Papal trip to Brazil turns spotlight on Latin America

BY JOHN THAVIS

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI is making his first trip to the Western Hemisphere in mid-May, traveling to Brazil to open a strategizing session with Latin American bishops.

The May 9-13 visit begins with a string of pastoral events in Sao Paulo, where the pope will meet with young people and canonize the first Brazilian-born saint.

Then he moves to the basilica of Our Lady of Aparecida, where he will inaugurate the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean, celebrating Mass and delivering a major speech to participants of the May 13-31 meeting.

The trip turns a spotlight on Latin America, a geographical area that has had little attention from this pope to date, but where 43 percent of the world’s Catholics live.

It also broadens the horizons of the pope’s two-year pontificate, taking him outside Europe, where four of his previous five trips have occurred.

“As special as my honor is, dear graduates,” the bishop noted, “yours is greater. For yours is earned, while mine is honorary. Yours is the result of work and industry, of study and devotion and service. Your minds have been opened to learning.”

Bishop D’Arcy also spoke of the futures the graduates had laid out before them, as well as the value of

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Father Bob Schulte, vicar general of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, contributes part of a prayer at the dedication of the new mission outreach center and food bank warehouse in Fort Wayne sponsored by Associated Churches.

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Ascension of the Lord
Solemnity celebrated Sunday, May 20
THE VALUE OF A GREAT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IS THAT IT ARRIVES AT TRUTH

An artist for Our Lady

On Saturday, May 5, it was my privilege to address the graduating class of the University of Saint Francis, Fort Wayne, and also to receive an honorary degree. As I told the graduates and the very large crowd at Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne, their degree was worth more than mine because they had earned it. For them, it was the result of hard work, intellectual energy, papers and exams and a genuine growth in their particular field of endeavor. So I salute them. I am also grateful for the honor given to me by the University of Saint Francis.

I also met Professor Esperanza Maria Camara, Ph.D. She was the recipient of the Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award at the University of Saint Francis, and she is director of the highly regarded master of arts in studio art program in the School of Creative Arts where she has taught since 2002. And why, you ask, is all of this so special? First of all, Professor Camara told me before the event that she grew up in East Cambridge, Mass., and her parents were immigrants from Portugal. I know that area well because my mother first visited Portugal coming back from Ireland because her grandmother and great grandmother were immigrants from Portugal. Portuguese — mostly from the Azores — lovely, scenic islands. Her mother hesitated, and then said quietly, “So our children could get an education.” This touched me very deeply, as it did the listeners.

An extraordinary study

Afterwards, I had a chance to talk to Professor Camara, and she told me about her field of study. She has a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University. The topic of her doctoral dissertation, if I say it properly, was “The Images of the Rosary.” She spent years in places like Florence, Assisi, Rome, Siena and other towns, studying the images of the rosary and stained glass windows and statues so she could do a worthy dissertation in art history.

I said, “Have you seen our cathedral?” She said, “Yes, I would like to teach a class at the cathedral.” I gave her approval immediately. As you know, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception is, as Msgr. Bill Lester once called it, “a song to Our Lady.” The stained glass windows are on the life of Mary, and they were done in Germany and restored in 1998. The professor has led pilgrimages to these places in Italy to observe these images, and she gives courses on the history of art, especially Christian art, to the students at Saint Francis. In some of the cities I knew in New England, like Lowell where I was regional bishop, and also Cambridge, New Bedford and Fall River, there were large enclaves of Portuguese people or those who spoke Portuguese. Hardworking, very religious, and fully American. They, like so many others, have helped to create a rich tapestry, a kind of mosaic, which has made our country so special. And I was reminded on a recent Saturday afternoon at the coliseum in Fort Wayne. This diocese is blessed with so many Catholic institutions of higher learning, and so many of the teachers at these universities are a blessing for our young people who come to this diocese from many places.

First of many

It was my first graduation homily for the year, in this lovely springtime, but there are about eight more before it is over. I reflect on three concepts: First, the nature of love, as depicted in “Deus Caritas Est,” the first encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI. He shows the relationship between the love called eros and the love called agape. He
do not disdain the first but shows how it must be purified and disciplined through sacrifice and even renunciation so that it may become the love of agape, which is unsullied in the offering of oneself to another after the manner of Christ. He shows, how to love that way depends on receiving, and how “the new commandment” to love others is new because we receive love from Christ, which makes it possible for us to love as he loves. His grace makes it possible to keep the new commandment, which says, “Love one another, as I have loved you.”

I also spoke about the true nature of freedom and how this is challenged in our culture. Freedom is not the right to do anything, but rather the capacity to do what we ought, to cherish the good.

And, finally, truth. Education is the pursuit of truth and there is an absolute truth, and it is possible for man and woman to know the truth. The value of a great Catholic university is that it arrives at truth from the study of the human sciences and also from the truths revealed by God in Jesus Christ, the truth of which the church is the caretaker, guided by the Holy Spirit.

Of course, the priest must always keep in mind that he wants Jesus Christ to speak through these homilies. It is the very nature of the priesthood that he desire this and to make this happen.

A jubilee continues

As in the great jubilee of the year 2000, so this year, the 150th anniversary of the diocese, one of our concentrations, quite appropriately, is on the sacraments. Therefore, this Sunday, along with other priests, I will confer the anointing of the sick at St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend. Over 22 years, I have tried to do everything at St. Matthew Co-Cathedral as well as at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. It has been demanding, but I believe the good Lord has made it possible, and there is a guardian angel who helps me. In keeping this practice, I hope to have a quiet Mass at St. Matthew, giving thanks to God for 50 years as a priest.

On the 5th Sunday of Easter I arose early in the morning and drove two hours to the Notre Dame campus. It was a gentle day, with the sun shining and a joy to confer the sacrament of confirmation on the students from Notre Dame, Holy Cross and Saint Mary’s colleges. Since many are graduating, it would not have been possible to make them part of our confirmation in September. Our next major event will be the Eucharistic Congress on Aug. 18 at Notre Dame. As you know, this Eucharistic Congress will be quite similar to the one we did in 2000, for the year of the Great Jubilee.

It is modeled after the World Youth Day. The cross, which is passing from parish to parish (an idea taken from the World Youth Day in Toronto) is nearing Notre Dame. You saw in a recent edition the great number of catechisms that will be given all over the diocese. The rosary will be prayed at the grotto. Confessions will be heard. And it will be a day of blessing for our diocese.

Roger Clemens to the Yankees

Why is anyone surprised? The Yankees will be a contender. They always are. It makes for an interesting summer for baseball fans. Too much money to throw a baseball.

See you all next week.
BRAZIL
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
reviewed them in capsule form last February:
• The need to revitalize the
faith among the church's members
in order to generate a new sense of
mission in society.
• The proselytism of religious
sects, which require, in the pope's
view, new effort in Catholic
education.
• The "growth influence of
postmodernism and secularism,"
which is seen as dramatically
eroding the traditional values of
the predominantly Catholic conti-
nent.
• Marriage and the family,
which the pope said show "signs of
youthful and Christian charis-
mas" that "push for legislative
changes and which are threatened
by the increase in divorce, cohab-
tation and adultery.
• Economic injustice and the
fight against poverty, along with
the growing phenomenon of
migration, which also impacts
family unity.
The pope is well aware that
many Latin American bishops
believe the church stands at a turn-
ing point after losing ground in
recent decades.
At the last Synod of Bishops in
2005, the pope listened as
Brazilian Cardinal Claudio
Hummes told the assembly that
in Brazil — the most populous
Catholic country in the world —
the number of Catholics was
dropping by about 1 percent each
year, with many lost to Protestant
sentiments.
"We have to wonder: How
long will Brazil be a Catholic
country?" Cardinal Hummes
said.
According to the Vatican's
statistics, the Catholic percentage of
Latin American populations has
dropped about 4 percent over the
last 25 years, but many believe
the official figures don't tell the
real story.
In Brazil, for example, the
Vatican says 85 percent of the
population is Catholic, but the
experts who follow census fig-
ures say the real number may be
closer to 70 percent.
The general conferences of
Latin American bishops are con-
sidered milestone events, and
some have produced important
shifts in pastoral direction.
This year's edition will reflect
the impact of globalization and
the need for greater cooperation
among churches of North and
South America, especially on
issues like economic migration.
To favor that kind of
exchange, the more than 160 vot-
ing members of the conference
will include four U.S. bishops as
well as U.S. Cardinal William J.
Levada, president of the Vatican's
doctrinal congregation. Two bish-
ops and a cardinal from Canada
also will attend.
In Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest
city and one of the most popu-
los metropolitan areas in the
world, the pope is likely to talk
about persistent social issues like
urban violence, homelessness,
corruption and economic dispari-
ty.
Outside Aparecida, the pontiff
will visit a Franciscan-run drug
rehabilitation center, called
Fazenda da Esperança (Farm of
Hope). In addition to illustrating
Christian charity in action, the
visit will give the pope an oppor-
tunity to highlight the deep
human and social damage done
by the drug trade throughout
Latin America.
When the Vatican recently
criticized Jesuit Father Jon Sobrino,
a pioneer in liberation theology,
some saw it as a sign of things to
come from the pope and the May
bishops' conference.
But Father Lombardi, the
Vatican spokesman, said he does
not expect liberation theology to
be a crucial issue during the
papal visit. Instead, he said, the
pope is likely to focus on con-
cerns like secularization, the
activity of the sects and urbaniza-
tion, and their relationship to the
fundamental question of how to
announce Jesus Christ in an
evolving culture.
The impact of papal visits,
of course, does not depend solely
on official events and papal speech-
es. Perhaps more than on previ-
ous trips, the world will be
watching to see how Pope
Benedict, an academic at heart,
interacts with the more outwardly
emotional culture of the region.
During his first trip to Brazil,
Pope John Paul II walked
through a slum neighborhood of
Rio de Janeiro, where he chatted
with residents and, moved by
what they told him, left his papal
ring as a gift to local parishes.
No one is suggesting a
repeat performance by Pope
Benedict, but many are interested
to see whether the pope uses
gestures as well as words to commu-
nicate his concern for the poor.
With 14 major events, it's
a relatively busy schedule for the
80-year-old pope. But almost
from the beginning of his pontifi-
cate, he has made this trip a pri-
ority. According to Latin
American bishops, it was the
pope who chose the Marian sanc-
tuary as the site for the confer-
ence and announced that he
would be coming.
The pope also chose the
theme, "Disciples and
Martyrs, Disciples of Jesus Christ.
That Our Peoples May Have Life
in Him." The focus on the person
of Jesus Christ is typical of the
pope, who just published a book
on the figure of Jesus.
In late April, sources said the
pope had canceled or shortened
some audiences at the Vatican in
order to work on his speeches in
Brazil. Many are looking for the
two papal talks May 13 — his
sermon and his inaugural address
— to set the tone and the direc-
tion of the conference.
The bishops of Latin America
have said they hope the confer-
ence will launch a new evangel-
ization mission across the contin-
tent, a type of spiritual mobiliza-
tion throughout the church.
The pope knows this cannot
be accomplished from the top
down, however. That may be
why, rather than announcing
grand plans or programs, he has
so far focused on more funda-
mental tasks.
As he told planners earlier this
year, the Latin American confer-
ence must first of all "encourage
every Christian to convert and
become a true disciple of Jesus
Christ, sent out by him as an
apostle."

