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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Pope says fasting in Lent opens hearts to God, hands to the poor

BY CINDY WOODEN



CNS PHOTO/NANCY WIECHEC

The Angelotti family prays before diving into a meatless meal of baked potatoes and salad at their home in Centreville, Va., Feb. 4. Parents Terry and Neil, along with their children, Brendan, 9, Emily, 11, and Kyle, 13, have made Operation Rice Bowl a centerpiece on the family table during Lent. The nationwide alms-giving program coordinated by Catholic Relief Services encourages participants to learn about hunger and poverty around the globe and then to make donations to help those most in need.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Fasting from food and detaching oneself from material goods during Lent help believers open their hearts to God and open their hands to the poor, Pope Benedict XVI said.

The Lenten fast helps Christians “mortify our egoism and open our hearts to love of God and neighbor,” said the pope in his message for Lent 2009.

The papal message for Lent, which begins Feb. 25 for Latin-rite Catholics, was released Feb. 3 at the Vatican.

Cardinal Paul Cordes, president of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Vatican’s office for promoting and coordinating charity, told reporters that Christian fasting brings together love for God and love for neighbor.

“The pope reminds us of our obligation to open our hearts and our hands to those in need,” he said at the Vatican presentation of the message.

The Vatican invited Josette Sheeran, executive director of the U.N.’s World Food Program, to help present the papal message.

“Serving the hungry is a moral call that unites people of all faiths,” said Sheeran, whose organization relies heavily on Catholic charities and other faith-based organizations to distribute food aid.

“At this time of worldwide economic challenges, let us not forget that the food and financial crises hit the world’s most vulnerable the hardest,” she said. “Since 2007, 115 million were added to the ranks of the hungry to create a total of nearly 1 billion people without adequate food.”

Sheeran said that at a time when the U.S. and other

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Fast and abstinence during Lent

Catholics in the United States are obliged to abstain from the eating of meat on Ash Wednesday and on all Fridays during the season of Lent. They are also obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Self-imposed observance of fasting on all weekdays of Lent is strongly recommended. — U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ pastoral statement of Nov. 18, 1966.

Persons between the ages of 18 and 58 are bound by the law of fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday; persons 59 years of age and older are not bound to the law of fasting on these days. All persons 14 years of age and older are bound to observe the law of abstinence during the Fridays of Lent.

The law of fasting, which obliges on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday and is recom-

mended on other weekdays of Lent, allows only one full meal a day, but does not forbid taking some food at the other two mealtimes. — Apostolic Constitution of Poenitemini 111, 1 and 2.

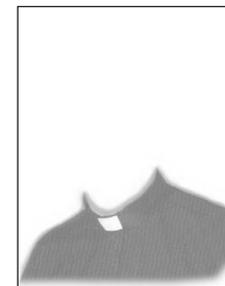
Bishop D’Arcy has urged that, according to a long-standing tradition, people try to attend daily Mass during Lent. Other traditional practices, such as Stations of the Cross, personal prayer and visits to the Blessed Sacrament, are highly encouraged. Concrete sacrifices, however small, for those in need are strongly encouraged. All are asked to pray for those who are preparing for baptism or reception into the church at Easter time. All are also asked to pray for more young men and women to respond to the call of the priesthood and religious life.

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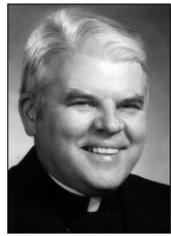
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Event stresses Catholic teaching on womanhood, sexuality, vocation



NEWS & NOTES

BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

There's always hope with the young

I headed west on a wintry Friday bound for Notre Dame. The occasion was the Edith Stein Conference. You have to know the origins of this initiative. Father Richard Warner, CSC, my good friend and head of the campus ministry at Notre Dame, reminded me recently that this was started by a group of young women in response to the V Monologues when it first was presented at Notre Dame. The young women wanted to make a positive response, so they began the conference named for this extraordinary woman, St. Theresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein). I recall a visit from my good friend Rabbi Richard Saffron, now long since retired, when she was declared Blessed and beatified in Cologne, Germany. She was gassed at Auschwitz, the Nazi killing camp, where so many Jews were killed. The rabbi correctly was reminding me that she was killed because she was a Jew, not because she had become a Catholic. Indeed she had said to her sister as they left the convent in Holland where she thought she had escaped from the worst of the Nazi prosecution against the Jews: "Come Rosa let us go and die for our people." I responded to my good friend, the rabbi, that she was declared a saint, because of evidence of her great holiness, and for her — the link between her Jewishness and Christianity — was a blessing.

The conference

This event in her name stresses Catholic teaching on womanhood, sexuality and vocation, and so much else. I met Anna Maria Scaperlanda who graduated from Notre Dame a few years ago, and I greeted her as "the foundress." She is a writer now, but this conference was her idea along with several young friends.

I arrived at the beautiful Alumni Hall Chapel a bit late and was greeted by Sarah Johnson and Maria Emilian, a parishioner of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, but now a student at Notre Dame, along with her sister Joanna.

The Mass was beautiful — extraordinary singing, some Gregorian chant. This chapel, one of the most beautiful on campus, was packed with mostly students. What a privilege to offer Mass with them.

I thought of John Paul II's act of faith about "a new springtime." He said that there would be a new springtime for the Christian faith — for the church across the millennium. That does not mean there will not be evil. There will be evil in the world

until the end. But it means a new springtime of faith, and these are manifestations of it. It seems to come in great part from among the young. It comes in a wide-eyed openness to the church and the traditions and a desire to learn to pray.

Love in the life of a bishop

I was asked to speak on love and vocation. There were many far more distinguished speakers than I in this three-day effort, which began early Friday afternoon. There was Sister Prudence Allen, the famous philosopher, and also the speaker who, not surprisingly, was probably the most significant speaker at the event, my longtime friend Professor Janet Smith.

I was given the topic, "Love and Vocation," but "would the bishop tell us how he finds love in his life as a bishop?" I started with a text of Pope John Paul II from his very first encyclical "Redemptor Hominis," where he wrote, "Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it." In an essay on young people, he said as a young priest he learned to "live human love." He said this guided him in his ministry in the confessional, in preaching, and in his writing; and this, of course, is the seed for his remarkable teaching referred to as the "theology of the body," which is a reflection in the light of faith on human sexuality; and which, if properly taught, will save our young people from the sad and permissive culture that is all around them.

'Deus Caritas Est'

I developed the thoughts of two more teachers; the first, Pope Benedict XVI in his encyclical "Deus Caritas Est" presents theological and philosophical analysis of love drawing from the Scriptures about God's passionate love as described in the Song of Songs, the Book of Hosea and as reaching its culmination in the pierced heart of Christ.

And the teacher

There is something from a beautiful book I have been reading by Father Francis Langford published by Our Sunday Visitor. This priest, who with Mother Teresa founded the priest component of the Missionaries of Charity, tells how Mother Teresa of Calcutta shared with him late in her life what it was God had revealed to her on the train in the mountains in India. She shared that she had learned what Christ meant when he said on the cross, "I thirst." She said it referred to his yearning for a relationship of love with humanity and with every person.

Love in the love of a bishop

I shared with them that for a bishop love is all around him everywhere in the

Eucharist, in the word of God, in the people he serves and in his coworkers. It was a splendid evening, and I thank God again for his gift of being the bishop of this diocese and what it affords at Notre Dame and other places in relating to young people.

Edith Stein

I was also able to share a few thoughts about Edith Stein from Sister Marie Morgan, OSF, who teaches at Marian, and has written her master's thesis at St. Thomas University in Rome on this extraordinary woman.

Drawing on sister's thesis and a little book entitled "The Conversion of Edith Stein," I presented a few thoughts about Edith Stein: philosopher, feminist, saint. She studied under the famous Husserl, a German philosopher. I also spoke about the famous exclamation of St. Therese Lisieux on love, "I will be love in the heart of the church." One of the things that brought Edith Stein to the church was when in the home of a friend she picked up the autobiography of Teresa of Avila and stayed up all night reading it. She was not yet Christian, but as she put the book down she said, "This is truth."

Four Teresas

Teresa of Calcutta, Therese of Lisieux, Teresa of Avila, Teresa Benedicta of the Cross — all women who knew what Christ meant when he said, "I am the vine and you are the branches."

The church's mystical tradition

It is a tradition of prayer in communion with Christ, and it remains as attractive to young people today as it ever was. We must just uncover it for them.

Now comes Lent

In one of the Lenten Mass prefaces it says that the season of Lent is a season of joy. I am told that the origin of the word has something to do with springtime. Let us approach this season with joy, for we long to experience joy and our hearts are open to the enormous love Jesus Christ has for us.

There are traditionally three ways of responding to Lent: the first always, is prayer; then fasting; then almsgiving. Let us pay attention to all, but especially to the third. Every day we meet someone out of work and another who has lost health insurance. Parishes are especially positioned to respond to these needs, and we must do so. I will celebrate the Ash Wednesday noon Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne, and I will speak at a number of parish missions during this holy season.

See you all next week.

UN statistics reveal extent of world hunger

BY NICOLE COIA

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In his 2009 Lenten message Pope Benedict XVI said the spiritual practice of fasting also should lead to concrete action on behalf of the hungry.

"Fasting is an aid to open our eyes to the situation in which so many of our brothers and sisters live," the pope said in the message released at the Vatican Feb. 3.

The Vatican invited Josette Sheeran, executive director of the World Food Program, to its press conference presenting the message.

The following are statistics on world hunger from the World Food Program and the Office of the U.N. Secretary-General:

- In 2008, the number of undernourished people in the world rose to 963 million (more than the combined populations of the United States, Canada and the European Union), up 40 million from 2007.

- The majority of undernourished people live in developing countries, with about 65 percent of the total living in India, China, Democratic Republic of Congo,

Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Ethiopia.

- Hunger and malnutrition are the No. 1 risk to health worldwide, greater than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined.

- Hunger does not affect just the individual. Economists estimate that every child whose physical and mental development is stunted by hunger and malnutrition stands to lose 5 percent to 10 percent in lifetime earnings.

- The total food surplus of the United States alone could satisfy every empty stomach in Africa; France's leftovers could feed the hungry in Democratic Republic of Congo and Italy's could feed Ethiopia's undernourished.

- Today 25,000 people will die from hunger. A child dies every six seconds of malnutrition or starvation.

- Food riots erupted in the spring of 2008 in Haiti, Mexico and Senegal. The World Bank estimated that social unrest, as a consequence of the world food crisis, could spread to 33 countries.

- There is enough food in the world today for everyone to have the nourishment necessary for a healthy and productive life.

cally on the practice of fasting, the pope said it is a way for believers to submit themselves "humbly to God, trusting in his goodness and mercy."

"Denying material food, which nourishes our body, nurtures an interior disposition to listen to Christ and be fed by his saving word," the pope wrote.

"Through fasting and prayer we allow him to come and satisfy the deepest hunger that we experience in the depths of our being: the hunger and thirst for God," he said.

While some people fast to cleanse their body or to lose weight, Christians fast during Lent in order "to heal all that prevents them from conformity to the will of God," he said.

"Freely chosen detachment from the pleasure of food and other material goods helps the disciple of Christ to control the appetites of nature, weakened by original sin," the pope wrote.

At the same time, he said, "fasting is an aid to open our eyes to the situation in which so many of our brothers and sisters live."

By fasting in solidarity with the poor, "freely embracing an act of self-denial for the sake of another, we make a statement that our brother or sister in need is not a stranger," the pope said.

The text of the pope's message in English, Spanish and other languages is posted online at: http://212.77.1.245/news_services/bulletin/news/23311.php?index=23311&q=en.

A decision regarding future of south side schools in Fort Wayne area

Last year, Bishop John M. D'Arcy asked that a cycle of reviews begin with the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. The reviews would have the goal of strengthening Catholic education in the diocese. The process began with the south side of Fort Wayne and would continue with other areas in the diocese.

Bishop D'Arcy appointed a committee comprised of six members who included a pastor, principal, council of teacher's member and representatives of the diocesan school board. The first recommendation of this committee was the merger of Benoit Academy to St. John the Baptist in Fort Wayne. This took place over the summer of 2008.

On Oct. 17, 2008, further recommendations were presented to the schools and parishes involved for the purpose of a period of review and comment. These comments then were presented to Bishop D'Arcy for a decision on the future of these schools.

The committee had one goal of strengthening Catholic education on the south and east ends of Fort Wayne. For this, it was necessary to address the ability of six schools to remain viable into the future. These schools include: St. John the Baptist, New Haven, St. Louis Besancon, St. Joseph, Monroeville, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel, St. Aloysius, Yoder, and St. Therese, Fort Wayne.

After the committee made its initial recommendations, there was a period of discernment where the schools and parishes formulated the positives and negatives of the recommendations and also offered possible alternatives not mentioned in the recommendations. These were presented to Bishop D'Arcy for review and his decision was announced at the involved parishes this past weekend.

"I am grateful to our committee for their close examination of our schools and for their recommendations," said Bishop D'Arcy. "It is our obligation and our purpose to provide the best possible Catholic education for the largest number of students and to do it at a reduced cost, so more families can enroll their children in our schools.

"The purpose of this review was to begin a discussion of common issues and to strengthen these schools for the future. The question brought by the diocese was whether to not joining schools together would improve those schools, both from an educational and financial point of view."

