SOUTH BEND — “Unless you become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The Gospel reading from Matthew 18:1-5 was not lost on the nearly 5,000 young people who filled the University of Notre Dame’s Joyce Center Jan. 29. The children, representing 27 diocesan schools, joined Bishop John M. D’Arcy in celebrating the 16th Annual All Schools Mass.

The gathering procession was led by several students carrying the large traveling Jubilee Pilgrim Cross bearing the inscription “His Steadfast Love Endures Forever.” The cross commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Students representing every school followed, each carrying a basket of food to be donated to the Northern Indiana Food Bank.

After offering prayers for those from Michigan and Elkhart schools who could not attend due to heavy snow, Bishop D’Arcy lost no time in getting the students involved with his homily.

“It is also a day of recognition,” the bishop said. “We recognize Christ as a child. He spoke about the importance of his own ordination to the priesthood.

The feast of the Presentation symbolizes light because Christ is the light of the world. “It is also a day of recognition,” the bishop said, noting how Anna and Simeon recognized Christ as a child.

“Jesus Christ, recognizing his person and recognizing what is his plan for us…” The bishop said, “We are called like Anna and Simeon to speak of the redemption (of Christ) to others — by our attitude, by our love and our self giving. So we recognize him in the Eucharist and in all the sacraments — in the forgiveness of sins…”

Bishop D’Arcy thanked those who attended the Mass and prayed with him on his 50th anniversary. There were 78 ordained to the priesthood from his class, 52 for the Archdiocese of Boston.

He spoke of the need for fostering of vocations: “Pope Benedict said recently that vocations would be given to those dioceses where there is a habit of prayer.” This includes prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament, prayer at home, the rosary, prayer to Our Lady as the patroness of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

The heart of vocations will come through renewal of the whole structure of the diocese — children learning the faith in elementary and high school. “We’ve worked hard to have good religion departments in our schools and high schools,” Bishop D’Arcy said.

He added that there must be spiritual

BIshop D’Arcy celebrates
50 years of priesthood

FORT WAYNE — “It’s not an easy thing to offer a child to God, but it’s a beautiful thing,” Bishop John M. D’Arcy said, as he celebrated the Feb. 2 noon time Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

Not only is Feb. 2 the celebration of the feast of the Presentation (when Jesus was presented in the Temple), the day holds significant importance for Bishop D’Arcy. This year, Feb. 2 marked his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood.

The bishop said, “We are called like Anna and Simeon to speak of the redemption (of Christ) to others — by our attitude, by our love and our self giving. So we recognize him in the Eucharist and in all the sacraments — in the forgiveness of sins…”

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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

South Bend students gather for all-schools Mass

DIANE FREEBY

Quality Dining Chief Executive Officer Dan Fitzpatrick, in a letter read by company President John Firth at the South Bend all schools Mass, presented Bishop John M. D’Arcy with a check for $10,167, representing a dollar for each of the 10,167 grade-school children presently enrolled in diocesan schools. The fund will provide scholarship assistance to deserving children in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.
Parish priest is father, shepherd and teacher, as well as priest

A tale of four parishes

It is in the parish most people meet Jesus Christ. The service and life of the parish priest is, in my judgment, the summit of the priesthood. Every day involves the sacraments; the sick and the dying: new births, both in life and in grace; and, above all, the making present of the holy Eucharist for the faithful. The parish priest is father, shepherd and teacher, as well as priest. This conviction served as a backdrop for me in four recent parish visits.

St. Mary of the Assumption, South Bend

Founded in 1882, this church existed for a long time in downtown South Bend. It was moved south after World War II. I have been there many times for parish missions, the sacrament of confirmation and the installation of pastors. This visit was touched with sadness. It is a small church located within the school, next to the cafeteria, with a tiny sacristy. Blowing snow was everywhere, but the church was full. There was sadness, but kindness toward each other, as people reflected on what this place of prayer and worship had meant to them over the years. The building is a bit isolated on the south side of South Bend, although not far from St. Adalbert Parish in some ways, light years away from that historic parish.

A painful day was touched with beauty; and credit for this belongs to Father John Delaney, pastor of St. Jude Parish, South Bend, the parish with which St. Mary of the Assumption was merged, as well as to Jim Fitzpatrick, our diocesan master of ceremonies.

After Mass, I presented the parish registers containing records of holy things, like baptisms and marriages. The sacred oils were taken up by parishioners, and I had the privilege of removing the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle for the last time and carrying it to St. Jude.

With a light snow falling and the sun shining, a parade of cars a mile long proceeded southeast to St. Jude, about three miles away.

We were welcomed there by the St. Jude parishioners. Songs were sung. The Blessed Sacrament was incensed and placed in the tabernacle. The symbolic sacred oils from St. Mary’s were joined to those at St. Jude, and the parish registers graciously received by St. Jude parishioners. I said a few words and we all went downstairs to the hall. Parishioners of St. Jude, under the direction of Father John Delaney, had prepared a delightful lunch. We were well received. While the love did not take away the pain of the parishioners of St. Mary of the Assumption, it softened it. How fitting that one reading at Mass was St. Paul’s great hymn of charity to the Corinthians.

Holy Cross, South Bend

The next day, after celebrating the noon Mass for a fine crowd at Faith, Hope, Charity Chapel, and sharing a nice lunch with the staff, I proceeded to Holy Cross Parish for an event of great significance. We know that Catholic schools in urban areas around the country are closing. Here, through the excellent leadership of Father Michael Mathews, CSC, and the people of Holy Cross Parish and St. Stanislaus Kostka, an urban Catholic school in a relatively low economic area is expanding. A large hole in the ground has already been dug and is covered with snow. A gym is being built, along with a school library, classrooms and offices. This beloved old parish, which at one time I am told, was the largest in the diocese, was not to take on this new venture. They would need a loan from the diocese, but they raised over $2 million in pledges toward their goal. There was great joy. The mayor of South Bend, Steve Lukecke, was quite aware of the importance of this event. He was present with other city officials and, after the service, told me how proud this parish and school represented an anchor for the area and how grateful he was that it would grow.

Interestingly, in his reflections, Father Mathews said there were many people in the church present who contributed substantially, but who asked not to be recognized, so did he not ask them to stand. I have a feeling that for the most part in the generosity of the people of this diocese. It is generosity touched by humility and a desire not to be widely known.

Also, it is significant that this blessing of the cornerstone took place in the church after a day of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Father Mike, Father Brad Metz, CSC, and Deacon Gregory Haoke, CSC, all members of the Holy Cross congregation, were present, and the event had a spiritual climate.

Afterward, I was pleased to meet Jim Schellinger. Jim is an architect, a graduate of Holy Cross School and Saint Joseph’s College. He lives and works in Indianapolis, but he gave his expert services without charge to Holy Cross in preparing for this addition. He has done the same for St. Joseph’s High School relative to their long-range plans. It was a privilege to meet him and discuss with him these two projects.

St. Joseph Parish, Garrett

I drove north on a bitterly cold Sunday morning to be present at St. Joseph Parish, Garrett. In August, I appointed Father Thaddeus Uwakwe as pastor to replace Father Thomas Lombardi, who had completed some remarkable years at this parish.

This is one of the most beautiful churches in our diocese, recently restored under Father Thom’s direction. It was a special joy to see how well Father Thad has been accepted. He and the parishioners have worked hard to respond to the financial strain. A parishioner told me that every Friday Father Thad visits the 15 Communion calls, beginning at 10 a.m. and ending at 3 p.m. He brings holy Communion to each person. A neighbor, who is a Methodist, drives him. Father Thad is also present in the school. How blessed we are to have this priest from faraway Nigeria. He did graduate work in Louvain University in Belgium in theology, catechetics and Catholic social teaching, and brings an excellent background.

Speaking of Catholic social teaching

St. Joseph is a model. Father Thom and the parishioners were late to St. Martin’s Clinic. I visited it after lunch. It has been in existence less than two years, but they see hundreds of people every week. There is a great mass of uninsured people whom the leaders described to me as the “working poor.” Similar to Matthew 25 in Fort Wayne, but much smaller, they have physicians who donate their time. They are able to give medication when properly prescribed. Most recently, they are working on opening a dental office. In addition, under Father Thom’s leadership, similar works have developed — such as a soup kitchen and a place to receive clothing.

Garrett is an old railroad town and it struggles economically. All of these initiatives are a great credit to St. Joseph Parish, Garrett, and to Father Thom Lombardi in his service there.

St. Vincent De Paul, Fort Wayne

After a full week in South Bend, retiring late on a Wednesday night, I was off early the next morning to celebrate the 8 a.m. Mass at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in observance of the 50th anniversary of their parish school. It was the day before my own 50th anniversary of ordination, and it was a joy to spend it with children. As always, it was special to be with Father John Kuzmicz, pastor of this huge parish. It was a delight to meet with some of his staff afterward for the always welcome coffee and muffins.

I was especially pleased to hear of the wonderful reaction of the people to Father Pius Ichelukwu, from faraway Nigeria. Father Pius has an excellent background, both academically and pastorally. He worked closely with his bishop on many important projects. He is a good preacher and an exemplary priest. It was gratifying to think of the relationship between him and Father Kuzmicz.

On top of all this, we had a magnificent Mass at the Joyce Center in South Bend for all our schools. This was also to launch the You-Can-Lend-a-Hand Program, which has brought significant funds for our schools.

Also, there were luncheons for Catholic schools in each of our major cities, with an award given to Thomas Blea and Our Sunday Visitor for all they have done for our schools and for the training of catechists.

Liturgy Day

A beautiful day at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Warsaw, with those involved in fostering liturgical prayer in our diocese. A magnificent presentation by Father Michael Jonas in which he explained a prayer, and showed the knowledgable way some of the changes to be expected in liturgical translations. A busy, but joyful day.

Congratulations to the Colfax. I will see you all next week.
On the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood, Bishop John M. D’Arcy celebrated the noon Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Feb. 2. Above, dancetry staff, Maureen Schott, Mari Raatz and Josephine Koch, present the offertory gifts at the Mass, a luncheon hosted by the Fort Wayne Serra Club and a gathering with diocesan employees followed that afternoon. The public celebration will take place Sunday, April 15, in Fort Wayne.

By Denis Fedorow

Fort Wayne Serra Club, an organization dedicated to fostering the religious, charitable and educational growth of young men, celebrated its 50th anniversary April 15, in Fort Wayne.

Development through the parishes with missions and retreats, and there must be devotion to the poor and to the needy. When all these things flourish, “that’s when vocations will come and grow,” he said and noted that, with 18 in the seminary, the fruits of renewal are beginning. A luncheon, sponsored by the Fort Wayne Serra Club, an organization dedicated to fostering the religious, charitable and educational growth of young men, celebrated its 50th anniversary April 15, in Fort Wayne.

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South Bend’s Corpus Christi was one of many diocesan schools kicking off Catholic education students may be willing to donate money for the project. Despite continuing fund rais- ing efforts, for Father Mathews and many others in the congrega- tions the school expansion and renovation is the fruition of a lifetime vision. It “is still a bit of a dream,” said Father Mathews when asked later how he feels about the project. “I still can’t believe it’s actually here. It’s been fun to be a part of, and it’s been a joy and loving process for me to see the people’s faith, trust and generosi- ty.”