Indiana prisoner executed;
pope calls for ‘dark act’

BY DEBBIE ROSAK

MICHIGAN CITY (CNS) —
Called in prayer a "dark act
done under the cover of night," the
execution of convicted murderer
David Leon Woods was carried
out in the early hours of May 4.
Woods, 42, had been sentenced
to death 22 years earlier for the
stabbing death of a family friend,
Juan Placencia, during an attempt-
ed robbery in April 1984 in
Garrett, Ind. Woods was 19 at the
time.
With appeals exhausted and
clemency denied by Indiana Gov.
Mitch Daniels, a group of death
penalty opponents began to assem-
ble at the Indiana State Prison
parking lot shortly before sunset
on the eve of the execution to keep
vigil in support of Woods, who
reportedly had undergone a con-
version of heart and a transfor-
mation of faith while behind bars.
Before entering the prison
to witness the execution, the Woods
family stopped to address the
group.
"David is a special person, a
godly person and he has no fear at
all tonight," said Tommy Yeager,
the prisoner's brother-in-law.
"He is at total peace and feels when
he leaves here tonight, he will be
walking with Jesus."
A letter addressed to the pope,
pointed to Scripture while noting that
people are so quick to judge others
for what they do.
"If you read the Gospel of
Matthew, it asks why do we condemn
our brother for murder? Love and
forgive them, for as you judge so
will you be judged. Why do you notice
the speck in your brother's eye and
not the log in your own?"
Speaking on behalf of his
brother-in-law, Yeager told the
crowd that Woods was grateful for
their prayers and support and
hoped his death would bring light
to the issue of the death penalty in
this country.
Lea Goyvert, a parishioner from
Holy Spirit in Winfield Township,
regularly attends death vigils at the
state prison. Citing the late
Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of
Chicago, she said it is worth
reexpressing his expression of life
as a seamless garment from birth
until natural death. "I'm here to
bear witness that this should not
happen," Goyvert said.
Many in attendance expressed
concern for the mitigating factors
surrounding the execution. Woods
was only 19 at the time and report-
edly under the influence of drugs.
During the appeals process,
defense attorneys questioned state
methods for determining if Woods
had some degree of mental retar-
dation, which would have de-
emed him ineligible for execution.
Woods also had accepted full
responsibility for his actions and
expressed remorse.
"This guy has done everything
he's supposed to do. He's changed,
shown remorse and yet we're
going to kill him anyway," said
Sean Naper, a frustrated local resi-
dent.
Mary Lou Pilkinson, Woods' moth-
er, was overwhelmed with emotion as
she talked about how much she
would miss her son.
"Thank you all for your prayers
and God be with you," she said.
Wendy Pilkinson, a cousin of
Woods, was only 9 when her brother
went to prison for his crime. She
called her brother "Heavenly guide
and explained how he had come to
minister to many of his fellow
inmates.
"I called the gathering the
'remembering hope of Christ into
their lives."
For Woods, even the last meal
shared with his family the previous
evening had spiritual overtones. As
Woods enjoyed a meal of pasta
and soda pop with the 12 closest to
him, he called the gathering the
"breaking of the bread."
"David asked for a birthday
cake," Pilkinson Yeager recalled.
While it was not his birthday,
he explained to his family that the
day of his execution would
become a new birth with Jesus,
she said. Woods spent those last
moments comforting his family
and telling them not to worry, say-
ing he understood the sorrow and
pain his victim's family had
experienced and hoped they could
do one day become a way to forgive
him.
According to Pilkinson Yeager,
Woods also admonished his family
to strive "to become better people
themselves.
"He told my mom to stop talk-
ing about people so much," she
said. "He asked her to try to be
better and she promised him she
would."
Recovering cord blood donations to benefit stem-cell research

BY RAY COZAD

FORT WAYNE — Continued advances in medical research utilizing human stem cells in the treatment of many human ailments shines a light of hope for the future. The controversial use of embryonic stem cells, however, rages on in both the political and religious arenas. New data reports the use of stem cells extracted from the neonatal peripheral blood contained in the umbilical cord and placenta may show more potential for successful treatment than the use of embryonic stem cells and without the loss of life.

One new Fort Wayne company, Cell and Tissue Recovery Services (CTRS), is addressing this issue by the very virtue of its work. CTRS performs cord blood recoveries at St. Joseph Hospital for research applications including drug and vaccine development, immune system research and cellular immunity with HIV, cancer and sepsis. Founded by President Shawn Archer assures participants that the cells recovered are used only for research, saying, “I explain that these stem cells are not suitable for cloning. They are used in research for the advancement of medicine.” And of course no life is lost due to the fact that the recovery is from the donated placenta and cord blood cells.

Archer works with the technicians in the labor and delivery department at St. Joseph Hospital, where staff and administration involvement is paramount, handing out informational pamphlets requesting cord blood donation from parents who are ready to deliver their infant.

Archer himself answers any questions about the program the parents may have and after attaining a signed consent form from the donors, he is then on call till the birth is complete. Once complete, Archer must obtain the cord and placenta immediately to minimize heart attacks. One human arteries of plaque and cellular immunity with HIV, cancer and sepsis.

Shawn Archer is founder and president of Cell and Tissue Recovery Services, an umbilical cord and blood donation program. He works with families at St. Joseph Hospital in recovering their voluntary donations and is hopeful as he provides an alternative to the controversial embryonic stem-cell issue.

Avoid allowing time for negative variables such as clotting, which he says renders the cord blood unusable.

Using a personally designed apparatus, Archer recovers the stem-cell rich blood from the placenta and a 10-inch section of the cord, used he says in the development of drugs for use in cleaning human arteries of plaque and minimizing heart attacks. One donated placenta is reported to supply from two to six vials of blood containing over a million stem cells each. The unused portion of the donation is destroyed in the hospital lab.

Archer has only 33 hours to ship the cord blood donation to Lonza Walkersville, Inc., in Walkersville, Md., a clearing house of sorts, where it will then be donated to research facilities, including teaching universities and hospitals, across the nation. This time constraint limits the donations to Monday through Thursday recoveries. But that hasn’t stopped Archer from recovering nearly 100 donations in the two and a half months he has worked with St. Joseph Hospital.

“The consent rate is about 85 percent now,” reports Archer. Providing potential participants with information about this free-cost program that uses the once discarded placenta and cord assists in the consent, he says.

Cord Blood donation and transplantation is in its infancy,” says Archer. “But we need to let the patients know their options. This is a great alternative to the embryonic stem cell issue.”

Archer, who is a certified tissue bank specialist, has over 20 years of experience in procurement of tissue and bone, customer service and distribution. He assisted with the initial development of the regulations for tissue banking for the American Association of Tissue Banks as well.

Working at St. Joseph Hospital years ago in the burn center has earned him a “family” feel to his work there now. Supervising the tissue bank operations and managing the procurement and customer services at the American Red Cross across three states, since 1986, has given him the experience and desire to design this cord blood program.

“My work with the dead has helped me develop this program for the living,” he says. With procedures for research-based recoveries relatively undefined in this new area, Archer, with the help of colleagues, has developed a standard for the field. His work with donor and recipient families at the Red Cross led him to incorporate a recognition certificate for the cord blood donor that he hand delivers when possible.

“Donor families were recognized with things like planting of a tree. With research donation, I saw a need for these families to be recognized as well,” says Archer, who has designed the certificate of recognition, which announces the baby’s name with this first time donation. “It’s a cute way to recognize the child and the certificate is suitable for framing or to be placed in the baby book,” he adds. These personal touches make this company unique in its mission.

Archer, a parishioner of St. Jude Parish along with wife Cyndy and sons Shawn and Zackary, was relieved to discover that his faith was not compromised by this important work.

“The pope has made comments on umbilical cord recovery. The Catholic Church is behind this issue.”

Future plans for the company include retaining the all important personal touch as the program reaches other hospitals in the area. Archer looks forward to offering informational workshops to hospital staff, including doctors and seeking “partnerships with different people like the bank in Indianapolis.”

This innovative and enthusiastic man says he is very proud of his part in recovering the precious gift these moms and dads are donating will benefit generations to come.

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For more information on Cell and Tissue Recovery Services umbilical cord and cord blood donation program visit www.mysite.verizon.net/archer/CTRS or call (260) 385-1143.

Kathleen Anderson is one of more than 30 Barnes & Thornburg attorneys providing legal services to their fellow parishioners in the Diocese of Fort Wayne - South Bend.
Marching for immigration reform in Detroit, other U.S. cities

BY ROBERT DELANEY

DETROIT (CNS) — "Unaccompanied minors need better treatment and deserve it," said Manuel Gonzalez, a Mexican-born U.S. citizen, waiting for the start of a May 1 March and rally in support of immigration reform in Detroit.

"Let us treat immigrants the same as everybody else in this country," said Gonzalez, a member of Most Holy Redeemer Parish in Detroit, who attended the Detroit rally with his 3-year-old son, Angel.

Gonzalez was among about 3,000 people — overwhelmingly Hispanic and mostly young, with many carrying baby strollers — who took part in the 2.5-mile march. Many of them carried American or Mexican flags, or signs calling for just immigration reform.

The march took place on the feast of St. Joseph, just two days after Michigan's Catholic bishops issued a statement on the need for immigration reform.

The Detroit rally was one of dozens of immigration rallies held across the country the same day. Demonstrators showed up in much smaller numbers than last year, even for larger gatherings in Chicago, New York, and Phoenix.

Although most of the rallies were peaceful, police clashed with demonstrators in Los Angeles while trying to disperse the crowd.

About 150,000 people participated in a march and rally for immigration reform in Chicago. Many of the marchers carried signs in English and Spanish calling for “No more raids” and proclaiming “We are workers, not criminals.”

Marchers primarily focused on the issue of keeping families together.

Many participants made the three-mile trek to the rally with children helping to carry flags and babies in strollers or strapped in carriers on their mothers’ chests.

While most of the flags were red, white and blue, most of the crowd was Latino, along with a significant representation of North African and Middle Eastern Muslims.

Agnes Nabi, a member of Sacred Heart Parish in Lombard, marched with a Polish flag to demonstrate that immigration reform is not only a Latino issue.

“We are a part of the community, too,” she told the Catholic New World, Chicago archdiocesan newspaper.

At the Detroit rally, Oneida Chapa, an American citizen, said she attended to support her husband, Guadalupe Garcia, in his quest for permanent immigrant status.

“I want to become a legal resident,” Garcia said. The couple belongs to Most Holy Redeemer Parish, one of the sponsoring organizations for the march and rally.

Eduardo Ybarra, a member of the Michigan bishops’ statement on the need for immigration reform April 29 at a media briefing before the Sunday evening Spanish-language Mass at Most Holy Redeemer Church.

He said the Michigan bishops’ statement echoes the principles of the U.S. bishops’ statement on immigration. He also hoped it would encourage Catholics to contact their representatives and senators in Washington to urge them to support reform.

Father Donald F. Hanchon, pastor of Most Holy Redeemer Church in Detroit, holds an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe as he marches with other protesters during a May 1 immigration rally in downtown Detroit. Father Hanchon joined thousands of demonstrators in the heavily Hispanic neighborhood, demanding legal rights for illegal immigrants.

“It’s a March for immigration reform,” he said.

DETROIT AUXILIARY Bishop Daniel E. Flores introduced the Michigan bishops’ statement on the need for immigration reform April 29 at a media briefing before the Sunday evening Spanish-language Mass at Most Holy Redeemer Church.

He said the Michigan bishops’ statement echoes the principles of the U.S. bishops’ statement on immigration. He also hoped it would encourage Catholics to contact their representatives and senators in Washington to urge them to support reform.

Bishops’ work group affirms church anti-abuse education programs

By Jerry Filipeau

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A report sent to the U.S. bishops by their National Review Board and Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People said the safe environment education programs for children in dioceses across the nation are “a major accomplishment and one that must continually be maintained and refined.”

It proposed criteria for evaluating and improving those programs, which are intended to prevent the sexual abuse of children and young people and to help them recognize it if it occurs and report it to adults.

The report recommended strengthening the training of teachers and adults who are called on to teach children in age-appropriate ways what they need to know to help them to avoid inappropriate behavior and to report it when it occurs.

It assessed objections to such programs in nine questions, particularly a 55-page criticism, “To Protect and to Prevent,” issued last fall by a task force of the Catholic Medical Association, which called for the abolition of such programs.

But the report concluded that “there is a widespread recognition among experts for children and young people of a positive effect on children, are consistent with the science of child development,” and in accord with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

It recommended that “children and young people receive safety training annually at each grade level and that this training is reinforced with regularity within the program and at home.”

It also recommended the use of “technology such as CD or DVD to present material, to assure consistency of content and approach.”

It suggested incorporating religious and catechetical texts “to integrate and/or align safety training into their materials.” It noted that one of the biggest challenges in safety training for children is incorporating such training into parish catechetical programs for those children who are not in Catholic schools.

Article 12 of the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People” adopted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002 requires all dioceses to establish ongoing safe environment education programs, including age-appropriate education of children, as part of the church’s effort to prevent sexual abuse of minors.

The new report to the bishops, “Safe Environment Training of Children in the Catholic Church,” was written by the Safe Environment Work Group, headed by Bishop Stephen E. Blaire of Stockton, Calif., a member of the USCCB Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People.

The work group consisted of him and six other members selected by Bishop Gregory M. Aymond of Austin, Texas, head of the committee, and Patricia O. Ewers, chairwoman of the National Review Board.

Three of the members were bishops, two were from the review board and two were lay experts in education.

The work group said all safety training programs run by the church must conform to the teachings of the Catholic Church that “the human body shares in the dignity of the image of God.”

It said other criteria of content appropriate for safety training at all grade levels are:

• “It must be appropriate for safety training because it helps children to establish ongoing safe environments in their lives and because they are a major accomplishment and one that must continually be maintained and refined.”

USF CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the friendships they had forged during their time in study at the university.

“And as we pause with genuine gratitude to God, to parents, to loved ones, to St. Francis, our patron,” the bishop said, “I hope that I might share a few thoughts with you of three great concepts of our time which are under threat.”

He listed love, freedom and truth.

For love, Bishop D’Arcy cited Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical, “Deus Caritas Est,” and how the pope spoke of love in terms of charity but also of eros, a love of desire, that needs to be purified by agape, selfless love.

