

Teresa Clark, an Indiana artist, molded this likeness of the face of Blessed Mother Theodore Guerin as part of a 6-foot clay statue of the French-born, 19th-century foundress of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

Pope appoints 12 new cardinals to Vatican congregations, councils

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In a standard follow-up to the March 24 consistory at which they became cardinals, Pope Benedict XVI appointed the 12 new active cardinals to membership on a variety of Vatican congregations and councils.

Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston was named a member of the clergy and religious life congregations.

U.S. Cardinal William J. Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, was confirmed as a member of the congregations for Saints' Causes and for Bishops, as well as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

More than half of the cardinal

assignments announced by the Vatican May 6 were confirmations of membership the prelates held before becoming cardinals.

For example, French Cardinal Jean-Pierre Ricard of Bordeaux and Spanish Cardinal Antonio Canizares Llovera of Toledo were confirmed as members of the doctrinal congregation.

In one of the new appointments, Pope Benedict appointed Chinese Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kium of Hong Kong a member of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

In another new appointment, Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales of Manila, Philippines, was named a member of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.



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Contraception and sterilization: separating what God has joined

We have seen how natural family planning enables a married couple to put responsible parenthood into practice because it reveres the gift of sex as God designed it. Inscribed in this sacred act is an inseparable connection between its love-giving purpose and its life-giving potential. This intimate link reflects the inner life of the Holy Trinity, in which the love between the Father and Son is so real it is actually another person — the Holy Spirit.

The church teaches about these two dimensions of sex what Christ himself taught about the bond between husband and wife: we must not separate what God has joined. Any acts that attempt to separate these dimensions by deliberately suppressing the life-giving potential of sex are always seriously wrong. This includes "direct sterilization, whether of the man or of the woman, whether permanent or temporary. Similarly excluded is any action which either before, at the moment of, or after sexual intercourse, is specifically intended to prevent procreation — whether as an end or as a means." — "Humanae Vitae," 14-16.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to contraception and sterilization as "intrinsically evil" (# 2370), which means that no cir-

cumstance can justify their use from a moral point of view. It is important to clarify here that we are not talking about taking synthetic hormones to treat a medical condition or to restore the proper functioning of the reproductive system — that is a good thing. We are instead referring to the use of drugs, devices or surgical procedures for the purpose of preventing pregnancy in freely chosen acts of sexual intercourse. In this regard, it is crucial to point out that the most effective forms of artificial birth control available today, such as the Pill, Depo-Provera and Norplant, not only work by suppressing ovulation. They also achieve their effectiveness by altering the lining of the uterus to prevent the implantation of a newly conceived child should conception occur, and therefore can cause a very early abortion. This obviously aggravates the moral evil involved.

It may seem difficult to believe that, until 1930, all Christian churches, not just the Catholic Church, taught that contraception and sterilization were morally wrong. In that year, the Anglican Church decided at its Lambeth Conference to permit the use of contraception among married couples for very serious reasons. This blew the proverbial lid off of

Pandora's box and paved the way for a radical sexual revolution three decades later that was largely facilitated by the use of contraception.

Enter Pope John Paul II and his beautiful theology of the body, which deepened the Church's understanding of sex by demonstrating that its love-giving and life-giving dimensions are truly inseparable. This is because contraception and sterilization not only imply a positive refusal to be open to the possibility of new life, but they also contradict the meaning of sexual union as a sign of total self-giving. I am not giving myself totally to my spouse in sexual intercourse if, at the same time, I am withholding from him or her my fertility, a gift which has the potential to unite us in the most profound way possible, and through which we are privileged to participate in the creative love of God.

And in the same way, I am not completely accepting my spouse as a gift, loving him or her in the fullness of his masculinity or her femininity, as he or she was created by God and as I encounter him or her at this particular moment, of I ask, or even demand, that he or she do something to his or her body to diminish or destroy its

capacity to create new life. What Pope John Paul II was saying, in summary, is that God has so intimately linked the love-giving and life-giving meanings of sex that when this sacred act is deliberately deprived of its procreative capacity, it also ceases, however implicitly, to be an act of love. Here it is in his own words:

"When couples, by recourse to contraception, separate these two meanings that God the creator has inscribed in the being of man and woman and in the dynamism of their sexual communion, they act as arbiters of the divine plan and they manipulate and degrade human sexuality and with it themselves and their married partners by altering its value of total self-giving. Thus the innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. This leads not only to a positive refusal to be open to life, but also to a falsification of the inner truth of conjugal love, which is called upon to give itself in personal totality." — "Familiaris consortio," 32.

Only if we have a deep sense of the sacredness of sex can we appreciate the desecration that

FAITH AND FERTILITY

WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES AND WHY

BY LISA A. EVERETT

contraception and sterilization really are. To desecrate means "to violate the sanctity of" and when we contracept or sterilize sex we have violated its sanctity, even if we are not conscious of it. As the companion testimony written by a married couple shows, this desecration damages our relationship with God and with one another. But the beauty of the Christian life is that Christ came to redeem us from sin and restore our relationships. Check out the One More Soul Web site (omsoul.com) for other inspiring stories and a list of physicians by state who perform sterilization reversals for men and women.

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

Ghana's first cardinal, Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson, will present the 2006 commencement address

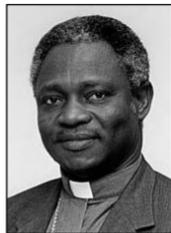
NOTRE DAME — The graduates of Holy Cross College will be celebrating with many familiar faces May 13, including Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson, archbishop of Cape Coast (Ghana). Turkson will be addressing the students, as well as receiving an honorary degree from Holy Cross College.

Many of the graduates have visited the cardinal at his archdiocese, as well as the Brothers of Holy Cross in Ghana, who are headquartered in Turkson's archdiocese.

A native of Ghana, Turkson was ordained for the Diocese of Cape Coast in 1975. He holds a doctorate in sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical

Institute in Rome.

Turkson has been the president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Ghana since 1992. He is also the chancellor of the Catholic University College of Ghana. He is a member of several Vatican bodies: The Methodist Catholic Dialogue, Pontifical Council for Christian Unity and Pontifical Commission for Cultural Patrimony of the Church. He is the treasurer for



Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson

the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar.

2007 will mark the 50th anniversary of the relationship between the Congregation of Holy Cross and the church in Ghana.

Holy Cross College is also honored to have Bishop John D'Arcy of the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese give the commencement's benediction.

Holy Cross College will commemorate the graduating class of 2006 on Saturday, May 13, at 2 p.m. The ceremony will be held in the Bendix Theatre of the Century Center in South Bend.

STATEMENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

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Sister Rose Thering dies; was pioneer in Catholic-Jewish relations

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Dominican Sister Rose Thering, a pioneer in Catholic-Jewish relations who dedicated most of her life to fighting anti-Semitism, died of kidney failure May 6 in Racine, Wis., at the Dominicans' Siena Center, where she became a nun in 1936. She was 85 years old. Her funeral Mass was to be celebrated the evening of May 9 at the Siena Center Chapel, with final commendation and interment the following morning at the order's cemetery. A scholar, educator and activist, for decades she was in the forefront of challenging Christian prejudices against Jews and Judaism and promoting Christian-Jewish understanding. Sister Rose's doctoral research 1957-61, before the Second Vatican Council, focused on anti-Jewish teachings in U.S. Catholic catechisms, many of which at that time blamed all Jews for the death of Jesus. "Her unflinchingly honest analysis ... profoundly influenced the development of the council's groundbreaking declaration, 'Nostra Aetate,'" said Eugene Fisher, an associate director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

Argentine Cardinal Primatesta dies

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI offered his condolences to Catholics in Argentina mourning the death of 87-year-old Cardinal Raul Francisco Primatesta, the retired archbishop of Cordoba. The cardinal, who had suffered from cardiac problems for several years, died of heart failure in his home early May 1. By early evening, his body was lying in the Cordoba cathedral, where the faithful paid their respects. The Argentine government proclaimed three days of official mourning. In a telegram sent to Archbishop Carlos Nanez of Cordoba, Pope Benedict asked God to "grant eternal rest to one who was a diligent pastor for many years." Pope Pius XII named him auxiliary bishop of La Plata in 1957 and he was transferred as bishop of San Rafael in 1961. Four years later, Pope Paul VI appointed him archbishop of Cordoba.

Only five living U.S. bishops were at all Vatican II sessions

WASHINGTON (CNS) — There are now only five living U.S. bishops who were voting participants in all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council, 1962-65. There were six until April 30, when Bishop Charles G. Maloney, retired auxiliary of Louisville, Ky., died. Bishop Maloney was 93 years old and had been a bishop since 1955. The only remaining bishop who was named by Pope Pius XII is retired Archbishop Philip M. Hannan of New Orleans. This year he marks his 93rd birthday May 20 and the 50th anniversary of his episcopal ordination Aug. 28. At the age of 95, retired Bishop Marion F. Forst of Dodge City, Kan., is the oldest living U.S. bishop. Pope John XXIII named him a

PRIESTS LIE BEFORE POPE DURING ORDINATION



CNS PHOTO/GIUSEPPE GIGLIA, REUTERS

Priests lie prostrate before Pope Benedict XVI during their ordination in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican May 7. The pope said that priesthood should be understood as a commitment to service and not as an opportunity for career-climbing.

bishop in 1960. Pope John, who convened the council but died in 1963 between the first and second sessions, named three other U.S. bishops who attended all council sessions and are still living: retired Bishop Charles A. Buswell of Pueblo, Colo., 92, who was ordained a bishop in 1959; retired Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen of Seattle, 84, who was ordained a bishop in 1962; and retired Maronite Archbishop Francis M. Zayek of St. Maron of Brooklyn, N.Y., 85, who was ordained a bishop in 1962 and was serving as an auxiliary bishop for Maronites in Brazil during the council years.

Chinese bishops not excommunicated until pope says so publicly

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The threat of excommunication hangs over two Chinese bishops ordained without papal approval, but only if they acted knowingly and freely, said a canon lawyer. And even if they incurred excommunication automatically by acting of their own free will, the penalty is limited until Pope Benedict XVI publicly declares their excommunication to the bishops and their faithful, said Jesuit Father James Conn, a professor of canon law at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University. Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said May 4 that the ordination of Bishop Joseph Liu Xinhong of Anhui May 3 and the ordination of Bishop Joseph Ma Yinglin of Kunming April 30 could lead to "severe canonical sanctions." He referred specifically to Canon 1382 of the Code of Canon Law: "A bishop who consecrates someone a bishop without a pontifical mandate and the person who receives the consecration from him incur a 'latae sententiae' excommunication reserved to the Apostolic

See." But Navarro-Valls also said the Vatican knew it was possible that the bishops who were ordained and those ordaining them "were placed under strong pressure and threats" to participate. Canon 1323 specifies that a person "coerced by grave fear, even if only relatively grave," is not subject to penalty.

Archaeologists discover unusual network of burial chambers in Rome

ROME (CNS) — Archaeologists repairing a Roman catacomb have discovered an unusual network of underground burial chambers containing the elegantly dressed corpses of more than 1,000 people, a Rome official said. The rooms appear to date back to the second century and are thought to be a place of early Christian burial. Because of the large number of bodies deposited over a relatively short period, experts believe a natural disaster or epidemic may have occurred at the time. The corpses, dressed in fine clothes embroidered with gold thread, were carefully wrapped in sheets and covered in lime. Balsamic fragrances were also applied, according to Raffaella Giuliani, chief inspector of the Roman catacombs, who spoke with Vatican Radio May 1. Giuliani said the burial chambers were found accidentally in 2003, when experts were repairing a cave-in located in the Catacomb of Sts. Peter and Marcellinus.

Yearbook on U.S., Canadian churches reports rise of 'emergent church'

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The 2006 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches has an essay on

the growing phenomenon of what is being called the "emergent church" — a decentralized movement or conversation among younger Christians in the United States and abroad who are committed to discipleship but resist traditional denominational ties, leadership structures and doctrinal formulations. Not surprisingly, much of the conversation among participants is carried out on the Internet, with numerous Web sites and blogs, short for Web logs, where they share ideas and write journals of their own faith understandings and experiences. The yearbook, an annual publication of the New York-based National Council of Churches, lists U.S. and Canadian church bodies, with a brief description of each and its national headquarters, officers, periodicals and major agencies or boards. It also has directories of U.S. and Canadian ecumenical organizations, cooperative religious organizations, seminaries and religious periodicals.

Vatican says Buddhists, Christians should help others understand love

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Buddhists and Christians should help others see that the highest form of love seeks only the good of the other, said the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. In a message for the feast of Vesakh, a commemoration of the major events in the life of Buddha, the Vatican council urged Christians and Buddhists to work together to recover the real meaning of love and to live it through concrete acts of charity. The Vatican released the message May 4 as many Buddhist communities were preparing to celebrate Vesakh May 12. In the message, the council said that in his first encyclical, "Deus Caritas Est" ("God Is

Love"), Pope Benedict XVI called Catholics' attention to the fact that the word love is "frequently used and yet so often misunderstood."

Bush visits New Orleans home, praises Catholic Charities volunteers

NEW ORLEANS (CNS) — President George W. Bush praised the work of Catholic Charities volunteers in helping to rebuild New Orleans during an April 27 visit to a Ninth Ward home ravaged by Hurricane Katrina and the floods that followed. He also called for another 2,500 volunteers "to come down to New Orleans to help people get back on their feet" through Operation Helping Hands, the Catholic Charities volunteer project that has already gutted 311 damaged homes to prepare them for rebuilding. Another 776 homes remain on the project's waiting list. At the home of Ethel Williams, a 72-year-old widow, the president said, "The amazing thing that's happened in her home is that there are people across the country who are helping to rebuild it." "Catholic Charities, in this case, has provided the volunteers to help Ms. Williams reclaim her life," Bush said. The 15-member team that worked on Williams' home came from Alabama, Michigan, North Carolina, Vermont and Washington, D.C.

Religious vocations can come from anyplace

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A few years ago Teresa Min-Sook Kim was a young Korean immigrant in Minnesota, a non-Catholic who spoke little English. Jay Toborowsky was a young Jewish man working as an aide to the mayor of Woodbridge, N.J. Carol Derynioski had been teaching more than 25 years and had her own home in Boca Raton, Fla. What do a Korean immigrant in Minnesota, a Jewish political aide in New Jersey and a Catholic teacher in Florida have in common? Now they are called "Sister" or "Father" and each was recently featured in a local diocesan newspaper as an example of some of the ways the call to priesthood or religious life can be heard.

Milwaukee pastor named to head Franciscans International board

MILWAUKEE (CNS) — Capuchin Franciscan Father John Celichowski has been named president of the board of directors of Franciscans International, the non-governmental organization that represents the estimated 800,000 Franciscans worldwide at various forums of the United Nations. Father Celichowski, pastor of St. Martin de Porres Parish in Milwaukee, also is a lawyer and a member of the provincial council for the Capuchins' St. Joseph province, based in Detroit. Franciscans International, which has general consultative status at the United Nations, aims to bring spiritual, ethical and Franciscan values to U.N. agendas.

Forever Learning Institute relocates to Little Flower

SOUTH BEND — School bells will be ringing at a new location for the 30-year-old Forever Learning Institute established by Father Louis Putz, CSC, for the welfare and benefit of senior citizens in the South Bend area.

According to a formal announcement by executive director Joan Loranger, beginning this fall, the new location will be Little Flower Parish on North Ironwood Drive, and the expanded new program will include eight new classes and a special course in African culture under the direction of Father Neal Ryan, CSC.

The move to Little Flower Parish will be the third for the institute, which has occupied the former St. Patrick School area for the past 26 years. Literally hundreds of seniors have taken advantage of expanding their academics since Father Putz together with the diocese launched the popular program three decades ago.

According to Loranger, "Surveys made it clear that the 65-plus population was located to the northeast of our present location. Transportation was a problem for our students and thus made the decision much easier."

The new facilities appear to be economically better and, in many instances, will help attract new students, she added.

Facilities will also help Forever Learning Institute to expand the course offerings to another 40 classes.

The last classes at the institute will be Friday, May 12, which will also be highlighted by special programs students have arranged for a finale.

A special day has been set aside before the fall classes open to provide students an opportunity to look over the new premises. — EJD

Serra South Bend has first deacon president

SOUTH BEND — For the first time in its 60-year history, the South Bend Serra Club will have an ordained deacon installed as president on July 1. He is Deacon Ron Moser of St. Joseph Parish in Mishawaka, where he has assisted Father Robert Yast, pastor, for more than 12 years. Father Yast has served as chaplain of Serra Club for 38 years.

Deacon Moser has conducted the opening candlelighting ceremony of the club as president-elect for the past two years. He was ordained a permanent deacon on June 11, 1983. He is married to Carolyn, and the two have three daughters.

