The diocese marches for life

Bishop and diocesan contingent participate in national march

Washington, D.C. — “I’m glad I’m here. ... I should have come before!” Bishop John M. D’Arcy’s face lit up as he smiled broadly while making his way along Constitution Avenue in Washington, D.C., for the 2009 March for Life.

Bishop D’Arcy was among the hundreds of thousands of men, women and children who gathered in the nation’s capital Jan. 22 to stand up for the unborn, while marking the infamous date when the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion 36 years ago. This was Bishop D’Arcy’s first time participating in the March for Life.

“I thank Fred and Lisa (Everett, co-directors of the Office of Family Life) for urging me to come,” said Bishop D’Arcy as he stood shoulder to shoulder with young people from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. “Most exciting is the young people. Many young people came from all over the world, who through their whole lives will stand for the child who has no one except us. I’m very impressed with the number of bishops... the enthusiasm and the interest. The dedication to this cause is very moving. It’s similar to World Youth Day, except pointed to one particular cause.”

Turnout from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend was exceptionally high, with organizers estimating an all-time record of over 500 young people and their chaperones. The first diocesan trip took place in 1998, with the Catholic high schools taking over a few years later and organizing their own trips.

Fred Everett says the timing was right for an even stronger turnout.

“This year, given the context of the election and the fact that some voices in the Catholic community saying the pro-life option and the fact that some voices in the Catholic community saying the pro-life option... the enthusiasm and the interest. The dedication to this cause is very moving. It’s similar to World Youth Day, except pointed to one particular cause.”

“Three times I have been shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brethren; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?” — 2 Cor 11:25-29

The new evangelization means that it is not only to far away countries, but is right here. Even in our best and most vital parish — and there are many of them — there are a large number of people who do not go to church. With this issue, Today’s Catholic will be placed in every home in the diocese.

Karen Clifford, St. Pius X Parish, Granger (and Today’s Catholic contributor)
Church is blessed with reach of the Congregation of Holy Cross

BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

A hidden gem

This past week, in concert with the feast day observed in honor of Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau, I continued some pastoral visitations of places cared for by the Congregation of Holy Cross. This was subsequent to offering Mass at St. Joseph Parish, South Bend, in honor of Father Moreau, friend of the Holy Cross Congregation.

First, I went to Holy Cross College as part of my visitations to the colleges and universities, which have graced this diocese, some of them for over 160 years.

What is most evident at this small Catholic college, located in the midst of a great complex of Catholic higher education in South Bend, is its Catholic identity. It has also changed its educational identity. It is becoming more and more a four-year college, and less and less a preparation for another institution. I celebrated Mass at noon time before a large group, mostly students, and followed up with a visit with Brother Richard Gilman, CSC, who is the president. Most encouraging was a visit with the theology department. It was inspiring to learn that this is truly an international institution. Because of the great outreach of this brotherhood to many African countries, and also to Latin America, as well as Asia, there is a built-in link to the church around the world, and visits to these missions and pastoral centers are now an essential part of the education of these young people.

It is hard to mention anyone, lest someone be left out, but I need to pay tribute to Brother Bob Hoffman, a member of the justly famed Kloska family of St. Thomas Parish, South Bend. He is one of 15 children. Formerly director of campus ministry for the college, he is now vice president, in charge of development. Bob's strong Catholic faith and missionary spirit has had a substantial overall effect. Many thanks to Brother Richard Gilman, CSC; Dr. Tina Holland — his assistant and senior vice president; Father Mike Sullivan, CSC — chair of the theology department; and many others.

This was a joyful event.

Holy Cross House

The next day, I completed this pastoral tour by celebrating Mass at Holy Cross House. This is the beautiful venue for retired members of the Holy Cross Congregation, priests and brothers, many of whom have special needs. What a joy to celebrate Mass with priests who have served all over the world; in Nigeria, Uganda, Bangladesh, Brazil, Haiti, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Tanzania and many others. I saw my old friend, Father Bob Hoffman, CSC, who served in our diocese in St. Patrick's Parish as pastor for many years. I had lunch with Father Ted Hesburgh, so well known and respected throughout the world, over 92 years of age and living a full priestly life even yet. We recalled the first day I came to this diocese, when I had lunch with him, and Father Ned Joyce, CSC, along with Bishop William McManus, my predecessor, and Father Terry Place.

I also recall the day of our official visit in June, and how we walked across the campus and made a visit to the Blessed Sacrament at the beautiful Alumni Hall Chapel. I told about the Holy Cross seminarians with whom I had visited the previous Sunday and how several of them said it was the presence of a priest in their residence, which was instrumental in their choice of Holy Cross.

Another candidate, a Notre Dame graduate and an attorney, said at the meeting that he had been drawn to Holy Cross through the instrumentality of Father John Coughlin, OFM, a professor of canon law at Notre Dame, and especially by his class on “Marriage, the Lord works in his own way.”

I also had lunch with the superior, Father Charlie Kohlerman, CSC, along with Father Hesburgh and Archbishop Charles Schleck, CSC. Archbishop Schleck is an old and dear friend, who was co-consecrator with Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, for the episcopal ordination of Father Daniel Jenky, CSC, at St. Matthew’s Cathedral Parish. Archbishop Schleck held a very great responsibility in Rome for the universal church. These days in South Bend showed clearly the extraordinary reach of Holy Cross, a missionary congregation founded by a humble and holy parish priest from Le Mans, France, whom the church has declared blessed.

The March for Life

This was the first time I have attended the March for Life in Washington. People asked me afterwards what this experience was. I said: inspiring and exhausting.

I arrived in Washington, a city still filled to its capacity, with people from all over the world attending the inauguration of our new president. After a short rest, I was on the way to the March for Life and the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The church began to fill up in mid-afternoon. Young people everywhere — in the main aisle and the side aisles, standing, sitting, kneeling. There was an overflow in the crypt of the church, and many bishops had Mass in surrounding churches for the young people.

The ceremony took close to three hours. It was very moving. Young people from all over the country, many of them with their priests. Women religious everywhere, especially the Sisters of Life, as well as the Sisters of Charity, founded by Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Up at six the next morning, and breakfast with Fred and Lisa Everett and their three children, who were my guides around Washington. Off early to the Verizon Center, to hear confessions. People have asked me what was the most impressive part of the trip, and I think maybe this was it. A large restaurant in the upper reaches of this huge auditorium, where professional basketball and hockey teams played, was open only for confessions. A huge line, and when you went in, priests and a few bishops everywhere hearing confessions. My friend of 50 years, Archbishop Al Hughes, was there ahead of me.

Sisters — members of fairly new congregations, most of them new to me, many from the eastern part of our country, accompanied the young people to the priests. I thought it was like bringing them to Christ, which it really was. I heard confessions for about an hour and a half.

Then a beautiful Mass before 25,000 people. I was so proud that we had over 200 young people, probably the largest in the history of this event, from our diocese. There was also a very substantial group from the University of Notre Dame. While I met some of them, I was not able to link up with this contingent. We will do better next time. A long wait then, maybe two hours — the most tiring part of the trip, and then a walk to Capitol Hill and the Supreme Court.

Our South Bend students had a very wonderful visit with Congressman Donnelly who assured them of his opposition to the Freedom of Choice Act, and told of the strategy to be used in opposing it.

A sense of vitality

The culture of life is not extinguished; I think it burns brighter than ever. How moving to see so many young people, tired after coming across the country by bus, but alert to this most basic human right — the right to life. I was able to slip away at the end of the march, and get home to Fort Wayne late in the evening.

The end of a very inspiring two days

Many thanks to all those who joined in the postcard campaign. With the help of everyone and the blessing of the good Lord, the Freedom of Choice Act will not become the law of the land. We have had an overwhelming response to this initiative with requests for more cards. Please send yours in if you have not already done so.

I will see you all next week.
Pro-Obama Catholics urged to send postcard opposing his abortion view

BY NANCY FRAZIER O'BRIEN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The national pro-life postcard campaign being conducted throughout the country is a way for Catholics who supported Barack Obama for president to tell him if they did so despite, not because of, the new president’s stand on abortion, according to officials of the U.S. bishops’ pro-life office.

“Many Catholics voted for Obama despite his position on abortion, and they have an obligation to say ‘This is not why I voted for you,’” said Richard M. Doering, associate director of the Office of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“I describe this as their penance,” he added in remarks at a Jan. 22 briefing with the Catholic press in Washington.

Deirdre A. McQuade, assistant director for policy and communications in the pro-life office, said it is important for Catholics to tell Obama, “If I voted for you, this (abortion) is not what I voted for.”

Such follow-up and feedback is an “ongoing responsibility” of all voters, she added. “You don’t just cast your vote and hope for the best. You call the best from our elected officials.”

According to polling, 54 percent of the Catholic electorate voted for Obama, who has consistently spoken out in favor of keeping abortion legal. On Jan. 22, the 36th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion, Obama reiter-ated his position that he is committed to protecting women’s “right to choose” and called for both sides to work toward common ground to find ways to reduce the number of abortions.

The postcard campaign, coordinated by the USCCB pro-life office and the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment, began in mid-January and was expected to continue for three or four weeks. It asks members of Congress to oppose the proposed Freedom of Choice Act, in the House and Senate, and to vote against other riders that promote or perform abortions over- seas; restrict funding for stem-cell research; or prohibit federal funding for health plans that cover abortions.

“Congress was expected to take up various appropriations bills in the weeks ahead. Those measures could delete or alter the Hyde amendment and other riders prohibiting federal funding for abortions; eliminate conscience clauses protecting health care providers’ rights not to participate in abortions and allowing Catholic health plans to participate in the federal employees’ health benefits program without having to pro-

Proceedings of the U.S. bishops’ pro-life office.

Loretta Fleming prepares to ship boxes of pro-life literature, used in a postcard campaign against the Freedom of Choice Act, at the office of the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment in Washington Jan. 26. Staff in the office were shipping boxes of postcards to dioceses and others as part of a national campaign against FOCA.

would put into place “the most extreme abortion license that we could possibly have,” said Philadelphia Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, at the briefing.

At weekend Masses around the country, Catholic priests are being asked to sign and mail postcards to each of their two U.S. senators and to their representative. The cost of postage is being handled via contraceptives; or end funding of abstinence-only education programs.

According to a handout at the briefing, organizations that could come before this Congress include FOCA, which would revoke most pro-life laws at the state and federal levels; a contraceptve mandate for all private health plans; a requirement that all hospitals receiving federal funds offer “emergency contraception” to all rape victims; and expanded funding for domestic and foreign family planning programs.

Obama also signed executive orders overturning the Mexico City policy barring federal funds to organiz-

WELCOME

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Thus, some people will experience for the first time the great vitality of our church. They will meet, on a regular basis, Pope Benedict XVI and their own bishop.

They will meet our young people, and learn of our educational efforts.

They will see the teaching of the church on the great questions of the day.

They will be helped to respond with the word of God to a culture, which is often inimical to the call of Christ.

This “or any similar measures.

The Freedom of Choice Act, which as of Jan. 23 had not been introduced in the 111th Congress, in different ways in different places; some parishes or Knights of Columbus councils are subsidi-

Evangelization today is a multimedia endeavor

Today’s Catholic is a publication with the purpose to provide Catholic evangelization to the people of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. People receive their diocesan news through streams of different means today. Many still prefer the traditional print product, but in this age of digital technology, some prefer to get their Catholic news from the Internet.

The 83-year-old history of Today’s Catholic dates back to Bishop John F. Noll, who founded Our Sunday Visitor in Huntington as a parish priest at St. Mary Church. His mission for the diocese was to hold steadfast today: to acquaint readers with important Catholic happenings of the week over the entire world; to give instruction of the faith that is intelligible and interesting; to furnish readers with the answer to charges made against the church, often called to attention by neighbors or fellow workers; to point out the falsity and unsound philosophy of many things read or heard in the secular media; to prepare the faithful for observance of the church feasts and festivals; and to provide news from the diocesan bishop. Through the years, the diocesan newspaper has changed names — Our Sunday Visitor, The Harmonizer, Today’s Catholic — but the message remains the same: to bring the Catholic faith into your home every week.

And at Today’s Catholic, we make an effort to meet people at multiple levels and through various distribution means. For example:

• Today’s Catholic newspaper has always been a print and mailed publication right to readers’ mailboxes. This remains the primary distribution means unless you choose the following:...

• Receive an electronic version of Today’s Catholic as a PDF file each week in your e-mail. Each page of the PDF looks exactly as the print publication, and it is fully searchable. A day before the hard copy is delivered, if a Web or e-mail address is listed in the publication, chances are likely that the address is hyperlinked. You may click and go right to an advertiser’s Web site, or get more information about a diocesan event out of context.