St. John the Baptist School, New Haven:

- Bishop D'Arcy asked that the school remain strong academically and, above all, spiritually
- There will be another evaluation in three years

St. Louis Academy, Besancon (New Haven):

- The school will continue for three years, after which time there will be another evaluation
- The school should continue its strong tradition of academics and continue the state's School Improvement Process
- The parish is expected to remain current with all its financial responsibilities
- The parish should plan to follow the guidelines mentioned in Policy 5120, which recommend a percentage of income for the school, taking into account tuition, outside resources and above all, the parish subsidy
- The parish is expected to implement a tiered tuition as stated in Policy 5120, namely, the first child in a family pays at the 100 percent level, the second child at 75 percent, and the third child at 50 percent
- The parish should publish the school's income and expenses, showing clearly how much of the expense of the school comes from the parish subsidy
- Enrollment currently is at 60 students. This number must not decrease, and the goal should be 72 students in three years
- When enrollment of a combined classroom falls below 10 students, the pastor will be expected to combine classes with St. Joseph School, Monroeville, at the campus of his choosing

St. Joseph School, Monroeville:

- The school should continue its strong tradition of academics and continue the state's School Improvement Process
- The parish must remain current with its financial responsibilities
- The parish is expected to follow the guidelines mentioned above in Policy 5120
- The parish should publish the school's income and expenses, showing clearly how much of the expense of the school comes from the parish subsidy
- During the next three years, enrollment should not be less than 50 students (the current enrollment), with a goal of 62 students. When enrollment of a combined classroom falls below 10 students, the pastor will be expected to combine classes with St. Louis Academy at the campus of his choosing

St. Joseph School-Hessen Cassel:

- The school will remain as is, but with certain guidelines that must be reached in the next three years, after which there will be another evaluation

St. Aloysius School, Yoder:

- There will be no change at St. Aloysius School at this time
- The school should continue its strong tradition of academics and continue the state's School Improvement Process
- The parish is expected to remain current with its present financial responsibilities
- The parish is expected to follow the guidelines mentioned above in Policy 5120
- The parish should publish the schools income and expenses, showing clearly how much of the expense of the school comes from the parish subsidy
- Enrollment (K-8) should be maintained no lower than 75 students with a goal of 86 students in three years

St. Therese School, Fort Wayne:

- A merger with St. Aloysius School will not take place. But there needs to be a stronger marketing and recruiting effort for St. Therese School

POPE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

governments are announcing multitrillion-dollar packages to bailout banks, car companies and other industries, the World Food Program is asking that 0.7 percent of all stimulus plans be dedicated to hunger relief.

"Financial rescue packages must serve not only Wall Street and Main Street, but also the places with no streets," she said.

Cardinal Cordes and Sheeran agreed that the financial bailout plans are necessary not just for helping the world's richest nations, but also for preventing a worsening situation in poor countries dependent on exports, on development aid and on the money their citizens working abroad send home to support their families.

"If the financial system fails completely, it will hurt the poor first," Cardinal Cordes said.

Sheeran said the 2007-2008 food crisis — when the price of basic staples soared — combined with more recent job losses because of the financial crisis involved "two separate problems, but the result is the same: malnutrition and death."

In his message, Pope Benedict said the Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving are meant to help Christians focus on God and prepare for the Easter celebration of Jesus' victory over sin and death.

Focusing his message specifi-

Promoting an understanding of the dignity of both men and women

Genders, sexuality issues addressed at Edith Stein Conference 2009

BY DIANE FREEBY

NOTRE DAME — “To provide a forum that is positive instead of reactionary.”

That’s what the organizers of the fourth annual Edith Stein Conference hope to achieve as they address various issues of gender and sexuality, especially as they pertain to women.

Hosted by the Identity Project of Notre Dame (idND), nearly 300 people registered for the Feb. 13-14 conference, “Love: What Hurts and What Works. Engaging Self, Society and God.” Twenty-five guest speakers and a dozen panelists were on hand giving talks designed to promote an understanding of the dignity of both men and women.

Talks like “Genuine Female Beauty and the ND Hook-Up Culture” were packed, according to organizers.

Notre Dame President Holy Cross Father John Jenkins offered a written welcome from the university. Bishop John D’Arcy celebrated Mass Friday evening and also gave a talk on “Love and Vocation.”

Notre Dame seniors Caitilin Podlaski and Joanna Emilian were joined by Saint Mary’s College senior Theresa Klinkhammer as chairs for the 2009 project.

“The first conference I attended really inspired me,” recalled Podlaski. “I went to Dr. Catherine Ruth Pakaluk’s talk, and I remember she was so happy and put God first in her life. She is a wonderful witness and embodies Pope John Paul II’s theology of the body. If there was one thing I wanted to throw myself into, this was it.”

Emilian echoed praise for Pope John Paul II, citing his writings as her inspiration: “In high school, I fell in love with ‘Love and Responsibility,’ and the dignity of the human person. Then I heard about Edith Stein and how she influenced Carol Wojtyla.”

Edith Stein, patron saint of the conference, was a German philosopher who died a martyr at Auschwitz in 1942. Conference organizers drew heavily from her writings, addressing the “distinct role women play in society, the

undeniable, nurturing female character and the vocation to motherhood. All of these aspects of women are reliant on and furthered by love, the key topic of the conference.”

Dr. Pakaluk returned for this year’s conference and shared her inspiring story in her talk, “Feminine Call to Motherhood.” Pakaluk, currently a doctoral candidate at Harvard in the department of economics, also studies and writes on motherhood, marriage and family issues, and Catholic social doctrine. More than her degrees, her experiences as student, wife and mother of five children give her a unique perspective.

“God must look at us the way we look at our own small children,” Pakaluk chuckled as she took the podium, “and how we think every little thing they do is just so neat.”

Pakaluk went on to discuss the influence Edith Stein had on her as a young wife and mother trying to get through graduate school.

“Stein says it’s hard because for women, it’s about being in relation to others,” explained Pakaluk. “For us, it’s much more important than what we do or make. When I got married, I gave those professional things to God. I made my obligations to God and family my first priorities.”

Pakaluk spoke about the importance of faith and education for women, whose true vocation is to nurture and form another person. That other person could be a biological or adopted child, or in the case of consecrated religious, the many children they adopt spiritually. Either way, she says, women have to be prepared.

“It is very difficult to make a major life change later,” she advised her audience. “Think about these things now. Open the catechism. Get a spiritual director. Start to put religious things first. Start to grow now in your convictions of what it means to be a child of God.”

To that end, Benjamin Klinkhammer’s talk, “Balancing Work and Family Life in a Hectic World,” took another look at the importance of putting priorities in order.



DIANE FREEBY

Edith Stein 2009 chairs include, from left, Caitilin Podlaski, Theresa Klinkhammer and Joanna Emilian. Podlaski and Emilian are Notre Dame seniors, and Klinkhammer is a senior at Saint Mary’s College. Along with the support of Holy Cross Father John Jenkins and Bishop John M. D’Arcy, the Edith Stein Project is backed by campus groups like Right to Life and the Center for Ethics and Culture.

“When I’m most stressed,” he revealed, “is when I’m not prioritizing. When I’m not putting God as center. When you put God as the center, as the pillar of everything, everything else balances out.”

Klinkhammer, the father of three children with another on the way, admitted the biggest challenge is to find that quiet time. He emphasized the importance of prayer life and how it benefits both family and work life.

“Jesus teaches us how to make our big decisions,” said Klinkhammer, referring to the need for constant prayer. “Jesus goes to the desert for 40 days prior to his ministry. Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemani prior to his passion.”

Other topics included pornography, the media’s influence, violence against women, sex and abstinence, the contraception myth and marriage preparation. Those in attendance could choose from a variety of subjects and speakers, in addition to several

interactive panel discussions.

“I really enjoyed the conference,” said Emily Thompson, a Notre Dame freshman from Leewood, Kan. She admitted society gives mixed signals about what it means to be a woman. “This conference provides clear answers a lot of girls aren’t hearing. The contraception talk wasn’t something I expected to hear much about. A lot of girls say it’s not a big deal or a problem. But in Caroline Lashutka’s talk, I learned about the connection with eating disorders.”

Women weren’t the only ones in attendance. Andy Bulso, a Notre Dame senior from Nashville, Tenn., said he had a few friends who were giving talks, like Amy Kleczinski’s “Sex and Abstinence: The Perfect Couple.” Bulso said he knew a little about NFP, but not everything.

“The abstinence period really helps the couple live a better, deeper and more spiritual and loving marriage,” he said. “That’s so countercultural.”

Kate Sweeney, associate director for the Denver-based Education on the Nature and Dignity of Women (ENDOW),

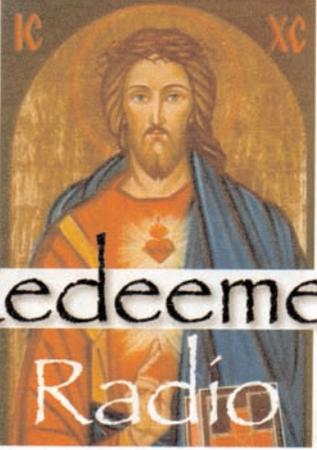
said she feels blessed to be a part of the John Paul II generation.

“New feminism differs from the radical feminism of the 1960s and ‘70s,” said Sweeney. “It recognizes and affirms the true genius of woman, which is the capacity for the other. New feminism is based on who women are versus what women do.”

Sweeney pointed to the Blessed Mother as the perfect role model of feminine genius.

“In her fiat, she gave her total ‘yes’ to God, and at the wedding feast of Cana she shows us how to care for others needs. Mary put herself at God’s service,” said Sweeney, “and at the service of others. JPII wrote, ‘In her service, she reigns. She teaches us service and love.’”

Sweeney wrapped up her talk, and summed up the conference, with a challenge: “Don’t let this weekend be wasted. Christ has called you, by your mere presence this weekend. The world is desperately in need of authentic femininity. How will you answer the call? How will you reveal the gift of your womanhood by placing yourself in the service of others?”



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Christ the King honored as a Blue Ribbon School

BY KAREN CLIFFORD

SOUTH BEND — Teamwork between teachers, administrators, students and parents is the key to a successful school, according to Stephen Hoffman, principal of Christ the King School in South Bend. And in 2008 the school became one of only 50 recipients of the Blue Ribbon School awards from the Council for American Private Education (CAPE).

Christ the King School was in the top 10 percent of the Indiana statewide testing for 2007-2008. ISTEP+ measures what students know and are able to do at each grade level. The Blue Ribbon designation is not chosen by state; rather it is the top-50 private schools nationwide. There were two schools picked from Indiana, the second being from Michigan City.

Peg Riggs, who has two children at Christ the King, conveys that the school provides her sons Drew and Ben the opportunity to grow educationally, spiritually and socially. Riggs credits the teachers and administrators for their hands-on approach with the students.

"When the students see the teachers going farther and pushing harder to make them think, experiment and learn, it gives a whole new level of respect for the school," Riggs adds, "The administrators demand excellence from the students, and the students want to give it."

Riggs notes the spiritual component of the school is a must for her family. The students attend all-school Mass twice a month, have adoration once a month, and attend a daily Mass once a week. "They file in silently, take their seats, and truly prepare their hearts for Mass. The reverence is overwhelming."

Riggs' son Drew was socially uncomfortable as a new student last year. She credits his third-grade teacher Christine Nemeth, as helping Drew feel welcome at school. "She is just one example of how the teachers care for the whole student, not just the educational side," she explains.

Students have glowing remarks about their teachers and volunteer

athletic coaches. Connor Edmonds, an eighth-grade student at Christ the King says, "The teachers are really great, if you need help they will stay after school." Connor plays football for Christ the King and he notes that "the coaches make sure that everyone stays on their grades, because if you don't, you are ineligible and you are no good for the team."

Teachers credit the support of parents and the school staff as key elements of the school's accomplishments.

Teacher Christine Nemeth acknowledges the parent-teacher partnership as critical to the school's success. "Here at Christ the King our parents are the absolute best. As a staff we are always there to support each other also."

Principal Hoffman also attributes parental support as a crucial factor in the school's achievements. "We have parent volunteers throughout the school. One parent sits at the front office every day for three hours. Parent volunteers come in to read to classes and all the school's coaches are volunteers."

Extracurricular activities also contribute to the overall blue ribbon status. "This year Christ the King has a quiz bowl team that competes with other area Catholic schools. We also have a drama club that goes over to Saint Mary's College to learn acting," Hoffman says.

He notes that the school's music sector has been active through Christmas concerts and a spring musical, and also the school's band, which is administered through Saint Mary's and Notre Dame students.

Ultimately, the success of every school rests within its leadership. Riggs notes, "Mr. Hoffman, the principal, is the heart of the school. He cares about every single child who enters his school." She concludes that it was through his direction that her family chose Christ the King School. "He understands that the parents have a choice when it comes to their children's education, and he is honored that we chose Christ the King."



DIANE FREEBY

Blue Ribbon banner hangs on Christ the King School.



KAREN CLIFFORD

Principal Stephen Hoffman interacts with Christine Nemeth and her third-grade class at Christ the King School in South Bend.



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Bishop John M. D'Arcy is joined by diocesan staff Brian MacMichael from the Office of Worship, Debbie Schmidt, executive director of Catholic Charities, and Kathy Denice, vice-president of the board of directors of Catholic Charities, at the blessing of the Community Resource Center for Refugees in Fort Wayne on Feb. 12. The center is the result of grants from the Anthony Wayne Services Foundation and the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ through the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation. The purpose is to help refugees achieve self-sufficiency in the greater Fort Wayne community by providing educational programming and services for individuals after their completion of the initial resettlement program until they have been in the United States for five years. The center is located at 2826 South Calhoun St. and can be contacted at (260) 456-8969 for those wishing to volunteer services.

Abortion laws pass Senate, headed to House

INDIANAPOLIS — When does life begin? Catholic teaching articulates this concept very clearly — life begins at conception. However, can Hoosier lawmakers put this simple, yet profound concept into law?

Sen. Patricia Miller (R-Indianapolis) author of two abortion bills, which passed the Senate Feb. 10, realizes lawmakers may not be able to get this exact language in statute, but is doing her part to improve informed consent laws for abortion and hold doctors who perform them more accountable.

Miller's informed consent bill, SB 90, which passed the Senate 39-11, would add several new components to Indiana's informed consent law. Consent to an abortion would be made in writing rather than given orally, which is now the law and current practice. It would inform the woman in writing at least 18 hours prior to the abortion, about adoption options and that some of the health cost associated with having the baby could be paid by the adopting couple. Women seeking abortion also must be informed of physical risks involved with having an abortion and carrying the baby to term, that human life begins when sperm and ovum meet, and that the fetus may feel pain during the procedure.