Others elected were Richard Wasoski, president-elect; Esther Cyr, vice president of vocations; Joan Dudzinski, vice president of membership; Robert Schultheis, vice president of programs; Arthur Lenin, vice president of communications; Dr. John Toepp, secretary; Norlin Ruschoff, treasurer, and Patricia O'Brien, Henry Froming and Michael Brennan, trustees.

Honored guests at the club were six novices from the St. Francis of Assisi Novitiate in Mishawaka and director Father Robert Melnick. — EJD

AROUND THE DIOCESE

SAINT JOSEPH'S POETS RECOGNIZED



SUSAN LIGHTCAP

Saint Joseph's High School in South Bend has announced two Top Ten Poet awards in the Creative Communications, Inc. national poetry contest: Michael Furdyna, left; and Margaret Dobrowolska, right. Both students will receive a savings bond and a complimentary copy of the anthology. These poets will each have a separate page in the book featuring his or her poem. In the congratulatory letter, these poets were told, "From the thousands of entries, your poem was chosen as one of the ten best... This is quite an honor." Also named was sophomore Alexandra Burlingame, a Saint Joseph's sophomore.

Wellborn to discuss 'Da Vinci'

FORT WAYNE — Catholic author Amy Welborn will discuss the best-selling novel and soon-to-be released movie, "The Da Vinci Code" on Tuesday, May 23, at 7 p.m. at the Archbishop Noll Catholic Center (915 S. Clinton). The event is free and open to the public.

Welborn will shed light on the claims made by author Dan Brown in his novel. She will examine the errors he has made about the history of the Christian Church, including his claims about the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Welborn will show why Brown's book can only be considered a work of fiction that distorts the facts.

After her presentation, she will answer questions from the audience and will be available to sign her book, "De-Coding Da Vinci: The Facts Behind the Fiction," which was published by Our Sunday Visitor. In this book, she explains how history, religion and art were misrepresented in Dan Brown's book, "The Da Vinci Code." She also examines the reliability of Brown's sources and his distortion of the life of Jesus and the church.

Welborn has a bachelor's degree in history from the

University of Tennessee and a master's degree in church history from Vanderbilt Divinity School. She has written for the Catholic press for 15 years and has written many books including the "Prove It!" series for teens on various issues of faith. She has also written "Here. Now. A Catholic Guide to the Good Life." Her latest book is "De-Coding Mary Magdalene: Truth, Legend, and Lies" just out this year.

Speakers to share blessing of St. Philomena's intercession

FORT WAYNE — Members of the Indiana Arch Confraternity of St. Philomena will host a St. Philomena Birthday Celebration on Thursday, May 25. Events, hosted by the Amici di Santa Filomena Indiana Archconfraternity, will include Mass at 5:30 p.m. at St. Peter Church at the corner of Warsaw and East Dewald streets in Fort Wayne.

Following Mass, Mark Miravalle, a professor of theology and Marianology at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, will share the story of St. Philomena's life, death and the numerous graces showered on her devotees. Miravalle has authored several books on Mary and St. Philomena including the

"Introduction to Mary."

Afterward, all are invited to the Window Garden Cafe, located on the 13th floor of the Summit building, where cafeteria meals will be available for purchase.

A presentation by Wayne Weible, a speaker and acclaimed author of numerous books including his latest, "A Child Shall Lead Them," will share many of the experiences he has witnessed through Marian intercession. The event will be an opportunity to honor Mary during this special month and commemorate the anniversary of the discovery of St. Philomena's relics.

For more information and interviews, tune into Redeemer Radio (1450 AM) or contact Amici di Santa Filomena at (260) 422-7763 or see their Web site www.philomena-indiana.org

The Philomena holy hour is held every fourth Tuesday from 7 to 8 p.m. at Our Lady of Good Hope in Fort Wayne. During that time they pray the chaplet, novena and litany and praises.

Sisters of Providence react to pope signing decree acknowledging miracle

SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS — Pope Benedict XVI has signed the decree acknowl-

edging the second miracle healing attributed to the intercession of Blessed Mother Theodore Guerin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind.

The pope's acknowledgment came during an April 28 private meeting with Cardinal Jose Saraiva Martins, prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

No date has been scheduled for the canonization ceremony at the Vatican, however it is expected that it will be planned for October.

"We are very grateful for Pope Benedict's recognition," said Sister Ann Margaret O'Hara, the congregation's general superior. "Mother Theodore truly led an inspirational life devoted to God and to serving God's people."

"The acceptance of a miracle is the church's confirmation of the holiness of Mother Theodore's life and as a woman for all time," Sister Ann Margaret said. "She was a wonderful example for people of all faiths on how we are all called to live a spiritual life and care for one another. Without that foundation that has been well documented through her own writings and the investigation of her life, the miracles attributed to her intercession might not have occurred."

"We now look forward to continuing the celebration of Mother Theodore's life and sharing her story with the world. This is an exciting opportunity for all people to get to know her better," Sister Ann Margaret said.

The pope's action is the final approval of the miracle required for Mother Theodore's canonization. The information will now be presented to a consistory of cardinals who will set the date for the official ceremony at the Vatican, which could be as early as this fall.

Kevin Anderson to speak on marriage

FORT WAYNE — Author Kevin Anderson, who holds a doctorate in counseling psychology, will be speaking at St. Peter Lutheran Church, 7710 East State Blvd., in Fort Wayne, on Tuesday, May 16, at 7 p.m. A catered spaghetti dinner will precede his talk from 5:30-6:45 p.m. The topic of his talk is, "Making the Ordinary Extraordinary — the Seven Spiritual Practices of Marriage."

Anderson, a Catholic, is the author of "The 7 Spiritual Practices of Marriage." He writes for the *Catholic Chronicle*, the official publication of the Diocese of Toledo, Ohio, and has been published in numerous other religious papers.

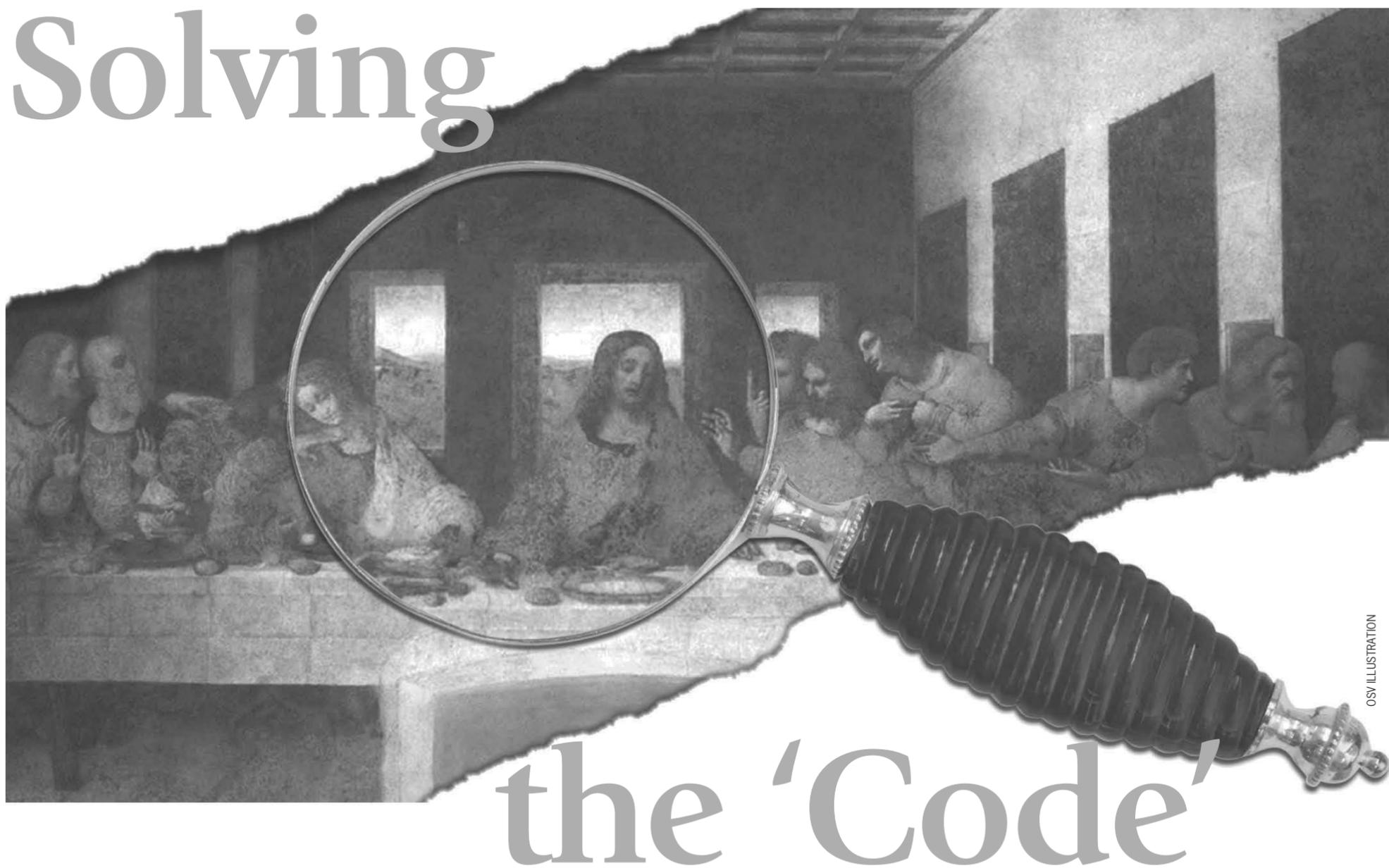
Anderson's talk is open to the public. There is no cost to attend, however, there will be a free-will offering, and copies of his book will be available for a suggested donation of \$17.

For those interested in attending the dinner beforehand, the cost is \$10. Reservation can be made by calling the church office at (260) 749-5816.

OSV In Focus

'The Da Vinci Code'

Solving



OSV ILLUSTRATION

Learn the real history behind the cracked claims in Dan Brown's best-selling novel and what promises to be one of the hottest movies of the summer

In a few short days, moviegoers will line up to see the big-budget adaptation of Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code." Many Catholics will be among the crowds watching Tom Hanks and Audrey Tautou race around France and Great Britain learning the "truth" about Jesus' relationship with Mary Magdalene.

To be sure, the movie will not paint a pretty picture of the Church. How can it with a plot that includes a fanatical albino monk hunting the hero and heroine and claims of a cover-up that reach back to the earliest days of Christianity?

To be exact, the film will tell its audience that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were married and that she bore his heirs. To protect its interests, the Church allegedly vilified Mary Magdalene (which is an odd thing for the Church to do to someone who is revered as a saint and is even included in the centuries old Litany of Saints) and rewrote the Bible to preserve the notion of Jesus' divinity.

To some people, "The Da Vinci Code" is just a novel or just a movie that can have no real effect on the Church. That

is not the point, said Msgr. Francis Maniscalco in an article on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Jesus Decoded website. "The pastoral concern of the Church is for each and every person," he wrote. "If only one person were to come away with a distorted impression of Jesus Christ or his Church, our concern is for that person as if he or she were the whole world."

In order to equip readers with the knowledge to confidently respond to such distorted impressions, this special "In Focus" presents four pages on the truth behind "The Da Vinci Code's" claims about Mary Magdalene, Opus Dei, the message of Leonardo Da Vinci's "Last Supper," the early Church and Christianity's treatment of women.

Inside

- When it comes to the Bible, the divinity of Jesus and the question of whether or not he ever married, 'The Da Vinci Code' is dead wrong.
- Get to know the *real* Opus Dei.
- Meet the true Mary Magdalene and learn about her role in the Church.
- Dan Brown's interpretation of Leonardo Da Vinci's "The Last Supper" exposes his lack of understanding of the historical background of the masterpiece.
- How the Catholic Church did not suppress women's spirituality.

In Focus: 'The Da Vinci Code'

APOLOGETICS

Come in from the 'Code' to get real story of Christ

Many of the assertions about Jesus, Mary Magdalene and the Bible fly in face of historical truth

By Amy Wellborn

“The Da Vinci Code” has remained on or near the top of best-seller lists ever since it was published in 2003, reaching tens of millions of readers worldwide.

With the May 19 release of a film based on the novel, directed by Ron Howard and starring the popular Tom Hanks, the message of “The Da Vinci Code” is about to reach millions more.

What is it all about?

The Da Vinci “code” at the plot’s center refers to cryptic messages that the artist supposedly incorporated into his work. Leonardo, as the story goes, was a member of an ancient secret society called the “Priory of Sion.” This group was dedicated to preserving the “truth” that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and had designated her as the leader of his movement, which is all about the appreciation of the “sacred feminine” in life. The “code” claims that the legendary “Holy Grail” is really Mary Magdalene, the bloodline of the descendants she and Jesus produced and the “sacred feminine” that she represents.

“The Da Vinci Code” film dramatizes these claims in flashback form, gives them life and will probably prompt even more people to ask: Could the traditional Christian understanding of Jesus be false?

Was Jesus truly divine?

Both “The Da Vinci Code” novel and film assert that early Christians viewed Jesus as merely

a “mortal teacher” and that it was only at the Council of Nicaea in 325, under pressure from the Emperor Constantine, that belief in Jesus’ divinity became official Christian teaching.

This is simply not true. The Gospels and the letters of Paul, as well as writings and liturgies from the centuries preceding Nicaea, give ample evidence that Christian faith was based on a belief that Jesus was the Son of God. They worshipped Jesus as Lord.

What Nicaea did was to correct the heresy of Arianism: the belief that Jesus was a highly exalted creature — but a creature, nonetheless — who did not share in God’s nature.

We repeat the council’s affirmation of Jesus’ human and divine natures when we say the Nicene Creed: “God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God.” This was not an innovation. It was simply a more precise articulation of the truth about the Jesus we encounter in the Gospels.

Is the Bible reliable?

In “The Da Vinci Code,” the scholar Leigh Teabing (played by Sir Ian McKellan) declares that at the time of Nicaea, there were “thousands” of texts documenting a very human life of Jesus. He says that there were 80 gospels in circulation, 80 gospels that give the story of the “original Christ” that Constantine repressed and — if the story is to be believed — personally had burned!

The implication is that dur-



Sophie Neveu (Audrey Tautou) and Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) try to unlock the “secret” of Jesus’ true relationship with Mary Magdalene in the movie version of “The Da Vinci Code.” COLUMBIA PICTURES/SIMON MEIN

ing the first three centuries of Christianity, there were many accounts of Jesus’ life, all equally reliable, and that the selection of the canon — the books of the New Testament determined to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and to be used by the entire Church — was based on nothing but a desire for power.

This is not true. First, there were not “thousands” of such texts. There were certainly more than are contained in the Bible, but relatively few with any confirmed link to apostolic times. Further, by the middle of the second century, Christian writers regularly cited the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as well as Paul’s letters, as the most reliable sources of information about Jesus’ life and the faith of the apostles. And, contrary to Brown’s story, it wasn’t under Constantine that the canon of Scripture was formally accepted. That happened at Church councils decades later, after a great deal of prayer and debate.

For his part, Brown launches his fictional account from texts that were produced by heretical groups in the late second through fifth centuries as more reliable sources for this “original Christ.” But most scholars agree these texts

Related reading

Our Sunday Visitor:

www.osv.com/davinci

Opus Dei:

www.opusdei.org

Jesus Decoded:

www.jesusdecoded.com

have no value in understanding Jesus or apostolic Christianity.

Was Jesus married?

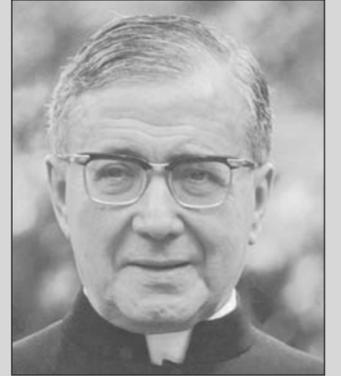
The story of “The Da Vinci Code” asserts that Jesus must have been married because that was the norm for Jewish men at the time, and he wouldn’t have been taken seriously as a religious teacher if he had not been married.

The Gospels do not describe Jesus as being married. They describe and name his parents, other family members and even women whom Luke says accompanied him and the apostles:

“Accompanying him were the Twelve and some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, Joanna, the wife of Herod’s steward Chuza, Susanna and many others, who provided for them out of their means” (Lk 8:2-3).

The Gospels describe Jesus’ interaction with the people of his hometown. If Jesus had been married, given the frequency with which other relations are mentioned, the

Opus Dei facts



St. Josemaria Escriva

CNS PHOTO/OPUS DEI

Opus Dei, a central element in “The Da Vinci Code,” is characterized as a radical, cultlike fringe group, associated with the Catholic Church. In the story, this group is all about control and repression of the truth. What are the facts?