• On Tuesday, a PDF file will be available on the diocesan Web site, www.diocesefwsb.org. For those who are not registered as a Catholic parish and still would like to see Today’s Catholic, visit the Web site for a free download.

The Web site, www.diocesefwsb.org/TODAY will have highlight stories, some additional photos, late-breaking news, links to the Indiana Catholic Conference, more comprehensive movie reviews, Catholic News Service updates, our book of the month blog page, etc.

Today’s Catholic Podcast is a 15-minute audio newscast assembled from each of the paper’s 47 issues. It can be heard on the Web site or downloaded for free on iTunes. It’s good for those “on the go” or who want to listen as they exercise, run errands, etc.

Redeemer Radio — Catholic Radio 1450 AM — carries the Today’s Catholic Podcast every Sunday at 1:45 p.m.

It is with great joy that we begin this new effort. May God grant it a multimedia endeavor
Obama reverses Mexico City policy

BY CHAZ MUTH

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Pro-life activists quickly denounced President Barack Obama’s Jan. 23 signature on an executive order reversing the Mexico City policy, a move that clears the way for the federal government to provide aid to programs that promote or perform abortion overseas.

The Associated Press reported late in the afternoon that Obama signed an executive order reversing the ban that was first instituted by President Ronald Reagan in 1984.

Obama signed the order with no fanfare and with no news media in the room, a marked contrast to signings of executive orders earlier in the week.

What a terrible way to begin a new administration, with an abortion business bailout that will exploit women in developing countries for political ends,” said Charmaine Yoest, president of Americans United for Life Action, a Washington-based pro-life activist group.

“We should not export the tragedy of abortion to other nations, and we certainly shouldn’t do so via the hard-earned dollars of American taxpayers.”

The policy banned U.S. taxpayer money, usually in the form of funds from the U.S. Agency for International Development, from going to international family planning organizations. “We should not export the tragedy of abortion to other nations, and we certainly shouldn’t do so via the hard-earned dollars of American taxpayers.”

The policy was dropped because it prohibited U.S. taxpayer funding for groups that even talk about abortion if there is an unplanned pregnancy, and is known as the Mexico City policy because it was unveiled at a U.N. conference there in 1984.

Many people expected Obama, like Clinton and Bush, to sign the executive order Jan. 22, when thousands of pro-life marchers were protesting U.S. abortion policy, but he decided to wait a day.

“I see that as a sign of respect to the Catholic Church,” said Deirdre A. McQuade, assistant director for Catholic — so they can continue to fund abortion overseas.

“It says something about his style and the courtesy he extended to those of us participating in the Mexico City policy discussion,” Melady told Catholic News Service Jan. 23.

“It says he is concerned about the will of the people in these countries,” she said.

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Pope lifts excommunications of Lefebvrite bishops

BY JOHN THAVIS

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI has lifted the excommunication of four bishops ordained against papal orders in 1988 by the late French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. The move was considered a major concession to the archbishop’s traditionalist followers.

The Vatican said the decree removing the excommunication, signed Jan. 21 and made public three days later, marked an important step toward full communion with the Society of St. Pius X, founded by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1970.

But some questions remain unresolved with the society, including its future status and that of its priests, and that these issues would be the subject of further talks.

“The Holy Father was motivated in this decision by the hope that complete reconciliation and full communion may be reached as soon as possible,” a Vatican statement said.

The head of the Swiss-based society, Bishop Bernard Fellay, had requested the removal of the excommunication in a letter Dec. 15. Bishop Fellay wrote that as long as the three other bishops illicitly ordained in 1988 were determined to remain Catholic and accepted the teachings of Pope Benedict with filial spirit.

The Vatican said the pope had responded positively to the request in order to promote “the unity in charity of the universal church and succeed in removing the scandal of division.”

In a letter published after the Vatican announcement, Bishop Fellay said his society was eager to begin talks with the Vatican about the causes of the “unprecedented crisis” shaking the church.

“During these discussions with the Roman authorities we want to examine the deep causes of the present situation and, by bringing the appropriate remedy, achieve a lasting restoration of the church,” he said.

The decree removing the excommunications, issued by the Congregation for Bishops, underlined the hope that this step would be followed by full communion and that all members of the Society of St. Pius X would demonstrate “true fidelity and true acknowledgment of the magisterium and the authority of the pope.”

The move came after one of the illicitly ordained bishops, British-born Bishop Richard Williamson, provoked Jewish protests with assertions that the Holocaust was exaggerated and that no Jews died in Nazi gas chambers. He spoke in a TV interview recorded last November but aired in mid-January.

The Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, said emphatically that the Vatican did not share Bishop Williamson’s views, but that it was a completely separate issue from the lifting of the excommunication.

“Saying a person is not excommunicated is not the same as saying one shares all his ideas or statements,” Father Lombardi said.

The removal of the excommunication was a key condition of the Society of St. Pius X in its on-again, off-again talks with the Vatican over reconciliation. In 2007 the pope granted another of the society’s requests, widening the possibility for use of the Tridentine rite, the form of the Mass used before the Second Vatican Council.

Archbishop Lefebvre rejected several important teachings of the Second Vatican Council, including those related to religious liberty, ecumenism and liturgy. The Vatican statements did not mention the council’s teachings, and Father Lombardi had no comment on whether the society was asked to adhere to them.

The Vatican action came the day before the 50th anniversary of Pope John XXIII’s announcement of the Second Vatican Council. Father Lombardi said it would be wrong to see the lifting of the excommunication as a rejection of Vatican II.

“On the contrary, I think it is a beautiful thing that the council is no longer considered an element of division, but as an element in which every member of the church can meet,” he said.

In addition to Bishops Fellay and Williamson, the decree removed the excommunication of French Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais and Argentine Bishop Alfonso de Galarreta. The Vatican said that Archbishop Lefebvre and the bishops he ordained had incurred automatic excommunication for defying papal orders against the ordinance.

Bishop Fellay called the pope’s action a “unilateral, benevolent and courageous act” and described it as a victory for Catholic traditionalists worldwide. But he said he had made clear to the Vatican that the society still has problems with Vatican II.

He said, quoting from his Dec. 15 letter: “We are ready to write the creed with our own blood, to sign the anti-modernist oath, the profession of faith of Pius IV, we accept and make our own all the councils up to the Second Vatican Council, about which we express some reservations.”

Bishop Fellay added in his communiqué that “we are convinced that we remain faithful to the line of conduct initiated by our founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, whose reputation we hope to soon see restored.”

In a separate letter written Jan. 21, Bishop Fellay commented on Bishop Williamson’s comments about the Holocaust, saying the bishop had spoken for himself, not the society. Bishop Fellay complained that the interviewer had introduced the topic “with the obvious intention of misrepresenting and maligning the activity of our religious society.”

Cardinal Andre Vingt-Trois of Paris, president of the French bishops’ conference, welcomed Pope Benedict’s action as a “gesture of mercy and openness for strengthening church unity.” France is home to nearly half of the 200,000 members of the Society of St. Pius X.

However, the cardinal rejected suggestions that the move would make it easier for Catholics “to be Catholic while making selections in church teaching, doctrine and church tradition.”

“I rejoice every time the church is able to suspend a penalty — it’s an opportunity, an open door allowing Christians to redisplay the fullness of communion with the church,” he told the archdiocesan Notre Dame Radio Jan. 24.

“People who, for the most part, present themselves sincerely as defenders of tradition also give themselves a magisterial power to distinguish good from bad tradition. But such an act of discernment can only be an act of the church, not of some particular group within the church.”

French Cardinal Jean-Pierre Ricard of Bourdeaux said Pope Benedict knew “the drama a schism represents in the church” and wished to travel together, which he could in extending his hand.” Cardinal Ricard is a member of the Pontifical Commission “Ecclesia Dei,” which oversees the reconciliation of Lefebvrite Catholics with the church.

“The lifting of the excommunication isn’t the end but the beginning of a process of dialogue.”

Cardinal Ricard said in a Jan. 24 statement. “It doesn’t regulate two fundamental questions: the juridical structure of the St. Pius X fraternity in the church and an agreement on dogmatic and ecclesiological questions. But it opens a path to travel together, which will doubleless be long and demand better mutual knowledge and esteem.”

Some French Catholics have criticized Vatican policy toward the society. In 2006, Catholics and bishops from eastern France protested the creation of the Good Shepherd Institute in the Archdiocese of Bourdeaux for receiving traditionalists. Protesters also said they feared church unity could be damaged by relaxing restrictions on the Tridentine Mass.

Contributing to this story was Jonathan Luxmoore in Poland.

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre presides at the 1988 ordinations of Bishops Richard Williamson, Bernard Tissier de Mallerais, Bernard Fellay and Alfonso de Galarreta in Econe, Switzerland. Archbishop Lefebvre and the four new bishops were excommunicated after participating in the ordination that had been forbidden by Pope John Paul II. Archbishop Lefebvre, who died in 1991, founded the Society of St. Pius X.
NEWS BRIEFS

Pope tells young people to continue to defend life at all stages

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Although he was not physically present, Pope Benedict XVI’s greetings added to the excitement of the more than 20,000 young people at a pro-life rally and Mass for life Jan. 22 at the Verizon Center in Washington, Yong people came from across the United States and from throughout the Washington area. The rally and Mass, sponsored by the Archdiocese of Washington, precedes the annual March for Life, which marks the date of the Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

When Washington Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl, the main celebrant for the Mass, introduced the apostolic nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Pietro Sambi, the crowd responded with a long standing ovation that cascaded through the arena as the pope’s representative smiled and waved. Archbishop Sambi read the message from the pope to the Verizon crowd. The pontiff said he was “deeply grateful to all who take part in this outstanding annual witness to the Gospel of life, and to the many others who support them by fasting and prayer.”

Senate urged to include unborn, immigrants in children’s health plan

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Expansion of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program should cover pregnant mothers and their unborn children, as well as legal immigrants who have not yet been in the country for five years, the head of the U.S. bishops’ domestic policy committee told senators.

Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, N.Y., chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, also said in a letter to senators that SCHIP legislation includes parental rights to secure needed health care for their children that do not violate their moral or religious convictions. “The bishop wrote to members of the Senate Jan. 14, the day the House of Representatives passed SCHIP legislation that includes legal immigrant children and pregnant women who are legal immigrants. The letter was made public just before the Senate began consideration of the legislation Jan. 26.

Groups applaud Obama’s decision to end torture

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Presidential executive orders to ban torture and close the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, newly arrived thanks to efforts to assure that torture never again becomes part of American policy, said religious and human rights workers. Organizations such as the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, which has partnered with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, planned to work toward getting the restrictions outlined in the Jan. 22 orders signed by President Barack Obama adopted into law. “Our goal is to make sure this dark chapter never repeats itself in American history,” said the Rev. Richard Killmer, the campaign’s executive director. Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, N.Y., chairman of the bishops’ Committee on International Justice and Peace, welcomed the order to ban torture Jan. 22, saying in a statement that the president’s action will “help restore the moral and legal standing of the United States in the world.”

Pope’s Africa trip includes encounters with bishops, youths, disabled

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — On his first trip to Africa, Pope Benedict XVI will meet with the continent’s bishops, visit a church-run center for the disabled in Cameroon and address young people in a stadium in Angola, the Vatican said. The trip March 17-23 will focus on preparations for the Synod of Bishops for Africa, to be held in Rome in October. The pope’s schedule, published Jan. 26, calls for him to release the synod’s working document when he celebrates Mass and meets with synod planners March 19.

New network launched to mobilize Catholics against death penalty

HARRISBURG, Pa. (CNS) — The Catholic Mobilizing Network to End the Death Penalty, launched Jan. 25 in Harrisburg, is not just another initiative of the bishops but instead represents lay Catholics at the grassroots level “taking up the challenge,” put forth in bishops’ documents, statements and actions over the past three decades. That’s how John Carr, executive director of the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, described the network at a news conference at the close of a training conference of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty in Harrisburg.

Members of the Sisters of Life cheer at the beginning of a pro-life youth Mass at the Verizon Center in Washington Jan. 22. Young people from across the nation packed the arena for the events held in advance of the annual March for Life.

Msgr. Edward Burns of Pittsburgh named bishop of Juneau, Alaska

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI has named Msgr. Edward J. Burns, rector of St. Paul’s Seminary in Pittsburgh and former director of national offices dealing with clergy, vocations and priestly formation, as bishop of Juneau, Alaska. The appointment was announced in Washington Jan. 19 by Archbishop Pietro Sanbi, apostolic nuncio to the United States. Bishop-designate Burns, 51, succeeds Bishop Michael W. Warfel, who headed the Juneau Diocese for 12 years before being named bishop of Great Falls-Billings, Mont., in January 2008. He will be ordained and installed as the 13th bishop of Charleston March 25. “I am both humbled and grateful that His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, would entrust this awesome ministry to me,” Bishop-designate Burns said in a statement, but he admitted he was “a bit anxious about leaving Long Island where I have spent almost my whole life.” However, “I do trust in the Lord and am very encouraged by the wonderful sense of Southern hospitality I have already experienced,” he said.