As an example of this sort of love, the bishop cited the Sisters of St. Francis for Perpetual Adoration, the founders of the University of Saint Francis.

For freedom, Bishop D’Arcy gave a definition not of being able to do whatever one wishes, but to be able to choose to do what is right.

He cited the example of Christ laying down his life for the salvation of the world as a truly free act.

For truth, the bishop encouraged the graduates, whatever their discipline, to continue their learning, their pursuit of the truth, noting that God has put in every human heart the desire to know the truth and that God revealed the truth to everyone is Jesus Christ.

“There’s no opposition between faith and learning,” Bishop D’Arcy said. “Faith without learning becomes fundamentalism. … Learning without faith becomes egotism, self-centeredness.”

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TODAY’S CATHOLIC

May 13, 2007

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Cardinal praises Bush pledge to veto any attack on pro-life policies

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The head of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities welcomed President George W. Bush’s May 3 promise to “veto any legislation that weakens current federal policies and laws on abortion.” Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia also expressed gratitude in a May 4 statement for pledges by 155 members of the House of Representatives and 34 senators to uphold any such vetoes. These pledges help ensure that the closure of this rest of the administration and this Congress Americans need not fear that the federal government will pursue new ways to force them to be involved in governing-funded abortions, coercive population programs abroad or the destruction of embryonic human beings,” the cardinal said. “Instead, we should work together to build respect for human life at its most defenseless stages, and to support women and families facing an unintended pregnancy or caring for family members challenged by age, illness or disability,” he added.

Nepal’s first bishop ordained in Katmandu

KATMANDU, Nepal (CNS) — In a historic moment for the local Catholic community, Jesuit Father Anthony Sharma was ordained Nepal’s first bishop. The ordination took place May 3 at the newly renovated premises of Katmandu’s Assumption Church. About 3,000 worshippers — almost half the nation’s Catholics in the country — attended, as did several Hindu and Buddhist well-wishers, reported UCA News, an Asian church news agency. The ceremony was officiated by the apostolic nuncio to India and Nepal, Archbishop Tadeo Lopez Quintana, and two co-consecrators, Archbishop Benedict Osta of Patna and Bishop Thomas D’Souza of Bagdogra. Archbishop Osta and Bishop D’Souza are the leaders of the Indian Catholic territories neighboring Nepal. After he took his solemn vows, Bishop Sharma, wearing his new miter and gold ring, spoke about the pastoral staff of his office, faced the audience, to thunderous applause.

Pope thanks Swiss Guards for dedicated, loyal service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI and Italy’s president and prime minister condemned threats made against Archbishop Angelo Bagnasco of Genoa, president of the Italian bishops’ conference. The pope relayed his support in an April 30 telephone call to the archbishop after an envelope containing a bullet was delivered to him. The archbishop has had an Italian police escort since mid-April, when threatening graffiti appeared on buildings near his residence. The threats began after Archbishop Bagnasco took the lead in opposing a proposed law that would extend legal recognition to same-sex unions.

Unrest in Iraq

VIENNA (CNS) — With more than 50 Chaldean Catholic bishops of Iraq and Kuwait from 12 nations bordering Iraq, including the Middle East, speaking in the meeting in opposition to a proposed law on same-sex marriage, and more than 50 people injured, some critically, authorities said.

A rescue worker checks her camera May 6 after taking photos of the devastation from a tornado in Greensburg, Kan. The tornado, rated an F5 and the most powerful to hit the U.S. in eight years, demolished every business on the main street the evening of May 4.

All the churches, including St. Joseph Catholic Church, also were destroyed. At least 12 people died, and at least 50 people were injured, some critically, authorities said.

Women religious gather to mark 40th anniversary of Omaha bone study

OMAHA, Neb. (CNS) — By the end of the first eight-day session of the Omaha Nun Study in 1967, Sister Rosalina Wilkinson was sick of chocolate bars. The Sister of Mercy had eaten one chocolate bar each day. “I only picked the chocolate bar because it was on the list they gave me and I thought it sounded good,” Sister Wilkinson told the Catholic Voice, newspaper of the Omaha Archdiocese. “Boy was that a mistake.” Sister Wilkinson was one of 190 nuns from six motherhouses who agreed to participate in a Creighton University study on calcium intake and women’s bone health, now known simply as the Omaha Nun Study. Participating nuns were from the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, School Sisters of St. Francis, Notre Dame Sisters, Sisters of Mercy and Benedictine Sisters. More than 30 of the nuns involved in the study were on hand April 25 to help celebrate the study’s 40th anniversary. “I would like to reiterate the impact you had,” Dr. Robert Heaney, study director and design- er, told the nuns. “I don’t think you realize this, but the intake recommendations for calcium were based on the figures you people provided not to me, not to Creighton, but to the women of America.”

Archbishop: Church must dispel prejudice about its stance on AIDS

LONDON (CNS) — The Catholic Church must do more to dispel “misunderstandings” about its attitudes to people with HIV/AIDS, said a Scottish archbishop. “It needs to be said again that the Catholic Church is committed to those works of mercy in the field of HIV/AIDS,” said Archbishop Mario Conti of Glasgow, Scotland. The archbishop spoke in Kiev, Ukraine, in late April to “Catholic-Orthodox Conference on HIV/AIDS in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.” He was one of the organizers of Catholic News Service in London with a copy of the text. Archbishop Conti said it was “very regrettable” that there is unsympathetic to AIDS patients because, in many cases, HIV is transmitted through sexual intercourse.

Pope, Italian leaders condemn threats against Genoa archbishop

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Vatican signals support for international meeting on Iraq

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Peace pole planted for nonviolence

NOTRE DAME — On May 4, Sisters of the Holy Cross and other participants made a public proclamation of the congregation’s stance on nonviolence by planting and blessing a peace pole in front of the Church of Our Lady of Loretto at Saint Mary’s.

“The peace pole has become a global symbol of commitment to peace and nonviolence,” said Sister Ann Oestreich, IHM, justice coordinator for the Sisters of the Holy Cross. “Over 250,000 peace poles have been planted in 180 countries. Each pole proclaims the prayer ‘May Peace Prevail on Earth’ in different languages.”

The planting of Saint Mary’s peace pole is part of the worldwide Peace Pole Project initiated by the World Peace Prayer Society, a nonprofit, nonsectarian, member-supported organization dedicated to spreading the message of peace.

“Visitors to the church and campus are encouraged to stop at the peace pole and recognize their connection with people around the world who have planted their poles with the same prayer and desire for peace.”

Father David Voors honored as distinguished graduate

NEW HAVEN — Father David Voors, pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption, Decatur, received the St. John the Baptist, New Haven, Distinguished Graduate Award for 2007. A Mass was celebrated Friday, April 27, and the award was presented to Father Voors.

Graduating in 1968 from St. John the Baptist School, he attended Central Catholic High School in Fort Wayne and later graduated from St. Pius X College in Erlanger, Ky. Father Voors attended seminary at St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md., and was ordained a priest on June 20, 1981.

Father Voors has spent his entire life as a priest supporting Catholic education. Since 1981, he has helped three diocesan parishes and schools: St. Michael, Plymouth; Our Lady of Good Hope, Fort Wayne; and St. Mary, Decatur.

A symbol of peace and nonviolence, the Sisters of the Holy Cross made a stance by planting and blessing a “May Peace Prevail on Earth” pole. Expressed in different languages — Bengali, English, Portuguese and Spanish — the four languages spoken in countries where Sisters of the Holy Cross serve, the pole is in front of the Church of Our Lady of Loretto at Saint Mary’s College.

Peace pole planted at Saint Mary’s College

St. Vincent de Paul society holds annual Mass, awards

SOUTH BEND — Members and their families of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Joseph County will gather for their annual family Mass and breakfast on Sunday morning, May 20, at St. Joseph Church on Mill Street in Mishawaka.

Father Terry Fisher, pastor, will celebrate the 8:15 a.m. Mass.

Among the special presentations at the breakfast will be the annual awarding of the Top Hat awards to volunteers from the past year.

The Top Hat Award is named in honor of top-hatted French aristocrat Frederick Ozaman, who devot- ed his life to serving the poor and undereveloped in his native Paris. — EJD

Luers students take a bronze in Academic Super Bowl state finals

WEST LAFAYETTE — Approximately 615 students from 90 Indiana high schools, including Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne, and seven other participants volunteered at the Indiana Association of School Principals Academic Super Bowl competition at Purdue University May 5.

The math team — Stephanie Ashburn, Brian Barker, Joe Croach, Suin Key and Molly Schall — traveled to Purdue and brought home the bronze. In a close contest Bishop Luers scored 19 points out of a possible 25. Tell City placed first with 21 points and Park Tudor snatched second with 20 points.

Mathletes from Bishop Luers High School are only in their third year of participation in Academic Super Bowl.

They have been preparing since October for this competition. Bishop Luers won a variety of ribbons at both South Side and Bishop Dwenger. At the sectional meet at Harding High School, Luers placed first in five categories: English, math, social studies, fine arts and interdisciplinary. Based on the scores from that meet, the top-six teams statewide, in each of four school-size divisions, were invited to the state finals held at Purdue on May 5.

Coaches are Ellen Douglas and Katie Kingsbury.

South Bend Knights elect officers

SOUTH BEND — John J. Lehner has been elected as the new faithful navigator of the Father Nieuwland Assembly, 4th Degree, Knights of Columbus at a dinner on Thursday, May 17, at the Father Badin Council located in Granger on the grounds of St. Pius Church.

Bishop Luers’ address will be on Riley Children’s Foundation. The foundation in Indianapolis supports the well-known hospital exclusively for children.

The hospital is named after the Indiana author and poet James Whitcomb Riley. For many years he authored a typical Hoosier column for an Indianapolis newspaper. — EJD

Serrans across the state meet for leadership conference

SOUTH BEND — Continued emphasis on religious vocations and a focus on priests highlighted the two-day spring leadership con-
The spirit of Father Duehmig alive in Avilla

BY FATHER EDWARD EPPELING

AVILLA — The missionary spirit of Father Dominic Duehmig is vibrant and alive at St. Mary of the Assumption in Avilla. In less than two months, District Deputy Knight Jim Helmka, working with the enthusiastic cooperation of the pastor and Ben Helmka, Mike Edwards, Chad Helmka and Jim Mueller as local contacts, a new parish-based Knights of Columbus Council was chartered.

This fraternal and beneficent society of Catholic men will be a blessing to the parish and has been notable in promoting Catholic education, charity and performing the work of the apostolate of the laity.

The Father Dominic Duehmig Council 14214 was chartered in February. At the first meeting in February, Mike Edwards was elected to serve as Grand Knight assisted by Ariann Grimm and an enthusiastic slate of officers.

The council was appropriately named in honor of Father Dominic Duehmig, a missionary in northeastern Indiana who served as pastor of St. Mary from 1867 until 1905.

Father Duehmig was born in Ebenheid, Baden, Germany on Nov. 9, 1842, the 11th of 12 children. He completed his early studies in classics at Wertheim am Main in 1862. For two years he studied theology at the University of Freiburg and completed two more years of study at the University of Louvain in 1866.

Ordained to the priesthood, Father Duehmig celebrated his first Mass on Aug. 15, 1866. When a cholera epidemic broke out in the neighboring parish of Frenedenburg, the pastor was one of the first victims. Putting himself at risk, Father Duehmig spent the next month serving the parish and ministering to the many unfortunate victims.

Later that same year, he traveled to Le Harve, France, and on Dec. 6, 1866, embarked on a ship bound for America and arrived in New York on Dec. 22. He proceeded immediately to Fort Wayne.

Bishop John H. Luers assigned him to assist at St. Peter and Paul Parish, Huntington. On Feb. 22, 1867, he was reassigned to assist Father August B. Oechtering at St. Mary of the Assumption, Avilla, with missions at Waterloo and Kendallville.

Father Oechtering was reassigned to Mishawaka on May 12, 1867 and Father Duehmig was installed as pastor. He began an extremely productive ministry in northeastern Indiana.

St. Mary Parish continued to grow under his pioneering administration. Father Duehmig’s life was filled with challenges, hardships and personal sacrifices. Filled with zeal for the church and a missionary spirit, he traveled from place to place during the week, sleeping in log houses, celebrating Mass in railroad shanties and humble cabin homes. He preached in court shanties and humble cabin homes.

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The Father Dominic Duehmig Council 14214 is named in honor of a former parish pastor.

In 1875, Father Duehmig wrote to Germany and convinced the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, with Mother Anastasia as superior, to come to Avilla. The motherhouse was maintained in Avilla until it moved to Joliet, Ill., in 1877. That same year the Franciscan Sisters took charge of the school. The present church, with its foundation laid in 1876, was dedicated in 1878. In the fall of the same year, work was begun on a new two-story brick building that housed the school and the convent for the sisters.

The name of the school was changed from St. Augustine to St. Mary’s. The present parish house and offices were erected in 1889.