Miller said she had wanted to get the language that life begins at fertilization in the bill, but said there was too much opposition to it so she had to go with a more technical definition stating that human physical life begins when sperm and ovum meet and the cells begin to divide.

Another measure authored by Miller would require more accountability for the doctor performing an abortion. Senate Bill 89, passed the Senate (44-6), provides hospital privileges for physicians performing the abortion in the county where the abortion is performed, or a nearby county for the purpose of follow-up treatment for a woman who has had an abortion.

Miller said, "The purpose of the physician admitting privileges bill, SB 89, is to make sure that the doctor is available for follow up treatment if a woman has complications due to the abortion. Right now, at least as far as I know the physicians that perform abortions in Indiana come from another state. The doctor leaves and if the woman has complications she is told to go to an emergency room. Then an emergency room physician is providing treatment for problems that they are not responsible for. And in some cases the woman is embarrassed about having an abortion and may not tell the doctor she has had an abortion, so the physician is unclear what triggered the hemorrhaging," said

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

BY BRIGID CURTIS AYER

Miller.

Senate Bill 89 also requires the physician to notify the patient of the hospital locations where the patient can receive follow-up care. It also makes abortion physicians more accountable for the abortions they perform and provide better after care for the woman.

"These bills are not new to the Senate," said Miller. "They passed the Senate last year and but were combined into one bill. This year the bills are separated into two bills, but in years past they have not gotten a hearing in the House," said Sen. Miller.

Information provided by Americans United for Life, a national pro-life action coalition, suggest that informed-consent laws reduce abortion not because access is denied but because women are more informed about the truth of abortion and decide against having one.

Between 1990 and 1999 abortions declined by 18.4 percent. Research conducted by the Heritage Foundation, a public policy think tank in Washington, D.C., confirms that informed consent state laws reduce the number of abortions, in particular parental consent laws for minors seeking an abortion has the most significant impact in curbing abortion. Indiana currently requires parental consent for minors seeking an abortion.

According to data provided by the National Conference of State Legislatures on state informed-consent laws, 33 states require counseling; seven require informing about the abortion and breast cancer link; eight required informing about fetal pain; 20 require informing about mental health impact; six require ultrasound services; 28 states have a waiting period.

Rep. David Cheatham (D-North Vernon) and Rep. Matt Bell (R-Avilla) are the House sponsors of the bill. Since the Democratic Party holds the majority of seats, Rep. Cheatham will be the lead sponsor of the bill as it moves through the House. The bills have not been assigned to a House committee. When they are assigned a committee, it will be up to the committee chair to determine if the bill will receive a hearing.

Sen. Miller said she is uncertain about the fate of her bills as it is now up to the House to act.

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Seven young men welcomed into St. Augustine Church

BY MAY LEE JOHNSON

SOUTH BEND — The way to reach families is with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and meaningful ministries to their children and teens. So says St. Augustine Catholic Church.

Seven young men are finding the welcoming love of the church that each of them wants to know.

Cortez Anderson, Catreal Anderson, Tyler Flynn, James and Jamar Taylor, D'Xavier Freeman,

Keyshawn Wright and Trajon Wright all have taken the first steps to becoming full-fledged members of the Catholic Church.

"I wanted to be a member of this church because I need the guidance in my life," says Jamar Taylor. "There are a lot things you can get into out here. But church seems to be the place where you can do no wrong, and I like that."

Cortez Anderson adds, "I want to be a part of church because kids keep picking on me, and I handle it badly sometimes. But I'm not sure I want to be baptized yet. There is still so much I don't understand, and I'm still learning how to behave."

Youth minister Melvin Tardy spearheaded the RCIA program at St. Augustine in which the young men are involved. Five

parishioners became sponsors for the boys and took one or two of them under their wings as part of the preparation process.

The sponsors worked with the catechumens and candidates of the church, who have been active in the church's youth ministry program, but not members of the church. They take part in many church activities and have been known to come to the church as many as three times a week for youth activities.

"To see these young men coming to church and wanting to be a part of it was one of the reason I became D'Xavier's sponsor," says sponsor Kevin Irvin. "It was a great experiences for both of us."

The boys' sponsors were Linwood Bailey, Alfred Guillaume, Thomas Jenkins, Kevin

Irvin and Holy Cross Brother Roy Smith.

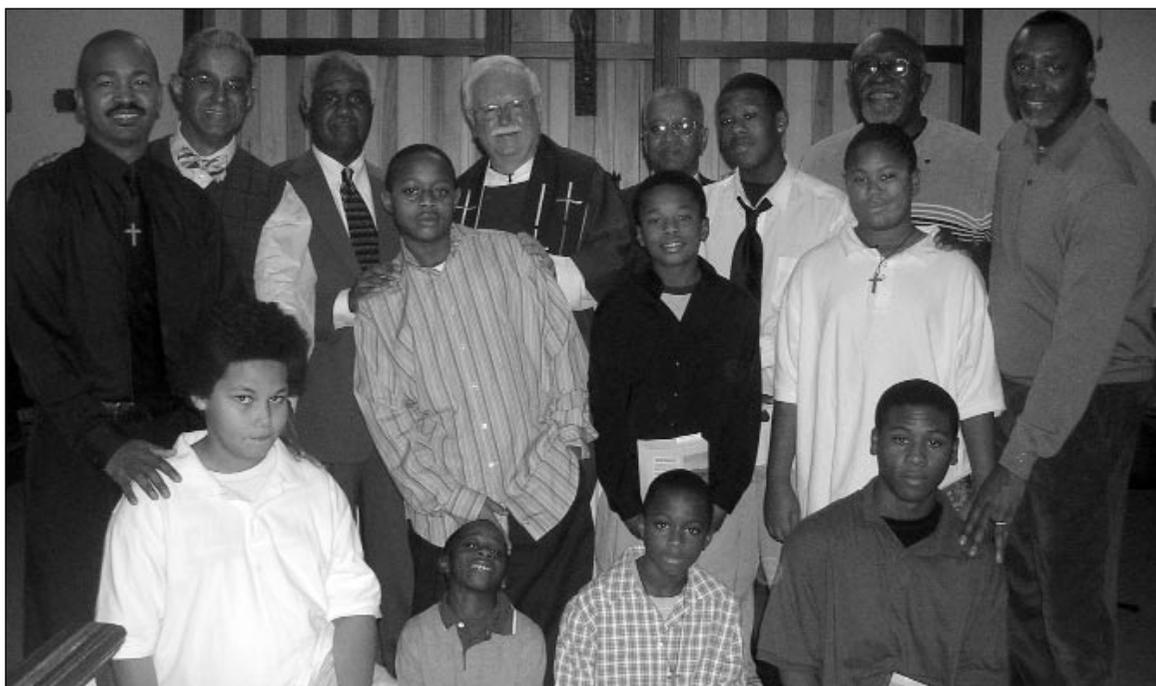
As the boys continue the initiation process, the church will continue to help them on their spiritual journeys.

"Church is cool," said Keyshawn Wright. "I feel good when I'm at St. Augustine with my mother, father and brother. We all love it here."

The boys will each become members of St. Augustine Church.

"I wanted to be a member of this church because I need the guidance in my life."

JAMAR TAYLOR



MAY LEE JOHNSON

The young men who are part of the rite of acceptance into the order of catechumens and rite of previously baptized candidates are shown here with their sponsors. In front, kneeling from right are Trajon Wright and D'Xavier Freeman. In the middle row, from right, are Tyler Flynn, Cortez Anderson, James Taylor, Jamar Taylor (white shirt standing) and Keyshawn Wright. In the back from right are youth director Melvin Tardy, Alfred Guillaume, Linwood Baily, Holy Cross Father Leonard Collins, Thomas Jenkins, Holy Cross Brother Roy Smith and Kevin Irvin.

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Pope says confession purifies sinners, restores relationships

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Through the sacrament of penance, Christ purifies sinners and restores their relationship with God and with the community of believers, Pope Benedict XVI. Using his Angelus address Feb. 15 to comment on the day's Gospel story about the healing of a leper, the pope said that in biblical times leprosy brought with it "a sort of religious and civil death" because its victims were forced to live outside the community. Bible stories use leprosy as "a symbol of sin, which is the true impurity of heart that separates us from God," he said. "The sins we commit separate us from God and, if they are not confessed humbly trusting in divine mercy, they even produce the death of the soul," Pope Benedict said. Healing the leper and all who were ill, Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah who would take on the infirmities and suffering of all God's people, he said.

Tiny Vatican City plays big role in promoting world peace, says pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — While it may be "a nearly invisible dot on the world map," the Vatican plays an enormous role in fostering world peace, solidarity and hope, Pope Benedict XVI said. The Vatican, which is the home of the tomb of St. Peter and the residence of the pope, "unceasingly announces a message of true social progress, hope, reconciliation and peace," he said during a Feb. 14 audience with participants in a congress marking the 80th anniversary of the founding of Vatican City State. This "minute and unarmed state," which lacks any real army, seems "apparently irrelevant within the big, international geopolitical strategies," he said. But precisely because the Holy See is truly free and independent from the world's geopolitical powers it can continually promote solidarity and the common good, he said. Perhaps it is for that reason that "everyone from every part of the world pays attention to this tiny strip of land," he added.

Date set for final approval of Blessed Damien's canonization

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican announced that final approval would be given Feb. 21 for the canonization of Blessed Damien de Veuster, a Belgian-born missionary priest who served patients with Hansen's disease on the Hawaiian island of Molokai more than a century ago. Pope Benedict XVI authorized the publication of a decree recognizing a miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Damien last July, clearing the way for his canonization. The Vatican said Feb. 16 that

NEWS BRIEFS

FRESCO SHOWS MULTIPLICATION OF LOAVES AND FISHES



CNS PHOTO/MAX ROSSI, REUTERS

Gregorio Guglielmi's fresco "The Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes" is seen during an exhibition at the former convent of Sant'Agostino in Rome Feb. 11. The painting was hidden from the public eye for centuries but admirers now have five weeks to see the late Baroque masterpiece.

an "ordinary public consistory" — a meeting of the pope with cardinals resident in Rome and invited bishops and other dignitaries — would be held Feb. 21 to finalize the approval of 10 canonizations, including Blessed Damien's. The dates for the canonization ceremonies are expected to be announced shortly after the consistory. Blessed Damien was a 19th-century missionary, a member of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Born in 1840, he spent the last 16 years of his life caring for patients with Hansen's disease, or leprosy, on Molokai. He died in 1889 and was beatified in 1995.

Bishop says he feels 'media hatred,' court rulings hurting church

PEORIA, Ill. (CNS) — Bishop Daniel R. Jenky of Peoria said he was becoming "increasingly concerned" that the Catholic Church "in effect no longer enjoys equal justice under the law." He cited what he called the media's "intense hatred for the Catholic faith" amid the tensions of the country's "culture wars" as well as "recent decisions in the Illinois courts" that "may make our legal situation more difficult in the future." Bishop Jenky made the comments in a letter to priests, religious, deacons and parishioners that was distributed the weekend of Feb. 7-8. In January the 3rd District Appellate Court of

Illinois reversed a Peoria court ruling that dismissed lawsuits by alleged abuse victims on the grounds they had waited too long to claim abuse. The ruling is expected to be appealed to the Illinois Supreme Court. "It should be noted that the sexual abuse of minors cuts across all socioeconomic lines, ethnicities, ministries and religions," Bishop Jenky said in his letter. "It is important to remember that the state basically exempts its own institutions from civil litigation."

Poll shows residents of Southern states most religious in country

PRINCETON, N.J. (CNS) — As part of a series titled "State of the States," a new Gallup Poll ranked the top religious states in the United States and found Southern states ranked highest on the list, while several states in the Northeast ranked the lowest. After more than 350,000 interviews, the survey found that Southern states had the highest percentage of respondents who said they considered religion to be an important part of their daily lives. Mississippi topped the list with 85 percent of those surveyed claiming that religion was important. Vermont was named the least religious state, with just 42 percent of respondents there who said they were religious. The data for the poll was collected throughout 2008 via telephone interviews of 355,334 U.S. residents over the age of 18.

According to the Princeton-based polling organization, the poll accounted for varying demographics within each state to ensure the accurate representation of the state's population. Overall, Gallup found that the U.S. is generally a religious country. Sixty-five percent of the total population said religion was an important part of their lives.

Diocesan schools that may close could become public charter schools

BROOKLYN, N.Y. (CNS) — Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio and New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced the possibility of converting a limited number of Catholic schools threatened with closure into publicly funded charter schools. The announcement was made during a Feb. 7 press conference at New York's City Hall. "Many Catholic schools are finding it hard to stay open because of tighter budgets and falling enrollment, even as they remain attractive to so many families because of their focus on high academic standards and high student achievement," Bloomberg said. The mayor also noted that "many if not most of the students" would likely seek admission in local public schools "that are already at or near capacity, which gives us all a shared interest in finding innovative ways" to keep open the schools slated to close. Bishop DiMarzio said the possibility of

converting closing schools into charter schools "only furthers the cooperation between the Diocese of Brooklyn and the city of New York."

Authorities release Chinese bishop after 30-month detention

XIWANZI, China (CNS) — Auxiliary Bishop Leo Yao Liang of Xiwanzi was released after being detained since July 2006, but Chinese authorities warned him not to exercise his episcopal authority or preside at large-scale church activities. Bishop Yao was detained in part for consecrating a large new church in Guyuan county in 2006, the Asian church news agency UCA News reported Feb. 13. Sources who visited the 85-year-old bishop upon hearing of his release Jan. 25 told UCA News that his health and physical condition seemed "quite good." Public security officers sent the bishop back to his church in Xiwanzi, in northern Hebei province. A source said officers informed a few parish workers in advance about Bishop Yao's release but forbade them to hold any welcome gathering. The source quoted Bishop Yao as saying officers treated him well during his 30-month detention in different locations, although he was forbidden to contact anybody. Bishop Yao, who is not registered with the government and whom the government recognizes only as a priest, said laypeople are free to visit him, although he thinks public security officers will keep an eye on him. He is not allowed to travel outside his parish area, UCA News reported.