■ Opus Dei (“Work of God”) was founded by St. Josemaria Escriva, in Spain, in 1928.

■ It is an institution fully approved by, and part of, the Catholic Church, with a mission to help lay people develop their spiritual lives.

■ It involves a number of different levels of membership.

■ There are priests associated with Opus Dei, but there are definitely no monks.

■ Opus Dei runs many institutions throughout the world dedicated to education, spiritual development and health care.

marriage would have been mentioned as well. There would be no reason not to.

Secondly, being unmarried would not have diminished Jesus’ authority as a Jewish teacher. Certain Jewish prophets, Jeremiah among them, were unmarried. John the Baptist was unmarried, as was Paul; and, during the first century, an entire community of Jewish celibates, called the Essenes, lived near the Dead Sea.

In other words, while being unmarried would have been unusual for a Jewish man, it would not be unheard of, especially for a man totally consumed by dedication to God.

Amy Wellborn is the author of “De-Coding Da Vinci: The Facts behind the Fiction” (OSV, \$9.95) and “De-Coding Mary Magdalene” (OSV \$9.95)

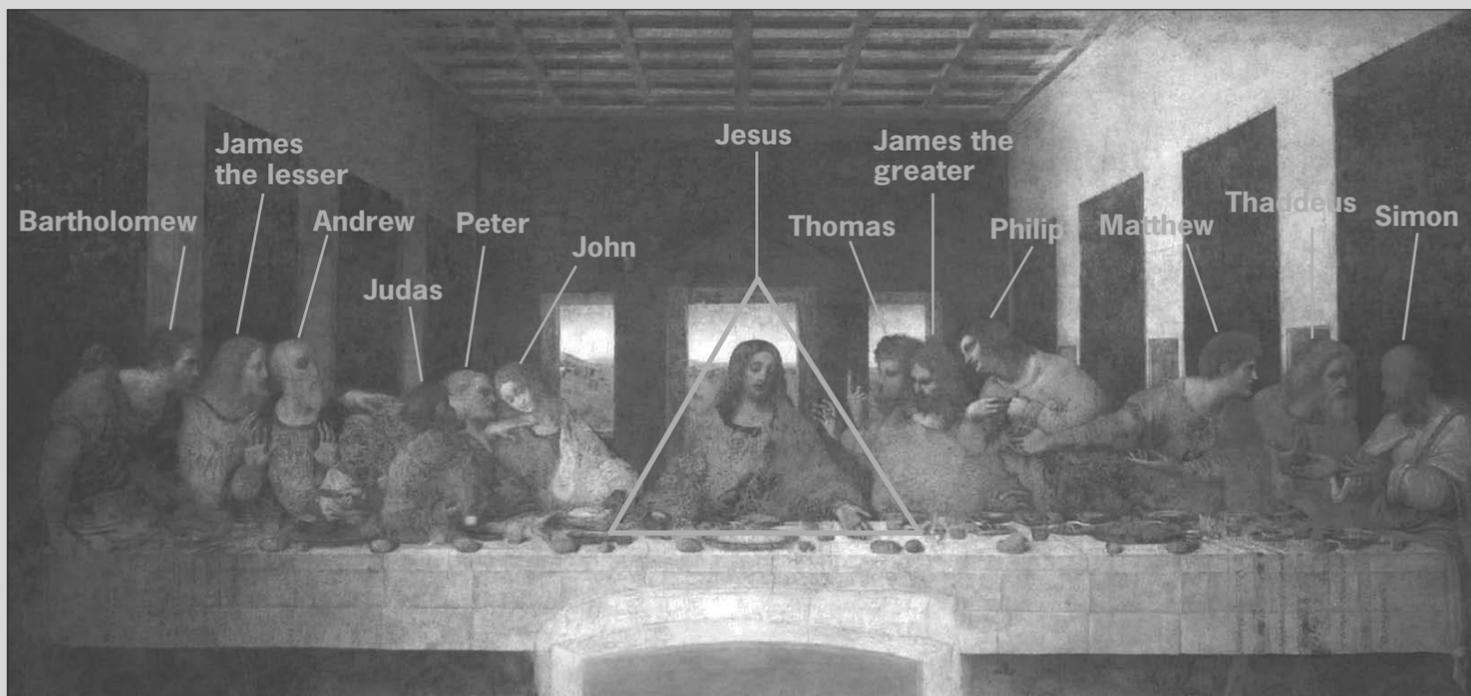
Consider the sources

The claims made in “The Da Vinci Code” are not original, but are all taken from other works. First there are books of pseudo-history (“Holy Blood, Holy Grail” and “The Templar Revelation”) from which the story connecting Jesus, Mary Magdalene, the Holy Grail-as-Mary and the Priory of Sion is taken.

Brown also depends on fictional works about Mary Magdalene (“The Woman With the Alabaster Jar”). Curiously, Brown never refers to any book of the New Testament nor to any of the writings or liturgies of the early Christian Church as he discusses Jesus’ identity or what early Christians believed about Jesus.

In Focus: 'The Da Vinci Code'

Who, what, why of 'The Last Supper'



CNS PHOTO FROM REUTERS

In "The Da Vinci Code," Dan Brown claims that Leonardo Da Vinci communicated the "truth" about the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene in his work, and gives several examples to make his point. But it's hard to believe what Brown says about this artwork, considering how regularly he incorrectly describes the content of the paintings and garbles the historical background behind them.

He writes, for example, that the John in "The Last Supper" is too feminine looking to be a man (thereby concluding it is meant to be Mary Magdalene). However, it was traditional during the time when Leonardo painted "The Last Supper" to represent

John as a beardless, attractive youth.

Brown also claims that Leonardo was giving away a clue as to the figure's "true" identity by having the figures of Jesus and "Mary" form the letter M. However, as art historian Elizabeth Lev explained the key shape in the painting is the lonely, isolated triangle formed by Christ.

Brown says that since there is no Last Supper chalice or "grail," the "grail" must be Mary Magdalene. However, there is no chalice in the painting because it portrays a scene from the Gospel of John (13:21-25) in which the Institution of the Eucharist is not described, and the Last Supper is not specified as a Passover Meal — hence, no central chalice.



OSV FILE PHOTO

Was Leonardo Christian?

Leonardo's writings don't indicate what we might think of as traditional Christian beliefs fully in tune with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

But on the other hand, remember that this was the Renaissance. It was a period of tremendous intellectual ferment. There was great interest in the natural world and a growing engagement by artists with that world, as they worked to accurately represent it.

It's a mistake, however, to think that this activity stood in opposition to the Catholic Church. The Church was the prime locus of intellectual activity during this period.

Leonardo definitely believed in God. Through his science and his art, he seemed to have primarily sought God through studying and representing what God had created.

LIFE OF A SAINT

Meet woman behind legends

Mary Magdalene has been used by heretical groups to advance theories

The resume is impressive, if ultimately fanciful, but it actually only begins to touch on the many ways in which Mary Magdalene has been interpreted over the past 2,000 years.

Legends, myths and wish fulfillment abound, but what's the truth — based on the evidence of history — about Mary Magdalene?

Mary Magdalene was an enormously important figure in early Christianity. She was, after the Blessed Virgin Mary, the most popular saint of the Middle Ages. Her cultus reveals much about medieval views of women, sexuality, sin and repentance.

Today, Mary Magdalene is experiencing a renaissance, not so much from within institutional Christianity, but among people who have adopted her as an inspiration and patron of their spiritual fads, paths and fantasies.

The novel

Many of you might have had your interest in the Magdalene

piqued by the novel "The Da Vinci Code," by Dan Brown. In that novel, Brown, picking up on strains bubbling through pop culture and pseudo-historical writings of the past 15 years or so, presents a completely different Mary Magdalene than the woman we meet in the Gospels and traditional Christian piety.

She was, according to Brown, Jesus' real choice to lead his movement; a herald of Jesus' message of the unity of the masculine and feminine aspects of reality; a valiant and revered leader opposed by another faction of Jesus' apostles led by Peter; the mother of Jesus' child; and some sort of divine figure. She is no less than the Holy Grail herself, bearing the "blood" of Jesus in the form of his child.

A glorious figure, indeed, was

this Mary Magdalene, but one that a patriarchal Church could not permit to flourish. So, a new image of Mary was created: that of the penitent prostitute.

This Mary Magdalene was the tool of a conspiracy to degrade and demean women and to bury the "truth" of her leadership in early Christianity once and for all.

Failing theory

The theory fails on a couple of levels. First, there's no evidence to support it.

There were certainly other interpretations of Jesus aside from the orthodox, apostolic experience and witness to him. We generally call these "heresies." Mary Magdalene was used, in minor ways, by some of these groups to embody their teachings, but these groups' writings date from at least two centuries after the life of Jesus. The Mary-Peter competition is a myth and a misuse of these writings.

The image of Mary Magdalene as repentant sinner certainly is a medieval development, but it is the consequence of a not-entirely



G.G. Savoldo's "St. Mary Magdalene Approaching the Sepulchre" includes a jar of oil to the left. The jar recalls her role in preparing Jesus' body for burial and the anointing at Bethany. THE GRANGER COLLECTION/NEW YORK

illogical conflation of Mary with other figures in the Gospels.

'Intriguing figure'

Brown pulled much of his theory from writings of the Gnostics who were early Christian sects that existed between the second and the fourth century. They were noted for their mixture of

Christian belief and pagan philosophy. While Gnostic writers were — or perhaps weren't — writing about Mary Magdalene, orthodox Christian writers had a few things to say as well during those early centuries of Christianity.

Story continued on next page

In Focus: 'The Da Vinci Code'

She didn't dominate the scene, but a few thinkers found her an intriguing figure, helpful in understanding the nature of faith and redemption. She's represented in art from the period as well, most often in her role as "myrrhophore" — one of the women bringing oils and spice to Jesus' tomb.

Many Church Fathers had no problem identifying her in quite exalted terms: "Apostle to the Apostles" and "Equal-to-the-Apostles."

Church Fathers

There's a good reason people still read the writings of these early Church Fathers. They were dealing honestly and tenaciously with the most fundamental aspects of Christian faith, and they were trying to make them understandable to a world that, while skeptical, was deeply in need of Christ.

These early Christian writers viewed the literal truth of Scripture as a starting point. From that factual level, they routinely set off exploring nuance, making connections and discovering useful analogies and allegories.

Into this richness step ordinary men and women. As they live and move in Jesus' shadow, listening and responding to him, they, too, become more. Their actions evoke other figures' responses to God's

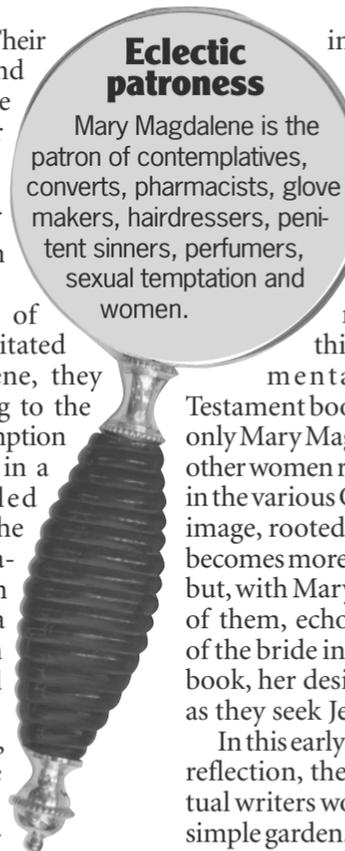
outstretched hand. Their doubt, faith, sin and redemption become more than just their own, as we look at them and see echoes of our lives and of the whole human story.

So, when some of these writers meditated on Mary Magdalene, they saw her responding to the Good News of redemption and eternal life — in a garden. It recalled another scene, at the beginning of salvation history, also in a garden in which a woman and a man disobeyed God, and humanity fell.

And so, for some, Mary Magdalene became a sort of New Eve. For example, St. Cyril of Alexandria said that because of Mary Magdalene's witness at the empty tomb, all women were forgiven of Eve's sin. St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great, St. Ambrose and St. Gregory of Nyssa also made the connection.

Her beloved

The image of a woman griev-



Eclectic patroness

Mary Magdalene is the patron of contemplatives, converts, pharmacists, glove makers, hairdressers, penitent sinners, perfumers, sexual temptation and women.

ing and waiting in a garden evoked another image: that of the great love poem in the Song of Songs. The third-century Christian writer Hippolytus made a great deal of this in his own commentary on the Old

Testament book. He brings in not only Mary Magdalene but also the other women reported at the tomb in the various Gospels. The female image, rooted in specific figures, becomes more generally symbolic but, with Mary Magdalene as one of them, echoes the deep desire of the bride in the Old Testament book, her desire for her beloved, as they seek Jesus at the tomb.

In this early period of Christian reflection, theological and spiritual writers worked in a relatively simple garden. Scripture was their primary source. Their sense of who Mary Magdalene was and of her importance for Christians was derived completely from that. She was historically significant because she was the first to see the empty tomb and the Risen Christ.

Source: "De-Coding Mary Magdalene" by Amy Welborn (Our Sunday Visitor, \$9.95)

Women and the Church

"The Da Vinci Code" suggests that until Christianity came, women were worshipped and revered. Christianity introduced patriarchy and women's lot changed forever.

What Dan Brown picks up on is the idea that in ancient times the "sacred feminine" was widely revered, and that woman's mysterious relationship with nature was the power center of spirituality.

In the late 19th century, some researchers hypothesized and promoted an ancient era of reverencing a "Mother Goddess." The conclusions were rooted in interpretations of archaeological finds like pregnant female figures and cave openings. In recent years, the ambiguous nature of these artifacts, the discovery of weapons and indications of traditional gender-based division of labor in many of these same sites have led to the conclusion that there is no evidence to suggest that such an era existed.

Don't forget about Mary

As to claims that the Catholic Church has repressed women's spirituality, let's be realistic here. If you know even a little bit about Christian history, you know that there are many female saints.

And finally, we might want to consider one important figure that "The Da Vinci Code" studiously ignores: Mary, the mother of Jesus.

When you consider the Blessed Virgin Mary's importance in Catholic spirituality, and you then consider that some Christians in other denominations criticize Catholicism for putting too much emphasis on Mary, you see how far off "The Da Vinci Code" is on this score.

Of course, Brown ignores Mary and the feminine spirituality she has represented in Catholicism for hundreds of years. He has to do this, or else his argument collapses.

— Adapted from "The Da Vinci Code Mysteries: What the Movie Doesn't Tell You," by Amy Welborn (OSV, \$5.95)

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Our Sunday Visitor
 Bringing Your Catholic Faith to Life

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Our Lady of the library

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

DAYTON, Ohio — To most, the seventh floor of the University of Dayton's Roesch Library is represented by just another button on the elevator. However, the seventh floor is certainly different for it houses a wealth of priceless books and artifacts devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The University of Dayton (UD), a private, Catholic Marianist school, located in Dayton, Ohio, is the home to The Marian Library. The Marian Library has a rich history. It was in the summer of 1943 that Father John A. Elbert, SM, the president of the university of the time, was inspired to establish this library. The Marianists wanted to establish something "that would be living and active, a contribution to the mission both of the University of Dayton and the Society of Mary." Father Elbert reasoned that a library solely committed to the

study of the Virgin Mary would be appropriate.

Father Lawrence Monheim was appointed as director of the library. He eagerly set out on his project to collect as many books as possible on the topic of Mary. On Oct. 23, 1943, The Marian Library formally opened, Father Elbert presented the library's first book, his own work "Devotion to Mary in the Twentieth Century." Sixty-three years later, The Marian Library holds over 100,000 books and pamphlets in about 50 languages, dating from the 15th century to the present.

Today, The Marian Library is recognized as the "world's largest and most comprehensive collection of printed materials on Mary." The Marian Library has a two-fold purpose: "to further study and research on Mary and to promote well-founded devotion to Mary." To further its mission, the library boasts an extensive collection of books, pamphlets, newspaper and magazine clippings, postcards, statues, medals and other Marian art.

The library's art gallery is quite a cornucopia of treasures. Exhibits of Marian art attract visitors year-round. Traveling exhibits as well as permanent ones are on display in the library. Artists inspired by the Blessed Virgin have submitted works in all media: collage, watercolor, sculpture, wood-carving, etc. The artifacts are from around the world, so Mary is depicted in cultural and ethnic variety.

Sister Jean Frisk, Art & Special Projects, comments on the diversity of art in the gallery. "We have everything from plastic to porcelain," she says. Sister's pride in her work and the library itself is evident by her enthusiasm as she leads a tour through the collection. "There is everything Marian you could possibly think of here," she comments.

A few works of art really stood out as powerful representations of the Blessed Mother.