Father Duehmig spearheaded the erection of the Old People’s Home in 1895. The last of his building projects was the Mortuary Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, located in the parish cemetery and celebrating the golden jubilee of the definition of this dogma. He did not live to see it completed.

Plagued with illness during his last years at St. Mary, he was being treated at Kneipp Sanitarium in Rome City when he died on June 3, 1905.

His body was used to form the base of St. Mary’s. The present parish house and offices were erected in 1889.

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Come, O Holy Spirit, come

BY GINNY KOHRMAN

Opening prayer

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work too may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.
— St. Augustine

Scripture: Acts 2:1-11, Rom 8:8-17, Jn 14:15-16, 23b-26

Commentary

Acts 2:1-11 — A strong driving wind Each Sunday at Mass we proclaim our faith in the Holy Spirit, saying, “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.” (Nicene Creed) In the first reading of Pentecost from the Acts of the Apostles, we are reminded of the wonderful actions of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christ’s first disciples. Jesus, before his passion and death, promised that he would send an advocate. He assured the apostles at the Last Supper by saying, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to be with you always...” (Jn 14:16)

The verses that we read in Acts tell us that the Holy Spirit is revealed in a great noise and a strong driving wind. For those of us who live in rural Indiana, loud strong driving winds might be thought of as just another crazy weather pattern passing through. This “strong driving wind” is different. This “Wind” is the breath of the Holy Spirit, “the Lord and giver of Life.” New Life of the Spirit is first given to Mary and the apostles, who clamored and prayed for this promised moment. This wind is the new life of Christ, the Holy Spirit that releases the spirit within all to proclaim the teachings of our savior, Jesus Christ. This wind is the counselor who teaches the whole truth of Jesus’ words and actions to the apostles and to his church. This reading from the Acts of the Apostles inspires us to ask the Holy Spirit for the apostolic zeal first manifested in early Christians. The words we speak in our homes and work environments should astound and amaze others of our words are influenced by the Spirit of Christ. Pentecost reminds us to use our tongues... enabled by the Holy Spirit... to proclaim the language of life and truth, found only in Jesus Christ.

Rom 8:8-17 — Veni Sancte Spiritus “Whoever does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness.” (Rom 8:9-10) St. Paul contrasts for us two life choices that lay before us as Christians: a life that is dominated by sinful human nature or a life that is filled with the Spirit of God. The first choice is one of self-centeredness and passions that control. This life, filled with sinful desires and actions, leads us down a path of misery and death. On the other hand, a life lived with the spirit of God (with wisdom, courage, piety, understanding, etc.) is one that brings peace, love and goodness, joy and freedom. A life filled with the Holy Spirit is one in which we are confident, energized and empowered to act in a way that identifies us as a son or daughter of God. Pope John Paul II said, “docility to the Spirit gives man continuous opportunities for life.” (Pentecost homily, 1998)

At Pentecost, we open our hearts to the Holy Spirit to unite the very depths of our human spirits with our “Abba, Father!” Pentecost reminds us of our baptism when, through the Holy Spirit and water, we are united into Christ’s death and resurrection to become one spirit, one body in Christ. It is with the help of the Holy Spirit that we discover and choose the true meaning of life as a son or daughter of God. A Spirit-centered life gives meaning to our human condition and leads us steadily on our final journey to the Father in heaven. St. Paul invites us to pray with faith and expectation — “Come, Holy Spirit, Come!”

Jn 14:15-16, 23b-26 — Do you love me? Jesus never asks his people to do what he did not do while on earth. Jesus remains obedient to the Father, even to the point of death on the cross. In like manner, Jesus says to his disciples in this Gospel reading, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” Our baptismal commitments require good moral actions and an ongoing surrender to the will of the Father. John’s Gospel clearly tells us that love of God requires our obedience to his laws and his teachings. We cannot simply say we love Jesus without also following his words, actions and morals.

Jesus is telling us: “I love you! Will you yield your heart to me so that I might breathe my Spirit of love into your heart? Will you risk your life for me?”

Surrendering our lives to God is a lifelong process. Obedience to God’s will is not easy. However, we need not do this alone. Our divine Advocate will teach us and guide us to the Father, through the his son, Jesus Christ. On this Pentecost Sunday, allow the Holy Spirit to pour the love of God into your heart. Make the life-transforming decision to surrender your life over to the powerful control of the Holy Spirit and to live wisely and prudently, filled with hope, understanding and courage while continuing to grow in knowledge and piety.

Evangelization action challenge

Interior renewal
Pray either of the prayers in this reflection in preparation for Pentecost. Pray for our priests, that the Holy Spirit will protect, encourage and empower them as they continue to preach Christ’s message of mercy and salvation to the people of our diocese. Pray for our diocese, that the Holy Spirit will descend upon us in this Jubilee Year of celebration and renew our hearts through the love of Jesus Christ and one another.

Reaching out to others
Daily commit your life to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. At the store, try to leave the store clerk with a smile on his or her face because she interacted with you.

Transforming Society
“The words we speak in our homes and work environments should astound and amaze others if our words are influenced by the Spirit of Christ.” Use God’s holy courage to speak up at home or in the workplace about the Gospel.

Closing prayer:

Lord Jesus, I thank you for the gift of salvation. I thank you for the grace that allows me to say, “I belong to you.” I ask you, Lord, for a deeper conversion and deeper surrender to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Help me to daily submit to the work of your Spirit within me. Melt away my self-will and mold me into the image of Christ. Fill me with your Holy Spirit. Use me to bring life and healing to others. Amen.

— Adapted prayer from “Coming to Life” by Father Robert DeGrandis, SSJ

CHASUBLE ON DISPLAY AT THE CATHEDRAL MUSEUM

Jubilee Pilgrim Cross

May 4-11
St. John the Baptist
South Bend
May 11-18
Holy Cross
South Bend
May 18-25
St. Stanislaus
South Bend
May 25-June 1
St. Augustine
South Bend

This rare “salesman’s sample” (19 inches high and 11 inches wide) chasuble-vestment from the 1940s is the “fiddle-back” or “Roman-style.” In its day, this vestment cost $91.50. Today, while this style is still available, most are now in the “gothic” or “monastic” style, and a quality chasuble will cost $1,000 or more. Visit the display at the Cathedral Museum located in the Archbishop Noll Catholic Center at 915 South Clinton St. in Fort Wayne. The museum is open Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. There is no admission charge, and there is free parking in the attached parking garage.
Balancing act for single mothers raising children Catholic

FORT WAYNE — Jill Houlihan would not have chosen to be a single parent. The days can be long, the demands great and the juggling act precarious. Houlihan was forced into the category of single parent five years ago when her husband, Brian, lost his courageous battle with cancer, leaving her to raise and spiritually guide their two young sons, Joey and Jared.

The Houlihans belong to St. Vincent de Paul Parish, where both Joey and Jared attend school and are in the eighth and fifth grades, respectively. Houlihan describes her son Joey, a server at church, as “very sensitive for a boy; he’s a great big brother and puts his all into the things he enjoys. He likes to be part of the action and he’s athletic-minded.” She is most proud of his loving attitude toward others.

Of Jared, the soccer, football, basketball player, she says, “he is fun-loving, makes me smile, energetic, sensitive too and sports-minded.” She loves his ability to try his best in everything he does and that he always wants to please her. She has nothing but praise for her two boys who, she says, have been “so resilient” since their father’s passing. “They’ve probably done much better than I have,” she adds.

Houlihan readily admits there are challenges to being a single mom. “The hardest thing for me is having to do all the parenting myself and not having anyone to back me up or give me a hand at home,” she says.

“In today’s society, you run across so many people who don’t share the same values as you do, and your kids don’t always understand why other parents don’t parent the same way you do,” says Houlihan. “Growing up it seemed like most families shared similar values but that’s no longer the case, and it can be hard for me as a single parent to always have to be the one to say ‘no’ with no one to back me up.”

However, after some thought, she can also admit that there are some hard-fought benefits to single parenthood as well.

“I am on the receiving end of all of my sons’ love and attention,” said Houlihan. “And being a single parent has probably made me stronger in ways I haven’t even realized.”

She adds that she is more aware that she needs to strike a balance in her parental approach between being the disciplinarian and providing a fun environment. “I have to try harder as a parent now,” she says. “Before I would be the stern one, but now I have a different perspective, and I have to think about providing a happy medium so I’m not the same old boring mom.”

What is central to her parenting is giving her children a solid faith base. “I want them to know as much about their Catholic faith as possible, which is why I send them to St. Vincent’s,” she explains. “I think it is so important with society’s values today to expose them to good Christian values at a Catholic school.”

She adds that she attended parochial grade school, “and although it doesn’t mean my kids will be saints, it will give them the background they need to meet the evils of the world and every little bit I can give them will help arm them for their future and instill the values they need.”

Houlihan says. Ironically, Houlihan converted to the Catholic faith herself only after her marriage to Brian but before they began their family. She was a devoted Lutheran, but she felt it would be too difficult to raise their future children in a family worshipping in two faiths. After prayerful consideration and exploration through RCIA, she converted to Brian’s Catholic faith and now finds herself entrusted with the job of shepherding her sons’ Catholic education.

She says that she looks to other parents in the St. Vincent Church or school community who she sees as good parents for inspiration. And even though the Virgin Mary was not a big icon in her Lutheran faith life growing up, she does draw on her more now for motherly inspiration.

“Like her we are involved in parish life, leave prayer and reflection books.”

In the end, Houlihan hopes her children can look back and say “that I cared deeply and loved them almost as much as Jesus loves them, which is something we would say to them when they were little,” she shares. “I just hope that I’ve done my best to be a good Mom and set a good example for them.”

Single mother Susie Black hopes her five children, who range in age from 19 to twin seven year olds, will one day look back and realize that their mom took the time to care for them, clothe them, feed them, to make sure they were involved in their Catholic faith and went to church, but most important, that she “tried to do what was best for them and loved them all very much.”

Divorced just three years ago, life is a balancing act for Black as she works full time as a legal advertising clerk for Fort Wayne newspapers while raising Jamie, 19, Mary, 16, Gregory, 14 and Bridgette and Bradley, both 7.

Walking by faith

BY KIM POHOVEY

Single, Page 11
John Paul II’s theology of women affirms dignity

BY ANN CAREY

NOTRE DAME — A 2006 University of Notre Dame graduate returned to campus last month to tell students how much Pope John Paul II’s theology of women makes sense in the real world.

Caitlin Shaughnessy is a counselor at the Women’s Care Center, a crisis pregnancy facility in South Bend, where she also coordinates the center’s chastity outreach education program.

She says she “smiles with her eyes;” she often rises early to say the rosary in the corner in their home, and Black and Bradley have their own prayer book, which they use to pray together.

The Black family are members of Notre Dame Right to Life and are a co-founder of the Edith Stein Project. A theology major, she wrote her senior thesis on John Paul II’s theology of women.

Shaughnessy was co-chair of Notre Dame’s Right to Life student group and a co-founder of the Edith Stein Project. A theology major, she wrote her senior thesis on John Paul II’s theology of women.

The family seeks parenting resources online and in the local community at Catholic.com on the Internet.

Shaughnessy briefly responded to criticism of John Paul’s vision of women by some feminist theologians, saying that “The role of women in the church is still underdeveloped,” and “Women are hurting and want to have a good experience of the church.”

Furthermore, “There is very real discrimination against women in the world, especially in Third World countries.”

Hence, some feminist theologians have been affected by these realities, and their frustration colors their criticism of John Paul II’s theology of women, she acknowledged.

Shaughnessy continued, this is often an emotional response rather than a valid theological assessment.

After her lecture, an audience member asked Shaughnessy if her work experience with women had confirmed John Paul II’s teaching for her. She said it definitely had, since the pope had emphasized the dignity of women and motherhood. She said she had encountered “much brokenness” at the crisis pregnancy center, where the women’s dignity had often been trampled by the men.

“We need to have their gifts affirmed, and they haven’t,” she said. “It is affirming to them to see their fertility as a gift.”

Shaughnessy’s lecture was co-sponsored by the diocesan Office of Family Life and the Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture.

“Pope John Paul II taught that men and women are equal in dignity, and both have the capacity to image God.”

CATHY SHAUGHNESSY

SINGLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

The Black family are members of St. Charles Parish where Gregory is in eighth grade and the twins are in first grade. Jamie is at Purdue University and Mary is at Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture.

Jamie is at Purdue University and Mary is at Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture.

Black was very involved as a volunteer at St. Charles Parish prior to returning to full-time employment and even worked in the parish rectory. Now she helps with special projects as needed at the children’s school and enjoys field trips when her work schedule allows.

Black glowsingly describes her children starting with eldest Jamie who, she says, is such a “big help, she’s almost like a second mom to the twins.” Black says Jamie never makes sense in the real world.