Crash claims 9/11 widow heading to Jesuit school's event

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Beverly Eckert, a victim of the Feb. 12 plane crash near Buffalo, N.Y., was en route to present a scholarship award in honor of her late husband at Jesuit-run Canisius High School in Buffalo. Eckert, a Sept. 11 widow, also had planned to take part in a weekend celebration in Buffalo of what would have been her husband's 58th birthday. Her husband, Sean Rooney, died in the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. That day he spoke to his wife by cell phone up until the second tower — where he was trapped — collapsed. A vice president for risk management services at the Aon Corp., he worked on the 98th floor. Eckert, a resident of Stamford, Conn., was aboard Continental Flight 3407 from Newark, N.J., to Buffalo when it crashed into a home seven miles from the Buffalo Niagara International Airport, killing all 49 passengers and crew onboard and one person on the ground. According to initial reports, the plane was coming in for a landing through light snow and fog. Witnesses said they heard the plane's engines sputtering before it struck the house in a fiery explosion.

Bishop Luers High School announces Sterling Sentinel Nominees

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Luers High School has announced its Sterling Sentinel nominees. They are the following: Nathan Hoeffel for art, nominated by Barb Sather; Joseph Bishop for industrial/vocational, nominated by Becky Handel; Annie Pryor for social studies, nominated by Julie Gore; Jessica Allphin for drama, nominated by Karlene Krouse; Kara Baumgartner for English-literature, nominated by Roger Bubb; Cody Miller for business, nominated by Matt Lazzaro; Rachael Anspach for athletics, nominated by Matt Lindsay; Jesse Anspach for science, nominated by Jason Draper and Alicia Hostettler; Talitha Frecker for math, nominated by Nicholas Vickrey; Jeffrey Andrews for foreign language, nominated by Mark Niemoeller; Robert Slocum for music-instrumental, nominated by Scott Newman; Jimmy Mitchell for vocal nominated by Karlene Krouse and Lauren Hellinger for journalism, nominated by Eileen Brodmerkel.

University of Saint Francis named to presidential honor roll

FORT WAYNE — The Corporation for National and Community Service honored the University of Saint Francis with placement on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary efforts in service to the local community.

"Our mission statement includes a call to service. I am honored these lessons have gone beyond the classroom. I know our students are busy, and yet they have taken our message and made it part of their lives," commented university President Sister M. Elise Kriss, a Sister of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration.

The Community Service Honor Roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement. Honorees for the award were chosen based on a series of selection factors including scope and innovation of service projects, student participation and the number of academic courses offered in service learning.

This year, university students organized a day of volunteering in conjunction with nine area businesses. They also raised over 21,000 pounds of food and \$5,000 for the Community Harvest Food Bank. Many faculty members have made service part of the curriculum.

"In this time of economic distress, we need volunteers more than ever. We salute the University of Saint Francis for making community service a campus priority," said Stephen Goldsmith, vice chair of the board of directors, who oversees the honor roll.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

PACK 451 HOSTS PINEWOOD DERBY



DIANE FREEBY

Cub Scout Billy Blacketor eyes the finish line along with Webelos Josh Collins and Jacob Snyder at Pack 451's Pinewood Derby held Saturday at Christ the King School in South Bend. Blacketor, a first grader from Corpus Christi, came in third place overall. Tre Yankel and Dylan Bradburn from Christ the King were the top two finishers overall.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. The corporation is working to expand campus incentives for service to spur higher levels of volunteering by America's college students.

For information, contact Janet Patterson, Director of Campus Ministry at (260) 399-7700 ext. 6703 or jpatterson@sf.edu.

Ancilla College enrollment rises

DONALDSON — Ancilla College has enjoyed a significant increase in the number of students enrolling and credit hours being taken, according to institutional data that was released this week.

The number of students enrolled for the spring 2009 semester is 501, up from the 473 who enrolled one year ago. Total credit hours have also jumped this semester, with students enrolled in 5,591, a solid increase over the 5,387 taken in spring 2008.

This data illustrates a continued growth pattern that began two years ago at the college, as Ancilla committed itself to increasing overall enrollment numbers.

In the spring 2007 term, Ancilla College had 455 students enrolled

in 4,903 credit hours. Since then, the college has seen a 9.2 percent increase in students attending and a 12.3 percent increase in total credit hours taken.

According to Mike Brown, executive director of finance and administration, several factors have proven to be vital in helping increase enrollment.

Fall-to-spring retention this year is the highest ever documented, with 77 percent of students returning for the second semester. Furthermore, a struggling economy has encouraged many individuals to go back to college.

Another factor, according to Brown, has been an increase in the financial aid opportunities available to students. The Indiana Grant Replacement Award, designed to help students who missed filing for financial aid on time, has proven beneficial, especially to both non-traditional and out-of-state students.

This has certainly been reflected in the sharp increase of participants in the "We Believe in You" program, which grew from six students in 2008 to 36 students in 2009. Of those 36 students, 16 are attending Ancilla full-time.

The "We Believe in You" program allows students 21 years and older who have never gone to college to enroll in one three-credit course at Ancilla College free of

charge.

"A big part of this is our financial aid commitment to students with a high level of financial need," said Brown. "What we've seen is that many new full-time students this semester would have qualified for the Indiana grant, but didn't because college wasn't on their radar screen last spring, so they didn't file their FAFSA's on time. With these financial aid grants, we are eliminating tuition as an enrollment barrier."

Saint Mary's College Lecture Series offers 'Hope During Hard Times'

NOTRE DAME — The theme of the 2009 Spring Lecture Series by the Center for Spirituality is "Hope During Hard Times." The three lectures, which are free and open to the public, will examine how spirituality can help people face the challenges of the current economic climate.

• Lecture 1: The Market Can't Imagine, But We Can: Creativity as a Spiritual Response to the Financial Crisis. Maureen H. O'Connell, assistant professor of theology at Fordham University, New York, will present this lecture at 7:30 p.m., March 3 in the Stapleton Lounge of Le Mans Hall

• Lecture 2: Did Jesus Laugh? What Humor has to do with Spirituality. Anita Houck, associate professor of religious studies, Saint Mary's College, will present this lecture at 4:30 p.m., March 25 in Earley Rooms D, E, and F of the student center.

• Lecture 3: The Hidden Face of Hope. Barbara Quinn, RSCJ, director of the Center for Christian Spirituality, University of San Diego, will present this lecture at 7:30 p.m., March 31 in the Stapleton Lounge of Le Mans Hall.

Marian mock trial team advances to state competition

SOUTH BEND — Thanks to the efforts of 14 students, Marian High School had two teams compete in the Regional Mock Trial Competition on Saturday, Feb. 7. The team, made up of sophomores, won third place and will advance to the State Mock Trial competition in Indianapolis on March 7-8.

Team members are Emily Voorde, Emily Madigan, Evan Merryman, Marcus Creachbaum, Tim Frye, Niki Wilkes and Amanda Magaldi.

In addition to the team advancing to state, five of the 14 students won individual awards. Best Attorney awards were presented to Patrick Eme, Evan Merryman and Mary Ganser, while Best Witness awards were presented to Alexa Gates and Morgan Rozenboom.

Attorney coaches for the Marian teams are Dan Tychonievich, Paul Harold and Patrick O'Connell. Faculty moderator is Vicki Schwab.

Sacred Heart, Warsaw, plans parish mission

WARSAW — Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw will hold a mission with the theme "Let Christ Reconstruct Our Hearts," March 8-12 at 7 p.m. The parish is currently building an addition to their church.

Each evening of the mission will feature speakers, prayer, spiritual reflection and music. The following themes will be offered:

• Sunday — "Reconstruction Zone," with Father Glenn Kohrman. The evening will have an emphasis on prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

• Monday — "Spiritual Additions," with Meg Hanlon as speaker.

• Tuesday — "Spiritual Housecleaning," with Father Tim Wrozek. The evening will include a penance service.

• Wednesday — "Construction Workers," with Father Dave Ruppert as speaker.

• Thursday — "Newly Constructed," with Bishop John M. D'Arcy celebrating the closing Mass.

Morning sessions will be conducted Monday through Thursday at 9 a.m. with Ginny Kohrman, diocesan director of the Office of Spiritual Development.

Everyone is welcome, and child care will be available.

VISIT FROM 'ABE LINCOLN' AT QUEEN OF ANGELS



PROVIDED BY QUEEN OF ANGELS SCHOOL

Queen of Angels had a very special guest teacher on Feb. 12. President Abe Lincoln came to share his 200th birthday. He spoke to many classes sharing information regarding his life. President Lincoln was played by Kurt Homan who teaches fourth grade at Queen of Angels. Homan is the same height as Honest Abe.

LIGHT OF LEARNING ADMINISTRATOR HONORED BY SCHOOL



TESS STEFFEN

Jane Sandor, principal at St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, was given a surprise party by the students. They honored her for receiving the administrative Light of Learning Award. The celebration included a blessing, song and a play. Then the school presented her with a gift basket and gift certificate.

Experience Lent as time for prayer, penance and sacrifice

BY KAY COZAD

The season of Lent offers an opportunity to take much needed time to reflect on the life and death of Jesus Christ in preparation for the celebration of his Resurrection. The 40-day journey, beginning with Ash Wednesday, is traditionally marked by the three pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It is the season of penance but can also include the addition of loving service to our fellow man. Works of charity done in faith enrich our relationship with God and man. To that end, during each of the six weeks of Lent, *Today's Catholic* will offer Scripture and a suggested action for each day, in hopes of encouraging increased Scripture reading, prayer and service in our communities. (*Scripture taken from the New American Bible Catholic Edition.*)

Ash Wednesday

"... for you are dirt, and to dirt you shall return." Gn 3:19

Action: Attend Ash Wednesday service and receive ashes. Discuss what the ashes mean.

Thursday

"Pray without ceasing." 1 Thes 5:17

Action: Create an original Lenten prayer and pray it every day throughout Lent.

Friday

"Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy." 1 Cor 3:16-17

Action: Ask someone to take a walk with you for exercise and fellowship. Discuss how your body is a temple.

Saturday

"Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work." 2 Cor 9:8

Action: Clean out closets and toy boxes and donate to a local charity.

First Sunday

"In waiting and by calm you shall be saved, in quiet and in trust your strength lies." Is 30:15

Action: Rest in silence with God for 10 minutes today.

Monday

"... and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up." Jas 5:15

Action: Pray for those who are ill. Then visit, call or send a card.

Tuesday

"... Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ." Eph 4:32

Action: Make amends with an adversary today.

Wednesday

"Do everything without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God ..." Phil 2:14-15

Action: Do a chore before you are asked.

Thursday

"In all circumstances, give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thes 5: 18

Action: Take time to thank God for how he blesses you. Then thank someone near for all they do.

Friday

"... One does not live by bread alone." Lk 4:4

Action: Fast from dessert today. Give your piece to someone else.

Saturday

"With your whole heart honor your father; your mother's birth pangs forget not." Sir 7:27

Action: Write a letter of love and gratitude to your parents today. Deliver it in person if possible.

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On Fire with St. Paul

St. Paul the revolutionary

**LENTEN
FAITH SHARING**

BY GINNY KOHRMAN

St. Paul, a Jewish Pharisee, in his own time, revolutionized Christianity. Today as well, St. Paul has the power to change the lives of all those who dare to read his letters. Some greatly admire the writings and teachings of St. Paul, while others struggle to grasp his straightforward and oftentimes difficult instructions. Regardless of these likes or dislikes, St. Paul has the ability to draw loyal followers to our Lord, Jesus Christ.

If we compare the focus of teaching or the personalities of both Jesus and St. Paul, we can see a world of differences. Jesus teaches us about his Father in heaven, who manifests his love through care for the poor, kindness and forgiveness of sinners, acceptance of the marginalized and compassion for the just and the unjust. St. Paul, on the other hand, teaches us about Jesus Christ who, by his passion, death and resurrection, rescues humankind from sin and the wrath of God.

St. Paul repeatedly insists on a sincere and persevering faith in Christ's death and resurrection, the necessary condition for our salvation. Jesus teaches in simple, clear and basic ways through stories and parables. St. Paul's teachings are more abstract and complex, indicating his own ongoing conversion and understanding of Jesus Christ.

It is thought that St. Paul sometimes struggles to put on paper what he may have felt and believed in his heart and mind. His early Christian followers may have also struggled to understand the depth and power of his words, rebelling in ways that often frustrated St. Paul. As we today read the words of St. Paul, it may be difficult to integrate his message unless we place ourselves in the culture and world of those early Christians and the circumstances under which he taught and wrote. Understanding St. Paul's message requires an open heart and the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the church's wisdom.

St. Paul, the apostle

"I am the least of the apostles, not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am and his grace to me has not been ineffective. Indeed, I have toiled harder than all of them; not I, however, but the grace of God that is with me. Therefore, whether it be I or they, so we preach and so you believed." — 1 Cor 15: 9-11

St. Paul yearns for acceptance as an "apostle" following his con-

version. However, the followers of the way would not readily overlook his participation in Christian persecutions as a faithful Jewish Pharisee. We first meet St. Paul, then known as Saul, in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, in the context of St. Stephen's martyrdom. Acts 8:3 confesses, "Saul, meanwhile, was trying to destroy the church; entering house after house and dragging out men and women, he handed them over for imprisonment."

St. Paul would not only have to earn the trust of the early Christians but the trust of Christ's apostles as well. Christ's call to Saul on the road to Damascus around the year A.D. 35 ignited and fueled his passion for Jesus. Experiencing the resurrected Christ in a supernatural event on this journey changes Saul and commissions him to bring the message of the long-awaited Messiah to the Gentiles. His brothers in Christ would eventually accept this work of grace in St. Paul.