BENITO ACADEMY OPENS DOORS TO ST. PATRICK RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STUDENTS

BY BONNIE EUBERSON

FORT WAYNE — The small elemen- tary school on Fort Wayne’s southeast side welcomed the entire student population and staff of the religious education program at St. Patrick Parish seeking heated rooms for their classes. Gisela Feil, director of reli- gious education at St. Patrick’s, had worried about the heating sys- tem at the aging school building on Harrison Street. In the past two years many repairs had been made to it, but finally, the old boiler gave out just as January tempera- tures dipped to freezing. Feil knew immediate action was required for the religious education program to continue without interruption.

Mary Schreiber, principal of Benoit Academy, stepped in and offered her building for Saturday classes. Not only are we opening our doors, she says, “We’re opening our arms nice and wide.” Schreiber is pleased to be able to showcase her school and all it has to offer to the parents of St. Patrick students, since that parish has no functioning elementary school. “They’re welcome here,” she says.

She said Father Dan Darkin, pastor at St. Henry Church, gave a welcoming address and juice and doughnuts were served by a committee from St. Patrick’s. Feil brings 260 religious educa- tion students and 33 teachers and aides from St. Patrick’s each week. Students range in age from kindergarten to high school, including 110 first communicants and 37 confirmands.

St. Patrick Parish is diverse, with Hispanics comprising 50 percent of its population, Vietnamese 10 per- cent and Anglos 10 percent — a trilingual community, says Feil. Her student population reflects that diversity as well, as do her reli- gious education teachers. It is a true combination of cultures, says Feil, “as they all come to hear the word of God.”

Feil is grateful for the opportu- nity to utilize Benito’s facilities until St. Patrick’s heating system is up and running once again and Schreiber is pleased to accommo- date them. She notes that Benito’s winter carnival is slated for Saturday, Feb. 17, and that each student will be given five free tickets to spend at the event in order to extend their welcome even further.
MISHAWAKA — Educators from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend were honored with Light of Learning awards last week by Quality Dining in South Bend and Fort Wayne.

The luncheon provides an opportunity for school representatives, political leaders and local business people to meet and establish meaningful relationships. These newly-created connections lead to the development of programs that benefit both Catholic schools and the community. Quality Dining, Inc.® hosts this annual event to demonstrate its continued commitment to area Catholic schools and Catholic education.

Bishop John M. D’Arcy served as the luncheon’s keynote speaker. Bishop D’Arcy addressed the impact a Catholic education has on building a strong foundation of faith for its students. The luncheon centers on the theme of Catholic Schools Week which is Catholic Schools — The Good News In Education.

The South Bend event was held Jan. 30 at the Century Center. In addition, 19 local Catholic School educators were presented with the Light of Learning award. From the South Bend area those teachers were the following:

- Monica Van Horn, Christ the King; Jason Pikaza, Corpus Christi; Deborah Fleece, Holy Family; Amy Sper, Our Lady of Hungary; Lori Mazick, St. Adalbert; Mary Jo Filipek, St. Anthony de Padua; James Mazurkiewicz, St. John the Baptist, South Bend; Kristin Darden, St. Joseph, South Bend; Ann Bartley, St. Jude; Julie Considine, St. Matthew; Donna Creighton, Queen of Peace; Kathleen Lehmann, St. Bavo; Kevin Joyce, St. Thomas the Apostle; Elkhart; Susan Agnieski, St. Vincent de Paul; Ruth Newell, St. John the Evangelist, Goshen; Dorothy Kissell, Sacred Heart, Warsaw; Sister Marie Morgan, OSP, Marian High School; A. Philip DePauw IV, St. Joseph’s High School. An Administrative Light of Learning award went to Fred Stump of St. Thomas the Apostle in Elkhart. A special Light of Learning award was presented to, Thomas Blee of “Our Sunday Visitor.”

The Fort Wayne event was held at the Fort Wayne Marriott hotel. The 20 educators from the Fort Wayne area who were recognized included the following: Jessie Bloom, Most Precious Blood, Amy Dumford, Queen of Angels; Kathleen Parson, St. Charles Borromeo; Gail Welling, St. John the Baptist; Kristin Spoltmann, St. Joseph-St. Martin; Elizabeth Ann Seton; Kathleen Dykuizen, St. Jude; Linda Luehring, St. Therese; Elaine Martin, St. Vincent de Paul; Virginia Robison, St. Aloysius; Peggy Richardson, Msgr. Julian Benoit Academy; Kathleen Hartenstein, St. Joseph; Hessen Cassel; Cynthia Stahl, St. Mary of the Assumption, Avilla; Merlie Ambrose, St. Joseph, Garrett; Sharon Emenhiser, St. Joseph, Decatur; John Fisher, Huntington Catholic; Shannon Tracy, St. Bernard, Wabash;

JoEllen Smith, St. Joseph, Monroeville and St. Louis Academy, New Haven; Erin Brady, Bishop Dwenger High School; Karlene Krouse, Bishop Luers High School.

Also honored was the administrative Light of Learning recipient J. Fred Tone of Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne.

The Good News in Education

Light of Learning Award recipients in the Fort Wayne area are shown in the photo above with Bishop D’Arcy and diocesan Catholic Schools Office staff.

Light of Learning Award recipients in the South Bend area are shown in the photo above with Bishop D’Arcy and diocesan Catholic Schools Office staff.

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Bishop Murry of Virgin Islands named to head Youngstown Diocese

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI has named Bishop George V. Murry of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands to head the Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio. Bishop Murry, 58, succeeds Bishop Thomas J. Tobin, who was appointed bishop of Providence, R.I., in March 2005. The appointment was announced Jan. 30 in Washington by Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States, who earlier this spring had been invited by the Vatican's newly elected pope to serve as the bishop of Youngstown, and I look forward to working closely with the priests, deacons, religious and laity of the diocese,” Bishop Murry said in a statement. He will be installed March 28. Bishop Murry, who is one of 10 active U.S. black Catholic bishops, had headed the Diocese of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands since June 1999. He first went to the diocese when he was appointed coadjutor bishop in May 1996. When Bishop Elliott G. Thomas retired, Bishop Murry automatically succeeded him. The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace is planning a spring seminar on climate change.

Pontifical council plans spring seminar on climate change

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace is planning a spring seminar on climate change from the point of view of the Catholic Church, social teaching. Officials at the council confirmed the meeting was being planned for late April or early May, although the dates and agenda for the seminar had not been confirmed as of late January. The council regularly holds seminars, designed to provide Catholic leaders with specific fields to share their experiences and discuss ways to put church teachings into practice. Among other topics, past seminars have looked at just business practices, the prevention of human trafficking, locally modified food and educating members of religious orders in the social teaching of the church, Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, told Catholic News Service Jan. 13. “I hope we will provide several high-level scientific meetings on climate change and related topics,” he said.

Vatican says Catholics can get indulgence for sick-day activities

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Catholics who participate in events connected with the 10th celebration of the World Day of the Sick can receive a special indulgence, the Vatican announced Feb. 6. Pope Benedict XVI authorized the indulgences in order “to enrich” the World Day of the Sick and to highlight Christian teaching on “the value and function of suffering” accepted as a way to express sorrow for sins he or she has committed and temporal punishment a person is due for sins he or she has committed. A plenary, or full, indulgence is being offered to those who join the official celebrations of the World Day of the Sick in Seoul, South Korea, or in their own dioceses or parishes.

Theologian says Catholic-Orthodox relations improving in Russia

WARSAW, Poland (CNS) — A Catholic representative to Catholic-Orthodox talks in Russia said the atmosphere between the two churches is improving. The improved atmosphere allows members “to face the problems and seek solutions,” said Jean-Francois Thury, a Catholic representative at the Jan. 26 talks in Moscow. “We agreed we should go to see the situation of churches in other cities and regions, while encouraging people at the local level to follow our example.” The Belgian theologian was part of the working group for problems between the Moscow Patriarchate and Catholic Church, set up in February 2004 by Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. A Jan. 26 joint statement said the working group, which convened in the Moscow Patriarchate’s Pilgrim Center, had discussed Catholic-Orthodox mixed marriages, the education of children at Catholic-run orphanages and the role of Catholic “vicarial and social structures” in Russia.

Eccumenist cites religious illiteracy as challenge to churches

ARLINGTON, Va. (CNS) — One challenge eccumenical leaders face is integrating the many solid ecumenical advances of the past half-century into the life of their churches, especially in an age when general religious belief is on the rise. Bishop Christofe Jeffrey Grous told a national gathering of ecumenists Jan. 30. Brother Grous is a theologian professor at Memphis (Tenn.) Theological Seminary who spent a quarter-century as a national ecumenical officer, first for the National Council of Churches and then for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He delivered the keynote address for the National Workshop on Christian Unity, held Jan. 29-Feb. 1 at Arlington’s Key Bridge Marriott Hotel. The gathering drew nearly 400 national and local ecumenical officers of the Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian and other Christian churches.

Catholic groups well represented at big anti-war rally at Capitol

WASHINGTON (CNS) Catholic groups were well represented at a Jan. 27 rally against the Iraq War that drew tens of thousands to the nation’s capital to protest the current war policy and President George W. Bush’s plan to send 21,500 additional soldiers to Iraq. Retired Bishop Walter F. Sullivan of Richmond, Va., a former bishop-president of Pax Christi USA, was one of the speakers at the rally, which preceded a march past the Capitol. Some rallies participated in the Washington to lobby members of Congress Jan. 29. The rally was organized by United for Peace and Justice, a coalition of more than 1,300 organizations that have declared their opposition to the war. “Pax Christi from the very beginning has condemned the invasion of Iraq as unlawful and immoral, as well as (condemned) the four-year war that has devastated this country and led to the deaths of thousands and thousands of innocent people,” Bishop Sullivan told Catholic News Service Jan. 29. “Our fundamental belief is that violence only begets more violence and that war is not the solution to any human problem.” Vatican newspaper denounces reporter who posed as penitent for expose

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican newspaper denounced an Italian journalist who posed as a penitent and confessed fake sins in order to write an expose on the sacrament of reconciliation. “Fake confessions in search of a shameful scoop,” the newspaper, L’Osservatore Romano, headlined a commentary condemning the cover story of L’Espresso magazine, one of the country’s leading weeklies. “Shame! There is no other word to express our distress toward an operation that was disgusting, worthless, disrespectful and particularly offensive,” the newspaper said. The commentary said the article had exploited the good faith of confessors and offended the religious sentiments of millions of people. “It was a sacri- fice, because it violated the sacred space in which a self-recognized sinner asks intimately to receive God’s merciful love,” it said. The reporter made his false confessions to 24 different priests in five Italian cities, including Rome. The magazine said the idea was to see how priests handled sensitive situations and whether they followed the norms in church teaching.

Vatican denies laicization to Paraguayan bishop running for president

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican turned down a laicization request from a Paraguayan bishop who wants to run for president and suspended the bishop from exercising his priestly ministry. Bishop Fernando Lugo Mendez of San Pedro, Paraguay, 57, had announced Dec. 25 that he would ask the Vatican to return him to the status of a layman so he could run for president. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, decreed in December with a formal warning that running for public office was “in clear contrast with the serious responsibility of a bishop of the Catholic Church” and would carry sanctions. Vatican News reported Feb. 1 that Cardinal Re informed Bishop Lugo in a Jan. 20 letter that his request to return to the lay state had been denied because “the episcopacy is a service accepted freely forever.” However, he radio said, because of Bishop Lugo’s decision to continue his political activity, Cardinal Re also informed him that he had been granted a year’s leave to act as bishop and priest.