Out the details, but when overwhelmed, she turns to pray. “Since it’s just me, it can be hard when I have to drive one child one way and another one in the opposite direction,” she shares. “That’s when I pray and somehow things always seem to work out — without my faith, I know things would be much harder.”

Prayer is a mainstay for the Black family. They participate in a prayer group along with three other families who meet every Sunday to say the rosary, pray and socialize. Black says that Bridgette and Bradley have their own prayer corner in their home, and Black often rises early to say the rosary aloud in the mornings and invites her children to join her when they wish to do so.

She also relates that holidays and traditions surrounding Easter, Christmas and Lent are very important to their family. “Basically we enjoy living our Catholic faith together,” she says.

To hone her parenting skills, Black seeks parenting resources from programs on Redeermer Radio such as “Heart and Soul” and Dr. Ray as well as turning to Catholic.com on the Internet.

She also mentions that her own mother and father were wonderful Catholic role models because “they did a good job raising us in the Catholic faith, they were always there for us and provided a good family life growing up.” She also adds that she is blessed with a large support system which includes her siblings, friends at St. Charles Parish and especially her pastor Msgr. John Suelzer.

“My number one goal as a parent is to make sure my children all go through Catholic schools because I can see what a difference it makes in their lives in building a strong faith,” says Black. “Jamie has already graduated from Catholic schools and is now at Purdue; she still goes to church every Sunday and is strong in her faith.” Considering the span in her children’s ages, Black knows she has to work hard to stay involved in each of their lives. “I have to stay focused and very involved from college down to the seven year olds to make sure the line of communication is open and to be there for them,” she says.

Black’s greatest hope for her children’s future is that “they make good choices; I pray for their vocations and that they become happy, well adjusted adults,” she shares.

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Faith supports special mom every step of the way

BY KAY COZAD

FORT WAYNE — Debbie Stevens doesn’t think she is an extraordinary mother. But her husband and four children would tell you differently. Stevens is raising her beloved children, some with special needs, with love, fortitude and faith.

Stevens and husband, Dave, are active members of St. Charles Borromeo Parish, along with their four children. Married in 1984, the Stevens’ began their post graduate careers, his in radio and hers in chemical engineering in Ohio. Following the birth of their oldest daughter Corinne in 1985, Stevens traded her promising career with Proctor and Gamble for the challenging and rewarding life of stay-at-home mom. The following year, a career move for Dave had them settling in Fort Wayne and the next decade saw the Stevens family grow to include sons Benjamin and David with Alli sandwiched in between.

Raising the children in the Catholic faith was a given for the Stevens’, though Dave was not Catholic. Following the move, however, a natural conversion process took place as Dave investigated the faith and in 1990 was welcomed fully into the faith. Following the move, however, a natural conversion process took place as Dave investigated the faith and in 1990 was welcomed fully into the faith.

With the two oldest children thriving, Stevens became concerned when at age one her middle daughter Alli was not yet sitting up. She was encouraged to allow more time for her daughter to develop by the medical community from which she sought help. Eventually a diagnosis of developmental delay was confirmed and Stevens immediately sprang into action. “We worked with First Steps and she (Alli) received physical therapy and speech therapy. We learned sign language because she didn’t talk until she was two,” she recalls.

First Steps is an Indiana program that coordinates early intervention services for infants and toddlers. Alli was three when she exhibited developmental delays. Following First Steps, Alli was enrolled in the Fort Wayne Community Schools’ development mental preschool, then Harris Elementary School where she was mainstreamed with assistance from the resource room and speech therapy. Her mom made sure she had the opportunity to enjoy social activities as well, including her time in Girl Scouts.

Stevens looks back and has seen God’s hand in it all. “There’s a reason why we have Alli. She’s just a joy,” she says. Alli’s siblings, some with learning disabilities of their own, are each her protector, advocate, and friend. “My oldest says if anything happens to us she will take care of Alli. David, the youngest, and Alli are best friends. They have their moments but they have a very special bond,” says Stevens.

Extended family has been a source of help and comfort for this devoted mom as well. The family has been supported by the SPCA, and Alli’s siblings have formed the “Amazing Apostles,” with Molly Doughtery at her parish, while Stevens works with the other parents. “They have adapted. They work with her with no reading. She is with the same kids each year,” says Stevens enthusiastically.

Alli enjoys the special needs religion classes, the “Amazing Apostles,” with Molly Doughtery at her parish, while Stevens networks with the other parents. Confirmation will be celebrated this fall and Stevens is currently investigating service projects with Alli at the SPCA to draw on her love of animals.

Stevens feels that faith begins in the home and that’s where Alli and her siblings began their instruction in faith. Of family faith development, Stevens says, “It’s my vocation!” She adds that she is blessed to have the “wonderful kids and supportive husband and family” she has and reminds those who may have a child with special needs, “You can’t do it without faith. Look at your kids as the blessings they are. Meet other parents and open yourself to others to learn and get new ideas. Take one day at a time and make sure God is with you every step of the way.”
Stewardship, service to others is important at St. Monica School

BY ADAM BAUMGARTNER

MISHAWAKA — Stewardship is a common theme in Catholicism. We are to be each other’s servants, treating them as we’d want to be treated. St. Monica School teaches us to help others, offers situations in which it’s necessary to serve and encourages us to engage in activities that allow us to be stewards to our local and worldwide communities.

One of the many projects and programs St. Monica School makes available to its students is Family Groups. In this activity, a child from each grade is placed into a group led by an eighth grader, and the nine of them play games, create artwork to be hung in the school and much more. Through this, the younger students of each group befriend those who are older, making them less nervous and more at home. The older children are given the ability to help the younger kids by helping them write or draw, encouraging participation in games and simply talking to them.

Parents of St. Monica’s students often get involved in school events. Without the help of our many volunteers, numerous activities that influence the social, spiritualistic and intellectual aspects of each child wouldn’t be available. Their sacrifices are examples of how people of all ages need to be stewards to each other, and we, the children, see that message.

Monthly, students send cards and artwork to the homebound parishioners of St. Monica Parish. We write sentimental and sincere messages in each card, despite the fact that we haven’t met the person we’re sending them to. While this example of stewardship often makes someone smile, as any act of service can potentially do, it also teaches students about unity. It reinforces that we, as individuals, have the ability (or power) to brighten someone’s day simply because we’re still governed and blessed by the same God. The Catholic community of which we’re taught is made visible through the thank-you letters that we many times receive in return.

These are just a few examples of the things that make St. Monica School and parish a true community. There are many more and each one leads people to feel that they are closer to each other than they previously were. In the world of today, which can oftentimes make us feel distant and detached from each other, St. Monica’s stands tall as a safe haven and sanctuary wherein people have each other’s support and know it to be so.

BY ADAM BAUMGARTNER

ST. MONICA SCHOOL is located in Mishawaka. The school has 205 students in 3-year-old preschool through grade 8. Sister Pat Gavin, SSND, is the principal. Additional information is available at www.stmonicacomets.org, sbdstmonic@aol.com, or by calling the school at (574) 255-0709. Registration is now open. Call for a tour of the school.
HUNTINGTON — Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters whose motherhouse, Victory Noll, is in Huntington, will celebrate the jubilees of 13 of their sisters. The jubilee celebrations will be held on May 24, for the 60, 70 and 75-year jubilarians and on Aug. 5 for the golden jubilarians (50 years).

The congregation was founded in 1922 as a missionary community, and the sisters minister in the United States and Bolivia.

75-year jubilarians

Sister Theresa Egidy, OLM, was born in Greeley, Kan., and entered the community from St. John the Baptist Parish. She has served in California, Texas, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona and at Victory Noll. Her ministries have included catechetics, teacher formation, adult education and pastoral care. She also has been an instructor on the construction and use of solar ovens. She currently resides at Victory Noll and is involved in prayer ministry.

Sister Trinidad Luna, OLM, was born in Tierra Amarilla, N.M., 1922 as a missionary community, to celebrate the golden jubilarians (50 years). The jubilees of 13 of their sisters. The jubilee celebrations will be held on May 24, for the 60, 70 and 75-year jubilarians and on Aug. 5 for the golden jubilarians (50 years).

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EDITORIAL

Mother’s compassion goes a long way

I

n a recent Chicago Tribune issue, Mary Schmich wrote a beautiful column urging people to observe Mother’s Day by thanking not just our own mothers, but all the other people who have cared for and nurtured us.

Schmich was inspired to write her column by Gerald, a child-

hood friend of her brother who often hung out in her family’s home. When Gerald had finished school and left

home, her 80-year-old mother received a card in the mail from

Gerald, in which he thanked Schmich’s mother for all the nice things she had done for him when he was growing up.

Schmich quoted her surprised mother’s reaction: “I couldn’t

remember most of the things he told me I did, but you just never

know what things mean to children.”

As it turns out, the “nice things” she had done for this boy were little, everyday things: A busy mother of eight, she still took time to talk to the boy and listen to him, and she loaned him tools to do

yard work. She never even noticed that he often spent most of the
time he was in her house not playing with her son, but rather, hanging out with her in her kitchen, just talking, listening to her

motherly advice.

Gerald never forgot that kindness, and he simply decided one day to write and tell her that he “looked up to her as a wonderful

mother.”

This story is a touching example of what Pope Benedict XVI
told us in his first encyclical, “Deus Caritas Est,” meaning “God is

Love.” He explained in his introduction that God lavishes his love upon us, and we in turn must share that love with others. As

Benedictine Father Philip Anderson told a recent conference at

Notre Dame on “Deus Caritas Est,” by loving one’s neighbor, even

one person has the power to cause “a spiritual tsunami.”

So often we have been taught that the only way to make a

difference is to “do something big.” But this is not the case.

In our lives who act as surrogate parents by nurturing and support-

ing us.

And all those individual “spiritual tsunamis” eventually will

erupt into a huge tidal wave to bathe the culture in God’s love.

Anti-Catholic bigotry emerges

from Supreme Court decision

Anti-Catholic bigotry is said to be the last acceptable prejudice, and this prejudice raised its ugly head again in reaction to the recent Supreme Court decision upholding the federal law prohib-
inng partial-birth abortion.

Some commentators lost little time in noting that the five jus-
tices who voted to uphold the law were all Catholic, and they

insinuated that the decision was a religious one. An editorial car-
toonist for the Philadelphia Inquirer went even further and depict-
ed the five Catholic justices wearing bishops’ miters, with the cap-
tion: “Church & State.” The implication, of course, was that the

Catholic Church was meddling in the affairs of the state.

This scenario is so unfair and inaccurate that it’s hard to know

where to begin in protesting. For starters, let us note that abortion is a civil rights issue, not a religious issue. To imply that the deci-

sion was religious denies the reality of partial-birth abortion, which has so horrified the general public that many people who

had formerly supported abortion rights have changed their stand.

Furthermore, many non-Catholic members of Congress voted for the partial-birth ban, which passed 64-34 in the Senate and

281-142 in the House. And the bill was signed into law by a

Presidential president.

To the shock of the five Catholic Supreme Court justices based their decision on religion also is an attempt to divert attention from the legal issues involved and an attempt to dissuade Catholics as unqualified for the high court. That attitude is nonsense, and Catholics must not allow such bigotry to limit our activity in the public square.

Catholic offers deep

grateful for 2006

contribution

I wish to acknowledge with deep gratitude your diocesan contribution from the 2006 Appeal for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

In his first encyclical, Pope Benedict XVI defines clearly a

vision for a just society which includes eliminating poverty and protecting human dignity. He

writes, “... within the community of believers there can never be room for a poverty that denies anyone what is needed for a dignified life.” (“Deus Caritas Est,” No. 20). Your recent contribution of $44,553.50 from your 2006 Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) collection will make a real differ-

ence in our efforts to break the cycle of poverty in America. Thank you very much for this generous support.

Last year, CCHD was able to grant nearly $90 million to commu-

nity organizing and economic development projects in 47 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The projects are planned and managed by local groups who are

working for affordable housing, living

wages, accessible health care, improved schools and access to

social services. Your leadership and the faithful and committed service of your diocesan manager, Ms. Ann Halmke, are sources of great encouragement to all of us.

Gratefully in Our Lord,

Timothy F. Collins

Executive Director

Catholic Campaign for Human Development

Washington, D.C.

Indian priest requests mission

needs

Dear editor and readers,

I am thankful for publishing my request for mission needs. Kindly note the change of address. Kindly send rosaries, statues, ballpoint

pens, pencils and other mission help to the following new address:

Father Paul Cruz

P.O. Box - 691 571

Kottiyam - P.O.

Kollam - 691 571

Kerala - India

Father Paul Cruz

Kerala, India

A virtuous way of life

c hristian stewardship gives the

best of ourselves and set

Fathers as an effort to do

good and to live according to

God’s will. Article 7 of our cate-

chism teaches: “a virtue is a habit-

ual and firm disposition to do the

best of himself.” The Christian

understanding of good is a way in which we

are able to commit ourselves to

our greater glory.