Pope Benedict XVI writes regarding the account of St. Paul's conversion in the Acts of the Apostles: "St. Paul was not transformed by a thought but by an event, by the irresistible presence of the Risen One whom subsequently he would never be able to doubt, so powerful had been the evidence of the event, of this encounter. It radically changed Paul's life in a fundamental way; in this sense one can and must speak of conversion" (1 Cor. 15: 8-11). Paul's conversion is sealed in the waters of his baptism and his entrance into the church of his Risen Lord (Acts 22:16).

Around A.D. 38 Paul meets with Peter and James in the city of Jerusalem. There the leaders of this new Christian religion endorsed Paul as the "apostle to the Gentiles." Paul's missionary work would take him to many lands, including Syria, Cilicia, Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and more. Paul eventually develops Gentile Christian communities in Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica and Rome, and "to the ends of the earth." — Acts 1:8

Setting the world on fire

Paul faces the challenge of making the teachings of Jesus, a Palestinian Jewish rabbi pertinent to Hellenistic Gentiles in a variety of Middle Eastern regions and the Roman Empire. With the help of the Spirit, through preaching and letter writing, St. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, set the known world on fire by spreading the message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Through his writings, we learn of his passionate faith in Jesus Christ and his desire to teach other Christians about the heart of the law found in Jesus Christ. He continually educates his Christian communities in proper Christian conduct and reprimands those who would stray from Christ's teachings of love of God and love of neighbor. Paul is a man of hope, who wrestles with the interpretation of Jesus' promise to return, the meaning of eternal life and the hope of a new creation made possible through Christ's reconciling gift on the cross. St. Paul holds the words of the Last Supper in his heart and believes that the mystery of Christ's body and blood, present in the breaking of the bread, would sustain him and his communities until Christ's return. St. Paul is able to interpret the teachings of Jesus in a way that would change the world and affect it until eternity.

Although we have not seen the resurrected Christ, as did Paul, how do you encounter Christ each day? Do you know Christ intimately? Have you allowed Christ to transform your life?

How did Paul accomplish his mission?

"Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, to you who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, their Lord and ours. Grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ." — 1 Cor 1:1-3

With modern technology the notion of letter writing has fallen by the wayside. However, this is the method of communication that spreads the message of Christ to the Gentiles. Paul is a tremendous evangelizer. From A.D. 38-50, Paul travels throughout many regions of the Middle East and Europe, preaching, teaching and spreading the Christian message. To stay in contact with established Christian communities, Paul also writes letters.

There are 27 books in the New Testament. Twenty of these books are letters. Letter writing, used mostly by the highly educated, was a totally acceptable and easy way for the early Christians to express their faith and to teach others about Jesus. Paul's letters are the earliest Christian letters found to this date. Through Paul's letters, the teachings of Jesus were no longer transmitted by oral tradition only but are now written down to address the questions and concerns of a particular group of people. Through his let-

ters, Paul begins to formulate a written theology that would be read by his communities and the followers of Jesus Christ. The Letters to Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Thessalonians and Philemon are the undisputed letters attributed to St. Paul. Other letters often attributed to Paul, such as Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are disputed by various Scripture scholars.

Dr. Vincent Branick, Ph.D., SS.D, writes, "By reading these letters we in effect tune into the most creative period of Christianity's history. We listen to an apostle rejoicing and agonizing with his communities, not having all the solutions, but risking new visions of a dynamic, powerful faith."

Paul used a culturally acceptable way to spread the message of Jesus through his personal presence and through letters.

Today, how do you communicate your belief in Christ?

Jesus and Paul

"I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me." — Gal 2:19-20

St. Paul's accounts of Jesus are different from those heard in the four Gospels. Although St. Paul's teachings are centered on Jesus, he does not give us a historical account of the life of Christ in the style of the four evangelists. However, through the apostles and the early followers of Christ, Paul would have heard about the significant events in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Paul never knew Jesus in a physical sense, but through a private revelation Paul comes to know Christ in a mystical way.

After his encounter with the risen Christ, Paul believes that Jesus exists in two separate but related dimensions. Jesus exists both in God's spiritual domain and in human consciousness: "Christ is at once a cosmic figure who will soon return to judge the world and a being who mysteriously dwells within the individual believer." — "Understanding the Bible," Stephen Harris, page 471.

Throughout Paul's letters there appears to be a tension between the transcendent Christ and the immanent Jesus who is intimately encountered by faithful followers. His encounter with the risen Christ convinces Paul that his generation would witness the Parousia, or the return of Christ in glory. Paul's expectation of a sooner, rather than later, final

judgment influenced his ethical teaching on day-to-day situations such as marriage, divorce, celibacy and moral conduct. Paul believes that this present time of sin and evil would soon be absolved by a new age, a New Creation, in which God would rule over the whole cosmos. His letters, therefore, reflect a certain urgency and a call to constant conversion.

Central to Paul's theology is his conviction that, through Jesus, the world is saved. Humanity, victims of sin and death due to Adam, is now given life through the glorified Christ: "For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead came also through a human being. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life..." (1 Cor 15: 21-22). Paul believes that Christ's selfless death on the cross liberates those who are enslaved by the powers of sin and death. Jesus brings freedom from sin and punishment, including the power of the Jewish Law to condemn. God the almighty exalts Jesus and sends his spirit into the world. Christ's spirit then changes forever our relationship with God. Paul knows, in a very personal way, that Christ is the one who reconciles all of humanity to God.

Pope Benedict XVI writes in his general audience, Oct. 29, 2008: "St. Paul sacrificed his own life, devoting himself without reserve to the ministry of reconciliation, of the cross, which is salvation for us all. And we, too, must be able to do this: may we be able to find our strength precisely in the humility of love and our wisdom in the weakness of renunciation, entering thereby into God's power. We must all model our lives on this true wisdom: we must not live for ourselves but must live in faith in that God of whom we can all say: 'he loved me and gave himself for me'."

During this season of Lent, ponder the love of God made visible to us through Christ's death and resurrection. Share this love with those about you.

As we continue our study of St. Paul through this Lenten faith sharing series, we will highlight specific aspects of Paul's teachings that continue to shape our lived faith and our understanding of Jesus Christ. It is hoped that those who study and share the life of St. Paul will appreciate his revolutionary love for Christ and his incredible ability to set the world on fire for Christ, whom he loved.

For the complete six-week series visit www.diocesefwsb.org/OSD

Brothers to present Lenten lecture series

NOTRE DAME — The Brothers of Holy Cross will sponsor the 2009 Annual Lenten Lecture Series each Wednesday of Lent at 7 p.m. in the great room of Andre Place in Holy Cross Village. Light refreshments will be available beginning at 6:45 p.m.

- The series includes:
- Our Lenten Project: Allowing God to Incarnate Christ in our Lives on Feb. 25 by Holy Cross Brother Raymond Pappenfus.
 - Globalization, Christian Spirituality and Social Justice on March 4 by Holy Cross Father Daniel Groody.
 - Mary the Mother of Jesus: A Closer and More Intense Look at What Was Written in the Christian Scriptures on March 11 by Holy Cross Father Nicholas Ayo.
 - Deeper Understanding of the Meaning of Jesus' Death on March 18 by Sister Kathleen Dolphin, a Sister of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
 - With Whom Do We Share Our Story on March 25 by Dr.

Anne Luther.

• Spring Is Here! Awakening Your Potentials on April 1 by Holy Cross Father Kenneth Grabner.

For information contact Pat Rowan, director of Spiritual Care at (574) 251-3287.

Parish missions, enrichments during Lent

The diocesan Office of Spiritual Development will offer the following:

- St. Louis-Besancon, New Haven, and St. Rose, Monroeville, March 1-4
- St. Mary, Culver, March 1-4
- Sacred Heart, Warsaw, March 8-12
- St. Michael, Plymouth, March 8-12
- St. Joseph, Roanoke, and St. Catherine, Nix Settlement, March 15-18
- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Fort Wayne, March 15-18
- St. Mary of the Assumption, Avilla, March 22-25.
- St. Joseph Parish, Fort Wayne, will have a Lenten Enrichment March 22 and April 5.

Reading, listening for the journey of Lent

BY KAY COZAD

As the soulful season of Lent approaches Catholics everywhere prepare to turn inward to the place where God lives with fasting, prayer and service. There is transformative grace in the traditions we follow as we anticipate the passion and resurrection of Jesus. One way to stay on track during the long and arduous 40 days of Lent is with daily meditations. *Today's Catholic* offers these diverse and inspired meditation books for reflection on your spiritual journey.

The first meditation book, "Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton," edited by Jonathon Montaldo and Robert Toth, provides a meditative source for small groups, retreat centers and religious communities for each week of Lent. The readings are designed to be used between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday and include contemplative musings from Merton's own pen as well as from other spiritual writers. A brief explanation of contemplative living makes this an ideal book to take one deeper into relationship with God. Each of the eight chapters includes Scripture, commentary and four reflection and dialogue questions followed by suggestions for closing meditations. Ave Maria Press, ISBN 978-1-59471-204-3

"Lent and Easter Wisdom from St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi," was compiled by John V. Kruse and offers an ideal companion book for daily use through the 40 days of Lent and the triduum. The 54 daily

entries alternate between the two saints, using writings from their personal spiritual journeys, along with Scripture, prayer and a Lenten action suggestion. The rich text of old, coupled with the suggested action offers a heart and hands approach to your Lenten journey. Liguori Publications, ISBN 978-0-7648-1765-6

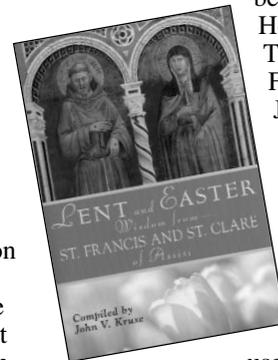
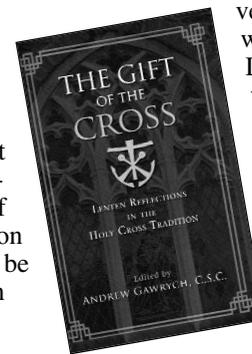
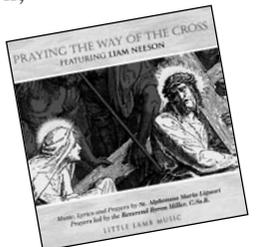
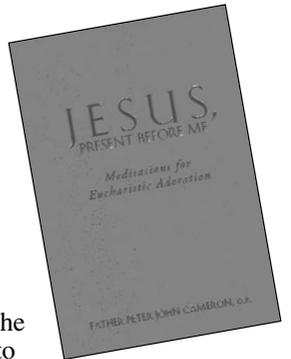
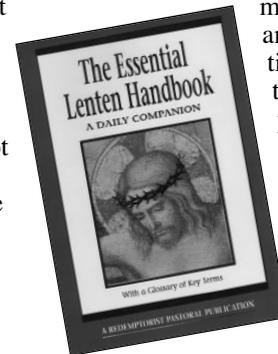
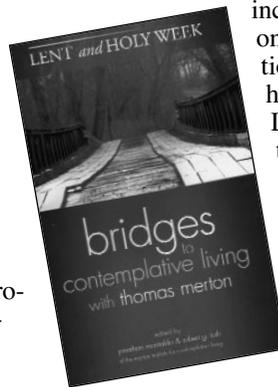
"The Essential Lenten Handbook: A Daily Companion," is a Redemptorist Pastoral Publication. The 288-page tome includes not only a section on the history of Lent and the traditions of fasting, prayer and acts of charity, but also modern practices such as the Stations of the Cross and Lenten family practices for each week. Each of the three liturgical cycles are represented with daily meditations including a Scripture verse, and the book features a glossary of terms and sources. This book provides a wealth of history and practice that would enhance the understanding of any Lenten journey. Liguori Publications, ISBN 978-0-7648-0567-7

"The Gift of the Cross: Lenten Reflections in the Holy Cross Tradition," is edited by Holy Cross Father Andrew Gawrych. This little meditation book is packed with Scripture verses and insightful reflections written by members of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, including Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, Father John I. Jenkins and Mary Ellen Vaughn. It is a pocketbook of inspiration that can be used from Ash Wednesday to

Easter Sunday to enrich the Lenten journey. Ave Maria Press, ISBN 978-1-59471-202-9

And for those who wish to spend more time in the presence of the Lord during Lent or any other time, "Jesus, Present before Me: Meditations for Eucharistic Adoration," by Father Peter John Cameron, O.P., offers a rich assembly of Scripture, meditation commentary and reflection questions and prayer. The 30 days of meditations guides the reader to see beyond appearances and enter into the mystery and miracle of Jesus present in the Eucharist. The book includes eucharistic reflections on the 20 mysteries of the rosary, a eucharistic colloquy, a litany and Way of the Eucharist all designed to help you adore wholeheartedly without distraction. Servant Books, ISBN 978-0-86716-857-0

"Praying the Way of the Cross," is an inspiring CD produced by the Denver province of the Redemptorists, the religious order founded by St. Alphonsus. Actor Liam Neeson, whose latest film "Taken" was the top box-office draw in the United States, has narrated this version of the Way of the Cross written by St. Alphonsus Liguori. Proceeds from sales will help the Redemptorists' missions in Brazil and Nigeria. This CD is available Ash Wednesday, Feb. 25, for \$16.95 plus shipping and handling, online at www.little-lambmusic.com, or by calling (800) 231-1207.



Soup's On!

Join us for a bowl of **Ash Wednesday Soup**

Your free will donation will help support **St. Mary's Soup Kitchen** which serves 1,000 free bowls of soup to hungry people every day.

Come Begin Lent Simply... Bring a friend for a lunch of soup and bread on **Ash Wednesday, February 25**

to **St. Mary's Parish at Lafayette and East Jefferson in Fort Wayne 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.** (Lenten prayer service at 11:00 a.m.)