Vatican publishing house defends choice of Doubleday for papal book

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican publishing house defended the choice of Doubleday as the English-language publisher of Pope Benedict XVI’s new book “Jesus of Nazareth.” The book, “Jesus of Nazareth: From His Baptism to His Transfiguration,” is scheduled to be released March 27 in North America. Citing Doubleday’s “respectful editorial curriculum,” the Vatican publishing house said that when it contracted with the Italian publisher Rizzoli to handle sales, promotion, advertising and publication of the book, it expected Rizzoli to negotiate individual language rights “with the most important world publishing houses.” The Vatican statement, issued Jan. 30, came in response to a front-page article in the Italian newspaper Il Giornale saying the English rights to the pope’s new book will be in the hands of the same publisher responsible for “The Da Vinci Code” by Dan Brown. Il Giornale said the assignment of rights to Doubleday, a subsidiary of Random House, which published Brown’s book, occurred despite Vatican officials’ recent complaints about how some publishers seem to enjoy making money from books that attack the church and the Christian faith.
AROUND THE DIOCESE

FIFTY-FIFTY: BISHOP AND ST. VINCENT SCHOOL CELEBRATE

Bishop John M. D'Arcy speaks to students gathered for Mass at St. Vincent de Paul School in Fort Wayne. Bishop D'Arcy's visit, to honor the school on its 50th anniversary, coincided almost exactly with the bishop's 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Ann Seton Parish in Fort Wayne, the School of Liberal Arts at the University of Saint Francis, Redeemer Catholic Radio and Untapped, a Catholic ministry for adults in their 20s and 30s.

stem-cell research has attracted widespread interest by the scientific community, and its advocates believe it may offer medical hope for a variety of life-threatening conditions. The Bush Administration has restricted funding for embryonic stem-cell research, while individual states have taken contrary funding positions. Critics of embryonic stem-cell research point to studies that show success with adult stem cells and do not involve the destruction of embryos.

“Dr. Janet Smith is a foremost authority and teacher in the area of life ethics and Catholic teaching,” said Gregory Erdmann, president of Our Sunday Visitor’s Publishing Division. “Stem-cell research is a controversial political and scientific issue, and both Fort Wayne’s Catholic and medical communities should find Dr. Smith’s talk timely and fascinating. All are invited.”

Dr. Janet Smith holds the Father Michael J. McGinvey Chair of Life Ethics at Sacred Heart Major Seminary of Detroit. She is the author of “Beginning Apologetics: 5. How to Answer Tough Moral Questions — Abortion, Contraception, Euthanasia, Test Tube Babies, Cloning, and Sexual Ethics”; “Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later”; and she is the editor of “Why ‘Humanae Vitae’ Was Right.” Smith was the recipient of the Haggard Award for Excellence in Teaching (1994) and Pro-Life Person of the Year (1995).

Smith’s talk will begin at 7:30 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish on 10700 Abbot Center Rd., in Fort Wayne. For more information, please contact the parish at (260) 432-0268.

Student Health Fair at USF offers practical demonstrations

FORT WAYNE — Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) students at the University of Saint Francis are putting their training into practice by offering a Health Fair on Monday, Feb. 19, from 9 a.m.-noon at the Doermer Center on the corner of Spring Street and Leesburg Road.

PTA students have researched an array of issues and will provide displays, printed material, demonstrations and activities for the general public and the university community. Topics include diabetes, walking, aquatic therapy, body mechanics and function and core/trunk stability.

The Student Health Fair is part of a class project in Mary Kay Solon’s Physical Therapy Assistant Seminar course. There is no cost to those who attend the fair, and no appointment is necessary. For further information, please contact Beth Schutt at (260) 434-7602.

Hall of fame director to speak at dinner

SOUTH BEND — Richard Walls, executive director of the National College Football Hall of Fame in downtown South Bend, will address wives and members of the Father Nieuwland Assembly Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus Thursday, Feb. 15, in the dining hall of the Mishawaka Council Knights of Columbus. A reception at 6:30 p.m. will be followed by dinner at 7 p.m.

Walls, who has been executive director of the hall for the past two years, said thousands of visitors have been attracted to this national site since it, along with the University of Notre Dame, is considered a most-patriot-loving attraction in Indiana.

The hall of fame has been especially popular recently when the Fighting Irish football teams play at home, – EJD

Nationally touring Divine mercy drama coming to Bristol

BRISTOL — St. Mary of the Assumption School will host the Mother of Mercy Messengers who bring the message of St. Faustina and Divine Mercy with their presentation “Tell All Souls About My Mercy.” The event, sponsored by the Catholic parishes of Elkhart County, will be held Sunday, Feb. 25, at St. Mary in Bristol at 6 p.m.

The Message of St. Faustina, presented by the divine team Dave and Joan Maenney present a mix of music, lights and sound to convey the message of Divine Mercy and the writings of St. Faustina Kotowalski.

The program is presented within the context of prayer and progresses from an emotional drama to a deep prayerful experience as the Blessed Sacrament is placed on the altar for a time for eucharistic adoration. During this segment, prayers from the “Diary of St. Faustina” are recited and there is time for silent contemplation. The Chaplet of Mercy is prayed for the sick and dying as well as the intentions of all gathered.

For information contact St. Mary church at (574) 848-4305

Annual You Can Lend A Hand coupon book sale begins

MISHAWAKA — The Michiana area You Can Lend A Hand coupon book sale campaign sponsored annually by Quality Dining, Inc. kicked off on Wednesday, Jan. 31. The coupon book sale is an integral part of Catholic schools’ fundraising efforts in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Since the campaign’s inception in 1982, more than $6,800,000 has been raised.

The schools have utilized profits from the fundraiser for school upgrades such as classroom and playground equipment, computer software, library books and capital improvements.

Students from Fort Wayne-South Bend diocesan Catholic schools will sell You Can Lend A Hand coupon books through Feb. 23. Each coupon book sells for $3, contains 16 coupons and is valued at over $70.

South Bend area Catholic schools participating in the program are: Christ the King; Corpus Christi; Holy Cross; Holy Family; Our Lady of Heart of Peace; Sacred Heart, Warsaw; St. Adalbert; St. Anthony de Padua; St. Bavo; St. John the Baptist; St. John the Evangelist, Goshen; St. Joseph, Mishawaka; St. Joseph, South Bend; St. Joseph, Mishawaka; St. Joseph, South Bend; St. Joseph, Hessen Cassel; Michael, Plymouth; St. Monika; St. Patrick, Walkerton; St. Thomas the Apostle, Elkhart; and St. Vincent de Paul, Elkhart.

Fort Wayne area Catholic schools participating in the program are: Bishop Dwenger; Grottoes; Mgr. Julian Benoit Academy; Most Precious Blood; Queen of Angels; St. Aloysius; St. Bernard, Wabash; St. Charles Borromeo; St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne; St. John the Baptist, New Haven; St. Joseph, Columbia City; St. Joseph, Garrett; St. Joseph, Hessen Cassel; St. Joseph, Monroeville; St. Joseph, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton; St. Jude; St. Joseph, South Bend; St. Patrick, Fort Wayne; St. Vincent de Paul, South Bend; and St. Monica.

The You Can Lend A Hand coupon book fundraising program began in 1982 with a handful of area Catholic schools. The year, 55 schools from northern Indiana and western, southwestern and southeastern Michigan will participate,” said Daniel B. Fitzpatrick, Quality Dining, Inc. chairman and CEO. “We are proud to be a sponsor of this annual event. It is with great pleasure that we support area Catholic schools with this program and all the events associated with You Can Lend A Hand and Catholic Schools Week.”

Catholic organizations host speaker on stem-cell research at St. Elizabeth Parish

FORT WAYNE — Dr. Janet Smith, noted author, speaker and moral theologian will be coming to Fort Wayne Feb. 13 to talk about Catholic teachings regarding stem-cell research.

Her talk is sponsored by Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., St. Elizabeth Parish

Sister Okure to speak at Holy Cross Mission Lecture at Notre Dame

NOTRE DAME — The Third Annual Holy Cross Mission Lecture at Notre Dame will be held at the Moreau Seminary Auditorium on Sunday, Feb. 18, at 7 p.m. Sister Teresa Okure, SHCJ, will speak on Salvific Option for the Rich: A Gospel Challenge for Mission in the 21st Century. Her talk will be followed by a discussion on the challenges of mission today and a reception.

Sister Okure, a graduate from the University of Ibadan, La Sorbonne, École Biblique of Jerusalem, and a doctorate from Fordham University, is a professor of New Testament and gender hermeneutics at the Catholic Institute of West Africa, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. She has been a member of the executive committees of several associations, including the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, the International Association for Mission Studies, and the Society for New Testament Studies.

The evening is planned to assist those who wish to deepen their reflection on the mission dimension of Christian life and service. All are invited. For more information or directions to Moreau Seminary, call Holy Cross Mission Center at (574) 631-5477.
Mentally ill not eligible for death penalty under proposed bill

BY BRIGID CURTIS AYER

INDIANAPOLIS — Life in prison without parole would be the stiffest penalty given to those suffering from serious mental illness under a bill being considered by the Indiana General Assembly.

Sen. Luke Feazel said, “It was out of respect for Sen. Bowser’s bill that we currently exempt. I’m not sure if we should get ahead of the U.S. Supreme Court on this issue. Indiana may benefit from getting some guidance on this highly complex issue from the court.”

Sen. Bowser, who is also an attorney, said before he makes a decision to take a vote on the bill, if possible, he plans to review the evidence that is currently before the Supreme Court to see if he can “get more pixels to this picture on mental illness.”

Pam McConkey, executive director, National Association of the Mentally Ill (NAMI) of Indiana said, “We strongly support SB 24 because part of our mission is to educate and advocate for the mentally ill. We feel that people with severe mental illness need to be exempt, just as juveniles, or exempting juveniles as Indiana has done,” she said. “Those who are mentally ill need treatment, not jail.

Indiana has a very good law providing assisted outpatient treatment, but only three counties in Indiana are funded.”

The pretrial determination of whether a defendant is mentally ill, which SB 24 is proposing, would mirror the procedure in cases involving claims of mental retardation. When critical evidence of mental illness and its effects on the defendant’s conduct is brought into the consideration of the prosecutor and trial judge, it is done so before an expensive capital trial is conducted, rather than in its final phase as done under current law.

There are two phases of a trial in a capital case, the guilt-innocence phase and the sentencing phase. Assistant Executive Director of Capital Litigation Assistance Paula Sites of the Indiana Public Defender’s Council explained that not all states operate like Indiana in capital cases. “For most of us in Indiana even when there is a guilty plea, Indiana still goes through phase one to determine guilt while some states skip the guilt-innocence phase and go right to sentencing.”

She explained that by making the jury go through a whole trial, the circumstances of the crime often times outweigh the defendant’s mental illness, and the jury gives the death penalty.