STEWARDSHIP – A WAY OF LIFE

HARRY VERHILEY

“IF I have not charity, I am nothing.”

CORINTHIANS 13:4

• Charity is a way in which we

love God above all things for his

own sake and for our neighbor’s

— a fellow creature, who is also

loved by God. St. Paul says in 1

Cor 13:7-8, “If I have not charity, I

am nothing.” Charity upholds our

ability to love and raises it to a

supernatural level of perfection of

divine love. If we are charitable,

we can expect to receive the fruits

of charity, which are joy, peace

and mercy.

As Christians, we are on a pil-

grimage towards our heavenly

Father. Along the way, we should

seek and savor the things which are

from above. These things are actu-

ally gifts to guide us along the

way. Habits which we can

develop with our heavenly Father.

We really do not make it on our own but

by the power of God. Receive God’s gifts gratefully and use them for

his greater glory.

Harry Verhiley

is the director of the
diocesan Development Office.
Disciples are called to love one another.

WASHINGTON (CNS) — It’s likely to get a little harder to ensure that the Polish, Tanzanian, Ugandan and Peruvian priests who minister to the Catholic immi-
grant workers of western Massachusetts in their own languages get to stay in the United States.

So too for Filipina nurses staffing hospitals in the Midwest, Mexican seminarians doing pastoral intern-
ships in South Dakota, the Franciscan brother from Nigeria working with immigrant teens, the Irish priest teaching history and the lay catechist from Brazil.

Allegations of fraud that have plagued the religious worker visa program since it was created in 1990 have prompted proposed changes that users of the visas worry will add unnecessary delays and costs.

In the Diocese of Springfield, Mass., one of Father Bill Pomerleau’s jobs is to handle the paperwork for foreign priests who work for the diocese.

He said some of the applicants that would-be employees file with the U.S. consulates in their home countries and gather the supporting documents that the federal office of Citizenship and Immigration Services, or CIS, requires to prove that there’s a valid employment offer from a bona fide religious organization.

If the immigrants decide they want to stay permanently, he helps them apply to change their temporary visas to permanent ones.

In the last few months Father Pomerleau’s part-time position as vicar for international clergy also means he has had to play host to inspectors from CIS who came to the chancery unannounced to ensure the diocese is what it said it is in the visa paperwork and that the church genuinely sought to hire the applicants.

The priest is also a reporter for the diocesan newspaper and a pastor.

Such inspections are under way for an estimated 4,000 religious institutions nationwide that have applied for immigrant religious worker visas.

About 160,000 came under various employment-related visas.

Physically inspecting the spon-
sorizing organizations, like the Diocese of Springfield, is one of the steps CIS has taken to address fraud. A survey by the Homeland Security Office of Fraud Detection and National Security found a fraud rate of 33 percent in applications for R (for religious) category visas.

WASHINGTON LETTER
PATRICIA ZAPOR

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

6th Sunday of Easter
Jn 14:23-29

As Christianity grew, it not
only expanded beyond its
original base in the Holy
Land, but it grew genetically as
well. This increasingly multi-cultural nature of the broad Christian community presented problems.

Such a problem is evident in this weekend’s reading. The dis-
pute is Antioch, at a time one of the major cities of the
Roman Empire. It was located on the Mediterranean Sea north of the Holy Land.

Obviously, a Christian commu-
nity had formed in Antioch. Most likely, its membership was com-
pose of people from all back-
grounds. Jews would have been among them. The roots of
Christianity theologically, geo-
graphically and historically were in the Jewish culture and in the Holy Land.

Still, at this point, the major fig-
ures among the Christians, certain-
ly including the apostles who had
known Jesus, were Jews.

The dispute was about circu-
mcision, a ritual followed by
Jewish males to this day.

Evidently, in Antioch some Christians were demanding that converts from paganism submit themselves to this ritual.

Antioch’s Christian leaders, nor Antioch’s individual Christians, resolved the dispute. It was not left to the personal thinking of the per-
sons directly involved, namely the converts themselves.

Rather, the question was taken to Jerusalem, for review and response by the apostles.

Replying, the apostles called the Antioch Christians “brothers.”

The decision was that this Hebrew ritual need not be imposed upon the converts.

The apostle who made the decisions was sent to Jerusalem, for review and, as all the readings in Revelation, his passage is poetic and symbolic. The city, of course, is heaven, the “heavenly Jerusalem.” This heavenly city awaits all who love God. On each of its four sides are three gates.

Three was a perfect number. The gates are open to anyone.

Also, written on the city’s walls are the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. It is another symbol to say that salvation is offered to all.

St. John’s Gospel gives this weekend its third reading. It is one of the most eloquent passages in the New Testament. Three points are important.

Jesus calls upon the disciples to love each other. The mere con-
struction of this passage illustrates the fact that following the Gospel will not be easy.

However, following Christ will not be impossible. The Holy Spirit will assist and strength.

Finally, for those who truly love God, peace will be with them.

As a way of understanding this passage, the Catequiz’em looks at how the monastic order of the Carthusians fits in.

THE CATEQUIZ’EM
By Dominic Campbison

Currently a three-hour documentary has hit movie theaters depicting
life in a Carthusian monastery.

This quiz looks at that monastic order.

1. Who are the Carthusians so called?

a. from “Carta Fraternalis Deus” — the charter of the Brotherhood
of God, their founding document
b. from Chartreuse (Charters) in France where their order began
c. from Castrus Rex, a Roman imperial camp at the site of their first monastery

2. Who was their founder in the 11th century?

a. St. Bruno
b. St. Bernard
c. St. Charles Roi

3. He was from this city, now in Germany:

a. Aix
b. Strasbourg
c. Cologne

4. Why did he go to France?

a. He was originally a member of an invading army led by Charlemagne
b. to seek a more spiritual life
c. to serve the popes at Avignon

5. The original order had this number of members at first:

a. 7
b. 12
c. 99

6. When the founder was called to this job, the order almost collapsed:

a. advisor to the pope in Rome
b. bishop of Auchen
c. spiritual advisor to the cathar “perfect”

7. The order in France had to rebuild their monastery at Grenoble after it was

a. destroyed by the invading Moorish armies from Muslim Spain.
b. destroyed by an avalanche which killed seven monks.
c. burned down by the rival order of Trappists.

8. The order got its guidelines (rule) and official start in this century:

a. the 11th
b. the 12th
c. the 13th

9. What distinguishes Carthusian monks from many other orders?

a. They live a life which is mainly solitary, with a few communal aspects.
b. They are totally silent.
c. They accept only men who have committed grave misdeeds such as murder or playing curling.

10. What physical arrangements make this possible?

a. They have developed a language of taps and punches, called Car A Te.
b. Like the Foreign Legion, they grant a fake identity and passport.
c. They live in individual cells joined to a monastery with common areas.

11. There are two main roles in a Carthusian monastery. What are they?

a. friar and chip monk
b. renunciant (one who has taken solemn vows) and junor (takes an oath)
c. monk “fathers” (cloistered priest or candidates) and brothers

12. What is the main difference?

a. The friar cooks meat or fish for the community; the chip monk does the veggie.
b. The cloistered monk remains in his cell, leaving only for services; the brother does other necessary work.
c. The renunciant can only be released by Rome; the junor can just leave.

13. Another thing that sets these monastics apart is that they do not encourage:

a. visitors or retreatants (apart from those contemplating joining)
b. prayer or contemplation
c. silence or liturgy

14. Although it is not a military order, the head of all the order is called the

a. general
b. commander in chief
c. imperium militarum

15. John Paul II encouraged orders such as the Carthusians

a. to update their lives to conform to modern realities.
b. to be present in new lands (this is why they are in Korea).
c. to boldly go where no monk has ever gone.

ANSWERS:

1. b, c
2. c
3. b
4. b
5. b
6. a
7. c
8. c
9. b
10. a
11. a, b
12. c
13. b
14. c
15. b
Both St. Mark and St. Luke end Gospels with ascension of Jesus

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT JESUS REALLY ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN? ANONYMOUS

St. Luke speaks of the Ascension of Jesus at the end of their Gospel. St. Mark says “Jesus was taken up into heaven and took his seat at God’s right hand.” St. Luke says “as Jesus blessed the people, he left them and was taken up to heaven.” St. Luke is also the author of the Acts of the Apostles.

To show the connection between the two books, St. Luke ends his Gospel with the Ascension and begins Acts with the Apostles’ experience of Jesus being lifted up before their eyes in a cloud which took him from their sight.

In the Gospel of John, the risen Jesus asks Mary Magdalene to tell the disciples “I am ascending to my Father and your Father.”

Since human beings learn through their senses, the risen Jesus appeared to many people, like the apostles, the Blessed Mother, Mary Magdalene and over 500 people at one time to show convincingly that he was risen and alive.

Similarly, to show the people that he was returning to God the Father in heaven, Jesus visibly ascended before their eyes. There is an insistence in the Bible that the apostles actually saw Jesus ascend into heaven. A cloud “took him from their sight.”

The New American Bible says there might have been several visible ascensions of the risen Jesus. St. Luke’s ascension takes place on the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem. But the final instruction of Jesus to his disciples at the end of St. Matthew’s Gospel occurs on a mountain in Galilee. The visible ascension of Jesus is in accord with the ancient world view that held the sky to be a solid vault above which God’s throne was. Later on the risen Jesus, twice in heaven, appears to St. Paul on the road to Damascus and asks “why do you persecute me?” This led to St. Paul’s conversion to Christianity.

Father John McKenzie says the ascension of Jesus is the transfer of his risen, glorious body to heaven, namely the world of the divine. This implies Jesus’ corporeal survival, his final glorification, his departure from the material universe.

The first Epistle to the Corinthians says the risen Jesus is linked to his descent from the Mount of Olives where two columns mark the spot where two men in white are said to have addressed the disciples after the Ascension: “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?” This tradition first appears in the 1st century, but is not solidly established until the 16th.

Eusebius of Caesarea (d. A.D. 340), the Father of Church history, says the Roman emperor Constantine chose a cave on the top of the Mount of Olives to remember the ascension of Jesus into heaven. Early Christians believed that, at this cave, foretold the end of the world and instructed his disciples on many other occasions. The pilgrimage of Boredeaux (A.D. 333) associated this cave with the teaching of Jesus before his Passion, namely the last discourses in the Gospel of St. John.

Father Richard Hire, pastor of Queen of Peace Parish, Mishawaka, answered this week’s question.

Your mother is calling

WHEN I WAS IN THE SECOND GRADE, MY TEACHER SISTER TERESA MARIE, AT HOLY CROSS SCHOOL, NEXT TO THE CEMETERY, ASKED EVERYONE TO CHOOSE A BOOK TO TAKE HOME. I PICKED UP A TATTERED BOOK WITH A VINTAGE MISSION PRESS COVER. THE FINE ITALIC PRINT ON THE COVER READ, “THE BEAUTIFUL STORY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.” IT CONTAINED THE SONGS TO OUR LADY’S, PLUS A BIBLE VERSE FOR THE DAY. THE DATES WERE 1959 AND 1960. I PICKED UP THE BOOK, SAW IT WAS A SERIES CALLED FIVE TO SEVEN WORKING DAYS. NO, NOT MEANING I HAD TO READ IT IN FIVE TO SEVEN WORKING DAYS. NO, SAYS THE COVER, “ONE DAY. ONE CHILD.”

I WAS DRAINED TO OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH. AS I OPENED THE BOOK, I HEARD THE SPEAKING VOICE OF THE LITTLE SHEPHERDS REVEALING THE HUMANITY AND INFALLIBILITY OF THE BLESSED MOTHER. I REALIZED THIS BOOK WAS SUPPLANTING THE BIBLE AS MY PRIMARY SCRIPTURE. I BEGAN TO READ, TO PRAY, TO MEDITATE.

I OPENED THE BOOK, “ON A HOT DAY IN MAY.” I REALIZED THIS WAS THE DAY OUR LADY APPEARED TO THE PEASANT CHILDREN AT FATIMA. ONLY SEVEN YEARS LATER I REALIZED THAT “HOT DAY IN MAY” WAS THE DAY OUR LADY APPEARED TO THE PEASANT CHILDREN AT FATIMA.

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Going away is a word search based on the Gospel reading for Sixth Sunday of Easter, Cycle C: Jesus’ reassurances as he prepared to leave his disciples. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

GOING AWAY

LETTER

THAT’S A GOOD QUESTION

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for Sunday of Easter, Cycle C: Jesus’ reassurances as he prepared to leave his disciples. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

GOING AWAY

Making a good question

GOING AWAY

Continued from Page 16

The most common type of fraud found was applications in the name of a nonexistent religious institution, he said. Other problems included using the name of an institution that did not support the application or applying for the visa on the basis of one type of job and then taking another one.