A plaster statue entitled "Our Lady of the Marian Library" by artist Xavier Hochenleitner was a particularly interesting piece. The statue portrayed Mary seated with a book. "The book stands for the Bible and Jesus as the Word. She studies him as the Word," Sister Jean explains. "Our Lady of



OUR LADY OF DAYTON
This work, by John Solowianiuk, is a historical testament of the reality of war.

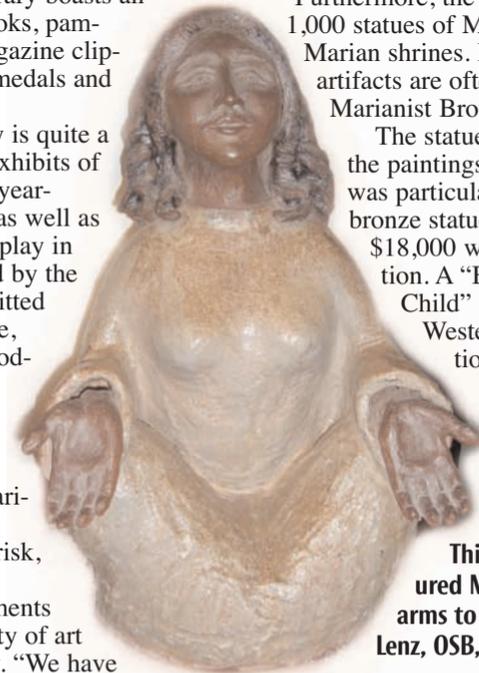
Dayton," by John Solowianiuk, is a symbolic devotional piece made out of wood. Dayton, as the location of the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995, played a role in the Bosnian peace efforts. Behind Mary's image are missiles and images of darkness and evil. However, the work also has a comforting feeling, for Mary is also portrayed as a shelter, a source of peace. The child Jesus in her arms

holds a dove, another symbol of the hope for peace.

"Mother of God of Chernobyl," also by John Solowianiuk, is another tribute to a historical event: the nuclear power plant accident of 1986. Mary is presented as the compassionate mother in the midst of tragedy.

Furthermore, the library houses "at least 1,000 statues of Mary, many representing Marian shrines. Books, statues and other artifacts are often collected by the Marianist Brothers," Sister Jean said.

The statues are just as diverse as the paintings. A Thai statue in gold was particularly striking. Notably, a bronze statue valued by the artist at \$18,000 was donated to the collection. A "Black Madonna with Child" is a real jewel. In the Western world, Mary is traditionally portrayed as Caucasian. Especially unusual is her representation as a pregnant



OUR LADY OF WELCOME
This piece portrays a full-figured Madonna extending her arms to greet people. Father Daniel Lenz, OSB, is the artist.

mother. It is such artifacts as this that make the library's collection so rich in diversity.

Visitors are surprised and amazed at one of the library's favorite treasures: a collection of "crèches," Nativity scenes from all around the world. The library houses 1,300 crèches, each with unique settings and made from different materials. A nativity on display by the elevator was created in "raku," a form of Japanese pottery. Brother Don Smith, one of the Marianist artists created this work entitled "Of a Single Mind."

Mary has many roles in our everyday lives. Many look to her as a mother figure, a source of inspiration and faith and an image of holiness. What better way to honor her this Mother's Day than by paying a visit to one of the world's finest collections of Marian artifacts?

For more information, visit The Marian Library Web site at udayton.edu/mary. The Web site provides information on the work of The Marian Library/International Marian Research Institute, its varied programs and its devotion to Mary. The Marian Library is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday by appointment.

THE Young Voice

ST. ANTHONY DE PADUA is located in South Bend. The school has 450 students in grades kindergarten through eight. Martha Lewallen is the principal. Additional information is available on the Web site at myschoolonline.com/IN/stanthonydepadua, sbdstanthony@yahoo.com or by calling the school at (574) 233-7169.

School history of St. Anthony dePadua

BY JEANETTE MCKEW

On May 3, 1949, ground was broken for the construction of a combination school and temporary church. The new school building housed four classrooms in what is presently the eastern half of the school building. The school opened during the fall of 1950, with 96 students enrolled in grades one through three.

Growing enrollment in the '80s demanded more space; therefore six new classrooms were added to the north side of the building. Beginning in 1993, a long range plan for renovating the school was put into place. At that time, many new rooms were added to the building. What originated as four classrooms has grown to include 18 classrooms for grades K-8 and art, music, computer and Spanish classrooms. An enrollment that started out at 96 students has now expanded to approximately 440.

Principal Martha Lewallen and assistant principal Donna Hemmerlein head a dedicated faculty and staff who help students grow in God's love and achieve academic excellence. The spiritual atmosphere within St. Anthony's School is designed to build upon the foundation laid by parents who encourage their families to pray and worship together.

Respect for self and for others is a central part of the school day.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ST. ANTHONY DE PADUA SCHOOL

This respect is extended through Christian service and outreach. Students annually prepare at least 18 food baskets for the needy of our community, have donated over 500 blankets to help keep people warm during the long winter months, made available over 800 prayer blankets to show care and concern for the sick, donate money to various organizations within our community and beyond, and personal items have been distributed

to the needy. In addition, the list of outreach efforts by each class is far reaching.

A variety of extracurricular activities are available for students including student council, St. Theresa Club, children's choir, bell choir, Girl and Boy Scouts, Lego League, football, basketball for both boys and girls and volleyball.

Sixth grade top ten reasons why mothers are important

10. Mom puts a smile on my face.
9. Mom helps me with my homework.
8. Mom spoils me by buying me stuff.
7. Mom gets me everywhere I need to go on time.
6. Mom teaches me valuable lessons.
5. Mom is there when I need her.
4. Mom understands me.
3. Mom cooks for me.
2. Mom cares about me.
1. Mom loves me.

Mother

JOHANNA GALLAGHER

I love my mom, I love her so.
She gives me hugs and kisses when I am low.

She treats me like her baby bear.
She is always nice and fair.

My mom is so very cool, but when I don't clean my room we are in a dual.

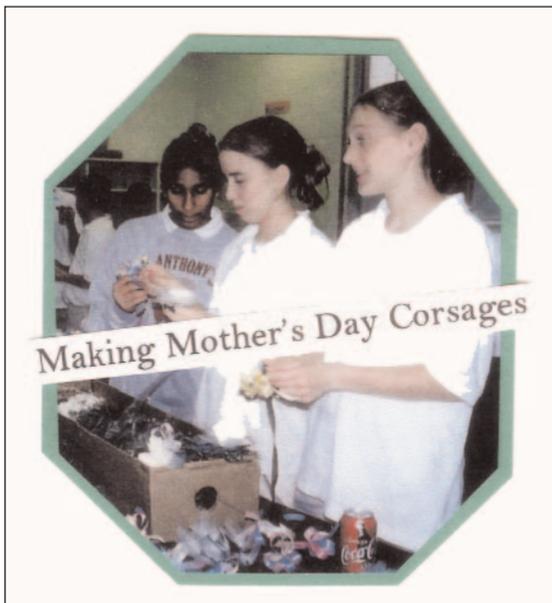
My mom helps me with homework and other things. I like the love that she brings.

My mom holds me tight,
she loves me with all her might.

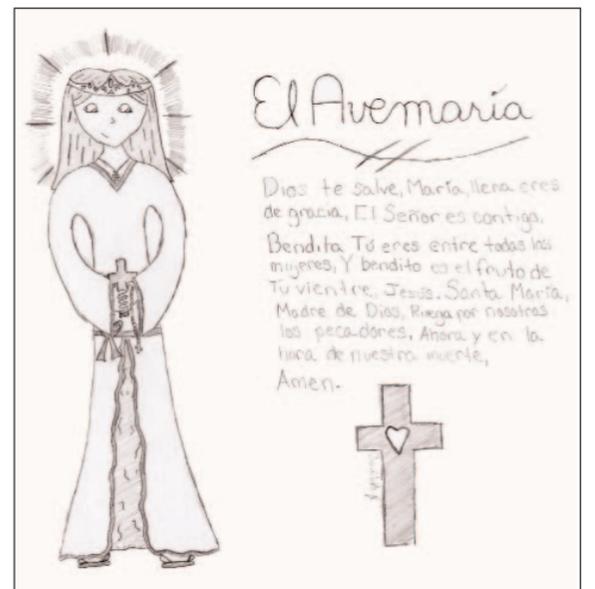
She ...

BY LAURA DILLON

- spoils me rotten.
- has a great sense of humor.
- helps me when I need it.
- knows how to settle fights between me and my brother.
- takes time off her daily schedule when I am sick to take care of me.
- sends me to a Catholic school.
- cooks the best meals ever, especially for me.
- tucks me into bed every night.
- gives me the best advice ever.
- tells me what is really bad in order to protect me.
- lets me have a lot of sweets after eating my food.
- plays games with me when I am bored.
- teaches me everything I know.
- tells me great stories.
- always encourages and comforts me.
- She is wonderful, fantastic, amazing, tremendous and outstanding!
- She is my mother.



Members of the student council create corsages and single-stemmed carnation bouquets for students to purchase as gifts for their mothers. For the past 15 years, fifth and sixth grade students have honored their mothers during a special liturgy. Immediately following Mass, mothers are treated to a reception, which includes coffee, doughnuts and a gift for mom. Students also present a reading of "I'll Love You Forever" and sing a song created just for mom.



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Medjugorje 2006 National Conference

University of Notre Dame
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Tony Melendez is an internationally known singer and guitarist. His 1987 performance for Pope John Paul II in Los Angeles was an unforgettable moment. Born without arms, he played the guitar with his toes and sang a touching song entitled "Never Be The Same." Since that time, he has performed in all fifty states and in twenty-eight foreign countries. He has appeared on many major television specials and has received countless awards for his inspiring music and personal accomplishments.

The International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima has travelled around the world since 1947 and has been seen by millions. Cures and miracles of conversion have occurred along the way. On more than thirty occasions it is reported to have shed tears. The statue will be on display throughout the conference, and Carl Malburg (custodian of the statue) will give a talk on its history.



Msgr. Ben Franzinelli is co-founder of the Medjugorje Information Center in Las Vegas, Nevada, which has sponsored Marian conferences and talks by Medjugorje visionaries. His first trip to Medjugorje in 1986 had a dramatic effect on his priesthood. He is pastor emeritus of Holy Family Parish in Las Vegas, which was built largely through the generosity of the Bing Crosby family.

Bro. Jason Lewis, MIC, a convert to Catholicism, is a seminarian with the Congregation of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception. He indulged in drugs, parties, and promiscuity until the age of twenty-one, at which time he read a book on the Blessed Virgin Mary's apparitions in Medjugorje, and the Divine Mercy entered his life in a profound way.



Dr. Theresa Karminski Burke was instrumental in producing the first video presentation of the events in Medjugorje. The Karminskis were the first American family to visit Medjugorje. Theresa is the founder of Rachel Vineyard Ministries, an international outreach to women on a variety of women's issues.

David Leatherby had a tremendous conversion experience in Medjugorje, which in turn had dramatic effects on his family and business enterprises. He is the founder of the Catholic Professional Business Club of Sacramento. His son will be ordained to the priesthood in Rome this May.



Eduardo Verástegui is a well-known and popular Mexican singer and actor. He is one of the rising stars in America and has appeared on major network dramas and music videos. His view of life and his entertainment career changed significantly after his trip to Medjugorje in 2005. He is now on fire for the Catholic faith and Our Lady.

Fr. Anthony Bus, CR, is author of the highly acclaimed book "A Mother's Plea," an inspiring diary about the life of a contemporary parish priest amidst the turmoil of today's culture. Fr. Bus is the pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka parish in Chicago, Illinois.



Program affirms women in faith

BY KAY COZAD

FORT WAYNE — "By virtue of our gender, each (woman) is intended to be 'mother.' Just as our bodies have been created with the capacity to bear physical life, our souls have been especially created by God to bring spiritual life to the world."

— Johnette Benkovic.

Women of the Catholic faith have a rich tradition of spirit-filled female role models to follow with historic documentation on the lives and service of these holy women, from the Blessed Mother to modern day Mother Theresa. But in the fast-paced world of the 21st century many women seek a path of service and faith that is very difficult to find.

A new program recently initiated at St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel Parish may be one important roadmap for the women of the diocese. Beginning in February, the "Women of Grace Foundational Study Series" was offered by facilitator Ginny Kohrman. This eight-week series invites women of all ages, races and occupations to gather for two hours each week to explore the powerful influence God calls women to in their homes, churches and in the world.

Women of the group read from "Full of Grace: Women and the Abundant Life," written by Johnette Benkovic, the creator of the program, in addition to passages from Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and encyclicals of the most recent popes. An accompanying study guide provides lessons and reflection questions for each text reading. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patron of the program.

Each session consists of an introductory prayer, a weekly theme and grace, questions, text

on knowing the faith, a vocabulary word with definition and a personal meditation written by one of several guest authors. Two holy women are studied each week offering virtuous characteristics the participants can emulate. A DVD provides the lesson for discussion and each session closes with an inspirational quote from a woman of faith and a prayer. The themes presented throughout the program include prayer, obedience, wisdom, Eucharist, renewal and apostolic courage.

Ginny Kohrman, of the Office of Spiritual Development, first heard Benkovic speak during a conference in Chicago in spring of 2005, when she says, the "Women of Grace" program was just being developed.

By early fall Kohrman once again participated in a conference offered by Benkovic and after much prayer felt led to consider the program in this diocese. "I showed it to Bishop D'Arcy and he okayed it saying we had a need for women's spiritual development," says Kohrman. She brought it to her home parish as a pilot program with Father Ed Erpelding on board as spiritual director.

Thirteen women signed up and currently meet weekly for discussion and prayer. "We have women of child bearing age, ones with young adult or grown children, singles and grandmas. We have occupations from nursing to stay-at-home moms," says Kohrman. "One young mom brings her two-month-old daughter to the group. We call her the 'littlest woman of grace.'"

The dynamics of the group intrigue her as she finds the younger women listening to the older women. "They learn from their wisdom," she says.

These women have committed to working independently five days each week on the lessons in the study guide. Kohrman says each lesson takes about 30 minutes to complete. They then gather on Saturday for the first hour of each session to reflect and share what the week's lesson meant to each of them. The discussion takes them to a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith as well as affirming their role as women of faith in daily life. Following a snack break, the second hour includes a lesson from the DVD and the next week's assignment. The series weaves the sacramental life into its weekly themes including Eucharist and reconciliation, and

Conference Schedule

Friday, May 26

5:00 pm...Doors open
7:00 pm...Conference begins
Guest speaker
Candlelight rosary procession to the Lourdes Grotto

Saturday, May 27

7:15 am...Doors open
8:00 am...Morning session
Holy Mass
Guest speakers (all sessions)
1:30 pm...Afternoon session
6:30 pm...Evening session
Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction

Sunday, May 28

7:15 am...Doors open
8:30 am...Morning session
Guest speakers
1:00 pm...Holy Mass
Procession and Consecration
3:00 pm...Conference ends

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Expanding vocabulary: Teacher works to get kids to talk and understand

BY JENNIFER OCHSTEIN

SOUTH BEND — It almost seems like teachers are fighting a losing battle.

Take, for instance, this statistic: in 1945, the number of words in the average elementary school student's oral vocabulary was 10,000. Today, it's 2,500 words.

That's what teachers in today's schools are up against, according to Donna VanderWeide, who recently facilitated a professional development program in South Bend for teachers from 19 Catholic elementary schools.

VanderWeide has worked in private and public schools and has trained teachers and administrators across the country. She's written several curriculum guides and children's books.

Her recent program in South Bend was called, "Reading and Comprehension: Thinking Outside the Box."

VanderWeide attributed the drop in the number of words in a modern child's vocabulary, in part, to television, video games, working and single parents.

"We're not having conversations at the dinner table," she told the teachers. That means they're talking less.

And, "they're not playing outside," said VanderWeide, because parents are often afraid to let them do that alone.

That means they're unable to use their words to negotiate and are less and less likely to negotiate period, she said. Students in previous generations played games with their friends outside, making up their own rules. If those rules were broken, children negotiated among themselves how to deal with and solve the situation without adult interference.

Now kids often play at structure sports leagues, in which the rules are already set.

"Now they're more physical," VanderWeide said.

They're reading less, which directly effects the number of words they can use, she explained. And the television is no help. In fact, TV is dumbing down — as if that's a surprise. The vocabulary spoken on television is now down to the third grade level, VanderWeide said.

All of this seems to spell trouble when you consider that the size of a child's oral vocabulary in kindergarten predicts reading success in fourth and eighth grades, she said.

If all that weren't bad enough,



Donna VanderWeide talks to teachers in South Bend from 19 Catholic elementary schools about student vocabulary and reading.