Pope says Christians must work, pray, convert for Christian unity

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Full Christian unity will be a gift from God, but it is something Christians themselves must work for, pray for and experience personal conversion in order to receive, Pope Benedict XVI said. Dedicating his weekly general audience Jan. 21 to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the pope said God wants Christians to be one, but that can happen only through deeper unity with Christ. The pope said the theme of prayer was “That they may become one in your hand,” a quote from the Book of Ezekiel in which God tells the prophet to take two sticks, representing his divided people, and join them together. “The hand of the prophet that puts the two sticks together becomes like the very hand of God who will gather and unite his people and, finally, all of humanity,” the pope said. “We can interpret the prophet’s words to Christians in the sense of an exhortation to pray, to work, to do everything possible so the unity of Christians will be accomplished, so that our hands will become instruments of the unifying hand of God,” Pope Benedict said.
ALL-SCHOOLS MASS TO BE CELEBRATED

FORT WAYNE — Area Catholic elementary school students, teachers, staff and parents will gather in the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum on Friday, Jan. 30, at 10 a.m. for the annual Catholic All-Schools Mass. More than 6,000 students are expected to attend the liturgy.

The All-Schools Mass in the South Bend area will be celebrated in the Joyce Center on the campus of the University of Notre Dame on Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 10 a.m. More than 6,000 students are expected to attend the liturgy.

Bishop John M. D’Arcy, of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, will preside at each Mass with 30 to 40 local and area priests serving as concelebrants.

Students also will participate in the Mass as servers, gift presenters, incense bearers and in other liturgical functions including prayer, petitions and singing.

Tajci performs in concert at Bluffton

BLUFFTON — Singer-songwriter Tajci will perform, “I do Believe,” in concert at St. Joseph Church, 1300 N. Main St., Bluffton, on Feb. 8 at 2 p.m. The free event features Tajci on keyboards, backed by electronic instrumentalist Mark Johnson and guest instrumentalist Eileen Bird.

Tatiana Cameron — Tajci, who has performed in over 600 concerts since 2000, tells her story of living with her powerful voice. A reception will follow the concert. Babysitting will be available. For more information call (260) 824-1380 or e-mail stjosephchurch@adamswells.com.

Notre Dame rises again in Peace Corps rankings

NOTRE DAME — As it did last year, the University of Notre Dame moved up four spots this year on the list of medium-sized schools, those with undergraduate enrollments between 5,000 and 15,000, producing Peace Corps volunteers.

With 26 alumni currently serving in the Peace Corps, Notre Dame is now ranked 13th on the list, up from 17th last year. This is the sixth year in a row that Notre Dame has been among the nation’s top 25.

Since its inception in 1961, the Peace Corps has enrolled volunteers from more than 3,000 institutions nationwide. At present, 7,876 Peace Corps volunteers are serving for 27-month commitments in 76 countries.

Notre Dame’s association with the Peace Corps dates back to the agency’s founding in 1961, when the very first volunteers were trained on campus. Since then, 800 Notre Dame graduates have entered the Peace Corps — more than from any other Catholic college or university.

NICHE TO HOLD CURRICULUM SHARE

FORT WAYNE — A curriculum share for current and prospective home school parents will be held on Saturday, Feb. 7, from 8:45 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the University of Saint Francis. It will be located in Achatz Hall in the planetarium building.

There is no admission charge for this event that features literature, speakers, a used book sale, and plays of favorite curriculums. Childcare will be available for a minimal fee. For more information contact Jeri Morman at jlmorman@hotmail.com or 639-3744.

Photographer Peter Turnley visits USF

FORT WAYNE — International award-winning photographer and Fort Wayne native Peter Turnley will visit the University of Saint Francis Feb. 2-13 as a visiting artist, where he will meet with students and faculty, host a roundtable discussion with the Fort Wayne Photographer’s Club, meet with local high school teachers, conduct workshops for student photographers and present two free public lectures in the Closer Look Lecture Series.

Turnley’s visit to the University of Saint Francis is supported by Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne, the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more information contact the School of Creative Arts at 260-399-7700 ext. 8001.

USF and Most Precious Blood School awarded GreenWorks service learning grant

FORT WAYNE — The University of Saint Francis department of biology, in collaboration with Most Precious Blood School, has been selected to receive a 2008 GreenWorks! Community Action & Service Learning Grant in the amount of $5,000.

The grant is sponsored by Project Learning Tree (PLT), a national organization that strives to increase students’ understanding of the environment, stimulate students’ critical and creative thinking, and develop students’ ability to make informed decisions on environmentally issues and instill in students the commitment to take responsible action on behalf of the environment.

The grant will be used to install a state-of-the-art learning and discovery garden at Most Precious Blood School this spring. The grant will also support a PLT environmental workshop at the University of Saint Francis in the fall.

“We Believe in You” enrollment skyrockets

DONALDSON — Enrollment for Ancilla College’s “We Believe in You” program has risen from nine students in 2007 to 35 this year. The “We Believe in You” program, reintroduced to the campus in 2007 after a long hiatus, is designed for prospective students 21 years and older who have never attended college.

The program allows a student to take up to three credit hours free of charge and is assigned an academic advisor to assist them with all aspects of attending college for the first time, including the registration process, filing a financial aid application, determining their education opportunities and more.

Classes officially began Jan. 12 and are held on site at the Donaldson-based campus. Upon completion of a course, students will have access to their transcripts.

“We Believe in You” was originally created in 1968 by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, the religious order that sponsors Ancilla College.

For more information on “We Believe in You,” contact the Ancilla College Admissions Office at (574) 936-8898.

St. Jude leads other parishes in Apostle Build

FORT WAYNE — Since this past summer, the social action committee at St. Jude Parish with the blessings of the parish council, has been contacting other Catholic parishes in the area and making presentations at parish council and staff meetings, to ask for a commitment of time, talent and treasure toward building a Habitat for Humanity home.

The name of the project is Apostle Build. The idea is to involve at least 12 parishes.

Building such a home will have three positive results. It will help a Fort Wayne family find affordable and adequate housing. The recipient of the home pays back by means of a low monthly payment, no-interest mortgage. It will unite local parishes in a common effort. It will make the Catholic presence in Fort Wayne felt in the area of social justice.

The cost of a Habitat home is $50,000. That averages out to about $4,166 for each of the parishes involved. Making a commitment so far are:

• St. John the Baptist: Time, talent and $4,166;
• St. Charles: Time, talent and $4,166;
• St. Vincent de Paul: Time, talent and $5,000;
• Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception: Time, talent and $4,166.
• St. Jude: Time, talent, and $5,000 from parish tithe.
• Queen of Angels: Donation of service, time, and labor worth a $1,500 deduction from the total cost of home.

There is a need for a licensed plumber and a drywall contractor. Donating these services will also reduce the total cost of the project. Private donations of materials and of time will also be accepted.

Even if a local parish cannot commit to the treasure part of the package in these tough times, all the parishes contacted have been asked to send volunteers, during the 10 days of the build, which is scheduled to begin May 12.

For more information, or to volunteer, please be a shift leader on one of the days of the building project, call (260) 483-0978.

Serrans hold dinner with seminarians

SOUTH BEND — Members and associates of the Serra Club of South Bend will hold their annual traditional dinner with seminarians from Holy Cross Seminary on Thursday, Feb. 5, at the seminary on the Notre Dame campus.

They will attend Mass at 5:15 p.m. prior to the dinner. Esther Cyr of Serra is coordinating the event. — EJD

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

This year, the Garrett Knights of Columbus Council 1790 sponsored a poster contest. The poster contest was open to all St. Joseph students in preschool through sixth grade. Prizes were awarded for the best poster in each grade and displayed during Catholic Schools Week. Winners include the following: front row, Zane Mix, Abbigail Sexton, Katie Lacey, Levi Follett, Libby Detcher, Connor Ort and Rachael Lay; and back row, Christopher VanPelt, Grace Cooper, Amanda Shonka, Jackson Haynes, Victoria Ruble, Amanda Stump and Nicole Gillespie. Winners Sophia Ruble and Emily Grueter were not available for the photo.

PROVIDED BY THE GARRETT KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL 1790

Handmaids of Jesus Christ, the religious order founded in 1988 by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, has been involved in 12 parishes.

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INDIANAPOLIS — Good ideas don’t always pan out in practice. Modernizing some of the services rendered by the state’s Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) to improve access to benefits is one of them. The attempt at rendering better services has resulted in, at least temporarily in some counties, an inability for many to access any benefits.

Two bills HB 1691 authored by Rep. Suzanne Crouch (R-Evansville) and HB 1195 authored by Rep. Bill Crawford (D-Indianapolis) have been introduced to address the problem. House Bill 1691 would prevent additional counties from moving to the new system until the Joint Commission on Medicaid Oversight has reviewed the changes and status of the counties that have already implemented the eligibility determination changes. Another bill regarding this topic, HB 1195, authored by Rep. Bill Crawford (D-Indianapolis), provides for specific measures to correct some of the problems noted in the summer study committee.

The Indiana Catholic Conference supports the review of the program and is supportive of these bills because they call attention to a real and serious problem facing the elderly and families in need.

Three programs, which are affected in the modernization effort, include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamps and Medicaid. In 2007, Indiana’s FSSA signed a $1.6 billion contract with IBM Corp. and Affiliated Computer Services to implement a call system and Web portal for welfare applicants. This new system would be the entry point for applicants to access benefits. Previously, applicants had to visit a county welfare office, where they were assigned a caseworker to handle their application process in a face to face interaction.

Debbie Schmidt, executive director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, said their clients are experiencing a myriad of problems with the new system. As a whole, Schmidt said, “We’re seeing an increase in need caused by rising utility bills, unemployment, the mortgage crisis and the downturn of the economy in general.”

This increase in need, coupled with a new system, which is complicated for applicants and Catholic Charities staff to navigate, has compounded the problem for those who are served by Catholic Charities. “Many of our clients can’t get access or maintain their benefits,” said Schmidt. “In general, the poor do not have home computers, Internet access or even phone service,” she said. “These are obstacles to gaining access. The demand for computers at the library has increased significantly as this is also the way many go to apply for unemployment benefits,” said Schmidt.

Lisa M. Young, who works with Schmidt as assistant director said, “The new system is difficult to navigate.” Lost paper work, documents of one applicant being placed in another applicant’s file causing denial or delay of benefits for both applicants, technology failure from unscanned signatures on the receiving end to the Web page being down for days highlight some of the problems encountered by those needing help. Not only is Catholic Charities’ staff hearing complaints about these problems but are experiencing them first hand as they work with their clients to help them access state benefits.

Corina Hartardo, Hispanic health advocate for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, has experienced difficulties made with document-management errors resulting in denied or denial of benefits to her clients.

“The application process is complicated,” said Hartado. “There’s really no easy way an applicant can confirm their application was completed properly or even received. The person thinks they’ve applied when in reality, they haven’t.”

Theresa Teders, community services supervisor for Brief and Emergency Services, another program of Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, said she’s had clients who came to her very upset because their Medicaid insurance card was rejected when they went to pick up a prescription at the local pharmacy. Under the previous system, emergency assistance for food stamps would be expedited with a wait time of seven to 10 days, said Teders, but now the wait is longer delays for those being served in his area.

“I’ve seen a delay in services 30, 60 or even 90 days. There’s a disconnect somewhere in the process,” said Etling. “There’s one company that has an expertise in handling calls, another with an expertise in document collection and another that handles the document verification. The problem is there isn’t one company handling it all.”

Both bills, HB 1691 and HB 1195, have been assigned to the House Public Health Committee.

Recap of social justice bills

• HB 1025. Child and dependent care tax credit, passed the House Small Business & Economic Development committee, Jan. 21, and is headed to House for second reading. The bill provides a refundable income tax credit to individuals for certain household, child care or dependent care expenses associated with an individual’s gainful employment. ICC supports the bill as a positive way to assist families and targets families who need it most.

• HB 1315. Funding for food banks, would add the Indiana food bank fund trust as a charitable purpose to which an individual may choose to give all or part of the individual’s state income tax refund. The bill received a hearing in Senate Appropriations committee on Jan. 15, but no vote was taken.