Theresa Thomas, parishioner of St. Matthew Cathedral Parish in South Bend, is the mother of nine children and wife of David. Visit her Web site at www.there- sathomas.typepad.com.

Because the Office of Fraud Detection is relatively new, Wright said there is little information about fraud in other visa categories to compare with that found in the nonimmigrant visa categories.

Fraud allegations have haunted the religious worker visa program since it was created. Each time the program has had a temporary visa category that has come up for renewal in Congress — it currently has been extended through September 2008 — hearings are held to discuss the benefits of the visa category and its problems.
Musing 1: Emotional ... or not?

Teresa Volante, Catholic campus minister at Virginia Tech, tried to describe how students reacted after the shooting deaths of 33 Virginia Tech students and faculty by saying that there were lots of tears and sadness. Immediately she added that there had also been overwhelming help and support from people everywhere.

So, how did this tragic event affect you? People often remember what they were doing when they were first shocked by a significant event. Did this event shake your emotions deeply — or did it seem far removed from your life? Can you imaginatively place yourself in the scene and experience the horror and sorrow — or is it just another news story?

Thinking about how we are affected can be a helpful spiritual exercise. On one hand, if we get emotionally caught up in the details of a tragedy, it can adversely affect our emotional and spiritual level. It can lead to unreasonable paralyzing fears; then, it is difficult to do anything proactive. At this extreme, we can pray to God for peace and ask others to do the same.

On the other hand, if we are complacent about tragedies, it may be because of a hardened heart. Perhaps we do not care enough about others in the world. In this day and age, we can easily become complacent about news events when we are constantly bombarded with media messages. Over time we can become “hardened of heart” to the actual happenings of life.

We react differently to tragedy at different times in our lives, but sooner or later we all come to realize that we are very small in our world and universe. We have less control over events than we care to admit. We are highly dependent on everything around us: the air we breathe, the warmth and light of the sun, the water we drink. God provides all these for us in nature and gives us even more through other human beings.

Accepting our dependence on God is the beginning of the unfolding of the sacred mystery of salvation and the beauty of God’s love for us.

So, you may ask — how much does God love me? Here is one example: imagine all the steps and how many people are involved in getting a simple loaf of bread to you. Grains of wheat are paired with a farmer’s labor and move toward you through various stages of production, ending up as a loaf of bread bagged for you by someone at the grocery store. In reality, you pay very little for that loaf of bread compared to everything and everybody that are involved. This is a small indication of God’s love reflected through the gifts of nature and human beings, all created by God for our good.

In truth, we are highly dependent on others, and they serve us well, compliments of our Creator. We often do very little to thank God and others. We must try to reciprocate this love, even when it is difficult.

Musing 2: Antidote to violence

Of course, most of us fall in between those two extremes. Can this event have a positive effect in your life? It can make a difference if we learn that the antidote to violence is love.

How can we be proactive with love? First, we go to the source of love, God, and try to understand, in our limited capacity, the quality and quantity of God’s love.

Humility we must acknowledge that we understand very little about the magnitude of God’s love and what that really means.

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Musing 3: Control, trust and response

In addition, we must learn to trust even when it is difficult. Just think about all the ways we trust one another without even realizing it. We trust you completely. Our culture leads us to believe. And the power and control we do have is another gift from God. Our culture can control and manipulate, control and power to get what we want, the way we want it, but the reality is that we have to trust God who holds the universe in “being” and counts every hair on our head. We must give more love through our actions.

We can choose to use the control we do have either positively or negatively. We are products of a culture that emphasizes the negatives and debates even the simplest and most basic questions of life. We think

What is your favorite prayer?

What is your favorite reading material and authors?


Musing 4: Judgment

Perhaps some ask, “What about the murderer?” In a way we can almost hear Jesus respond, “Judge not lest you be judged.” We would be wise not to judge too quickly, despite the great evil done by this person, that is something best left to God. The murderer said that those around him made it; perhaps others didn’t recognize how much he needed love. He was likely hurting a great deal because of past experiences, perhaps people didn’t recognize his need for care enough. Perhaps the pain increased and escalated into this tragedy. We may never know what or why.

Musing 5: What can we do?

Whatever the case, we all have a responsibility to make use of the gifts God has entrusted to us to model this world a better place — especially a more peaceful, loving one. Mother Teresa pointed out that loneliness is the most terrible poverty. It seems this ingredient may be at the heart of this tragedy and countless others in our modern day world.

What can we do? We can be there for others and love them in our everyday circles. These rays of love, rooted in prayer, emanate through our trust in God, our confidence, our feelings and actions. Carrying out deeds of mercy will truly help others feel less isolated and give us the power to prevent forms of violence by our proactive activity. If we are true to our calling, we will shine more profoundly in the light, then, the darkness won’t envelop us, but the light of Christ will shine more profoundly through us and for all.

Meet the Priest

What is your favorite Scripture passage?

The parable of the prodigal son

Who is your favorite pope?

Pope John XXIII

What is your favorite food?

I like any kind of seafood.

What is something interesting about yourself that most people might not know?

I was a stutterer and stammerer from the age 15 to 61, which caused periods of depression during my high school counseling from 1962-63 and 1984-86, especially the last period in which I recorded and analyzed 129 dreams, I found the cause and symbolism of my speech problem. As I look back, I would not trade those many years of prayer for peaceful-failed years because I learned so much authentic wisdom and self-knowledge during these difficult years. I am grateful for the guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit during all those trials.

How do you prefer to be addressed?

Ed or Father Ed
Good relationships don’t just happen

SISTER MAGGIE LAVINS, CSC

T he one of the four core values of the Sisters of the Holy Cross is “community.” We declare and believe that we are called to build community wherever we are. Every time we find ourselves is an opportunity to do this. The key word is “build.” Relationships are the core of community and meaningful community doesn’t just happen. A community is only as strong as its relationships.

Some have many relatives and still do not experience “family.” On the other hand, a group of unrelated people can mean more to us than our own brothers and sisters. What makes the difference?

None of us chose our family of origin. Parents do not select their children and children don’t choose their birth mothers and fathers. However, how we develop our family relationships, whether by blood or through adoption, is up to us. To build community and/or family requires effort on the part of each person. We must both actively care for and respect one another. Trust and honesty between the members are necessary.

Parenting is a lot more than taking care of the material needs of children. Too often parents are so busy with their work and other interests that they fail to spend quality time with and really listen to their children. Being a good mother or father does not mean giving them everything they want. Life-giving relationships are fueled by mutual, active love that we give each other. If I work day and night to give my family members whatever material things they want, but rarely spend time with them, problems often develop.

Distance can limit our physical presence to others. Even so, there are many ways we can stay connected. We can write letters (When was the last time you received a “real” letter by snail mail?), send e-mail, text message, telephone, etc. The bottom line is we must share ourselves with them. They have an important place in our lives.

The quality of community and family is based on the quality of our relationships. Just living in the same house or being related by blood does not make community. Even in our church. We belong to the Christian community through our baptism, but experiencing that community is another story. Some people can be members of a parish for 20 years and not relate in any meaningful way to other parishioners. Too many Catholics just go to Mass, and that is the extent of their involvement in the parish.

To make community happen we must be willing to go out of ourselves. We must share our lives with others. This includes both our joys and our pain. It means letting other people into our lives. It means striving to become interdependent rather than independent and self-sufficient. Being part of a community means being willing to receive as well as give.

Authentic Christian community requires a willingness to share our values and our faith in Jesus. It involves forgiving and asking for forgiveness. Sometimes we have to take the first step. We might have to be the ones who introduce ourselves to the people who sit next to us in the pew. We might have to join a parish organization or begin the process of reconciliation in my life.

Once I watched an ugly Ashlee Simpson, who burst into a music video with a nose job and plastic surgery. It’s hard to shake that model in our mind and it’s easy to spot our physical deviations.

But the image we envy is the ancient acceptance of euthanasia. Euthanasia grew as Christianity grew, and ancient Greek and Roman societies. Abortion toward euthanasia grew as Christianity grew, and it is a right to die. The acceptance of euthanasia has resurfaced, he said.

Euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide is a right to die, not a medical problem, Dr. Bufill explained, so the cultural problems surrounding the issue need to be addressed. It is ironic, he said, that now, when physicians can offer good palliative care (“pain relief and comfort”) — the very thing that euthanasia is not a new issue and was often considered acceptable in ancient Greek and Roman societies.

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Deirdre McQuade, director of Students for Life, told the conference that “The church’s mission is to equip the people for life generation.” She noted the increasing popularity of euthanasia among students that “I am fully confident that Roe v. Wade will be overturned.”

She said that Americans United for Life (AUL), a public-interest advocacy law firm, has crafted model pro-life legislation that has passed in all the states where it was introduced. McQuade also said that first-pro-life efforts were focused on overturning Roe v. Wade, but experience has shown that Planned Parenthood vs. Casey, has convinced him that men who makeincremental gains is the wiser course of action.

Deirdre McQuade told the students that human nature is such that people do not order to what is true and just, “So we know we must care for those children.” No person can arbitrarily choose to live or die, and God will hold us accountable for our lives. We were created in the image of God and our destiny is to live with God forever, she continued. “All human life is a gift, revered and it deserves the ability to grow and mature.”

The maker’s mark: Don’t underestimate your value

“Antiques Roadshow” catches ordinary people in an endearing position: their nerve-racking television debut. They tend to be talkative and make-up, dressed in coral, sputtered in rage and framed in fluffed-up curls.

Then an appraiser delivers the news that they’re richer than they thought they were. Substantially richer.

The poised persons were trying to act cool, but their voices were giving away their way to a Macaulay Culkin face and homespun expressions such as “Oh my lanta,” or “Egad, you’ve got a deal.”

Some were relieved, “You’re kid- din’!” in a stunned haze. Others focus on one fact to navigate through their shock. For one man, that was the handle of his sword, which, evidently, was made of rhinoceros horn. “The most amazing thing is the rhinoceros horn,” he exclaimed. “I thought that was plastic!”

Now in its 11th season, PBS “Roadshow” is currently being filmed in South Bend, which should be fertile ground for granulul and jタイム. It’s one of a few reality TV shows that stimulate rather than wallow. It’s packed with obsolete tidbits.

“This artist always painted a picture of the Virgin Mary’s left calf,” the appraiser said, “The first way to change the culture is to change the image of God in our children’s minds.”

Katrina Zeno spoke about how important it is to create a culture that parallels “Evangelium Vitae.” She told the students that the dignity and sanctity of human life is caught up in the purpose of the body: “To reveal God.” Being made in God’s image and likeness is a gift that flows out to others, she explained, and we fulfill ourselfs by giving a gift of ourself.

Heavens above! I feel like that ancient acceptance of euthanasia.

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Sports

Tournament season begins

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — As the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) soccer season winds down, the eighth grade Lady Cardinals from St. Charles have earned 10 points going undefeated (5-0) and are the top seeded team in the seven-team tournament to be played this weekend. The Cardinals received a bye and will face the winner of Monday night’s opening round game between the No. 4 and No. 5 seed — St. Joe/St. Elizabeth vs. St. John Wednesday night, May 9.

In the lower bracket, St. Vincent will play St. Theresa. And St. Jude’s opponent will be St. Charles. The winners will meet Wednesday night at Kreager Park vying for a spot in the finals. The championship game will be held at Fort Wayne Sports Club at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday evening, May 10.

Girls Soccer Standings heading into the CYO tournament:

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<th>Team</th>
<th>Wins</th>
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<tr>
<td>St. Charles 8</td>
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<td>St. Jude</td>
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<td>St. Charles 7</td>
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Softball

CYO softball will also be playing their tournament this week. In her first year as a fast pitch coach, St. Joe-St. Elizabeth’s Monica Zwick says the season got off to a slow start with several rainouts. The team got in just three games and finished with a 1-2 record. Zwick has 12 girls on her roster ranging from grade 5 through 8.

“They truly had a learning experience for me and the girls,” she remarked. Zwick recalled that the final regular season game against Queen of Angels was a very positive experience for her team. “And it was not just because we won,” she said.

“The players and coaches were very encouraging and complimentary of our girls. It exemplified to me what CYO sports are all about,” Zwick concluded.

ICCL baseball teams vie for top division placements

BY ELMER J. DANCH

SOUTH BEND — Drew Hasler turned in a spectacular three-hit performance for St. Jude Green as his mates pounded out 10 hits to hand St. Joseph of Mishawaka its first loss of the year. At the same time, St. Jude Green tied the Mishawakas in first place in the Marian De Porres Division of the Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL). St. Jude’s 6-0 blanking of the Mishawakas was spearheaded by Kyle Laczkowski who cracked out three doubles to bat in four runs. As the teams head into the final weeks of the regular season campaign, the John Bosco Division leadership is still up for grabs.