JENNIFER OCHSTEIN

use, VanderWeide explained. And students only have an attention span similar to their age plus two. So, a seven-year-old has an attention span of seven minutes plus two. That plays a part in why students only retain five percent of the information they are taught during lectures.

VanderWeide explained to teachers that the things kids learn need to have meaning for them. Meaning and attention drives learning, she said. And that needs to be attached to the things kids are reading.

"The brain isn't a sponge, it's a sieve," VanderWeide said.

The things the brain deems unimportant are put in the trash, but those things it deems important, she said, are processed into short-term memory.

Once a child practices and reviews many times, the information he learns will be added to his long-term memory.

She suggested, in terms of reading, that students be given activities like "accountable book talks." These hold students accountable for retelling the story they have independently read, compare two books by the same author and more.

She also suggested teachers start conversations about the books the kids are reading to get them talking and using their words. VanderWeide encouraged teachers to get kids to talk to each other and to the entire class about the books they're reading in school and out of school. When they can talk well about books they also begin to think well about them.

is rich with traditional prayers, such as the Magnificat.

Cheri Berris, a recent convert to the Catholic faith, felt ready to begin the program in an effort to gain a "deeper intimacy with God."

"The program is very rich and beautifully presented. Each of us brings our own perspective and we encourage each other with faith sharing," says Berris. She feels she gains much from the readings and discussions and adds, "I've learned we were created feminine and I don't want to miss one little bit of my vocation."

Kathy Hartman finds the program has helped her focus on the love of Christ. "We are all searching for a deeper meaning to our faith," says Hartman. "I am excited that as women we can be great examples of faith."

As the group's spiritual director, Father Erpelding bought the workbook and participates fully in discussions in an effort to further his understanding of women in the church. "If it's going to help women, it'll help me. I always say I got half my genes from a woman — my mother," says Father Erpelding. He enjoys

his participation in the series and encourages the powerful nurturing nature in women. "The dignity of women points to Christ and to the church," he says.

Kohrman is encouraged by the response to the program and feels it has been good for her own spiritual journey. "I ask myself what I bring to others in my daily life as a woman. I use it in all aspects of the work I do. Part of my role is to affirm what is good in others." She believes the program might be an inspiring series for all women including those who have recently come into the church and as a follow up program for those who have participated in Christ Renews His Parish retreats. Her hope is that other parishes in the diocese will develop groups for their own women of grace.

For more information about the "Women of Grace" program and how to start one at your parish contact Ginny Kohrman at the office of Spiritual Development at (260) 422-4611 or e-mail gkohrman@fw.diocesefwsb.org

poverty also effects language, she said, and by 2020, 37 percent of kids in the U.S. are expected to be living in poverty.

But it seems there's a solution: "We need to get kids talking more and understanding more," VanderWeide said.

VanderWeide provided teach-

ers with resources that may help overcome these barriers.

And, it seems, children learn best by cooperative learning, teaching others and immediately using the information they've just been taught. Studies suggest that under that model that children retain 90 percent of what they



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EDITORIAL

Traditional family attacked from many fronts

Mother's Day is always a wonderful time to contemplate the beautiful institution of marriage and the miracle of procreation. On this Mother's Day, we can look around in our parish churches and see a wide variety of families, ranging from elderly couples who have been together for half a century, to families with children still at home, to newlyweds just beginning their life together.

Unfortunately, we also can look around in our society and see many individuals and groups trying to change the meaning of marriage, parenthood and family in bizarre ways that previous generations never could have imagined.

For example, unregulated businesses engage in buying and selling human eggs and sperm so that babies can be created upon demand by anyone who has the money. In his excellent column in last week's *Today's Catholic*, Father Tad Pacholczyk explained that this practice "dissociates us from the deeper meaning of our own bodies and gravely damages the inner order of marriage."

This practice also treats children like consumer goods that can be ordered up to specification, rather than gifts from God who are born out of marital love. Indeed, a recent article in the *Chicago Tribune* reported that one donor's sperm were particularly sought after because he tanned well and had a close relationship with his mother, attributes the new mothers hoped to see in their "designer" babies.

Closely related to this practice is the disturbing trend in which single women have themselves artificially inseminated so they can have children without the complication of a man in their lives. Not only does this demean the sacredness of marriage and procreation, it also sends the erroneous message that fathers are unnecessary.

Another affront to marriage and the family is the push to allow so-called same-sex "marriage." Already one state issues marriage licenses to same-sex couples, and activists have initiated lawsuits in seven other states to achieve the same goal. This situation is so serious that the United States bishops have joined with other religious groups in supporting a constitutional amendment to preserve marriage as the union between one woman and one man, which the U.S. Senate is scheduled to discuss next month.

As Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia noted during a teleconference to promote support for the amendment: "The institution of marriage is suffering. We cannot sit idly by."

Yet, in some public schools and in some public discourse, all of the above distortions of parenthood and marriage are depicted simply as an alternative way of being "family" that should be accepted by a tolerant society.

We bring up these points on Mother's Day not to put a damper on a cheerful, celebratory day, but as a reminder on this family day that we cannot be complacent about the family values we cherish and embrace, nor can we condone or tolerate those who want to redefine marriage and parenthood.

We must, of course, treat all humans with respect and dignity, even those who promote these attacks on the family. At the same time, it is essential for us to be strong and forthright in denouncing and resisting all these efforts to demean and debase the family, which is the very cornerstone of civilization.

Spiritual mothers

On Mother's Day, it is natural for us to honor our grandmothers and mothers, but we think it's also appropriate on Mother's Day to honor women who may not be birth mothers or adoptive mothers or foster moms, but are spiritual mothers.

We can identify the spiritual mothers in our lives if we just look around, for they "mother" by using their feminine gifts to love and nurture people who are not their children.

Spiritual mothers might be the women religious who teach our children or pray for us when we are troubled. They might be single friends who share their wisdom and compassion and offer a shoulder to lean on. They might be elderly neighbors who bring over cookies when someone is sick. They might be the volunteers who tutor our children or lead their scout troops.

Spiritual mothers might be the family friends who are happy to babysit when we have an emergency. They might be the parish nurses who check up on us or take our blood pressure. Or they might be the friends who are always available to give us a ride to the doctor's office.

So, this Mother's Day let us honor and thank all mothers, including the spiritual mothers who grace our lives in so many ways.

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

COMMENTARY

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

Fund assists Pascagoula, Miss., school

To All Our Readers,
I have received this letter from Elizabeth Benefield, principal of Resurrection Catholic School in Pascagoula, Miss. This \$10,000 was from a fund established by a farming couple who were parishioners of St. Dominic Parish, Bremen. They had no children and were very devoted to their parish. They left \$275,000 to be distributed to missions around the world. Because Resurrection Catholic School had some ACE teachers, one of whom grew up in our diocese and went to our schools, we gave \$10,000 to Resurrection Catholic School to assist in their recovery from Hurricane Katrina. I received this note. The address of Resurrection Catholic School is enclosed. Why not send them some funds? I hope to find more funds from the diocese to send them. Perhaps one of our parishes would like to reach out to them with extra funds as well.

Bishop John M. D'Arcy

Dear Bishop D'Arcy,
Our hearts are filled with appreciation for your diocese's generous donation of \$10,000 to Resurrection Catholic School to assist with recovery following Hurricane Katrina. Your generosity will make a real difference for us as we struggle to replace textbooks, resources and equipment that were lost during the hurricane. We will use your donation to help replace cafeteria and kitchen equipment and textbooks.

I have been blessed to visit your diocese twice while in retreat at Notre Dame. Resurrection has been blessed through the work of many ACE teachers, but two in particular who have grown up in your diocesan schools and have gone on to become exemplary teachers. They have been remarkable role models for our students.

We try to teach our students to put their faith in action. Last year, our classes were privileged to reach out to Catholic schools in the Pensacola-Tallahassee Diocese that were devastated by Hurricane Ivan and to victims of the tsunami through an orphanage in

Chennai, India. This year we are the recipients of heaven-sent relief. We never know when we will be faced by serious challenges. We can but pray for God's strength and direction and give thanks for all who have provided help and support.

The devastation experienced by our community at large and our diocese, in particular, could never have been imagined nor planned for. Available resources fell far short of needs. We are blessed by your prayers and financial support. We will pray for all of you as we continue to rebuild our school, our community and our homes. God bless you.

Yours in Christ,
Elizabeth Benefield
Principal
Resurrection Catholic School
3704 Quinn Dr.
Pascagoula, MS 39581

The rosary works wonders

BY FATHER WILLIAM PEIL

The year was 1571. The day was Oct. 7. The place was Rome, Italy. Pope Pius V, 67 years old, was conducting a meeting with some of his cardinals. The whole city was praying the rosary, asking the Mother of God to intercede with her son for a victory at the seaport of Lepanto, where a fleet of Ottoman ships had attacked Italy and a force of soldiers was defending the city and country.

Suddenly, the pope got up from his chair, went across to a window, opened it and stood there for some moments, his eyes searching the skies. Then, closing the window, he turned back to the cardinals and said: "This is not a time to talk business. Let us give thanks to God for the victory he has granted today."

Sure enough, word soon drifted to Rome that the band of 20,000 soldiers from all over Europe under the leadership of Don Juan of Austria had won a complete victory. Ever since, Oct. 7 is a very special day; Our Lady of the Rosary we call the feast today.

The rosary is a very powerful prayer. When Mary appeared to the three children of Fatima in 1917, she asked that this very powerful prayer, the rosary, be prayed daily. She used the word

"terco," which in Portuguese means a third. In other words not all 15 decades, just a third — five decades, according to what day of the week it is — glorious, sorrowful or joyful mysteries. Now we have five more, the luminous mysteries, from Pope John Paul II, to fill in the gap in our Lord's life between the joyful and sorrowful mysteries.

In the Gospel for the third Sunday of Easter, our Lord turned to the apostles and "opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." What a fine way to come to understand the Scriptures — to spend 10 minutes reflecting upon the various events in the life of Jesus and Mary — to pray the rosary daily.

One day when Bishop Sheen had just given a talk for the radio and was leaving the studio, a young couple came up to him, and the girl started to berate him for promoting the rosary, saying it was just "vain repetition," something the Bible condemned.

The bishop paused. Then he said, "Are you two going together?" She answered, "Yes. We're engaged to be married." The bishop cleared his throat and, gesturing to the young man, asked her: "Did he ever tell you he loved you?" "Of course he has," she answered. "Did he ever say it more than once — maybe several times a day?" he asked. "Yes," she said. "Well, the bishop

went on, "that's the rosary, telling God and his Blessed Mother, over and over again, we love them, while going over in our mind the many things they did in their lives to show their love for us."

The bishop had a good point. As the prayers are lovingly repeated over and over, it's like beautiful music behind the story of Jesus and Mary floating through our minds, or like a movie we go to with the music in the background rising and falling as the action moves along. And more and more we understand the Scriptures as our Lord wants, and asked of the apostles, especially if occasionally we read again the account of those "mysteries" in the Scripture from which they came.

Praying the rosary daily may be a fine idea, especially during the month of May dedicated to Jesus' mother. Even if it's never been a part of one's daily routine before. It wouldn't hurt, too, to learn the luminous mysteries, reserved for Thursdays.

Maybe we need to get up, open the window, like St. Pius V in 1571, look up at the sky and see some marvelous things happening in our lives when the rosary is prayed daily.

Father William Peil is a retired priest from the Gary Diocese who now lives in Fort Wayne.

Praying the rosary, reading the Bible go hand in hand

Praying the rosary is a devotional practice that dates back to the Middle Ages. It is a distinctively Catholic form of spirituality not found in most Protestant denominations.

Reading the Bible, on the other hand, has been a long-standing form of Protestant piety. Until the 1960s, Catholics were discouraged from reading the Scriptures. Since Vatican II, however, the church has embraced Bible reading as yet another way for Catholics to pursue holiness.

For some time now, I have wondered how many Catholics participate in one but not the other of these practices, how many participate in both, and how many participate in neither one. I also have wondered if different types of Catholics participate in each one, or if the same types of Catholics embrace both. Do women pray the rosary or read the Bible more than men? Do older Catholics do these things more than younger ones? Do regular Mass-goers participate in one, the other, or both more than people who attend less often? Are registered parishioners any



RESEARCH FOR THE CHURCH

JAMES D. DAVIDSON

different from non-parishioners?

A brand new national survey that I conducted for the Institute of Church Life at the University of Notre Dame gave me a chance to explore these questions. The study included a cross-section of 1,100 Catholics, who were interviewed in February and March of 2006.

According to the survey, one-fifth of Catholics say the rosary at least once a week. Another 16 percent pray the rosary one to three times a month; 10 percent, less than once a month; and 49 percent, never or almost never.

Interestingly, the pattern for Bible reading is almost identical.

Twenty-one percent of Catholics read the Bible weekly or more; 17 percent, one to three times a month; 12 percent, less than once a month; and 48 percent, never or

almost never.

There also is a positive correlation of .40 between the two practices. Catholics who engage in one of these devotional practices also tend to participate in the other. The two tend to go hand in hand.

Which Catholics are most likely to participate in these practices? The answer is weekly Mass-goers, 37 percent of whom pray the rosary and read the Bible at least weekly. As Mass attendance declines, so does participation in both practices. For example, among Catholics who never or almost never go to Mass, only 6 percent say the rosary and only 3 percent read the Bible at least once a week.

Registered parishioners also are

DAVIDSON, PAGE 18

Jesus is the vine, we are the branches



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

5th Sunday of Easter Jn 15:1-8.

The Acts of the Apostles, once again, furnishes the first reading for the liturgy in the season of Easter.

This weekend's reading is about Paul and Barnabas. In the story, Paul, who had been converted on the road to Damascus, and who had spent much time learning about Jesus, attempts to join the Christian community in Jerusalem. The community fears him — not without cause. After all, Paul had been a very strident opponent of the Christian Gospel, and he indeed had persecuted Jerusalem's Christians.

Understandably these same Christians must have wondered what dark purpose lay beneath Paul's wish to enter their community. Was he looking for ways to entrap Christians, or to frustrate what they did in the name of Jesus?

As intercessor, Barnabas, already part of the community, spoke for Paul. He urged Paul's admission into the community.

Paul stayed in Jerusalem, speaking boldly about Jesus wherever he went. Apparently, such fervor was not always appreciated among those not of the Christian fold. In fact, some tried to kill him. Christians rescued him by taking him to Caesarea, the Roman capital of the region, a seaport on the

Mediterranean located slightly north of modern Tel Aviv. There they put Paul on a ship bound for Tarsus.

Meanwhile, as Acts says in this reading, the church in Palestine was growing and its faith was deepening.

Also once more, the First Epistle of John supplies the second reading.

As was the case in the readings for the past weekends, this passage is moving and compelling in its eloquence. It refers to its readers as "little children." This form of address in itself is highly expressive. Believers, as all humans, are vulnerable. They are weak. They are limited. Yet, in a most special way, true believers are God's children. If they are without sin, God will protect them from peril.

St. John's glorious Gospel provides the last reading.

Last weekend, the Lord gave us the beautiful image of the Good Shepherd. He is our leader. He guides us away from danger.

This weekend, the image is no less telling and descriptive. Jesus is the vine. We believers are the branches. This image was as immediate in its message to the first hearers of these words as was the story of the Good Shepherd. The society in which Jesus lived was agrarian. Viticulture was well known. Everyone knew about vines, and everyone knew what vine growers did for a living.

In last weekend's Gospel, Jesus appeared as our guide and protector. In this weekend's reading, the link between believers and Jesus is revealed. His life is within believers. Without Christ, they can accomplish nothing. In Christ, they can live forever.

Reflection

The Gospel presents us with a wonderfully consoling fact. If we truly love the Lord, if we are disciples literally, then the very life of Christ is in us. Powered by this life, enlightened by the light of Christ, we need not fear anything. We can anticipate eternal life.

It is a message repeated in the lovely passage from First John, read as the second lesson.

Part of the divine plan for redemption in Christ is how we approach the Lord, and how we live with the Lord. The church is very frank this weekend in giving us these details. It is more than a question of good intentions or personal conviction. Christ lives in the church, and we must spiritually incorporate ourselves into the church to be joined into the vine that is the Lord.

Paul had indeed been converted. But, he saw being part of the church as critical. Thus he sought admission into the Jerusalem community. A secondary lesson in evangelization is in Acts. Barnabas reached out to him to bring him into the community.

READINGS

Fifth Week of Easter

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

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

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

Thursday: Acts 15:7-21 Ps 96:1-3, 10 Jn 15:9-11

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

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

CATEQUIZ'EM

By Dominic Camplisson

On May 12, the church remembers St. Pancratius.

This quiz looks at a few pans, but no pots.