Sen. Tom Steele said, “The church is not trying to erase the guilt or punishment for those convicted of terrible crimes, however, the church recognizes those with severe mental illness are less morally culpable and should not be put to death.”

SB 24 must pass the Indiana Senate by the end of February in order to move to the House chamber for further consideration.

To view the Indiana Catholic Conference position paper on SB 24 (Death Penalty and Mental Illness), visit the ICC Web page at www.indianaccc.org. Click on Public Policy Priorities and scroll down to ICC Position Statements on Issues of Interest.

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South Bend — He popped the question, she said “yes,” and they’ve even picked a date. Now it’s time to start planning for the big day. But even more important, it’s time to start preparing for life beyond the wedding reception.

“It’s important to have not just a beautiful wedding day,” says Co-Director of the Office of Family Life Lisa Everett, “but to have a beautiful marriage.”

So how does this all fit in with making decisions on everything from the church to the bridal dresses? During what can be a whirlwind engagement time for many couples, preparation for married life itself needs to be at the top of the list.

“Couples not only need to prepare for the realities of married life, but to also evaluate their readiness for the responsibilities of marriage in the Catholic Church.”

Those getting married in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend must fulfill certain requirements, and the Office of Family Life offers different ways for couples to do that. The most hands-on approach is to take part in a parish sponsor-couple program. Using the “Christian Married Love” video and workbook series, the engaged couple comes to a sponsor married couple’s home over the course of four weeks. During that time, both couples view the video, which covers relational, psychological and theological topics.

“It even covers some scientific topics,” adds Lisa, “by getting into the physiology of Natural Family Planning. All the topics serve as a springboard for discussion between the engaged and married host couple.”

Understanding that not everyone is able to attend four sessions over the course of a month, particularly if one is from out of town, the Office of Family Life offers a second option. The Christian Married Love conference is offered six times a year at Ancilla College in Donaldson.

Instead of the video series, the day-long conference features a Power Point presentation with time for the engaged couples to answer questions individually before coming together again at the end of the presentation.

Q: Why can’t I have “Wind Beneath My Wings,” or another popular song at our wedding? See page 10

Q: Why can’t we redecorate the sanctuary? See page 14

Q: My photographer has a backdrop he wants to use in the sanctuary; can I do this? See page 14
Q: I am marrying a non-Catholic. Should we have a Mass?
Diocesan Office of Worship: At the rite of marriage, it is better to highlight the unity of the couple rather than the differences. Therefore, it would provide a greater sign of unity within the couple to have the rite of marriage outside of Mass. If the couple had a Mass, one partner would not be able to receive the Eucharist since he or she would not be Catholic, and, most likely, most of the non-Catholic’s family would not be Catholic.

Q: I have a son or daughter from a previous relationship. Can they be involved in the ceremony?
Diocesan Office of Worship: Depending upon the age of the child, they could serve as a member of the bridal party (bridesmaid, groomsmen, flower girl, ring bearer). Also, if the child is of the appropriate age, is a practicing Catholic and has received the appropriate training and/or commission, they could be a proclaimer of the word or serve as an extraordinary minister of holy communion (during a Mass).

Q: Can a non-Catholic friend or relative participate in the ceremony as a reader or bearer of the gifts? What could they do?
Diocesan Office of Worship: A proclaimer of the word needs to be a person in full communion with the Catholic Church, a person who is serious about the practice of their faith and a person who is willing to complete the appropriate formation process. Proclaimer of the word is not a role a non-Catholic can take in the Mass.

Q: Why can’t I have “Wedding Bells” or another popular song at our wedding?
Diocesan Office of Worship: The wedding is a sacred event, and the music at such a sacred event must reflect that. Secular music does not belong either before, during or after the rite within the sacred space of the church. Favorite secular or popular songs of the couple belong at the reception or at another time during the wedding festivities that do not occur within the church itself.

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Set the date and we’ll make it a day you and your guests will remember! Your wedding plans deserve our special touch. The catering staff here at Lester’s will be happy to help coordinate the wedding reception of your dreams. Your first class services are available for presentation in other facilities, banquet halls, churches or private homes. Contact our sales office to arrange your special event.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WEDDING CAKE ARTISTRY!

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WEDDING CAKE ARTISTRY!

Hall’s Catering Services
Takes the Cake
Matrimony — Marriages to last a lifetime

BY LINDA FURGE

Opening prayer

Calm us down, Lord, with your presence, open our ears and our hearts to hear your word in the Scriptures and in our discussion. Help us to see your will for the good of all, and assist us to the courage daily to be the people you have called us to be. We ask this, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 13: 4-8 “Love is patient, love is kind.”

Commentary

As anyone who’s been married for any length of time knows, “happily ever after” does not automatically follow the wedding ceremony. Experience teaches that, over the years, “happily” joins sadly, patience is replaced by impatience, for-givingly, bite-the-tongue — essentially, the whole gamut of emotions. And it’s in all of these descriptions that human marriage is best understood.

Falling in love is a wonderful emotional experience, but staying in love requires intentional choices and actions of the will. As we “fall in love,” we are immersed in our own emotions and feelings of hap-piness, pleasure and desire. But, when we encounter another whose life and emotions are different from our own, we move from “falling in love” to “being in love,” from feeling in love to a decision to love. When that other person makes the same decision, together we embark on a whole new life adventure in marriage.

Even with today’s questions about “civil unions,” marriage is (and always has been) a sacred institution (and always has been). Here a distinction between legal marriage and sacramental marriage is in order. A legal marriage is one that is recognized by the state as civilly lawful and only requires that the union be performed by someone properly licensed to do so. By fulfilling legal requirements, the legal benefits of marriage are gained. A legal marriage is how two people make a visible sign of an invisible reality, the union of their marriage as the Church sees it.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says that marriage is a covenant “by which a man and woman establish between them-selves a partnership for the whole of life” (CCC 1601). If a sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible reality, then the sacramental symbolism of the covenant of marriage is very rich indeed. Two people come together in a relationship of love and commitment, vowing to stay together through good times and bad for all their natural lifetimes.

They mutually give their love to one another and accept their partner’s promise to return this trust and commit-ment so that “By its very nature (their marriage) is ordered to the good of the couple, as well as to the generation and education of chil-dren” (CCC 1660).

The saying, “A wedding lasts a day, but a marriage lasts a life-time” best sums up the truth about marriage. It is in the ups-and-downs of living out their commit-ment that married couples reflect the unconditional love of God and Christ’s love for the church. This is when the couple becomes the “vis-ible sign of an invisible reality.”

The sacrament of marriage is the outward sign of two people pledging their lives to each other — and who then actually live out that pledge, unconditionally, in the nitty-gritty, down-and-dirty of everyday life. It is here that God’s unbreakable covenant with human-ity is modeled.

The sacrament of marriage also unites couples within the church, making the family a “domestic church” in which the family itself is a sign of God’s love to the world. A reflection of the Trinity, the family is where com-mion resources, and each person is recognized, accepted and loved beyond measure.

As a believing and sacramental community, we have a stake in every Christian marriage, and so we learn to recognize and edification vows of the couple. In the marriage ceremony, the truth about God’s and the couple’s uncondi-tional love is ritualized as the cou-ple confers the sacrament on each other and their union. On their wedding day, no one can predict whether or not they will live “happi-ly ever after,” but they do pledge to love and trust each other and to journey together through life. This is the same pledge God makes to journey with each of us and with the church till the end of time. Throughout a sacramental marriage, God always stays nearby, providing the couple with a deeper and more loving relationship with each other and with him.

Vatican II has been called the ecclesial movement of the laity. “The Church in the Modern World” says, “Let married people themselves … bear witness by their faithful love in the joys and sacri-fices of their calling to that mys-tery of love which the Lord revealed to the world by his death and resurrection (1 Cor 16).” Caring and committed couple-love is one of the most effective and meaningful voices in our church today, reflecting God’s love for humanity and the church in communities of love, full of warmth and closeness.

A Christian marriage can be one of our most effective forms of evangelization, one that really spells out the Gospel message in flesh-and-blood terms. The church is going to be as real to our chil-dren as we are to each other. To our neighbors and friends, the church will be as believable and attractive as we are as couples. Marred couples are a strong voice in the church today, and the spiri-tuality of married peoples enriches our communities, our society and our world. Love, after all, is our common calling as Christians: “It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.” (1 Cor 13:8)

Reflection and connection

• How would you describe the function and purpose of marriage in our society today? Do you think our society values marriage and provides support for couples and families? Why or why not?

• What does marriage reveal to you about God’s love? Whose marriages have been sacramental signs for you? How have they lived out their sacramentality?

• How has your experience of marriage shaped your understand-ing of God? If love is our common calling as Christians, how has your being a called to live, whether married or not?

Evangelizing action challenge

For interior renewal

This week pray for couples on an Engaged or Marriage Encounter weekend that God will bless their marriages as they live out their sacrament of matrimony.

For reaching out to others

Offer to baby sit for a married couple so they can enjoy an occasional evening out for themselves.

For transforming society

Work to preserve the institution of marriage as the basic building block of society. Educate your-selves as to the reasons why.

Closing prayer

Lord, from the beginning of time you have drawn man and woman together in marriage to witness to your everlasting love for all people. We pray for all couples today, that you will strengthen them as they live out the sacra-ment of their marriage. We ask that you increase your love and peace in each of us. Guide all our jour-neys of love and relationships, and keep us ever grateful for your unconditional and bountiful love for each of us, now and forever. Amen.

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The book, “The Millionaire Next Door,” is a wonderful read. Although it was originally published in 1996, the points noted in the book are timeless. The authors identified one of the key characteristics of the financially successful households studied as the presence of a stable, long-term marriage. A recent survey conducted by the American Bar Association identified two of the top five causes of divorce as finances and communication. We know that nearly 50 percent of American marriages end in divorce. Further recognizing that divorced households see an average reduction in wealth of 77 percent, the larger effect on families and society is evident in daily struggles. Sadly, these statistics apply to Catholic unions as well as to the population at large.

How a couple will handle finances in the context of marriage is often overlooked as young people prepare for new lives together. Too often the discussion of finances and economic habits is forged in the interest of romance. The statistics show that economic issues can affect all other components of a relationship and deserve equal attention. Points of conflict arise rapidly when one partner enters the relationship with assets and the other enters with debt. It is essential to have a strategy to deal with these matters and communication is the cornerstone. Lifestyle expectations must be clear. Likewise, the value that the different parties bring must be recognized. A stay-at-home spouse may not be an income producer but there is significant economic value in the child care and domestic service represented. Dual income couples need to identify shared expenses and separate their individual budgets. Personal spending money and separate accounts can help self-esteem and independence, but it is important to remember that marriage means the two have become one. Any significant expenditure should be discussed and agreed upon before any money is spent. It is all in the numbers.

Keith Davis is a member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Wayne and president of STAR Wealth Management in Fort Wayne. He is a partner in Davis Wealth Management and a member of the Financial Planning Association and the American Society of Financial Planners. He is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame where he earned a BA in Finance. Keith is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst (CDF). He has authored a monthly column, “The Millionaire Next Door,” which runs in the newspaper of his local parish and is also frequently invited to give talks at parishes.

PREPARE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

TOGETHER to share their answers.