• HB 1315. Funding for food banks, creates the food bank account within the general fund to provide funding for food banks. The bill is in the House Ways & Means committee. Because of fiscal costs the bill faces a difficult path. However, ICC supports this bill and SB 281 as many agencies who for the needy are finding it difficult to meet the daily and nutritional needs of growing numbers by which the ICC acting on behalf of the Indiana bishops determine which issues deserve the church’s involvement.

In addition to the update, one can obtain more detailed information regarding the bills and detailed information about legislative process through the Legislative Action Center under policy tools; click issues and legislation to access the state or federal bills. Also, you can access the archived updates, ICC positions and other background information at the ICC Web site www.indianacc.org.

What is the consistent life ethic? It is the belief that all human beings, from conception to natural death, have inherent dignity given to them by God himself.

The unborn, the elderly, the dying, the sick, the handicapped, the undocumented immigrant are all human beings deserving respect and dignity. This Christian ethic is applied to public policy and is the measuring stick by which the ICC acting on behalf of the Indiana bishops determine which issues deserve the church’s involvement.

To explore the ICC’s new, online, public policy tool and join the ICC network go to the ICC Web page at www.indianacc.org and click “Legislative Action Center.”
Granger — Recently, John and Angie Miller, leaders of St. Pius X Wells of Hope ministry answered questions about the direction of this program since its inception in 2007.

Today’s Catholic: When did Wells of Hope begin at St. Pius X and in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend?

John: As a part of the 2007, 150th anniversary jubilee celebration of the diocese, “You Can Always Come Home” was the theme of billboards and posters throughout the diocese as part of an evangelization outreach to inform the region about Catholic churches. St. Pius X introduced and launched Wells of Hope during the Christmas season of 2006 with pew cards and invitations to attend sessions held beginning April 11, 2007, once a week for five weeks.

Today’s Catholic: What is the basic thrust of the ministry?

John: The diocesan concept for Wells of Hope was to have parishes form a team of people to go to people’s homes that have left the church for some reason and listen, love and invite them back home to the Catholic Church. These visits would, of course, be scheduled and not unannounced or uninvited.

At St. Pius X, we took a slightly different approach. Father Bob Lengerich and our Wells of Hope team felt the home visits may be a bit tough for team members as well as those being visited to really open up and feel comfortable. We proposed a concept similar to Christ Renews His Parish, where people could come somewhat anonymously and listen to a series of the truths and wisdom given by team members on subjects we felt would be appropriate to many who had left the church. These included divorce, loss of a loved one, misunderstanding of church teaching and others. These talks would be accompanied by table discussions facilitated by team members and a question and answer session with Father Schooler or Father Bob Lengerich, where answering was off the table for discussion.

Today’s Catholic: How has it developed over the years?

John: Slowly. The first sessions offered drew a lot of attention because of the diocesan advertising and promotional efforts during the jubilee year. Since that time St. Pius X has relied on the pew cards during Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter to attract people to the program. These times for promotion were chosen because many people who have been away from the church often return for Mass during these times.

Today’s Catholic: How has the format changed or matured?

John: The program at St. Pius X has changed for a number of reasons. First, because it is difficult to determine the number of people who might want to attend sessions; divorce, loss of a loved one, misunderstanding of church teaching and others. These talks would be accompanied by table discussions facilitated by team members and a question and answer session with Father Schooler or Father Bob Lengerich, where answering was off the table for discussion.

Father Bob Lengerich was shown leading an ASK (Adults Seeking Knowledge) meeting. Wells of Hope leaders Angie and John Miller, seated in the back row, were present to field questions about returning to the church.

Many people who inquired about returning to the church during ordinary time had nowhere to go during the bulk of the year. We made a conscience decision to revise the program to be more inclusive during the year and have incorporated the program into Father Lengerich’s ASK (Adults Seeking Knowledge) sessions.

These sessions are a free flowing exchange between attendees and Father Lengerich, where questions about anything related to the church are answered. Wells of Hope team members will be there for anyone who may be in need of further ministering and to help guide them on the journey back home.

Today’s Catholic: Describe the success.

John: In discussing and defining success, Father Schooler says, “The return of one person to the church has made our Lord smile.” It is kind of the parable of the lost sheep.

We have had a number of people return fully to the church. One couple had their marriage blessed in the church, some have gone through Christ Renews His Parish, others have joined the choir and many others are engaged in parish life.

Angie: I felt very encouraged by what we have learned so far with the people we have ministered to. Many of the people we have worked with just needed their questions answered, a meeting with Father Schooler or Father Lengerich, so we could receive the sacrament of confession. Then they had fulfilled the requirements of the church.

Today’s Catholic: What have you learned about the reasons for drifting away from the church?

John: There are countless reasons people leave the church. The most frequently voiced are things like divorce, annulments, loss of a loved one, misunderstanding of church teaching and others. Many of the people we have ministered to have had profound personal experiences; hurt by a priest or religious, attracted by another faith, lack of community and a big one — unfriendly, unwelcoming churches.

Today’s Catholic: What have you learned about the reasons for considering returning to the church?

Angie: As John mentioned, it is most important for people returning to the church to feel welcome and to have someone to connect with so that we can help them back in the fold. It will be important for them to join a ministry so they have a support group and a way to meet others in such a large parish.

People always have a desire to come home to the Catholic Church. The biggest reason that I have heard is that they miss the sacraments most specifically the Eucharist. It tells me people are hungry for God and long for his grace. We have also found that if people feel welcome and you help them become a part of the community, they feel at home.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter convention stated in South Bend

South Bend — Hundreds of priests and happily married couples of many faiths from all over the Midwest will gather at the Milton Center on Saturday evening featuring excerpts from the musical “The Man of LaMancha.”

Today’s Catholic: Describe the success.

By Karen Clifford

The theme of the convention is “Let Us Be Your Servants.” Opening ceremonies start at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, July 10. It concludes about noon on Sunday, July 12, at the Hilton Garden Inn located on the north side of the campus of Saint Mary’s College.

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In report to USCCB, preserving Catholic schools will require universal effort

By Julie Nail Flory

Notre Dame — As national Catholic Schools Week (Jan. 25 to 31) approached, the state of America’s parochial schools was in the spotlight, and the news is somewhat discouraging.


Holy Cross Father Timothy R. Scully, professor of political science at the school’s Institute for Educational Initiatives, led the task force and said the decline in enrollment in Catholic schools is largely due to finances.

“The principle cause is financial,” Father Scully said. “First of all, of course, there has been a huge transition in the faculty and staff who support the work of this wonderful postulate. There has been a complete turnover in terms of the kind of leadership and staffing that we have in Catholic schools from 90some-percent in the 1960s religious — who by the gift of the church subsidized Catholic schools at the time — to 95 percent today lay, who also subsidize by the gift of their time.

There are countless reasons people leave the church. The most frequently voiced are things like divorce, annulments, loss of a loved one, misunderstanding of church teaching and others. Many of the people we have ministered to have had profound personal experiences; hurt by a priest or religious, attracted by another faith, lack of community and a big one — unfriendly, unwelcoming churches.

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The fundamental shift that has to occur in the church in order for our Catholic schools to recover the importance that they have always held is that we as a Catholic community have to commit ourselves totally, every single person, to give all that we have. The work of Catholic education is the responsibility of all Catholics. It’s not just the responsibility of the priests and religious, but all of us who profess to know Jesus. It’s the future of our church.”
Rally and march for life draw record-breaking crowd

BY BONNIE ELBERSON

FORT WAYNE — Despite the wintry weather, Saturday’s 35th annual March for Life and rally in downtown Fort Wayne attracted a huge crowd. Attendance at the event was the largest in recent memory, completely filling the Scottish Rite Auditorium. Marchers afterwards extended three city blocks as they made their way to the Federal Building on Harrison Street where they heard personal testimonies of those affected by abortion in the Silent No More Awareness Campaign.

Cathie Humbarger, executive director of Allen County Right to Life, served as emcee for the rally. She called it a “bittersweet moment” — bitter because there is still a need to assemble more than three decades after the passage of Roe v. Wade. Sweet because of the many dedicated proponents for life in attendance.

A large number of elected officials were also in the audience, including 3rd District U.S. Rep. Mark Souder. He discussed the current threat to the pro-life agenda on the national level, the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) currently under consideration in Washington.

He pointed out that FOCA, if enacted, would eliminate all the federal and state laws passed in the last 35 years that restrict abortion and protect women and their unborn babies. States like Indiana would be forced to comply regardless of life-affirming legislation already on their books.

According to information on the Indiana Right to Life Web site (www.protectinglife.com), if FOCA becomes law, abortions would be funded by taxpayers, partial-birth abortions would be legalized, no parental consent would be needed for minors to receive abortions, no waiting period would be required for women seeking abortions, and medical professionals and facilities would be required to perform abortions. In short, all the pro-life gains of the past 35 years would be wiped out and the number of such procedures would escalate dramatically.

Audience members were urged to write to their senators and congressmen asking them to vote against the proposed legislation.

Indiana State Representative Jackie Walorski (R-Elk) also discussed her request for a full investigation of the activities of Planned Parenthood of Indiana (see sidebar), receiving an enthusiastic standing ovation for her comments.

Keynote speaker was Shawn Carney, chairman of Coalition for Life in Texas and an organizer of the National 40 Days for Life Campaign. He called this “a sad and sobering time of year” when we are reminded of the Jan. 22, 1973, Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

A few years ago Carney was instrumental in launching the 40 Days for Life campaign among pro-life advocates in his home state of Texas. It was a period of prayer, fasting, peaceful vigil and community outreach, which was so successful that post-abortion women found healing, abortion clinic workers left their jobs and many such facilities closed their doors for good. The campaign resulted in a 28 percent drop in such procedures. “That’s when we knew we really had something,” he said.

By 2008, he noted, 204 cities in 49 states, including Indiana, had launched similar campaigns to bring about change in the attitude toward abortion in the hearts and minds of those it touches. “We are not here (only) to make abortion illegal,” he said. “We are here to make abortion unthinkable.”

Bishop John D’Arcy, when asked about the importance of pro-life efforts at a time when changes in Washington threaten their advancement, said there is not an issue more important than politics. “Politics come and go.” The unborn child has no constituency so it must be constantly defended. “It’s an issue of faith,” he said.

Bishop D’Arcy’s closing benediction was a validation of the 40 Days for Life Campaign, which he said shows “how active God is, how strong the pro-life movement is.”

“Though the fight for life will continue on the national level, speaker Carney reminded his listeners that it requires a grassroots effort. Abortion is a moral crisis that requires a moral solution, one that is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.

“Obeying faith is not in Washington, D.C.,” said Carney. “It is in this room.” It is in the proponent of life assembled locally whose dedication and tenacity will promote change in America.
Indiana legislators plan to take on Planned Parenthood

BY BONNIE ELBERSON

FORT WAYNE — Allen County Right to Life hosted a press conference calling for an investigation of Planned Parenthood of Indiana and defunding Planned Parenthood at the national level on Saturday, Jan. 24, just prior to the Rally for Life at the Scottish Rite Center in downtown Fort Wayne.

The request for an investigation was made by Indiana State Rep. Jackie Walorski (R-Elkhart) in the wake of the release of videotapes revealing the apparent illegal actions of Planned Parenthood employees in Indianapolis and Bloomington. The employees were allegedly caught on tape violating state law by attempting to discourage a young woman, posing as a 13-year-old pregnant girl, from reporting statutory rape.

Walorski has called for a full investigation by the Indiana attorney general and for seizure of all taxpayer funding to Planned Parenthood of Indiana, pending the outcome of the investigation. She is concerned about potential Medicaid fraud involving Planned Parenthood clinics across Indiana, as well as “egregious disregard for our laws that protect minors.”

Planned Parenthood is the largest abortion provider in Indiana.

Walorski said she is “laser-focused” on the issue and further explained her concerns during the Rally for Life, which followed the press conference.

The problem is threefold, she said. Planned Parenthood employees not only discouraged reporting of statutory rape, they overlooked possible child sexual abuse and sidestepped Indiana’s parental consent laws.

“At a time when ‘tax dollars are at a premium,’ said Walorski, Planned Parenthood should be held accountable and possible Medicaid fraud should be investigated.

“This is not a Republican or Democrat issue,” she added, but one focused on protecting girls across Indiana and guarding our precious tax dollars.

On the national level, it was mentioned Rep. Mike Pence (R-6th District) of Indiana and 60 cosponsors recently reintroduced the Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act, a bill that would deny any federal funding to Planned Parenthood of America.

Congressman Pence has long been an outspoken advocate for life, saying in a speech from the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives on Jan. 22, “On this dark anniversary, let us rededicate ourselves to protecting the unborn and to protecting taxpayers on matters of conscience.”