1. What name is also used for St. Pancratius?

- a. Pancake b. Pancras c. Pancrus

2. What does "panagia" mean in Greek and for whom is it a common title in the East?

- a. ever virgin, Mary
b. Most Holy, Mary
c. Most revered, the Tsar (formerly the Byzantine emperors)

3. Christianity arrived early in Pannonia and is still there. But this ancient Roman province was long ago subsumed into (mostly) this mostly Catholic European country

- a. Hungary
b. Germany
c. Switzerland

4. What non-Catholic notion holds that God's being is at one with all elements of the physical universe, so that his divinity pervades matter, though he is indeed greater than matter?

- a. Panegyric
b. Panentheism
c. Pantocratism

5. Pange Lingua are the beginning words of two of these

- a. hymns
b. sonnets of Shakespeare
c. stanzas of Milton's Paradise Lost

6. An Eastern Panachida (literally all-night) is usually a vigil for

- a. the dead
b. an ordination
c. a coronation of a king or duke

7. Panormitanus was a 15th century cardinal embroiled in politics, but also the conciliar faction who sought to have popes accept the superior authority of

- a. cardinals
b. secular rulers
c. church councils

8. St. Pantaenus left us very little detail of his second century life, except that he was a convert from this philosophy which taught fortitude in the face of adversity:

- a. Buddhism b. Cynicism c. Stoicism

9. St. Panteleon, through a strange set of circumstances, had his name associated with these garments

- a. leotards
b. painters' caps
c. pants or trousers

10. The belief that God and the universe are identical is

- a. pantalunacy
b. pantheism
c. panygrym

11. Another notion rejected by most Christians is panpsychism, the notion that all things are

- a. conscious
b. made by God
c. smelly

12. In Eastern churches there is usually a depiction of the Pantocrator. What is it?

- a. A depiction of Christ as crucified
b. A depiction of Christ as God and ruler
c. A depiction of the Holy Trinity

13. "Panis Angelicus" is one of these

- a. a liturgy of the Eastern Rite
b. a hymn composed by Thomas Aquinas
c. a monastic order

14. What do the words "Panis Angelicus" mean?

- a. The bread of angels
b. Holy panic
c. The angelic harvest

15. A panegyric is a type of

- a. liturgy of the dead
b. song of praise
c. percussive accompaniment to a funeral (dirge)

ANSWERS:

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

With apparitions, Christ lies in the fullness of God's revelation

What does the church look for in approving an alleged apparition? Anonymous.

An apparition is an appearance, a phenomenon, an unusual or unexpected sight, a ghostly figure. Father Louis Bouyer says an apparition may be a manifestation of God, angels or the dead, whether saint or not, appearing under a form that surprises the senses.

J. Giens says an authentic apparition is not a purely subjective experience. Rather it results from a real objective intervention of a higher power that enables the beneficiary to make true contact with the being that appears and makes itself known.

The main thing to look at in an alleged apparition is the message. Is it in sync with the word of God in the Bible and the authoritative teaching of the church? For example, the Blessed Mother or the Sacred Heart are not going to appear to someone and say something contrary to what God has revealed. God the Father, Jesus, the

Holy Spirit, the angel Gabriel, the Blessed Mother are all on the same track. Thus J. Giens mentions if the message of an apparition is at variance with a revealed doctrine or the teaching of the church, that is a clear sign of nonauthenticity, or conscious or unconscious falsification.

The church also looks at the person receiving the apparition. Is this person credible and psychologically healthy, or someone often subject to hallucinations? It seems that a young and innocent person, like Bernadette and the three children of Fatima, or a new convert, like Juan Diego, would be less likely to invent or fake an apparition.

It is the position of the official church to determine if an alleged apparition meets the guarantees of authenticity. The church says certain apparitions are credible or worthy of belief, but she does not force anyone to accept a particular alleged apparition or private revelation. Sometimes the church allows a feast day of the acceptable apparition, such as Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Lourdes,

THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION

Our Lady of Fatima, the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Sometimes the church beatifies or canonizes as a saint the person who experienced the apparition, such as St. Bernadette, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, and more recently Juan Diego, Francisco and Jacinta. Pope John Paul II showed the acceptability of certain apparitions by visiting the Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico in 1979 and the shrine at Fatima in Portugal in 1982.

In dealing with apparitions or private revelations, we must remember that in Christ lies the fullness of God's revelation. Jesus is the Son of God made man. We can't get any more God than God. We have no need of any further

public revelation. Throughout history we continue to delve more deeply into the fullness of revelation given us by Christ so we continue to grow in our understanding and appreciation of our faith.

The new catechism from Rome says that, throughout the ages, there have been private revelations, some of which have been recognized by the authority of the church. They do not belong, however, to the deposit of faith. It is not their role to improve or complete Christ's definitive revelation, but to help live more fully by it in a certain period of history.

We see examples of how certain apparitions fit in with the teaching of the church. At Lourdes in France, the Blessed Mother said "Pray to God for sinners," and reiterated the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. At Fatima in Portugal, the Blessed Mother called for prayer and penitence and called herself Our Lady of the Rosary. At Guadalupe in Mexico, the Blessed Mother called herself the Mother of God, and from this apparition came the greatest mass

conversion ever experienced by the Catholic Church in its history.

Pope John Paul II said that the church has always taught and continues to proclaim that God's revelation was brought to completion in Jesus Christ, who is the fullness of revelation, and that no new public revelation is to be expected before the glorious manifestation of Our Lord. The church evaluates and judges private revelation by the criterion of conformity with that single public revelation.

Today's Catholic welcomes questions from readers to pose to Father Richard Hire, Father Michael Heintz, Father Mark Gurtner and the Office of Worship. Please e-mail your questions to editor@fw.diocese-fwsb.org or mail them to *Today's Catholic*, That's A Good Question, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN 46856. Include your name, city and an e-mail address or phone number so we can contact you if necessary. Anonymity will be preserved upon request.

Mother as a human being

Mothers can be so efficient. We can do laundry, clean a dirty kitchen and calm sibling spats in between spooning Gerber's best into our babies' mouths. Once, just for fun, I wrote down everything I did during a one hour period one morning. The list took up two pages.

I often get wrapped up with juggling tasks, with accomplishing, with doing. I know I am efficient. Most mothers are. But I am here today to admit that maybe that's not always the best thing to be.

Once, one of my sons, in the fifth grade at the time, invented a new game. He spent hours devising rules, cutting out game pieces and gluing the pieces to toothpicks (It was a very involved game). The object, if I remember, was conquering the world, which wasn't a bad goal considering he was just 10. At any rate, I was busy the morning he finished the game. I was doing laundry, cleaning up baby spit-up, changing diapers, sweeping the carpet and tending to a dirty kitchen. You know, I was being efficient. I was "doing."

When my son finished creating the game he immediately wanted to play. I admired the game from the stairway, my arms full of miscellaneous objects I was putting away, and I promised to play "in a bit." I had, in my mind, a list of things I needed to do, and I was on a roll. I would play later. He could show his sister now.

When the clothes were put away and my other chores were done, I asked my son to show me his creation. He simply gave me the short version of his game. No one told me his initial enthusiasm and willingness to explain every detail would wane. It simply dissipated and didn't come back. Even a little motherly prodding



EVERYDAY CATHOLIC

THERESA A. THOMAS

didn't elicit more than, "Well, you just roll the dice and follow the instructions on the card. It was fun when I played it a while ago. What's for dinner?"

Now, eight years later, I still think of that moment lost. It's a little thing, but I wish I hadn't been quite so efficient that afternoon.

Another time my efficiency cost me something really special it was early spring. I had been trying to teach the children to come to me when they wanted something instead of yelling out "Mom!" from wherever they were. That morning I was in the basement, switching a load of laundry, with the baby in the swing. "Mom! Come here!" I heard. Again, "Mom! Come here!" There was no alarm in the voices, just a sense of urgency. "I'm in the basement," I answered cheerily, giving them notice but not budging. "Mom!" Now more than one child was calling my name. What did those kids want? Why wouldn't they come to me? What was so important?

I finished pouring liquid detergent into the machine, folded a couple more towels, grabbed some garbage bags, which I needed in the kitchen, took the baby from the swing and climbed the stairs. In the family room five children were standing, staring at the sliding glass door.

"You missed it!" said Michael, visibly disappointed. "Missed what?" I asked, peering out the window. "Two deer," he continued, "A buck and a doe, in our backyard."

If we had lived on a farm or other rural area, that might not be such a big deal, but we live in a subdivision with a smaller yard that is fenced in on two sides.

"Really? Deer?!" I exclaimed, coming closer to look. "It's too late, Mom," Michael said, "They're gone." The kids turned away from the window, leaving me there, standing alone. That was the second moment that I lost because I was being efficient.

It's true. My kids won't be scarred forever on account of these two incidents. But you can bet that both events taught me something. I learned that no work I am doing is so vital that it can't be put aside for just a moment, if something important comes along.

My children should not expect me to come running at the drop of a hat, but nor should I be so busy that I can't take advantage of a precious moment that spontaneously arises.

The Martha-Mary dilemma presents itself every day, and moms need to quickly discern to make the right choice.

There is a good reason God calls us human "beings" and not human "doings."

From now on I expect to "be" a little more. And I don't mean efficient.

Theresa Thomas writes from Elkhart. She is a stay-at-home mom and a member of St. Mary of the Annunciation in Bristol.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

By Patricia Kasten

Gospel for May 14, 2006

John 15:1-8

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

I AM	TRUE VINE	FATHER
EVERY BRANCH	FRUIT	PRUNES
BEAR	MORE	ALREADY
THE WORD	CANNOT BEAR	NEITHER
CAN YOU	BRANCHES	WITHER
FIRE	BURNED	MY WORDS
WHATEVER	DONE FOR YOU	DISCIPLES

ETERNAL VINE

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

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DAVIDSON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

more involved in both practices than Catholics who do not belong to a parish. Twenty-six percent of parishioners pray the rosary at least weekly, compared to only 16 percent of non-parishioners. Twenty-seven percent of parishioners read the Bible once a week or more, but only 15 percent of non-parishioners do.

Members of the pre-Vatican II generation (born in or before 1940) are more likely than younger Catholics to participate in both practices. For example, 30 percent of pre-Vatican II Catholics pray the rosary, and 27 percent read the Bible. On the other hand, only 10 percent of "millennial"

Catholics (born after 1982) pray the rosary and only 14 percent read the Bible.

Women are twice as likely as men to pray the rosary (28 percent vs. 13 percent) and are somewhat more likely to read the Bible (24 percent vs. 18 percent).

Thus, older women, registered parishioners and regular churchgoers are more inclined than other Catholics to participate in the centuries-old Catholic practice of saying the rosary. Interestingly, it is the very same people — not different types of Catholics — who have embraced the relatively new practice of reading the Bible.

James D. Davidson is professor of sociology at Purdue University in West Lafayette.

Moses died in the land of Moab

Where is Moses buried?

After Moses and the Israelites left Egypt, they traveled through the desert of the Sinai peninsula by the southern route, until they came to Mount Nebo near the Promised Land. The Book of Deuteronomy says that, from Mount Nebo, God showed Moses an aerial view of the Promised Land, saying, "This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that I would give to their descendants. I have let you feast your eyes upon it, but you shall not cross over."

Deuteronomy then says Moses died in the land of Moab and was buried in the ravine opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows the place of his burial. Moab is an ancient kingdom east of the Dead Sea now in the southwest part of the country of Jordan.

The Moabites were closely related to the Hebrews. Sometimes they were at war with each other and other times they were in alliance. The famous Moabite stone, discovered in 1868, describes the victories of the king of Moab over the Israelites.

Mount Nebo, also called Mount Pisgah, lies east of the north end of the Dead Sea now in the country of Jordan. Its highest point is 2,644 feet. Its twin peaks of Siyagha and el-Mukhayyat are both property of the Franciscans.

The peak of Siyagha means "monastery." G. Grenville says there was already a monastery on this peak in A.D. 384, when the Spanish nun Egeria visited it and was hospitably received by the monks. Here, in the church, she was shown the place where the angels were said to have buried

Moses. What Egeria saw was an apse with a short nave and an atrium. There was also a baptistery with a font sunk into the floor into which the candidate could descend and then rise again on the opposite side. There was yet a small basin inset, probably for infant baptism. On the side of the church was a small mosaic cross, serving as a memorial of Moses.

In the sixth century, this church had expanded into a large Byzantine monastery, with side aisles, a clerestory or gallery, a new baptistery, buildings on either side, and a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Mother of God. G. Grenville mentions they have found a mosaic from A.D. 538 in the old baptistery and a mosaic from A.D. 597 in the new baptistery.

In 1933, out of a mass of ruins, the Franciscans recovered a church and other buildings and a small monastery was constructed. D. Simonis describes this complex called the Moses Memorial Church. The main building open to visitors is the sixth century basilica. The huge mosaic on the floor shows scenes of winemaking and hunting, as well as a panther, bear, fox, zebu and lion, all of which are now extinct in Jordan. The complex also contains a museum, monasteries, the first sanctuary, the new baptistery, the chapel and the courtyard.

Here you also see the huge bronze memorial showing the serpent twined around a staff. The Israelites in the desert complained, so God sent serpents to bite them. Moses then made a bronze serpent mounted on a pole. When anyone



FATHER RICHARD HIRE

HIRE HISTORY

bitten by a serpent looked at the bronze serpent, he recovered. In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells Nicodemus: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up," namely the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, "so all who believe may have eternal life."

Finally, there is the lookout west of the courtyard with a superb, breathtaking view across the valleys to the Dead Sea and Jerusalem, a view that Moses himself would have seen. G. Grenville mentions that a brass plate here names the principal sites that can often be viewed in good weather, such as Jericho (the lush city of palms where the Israelites would soon arrive), Sodom (the city destroyed by fire), Masada (the mountain fortress), Qumran (the monastery of the Essenes), Hebron (where Abraham and Sarah are buried), Bethlehem (where Jesus was born), Jerusalem (where Jesus was crucified), the Mount of Olives (where Jesus ascended into heaven), Nablus in Samaria (where Joseph, the son of Jacob, is buried) and Mount Tabor (where Jesus was transfigured).

The numbers game: Stats give picture of Pope John Paul II's pontificate

BY JOHN THAVIS

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Under Pope John Paul II's 26-year papacy, the Catholic Church grew by 45 percent, struggled to replace priests and religious, and experienced a significant "graying" of its hierarchy, according to statistics released recently by the Vatican.

In a sense, the statistics complete a by-the-numbers portrait of Pope John Paul's pontificate. They cover the period from 1978, the year of his election, through the end of 2004, three months before he died.

The worldwide Catholic population increased by 342 million during that time, from 757 million to just under 1.1 billion.

That sounds huge, but it was actually slightly less than the rate of general population increase. As a result, Catholics as a percentage of the world population decreased from about 18 percent in 1978 to about 17.2 percent at the end of 2004.

The continent-by-continent numbers are more significant than the global totals, confirming the church's demographic shift to the developing world.

The church in Africa grew by 172 percent under Pope John Paul, increasing from about 12 percent to 17 percent of the African population. By the end of 2004, Africans represented about 14 percent of Catholics worldwide, compared to 7 percent in 1978.

The number of Catholics in

North and South America, where about half the church's members live, increased about 50 percent, virtually the same as the general population growth.

Europe showed signs of stagnation. The Catholic population there increased by 13 million in the first 10 years of Pope John Paul's papacy, but over the last 16 years declined by more than 650,000. The overall European growth rate under Pope John Paul was 4.6 percent, the lowest by far of any continent.

The number of Catholics in Asia increased nearly 80 percent over the same period. The fact that Catholics still represent only 2.9 percent of the total Asian population explains why many Vatican officials see the continent as the great frontier of evangelization.

The Vatican also examined the numbers of priesthood candidates in relation to the Catholic population and found "greater dynamism" in Africa and Asia, which have more than 150 seminarians for every 1 million Catholics. Europe had 84 seminarians and North and South America about 67 for every 1 million Catholics.

The statistics confirmed two other widely known trends under Pope John Paul: the sharp decline in the number of women religious — down about 23 percent, from 991,000 to 767,000 — and the sharp increase in permanent deacons, up about 480 percent, from 5,500 to 32,000.

Meet The Priest

Father Wilson Corzo

Ordained to the priesthood:

Dec. 12, 1998

Associate Pastor,
St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Elkhart

What was the primary influence on your decision to become a priest?

My primary influences were my family and my vocation-promoting priest.

Why do you like being a priest?

Because I like serving the community and because I am happy.

Do you have a special interest or hobby?

I enjoy traveling.

Do you have pets?

Yes, birds, canaries.

What do you do for relaxation?

I like movies, exercising and reading.

What is your favorite food?

Colombian cuisine



What is your favorite reading material?

history and science

What is the best part of being Catholic?

I think the best part is living the freedom of faith.

What is your favorite scriptural passage?