Taking part in one of these marriage preparation programs within the diocese is critical to making well-informed decisions on both practical and spiritual terms. Both diocesan programs remain faithful to the official teachings of the church. Another requirement for couples wishing to be married within the diocese is to become familiar with Natural Family Planning (NFP). Again, there are different ways for couples to achieve this requirement. They can either attend a day-long conference on Natural Family Planning, which includes the rationale for using NFP and an explanation of how to use it. The other option if for the engaged couple to attend the first class of a diocesan NFP program.

If couples choose to attend another NFP course, such as Couple to Couple League, NFP Coop, or the Creighton Method in Fort Wayne, they need to attend the entire series. While some may view required courses before marriage as a burden, the church has a responsibility to prepare its members for any sacrament received. Pope John Paul II took this responsibility seriously himself, penning the encyclical “Theology of the Body” after years of talking and listening to his married friends.

“Pope John Paul II once said that love of God is the first priority for a happy marriage. One of the main purposes in our diocese’s marriage preparation program is to help engaged couples grasp this insight and consider its implications for all the aspects of their life together. Whether they are conscious of it or not, all couples want God at the center of their marriage, because they want love at the center of their marriage, and God is love.” It takes effort not only to prepare but also to maintain a marriage. But it is effort well spent. Couples looking for a way to renew their marriages are invited to attend the day-long Marriage Enrichment Conference, held at Ancilla College. Lisa and Fred Everett are also frequently invited to give talks at parishes.

For more information on any of the marriage programs, contact the Office of Family Life at (574) 234-0687.
Married couples called to make gift of themselves

By Michelle Castleman

NEW HAVEN — The temperatures were subzero outdoors, but inside St. Louis Besancon parish hall, 64 couples gathered for a heartwarming event. Witnessing the importance they placed on marriage and hoping to grow closer to Christ through this spiritual retreat, the couples were not disappointed.

The Couples Evening came about as part of a challenge posed by pastor Father Steve Colchin last spring to parishioner Kathy Coonrod. Father Colchin asked Coonrod to plan a special event for the married couples of his neighboring parishes — St. Louis and St. Rose, Monroeville.

As Coonrod began to seriously pray about what the Holy Spirit might have in mind, three young couples from St. Louis approached Father Colchin with an idea for an event centered on the sacrament of marriage. The first ever Couples Evening came to be, “God always answers prayers,” marveled Coonrod.

At the Couples Evening, hosted at the rural New Haven parish Feb. 5, all were asked to stand while wedding dates were announced in date order. Maurice and Mary Blauvelt — married 60 years. A sacramental marriage

After viewing old wedding albums, enjoying wine and a lovely catered meal, Fred and Lisa Everett from the diocesan Office of Family Life spoke on the topic “Our Sacrament of Marriage.” The Everett’s could not believe the tremendous response from two small parishes and praised the group for their obvious commitment to something so important.

Fred explained how at the core of marriage is the idea of “gift.” Married couples are called to make a gift of themselves to their spouse. A gift you do not want back when things go wrong or if you change your mind.

He repeated the lines from our wedding vows when one is asked, “Have you come here freely to give yourself to one another?” Fred also made reference to Pope Benedict’s first encyclical, “God is Love,” in which the trinity of marriage is described as love, the beloved and the love between them.

Fred said marriage is our deepest vocation as Christians. True happiness can only be found when one learns to make a gift of oneself. “The more you love your spouse, the more you love God,” he stressed.

Next Lisa shared how the gift of marriage is a gift that we are continually opening as your life experiences change. As each couple goes through different stages in their married lives they discover different aspects of their spouse.

She described how the complementary features of the male and female describe precisely how Christ loved the church. For example, studies show how women have an emotional need to feel cherished by their husbands. They have the deep desire to be loved, honored and protected while husbands have the need to be respected by their wives.

When comparing Christ as the bridegroom and the church as the bride, husbands need to ask themselves, “Would you lay down your life for your spouse?”

Fred then described three concrete ways couples can invite Christ to “stay with them” through their married years. First, he encouraged couples to feed their minds and souls with the word of God by sharing a common love for Scripture and reading the Bible together.

Next he recommended holding hands and praying together. A strong prayer life and celebrating the sacraments of penance and holy Eucharist together can unite man and woman for life.

Finally, he spoke of the need for couples to “serve” together, both to others and to each other. He referred to a system of deposits and withdrawals, explaining that a deposit was a positive thing that a spouse gives the other.

Couples were challenged to make a list of “deposits” for each other during the upcoming Lenten season and think of other ways to make their marriage more sacramental. Fred also insisted that couples strive to make their marriage a “great one,” not just a good one.

Time for prayer

Mass was celebrated in the hall by Father Colchin and concluded the evening.

Before the ceremony of the renewal of marriage vows, Father Colchin asked each husband and wife to join hands and face each other.

He led a powerful reflection titled, “The Hands of a Married Couple,” based on the importance of the spouse’s hands. “Hands give strength and support. They hold us when we are grieving or when we are filled with joy.”

During his homily, Father Colchin reminded each couple of their primary role in their spouse’s eternal salvation. “We are each called to help our mate be the best person they can be, to help get them to heaven,” he said.

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Q: Why can’t we redecorate the sanctuary?

Diocesan Office of Worship: First, the time of the liturgical year is a factor. “During Lent, the altar should not be decorated with flowers, and musical instruments may be played only to give the necessary support to the singing. If marriages are to take place during Lent, couples are to be reminded that wedding plans should respect the special nature of this liturgical season; they should refrain from too much pomp or display” (“The Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Celebration of the Eucharist 2007” — Dioceses of Indiana p. 57).

Second, the sanctuary is a place of great dignity in the church; the decorations and the flowers should not detract. The sanctuary is the place where the altar stands, where the word of God is proclaimed and where the priest and deacon exercise their office. (GIRM 295) “Church decor should contribute toward the church’s noble simplicity rather than ostentation.” (GIRM 292)

Third, having the sanctuary redecorated could conflict with the decorations planned by other weddings that are using the church on the same day.

Q: My photographer has a backdrop he wants to use in the sanctuary; can I do this?

Diocesan Office of Worship: No, because of the sacredness of the sanctuary space. The beauty of the sanctuary itself can make a lovely background for wedding photos.
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**Marriage licensing rules and regulations**

**BY KAY COZAD**

Preparation for marriage requires an intimate look at spiritual and relational desires as well as the logistics of the wedding itself. Engagement classes may assist with relational questions and a wedding planner is the perfect wedding date. And finally, the officiating clergyman must sign the marriage license on the wedding date to ensure the marriage license together within a month of the wedding date to ensure the marriage license does not expire before the wedding date. And finally, the officiating clergyman must sign the marriage license on the wedding day prior to sending it to the proper government agency for validation.

Other little known marriage licensing facts in the state of Indiana include: cousins may marry if both applicants are over 65 years old, and proxy, common law and same-sex marriages are forbidden. A spokesperson from the Allen County Recorder’s Office encourages couples to apply for the license together within a month of the wedding date to ensure the license does not expire before the wedding date. And finally, the officiating clergyman must sign the marriage license on the wedding day prior to sending it to the proper government agency for validation.

**For more information on specific County Recorder’s Office phone numbers visit www.weddingvendor.com.**

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Can't be Lent already

I don’t know about you, but it seems to me like we just took down our Christmas trees and put away our decorations. Can it really be time for Lent already?

The season of Lent is a very important time for Catholic Christians. Each year the church, in her wisdom, gives us 40 days as a kind of annual retreat to focus on our spiritual lives and our relationship with God. Lent is a yearly opportunity to slow down and take stock of how we are living our faith. It is also a good time to examine our actions and determine how well we are doing in our attempts to live the Gospel message of Jesus. It is a call to conversion.

Our Catholic tradition suggests that we use the disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving to renew our spiritual lives during Lent — actually not just in Lent, but throughout our lives.

What about prayer? You might evaluate how much quality time you give to the Lord. Maybe your prayer life is limited to Mass on most Sundays and a quick prayer before meals, when you remember or are brave enough to do so in front of friends. Maybe you primarily pray only when you want something from God, like the miracle of passing a test you didn’t study for. Perhaps this Lent you can give more attention to prayer other than petitions.

No relationship grows unless we are willing to listen and share ourselves with the other person. God is no exception. During Lent, begin to set aside 10 or 15 minutes of your quality time each day for prayer. Make it a special “God and me” time. Try to find a quiet place where you can just be with God and let God love you. Read and reflect upon some Scripture each day and get to know the Lord better. Don’t call upon God only when you are in trouble or want something.

Fasting is another important part of our Lenten experience. Most people think that fasting is primarily giving up some kind of food, like candy or ice cream or not eating in between meals, but there are other, and maybe even more important, ways we can fast. Only you know what type of fasting would best help your spiritual life grow. Maybe it would be giving up chatter, idle gossip or negative words rather than chocolate chip cookies. Or perhaps you could choose to talk less and become even more of a listener, especially to people who could use some of your attention. It can be a real discipline to focus on the other person and truly hear what he or she says.

For many, almsgiving means giving something to a charitable cause. This is an important part of it, but it is often much easier to give our loose change to an organization than to give the precious gifts of our time and talents to people in need. Lent calls us to give of ourselves, not just our financial and material resources. This Lent you might think about the people who could change the course of your quality time? Who would most benefit from your gifts and talents? In what ways can you get out of yourself and think more of the needs of others?

Besides personal time, another thing one may be called to give during Lent is forgiveness. Who is in your life — whether living or dead — do you need to forgive for some hurt done to you? Or of whom do you need to ask forgiveness? I think this is a very important way to give alms and is a sacrifice pleasing to our God. It can be difficult but it brings a lot of peace to those involved and, after all, it is what Jesus tells us to do.

During this Lent let us try to slow down and be more reflective. Let us set aside, if we can, the day, some regular time to fast and pray. This might be a time to do some charitable work that you can continue even after Lent is over.

Don’t let this opportunity to deepen your spiritual life slip by you. Classes, papers, committees, activities, even work will pass away, but our relationship with God is forever. Get to know and serve God better during these days when we prepare for Easter. Don’t let this be just another 40 days of the year.

Sister Margie Lamon, CSC, a former campus minister and vocations director, works for the Sisters of the Holy Cross communications department. mlamon@cscsisters.org

Looking for love: Pop culture lends urgency to romantic quests

My friend Tauna’s New Year resolution is to find romance. Last year’s wedding circuit took a toll on her and now she’s determined to find a mate before 2008.

The year is starting off slow, she acknowledged in her blog, but it’s early in the year. Thanksgiving is one of the resources for Tauna, like Janis Spindel’s book, “Get Serious About Getting Married: 365 Proven Ways to Find Love in Less Than a Year.”

And if Thanksgiving rolls around and she’s still single, she could read Wendy Stehling’s “Proven Ways to Find Love in Less Than 2008.”

That’s the issue my friend is facing. She’s over 50 and not married. Society always connects before the credits roll. Romance is the endpoint of the story until the movie is over. If you’re feeling tired and sea-sick, according to his infinite planning, the theme of the movie is your own satisfaction, he said. People to look beyond the cultivation of talents needed to obtain a social position.

Engagement allows couples to practice self-control and develop respect for each other, he said. This is true love, which does not place an emphasis on seeking one’s own satisfaction, he said.