Parish Mission

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Visit your local parish for these Lenten activities

Bremen St. Dominic

Lenten Penance Service will be Wednesday, March 4, at 7 p.m.

Bluffton St. Joseph

Lenten Penance service will be Monday, March 23, at 7 p.m.

Columbia City St. Paul of the Cross

Lenten Penance Service will be Tuesday, March 24, at 7 p.m.

Culver

St. Mary of the Lake

Lenten Penance Service will be Tuesday, March 10, at Culver Memorial Chapel at 6:30 p.m.

Mission Night with reconciliation will be Wednesday, March 4, at 7 p.m.

Elkhart

St. Vincent de Paul

Parish Reconciliation Service on Wednesday, April 1, at 7 p.m.

Soup and Scripture will be each Wednesday excluding Ash Wednesday and April 1. A lite soup supper will be served at 6:30 p.m. and a Scripture reflection will be given at 7 p.m. in Vincent Hall.

Fort Wayne

Most Precious Blood

Lenten Penance Service, combined with Queen of Angels Parish, will be Tuesday, March 24, at 7 p.m. at Queen of Angels Church.

Our Lady of Good Hope

Lenten Penance Service will be Monday, March 30, at 7 p.m.

Queen of Angels

Lenten Penance Service, combined with Most Precious Blood Parish, will be Tuesday, March 24, at 7 p.m. at Queen of Angels Church.

Lenten reconciliation schedule is as follows:

Monday, April 6, 9 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 7, 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, April 8, 9-10 a.m., and 6-7 p.m.

Thursday, April 9, 11 a.m. to noon and 8 p.m.

Friday, April 10, 2-3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 11, 9-10 a.m., and 3-4 p.m.

St. Charles

Reconciliation on Saturdays through April 4 will be 2:30-4:30 p.m. in the chapel.

Lenten Penance Service will be Wednesday, March 25, 7 p.m. in the church.

Holy Week reconciliation in the chapel will be:

Wednesday, April 8, 2:30-4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. until last heard.

Holy Thursday, April 9, 2:30-

4:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 10, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Holy Saturday, April 11, 11 a.m. to noon

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Parish Reconciliation Service in conjunction with the Parish Mission March 15, 16, 17 and 18. Bishop John M. D'Arcy will speak March 17, at 7 p.m. with opportunities for individual reconciliation to follow. Fourteen priests will be available.

St. Jude

Reconciliation will be Saturdays at 9 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Lenten Penance Service will be Thursday, March 26, at 7 p.m.

Reconciliation will be April 7-9, from 3-5 p.m.

St. Vincent de Paul

Reconciliation will be offered Saturdays from 8:45-9:45 a.m. and Wednesdays from 4-5 p.m.

Lenten Penance Service will be Monday, April 6, from 6-7 p.m.

Reconciliation during Holy Week will be: Monday, April 6, from 6-7 p.m.; Tuesday, April 7, from 3:30-4:30 p.m.; Wednesday, April 8, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. and 7-8 p.m.; Holy Thursday from 9:30-10:30 a.m. and on Good Friday from 3-4 p.m. and following the 7 p.m. Stations of the Cross.

LaGrange

St. Joseph

Lenten Penance Service will be Sunday, March 29, at 7 p.m.

New Haven

St. John The Baptist

Parish Lenten penance service Tuesday, Feb., 24, at 7 p.m.

Roanoke

St. Joseph

Reconciliation will be Saturday, April 4, from 9-10 a.m. and 3:45-4:45 p.m.

Holy Thursday, April 9, Mass at 7 p.m. will be followed by confession and adoration until 9 p.m.

Good Friday, April 10, Passion service at 2:30 p.m. will be followed by confession.

St. Catherine

Reconciliation will be Monday, April 6, at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 8, at 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 10, Passion service at 6 p.m. will be followed by confession.

South Bend

Christ the King

Penance Service will be combined with Little Flower Parish at Little Flower Parish on March 31, at 7 p.m.

A noon Mass will be on Wednesdays of Lent beginning March 4 and Stations of the Cross will be Fridays of Lent beginning Feb. 27 at noon and 7 p.m. Soup supper on Fridays of Lent at 6 p.m. in the church basement.

Holy Cross

Parish Reconciliation Service Monday, March 30, at 7 p.m.

Reconciliation Tuesday, April 7, from 7-8 p.m.

Reconciliation Wednesday, April 8, from noon to 1 p.m. at St. Stanislaus Church.

Little Flower

Penance Service will be combined with Christ the King Parish at Little Flower Parish on March 31, at 7 p.m. The Wednesday Mass time has been changed from noon to 5:30 p.m. beginning March 4. Stations of the Cross will be at noon and 7 p.m. on Friday along with soup supper beginning at 6 p.m.

St. Adalbert

Reconciliation (in Spanish or English) will be Saturday mornings at 8:30 a.m. at both St. Adalbert and St. Casimir.

Lenten Penance Service will be Wednesday, March 18, at 7 p.m. and will be bilingual.

Gorkie Zale (sorrowful lamentations) will be every Wednesday in Lent at 5 p.m.

St. Casimir

Reconciliation (in Spanish or English) will be Saturday mornings at 8:30 a.m. at both St. Adalbert and St. Casimir.

St. Joseph

Lenten Penance Service will be Monday, March 30, at 7 p.m.

St. Stanislaus

Parish Reconciliation Service Monday, March 30, at 7 p.m. at Holy Cross Church.

Reconciliation Tuesday, April 7, from 7-8 p.m. at Holy Cross Church.

Reconciliation Wednesday, April 8, from noon to 1 p.m.

Wabash

St. Bernard

Lenten Penance Service will be March 24, at 7 p.m.

Waterloo

St. Michael the Archangel

Reconciliation will be offered Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 7:30 a.m.

Wednesday, after the 7 p.m. Mass

Saturday at 4 p.m.

Sunday at 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

Lenten Penance Service will be Sunday, March 15, at 5 p.m.

Yoder

St. Aloysius

Parish Reconciliation Service will be Tuesday, March 3, at 7 p.m. Several visiting priests will be available. Holy hour on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

An examination of conscience for Lent

Faith and God

• Am I proud to be a Catholic Christian? Do I speak openly about my faith?

• Do I defend my faith when asked questions about it? Do I stand up for what I believe with my family and friends, at work or social events?

• Do I know enough about my religion to share it with others?

• Do I have God and faith and other people "figured out," or am I open to the mystery that God reveals daily?

• Am I open to the religious traditions of others? Do I respect the faith and beliefs of others?

Action and decisions

• Do I make decisions, large and small, based on "costs and benefits," or on beliefs and values?

• Do I consider as sinful both "what I have done and what I have failed to do" in my daily life?

• Am I prepared to do "what is right" under all circumstances?

• Can others identify me as a Catholic by my speech? Do I gossip? Use foul language? Take God's name in vain?

• Is there enough evidence to convict me of being a Catholic?

Forgiveness

• Do I have the humility to learn from my mistakes?

• Do I forgive quickly both my friends and those I dislike?

• Do I apologize and seek forgiveness when I have hurt someone?

• If I forgive, do I then hold a grudge? Do I have the ability to forgive even the person who doesn't really deserve it?

• Am I resentful of those who are better liked, more successful or smarter than me?

Sundays ...

• Am I a member of a faith community? Do I "keep holy the Sabbath?"

• Do I come to Mass as a willing and active participant? Do I listen reverently and join in the praying and singing?

• Do I appreciate the gift of the Eucharist and the opportunity to speak and listen to God?

• Do I carry on conversations during Mass, disturbing others at prayer?

... And the rest of the week

• Am I aware of God in my life on days other than Sunday?

• How does God enter into my work, my play, my other activities? Have I ever invited God to be involved in these areas of my life?

• As I increase my knowledge or experience in school or the workplace, how am I deepening my understanding and appreciation for God and my faith?

• What are the top three priorities in my life? Is God there? If not, then where?

• How has God blessed me today? Yesterday? When was the last time I said thanks?

Hospitality

• Do I welcome and respect new people and make them feel at home? Do I reach out to those who feel lost, forgotten or alienated?

• Do I judge others by their appearance or dress?

• Do I hang out only with my friends or certain associates? Do I belong to a clique? When was the last time I invited another to an activity at church or in the community?

• When was the last time I went out of my way to help or include someone?

Participation

• Who is my neighbor?

How aware am I of the needs of my neighbor?

• How involved am I in the needs of my school or my community?

• Do I volunteer to help others, or do I assume that someone else will? When I do volunteer, is it done out of love or personal gain?

Personal life

• Do I see Jesus in others? In my friends? In my coworkers? Do I give them the benefit of the doubt?

• Do I work to the best of my ability, either in my studies or my employment?

• Do I follow through on my promises?

• Am I faithful to God? To family? To prayer? To balance in my life?

• Do I try to communicate with my parents? My spouse? My family?

• Am I carrying on any kind of sexual relationship outside of marriage?

• Do I begin and end my day with prayer? Do I turn to God in gratitude for all my blessings?

Self awareness

• Can I honestly say to God: "Thy will be done?"

• Am I comfortable with myself and my environment? In other words, can I accept what I cannot change?

• Do I have a sense of humor? Can I laugh at myself?

• Am I hooked on power? Success? Drugs or alcohol? Possessions or wealth?

• Have I abused any of God's gifts through my actions or desires?

• Can I accept the reality of authority?

• Do I treat people as objects, especially in sexual ways? Do I make sexist remarks? Do I read pornography?

• Have I done violence to others by damaging their reputation, honor, or material possessions?

• Am I truthful and honest in all I say and do?

EDITORIAL

'Hell on wheels'

Ever driven off the beaten path, taking a back road instead of the main highway to your destination? It can be quite pleasant getting away from the congestion, noise and monotony of the heavily-traveled interstate with its truck traffic, crowded rest stops and repetitive fast-food restaurants and service centers.

Often a winding, two-lane state or county road offers pleasant scenery, a glimpse of grazing livestock, and a view of rural life and small-town America as you pass through places with names like Elmo, Deerhead and Montezuma. Maybe you've stopped for a meal in such a burg at restaurants called "Molly's Café," "Pete's Palace" or just "Eat."

Usually the folks in such diners are friendly and welcoming. But sometimes you enter an eatery where everyone eyes you menacingly the moment you open the door. All look at you as if to say, "What are you doing in here? You're not one of us!" If you persist on staying, you're made to feel you really don't belong in the place. The waitress reluctantly takes your order matter-of-factly. After what seems an eternity she returns with the food, shoving plates and tableware along with the check at you with an attitude that says, "Don't you dare ask for anything else."

You hurriedly eat in silence as the locals rudely stare at you, seemingly anxious for you to finish your food and get out. If they talk to each other at all, assumedly it's to make an unkind remark about you. As you choke down your meal you nervously keep glancing out of the window to make sure someone isn't ransacking your car.

Nearly anyone who has traveled can say, "Been there, done that!" Some, in fact, may have experienced entering a small-town bar where the atmosphere and attitude is even more threatening when mixed with alcohol.

You may have experienced a visit to a remnant of hell on wheels. The phrase originally was used to describe the itinerant collection of flimsily-assembled gambling houses, dance halls, saloons and brothels that followed the army of Union Pacific workers westward as they constructed the transcontinental railroad in the 1860s.

Imagine if you will, after you've lived most of your life trying to follow the commandments and precepts of the church, you seriously stray from the path of virtue and venture down the road of evil. You turn from doing good and follow wicked ways; literally turning your back on God and rejecting his teachings. (See Ez 18: 24-26.) After a sudden and unexpected death, you find yourself at the gates of hell; the penultimate hell on wheels!

Consider the reception that awaits you when you enter those rusty, red-hot railings. We've never experienced on earth the inhospitality of hell, especially if, for most of our lives, we followed a righteous path. There are not adequate words to describe the scorn, mockery, ridicule, torture and despair we will experience, not for the short time it takes to eat and leave, but for all eternity.

Having been a practicing Catholic Christian the majority of our lives — celebrating the Eucharist, praying and striving to love God and our neighbor — will leave us inexperienced in the ways of the wicked. Our despair over what we lost will be far greater perhaps than those who rejected virtue in favor of sin throughout most of their lives. (See Lk 16:8-9.)

If you're reading this, it is, of course, not too late to amend your life and turn from following the "broad road that leads to destruction" — even though that path has many popular, pleasurable, yet perishable earthly rewards — and follow "the road that leads to life... enter(ing) through the narrow gate." — Mt 7:13-14. The road of the righteous is not like the smooth, heavily-traveled interstate but can be rough, narrow and difficult.

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 25. Vow to only follow the virtuous path in your life from now on even though at times it may appear unpopular, monotonous and less satisfying than evil ways with names such as "carousing and drunkenness ... sexual excess and lust ... quarreling and jealousy." As St. Paul writes, "It is now the hour for you to wake from sleep, for our salvation is closer than when we first accepted the faith. The night is far spent, the day draws near. Let us cast off deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light." — Rom 13:11b-14.

It's never too late to turn off the dark and evil road to hell on wheels and return to the Light of the heavenly highway. (See Ez 18, 21-23, 27-28.)

Today's Catholic editorial board consists of Ann Carey, Kay Cozad, Fred and Lisa Everett, Father Mark Gurtner, Father Michael Heintz, Tim Johnson and Vince LaBarbera.

COMMENTARY

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

Verbal engineering and the swaying of public conscience

Over the years, a number of unjust laws have come to be replaced by more just ones. Laws overturning the practice of slavery, for example, were a significant step forward in promoting justice and basic human rights in society. Yet in very recent times, unjust and immoral laws have, with increasing frequency, come to replace sound and reasonable ones, particularly in the area of sexual morality, bioethics and the protection of human life. Whenever long-standing laws are reversed, and practices come to be sanctioned that were formerly forbidden, it behooves us to examine whether such momentous legal shifts are morally coherent or not.