Mt 6: 25-34, do not worry

How do you prefer to be addressed by the laity?

Father Wilson

Honoring: The forgotten vow

BY KEVIN ANDERSON

At the Fall 2005 Retrouvaille International Conference in Santa Clara, Calif., I was watching the Friday evening keynote speaker, theologian Richard Gaillardetz, receive a standing ovation for his fine talk.

As it often does, my mind began to generate less-than-helpful thoughts, such as: I wonder if they'll give me a standing ovation tomorrow night when I speak after dinner? While reviewing my notes later that evening, a light bulb went on in my head. What if I start the talk by asking for my standing ovation right at the beginning just to get it out of the way? I did just that, and to my surprise, the 700 or so attendees stood and went wild for me before I'd said or done anything to earn it.

Such unconditional honoring, I told them, is the key to what I call extraordinary marriage. If we intentionally and unconditionally honor our partner daily — with kind words, affectionate touch, and the willingness to listen and forgive — we can experience the best of marriage. We promise to honor and love on the wedding day, but love gets all the songs, the poems, the accolades.

Honoring is the forgotten vow, the tortoise that wins the race when the hare of "We're so in love!" pauses for a rest.

After the standing ovation, I asked the 350 couples to bow slightly to one another with their hands in the prayer position over their hearts. Then I had them repeat what I call a nested meditation, a prayer-like poem in which each stanza contains the one before and adds to it in a way that shifts the meaning: I honor you. I honor you, my soul companion. I honor you, my soul companion, as you are. I honor you, my soul companion, as you are Divinity in disguise.

What a concept — treating your spouse every day like God living in your home. "Whenever you do these things to the least of my brothers and sisters, you do them to me." Or, as Victor Hugo put it in "Les Miserables," "To love another person is to see the face of God."

I remember telling a friend who had called me to complain about his wife that we get in trouble as married people when we begin treating our spouses like a home improvement project. We're better off, I told him, treating them like Divinity in disguise. "If my wife's Divinity in disguise," he said, "she's got a pretty darn good disguise going!"

For years I've been teaching couples about seven spiritual practices of marriage — ways in which we can choose to honor our spouses on a regular basis.

The seven practices are: Create a shared vision; make connection the norm; bring honoring to conflict; give up the search for the perfect lover; work on the "I" in marriage; make love a gift, and walk the sacred path.

Most married people want loving feelings to carry them along from the wedding day to "death do us part." They think loving feelings will produce honoring behaviors, but it's the other way around. Honoring is the soil, the water, the sunlight, the fertilizer, the stem and the leaves of marriage. Loving feelings are the blossoms.

Kevin Anderson, Ph.D. is a psychologist and author of "The 7 Spiritual Practices of Marriage and Divinity in Disguise: Nested Meditations to Delight the Mind and Awaken the Soul." Give away a copy of "The 7 Spiritual Practices" and receive a free copy for your own marriage by e-mailing giftofmarriage@buck-eye-access.com.

Sports

USF BASEBALL COACH NAMED MCC COACH OF THE YEAR University of Saint Francis first-year Cougars' coach Greg Roberts has been named MCC Coach of the Year. Roberts, an assistant coach with the Cougars the previous two seasons, guided USF to 23 wins this season, the second highest total in the 43-year history of the program. USF finished 23-30 in 2006 after a 4-29 season in 2005. It was the most wins since USF won 20 in 2000 during a 20-32-1 season.

Only City Meet remains for CYO track athletes

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — The boys' and girls' team from St. John, New Haven ran away with the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) track meet held at Bishop Luers on April 27.

The girls topped St. Jude (124 points) and St. John, Fort Wayne-Benoit (82 points) by racking up 168 total points. The boys scored 131.5 points. St. Jude was a close second with 125.5 and St. John-Benoit came in third place, posting 97 team points.

At Bishop Dwenger, St. John, New Haven, again dominated the field outscoring St. John-Benoit and St. Vincent in both boys' and girls' meets on May 1. St. John, New Haven, boys won a total of seven events including the hurdles, 800, 400 relay, 400, 1,600, discus and high jump. Athletes from St. Vincent won the 100 and 4x200 relay. St. John-Benoit won the 200 and long jump

events.

In the girls' competition, St. John, New Haven, claimed first place in all but two events. Top honors in the discus throw went to St. Vincent. And St. John-Benoit won the 1,600-meter run.

The final meet of the CYO regular season set a large field of competitors from many schools. St. Jude girls' squeaked by St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth, 109-105, for first- and second-place wins out of the seven teams represented.

Individual winners for St. Jude were the 4x100-relay team, Lauren Palmer (200) and Leah Ehinger (shot put). The 800 relay team, Jennifer Downey (long jump), Kasey Connelly (high jump), Anna McNamera (400), and Julia Lee (hurdles), took top honors for St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth. St. Charles got first place points from Samantha Eckrich (discus)

and St. Therese (Marie Peppler) won the 100-meter dash. Anna Marie Shank was a double winner for St. John-Benoit crossing the finish line first in the mile and half-mile.

In the boys' competition in the final meet of the regular season at Bishop Luers, St. Jude finished on top by winning four events:

the hurdles (Bobby Widner), 1,600 (Luke Momper), shot put (Brendan Berghoff) and the discus (Anthony Bobay). St. Charles won the 800 relay, the 100 (Chris Lee), and the high jump (Mike Gabet).

Top place finishers from St. John-Benoit were the 400 relay team members, Deangelo Fincher (400 and long jump), and Courtney Mitchell (200). Andy Brennan got a blue ribbon in the 800 for St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth.



ICCL baseball enters last two weeks of campaign

BY ELMER J. DANCH

SOUTH BEND — The race for the two-division baseball championships of the Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) has narrowed down to the top-two teams in each section as the regular season enters the last two weeks of the campaign.

Although Christ the King, with its unbeaten skin, continues to be the sole leader of the John Bosco Division, the St. Jude Falcons missed an opportunity to keep pace with the Kings.

The Falcons edged Holy Cross, 8-7, when Andy Clark lashed out the winning hit to drive in the tie-breaking run in the last frame, but the Falcons could not keep up their winning pace when Holy Family tripped the Falcons, 8-6.

Although weather has hampered the circuit, a number of make-up games will have to be played in the next two weeks.

In one of the longest games, St. Anthony, behind the power hitting Pete Gillis who batted in five runs, swamped St. Matthew, 17-6.

Another batting hero was Pat Gimmer who lined a deep single down the left field line to drive in the winning run for St. Joseph-St. John-Our Lady of Hungary in a 4-3 win over Corpus Christi.

In the Martin de Porres

Division, Corpus Christi Red nailed down its seventh straight win by beating St. Michael of Plymouth, 5-4, and beat St. Jude Green, 15-4.

In other high scoring games, Holy Family Blue trounced St. Adalbert 12-0 as Mike Howlett pitched a one hitter; Christ the King White overwhelmed St. Adalbert, 14-3, as Jonathon Daniel smashed out four hits, and St. Anthony Maroon clubbed Mishawaka Catholic, 15-14, as Zack Waltz received credit for the win by pitching five innings.

Standings

Martin De Porres Division

Corpus Christi (Red)	7-0
St. Jude (Green)	5-2
Holy Family (Blue)	4-2
Christ the King (White)	3-3
St. Michael (Plymouth)	3-2
St. Adalbert	2-3
Mishawaka Catholic	1-5
St. Thomas (Maroon)	1-4
St. Anthony (Maroon)	0-4

John Bosco Division

Christ the King	4-0
St. Jude	5-1
Holy Family	4-1
St. Thomas	4-2
St. Joseph-St. John-Our Lady of Hungary	2-3
Holy Cross	2-4
St. Anthony	2-3
St. Matthew	1-4
Corpus Christi	0-6

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Bishop D'Arcy speaks at ND law school

BY ANN CAREY

NOTRE DAME — Bishop John M. D'Arcy was invited to the University of Notre Dame School of Law on April 21 to celebrate Mass, to enjoy lunch with the students and to speak about "The Bishop as Pastor and Teacher." He came at the invitation of student members of the Thomas More Society, an organization dedicated to integrating the Catholic faith with the practice of law.

The bishop spoke to the students in the school's courtroom for about 30 minutes, and then opened the floor to questions. The students had asked him to speak about three main topics: the role of bishop, Bishop D'Arcy's criteria for admitting men to the priesthood and the relationship of a bishop to a Catholic university.

"The Second Vatican Council was a great reforming council for the office of bishop, and that is still continuing," Bishop D'Arcy said. "In Vatican II we find an attempt to move the bishop away from being a CEO or an administrator, to being a shepherd, a pastor, an evangelist."

Pope John Paul II was an excellent example of that model, Bishop D'Arcy said.

With the office of bishop comes great responsibility, he continued, for the bishop must render an

account of souls before God. The faithful should be attached to their bishop as the church is attached to Jesus, he said, and in turn, the bishop has "tremendous responsibility" to be close to the people. Consequently, the bishop said he does not like to see a frequent turnover of bishops in dioceses.

"I see it as an enormous responsibility; I think God will judge me on it," Bishop D'Arcy told the law students.

The two most important things a bishop does is determine whom to ordain and whom to send to a parish, he said, noting that "The best thing you ever do for a parish is send them a good priest."

Bishop D'Arcy said that good candidates for the priesthood are men who would be good spouses and fathers, men who can give of themselves. He said that in his judgment, homosexuals should not be ordained, and he supports the recent instruction from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith dealing with seminary admission. That document directed that men with deep-seated homosexual tendencies or those who have lived a gay lifestyle should not be admitted.

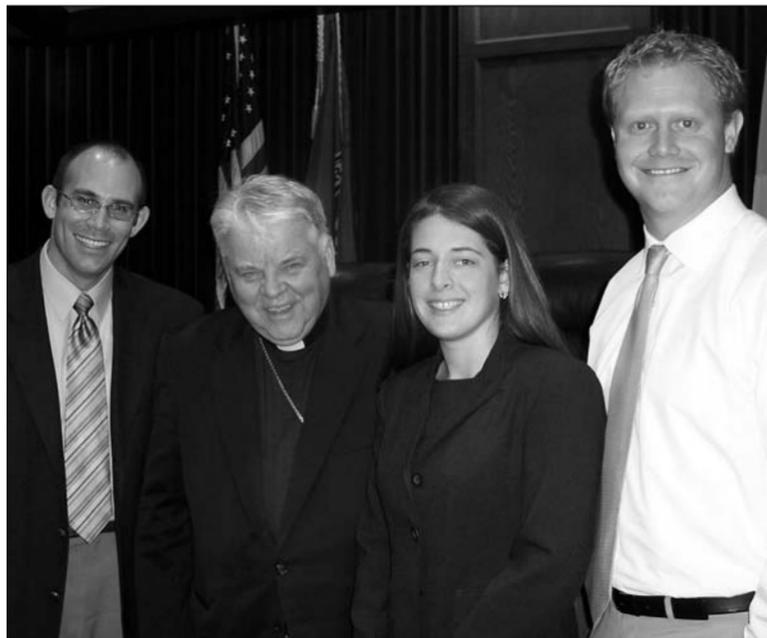
To explain the relationship between a bishop and a Catholic university, Bishop D'Arcy said his philosophy is found in "Ex Corde Ecclesiae" ("From the Heart of the Church," Pope John Paul II's 1990

apostolic constitution on Catholic higher education). He read a passage from that document that directs the bishop to promote and assist in the preservation of the Catholic identity of the university through close personal and pastoral relations "characterized by mutual trust, close and constant cooperation" and continuing dialogue.

"It's been a privilege to be bishop of Notre Dame," Bishop D'Arcy said, "especially to meet the young people led by God to this place."

In the question-answer period, a student asked Bishop D'Arcy to describe his relationship with Notre Dame.

"My main responsibility is to preach the Gospel," he said. "It's important to recognize the independence of the university and academic freedom. But, if they have academic freedom, I have pastoral freedom. And I cannot refrain from preaching the Gospel and applying the Gospel to particular circumstances."



ANN CAREY

Bishop John M. D'Arcy was invited to speak at the Notre Dame School of Law by the St. Thomas More Society, an organization that seeks to integrate the Catholic faith with the practice of law. With Bishop D'Arcy are law students who are members of the society: John Peiffer, left; Becky Austen, second from right, and Ryan Bradel, right.

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Up close with Barbara Nicolosi, an exclusive interview

BY THERESA THOMAS

NOTRE DAME — Barbara Nicolosi, writer, speaker, blogger, adjunct professor of screenwriting at Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, CA., and executive director of ACT ONE, a nonprofit organization that, according to its Web site, “trains people of faith for careers in mainstream film and television,” spent a few minutes after her April 27th lecture “Why Does God Care About Hollywood? The Role of Entertainment in Human Life” with Theresa Thomas, *Today's Catholic* reporter. Nicolosi spoke about her family and ACT ONE, and she answers questions from *Today's Catholic* readers.



THERESA THOMAS

Barbara Nicolosi speaks at a lecture at the University of Notre Dame.

TC: Barbara, can you tell me a little about your family background?

Nicolosi: Sure, I grew up one of four girls in Rhode Island. We were a disciplined family, and my parents were committed Catholics. We said the rosary. We all were raised appreciating the arts as well. We all had music lessons, and a sentence I heard over and over again in our house was, “A thing of beauty is a joy forever.” Two of my sisters have music degrees (one of them is an opera singer), and the other sister is a writer, as I am. My parents exposed us to great movies. I was nine when my mom took me to “Gone with the Wind” in the theater. She said, “Yes, you’re young for this but it’s a beautiful movie and I want to watch it with you.”

TC: Did you always know you wanted to be involved in the media?

Nicolosi: Well I always loved drama and doing skits. And, as I said, I had a good appreciation of the arts from an early age.

TC: You have said that you spent your 20s with the Daughter’s of St. Paul, a congregation dedicated to evangelization with the media. You spent countless hours during those years in front of the Blessed Sacrament, praying for the media. It seems that you are seeing the fruit of that prayer now, with your work.

Nicolosi: Yes, definitely. At the time I never knew where I was heading, though.

TC: Can you give me an example where you have seen that fruit, where the Holy Spirit was directly working in your life?

Nicolosi: The first 10 years after ACT ONE was started, my time was consumed with getting it off

the ground. I always wanted to write, but I felt God wanted this nonprofit (organization) to succeed. Finally, as I was not being able to spend the time writing I thought, “I guess I’m not going to be a writer.”

I turned it over to God. It was my “Isaac moment.” It wasn’t until I turned myself over to what I thought God wanted then suddenly, like that, I got all this work. Within three

months I was offered all sorts of great writing jobs. God needed to hear it was okay. I thought I was supposed to give up writing. I wasn’t.

TC: I understand that a group of writers from several different Christian denominations started ACT ONE on Jan. 25, 1999, the feast day of the conversion of St. Paul.

Nicolosi: Yes, isn’t that something? I spent a lot of time with the Daughters of St. Paul.

TC: Some readers have expressed different thoughts about movies. They include: “I feel alienated from the themes in many of today’s movies. They just don’t resonate from my experience. Why doesn’t Hollywood make movies that actually relate to my life?”

Nicolosi: You have to understand that people make movies that they want to see. Most people in the entertainment industry aren’t family oriented and faith filled. That’s not their background. That’s not their experience. That explains why they make what they make. We need to train a new generation of quality writers and producers to create excellent material that you

want to see. The other thing is that there are some good movies being made. They just don’t get to you. You have to glean through all this other stuff to find them.

TC: “I don’t enjoy movies any more. I am afraid to take my children to them. There is so much premarital sex, violence and vulgar language on the screen. How can I determine the good movies from the bad ones?”

Nicolosi: Again, you have to glean. You have to look. Our job as Christians is not just to protect our children but to prepare them. How do you find the good stuff? Find a critic whose sensibilities you trust. Check out what they’re saying on the Internet, my blog, the bishop’s Web site (The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: www.usccb.org/movies/). The bishop’s Web site actually does a good job. They look at movies with a sense of artistry as well as considering the language and violence.

TC: “My daughter is interested in a scriptwriting career. I don’t care to send her, at age 18, out to California to college where she might be warped by the Hollywood mindset, not to mention be taken advantage of. Should she pick another profession? Does she really have a shot at this?”

Nicolosi: Well, you could send her to a secular film school, but only if she is really solid in her faith and well grounded. It’s hard. I would say she could major in something else, anything else she is really interested in, so she has something to say and develops a sense of depth.

Then she could come to one of our ACT ONE programs and study at the graduate level. At ACT ONE we always say that we aim to provide a mastery of craft united to unusual quality of depth.

Can she make it? If she’s a very good writer she can make it. It’s a lucrative, powerful and demanding career. If you work hard and are good you can succeed. You will succeed.

TC: Can you share a few of your favorite movies?