When it comes to the daily routine of family, study, work and free time, the pope asked young people to look beyond the cultivation of talents needed to obtain a social position.

He encouraged young people to study the social doctrine of the church and use it to guide their actions in the world. Love is a powerful social force, the only force capable of changing human hearts, he said.

He said he hoped young people would join in youth day celebrations at the diocesan level this year in preparation for the 2008 World Youth Day international gathering in Sydney, Australia.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI urged young people to express love in unselfish ways, looking past social goals of competition and pursuit of wealth in order to become “witnesses of charity” in the world.

The pope said marriage is a “project of love” between a man and a woman that fits into a divine design.

“Learning to love each other as a couple is a wonderful journey, yet it requires a demanding apprenticeship,” he said.

For couples who get engaged, he said, it’s a period of preparation that needs to be lived “in purity of gesture and words.”

Engagement allows couples to practice self-control and develop respect for each other, he said.
EDITORIAL

The cultural crisis of commitment

Sociologists and cultural critics have observed and commented extensively over the past few decades on the trends in the number of people choosing to profess Catholicism and the Catholic rate which hovers around 50 percent, as well as the decline over the past 50 years in priestly and religious vocations. But sociology is largely descriptive and is not always or easily equipped to discover and explain underlying causes.

In the wake of these often staggering figures, some suggest the church relax its laws (as if it is in the church’s power to do so) regarding divorce and remarriage, or that the discipline of clerical celibacy be made optional as a matter of expediency. However, such approaches address symptoms, not causes. The real crisis is not going to be resolved by recasting the plain teaching of Jesus on marriage or by a simple edict from the pope relaxing the practice clerical celibacy. The deeper issue is one of commitment.

Very many people today have a problem in making permanent and lasting commitments. People shy away from commitment because it is perceived as impinging upon freedom and spontaneity. Yet the very nature of discipleship presumes commitment. And the commitments made in marriage or at ordination are an expression of the fundamental commitment to Christ made in baptism, a commitment sustained weekly (and for many, daily) by the Eucharist. Nowhere in the Gospel does Jesus suggest that his disciples “try it out.” In fact, it can be suggested that the only way to understand Jesus and his teaching is by first making the commitment to follow him unreservedly; counter-intuitively, the understanding comes only after the doing. Only those who walk with him regularly and faithfully can understand what he says and what he means.

Those prepared to make commitments — whether in marriage, consecrated life or priestly orders — must rely upon God’s grace to sustain them in those commitments. It is Christ who empowers us to make and maintain these sacred commitments. If we rely solely on our own efforts, we will surely fail.

Shared faith materials this Lent

For those accustomed to using Today’s Catholic as the source for shared-faith materials in their Lenten experience, we will embark on a different type of journey this year. First, the shared faith materials available to you will be published online in smaller, more manageable portions than before. We will also offer a shared faith commentary next week on reconciliation. In the March 25 issue, we will focus on the Eucharist. If you would like to use the sacramental material with your group, the remaining sacraments can be found online on the diocesan Web site, www.diocesefwsb.org. Click on “Lenten Faith Sharing Materials” to link to the page.

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We encourage readers to explore these opportunities.

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 • 46565-1169 or e-mail to: editor@diocesefwsb.org

COMMENTARY

Distinction between justifiable and unjustifiable killing

In the past weeks our Today’s Catholic has carried two articles that in many do grave harm to the distinction between justifiable and unjustifiable killing. The first article appeared in our Jan. 7 issue and quoted Cardinal Renato Martino’s statement in a Vatican City CNS article from Italy’s La Repubblica newspaper wherein the cardinal declares that the execution of duly tried and convicted mass murderer Saddam Hussein.

All interested persons are fully aware that the Iraqi government has visited upon the innocent families of the Middle East and of the United States the tragedy of death handed down from the Iraqi court. Cardinal Martino is quoted as saying, “there is no doubt” of his ruthlessness and responsibility for hundreds of deaths and then the cardinal goes on to say, “But one must not compensate for one crime with another crime.”

Crime: “an act that is injurious to the public or to the state that is legally punished.”

The other example of a report of a state execution that in my view misrepresents the distinction between justifiable killing and “muder” was carried in the Jan. 21, 2007 Today’s Catholic: “Questioning a society that condones murder with murder,” wherein Sister Helen Prejean explains the death penalty as an additional murder. Murder: “the unlawful killing of a human being with malice aforethought.”

I fully agree with Pope John Paul II that the imposition of the death penalty, even when the death penalty is a just execution based upon a person convicted of a capital crime. For example, perpetual bondage (fruits of his labor) to the service of the victims survivors would be justice in the strictest sense, the murderer (etc.) having forfeited his right to life for having denied another of his right to life. I am writing to express my deep disappointment with those who chose to ignore the contents of these articles in our Catholic publication without comment as to their doctrinal accuracy.

We are critically profound life issues in our communities and world today that require the conscience formation of all men and women of good will. This end is undermined, the innocent are confused, and those depending on the Catholic media for unadulterated truth are terribly distorted when these strange misinterpretations of Catholic doctrine are offered to the faithful as legitimate examples of authentic Christian doctrine. The duty of every Christian in our generation is to be faithful to the teaching of the Spirit in their hearts that the promotion of and the defense of innocent human life.

I maintain that those who try to piggyback their political agendas on to the seamlessness of the pro-life movement, mislead and deflect the attention and efforts of those who have valiantly defended the right to life of the pre-born, the aged and all others innocents. Those heroes of our present who for the past 34 years have placed their bodies and families resources on the frozen pavements leading down to their local abortuaries deserve all the support that we who are innocent can give them hand in hand can give and that begins with respecting the integrity of their efforts.

Daniel L. Federspiel
Fort Wayne

Office of Family Life director responds

Daniel Federspiel is correct in his assertion that those responsible for presenting Catholic doctrine even in common consultations as the teaching of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ or other religious leaders who speak as if they represent the church’s teachings in order to promote a particular political agenda. He is also right to laud the efforts of those who for many years have courageously spoken out and acted on behalf of the unborn. He is wrong, however, to do so at the expense of the church’s “unconditionally pro-life” teaching regarding the death penalty and the dignity of each and every human person — even that of a mass murderer like Mr. Hussein.

Fred Everett
Director, Office of Family Life
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
Adjunct Professor of Medical Ethics, University of Saint Francis, Fort Wayne

Deacon Jean de Lestonnac

FEBRUARY 11, 2007

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We encourage readers to explore these opportunities.
Lost in translation: Pope’s asides might be changed in official texts

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Rarely is a general audience talk interrupted by spontaneous applause, and Pope Benedict XVI seemed as surprised as anyone when the clapping began in the Vatican’s audience hall.

The pope had been talking about the church’s early times, and he set aside his text to drive home a point: The apostles and first disciples weren’t perfect, but had their own arguments and controversies.

“Today appears very consoling to me, because we see that the saints did not drop as saints from heaven. They were men like us with problems and even sins,” he said Jan. 31.

That’s when the applause erupted among the 6,000 people in attendance. The pope paused, looked up and smiled awkwardly, then continued: “It’s ad lib about holiness doesn’t mean never making a mistake.”

The moment marked a milestone for Pope Benedict as a communicator and demonstrated two important facts: First, the scholarly pontiff is focusing on uncomplicated lessons about the church and the faith. Second, when he talks, people listen.

The simple idea that saints were also sinners resonated with his audience, and journalists were among those eagerly awaiting the Vatican’s official text of the pope’s remarks. But a funny thing happened on the way to the printing presses.

When the Vatican press office released the text two hours later, gone was the line about the sins of saints. Instead, the official version had the pope saying that the early saints “were men like us with problems that were complicated.”

The pope spoke in Italian, and “con peccati” (“with sins”) sounds like “complicati” (“complicated”). But a close listening to a tape confirmed that the pope had indeed been speaking about sins. The Vatican spoiled his applause line.

What happened? The discrepancy was said to be a simple transcription error. Two days later, however, it had still not been corrected — which meant that many media reported the mistaken version.

It’s not always easy to catch every word the pope delivers off-the-cuff. But on some occasions, the pope’s words have been deliberately tweaked by his own aides. The practice was explained recently by Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican press office, in a meeting with a group of news agency reporters.

When Pope Benedict extemporizes, the Vatican press office scambles to transcribe the talk and put it in the hands of the media. But before that happens, the transcript is sent to an office of the Secretariat of State, where it undergoes a “final polishing in Italian,” Father Lombardi said.

The reason is that the German pope, although fluent in Italian, might use an awkward or imprecise phrase that could be rendered more artfully in the Vatican’s official text of the pope’s words.

In February the church remembers St. Blase/Blaise. As well as having his own feast, Blase was previously remembered (in August) in the group mentioned in question 1. This group is the subject of this week’s quiz.

1. This group is known collectively as:
   a. the Twelve Latter Day Apostles
   b. the Fourteen Holy Helpers
   c. the Sixteen Vestal Virgins

2. Why were they so known?
   a. Because they were 12 latter day saints with the same exact names as the apostles and/or their wives.
   b. Because they were believed to have rendered assistance in times of great trouble.
   c. Because they bridged the period from the Roman pagan priesthood to the Catholic clerical predominance.

3. It is generally believed that this group was invoked for assistance during a 14th century catastrophe which hit most of Europe. What was it?
   a. global warming
   b. the Wars of the Roses
   c. the Black Death or plague

4. The origin of the appeal to this group is thought to have been strongest in:
   a. Germany
   b. China
   c. Yemen

5. One female saint amongst them has a California county named for her:
   a. St. Fereana
   b. St. Diego
   c. St. Barbara

6. Two other females in the group are associated with significant Eastern cities. Who and what are they?
   a. St. Sophia of Constantinople and Julian of Norwich
   b. Catherine of Alexandria and Margaret of Antioch
   c. Mary (Miriam) of Jerusalem and Anna of Capernaum

7. One of the group is invoked against diseases of the throat:
   a. St. Blase
   b. St. Lozenie
   c. St. Stomos

8. One of the group is often depicted fighting, of all things, a dragon:
   a. St. Gerold
   b. St. Hipondrus
   c. St. Vital

9. This member of the group is a popular subject for medals worn by travelers:
   a. St. Christopher
   b. St. Basil
   c. St. Monica

10. Accepting the realities of medieval life, people did not just pray for cures, but invoked St. Catherine against:
    a. wealth
    b. sudden death
    c. losing in the playoffs

11. This saint, who also has a “dance” named for him, is invoked against epilepsy:
    a. Elmo
    b. Hippondrus
    c. Vitus

12. At one point a pope attached these to devotions to this group:
    a. penalties
    b. indulgences
    c. Vitus

13. This saint is not, despite his name, the patron of tailors but is patron of physicians:
    a. St. Parsifal
    b. St. Uticke
    c. St. Komodo

14. The saints honored in this group were removed from the church calendar in:
    a. the 19th century
    b. the 20th century
    c. the 21st century

15. Another more technical name for these saints, based on their ability to help, is:
    a. First Aid Saints
    b. Assisi Tants
    c. Auxiliary Saints

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

THE VATICAN LETTER
JOHN TRAVIS

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   c. the Sixteen Vestal Virgins

2. Why were they so known?
   a. Because they were 12 latter day saints with the same exact names as the apostles and/or their wives.
   b. Because they were believed to have rendered assistance in times of great trouble.
   c. Because they bridged the period from the Roman pagan priesthood to the Catholic clerical predominance.