Concerns about moral coherence have always influenced the crafting of new laws, as they did in 1879 when the state of Connecticut enacted strong legislation outlawing contraception, specified as the use of "any drug, medicinal article or instrument for the purpose of preventing conception." This law, like the anti-contraception laws of various other states, was in effect for nearly 90 years before it was reversed in 1965. It codified the long-standing dictate of the public conscience that contraception was harmful to society because it promoted promiscuity, adultery and other evils. It relied on the nearly universal sensibility that children should be seen as a help and a blessing to society, and that, as Joseph Sobran puts it, "a healthy society, however tolerant at the margins, must be based on the perception that sex is essentially procreative, with its proper locus in a loving family."

Such a view had been remarkably deeply engrained in Western society for millennia, and interestingly, until as late as the 1930s, all Protestant denominations agreed with Catholic teaching condemning contraception. Not until the 1930 Lambeth Conference did the Anglican Church, swayed by growing societal pressure, announce that contraception would be allowed in some circumstances. Soon after, the Anglican Church yielded entirely, allowing contraception across the board. Since then, every major Protestant denomination has followed suit, even though their founders, including

Luther, Calvin and Wesley, had all unhesitatingly condemned contraception, and insisted that it violated the right order of sexuality and marriage. Today, it is only the Catholic Church which teaches this traditional view.

How is it that modern times have seen such a striking reversal of this ancient view of the moral unacceptability of contraception? How is it that our age continues to witness a seemingly endless stream of legislative activity that promotes contraception through exorbitant government funding initiatives in nearly every major country of the world, with American taxpayers providing, for example, more than \$260 million of Planned Parenthood's total income for 2004? Can something almost universally decried as an evil in the past suddenly become a good, or is such a legislative reversal not indicative of a significant misuse of law, and of a collective loss of conscience on an unprecedented scale?

Whenever widespread social engineering of this magnitude occurs, it is invariably preceded by skillful verbal engineering. The late Msgr. William Smith observed that the argument about contraception was basically over as soon as modern society accepted the deceptive phrase, "birth control" into its vocabulary. "Imagine if we had called it, 'life prevention,'" he once remarked. The great Gilbert Keith Chesterton put it this way: "They insist on talking about birth control when they mean less birth and no control," and again: "Birth control is a name given to a succession of different expedients by which it is possible to filch the pleasure belonging to a natural process while violently and unnaturally thwarting the process itself."

Fast on the heels of such seismic cultural shifts over contraception was even more radical legislation permitting abortion-on-demand. Since the early 1970s, such legislation has effectively enabled the surgical killing of 1 billion human beings worldwide who were living in the peaceful environment of a womb. Here too, sophisticated verbal engineering was necessary, since nobody could reasonably expect the abortion ethic to advance by saying, "Let's kill the kids."



MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

BY FATHER TAD PACHOLCZYK

Many things simply cannot be achieved when it is clear to everyone what is going on; obfuscation is essential.

The growing child in the womb was thus recast as a "mass of tissue" or a "grouping of cells." The abortion procedure itself was redescribed as "removing the product of conception" or "terminating a pregnancy" or simply, "the procedure." Those who were "pro-choice" obfuscated as to what the choice was really for. As one commentator put it, "I think a more realistic term would be 'pro-baby killing.'"

Euphemism, of course, has a serious reason for being. It conceals the things people fear. It is defensive in nature, offsetting the power of tabooed terms and otherwise eradicating from the language those matters that people prefer not to deal with directly. A healthy legislative process, however, will abstain from euphemism and obfuscation, zeroing in on truth and moral coherence. It will safeguard and promote an enlightened public conscience, particularly when crafting laws dealing with the most foundational human realities like sexual morality, bioethics and the protection of human life.

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, Mass., and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org

Overlooked commandments

BY MSGR. THOMAS MCDONNELL

"Be holy, for I, the Lord Your God, am holy." Lev 19:2

Even elementary school children are aware that God gave Moses Ten Commandments. And all of us, through Sunday readings of the Gospel, are aware of the two great commandments — love of God and love of neighbor — which Christ gave us. Yet deep within our tradition are other commandments given to us by God — some largely overlooked — for our spiritual growth. Our Lenten theme this year will be to reflect upon some of these commandments.

At the very beginning, God tells his people to be holy as he is holy. Some scholars point to the truth that holiness is of the essence of God. But they also admit that this characteristic is difficult to define. In one of the monumental works dedicated to the subject, Rudolph

Otto concluded that holiness signifies a tremendous mystery before which we can only bow in awe and worship. In a way, the poet John Berryman was correct when he wrote:

Holy, as I suppose I dare to call you
without pretending to know anything about you
but infinite capacity everywhere and always
and in particular certain goodness to me.

While we may not be able to grasp the inner essence of God's holiness, there are certain characteristics associated with it in sacred Scripture as well as certain traditions, which I believe may help us grow in holiness — which Vatican II reminds us is our universal call.

In one of those vivid experiences that are etched in my consciousness, I remember visiting a mosque in the Holy Land in the 1960s. Before one could enter, one had to remove one's shoes (cf.

Moses in Gen 3:5: "Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground" and wash one's hands seven times.

The latter was highly symbolic — intending to point out that no stain, even physical, is compatible with God's holiness. In this context, we are reminded that in our pursuit of sanctification we must continually try to rid ourselves of all our sins and failings.

The Holy One of Israel is also our Redeemer. When the latter word first appeared, it signified the intermingling of blood — the life-force of a person. And blood was essential for ratifying the covenant in both the Old and New Testament. For the sake of brevity, we will simply emphasize in this context the centrality of the Eucharist in our pursuit of holiness.

From God's own mouth, as it

LENT, PAGE 16

Jesus rescues us from our exile



THE
SUNDAY
GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time Mk 2:1-12

The Book of Isaiah provides this weekend's first reading. When this reading was composed, times were bad for God's people. It was not just that they faced great hardships, but they were angry and disappointed.

They had endured four long generations of living as a powerless, probably outcast, community of exiles in Babylon, the seat of the Babylonian Empire that had overtaken their land years earlier and not only had taken their political independence but had destroyed all their structures.

The exiles had yearned for the chance to return home. At long last, Babylonia itself fell, humbled by the Persian emperor, Cyrus, who overwhelmed Babylonia. He allowed the exiles to go home. For the Jews, it was the answer to their prayers.

At last returning to their homeland, they had a rude awakening. It was not overflowing with milk and honey. It was just the opposite, a bleak and sterile place. It is easy to imagine their disgust, and even despair, and then to suppose how bitterly they either rebuked God or decided that God did not exist after all.

The prophet attempted to rein-

force their faith. He in effect reminded them that God's will takes its own time to unfold, but unfold it will, although rarely if ever in the exact terms expected by humans.

St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians provides the second lesson for this weekend's liturgy. Corinth was one of the chief cities of the Roman Empire. With a large population, including people from throughout the Mediterranean world, it of course received its share of pioneer Christian missionaries. Converts were made in Corinth. A Christian community formed.

However, evidently these converts were the source of some anxiety for Paul. He wrote to them at least twice. His two known letters to Corinth are in the New Testament as the inspired word of God.

The people quarreled among themselves. They strayed into sin and pagan practice. Paul firmly called them to uncompromised loyalty to the Gospel.

He himself was not always well received. Some challenged his credentials as an apostle. In this reading, Paul reasserts his role, and moreover he reaffirms his purely spiritual intentions.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading. Healing this paralyzed man was marvelous, and the extraordinary circumstance of lowering him through the roof made it all the more dramatic. However, the scribes present at the event took offense. Jesus said the paralytic's sins were forgiven. The scribes saw blasphemy in this statement. Only God can forgive sins, because sins offend God. Jesus also reversed the effects of sin.

Again, to understand the reading requires an awareness of the context. Pious Jews at the time looked upon physical maladies as the result of sin. Perhaps the para-

lyzed man had sinned. Perhaps his ancestors had sinned. But, in any case, all physical distress ultimately came from sin.

Incidentally, roofs at the time were quite flimsy by modern standards. They were wooden beams laid horizontally from wall to the opposite wall. Thatch was laid on these beams, loosely held together by mud. It kept out the hot rays of the sun, much more a problem in the Holy Land than rainwater.

Reflection

The church's emphasis is on Jesus as savior, and as son of God. He acts as God. He forgives sin. He takes away the effects of sin. This is the marvel, exceeding even the cure of the paralytic.

That was then. What about now? We sin today. Jesus forgives us, if we sincerely and humbly seek to be forgiven. Jesus will remove from us the worst effect of our sins, namely eternal death. By forgiving us, Jesus frees us, healing us and strengthening us, and giving us hope. He rescues us from our exile. Sin holds us hostage.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25 Ps 41:2-5, 13-14 2 Cor 1:18-22 Mk 2:1-12

Monday: Sir 1:1-10 Ps 93:1-2, 5 Mk 9:14-29

Tuesday: Sir 2:1-11 Ps 37:3-4, 18-19, 27-28, 39-40 Mk 9:30-37

Wednesday: Ash Wednesday Jl 2:12-18 Ps 51:3-6a, 12-14, 17 2 Cor 5:20-6:2 Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday: Dt 30:15-20 Ps 1:1-4, 6 Lk 9:22-25

Friday: Is 58:1-9a Ps 51:3-6a, 18-19 Mt 9:14-15

Saturday: Is 58:9b-14 Ps 86:1-6 Lk 5:27-32

CATEQUIZ'EM

On Feb. 17, 2009 the church remembered the Servites.

This quiz serves up some servile questions.

- Joshua reminds the Israelites that before Abraham they served**
a. other gods b. Pharaoh c. pies
- Jeremiah reminded the people that God said that all men must serve this Babylonian King:**
a. Oedipus b. Pharaoh c. Nebuchadnezzar
- Jeremiah also wrote about the "Suffering Servant." Many theologians see in this as a reference to (or "type" of)**
a. Jesus b. Paul c. Peter
- Jacob served Laban for 14 years to earn these:**
a. Two golden status of cattle
b. Two sisters as wives
c. Two turtledoves
- Mary told the server at the wedding at Cana to do whatever Jesus said. In doing so she started this:**
a. a riot over who got what wine
b. Jesus' public ministry
c. the custom of doing the chicken dance at weddings.
- Who was upset that she was left to serve while her sister listened to Jesus?**
a. Martha b. Mary c. Tabitha
- In the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) article 331, what beings are described as being sent forth to serve?**
a. Demons b. Angels c. Men
- Which Christian clergy trace their origin back to a need to have men serve the community in practical ways?**
a. Canons b. Levites c. Deacons
- "Servus Servorum Dei" is a Latin phrase meaning**
a. Those who wait also serve
b. The servants of God serve the servants
c. Servant of the servants of God
- Who often uses this phrase (question 9) as a title?**
a. The pope
b. The Dalai Lama
c. Queen Elizabeth III (from title granted to Henry VIII)
- These are often found at Roman Catholic and Eastern liturgies:**
a. altar servers
b. tax servers
c. mainframe servers
- How does the CCC 873 discuss the variety of roles and functions in the church?**
a. The laity are to serve the clergy.
b. These very differences serve its unity and mission.
c. The role of the clergy is as servants of the pope.
- In article 1534 of the CCC two sacraments are noted which contribute to personal salvation, but only through service to others. These are**
a. baptism and Eucharist
b. holy orders and matrimony
c. anointing of the sick and penance
- In part three of the CCC a Greek word is used for a gathering, collection, or summary, which serves as the first and fundamental point of reference for catechesis. This word is closely related to the English word**
a. symbolon
b. thrace
c. Haiku
- According to the CCC part 4, one who prays must battle in order to decide which to give attention to — prayer or**
a. the devil
b. Aegis
c. distraction

ANSWERS:

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

Historic sites where Jesus walked

Where was the hill that the people wanted to throw Jesus over to kill him?
Anonymous

St. Luke's Gospel tells us this episode. Jesus came to his hometown of Nazareth. He entered the Jewish synagogue there and did the reading from the prophet Isaiah. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me: therefore he has anointed me." Jesus then said, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." In other words, Jesus is saying he is the promised Messiah.

Then people wondered how the son of St. Joseph, a carpenter from Nazareth, could be such an important person. Jesus responded that the people of Nazareth probably want him to work great miracles here like he did in Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus added that no prophet gains acceptance in his hometown.

Then Jesus continued that some of the Jewish Old Testament prophets were sent to help the pagans, not the Jews. For example, the prophet Elisha

THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION

cured Naaman, the general of the Syrian army, of his leprosy. This angered the congregation in the synagogue. The people expelled Jesus from Nazareth and led him to the brow of the hill on which Nazareth was built and intended to hurl Jesus over the edge, but Jesus escaped.

To commemorate this episode, says R. Ullian, Our Lady of Fright Chapel, sometimes called the Tremore, is built on a wooded hill south of the center opposite the Galilee Hotel. It is on the spot where the Blessed Virgin Mary watched while the people of Nazareth attempted to throw Jesus over a cliff, called the Precipice or Lord's Leap rock.

Where did Jesus multiply the loaves and the fishes? Anonymous

The traditional site of this miracle is at Tabgha, eight miles north of Tiberias, the main city on the Sea of Galilee. Tabgha is close to Bethsaida. This miracle is commemorated by the large, orange-roofed Church of the Multiplication dedicated by the Roman Catholic German Benedictine priests in 1981 on the remains of earlier shrines.

G. Freeman says there was already a church here in A.D. 384 which was replaced in the fifth century by a basilica and a convent. The apse and presbytery of this basilica contained an altar with a stone on which Jesus placed one of the loaves. The nave is covered with geometric designs, and the front of the aisle is filled with flora and birds. In front of the altar is a mosaic of the loaves and fishes.

Father Richard Hire is pastor of St. Martin de Porres Parish, Syracuse.

A tribute from the most loved kid on the face of the earth

She impacted the life of everyone she encountered.

And so from east to west, north to south, her family gathered together on a cold day in January to pay tribute to the person who epitomized what loyalty to family is all about.

They came from Cincinnati and Oregon, Michigan and Indianapolis. They told stories of random acts of kindness, generosity unsolicited, concern for another's well being when it was least expected.