Pro-lifers from the Michiana area march in front of the South Bend Federal Courthouse Jan. 22, the date that marks the 36th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, which legalized abortion. Saint Joseph County Right to Life sponsors the hour-long event. An optional signup sheet drew 112 signatures. Catholics and Protestants, youths, mothers with babies, college students, including those shown above from Holy Cross College, and Catholic clergy joined the peaceful public witness. Marchers carry signs: “mourning 50 million deaths”; “adoption is the loving option”; “abortion hurts women”; and “abortion kills children.”
Meet those who write for Today's Catholic

FORT WAYNE — Many would be surprised to learn that the editorial staff at Today’s Catholic consists of Tim Johnson, editor, and Kay Cozad, news editor and staff writer. Some might be in addition to ad composition, often takes stories and photos for Today’s Catholic. And don’t be surprised to see Today’s Catholic’s business manager Kathy Denice, advertising sales executive Tess Steffen or composition department, Web master Elmer Danch toting a camera at a diocesan event. And Director of Communications Vince LaBarbera also writes copy for Today’s Catholic. Bringing Today’s Catholic into your home, and the stories of the events and happenings taking place across our diocese, a second grade teacher and we moved to South Bend. Perhaps you will see them with a clipboard, camera and recorder in tow. Here’s a bit of background about us:Tim Johnson, editor of Today’s Catholic

I have been editor of Today’s Catholic for five years. Prior to that, I was assistant editor for five years. I began my publishing career at the Ossian Journal, Sunriser News and News-Runner Publications in Bluffton where I worked nine years. I am a graduate of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) with a degree in business and minor in mass communications. I’m a lifelong member of St. Aloysius Parish, Yoder, and a 1984 graduate of Bishop Luers High School. I married to Rose, who is a second grade teacher and we have a daughter who is a kindergarten teacher, and a daughter at St. Aloysius School. The best thing about working at Today’s Catholic is the opportunity to meet and write about great Catholic people of my home diocese, the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. I am blessed with this opportunity — it is rare in the Catholic press for an editor to serve his native diocese.

Kay Cozad, news editor, staff writer

My writing career with Today’s Catholic newspaper began in March of 2004 as a stringer and the following September I came onboard as news editor. Recently I moved into full-time work as news editor and continue my staff writing position; the best of both worlds.

Mark Weber

At Today’s Catholic I am an artist/writer. My qualifications for the position include disappointing report cards in grade school, high school, one college and one university. I finally did okay in a Chicago art school that did issue report cards.

For years, I was editor of The Hoosier Knight, official publication of the Knights of Columbus publication in Indiana. I have honorable discharges from the United States Navy and the United States Air Force. I am a member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Fort Wayne. As a matter of interest, I have had face to face encounters with Eleanor Roosevelt, Charles Laughton, James Dunn, James Melville, Burt Lancaster, Risto Traubel and Riste Stevens. My heroes are Ernie Pyle, Jim Bishop, Bishop Noll, Mother Theodore Guerin, Edith Stein.

I have been a guest instructor twice at the College of Fine Arts, University of Notre Dame.Judy Bradford

I am a freelance writer with a special interest in personal faith and religious stories of all kinds. I am a United Methodist, I have enjoyed writing for Today’s Catholic because it keeps a dialogue open among Catholic believers, and presents an opportunity for readers to deepen their faith. I have a reporting background and have worked for The South Bend Tribune as a news and feature writer for 11 years. I began my career in my hometown of Logansport, Indiana, and have also worked as a public relations officer in two nonprofit agencies in South Bend, including the St. Vincent de Paul Society. I currently freelance for The South Bend Tribune, Flagship Publications, Bethel College, Ivy Tech Community College and ND Works, the faculty and employee newspaper for the University of Notre Dame.

Karen Clifford

I have been freelancing for Today’s Catholic since October of 2006. I am a 1977 graduate of the University of Missouri at Rolla, with a double major in English and history. I began writing news articles while I was a lieutenant in the United States Air Force. I have freelanced articles for The South Bend Tribune. It has been a privilege for me to share stories about members of the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocese in the articles I have written for Today’s Catholic.

Lauren Caggiano

Time flies. It’s hard to believe I have been a freelance contributor to Today’s Catholic for almost three years. My journalism career first began at the University of Dayton, where I pursued degrees in French and journalism. I further explored the field as the arts and entertainment editor for the student-run newspaper, Flyer News. I graduated in May 2007 and moved to Fort Wayne to pursue a job in my field. And the rest is history as they say. Now as a full-time reporter for the Greater Fort Wayne Business Weekly, I cover a wide range of business news in northeast Indiana and northwest Ohio. But outside of the newsfrancis hogger, i'm a diehard feature writer. I love talking to people about their hopes, dreams and achievements. It’s a real high. That’s why I enjoy writing for Today’s Catholic. From covering a service event at the University of Saint Francis to interviewing a saint: the people I write about have the pleasure of sharing people’s stories with other Catholics. The variety is what motivates me. In my spare time I contribute to both local and national publications. I attend St. Charles Borromeo Parish.

Michelle Castlemann

I have been writing CYO sports stories for Today’s Catholic for over five years. I love working from my home, following the different sports and talking with the coaches. This venture was my first after staying home to raise my four children. I have six children ages 6-15. I am a lifelong member of St. Louis Parish, Besancon, and live in rural Monroeville. I have a degree from the University of Dayton and am a Heritage High School graduate. I enjoy photography, volunteering at school, coordinating our SCRIP program and am a member of the Christ Child Society. Just last fall I also began serving three lunch hours per week at Rack & Helen’s in downtown New Haven.

Elmer Danch

I began writing for Today’s Catholic newspaper when it was known as Our Sunday Visitor back in 1942. I believe I’m the oldest reporter the newspaper has, at 95 years old. As a native of South Bend I have known several of the bishops and pastors, and as a reporter for The South Bend Tribune, I shared the South Bend Catholic news with Today’s Catholic over the years. Currently I enjoy writing Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) sports news for the paper. I was running for 67 years for my life. I have enjoyed living and teaching German and Spanish on the South Bend Tribune. Though we are members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, writing for Today’s Catholic affords me the opportunity to connect in a more personal way with the broader Catholic community.

Denise Fedorow

My name is Denise Fedorow. I live in New Paris and I’m a parishioner at St. John the Evangelist Church in New Haven. I have been writing for Today’s Catholic’s since 2002. I’ve also been a freelance correspondent for The Goshen News since 2001. My column is called “Not That You Asked, But…”. I was born and raised in New Paris and educated in Catholic schools. I graduated from Yonker High School in 1976 and Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) in 1978. I moved to Indiana in 1978. I have two grown sons.

Michelle Donahue

I have been a writer for Today’s Catholic for at least five years. I actually got my freelance writing career in this area working for The Goshen News, Inc. doing features and two local news columns for Nappanee and Bremen in 1986. I freelanced for several years for The Goshen News, The Papers, Inc., Senior Life, and The South Bend Tribune, where in the early 90’s, I served as their special sections editor. Currently, I freelance for Today’s Catholic as well as The South Bend Tribune Community News and The Elkhart Post and for Parenting Publications of America, a parenting magazine group. I am a graduate of Munster High School and Purdue University (bachelor’s degree in mass communications). I love writing for Today’s Catholic not only because of all of the wonderful events I get to attend, but truth be told, it gives me reason to get out of Bremen every so often. I am grateful everyday for the gift to write and the people I write about.

Bennie Elberson

I was a freelance writer for the News-Sentinel and The South Bend Tribune. I freelanced for almost 13 years before I married for 67 years to my husband Terry and I moved from Defiance, Ohio, where I worked as farm editor at the Defiance County News. Though we are members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, writing for Today’s Catholic affords me the opportunity to connect in a more personal way with the broader Catholic community.

WRITERS, PAGE 18
WHLY Holy Radio: Reaching people and touching hearts

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

FORT WAYNE — As Redeemer Radio — Catholic Radio 1450 AM — WLYV marked its third year in operation, recently appointed Board Chairman Mike Kelly has high hopes for the future of this new medium.

Kelly said his interest in this form of evangelization was spurred upon hearing the Catholic Answers “program on the drive home from work. Kelly noted he had recently returned to the church after a period of inactivity, so the program really spoke to him. Being a self-described “info-radio hound,” Kelly said it was a call from God to become involved with the station in some form.

Looking ahead, Kelly said he wants to hold true to the station’s goals and mission. First and foremost, it serves to educate and evangelize. Kelly noted that since Vatican II, there has been “a gap” in religious education in youth, and it hopes to change that through the station’s programming.

Fortunately, Kelly said he has noticed a rebirth in Catholic apologetics in the past few years, something the station embraces. He sees radio as an “intimate medium,” an important tool for evangelization. Despite its intimate nature, the station is far from elite. The signal has the ability to reach 365,000 and 65,000 Catholics. Eight thousand listeners tune in weekly.

“The Holy Spirit works through (the station) in a quiet way,” he said. “I’m a case in point.”

Secondly, Kelly hopes to see the station continue to be a unifying force in the Catholic community. He wants to talk to as many listeners as possible to get feedback on how to get the message out better.

But overall, Kelly, a businessman himself, said he wants to adhere to the station’s business foundation.

“You have to weigh where God’s calling you,” he said. And that means being prudent with the funds so the station can remain fiscally healthy, he said.

Kelly noted the station is about to undergo a strategic plan process next month. This means the 11-board members will analyze the station’s strengths and weaknesses so it can function at optimal efficiency.

And the station is not lacking in strong points. Many initiatives, like parish talks, bulletin announcements and share-a-thons are working, and Kelly plans to nurture them.

“You see such a spirit (working) there,” Kelly said about the share-a-thons. Other considerations include streaming live, podcarts and broadcasting more priests’ talks. And if all goes as planned, Redeemer Radio will move to a new location that will triple its current 800-square feet facility at 4705 Illinois Rd., suite 104.

But all of this cannot happen without listener support. The station has a capital campaign planned for March. In the meantime, the station welcomes volunteers for marketing, studio production and office support.

Visit www.redeemerradio.com for monthly updates or call the station at (260) 436-9598.

Questions about this gift?

On Feb. 1, 2009 Today’s Catholic will be sent to the home of every registered Catholic in the Diocese Fort Wayne, South Bend. We are excited and humbled by this increase in circulation; however, we realize there will be several questions. We hope to answer some here:

What if I still have remaining years on my subscription?

Your 2008 subscription will expire with the Jan. 27, 2009 issue. We realize that some renewed last year for more than one year, if that is the case we would suggest that you treat those prepaid years as a donation to the diocese.

What if I have already chased a gift subscription for someone?

If the recipient is a registered Catholic in the diocese he/she will receive the paper automatically starting Feb. 1, 2009. If the gift subscription was for longer than one year question one would apply.

If the recipient lives outside the diocese he/she will continue to receive the paper as a subscription and that subscription will have to be renewed and paid for as in the past.

Today’s Catholic will only be available to all registered Catholics in the Diocese Fort Wayne-South Bend as a gift from Bishop D. Arcy.

What if I do not choose to use prepaid subscription years as a donation?

Please call our office at (260) 456-2824 and we will reimburse you the remaining years.

Reimbursements will only be made if last year (2008) you paid for more than one year.

If I live in the Diocese of Fort Wayne – South Bend and I am not registered in a parish can I purchase a subscription to Today’s Catholic?

No, the only subscription program will involve those who reside outside the diocese.

If I am a registered Catholic in the Diocese of Fort Wayne – South Bend and spend my winters in a warmer climate will I still receive my paper?

Yes, your winter address is considered a temporary change of address. Please notify your local post office two weeks prior to your departure in order to receive your paper without interruption.

Being registered in your current parish is extremely important, as well as being registered in only one parish. Often people move and do not report the move to their previous parish consequently they are registered in two parishes. In this case you will most likely receive two papers, please call our office, 260-456-2824 and we will correct your address.

As Bishop John M. D’Arcy wrote in the Jan. 4, 2009 issue, our newspaper is an instrument of evangelization and we ask God’s blessing on this new effort.
Editorial
Getting the most from your Today's Catholic

Welcome new readers and welcome back to our longtime readers.

Beginning this week, Today's Catholic will be gifted to all registered Catholic homes in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend — a new endeavor from our publisher, Bishop John M. D'Arcy.

Obviously, we hope that Today's Catholic will be a part of every household's reading material. We want to be your Catholic window to the world: from the Vatican, the United States, the world, to your very own street in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

We want to walk with you as we all integrate our faith into our lives and evangelize our communities.