3. It is generally believed that this group was invoked for assistance during a 14th century catastrophe which hit most of Europe. What was it?
   a. global warming
   b. the Wars of the Roses
   c. the Black Death or plague

4. The origin of the appeal to this group is thought to have been strongest in:
   a. Germany
   b. China
   c. Yemen

5. One female saint amongst them has a California county named for her:
   a. St. Fereana
   b. St. Diego
   c. St. Barbara

6. Two other females in the group are associated with significant Eastern cities. Who and what are they?
   a. St. Sophia of Constantinople and Julian of Norwich
   b. Catherine of Alexandria and Margaret of Antioch
   c. Mary (Miriam) of Jerusalem and Anna of Capernaum

7. One of the group is invoked against diseases of the throat:
   a. St. Blase
   b. St. Lozenie
   c. St. Stomos

8. One of the group is often depicted fighting, of all things, a dragon:
   a. St. Gerold
   b. St. Hipondrus
   c. St. Vital

9. This member of the group is a popular subject for medals worn by travelers:
   a. St. Christopher
   b. St. Basil
   c. St. Monica

10. Accepting the realities of medieval life, people did not just pray for cures, but invoked St. Catherine against:
    a. wealth
    b. sudden death
    c. losing in the playoffs

11. This saint, who also has a “dance” named for him, is invoked against epilepsy:
    a. Elmo
    b. Hippondrus
    c. Vitus

12. At one point a pope attached these to devotions to this group:
    a. penalties
    b. indulgences
    c. Vitus

13. This saint is not, despite his name, the patron of tailors but is patron of physicians:
    a. St. Parsifal
    b. St. Uticke
    c. St. Komodo

14. The saints honored in this group were removed from the church calendar in:
    a. the 19th century
    b. the 20th century
    c. the 21st century

15. Another more technical name for these saints, based on their ability to help, is:
    a. First Aid Saints
    b. Assisi Tants
    c. Auxiliary Saints

ANSWERS:
1. b, 2. c, 3. a, 4. c, 5. b, 6. a, 7. c, 8. b, 9. c, 10. c, 11. c, 12. c, 13. a, 14. b, 15. c.
Turning toward Christ, together

**THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE**

George Weigel

Eventually in 1854 Pope Pius IX proclaimed that Mary was preserved from original sin, beginning with the moment of her conception, that is, about nine months before her actual birth. Then in 1858 the Blessed Mother was said to have appeared to St. Bernadette at Lourdes in France and said “I am the Immaculate Conception.” The graces of the Immaculate Conception were in anticipation of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, just as the Last Supper, the first Mass, was in anticipation of the sacrifice on Calvary.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated on Dec. 8. Then, nine months later, the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on Sept. 8. Back in 1476, Pope Sixtus IV had approved the feast of the Immaculate Conception and in 1708 Pope Clement XI extended the feast to the universal church.

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME**

**The Christianization of the Thanksgiving Feast**

Commentary by GEORGE WEIGEL

**A GOOD QUESTION**

Middle Ages, says H. Holstein, felt that 1) every human being is infected with original sin and bears its consequences and 2) this hereditary sin is remitted through the merits of Christ, redeemer of the entire human race. They felt Mary was preserved from personal sin, but could she be preserved from original sin? St. Thomas Aquinas felt that, if Mary would be preserved from original sin, it would be a derogation of the dignity of Christ as savior of all. So he said Mary inherited original sin, but was sanctified in her mother’s womb. Duns Scotus, however, felt that the Immaculate Conception of Mary and said that, preserving Mary from original sin and personal sin, does not detract from the redemption by Christ, but represents the most glorious result of Christ’s work.

**BOOKS RECEIVED**


**LETTER**

Continued from Page 19

...more elegantly appropriate choices included these changes from the beginning of Pope Benedict’s pontificate. Most are minor stylistic modifications. But some are more substantial and seem to suggest the presence of an overly cautious editor.

For example, when the pope learned in 2005 that Brother Roger Schutz of the Taizé community had just been stabbed to death, he went out and told a general audience about what he called the “terrifying news.” That was changed to “dramatic news” in the official version, which toned down his spoken remarks and drained it of the emotional impact the pope had expressed so well.

The problems stem partly from Pope Benedict’s modernist style at the Wednesday general audiences. The general audiences used to be a place where reporters could get disappointing and eventful events.

They are finding less of that these days, and more on Scripture, the church and salvation. The pope’s goal is to bring people back to the roots of their faith, so many Christians in the public hall and beyond are hearing these New Testament stories for the first time.
CYO Twins characterized as ‘fundamentally sound’

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — After 31 years of coaching Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) basketball, Herb Widner now sees some of his former players and others who sit on the bench in coaching positions themselves. Widner has enjoyed following the hundreds of players he has coached over the years and watching their successes after CYO. Widner has seen many boys go on to play at the high school level, even some have made it to Division 1 and Division 2 basketball.

Widner has coached at many different CYO schools during his career including St. Charles, St. Patrick, St. Vincent, and for the past six years, St. Louis-St. Rose. He said he loved coaching at St. Patrick and would have stayed there forever. Widner admitted there are so many more players to choose from at the larger schools, but he is just as happy at the smaller schools. He concluded, “It doesn’t matter where you coach, it’s always fun.”

Widner’s roster this year of the St. Louis-St. Rose Twins includes nine players. The team consisted of just three eighth-graders — Jake Collett, Ryan Spieth and Nathan McKo — and three seventh graders — Mitch Castleman, Austin Hammon and Colin Stuezenberger, from both schools. So, Widner decided to bring up the only three sixth graders — Conner Sheehan, Nick Plater and Zachary Miller, from the younger team to help out.

“We may lack size, but we are fun to play with. “The and play well together,” summarized Widner. Their season record is now 8-9 overall and 1-5 in the tough Blue League.

Widner said the highlights this season include scoring 60 points in the game against the Squares from St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel. Although the Twins lost the game, 60-69, it was a moral victory to stay with a team of their talent. “You don’t see that kind of scoring at this level very often,” said Widner. St. Louis-St. Rose also secured a fourth-place finish in the Queen of Angels Invitational at the University of Saint Francis over the Thanksgiving break. In the 10-team tournament, the Twins came overall the loser’s bracket and won some big games to take home a ribbon.

Last weekend, the team beat Queen of Angels, 48-36, in a non-conference match-up. Guard-forward Ryan Spieth led all scoring with 13 points. “They’ll remember this game and have balanced scoring all season: some weeks the big man, Jake, will lead the team. Then in the Hessen Cassel game, Mitch and Colin combined for 44 points.”

In other net action, St. Vincent Panthers went 7-0 to wrap up the Gold League with a 43-26 victory over the St. Charles Cardinals. The Cardinals started out strong staying with the Panthers in the first quarter 6-4. The Panthers increased the lead to 15 by the half and never looked back. Greg Kaiser paced St. Vincent with 15 points. In a non-conference match-up, St. Vincent will face the undefeated Blue League champs Benoit Academy next weekend at St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel.

Fifth and sixth

In the “small school” fifth and sixth grade CYO tournament, Jacquel Cooper and the Benoit Academy Phoenix got by St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel, St. Louis-St. Rose and St. Therese on the road to the title. Cooper scored 73 points in the three-game spree. In girls’ action, the Lady Gators from St. Aloysius swept the CYO, winning the tournament and the league. They finished with a perfect 14-0 record.

Scoreboard
St. Louis-St. Rose 48; Queen of Angels 36 (Spieth 13, Myers 11) St. Charles 30; St. Joseph, Decatur 28 (Birkhardt 19, Schatz 10)

SOUTH BEND — The two undefeated division leaders and four co-leaders in two other sections of the Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) maintained their respective marks as the circuit entered the last two weeks of the regular season.

The unbeaten Corpus Christi Cougars in the John Bosco West division and St. Joseph, Mishawaka, in the Martin De Porres East division each racked up their eighth consecutive victories and appeared to have a clear focus on their division pennants.

However, the battle for first place in the John Bosco East division was deadlocked for first place between St. Anthony and St. Joseph of South Bend, each with 5-3 records, and St. Mary in the Martin De Porres West division between St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph, South Bend. Corpus Christi beat Holy Cross, 47-19, as the Cougars used their entire bench in the process. Meanwhile, St. Joseph, Mishawaka, also had an easy victory, this one a 40-9 win over sister-city school St. Monica as Tim Wilson popped in 14 points for the victors.

Alex Bauters singed the nets for the day’s top individual performance of 20 points in leading St. John the Baptist to a 46-23 victory over St. Adalbert. Brandon Niezgodski had 15 points for St. John. Mario Navarrete had 10 points for St. Adalbert. St. Jude kept pace with St. John by defeating St. Michael of Plymouth, 39-17. Cory Samuels led the winners with 11 points. St. Anthony rolled up the highest team score of the day in beating St. Matthew, 52-23, as Sean Hart drained the nets for 14 points.

In a nip-and-tuck close encounter, Christ the King pulled away to a 35-28 decision over Holy Family. Garrett Libertowski had 10 points for Christ the King. St. Joseph of South Bend defeated St. Thomas of Elkhart, 46-35, leading all the way jumping out to a 16-4 first quarter lead.

St. Pius of Granger had no difficulty in marking up a 42-16 verdict over St. Bavo of Mishawaka. There were seven contests in the Colors Division which is also entering the final two weeks.

White beat St. Pius Blue, 31-9. St. Joseph, SB 5-3; St. Anthony 5-3; Christ the King 4-4; Holy Family 4-4; Holy Cross 2-6.

Martin De Porres East
St. Joseph, Mishawaka 8-0
St. Pius 7-1
St. Monica 2-6
St. Bavo 0-8

Martin De Porres West
St. Jude 5-3
St. John 5-3
St. Michael 4-4
St. Adalbert 1-7

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LADY COUGARS INCH BACK INTO NAIA TOP 5

WITH wins over Huntington and Grace, the University of Saint Francis women’s basketball team moved up to No. 4 in the seventh NAIA Top 25 Division II rating released on Jan. 31. The Lady Cougars, 20-5 prior to Wednesday night’s Mid-Central Conference contest at Goshen College are back in the Top 5 after spending two weeks at No. 7 and No. 6. It is the fifth rating this season USF has been in the Top 5. This is the first season since the 1999-00 season, when USF was ranked No. 1 in the final ‘Top 25’ of that season, that the Lady Cougars have been in the Top 5.

ICCL teams make their marks with two weeks to play

THE ICCL teams make their marks with two weeks to play.

BY ELMER J. DANCH
Oscars make way to St. Matthew’s Red Carpet Extravaganza

By Jennifer Ochstein

SOUTH BEND — Oscar recently visited St. Matthew School in South Bend during the school’s Red Carpet Extravaganza.

Eighth graders in Cathy Roney’s home room were given a technology project to develop their own films, teaching students to edit video on a computer.

The students made, filmed, and edited the films over a six-week period. To cap off the project, Roney held what she named the Red Carpet Extravaganza to reward students for their hard work.