St. Thomas of Elkhart still has to make up a game with Holy Family and a victory for the Elkhart team would give them the top position in the division. Holy Family still has make-up games and must win their last two with deadlocked St. Anthony Maroon and St. Thomas for the top spot.

In one of the best slugfests of the season, Holy Family pounded out a 21-18 decision over St. Joseph of Mishawaka as Blake Palticki had three hits — including two doubles — to lead Holy Family. Zach Fozo, Sidney Leda, Zach Zehender and Alex Zadiccki chimed in the Holy Family attack with two hits each. N. Neuklis had three hits for St. Monica. Corpus Christi nipped St. Anthony Maroon, 3-1, as Dylan McMahon turned in a 10 strikeout performance for the victory. Tyler Lukens and McMahon collected two hits each for Corpus Christi.

St. Anthony beat St. Thomas of Elkhart 7-0, 15-2, as Tim Kleck fanned nine for the victors. In other makeup games, Corpus Christi beat St. Jude 10-0 as Andy Klincz tallied nine for the victors. The Elkhart team collected four hits for Corpus Christi. St. Jude Green defeated St. Anthony Gold, 9-3, with Tyler Oliver and Mark Downs, who each had three hits.

St. Joseph of Mishawaka won easily over St. Anthony Gold, 15-8, as Mike Landunder and Andrew O’Lena smashed out three hits apiece.


Marian golfers win country club invitational

MISHAWAKA — Mishawaka’s talented golfers won the prestigious nine-team South Bend Country Club Invitational golf tournament with an 18-stroke victory over rival Penn High School.

The victorious Knights were paced by Adam Sunrall who received the low medalist honor in an extra hole playoff. Team scores included Marian, 317; Penn, 330; Saint Joseph’s, 355; Adams, 355; Mishawaka, 358; Riley, 373; Clay, 390; and Washington, 413.

Marian team scores — Colin Van Es, 74; Adam Sunrall, 74; Andrew Thomas, 76; Bryant Demeter, 78; Stephen Sexton, 79; and Michael Patty, 94.

St. Joseph’s team scores — Riley Fazan, 75; Tyler Kanczewski, 84; Tyler Blaha, 89; Brooks Demars, 94; and Andrew Thomas, 90. — EJD

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Fort Wayne runners receive bishop’s blessing to run Boston Marathon

BY CRAIG J. BOBAY

FORT WAYNE — The symbol of the Boston Marathon is the unicorn. In the days and hours leading up to the Boston Marathon this year, it looked like there might be a better chance that unicorns would be running the Boston streets rather than the 24,000 registered marathoners.

A severe spring storm, called a “nor’ easter” hit New England on the recent mid-April marathon weekend. Trencherous winds and torrential rains pounded New England on Patriots’ Day, the day New Englanders annually honor our country’s early heroes and the day when the marathon is held.

Rumors were flying in the media that the legendary marathon would be canceled. However, in the 111 years of the Boston Marathon, the race has never been canceled, and for better or worse, this year proved to be no exception.

Allen County Circuit Court Judge St. Patrick, Fort Wayne, cantor Tom Felts and I were among those who traveled almost halfway across the country to Bishop John M. D’Arcy’s hometown to run the famous marathon this year.

We left home with the bishop’s blessing and encouragement and with the keys to the bishop’s boyhood home in Brighton. The bishop graciously made his Boston-area residence available to us as our home for the weekend — the same weekend he was celebrating the golden anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Tom and I, and our wives, Kay and Nancy, arrived at the John Hancock Sports Expo, where we picked up our running “bib” numbers and timing “chips.” There, we found favorite books about Ireland, Notre Dame and the church.

The bishop’s sister, Sister Anne D’Arcy, a Sister of St. Joseph, thoughtfully supplied us fresh milk and orange juice in the fridge and cereal in the cupboard. She also called while we were there to make sure everything was well.

Torn wandered out to the second floor back porch, often mentioned in bishop’s “News and Notes” column. Unfortunately the weather didn’t permit us to enjoy the solitude of the porch, but we could definitely picture the bishop out there enjoying a warm July evening after dinner.

Sundays were probably the worst weather day of the long weekend, but it did not dampen our spirits. Our first stop was for Mass at Our Lady of Victory Church, in the heart of Boston’s Back Bay. Father John Harhager held the traditional “marathoners Mass” for those who would be running.

At the end of the Mass, all marathon runners were called up to the altar for a special blessing as the organist played the inspiring theme from “Chariots of Fire.” The Mass and blessing was definitely one of the highlights of the weekend for the four of us.

We then tried to dodge the raindrops as we visited several well-known Boston sites, including the Boston Commons, Faneuil Hall, Cheers and Old North Church. Our day also included bowls of Chowder and the traditional pre-race pasta meal.

On marathon Monday we woke at 6 a.m. to rain that seemed to be coming down sideways due to the winds. Kay and Nancy drove us out to the start through the downpour. The wind was a steady 25 mph, with gusts up to 50 miles an hour. The temperature hovered in the high 40s. The 26.2 mile course would take us through six small towns today before returning to Boston.

The rain eased to a light drizzle before the start, and the ladies headed back downtown so they could meet us at the Boylston St. finish line. The weather was meri-
cific for the first five live miles through Ashland and Framingham, but the cold hard rain returned at mile four, and stayed with us until we made it to picturesque town of Natick around mile nine.

Midway through the race, we heard the screams of the coeds at the course at Wellesley College from the point we entered the small college town, almost a mile away. The next town on the course was Newton, home of the marathon’s dreaded hills, including the infamous “Heartbreak Hill.” The uphilling hills of Newton lived up to their reputation and took a toll on me. I later learned that at the top of Heartbreak, a couple running the race stopped briefly to get married, and then continued on the course after exchangning their vows.

After Heartbreak, just when my legs were starting to tire, the students at Boston College (B.C.) were out in force, despite the weather, cheering us on. Tom was still going strong at this point, the only time the wind was at our backs the entire race. Shortly past B.C., we turned onto the home stretch at Cleveland Circle. I dropped back from Tom to stretch my legs’ cramping quad and calf muscles, and to say a few “Our Fathers” to give me the strength to go last miles.

The great crowds cheering all along that last three miles brought back strength to my sore legs. When, at last I passed Fenway Park and its green monster, and passed the famous Citgo sign on Beacon St., indicating there was just one mile left, I knew I would finish strong.

The roar of the crowd at the finish line made us all feel like Olympic athletes as happy as I met my goal of completing the marathon in less than four hours, clocking a 3:59:54, while Tom delighted in improving on his 2006 Boston Marathon by finishing in 3 hours, 52 minutes.

Nancy and Kay were truly heaven-sent, meeting us at the finish with warm hugs and dry clothes. We also were rewarded with the Boston Marathon finisher’s medal — featuring a unicorn.

The cold rain and windy nor’ easter conditions were said to be the worst weather for the race since 1970. It caused most people to run much slower than they had planned and resulted in the slowest winning times since 1985. Robert Cheruiyot of Kenya won the race, with a time of 2:14:13. Russian Lidiya Gregoryeva won the women’s race in 2:29:57, while Boston area native Deena Kastor finished fifth, and was the first American woman to cross the line. People came from all 50 states and 88 countries to run the oldest and most famous annual foot race in the world. Of the 23,869 who registered for the race, 20,640 decided to run on that day. However, of those who braved the weather to run, almost all made it to the finish in downtown Boston. For those like us who traveled a great distance, we were not going to let the weather stop us. As the Boston Athletic Association president said after the marathon, quoting Shakespeare, “And gentlemen in England now-a-days shall think themselves accursed they were not here.” Despite the weather, we were truly not cursed. No, we were very blessed to have met this challenge in such a great and historic city, with the support of many good friends and family.

Craig Bobay is a member of St. Jude, Fort Wayne, and is the Allen Circuit Court magistrate.
‘Spider-Man’ sequel builds on admirable themes

BY HARRY FORBES

NEW YORK (CNS) — Any fears that this second sequel in the phenomenally successful “Spider-Man” franchise would signal a diminution of quality prove happily groundless.

When the film opens, our endlessly self-effacing hero, Peter Parker (Tobey Maguire), is ready to propose marriage to his longtime girlfriend, Mary Jane Watson (Kirsten Dunst). M.J. is about to get her big break in a new Broadway musical.

Peter is still contending with the ongoing enmity of his former buddy, Harry Osborn (James Franco), who continues to unfairly blame Peter for the death of his villainous father (Willem Dafoe) who, had in fact, taken his own life. An airborne battle between the two results in a knockout of Harry, who wakes up with no memory of his grudge against Peter.

Thanks to this amnesia-inducing accident, the trio’s friendship is back on track, despite Harry’s lingering affection for M.J. But there’s trouble ahead.

On the personal level, M.J.’s less-than-stellar stage performance results in her firing. Peter is letting his Spider-Man accolades go to his head, even allowing himself to be photographed being kissed by first girlfriend Gwen (Bryce Dallas Howard) in the same famous upside-down manner as he memorably kissed M.J. Peter is completely oblivious to both M.J.’s hurt and her professional humiliation.

Fueling Peter’s arrogance is a slimy substance that he has inadvertently tracked into his apartment, and a mysterious black Spider-Man suit which has magically appeared, and which gives Spider-Man added strength, albeit at the cost of his basic decency.

At the Daily Bugle, Peter’s budding career as a photographer is undermined by a conniving newcomer, Eddie Brock (Topher Grace). Peter eventually gives Eddie his comeuppance, but the vengeful act results in Eddie’s transformation into the fearsome Venom.

The other new villain with which Peter/Spider-Man must contend is jailbird Flint Marko (Thom厘米 Hadlen Church), whom we first see trying to reunite with his little girl against the opposition of his estranged wife (Theresa Russell). When Flint flees from the cops and gets trapped in a giant vat used for physics experiments, his molecules decompose, and he turns into the Sandman, able to transform into sand formations large and small.

Most admirable is the very human story imbued with a strong moral focus. When Peter kills the putative killer of his beloved Uncle Ben, and gleefully reports the villain’s demise to his gentle aunt May, her disapproving words to him about revenge are about as potent a discourse on that subject as we’ve heard on screen in some time.

Miracles of reconciliation shared in book

Easter’s promise of redemption and forgiveness offers hope to people whose lives are compromised by anger and bitterness. Such emotions imprison them in burning resentment, obsessive thoughts of revenge or in cold behavior, refusing to deal with the offender.

For Christians, “the ultimate exam- ple of forgiveness is Jesus on the cross,” write the authors of the new book, “Facing Forgiveness: A Catholic’s Guide to Letting Go of Anger and Welcoming Reconciliation.”

“Forgiveness is neither a cognitive nor an emotional response. Forgiveness is an act of the will. It is the choice to let go of the desire to get even with an offending party,” they write. The three authors, a “brother-sister-team,” distill their experiences gathered over many years of teaching and counseling into a small but helpful book on the dynamics of forgiving.

“The topic of forgiveness, they write, “is like a magnet that draws people into its field.”

The book pulls together 25 brief stories of people who struggled to forgive, overcoming anger and the depression such feelings often lead to.

“The main reason why people choose to retain their anger and not forgive is, as they declare, ‘I don’t know how to forgive.’ They may not know how to forgive because they lack human models of forgiveness,” the authors write.

Again and again the authors share the small miracles of reconciliation that result when someone makes a gesture of forgiveness from the heart.

Patricia Bartos is senior staff writer at the Pittsburgh Catholic diocese newspaper.

Tobey Maguire stars in a scene from the movie “Spider-Man 3.” The USCBB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13.

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What’s Happening?

Today’s Catholic 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, PO. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or e-mail: fhogan@fw.diocesefwsb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

Devotions

Little Flower Holy Hour
Fort Wayne — Deacon Bob Lengenrich will celebrate the Holy Hour at MacDougal Chapel on Tuesday, May 15, at 7:15 p.m. Deacon Bob will be ordained to the priesthood in October. Join in praying for vocations.

German Mass and dinner
Fort Wayne — St. Peter Church, 500 E. Dewald St., will open German Fest with a Mass at 11 a.m. on Sunday, June 3. Following Mass a traditional dinner of bratwurst, sauerkraut, German potato salad, dessert and acres of bratwurst will be served in the Pavilion for $7. The Pavilion is handicapped accessible.

Day of Reflection
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Memories of Mother’s Day

Many women get to enjoy Mother’s Day two ways; as a child and as a mother, and for those who do, the memories and comparisons are feelings that stay deep in the heart. And then there are the mothers for whom things are difficult...

In spite of what is missing on Mother’s Day, they do have a mother’s love and a child’s love in return.

*If you can help us, we can help them. Please drop your Catholic Charities envelope in the collection on Mother’s Day.*

Services of Catholic Charities

- Adoption Services
- Foster Care Services
- Kinship Care Services
- Pregnancy Services
- Children’s Services

- Counseling Services
- Community Services
- Refugee Resettlement
- Immigration Services
- Older Adult Services