There are those out there reading who want us to be a more Democratic or a more Republican publication. But we are neither. We are centered on church teaching and the Gospel, and neither political party has or probably ever will fall directly in line with the teaching of the pope or our bishops. But living in these troubled times where society blues the lines between calling what is good, good, and what is evil, evil — our goal is to help you understand the beauty of the truth of the Catholic faith.

From those who just skim headlines to those who read every story, we ask you to take just a few minutes to search Today's Catholic each week and see if you don't find it to have stories, features, commentary that will inspire, clarify a teaching or help you in your faith formation journey, which continues throughout our lives.

The dream of justice denied to the unborn

As the nation celebrated the dream of justice expressed so eloquently by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the inauguration of the first African-American President Barack Obama — a truly historic moment in the United States — it is clearly overlooked that the unborn are denied the full justice as other Americans. It has been said many times, the most dangerous place for Americans is the womb. Just a day after the inauguration, thousands, including a large contingent from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, marched on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., appealing for justice and protection for the unborn under our laws.

The march was held Jan. 22, the 36th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion. The same day the Supreme Court ruled on the Roe case, it also handed down the companion decision Doe v. Bolton. Together, Roe and Doe were both rulings from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, and marched on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., appealing for justice and protection for the unborn under our laws.

And then last Friday, President Obama repealed the Mexico City policy. This repeal, according to a memo sent to Rep. Burton’s (R-Indiana who opposed the repeal) office “… will allow U.S. taxpayer dollars to fund non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that discuss or provide abortions as a method of family planning, while they support coercive practices like China’s ‘one child policy’ — such organizations have been banned from receiving funding since Jan. 22, 2001.”

President Obama has opened the pipeline for using millions of our taxpayer dollars to support the killing of unborn children and to advance the promotion of abortion on demand,” responded Indiana Right to Life President and CEO Mike Fischer.

This indicates the likelihood of fulfilling a pledge by the new president to sign the so-called “Freedom of Choice Act” (FOCA), which would overturn virtually all pro-life laws nationwide. This would divide the nation on a moral issue at a time when the country needs to unite. It is a time to make pleas for justice to government leaders.

The Office of Family Life of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend has initiated a postcard campaign to write to our U.S. legislators encouraging them to fight FOCA. Our congressmen and senators need to hear from Catholics in our diocese. Please mail the postcards. The addresses of the senators are provided; but depending on your congressional district, you will need to hand-write the address of your district congressperson separately.

Those addresses are:

The Indiana Catholic Conference Web site’s Legislative Action Center offers action alerts and can connect readers to their state and federal-level representatives. Visit www.indianaccc.org.

Commentary
Include Scripture word puzzle every week

I am a senior citizen who neither read nor write, they’re going through the sports section for the young. But I do enjoy doing the Scripture word puzzle. Please find room for it. And other seniors, especially shut-ins, will thank you.

And regarding the letter from Monroeville, I, too, was surprised at this portrayal of the Virgin Mary in this painting until I really looked at it and decided the woman, among the shepherds, had to be a shepherdess or the attendant at the inn.

D.W. South Bend

Examine CCHD grant process after ACORN troubles

I was so disappointed that I have wasted a lot of time. He shares our views about the article in the Nov. 2, 2008 issue concerning ACORN. I also read the subsequent articles attempting to sanitize this fiasco. Nothing that has been written can do anything but further illustrate the dangers involved in the church aligning itself with these various organizations under the “social justice” banner. Many of these tax-exempt organizations serve primarily to enrich the organizers and the attorneys that work for them. The history of government “antipoverty” programs is also one of corruption and scandal. The agendas of so many of these groups directly conflict with Catholic beliefs and moral values.

What is the point of hiring specialists to determine which account Rathske embezzled the money from? This appears to be throwing good money after bad. The grant process itself should be examined and McCloud and the directors of CCHD should resign or be replaced. They are either naive or incompetent or both.

The bishops themselves are ultimately responsible for how the money is distributed. We already have the St. Vincent de Paul Society and other Catholic organizations that we should support.

David R. Holmes
Bremen

Paul and the ‘last Adam’

We often say, “We’re in this together!”

A husband and wife might say this when they’re going through a tough patch. And a couple of friends could say this when they vow to help each other meet a challenge. And a family will say this when one of the children gets ill.

Two people are probably the smallest group where this can be said. But it can be affirmed by a larger number of people, too.

I was in a flood once and the whole city said “we’re in this together.” And at times of national threats the whole nation can say it. And even the whole world can say it about things like ecological concerns or financial crises.

Paul is saying “we’re in this together” in the largest sense possible. When he says it, he means the whole human race, ever. Every human being who has ever lived is in this together because we are all sons of Adam and daughters of Eve (as C.S. Lewis phrases it).

There is a mysterious connection between every human being. The creation account in Genesis affirms this, even if it doesn’t explain this. And Paul is referring to that fact when he writes to the Romans (and we read over their shoulder).

The human race has a problem with death, and we’re all in this problem together. Therefore, just as through one person sin entered the world, and through sin, death, and thus death came to all “… — Rom 5:12

This sounds like bad news. We all share one human nature, and that nature has been affected by sin, and is subject to death. The point is not so much that we’re being punished for something someone else did. Rather the point is that “we’re all in this together,” and sin affects the whole human race. We are not naturally attached to the Source of Life any more.

But what sounds like bad news can now be seen as good news. Since the Incarnation, the Son of God is in this together with us. He has joined us in our circumstance. He shares our condition. And therefore, what sounded like bad news is the basis for the good news: the Gospel. “For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life …” — 1 Cor 15:22.

This is why Paul refers to Christ as the “second Adam.” It may be even better to say Christ is the “last Adam.” We don’t mean this in the sense of “last in line,” but in the sense of “at last” — at last human nature exists the way it is supposed to exist. At last humanity stands before God the way it is supposed to. A theologian once said, “Jesus is what God means when he says ‘man’, and what man means when he says ‘God.’”

Jesus undoed what Adam did. Though Christ was in the form of God, he did not regard equality with God something to be grasped (Phil 2:6). Adam was not in the form of God, but seized on the tempter’s empty promise to not need God.

Christ emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, dying on the tree of the cross. Adam elevated himself by eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge. The second Adam undoes what the first Adam snarled up. Why? Because Christ is in this together with us.

The Year of St. Paul

NOTRE DAME CENTER FOR LITURGY
DEDI CATED TO LITURGICAL RESEARCH AND PASTORAL LITURGY

For more information about the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy, which is providing this series on St. Paul, visit www.liturgy.nd.edu.
World issues dominate Vatican hopes

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican has struck a predominantly positive tone as it opens relations with the administration of President Barack Obama, emphasizing hopes for cooperation on issues of peace and social justice.

While registering its disappointment over an early presidential decision to restore funding to programs that offer abortion overseas, the Vatican has avoided pre-emptive battles with Obama over pro-life and family issues.

Pope Benedict XVI sent an Inauguration Day telegram congratulating the new president and supporting Obama’s resolve to “promote understanding, cooperation and peace among the nations.”

The Vatican newspaper, L’Osservatore Romano, compared the swearing-in of the first African-American president to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and said it ushered in a new era of expectation and participation.

But beyond these optimistic public declarations, what are the Vatican’s top concerns at the start of the Obama term? What are its highest hopes and its deepest worries?

In interviews over recent weeks, Vatican officials said their expectations were high on international questions of war and peace — most specifically, the Israeli-Palestinian war, which a Vatican official once termed “the mother of all conflicts.”

What is expected of the Obama administration, they said, is a decisive initiative to restart the peace process and move it toward a definitive solution, not a one-shot attempt but a “consistent commitment” to lead Israelis and Palestinians to the realization that a settlement is in their own best interests.

Vatican diplomats were disappointed at the Bush administration’s peace-promoting efforts in the Holy Land. They said those efforts came late and that the most promising initiative — the peace conference in Annapolis, Md., in late 2007 — was not followed up with diplomatic pressure.

While no one expects Obama to alter the United States’ fundamental support for Israel, Vatican officials said the new president begins his term with a certain amount of trust and sympathy among Arabs. That could be important, they said, because Arabs need to feel they have a world leader who takes their situation to heart.

All this could help change the
classical perspective on the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Any new strategy by the United States might give Obama leeway to make tough decisions. For example, the United States might be able to support the uprising in Egypt where they were enslaved. Egypt where they were enslaved.

Such was the promise of Moses. He returned from God to lead the Israelites to the Promised Land. It was a difficult journey, but God was with them every step of the way.

In this reading, Moses addresses the Chosen People, whom he calls “my people.” For them, these readings are remarkable. They are the only people in the Bible who have the promise of a land.

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All this could help change the

THE VATICAN LETTER

JOHN THAVIS

In this reading, Moses addresses the Chosen People, whom he calls “my people.” For them, these readings are remarkable. They are the only people in the Bible who have the promise of a land.

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All this could help change the
In praise of George W. Bush

The following is best appreciated if read aloud in the best Irish accent you can manage: Paddy, the local scoundrel, was dead. The entire population of the village where he spent a lifetime making others miserable attended his funeral Mass — some, doubtless, to make sure he was really gone. Knowing the congregation’s sentiments, the wise old priest said to his people, before the final commendation, “Now, dear brother and sisters, before we commit our brother to the sod, it would be an act of charity if any of you were to come forward and say a good word about ‘im.” No one moved. “Come, now, brothers and sisters,” the priest pleaded, “surely there’s someone you can find to say a good word for the man.” Total silence. “My dear people, I’ll be tellin’ the sacristan to lock the door in a minute, and no one of you’s goin’ to leave this church until someone comes forward to say a good word for this departed brother.” Finally, an ancient villager got up, shuffled to the side of the casket, turned his back to the pastor, and said in a clear voice, “I think his brother was even worse.”

As he leaves office, George W. Bush could be forgiven for feeling like Paddy, he was a man given to self-pity. Happily, he isn’t. And it’s emphatically not in the spirit of, “Well, James J. Buchanan and Herbert Hoover were even worse” — that he should like to praise President Bush at the end of his two terms.

For what, you ask? For many things that ought to count for Catholics.

I should like to praise him for his steadfast support of the pro-life cause, domestically and internationally. Thanks to President Bush, we have two more Supreme Court justices who likely know that Roe v. Wade was terrible constitutional judging, and dozens more federal district court and appellate court judges with similar convictions.

Thanks to President Bush, the U.S. government drew an important moral line in stem-cell research, even as the administration accelerated biotechnically sound research strategies that have produced real results.

Internationally, the Bush administration stood firm against the Gadairene rush to use international law to declare abortion an international human right and a necessary component of the emancipation of women; as one senior Vatican official put it to me, a year ago, “We know we’re never going to have an American administration as supportive of our core issues as the Bush administration has been.”

I should like to praise the president for his work to rid Africa of the plagues of AIDS and malaria and to relieve the suffering of those afflicted with those awful diseases. George W. Bush may be an object of ridicule in certain U.S. zip codes; he is the subject of reverence among those who have “bottom billion,” whose lives his policies have saved or enhanced.

I should like to thank the president for offering Pope Benedict XVI such a warm welcome on the South Lawn of the White House on April 15, 2008 — a welcome that ought to have put paid, once and for all, to the notion that there is something incompatible between robust Catholic faith and Catholic Old Testament than in every other Christian except that Catholics use the same Bible as every other Christian, except that Catholics are taught a watered-down version of the Bible. What can I say to you with open arms.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I should like to thank President Bush for his personal decency, manifest in his (unpublicized) personal attention to our wounded and to the families of the fallen; in his refusal to become bitter in the face of outrageous slander; and in his calm amidst tribulations that most of us can’t imagine. I should like to thank him for his unapologetic confession of Christian faith, and for his testimony to the importance that prayer plays in his life. And I should like to thank him for not giving a hoot about the mockery that such a witness draws from a secularized mass media, from American high culture, from leftists like Michael Moore, and from Euro-socialist snobs who spent eight years snearing at the evangelical cowboy in the White House while we always being funded from spiritual boredom. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

On pro-life issues, Vatican officials said the pope, who is seen as an intelligent politician, would not pick unnecessary fights with the church. Although it was expected, the Vatican reacted quickly to the president’s executive order Jan. 23 to remove a ban on federal aid to programs that promote or perform abortion overseas.

“A very disappointing decision,” read the headline in the Vatican newspaper, quoting from a reaction statement from U.S. bishops. Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Academy for Life, told an Italian newspaper that “if this is one of President Obama’s first acts, I have to say that, with respect, that we’re a short step away from a drastic decision.”

Archbishop Fisichella noted the massive participation in the Jan. 22 March for Life in Washington. If Obama’s response is to extend the right of abortion, he said, that would reflect the president’s own remarks about defending human dignity. “But we shall see,” he added.