Students in the fifth through eighth grade voted on their favorite three films that were made in categories including: Best Editing, Best Sound, Best Supporting Actor and Actress, Best Actor and Actress, and Best Movie.

Lindsey Gilbert, 14, won Best Supporting Actress, stayed in character while accepting her award.

As the “weather lady” in the short movie “Code Borage,” Lindsey’s character “was kinda stupid,” she said.

Dressed in a flowing gown to accept her award, she thanked “All the kids got together and had a great time for our last year together at St. Matt’s,” Lindsey said.

Other trophies were awarded to: Juan Barrios, 14, for Best Sound and Best Movie; Juan Barrios, 14, who helped make and acted in “Cribz,” said he was surprised the movie won Best Movie but he got a chance in the hallways after students prescreened the movies. “Everyone in the hall was telling us we won Best Movie,” Juan said. Roney agreed that students seemed to evolve while they were filming. “They developed more behind the camera,” Roney said. “They’re nervous right now, but on video they were very outgoing, and they were all eager to be in front of the camera.” Juan said it was fun working on the project, the computer and programming the video on camera. “We worked with different people in class and made a lot of friends,” Juan added.

Other trophies were awarded: Troy McGovern, 14, for Best Actor, Madison Pletcher, 14, for Best Actress and Ian Saboski, 13, for Best Supporting Actor.

Lindsey Gilbert, 14, poses after winning an “Oscar” for Best Supporting Actress for her portrayal of “the weather lady” in “Code Borage,” a film made by her and her eighth grade classmates at St. Matthew School in South Bend.

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MOVIE CAPSULES

NEW YORK (OSS) — Following are capsule reviews of movies issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office for Film and Broadcasting.

“Because I Said So” (Universal/Gold Circle)

Mediocre and unfunny comedy about an overbearing mother (Diane Keaton) who tries to match up her only daughter (Mandy Moore) with a shallow architect (Tom Everett Scott), while the daughter is more sensibly drawn to a decent single father (Gabriel Macht), but nonetheless engages in a sexual relationship with both. Director Michael Lehmann’s appalling chick flick pushes the contemporary acceptance of pre-marital sex to new lows, as the permissive Keaton character and her three daughters brazenly discuss their sexual experiences at every opportunity. Keaton’s comic prowess, appealing performances from Moore, Macht and Stephen Collins, the absence of graphic sex, minimal expletives, and a reasonably moral tie-up fail to balance a script that is morally — and dramatically — askew at every turn. Several non-sensical sexual encounters, permissive sexual mores, much sexual banter, innuendo and other questionable elements, cartoonish portrayal of porn and an instance of profanity. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is O — morally offensive. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13.

“Blood and Chocolate” (MGW)

Disposable tale about an American wedding artist (Hugh Dancy) researching folklore in Romania where he romances an alluring expatriate chocolatier (Agnes Bruckner) who turns out to be a werewolf, provoking the ire of her shape-shifting clan, especially her insistent cousin (Bryan Dick) and the feral leader of the pack (Olive Martinez) to whom she is promised. While relatively restrained in terms of sex and violence, director Katja von Garnier’s film doesn’t work as a love story or a thriller, and despite its nocturnal Bucharest backdrop and some modestly stylish sequences the overall effect is bland. Some violence, a few bloody images, erotically suggestive dancing, fleeting glimpses of a nude photograph, drug references and sexual innuendo, as well as sporadic mildly 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.

“When A Catholic Marries a Non-Catholic” (Universal/Gold Circle)

CINCINNATI — Marriage can be challenging under even the best of circumstances. When one’s spouse is from another Christian denomination, another faith or no faith at all, a whole new set of unique challenges comes into play. The increasing frequency of such marriages demands intelligent planning and compassionate advice. Starting from the premise that God blesses all marriages, Father Robert Hater offers a pastoral approach to dealing with the difficulties Catholics face in marrying someone from another faith background.

Tips for both the married (or marrying) couple and parish professionals range from how to manage the wedding ceremony to creating a faith-centered home environment. Drawing on his pastoral experience, Father Hater provides stories of those who have successfully overcome these difficulties and who have been enriched by embracing the challenges, rather than avoiding them.

Book supports those in ‘mixed’ marriages


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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: ftagan@fw dioce selivo sb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

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**Divine Mercy program**

Decatur — St. Mary of the Assumption Parish will offer a Divine Mercy program on Monday, Feb. 26, at 7 p.m. The Mother of Mercy Messenger, the outreach ministry of the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy will be presenting “Tell All Souls about My Mercy.” The program will include quotes of Jesus and passages from the diary of St. Faustina, exposition of the holy Eucharist, benediction, the Divine Mercy chaplet, and a Marian prayer. The program will conclude with a rosary. For information call (260) 728-9217.

Passion play at Oberammergau

South Bend — Delivered from the horror of the Black Plague, Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales is proud to host the presentation of the Passion play at Oberammergau. Oberammergau fulfills its vow of reverting the same money gathered from the first Passion play to the poor, and presents the Passion play as a Sacred Heart of Jesus and passages from the Assumption Parish will offer a day of reflection on Immaculate Conception. For additional information call (260) 728-9217.

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**St. Mary of the Assumption**

Fort Wayne — Bishop Luers High School and Casa restaurant will offer dinner served by Bishop Luers, teachers, coaches and friends on Sunday, Feb. 25, at the 3402 Fairfield location. First seating is 12:30 to 1:15 p.m., second seating is 3 to 3:45 p.m. Adult tickets $7.50. Cash bar. Children 10 and under $3. Bring a gift item or cash donation for Luers/Knight auction as a gratitude. Purchase tickets by calling Kathy Skelly at (260) 456-1261.

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**St. John the Evangelist**

Fort Wayne — St. John the Evangelist High School announces Oldies Reunion. Fort Wayne — Bishop Luers High School and Casa restaurant will offer dinner served by Bishop Luers, teachers, coaches and friends on Sunday, Feb. 25, at the 3402 Fairfield location. First seating is 12:30 to 1:15 p.m., second seating is 3 to 3:45 p.m. Adult tickets $7.50. Cash bar. Children 10 and under $3. Bring a gift item or cash donation for Luers/Knight auction as a gratitude. Purchase tickets by calling Kathy Skelly at (260) 456-1261.

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**Fish Fry for first Friday of Lent**

Fort Wayne — St. Jude Parish will have an Ed Fox fish fry on Friday, Feb. 23, from 5 to 8 p.m. Adults 18+: $8, $5 with a St. Jude Parish or Bishop Luers student I.D. Children 5-12: $3. Dinner includes spaghetti, salad, garlic toast and coffee. Carry-out available.

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**Show Luers Spirit at Casa**

Fort Wayne — Bishop Luers High School and Casa restaurant will offer dinner served by Bishop Luers, teachers, coaches and friends on Sunday, Feb. 25, at the 3402 Fairfield location. First seating is 12:30 to 1:15 p.m., second seating is 3 to 3:45 p.m. Adult tickets $7.50. Cash bar. Children 10 and under $3. Bring a gift item or cash donation for Luers/Knight auction as a gratitude. Purchase tickets by calling Kathy Skelly at (260) 456-1261.

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**Fish and tenderloin dinner**

New Haven — St. Louis Besancon Parish will have an all-you-can-eat Country Chef fish and tenderloin dinner on Friday, Feb. 16, from 4 to 7 p.m. Adults $7, children 6-11 $5 and 5 and under $3. Carry-out available.

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**Fish and tenderloin dinner**

Fort Wayne — St. Peter Church will have a fish and tenderloin dinner by Ed Fox on Friday, Feb. 16, from 4-6:30 p.m. in the pavilion, corner or DeWald and Warsaw streets, which is handicapped accessible. Tickets are $7 for adults, $4 for children ages 5 to 10, under 5 eat free. There is a $25 max for larger families.

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**Day of Reflection**

Warsaw — Sacred Heart Church will offer a day of reflection on Saturday, Feb. 24, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Presenter for the day is Jay Landry, pastoral associate at Holy Cross Parish in South Bend. The cost is $10, which includes lunch. Call (574) 267-584 for reservations by Feb. 17.

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**Day of Reflection**

Mishawaka — A Day of Reflection will be held at St. Francis Convent, (across from Marian High School) on Wednesday, Feb. 28, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The theme for the day is “Journaling the Journey.” Bring your journal or a notebook. The cost is $15 and includes lunch. Register to Sister Barbara Anne Hallman at (574) 259-5427 by Friday, Feb. 23.

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**Singles gather at St. Elizabeth**

Fort Wayne — The GAP, a social group for single Catholics in the 40-65ish age range will meet in the 40-65ish age range will meet at St. Elizabeth Parish hall on Friday, Feb. 16, at 7 p.m. Warm up with hot chocolate and fun at “oldies trivia night.” For information call (260) 412-7346 or e-mail gap4565@msn.com.

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**Preschool and kindergarten registration to begin**

Fort Wayne — Queen of Angels School will host registration for preschool and kindergarten students on Tuesday, Feb. 13, in the social hall at either 1 or 7 p.m. Baby sitting will be provided. Students may register for 3 or 4 year old preschool and full or half day kindergarten. Bring birth and baptismal certificates. Registration fee is $50. Open registration for grades 1-8 begins Feb. 15. Call (260) 483-8214 for information.

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**SAJES announce Valentine party**

South Bend — The St. Matthew Cathedral SAJES will have a Valentine’s Day party on Wednesday, Feb. 14, beginning with Mass at 11:30 a.m. in the cathedral followed by a potluck luncheon in the church basement.

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**Valentine’s Day Mass for widows**

South Bend — The Office of Family Life invites those who are widowed to a Valentine’s Day Mass at St. Matthew Cathedral at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 14. Father Michael Heintz will preside.

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My alma mater: visits and reconnections

BY DANIELLE MORAN

SOUTH BEND — Within the Notre Dame community there is an idea of the “Notre Dame Family.” It is the concept that there is a very unique connection between students, alumni, professors and other staff that holds these people together throughout the years. No matter how much time has passed, members of this family can still rely on this bond. When I was in high school researching colleges, this notion seemed strangely familiar. In fact, it specifically reminded me of my elementary school experiences at St. Jude.

There are several excellent Catholic elementary schools in the South Bend area, but none of them form the same kinds of relationships between students and teachers like those created at St. Jude. For example, in high school half days were highly prized. The dismissal bell rang and most students were off to get lunch and spend the rest of the day shopping or relaxing or simply rejoicing over the fact that we were not in school.

However, more often than not, several groups of St. Jude alumni would head over to the elementary school to visit with their old teachers. In return, St. Jude is always open to these visits. Back when I was a student at St. Jude, I remember teachers stopping classes to introduce their former students, and the alumni sharing some stories about their own days in that classroom. Years later, when I was the high school kid coming back for a visit, the same privilege was given to me. It is nice to know that some things will never change.

Friends who attended other elementary schools have also jealously commented on this relationship between students and their grade school teachers. Where they were eager to get out of their schools and on with their high school lives, St. Jude students were just as excited to go back to visit and reconnect.

All of the Catholic schools in the area teach similar classes, offer similar programs and participate in the same athletic activities. St. Jude is set apart because on a deeper level, the students and the faculty and the parents are all truly a part of the St. Jude family.

Danielle Moran is a graduate of St. Jude class of 1998.