Nicolosi: ... “The Passion of the Christ,” “In America,” “Millions,” “October Sky,” “Giant,” “Sophie Scholl” ... that’s a foreign film.

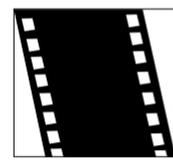
TC: Any parting thoughts for *Today's Catholic* readers?

Nicolosi: Yes! Don’t go to (the movie) “The DaVinci Code.”

Some people say, “If we don’t watch it we can’t talk about it.” That’s ridiculous. That’s like saying we can’t talk about human sexuality without watching porn.

“The DaVinci Code” is dangerous and dumb. It presents Christ as a goddess worshipper and is blasphemous. Some people say, “It’s just a movie.”

Well, you are paying Sony to see it and attendance will affect future releases. Remember the movie tanks if the audience doesn’t go to see it. “The DaVinci Code” will plant seeds of doubt in many faithful.



MOVIE CAPSULES

NEW YORK (CNS) – Following is a recent capsule review issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office for Film and Broadcasting.

“An American Haunting” (After Dark)

Spookily atmospheric, well-acted thriller based on the “true story” of the “Bell Witch” case, the only documented case in the U.S. of a spirit causing the death of a person, as the Bells, an 1818 Tennessee couple (Donald Sutherland and Sissy Spacek) battle ghostly horrors in their home and the possession of their daughter (Rachel Hurd-Ward), after a woman thought to be a witch curses the family. Writer-director Courtney Solomon builds up an atmosphere of heady suspense that never lets up, and although there’s lots of generalized demonic violence, there’s little bloodshed. Some intensely violent episodes including a hair-raising wolf attack, an attempted suicide, questioning of God’s existence and omnipotence, and subtle sexual revelations of an adult nature. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13.

“Hoot” (New Line)

Amiable family-friendly drama about an eighth-grader (Logan Lerman) who moves with his parents to small-town Florida, where he is caught up in the crusade of an enigmatic boy (Cody Linley) and his stepsister (Brie Larson) to save a colony of burrowing owls whose habitat is threatened by a real-estate developer hoping to bulldoze the endangered birds’ nesting zone to make way for a pancake franchise. Directed by Wil Shriner and based on Carl Hiaasen’s award-winning children’s book, the film’s warm message about friendship, respect for nature and taking a stand for

what’s right is handicapped somewhat by a weak script and a slow-starting plot, and the saucer-eyed critters get very little screen time. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is A-I — general patronage. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG — parental guidance suggested.

“The Lost City” (Magnolia)

Wistful and deeply personal drama set in 1950s’ Cuba on the eve of Castro’s communist revolution about three brothers (Andy Garcia, who also directs, Enrique Murciano and Nestor Carbonell) caught in the political unrest that ultimately tears them and their island home apart. While the sprawling story needs tightening, Garcia’s well-acted love letter to the country he left as a child is full of passion and gorgeously captures the beauty and energy of the island, its culture and especially its music, in exploring themes of longing and loss. Some violence, including several graphic executions, a suicide, a brief voodoo reference, and a few rough and crude expressions. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R.

“Mission: Impossible III” (Paramount)

Third installment in the franchise which finds secret-agent Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise) and his team of spies (Ving Rhames, Maggie Q and Jonathan Rhys Meyers) battling a ruthless arms dealer (Philip Seymour Hoffman) who kidnaps Ethan’s fiance to get back the doomsday device they snatched from him. As popcorn entertainment, director J.J. Abrams’ thrill ride doesn’t disappoint, piling on the action fireworks and pulse-pounding excitement, but, like the previous two films, is otherwise an empty exercise in adrenaline-charged excess. Pervasive action violence, including an intense execution scene, a few disturbing images, a suggested sexual encounter, and some crude language and profanity. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

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

DEVOTIONS

Little Flower Holy Hour

Fort Wayne — Deacon Tony Steinacker will celebrate the Little Flower Holy Hour at MacDougal Chapel on Tuesday, May 16, at 7:15p.m. The speaker for the evening will be seminarian, Matt Coonan.

MISC. HAPPENINGS

Honor religious and eat frozen treats

South Bend — Ritters Frozen Custard at 4540 South Miami St. will sponsor a day to honor religious on Sunday, May 21, from noon - 6 p.m. Proceeds will be donated to the Religious Retirement Fund sponsored by the USCCB. Serving the frozen treats will be sisters from religious communities serving hospitals, schools and other diocesan ministries. Take-home packs and gift certificates available.

Ministry to caregivers sponsors pancake breakfast

South Bend — Faith in Action Respite Care, a ministry to family caregivers, is sponsoring a pancake breakfast Sunday, June

11, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at Little Flower Church, 54191 N. Ironwood. Tickets available at the door are \$5 for adults, \$3 for children and free for those under 5. Senior tickets are \$3 and family tickets \$15.

All alumni reunion planned

Fort Wayne — The Central Catholic High School all-alumni class reunion will be held Saturday, June 24, at the Memorial Coliseum with Mass at 5 p.m., a buffet at 6:30 p.m. followed by musical entertainment ending at 11 p.m. The event includes all who attended CCHS, St. Augustine or St. Catherine Academy. The cost is \$30 per person. Call the alumni office for more information at (260) 471-7649.

Ladies May brunch

Plymouth — The St. Michael Altar Rosary Society and Angel Girls Club are sponsoring a ladies May brunch on Sunday, May 21, after the 9:30 a.m. Mass in the school cafeteria. All women and girls of the parish are

invited. Tickets are \$6 for adults, \$3 for students and preschoolers are free. For tickets call Chris Morrow at (574) 936-2400 or Marilyn Fortin at (574) 936-9582 or the rectory.

Knights plan spaghetti dinner

South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a spaghetti dinner on Friday, May 19, from 5 to 7 p.m. Adults \$6, children (5-12) \$3. Dinner includes spaghetti, salad, garlic toast and coffee. Carry-out available.

Card party planned

South Bend — The St. Adalbert Rosary Society will have a card party on Wednesday, May 17, at 6 p.m. in the Heritage Center. Plate lunch will be served. Tickets are \$4.50 per person by calling (574) 258-4535 or (574) 288-6641 or at the parish office by Monday, May 15.

Save all your loot for Luers

Fort Wayne — Donations are needed for the Luers Loot rummage sale. Drop off dates are any Saturday in May from 9 to 11 a.m. and May 30 and June 1,

REST IN PEACE

Decatur

Floyd D. Balliet, 72, St. Mary of the Assumption

Elkhart

Mark L. Minichillo, 52, St. Vincent de Paul

Fort Wayne

Beth Ann Robinson, 46, St. Joseph

Mary M. Hartman, 90, St. Jude

Vera E. Rucoi, 92, Queen of Angels

Louis J. Voors Jr., 84, St. Jude

Marjorie E. Turpchinoff, 77, Queen of Angels

Donna Marie Waterman, 60, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Randy G. Sorg, 47, St. Jude

Mishawaka

Adelia Canarecci, 80, St. Bavo

Celia Detrick, 97, St. Monica

Elizabeth R. Germano, 93, St. Monica

John Mickels, 66, St. Bavo

Notre Dame

John S. Destis, 87, Sacred Heart Basilica

Robert H. Vasoli, 80, Sacred Heart Basilica

Roanoke

Lucille M. Prouty, 88, St. Joseph

South Bend

Alice M. Herma, 91, St. Paul Retirement Community

Barbara M. Smith, 86, St. Anthony de Padua

Leonard P. Sosinski, 79, St. Casimir

Kathleen R. Pyle, 84, St. Anthony de Padua

Harry C. Pawelski, 53, Holy Family

Florence A. Kowalewski, 80, Christ the King

Betty J. Peczkowski, 78, St. John the Baptist

Wabash

Larry Shoemaker, 55, St. Bernard

Robert Kaiser, 63, St. Bernard

from 3 to 8 p.m. Please drop off items at the door on the east side of the school. To arrange large items to be picked up, contact Larry Wellman at lgwellman@msn.com or call (260) 748-4107.

Day of reflection at convent

Mishawaka — A day of reflection will be at St. Francis Convent, (across from Marian High School) on Wednesday, May 31, from 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. The cost of the day is \$15 and includes lunch. Register by Friday, May 26, to Sister

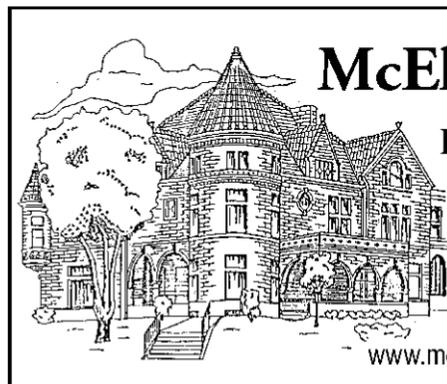
Barbara Anne Hallman at (574) 259-5427.

Garage Sale planned

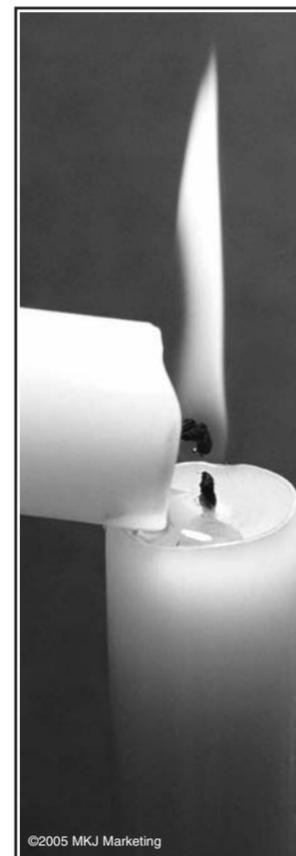
Fort Wayne — St. Peter Parish will have a garage sale on May 19 and 20, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the pavilion at 500 E. DeWald St. Come early for best bargains.

Area Catholic women to meet

South Bend — The South Bend deanery of the Area Council of Catholic Women will sponsor an area rosary at St. Anthony de Padua Parish, Sunday, May 21, at 3 p.m.



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Notre Dame welcomes area residents interested in summer study. A broad range of day and evening courses is available. High school students entering their senior year may register for introductory language courses.

Tuition is \$538 per credit hour for undergraduate students and \$288 per credit hour for graduate students, plus a \$50 general fee. For a 2004 Summer Session Bulletin, call (574) 631-7282 or send your name and address to:
Summer Session
510 Main Building
Notre Dame, IN 46556-5602

The Summer Session Bulletin is also available online at www.nd.edu/~sumsess

summer session



PROVIDED BY NEW GROUP MEDIA

The New Group Media crew stand in front of the Leonardo Da Vinci painting of the Last Supper in Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, Italy. With Chris Salvador, from left, is Franciscan Sister Judy Zielinski, Douglas Thomas and Mark Stephenson. Shooting the film footage at locations like the Sea of Galilee and Rome was done on a two-week trip between Thanksgiving and Christmas of 2005.

MEDIA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

acy — including murder and hiding “gospels” — to keep people from finding out these “truths.” The “truths” are discovered by the novel’s lead characters through deciphering clues allegedly embedded in the paintings of Renaissance artist Leonardo Da Vinci.

A novel and movie cannot seriously damage the Catholic Church, acknowledged Msgr. Francis Maniscalco, director of communications for the U.S. bishops, but “If only one person were to come away with a distorted impression of Jesus Christ or his church, our concern is for that person as if he or she were the whole world.”

Thus, the bishops asked film production companies to submit proposals for a documentary to address the misinformation in “The Da Vinci Code,” and NGM won that competition.

NGM, with its offices and studios in downtown South Bend, was formed in 2002 by three men who had been employed by Golden Dome Productions, a film production company associated with the University of Notre Dame. When Golden Dome Productions was disbanded by the university, Christopher Salvador, Larry Bilinski and Douglas Thomas partnered to start NGM, and their company has been growing ever since. The addition of Franciscan Sister Judy Zielinski in 2003 as director of Faith and Values Programming has made the company even stronger in the area of religious programming.

Salvador, the film’s director, told *Today’s Catholic* that as soon as the company learned in March of 2005 that it had won the contract for “Jesus Decoded,” company personnel dove into researching the

issues, deciding what to address and where to go to film.

Sister Judy explained that it became apparent they could not address every troubling issue in the novel and movie in a one-hour documentary, so they decided to limit the scope to the first 300 years of Christianity, because those were the most problematic issues in the novel.

The NGM team knew they wanted to do realistic dramatic reenactments for the film and not just rely on “talking heads,” so Sister Judy and Salvador took two scouting trips in July and August to Turkey, Greece, Italy and the Holy Land to look for locations, visuals and local people to be the actors. They also wanted to find religious art, buildings and other imagery for their film.

Shooting the film footage at locations like the Sea of Galilee and Rome was done on a two-week trip between Thanksgiving and Christmas of 2005. Salvador and Sister Judy were accompanied that time by NGM’s Douglas Thomas, who did all the camera work, and Mark Stephenson, NGM’s director of technical operations, who handled the sound. The four-person NGM team carried all of their own equipment, as well as costumes and wigs provided by a South Bend costume consultant.

Also during that busy November of 2005, NGM did all the on-camera interviews with the experts who speak about the issues in the film: Salesian Father Francis Moloney, a biblical expert who formerly taught at The Catholic University of America; Richard Hays, a New Testament expert at Duke University; Sister of St. Joseph Maria Pascuzzi, a New Testament expert at the University of San Diego; Marist Father Justin Taylor, a biblical scholar and expert on Christian origins at the Ecole Biblique et Archeologique Francaise in Jerusalem; and Robert Randolph Coleman, an art expert at

Notre Dame.

A handful of scenes were recreated and shot in South Bend later, under the watchful eye of photo editor Lynn King, a graduate of the American Film Institute who joined NGM in January.

Hundreds of pages of transcripts were boiled down by Sister Judy, the film’s writer, to 33 pages, which were refined during consultations with the bishops’ conference. Likewise, hours and hours of film were edited down to the 55-minute running time by Larry Bilinski, NGM’s post-production director and senior editor, who also blended in appropriate background music.

Bilinski explained to *Today’s Catholic* that the other members of the team bring all the “ingredients,” and he is the person who stays home and “cooks the meal.”

And a delicious meal it is, combining dramatic reenactments in the actual locations Jesus and early Christians walked, along with stunning visuals and engaging commentary by top experts, all of which will interest any person, even those unfamiliar with “The Da Vinci Code.” Adding to this quality is justifiable pride in having this highly professional film made not in Hollywood, but right here in this diocese.

WISE-TV in Fort Wayne is scheduled to air “Jesus Decoded” at noon on May 21. The programming manager at WNDU-TV in South Bend said the film is not yet scheduled, but probably will run on a weekend. He said to watch the television listings in the paper, or check the WNDU Web site, at www.wndu.com.

More information on the film can be found at www.jesusdecoded.com/tvspecial1.php. Click on “View the Trailer” for a short preview of the film. The DVD may be ordered for \$19.95 through that Web site, or by calling the bishops’ publishing office at (800) 235-8722.

KATRINA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

raised \$1,000.

During Catholic Schools Week in January, students made pillows for the displaced students. The small pillows had five prayer cards with inspirational Bible verses, and with the help of a few moms, the Yoder students decorated and prepared the pillows for shipment.

It just so happened that a brother of one of the St. Aloysius, Yoder, parents was working construction in New Orleans as part of the rebuilding project. He agreed to personally deliver the pillows to Baton Rouge.

And they arrived, as well as

books from a recent book fair, two weeks ago.

“When we distributed the pillows to our Katrina students,” Staid, in Baton Rouge told *Today’s Catholic*, “their reaction was one of appreciation and surprise that they are still being remembered and thought of in such a special way.”

Principal Sandor hopes the project with their patron saint ally will make some impact on the Yoder students. “We had to do something because it is the right thing to do.”

As for the Baton Rouge students, Staid commented, “Thank you to St. Aloysius School and all their wonderful children for reaching out to these displaced students and making them again aware of Christ’s work being carried on by his disciples.”



PROVIDED BY ST. ALOYSIUS SCHOOL, BATON ROUGE, LA

Students displaced from New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina, accept the pillows from the Yoder students at St. Aloysius School in Baton Rouge, La. Of the 169 students that the Baton Rouge school accepted last fall, 38 are still enrolled. “What a kind gesture by the children at your (Yoder) St. Aloysius School,” said Nancy Staid, curriculum and development director at the Louisiana school.

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Watch *Jesus Decoded* on WISE-TV, Ch. 33, from noon-1 p.m. on May 21. In the South Bend area please check your local listings.

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To help separate Catholic belief from modern fiction, the Catholic Communication Campaign, presents *Jesus Decoded*, an hour-long documentary that provides accurate information about the person of Jesus, his followers, their belief in his divinity, the formation of the New Testament, and the important role women played in his ministry and the spread of the Gospel message.

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