The Teacher

The Catholic Difference

George Weigel

In praise of George W. Bush

The following is best appreciated if read aloud in the best Irish accent you can manage: Paddy, the local scoundrel, was dead. The entire population of the village where he spent a lifetime making others miserable attended his funeral Mass — some, doubtless, to make sure he was really gone. Knowing the congregation’s sentiments, the wise old priest said to his people, before the final commendation, “Now, dear brother and sisters, before we commit our brother to the sod, it would be an act of charity if any of you were to come forward and say a good word about ‘im.” No one moved. “Come, now, brothers and sisters,” the priest pleaded, “surely there’s someone you can find to say a good word for the man.” Total silence. “My dear people, I’ll be tellin’ the sacristan to lock the door in a minute, and no one of you’s goin’ to leave this church until someone comes forward to say a good word for this departed brother.” Finally, an ancient villager got up, shuffled to the side of the casket, turned his back to the pastor, and said in a clear voice, “I think his brother was even worse.”

As he leaves office, George W. Bush could be forgiven for feeling like Paddy, he was a man given to self-pity. Happily, he isn’t. And it’s emphatically not in the spirit of, “Well, James J. Buchanan and Herbert Hoover were even worse” — that he should like to praise President Bush at the end of his two terms.

For what, you ask? For many things that ought to count for Catholics.

I should like to praise him for his steadfast support of the pro-life cause, domestically and internationally. Thanks to President Bush, we have two more Supreme Court justices who likely know that Roe v. Wade was terrible constitutional judging, and dozens more federal district court and appellate court judges with similar convictions.

Thanks to President Bush, the U.S. government drew an important moral line in stem-cell research, even as the administration accelerated biotechnically sound research strategies that have produced real results.

Internationally, the Bush administration stood firm against the Gadairene rush to use international law to declare abortion an international human right and a necessary component of the emancipation of women; as one senior Vatican official put it to me, a year ago, “We know we’re never going to have an American administration as supportive of our core issues as the Bush administration has been.”

I should like to praise the president for his work to rid Africa of the plagues of AIDS and malaria and to relieve the suffering of those afflicted with those awful diseases. George W. Bush may be an object of ridicule in certain U.S. zip codes; he is the subject of reverence among those who have “bottom billion,” whose lives his policies have saved or enhanced.

I should like to thank the president for offering Pope Benedict XVI such a warm welcome on the South Lawn of the White House on April 15, 2008 — a welcome that ought to have put paid, once and for all, to the notion that there is something incompatible between robust Catholic faith and Catholic Old Testament than in every other Christian except that Catholics use the same Bible as every other Christian, except that Catholics are taught a watered-down version of the Bible. What can I say to you with open arms.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I should like to thank President Bush for his personal decency, manifest in his (unpublicized) personal attention to our wounded and to the families of the fallen; in his refusal to become bitter in the face of outrageous slander; and in his calm amidst tribulations that most of us can’t imagine. I should like to thank him for his unapologetic confession of Christian faith, and for his testimony to the importance that prayer plays in his life. And I should like to thank him for not giving a hoot about the mockery that such a witness draws from a secularized mass media, from American high culture, from leftists like Michael Moore, and from Euro-socialist snobs who spent eight years snearing at the evangelical cowboy in the White House while we always being funded from spiritual boredom. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

On pro-life issues, Vatican officials said the pope, who is seen as an intelligent politician, would not pick unnecessary fights with the church. Although it was expected, the Vatican reacted quickly to the president’s executive order Jan. 23 to remove a ban on federal aid to programs that promote or perform abortion overseas.

“A very disappointing decision,” read the headline in the Vatican newspaper, quoting from a reaction statement from U.S. bishops. Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Academy for Life, told an Italian newspaper that “if this is one of President Obama’s first acts, I have to say that, with respect, that we’re a short step away from a drastic decision.”

Archbishop Fisichella noted the massive participation in the Jan. 22 March for Life in Washington. If Obama’s response is to extend the right of abortion, he said, that would reflect the president’s own remarks about defending human dignity. “But we shall see,” he added.
17 COUGARS EARN ALL-MSFA ACADEMIC TEAM SELECTION The Mid-States Football Association has released its 2008 All-Academic Team and 17 members of the University of Saint Francis football team have earned selection. USF led all MSFA members with the 17 selections out of 104 players earning selection. “We’re very pleased to learn that 17 members of our football team have also shown exceptional attention to academics,” USF coach Kevin Donley said. “You have to have intelligent players to succeed on the field, and it is an important element of our success through the 11 seasons we’ve had a football program at the University of Saint Francis.”

Fox’s faith foundation for athletic prowess

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

DAYTON, Ohio — What was once a boyhood pipe dream is now a reality. Dan Fox, a 20-year-old junior at the University of Dayton (UD) is a member of the national-tying 25th-ranked UD basketball team. Fox’s spiritual and athletic lives began in Wolcottville in LaGrange county where he grew up. As a team in 2006 it was a “wake up” in LaGrange and student at Lakeland High School, the basketball star was a member of the church youth group. Fox’s faith is evident in his belief in the power of sports and the ability of athletes to reach the world for Jesus Christ. The University of Dayton has a chapter of Campus Crusade for Christ, founded in 1966 by David Hannah, who desired to build on society’s great love of sports and utilize the platform given to the athletes to reach the world for Jesus Christ.

“Day I was born, my uncle (who played basketball) came to see me,” he recalled. “As long as I can remember I’ve been playing basketball.” It was no surprise when Fox joined Lakeland’s team and excelled in the sport. Four years passed and soon it was time to look towards his college career. Fox said he knew he wanted to attend a school not too far away in a medium-sized city, with a small-to medium-sized student body and Division I sports.

Fox noted that a twist in fate led him to the University of Dayton. A good friend had his sight set on Butler University. In fact the two were planning on being roommates. Fox was “dead set” on the Indianapolis school until another friend suggested he consider a visit.

“fell in love with it,” he said about UD’s campus. Lasting, attending an NCAA tournament at UD’s arena sealed the deal for him. It was then he realized he wanted to go to Dayton. Fox joined the UD basketball team in 2006 as a walk-on, meaning he was not recruited prior to his attendance. And this is a privilege he does not take lightly.

“There’s a sense of part of something bigger than yourself,” he said about his enthusiasm for the team. “You get to see the rewards and everything that comes from it.”

Playing in the UD arena before a crowd of 12,000 or 13,000 people a night is especially exhilarating for someone who comes from a small town. But this superstar experience can be rather humbling as well.

To read more about Dan and his basketball career, see the UD Basketball Web site: daytonflyers.csfv.edu/sports/mBasketball/mtt/fbox/dan086.html.

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) hoops action heated up on another cold January Saturday morning at St. Aloysius, Yoder. In the show-down against St. Therese, the host Gators won both the boys’ and girls’ games.

Bud Sorg’s ladies from St. Aloysius increased their conference record to 4-0 claiming the Blue League title with the “W” on Jan. 24. However, leading just 17-16 going into the half, Coach Sorg summarized, “Linda Luegring’s team came ready to play.” At St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel, St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth boys and girls played St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne. The Eagle girls bested St. Joe-St. Elizabeth, while it was the Panther boys who squeaked by in one-point victory. The home team Squires girls and boys both were victorious over Queen of Angels.

Although they are still looking for a win, Queen of Angels coaches Dean Fowler and Dean Stahls agreed that their Lady Royals are having a lot of fun this season. Ross determined that the girls are not all that concerned with wins or losses. With seven of St. John’s girls playing basketball for the first time, and many of the team in other sports, head Coach Fowler explains, “We struggle with fundamentals, but we are good outside the perimeter. And most importantly, these girls never give up.”

The Royals are a combined seventh- and eighth-grade team and list nine on their roster. Bill Karltholl is also an assistant coach this season.

Boys
St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel, 48; Queen of Angels, 23 — Knappe 27, Simpson 8
St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth, 41; St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, 40 — Volz 15, Starks 9
St. Aloysius, 31; St. Therese, 27 — Thiele 8, Burrows 11

Girls
St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel, 51; Queen of Angels, 11 — Beckman 12, McMann, Fowler 4
St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth, 29; St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, 44 — Whitman, Andrews 17
St. Aloysius, 31; St. Therese, 19 — Sterrett 10, Hell 7

Two ICCL games head into overtimes

BY ELMER J. DANCH

SOUTH BEND — The Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) will wind up its 65th successive season this weekend by crowning four division champions.

The unbeaten St. Joseph Wildcats of Mishawaka have the best overall record. They and Christ the King are favored bets for division titles. Other champions will be decided on overall records.

And the Wildcats’ winning streak was carried on with the victory over Queen of Angels. Davis Payne scored 16 points.

Our Lady of Peace beat St. Michael of Plymouth, 38-30, with the help of Dominique Sanders scoring 16 points for the BEGesi. Davis Payne scored 16 points.

Boys
St. Matthew beat St. Thomas of Elkhart, 25-20; Frank Iavaganilo paced St. Thomas with 12 points.

The Lady Royals are a combined seventh- and eighth-grade team and list nine on their roster. Bill Karltholl is also an assistant coach this season.

Music Director
St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

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I enjoy writing for Today’s Catholic for several reasons, including getting the word out about all the wonderful things happening in our diocese. It is so inspiring to hear and write about the faith walk of others and an honor to share those stories. It’s inspiring to hear and write about events in our diocese. I am so about all the wonderful things happening in our diocese. I am so about all the wonderful things happening in our diocese.

Diane Freeby

I have enjoyed freelance writing for Today’s Catholic for three years. My husband Chuck and I have six children. With our youngest child now in first grade, I am able to spend a little more time writing while working around our family’s schedule. I also am a production assistant for MaryTV, a lay apostolate devoted to sharing Our Lady’s messages of peace and prayer through broadcast communications. I am a 1984 graduate of Carmel High School for Girls in Mundelein, Ill. In 1988, I earned a degree in mass communications from Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame. Our family has attended Corpus Christi Parish in South Bend for 18 years, with five children attending school there and the oldest now at Saint Joseph’s High School. The best thing about writing for Today’s Catholic is the opportunity to meet so many area Catholics and share their stories with our community.

Joe Kezinski

I have been a stringer for Today’s Catholic since 2005, primarily with St. Joseph County as my area of responsibility. My contributions include the annual spring and fall sports issues detailing the upcoming Inter-City Catholic League League, Marian High School and Saint Joseph’s High School athletic campaigns. My focus has included many youth activities in and out of the local schools as well as celebrations of faith designed to be inclusive of our youngest parishioners. While serving in the United States Marine Corps, I was on staff at The Camp LeJeune Globe, The Fleet Hometown News Center and The Thomas Jefferson Award winning Okinawan Marine. I am currently on the boys basketball staff at Saint Joseph’s High School and am the fall event coordinator at Marian High School. I am also the boys basketball director for the ICCL. With my family of Sabrina, Kenneth and Tyrus, we are members of St. Pius X Parish in Granger. Simply put, I write and coach because I can’t sing in the choir.

Sister Margie Lavonis, CSC

I am a member of the Sisters of the Holy Cross. I began writing the Cutting Edge column for young adults in 2000. In 2003, the former editor, Bill Cone, asked me to serve as a freelance reporter. Currently I work at Saint Mary’s, Notre Dame, as a writer/editor for the communications department of my congregation. The thing I like best about my work with Today’s Catholic is the opportunity to share my reflections with others.

Jodi Magallanes

I am employed full-time for The Elkhart Truth newspaper, having found my way back into journalism several years since high school. I have also written for El Noticiero Spanish-language newspaper, the PAPER in Milford, the Indianapolis News during college and founded the first Spanish-language newspaper in northern Indiana in 1992. My bachelor’s degree is in international relations and Spanish from IUPUI. I am also a former DRE and Spanish teacher, am bilingual and cover some of the Spanish-language and Hispanic community events in the diocese. My husband Ubaldo, son Nicolás and daughter Annabelle complete the Magallanes family. We live in Goshen and attend St. John the Evangelist Parish.

Jennifer Ochstein

I have been a freelance writer for three years and writing for Today’s Catholic just as long. I’m also an adjunct writing professor at Bethel College. Before venturing out on my own, I worked as a staff writer for The South Bend Tribune for eight years and graduated from Ball State University with a degree in journalism in 1997. Currently, I’m working on my master’s degree in English studies and communication at Valparaiso University and plan to graduate in 2010. What I enjoy most about writing for Today’s Catholic is meeting people who are committed to their ideals and their faith in God.

Tom Ubegging

I have been a parishioner at St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend, for 19 years. Writing is an avocation for me — my primary career has been in sales. Following graduation from Notre Dame in modern languages, I did some freelance writing for the local South Bend newspaper. I also wrote some copy for an ad agency, articles for a Christian magazine and for a newsletter for a missionary outreach. I have written a number of letters and articles to the local paper in support of the pro-life and pro-marriage causes. Writing for Today’s Catholic is way to use my talents to serve the church.

Deb Wagner

“For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

Matthew 7:8

I told Tim Johnson, longtime friend and high school classmate during a chance meeting in 2004, to let me know if he ever needed any writers and my journey as a stringer began shortly thereafter. I have always enjoyed writing and was able to develop my writing skills through Catholic education. By writing for Today’s Catholic, I am able to use a gift given to me by God and to learn about events within our diocese. I currently belong to Most Precious Blood Parish in Fort Wayne where I also serve as proclaimer of the word and eucharistic minister.
What’s Happening?

DEVOTIONS
First Saturday devotions of reparation
First Saturday devotions will be held Feb. 7, at the following locations: in Fort Wayne, St. Joseph, 7:15 a.m.; St. Charles, 8 a.m.; Sacred Heart, 7:30 a.m.; in Arcola, St. Patrick’s 7:15 a.m.; in Garrett, St. Joseph, 9 a.m.; in New Haven, St. Louis Besancon, 8:10 a.m.; St. John, 6:55 a.m. Call (260) 749-9396 to have your listing added.

A day of prayer for women
South Bend — The Rosary Sodality of St. Catherine of Sienna Parish will host Jim Murphy for a day of prayer and reflection on Saturday, Feb. 7, at 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Francis Convent on Dragon Trail. Murphy will speak to the call for holiness in our lives and how the Blessed Mother is our companion on our journey. Cost is $20. Call Mary Huszar at (574) 291-8021 to make a reservation.

Little Flower Holy Hour
Fort Wayne — Father David Voors, pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Decatur, will celebrate the holy hour for vocations at MacDougall Chapel Tuesday, Feb. 3, at 7:15 p.m.

Christ Child Society offers day of prayer and reflection
South Bend — Christ Child members will have a day of prayer and reflection on Wednesday, Feb. 4, at Sacred Heart Parish Center on Douglas Road. Father Kevin Bauman of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Elkhart, will speak. Gathering and coffee will be at 9:30 a.m. with reflection at 11 a.m. All are invited.

Young adults host Theology on Tap
South Bend — The St. Pius X young adults group will host a Theology on Tap series open to all young adults in their 20s and 30s Tuesday nights at Brigaid’s Irish Pub (Waterford Estates Lodge) 52890 State Rd. 933, at 7 p.m. Dates and speakers are: Feb. 3, “Sacrifice” with Professor Robert Kloska, director of Campus Ministry at Holy Cross College; Feb. 10, “Lent: Narrowing the Gap Between Spiritual and Religious” with Father William Schooler, pastor of St. Pius X; Feb. 17, “Reconciliation: An Encounter with the Lord” with Father Tom Florek, SJ, from the CLSM and the Notre Dame community; Feb. 24, Fat Tuesday celebration. Contact Sean Allen at allen3@nd.edu or (85) 354-9006.

MISC. HAPPENINGS
Chicken dinner plans
South Bend — The St. Hedwig Holy Name and Rosary Societies will have a chicken dinner buffet on Sunday, Feb. 8, from noon to 3 p.m. Tickets are $10 for adults and carry-ouls, children 12 and under free. Advanced sale only by Feb. 3 to (574) 287-4821, (574) 287-5533 or at the parish rectory.

Catholic networking offered
Fort Wayne — The Catholic Business network will have a Mass followed by a meeting Friday, Feb. 6, at 6:30 p.m. at St. John Church, 4500 Fairfield Ave. Bring your business cards. For more information visit www.thecatholicbusinessnetwork.com.

Knights plan fish fry
Fort Wayne — The Knights of Columbus Council 451, 601 Reed Rd., will have a fish fry on Friday, Feb. 6, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. The cost is $7 for adults, $3 for children 12 and under. Fish, two sides and beverage are included.

Knights plan fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a fish fry on Friday, Feb. 6, from 5 to 7 p.m. Adults $7.50, children $5-12 $3. Chicken strips for $7.50 and shrimp for $8.50 will be available.

St. Louis Besancon School plans square dance
New Haven — St. Louis Besancon will present Luers Spirit at Casa, 3402 Fairfield Ave., on Sunday, Feb. 1. Seatings will begin at 12:30 p.m. with the last seating at 4 p.m. Adults $7.50 includes Casaburo salad, bread, cheese-cake, soft drinks, coffee or tea and choice of three entrees. Chicken and under 10 are $4. A cash bar will be available. Tickets may be purchased by calling Kathy Skelly at Bishop Luers (260) 456-1261, Pat Landon at (260) 747-6110, or Molly Denning at (260) 409-4132.

Fish and tenderloin dinner
New Haven — St. Louis Besancon Parish will have a fish and tenderloin dinner Friday, Feb. 20, from 4-7 p.m. at Besancon Hall. Adults $8, children 6-11 $4.50 and children 5 and under free. Carry-out available.

Scouts offer fish dinner
Fort Wayne — The St. Vincent de Paul Boy Scouts will have a fish dinner Friday, Feb. 20, from 5-7:30 p.m. The cost is $3 for adults, $2 for children 12 and under. Fish, two sides and beverage are included.

Pancakes and sausage for breakfast
Fort Wayne — The Knights of Columbus Council 9460 will have a pancake and sausage breakfast Saturday, Feb. 1, at the St. Therese Parish Hall from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. A freewill donation will be accepted.

St. Jude HASA dance and silent auction
Fort Wayne — St. Jude will have a dance and silent auction Saturday, Jan. 31, at 8 p.m. in the church basement. Tickets are $12 per person in advance or $15 at the door. School tuition raffle tickets also available for $50 each. Winner announced at silent auction. (Need not be present to win.)
The Everetts, who had teenage daughters travel by bus with the group from Saint Joseph’s and Marian High Schools, also marched with their three younger children like so many other families in attendance.

The bus from Saint Joseph’s and Marian included several youth groups from Elkhart’s St. Thomas and St. Vincent de Paul parishes, along with a youth group from South Bend’s St. Adalbert Parish. Fort Wayne Dwenger High School also had a group come by bus, joining the other two diocesan buses organized by Allen County Right to Life. Students from Notre Dame and Saint Mary’s College also joined in the diocesan contingent.

Many of the high school students said it was important to make the trip, despite the hardships of traveling overnight and trying to sleep on a bus. Many of the students also spent a few hours sleeping on gym floors the night before the march. The trip was definitely a pilgrimage and not a vacation.

“I think it’s two things,” explained Bishop D’Arcy. “One, it’s a pilgrimage of prayer. At Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, several thousand young people gathered in prayer — and another 25,000 for Mass and the rosary today at the Verizon Center. So it’s prayer and penance. Pope John Paul II said that as Christ faced evil by prayer and penance, so should we.

Despite the busy schedule and lack of sleep, young people were energetic and enthusiastic about participating in the march.

“I was blown away by the huge numbers, especially for the Mass,” exclaimed Marian junior Katie Garcia. “I thought it was neat how everyone stood up for what they believed in even when it wasn’t convenient or pleasant.”

The group from Saint Joseph’s and Marian high schools packed a lot of action and prayer into their pilgrimage to Washington, D.C. With a bus filled to capacity, 46 students and 10 adults left South Bend around 8:30 Tuesday evening. Driving all through the night, the group arrived in Washington, D.C., around 9 a.m. the following morning.

Hoping to take in some of the historic sites at our nation’s capital, the students eagerly hopped off the bus and made their way over toward the U.S. Capitol Building. They were met by Indiana’s second district congressman and Marian High School graduate Joe Donnelly. Trying to stay on schedule, the group hustled over to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. They secured the last few rows of available seats four hours before Mass was to begin in the largest Catholic church in all of North America. The students used that time to pray, waiting for Mass and planning to tour the basilica.

Bishop D’Arcy was one of the first to arrive in the building, greeting time to tour the basilica.

One student, a junior at Marian High School, was the first to arrive in the building, greeting the students and the others arriving for Mass. Bishop D’Arcy was among the hundreds of priests and bishops who heard confessions in the makeshift confessional set up in the Verizon Center’s main restaurant and bar. A group of energetic nuns helped usher the seemingly unending line of penitents in and out of confession. The graces were not lost on the high school students.

“It was a total feeling of unity,” exclaimed Saint Joseph’s junior Rylee Magee. “Something that struck me from the homily was when he said Christ has already won the victory for us, and it’s still unfolding,” reflected Saint Joseph’s junior Donny MacDonell. “The battle’s already won, and we just have to do his will and his work... we have hope and believe in that.”

Arriving at the host high school late, and tired and hungry, the group was met by hundreds of other students and piles of empty pizza boxes. Another challenge for the pilgrims, chaplains managed to order a few extra pieces of pizza before sending the students off for a few hours of sleep.

Everyone packed up by 6 a.m. the next morning, headed to the Verizon Center where they would participate in the Youth Rally and Mass along with over 25,000 other Catholics. Musician Matt Maher was among those who led the crowd in prayer, while people took advantage of the opportunity for confession and the rosary before Mass.

Bishop D’Arcy was among the hundreds of priests and bishops who heard confessions in the makeshift confessional set up in the Verizon Center’s main restaurant and bar. A group of energetic nuns helped usher the seemingly unending line of penitents in and out of confession. The graces were not lost on the high school students.

“It was a total feeling of unity,” exclaimed Saint Joseph’s junior Rylee Magee after returning from confession. “Beyond a need for cleansing of the soul. It really energized me.”

As they made the long trip back home a few hours later, students and adults alike expressed thoughts on the pilgrimage.

St. Joseph junior Elizabeth Everett shared a meeting she and her friends had with an older woman during the march, and how they talked with her about the intrinsic evil of abortion.

“I think it really showed the main problem in this debate is that people just think it’s a matter of opinion, when they need to believe it’s a matter of fact,” said Everett. “It showed that belief is still in this country and the young people know.”

“Every one of you on this bus is a leader,” added Father Glenn Kohrman, pastor of St. Mary of the Lake Parish, Culver. “You can hopefully take this message back lovingly and kindly, because you have the truth on your side, to share this and help other people understand this more deeply.”

Today’s Catholic

This month’s featured selection:

“Eve: A Novel of the First Woman” by Elissa Eliott

Reviewed by Kay Cozad

This month’s Book-of-the-Month Club selection is “Eve: A Novel of the First Woman,” by Elissa Eliott. The 421-page tome is the story of the life of Adam and Eve following their expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

“Eve” is written in first person and each chapter is told through the eyes of either Eve herself and one of her three daughters, Naava, Aya or Dara. The story begins with Eve’s vivid and emotional account of finding her son Abel’s lifeless body after his murder at the hands of his older brother Cain and takes the reader back through the reality of the summer’s events that led to his death.

The chapters are laid out with the current narrator’s perception of life as it unfolds outside the garden of Eden, laced with both biblically and historically accountable events that draws the reader into the heart of the first family. At times it is difficult to distinguish when the text is current or describing a memory, however, it is well worth the time to uncover the treasure of this first time author’s imagination.

Eliott takes her reader through the everyday joys and sorrows of Adam and Eve in piecemeal fashion. As events and memories are described by the four female voices, the novel begins to fit together to offer a compellingly fertile account of the biblical story of creation as told in Genesis. As each character’s struggle develops, the human condition is easy to identify and relate to — Eve’s struggle to find God in everyday life again, Naava’s selfish vanity, Aya’s disability and need to be healed and young Dara’s innocence and malleability.

The emotional responses to the difficult and dangerous life outside the garden, along with some curious subplots may stir moral and theological queries in the reader.

Though Elliott takes literary license to produce this fictional tale, she explains in the afterward that the book was inspired by the Genesis account and Mesopotamian history, and written after much research. Her own faith questions play out in this colorful tome and nurtures a curiosity for more of the story.

The saga is an easy read though lengthy, but holds the reader’s attention with sheer determination. Eliott’s exquisite description of God’s creation of man and woman, their thoughts, fears, questions and responses when the reader’s appetite to return to the Bible and create the creation account in Genesis with new eyes. Her version of the story of creation provides food for thought for biblical and everyday faith questions any reader may have.

Questions for discussion

• During Eve’s conversation with Lucifer about feelings on page 110 she says, “I think it’s... choices... that inhibit her openness to the future. What events of the past, whether joys or painful, stop you from experiencing God’s presence in your life? How can you find God in the present moment? In your hope for the future?

• Cain and Naava were swayed by the riches of the city and chose to worship idols. Have you ever found yourself tempted to “follow the crowd?”

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