Cards of condolence continued to arrive weeks after her death containing more anecdotes of stories previously untold. "I remember when she..." is how they would start. "I'll never forget how she..." is how they would end.

She died quietly, alone, on a cold winter day in the home where she had resided for nearly 60 years. She steadfastly lived in that home, even though she now had difficulty maintaining it at her age. Her husband had died nine years earlier, and she often recalled how they barely had enough money to buy milk for the three young children. But under no circumstances would she move away. It was her home. It was where she lived. It was where she would die.

She loved her family unconditionally. She reveled in family gatherings, beaming throughout the event, talking incessantly as if she might never get the chance to share her story again. She loved to talk. Boy, did she love to talk.

She had a story to share about her family, and it didn't matter if you were a member of her immediate family, the daughter of a

niece's daughter 2,500 miles away, or the little girl in church who sidled up next to her at Saturday evening Mass, as long as you had some connection to her family, you were a part of her family and you were important to her.

She collected relationships.

And so when she died, former baby sitters showed up at her wake. Grade school baseball and basketball coaches 40 years removed from her son arrived. Employees of the supermarket where she bought her groceries made an appearance. People who simply knew of her paid their respects.

Every now and then, there is a person in this world who loves for the sake of showing love, shares because it is the right thing to do, gives of herself until it hurts or becomes a sacrifice, and lives life for the happiness of others.

I knew such a person. She died last month, and I was the most blessed of all because — as fate would have it — I was her youngest son.

When I was young, my neighbors thought I was the most spoiled kid on the face of the earth. But that wasn't true. I was simply the most loved kid on the face of the earth.

Make no mistake, I had to hold up my end of the bargain. I had high expectations placed on me. I was held to a different standard.

I remember the time she mentioned something to me about having a lazy streak. I was heartbroken. From that moment on, I was bound and determined never to be called lazy by anyone ever again.

But at the end of the day,



FROM THE SIDELINES

BY TIM PRISTER

whether I had achieved everything that was expected of me or if I had simply given it my best effort, there was never any doubt that I could come home to an unconditional love.

The giver of that love is gone now, but her goodness carries on, not so much in her three boys who are all grown up and set in their ways, but more so in her three grandsons. They were her beacons of light, and they now live their lives representing the goodness that she embodied.

The house is empty and someday soon, someone who probably never knew her will call it home. If they listen carefully, they might still be able to hear her voice of warmth and optimism, persistence and strong will. It will be the voice of a person who would not give in no matter how dire.

Above all, it will be the voice of a woman who believed in God, believed in a life with God and her husband after death, and would do anything to bring her family along for the ride.

Tim Prister is a 1978 graduate of Marian High School and a 1982 graduate from the University of Notre Dame.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

Gospel for February 22, 2009

Mark 2:1-12

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B: the cure of the Capernaum paralytic. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

CAPERNAUM	HE WAS AT HOME	NO LONGER
ROOM	DOOR	CARRIED
CROWD	ROOF	LET DOWN
PARALYTIC	JESUS	FAITH
YOUR SINS	SITTING THERE	GOD ALONE
EASIER	MAY KNOW	SON OF MAN
AUTHORITY	EARTH	HOME

TAKE YOUR MAT

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

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LENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

were, we have another command tied up with the pursuit of holiness. In the Book of Wisdom (7:11) we hear his injunction: "Desire my words." Sometimes we forget that the words of sacred Scripture are living words, aimed at transforming our lives and our hearts. We must develop a passionate desire to not only understand intellectually the word of God as it comes to us through sacred Scripture and preaching; but we must pray for the grace, under the Holy Spirit, to discover its personal redemptive meaning of our lives.

One of the overlooked characteristics of the Holy One is that he is a "jealous" God. We usually associate this characteristic with negative feeling, e.g. envy. But as used by the sacred authors it has a different connotation. The emphasis is on God's precious care and concern for those made in his image and likeness. It is especially centered about his feelings for the poor and suffering. Because of indifference and neglect, he sees how this image is blasphemed by degrading poverty and senseless starvation. That is why we encounter God's frequent injunctions to reach out to the hurting and ignored. In our age, we might inscribe in our own hearts the

Lord's own words recorded in Sirach (4:1): "Delay not to give to the needy." And we better understand how almsgiving has always been a part of our Lenten ascetic.

One of the early writers of the church stated that "there is no force in God." God does not compel. He respects our free will. But he continues to extend his invitation to pursue holiness through individuals. In other words we must be displaying the characteristics which will lead others to desire to pursue holiness. We must never forget the observation made long ago by Dr. Johnson that our world does not need more precepts but rather living models and examples.

When asked about the secret of holiness, Mother Teresa of Calcutta said simply to ask the Lord for the grace and desire, and He will show you your own unique path to follow.

Msgr. Thomas McDonnell is a retired priest from the Archdiocese of Boston. He has dedicated his life to the urban poor and disabled. A cancer survivor, he is the author of "Walking in the Dark Valley: When Cancer is a Constant Companion." This is the first of a four-part series that will be offered by *Today's Catholic* through Lent.

Sports

'Plan B' reconfigures CYO tournament brackets

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — The brackets for the 73rd running of the Catholic Youth League (CYO) tournament will have a slightly different look from years past. For example, the boys' White League will be missing the Raiders from New Haven. The seventh-grade class had just two boys who wanted to play CYO basketball. In addition, the 2009 boys' Blue League (small school) competition will have just six teams vying for the championship instead of the usual eight from prior tournaments.

With the merger of Benoit Academy with St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, last year, the 2007 champions, the Phoenix team, will be sorely missed along with the St. Louis-St. Rose Twins' team who took the titles in 2002 and 2003 according to official program records. The Twins' small number of boys between the two schools prevented them, like the New Haven boys, to field a CYO team.

However, "plan B" fell into place when desire and opportunity came together for another purpose. And the missing link that made the joint effort happen was Paul Gerardot.

Gerardot, a familiar face in the CYO circuit with over 25 years of coaching experience at St. Henry, Sacred Heart and Benoit, agreed to coach the small group from St. Louis Academy and St. John, New Haven, despite not being on the CYO schedule.

"I was looking for another program to get involved with and it felt like a good fit. These boys just wanted a chance to play basketball," Gerardot explained. With the recent announcement assuring that St. Louis Academy and St. Joseph School will remain open for the next three years, Gerardot is hopeful for a chance to continue with the group and return to the Blue League for the 2009-2010 season.

With players at different levels and newcomers to the sport, Gerardot stresses the basics and tries to make learning the game "a process" at both Besancon Hall practices and the vacated St. Henry/Benoit Academy gym during scrimmage games.

Gerardot uses examples like

Lawrence Barnett, a former protégé and Bishop Luers standout, to show his young players that when they learn to shoot a foul shot the right way at a young age it will carry with them throughout their career.

Gerardot's team roster consists of six players: Luke Hamman, Jacob Matter, Tory Wild, Martin Lortie, Sam Smith and Derrick Marks. Garin Marks is serving as assistant coach.

Parent Kelly Hamman is amazed at the progress the team has made since the beginning of the season, "You can not believe how far they have come."

Gerardot summarized, "Besides teaching them the fundamentals, one of my main jobs as their coach is to encourage these boys and build them up, build them up and build them up some more. I want to be their cheerleader. I love wearing 'the skirt.'"

In the final week of regular season play, all games played on Saturday, Feb. 14, were no count match-ups with the league standings determined a week ago and brackets set for the upcoming CYO tournament.

Sunday, March 1, is the date set for the 2009 diocesan showdown. This year's games will be held in Fort Wayne with the South Bend Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) teams traveling to St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel School.

Boys

St. Joseph, Decatur (8) 19, St. John, Fort Wayne (8) 47 — Kohne 10, Cooper 11
St. Aloysius 22, Queen of Angels 32 — Thiele 9
St. Therese 32, Huntington 22 — Pike/Krider 8, Colvin 17

Girls

St. Aloysius 45, St. Vincent (8) 34 — Mueller 14, Zaremba 19
St. John, Fort Wayne (8) 40, St. Joseph, Decatur 30 — Welling 28, Schultz 18
St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel 31, St. Therese 26 — Saalfrank 12, A. Trevino 16

ON TO STATE BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIP The Bishop Dwenger High School boys bowling team is in the big show. They qualified for the Indiana State High School Bowling Finals this weekend at Anderson and will bowl against seven other schools at Coopers Sport Bowl, Saturday, Feb. 21, at 9 a.m. for the state championship.

Wildcats take ICCL championship

BY ELMER J. DANCH

SOUTH BEND — A well-organized basketball team that has been playing together since they were in the fifth grade at St. Joseph School in Mishawaka, won the divisional and post season tournament of the Inter-City Catholic League on Feb. 15 and officially wound up the hardwood season.

The St. Joseph Wildcats thundered past St. Pius X of Granger, 49-24, and led from start to finish behind the superb scoring of

Michael Whitfield, who cleared the nets for 27 points.

The Wildcats soared to a 14-2 lead, then led at half-time, 22-6, and 43-12 at the third period.

The champions eliminated St. Joseph of South Bend in

the semifinals, 58-37, and it was Whitfield who led the attack with 24 points.

St. Pius beat Holy Family, 41-36, in a nail biter semi.

St. Joseph Green of Mishawaka won the Colors Division of the ICCL defeating Christ the King Blue, 43-36.



Bishop Luers Knights offer wrestling club

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Luers High School is offering a wrestling camp for grades 1-8. Camp for grades 1-4 will be held March 2-12, Monday through Thursday, from 6-7:30 p.m. Grades 5-8 will attend camp March 2-21, Monday-Thursday, from 6-7:30 p.m. The cost is \$15. For further information contact Kevin Lovejoy at (260)747-1662 or visit www.bishopluers.org.



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Catholic actress Hogan likes roles, pace of her career

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — You probably would not recognize Siobhan Fallon Hogan by name, although you might have spotted her in a few landmark screen hits.

She had a recurring role three times on TV's "Seinfeld" and a role in the movie "Men in Black," spent one year as a member of the "Saturday Night Live" cast and, last year, played the part of a birthing instructor who sounds a lot like cartoon character Elmer Fudd in the film comedy "Baby Mama."

From "Baby Mama," Hogan landed a role in the new romantic comedy "New in Town," starring Renee Zellweger and Harry Connick Jr.

But Hogan, who described herself as being the "goof" of her Irish-American Catholic family when she was growing up, doesn't take a lot of roles.

For one thing, she's the mother of three children in a Catholic school in New Jersey.

"I don't know if you can hear me. I'm putting silverware away," she said during a Jan. 22 telephone interview with Catholic News Service from her home in Rumson, N.J. "I like to work on projects as they come (and) finish them. If I work only a couple of months out of the year, it works for me. My agent won't like to read that, but it's true."

For another, Hogan said she routinely rejects roles she finds at odds with her faith.

"I get scripts and when I read them, I think, 'I can't believe they're going to make this.'" She

added that she rarely sees the film or TV projects she's passed up. "I have very few regrets on those. No — I have no regrets on things I did not do," she said.

Noting the date of the interview and CNS' Washington headquarters, Hogan said, "Hey, you got a big day down there. I've got a sister down there with two busloads of kids." She was referring to the contingent from a parish in the Diocese of Syracuse, N.Y., that had come to Washington for the annual March for Life.

Hogan grew up in a small town in the Syracuse Diocese that had no Catholic school. However, she got her bachelor's degree from Jesuit-run LeMoyné College in

Syracuse, then got a master's degree from the theater program at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

Her one season on "Saturday Night Live," 1991-92, was different from what she had expected. "I'm not a stand-up comedian, I'm an actress," she said. "It was really competitive. It was the 'Wayne's World' time," referring to a recurring sketch that starred Mike Myers and Dana Carvey.

"Women got only one sketch per show," she said. "You had to claw your way to the top. I'm not

a fighter. You either get me or you don't."

Still, "SNL," as it is popularly called, proved to be "a great platform" for landing movie and TV roles, according to Hogan. It also put her in good stead for the "Baby Mama" role. Hogan had played the part of Alec Baldwin's sister on "30 Rock," which stars "SNL" alum Tina Fey, who was going to be in a lead role in "Baby Mama." In addition,

"SNL" creator Lorne Michaels was executive producer of the movie.

In "Baby Mama," Hogan stole the scenes she was in, even a deleted scene included in the DVD version of the film that's now out.

Hogan likes her role in "New in Town." She plays an executive assistant to Zellweger's

character, a corporate executive sent by her company to its plant in a small Minnesota town where she might have to cut jobs or close it.

"I play a Christian ... and there's a great scene when the town comes together to save the cheese factory," Hogan said.

Of her co-star Connick, she noted. "Oh, he's a Catholic. He sang for the pope."

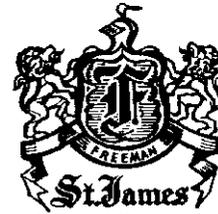
Last April Connick performed two pieces he composed for an event with Pope Benedict XVI when the pontiff came to the U.S.

"I play a Christian ...
and there's a great scene
when the town comes
together to save
the cheese factory,"

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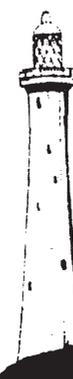
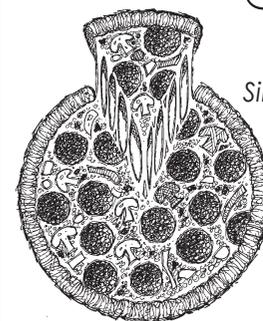
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Renee Zellweger and Siobhan Fallon Hogan star in a scene from the movie "New in Town."

CNS PHOTO/LIONSGATE

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WHAT'S HAPPENING carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. Send in your announcement at least two weeks prior to the event. Mail to: Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or e-mail: fhogan@fw.diocesefwsb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

MISC. HAPPENINGS

Beginning Experience weekend

Donaldson — A weekend for separated, divorced and widowed men and women will be March 13-15 at Lindenwood Retreat Center. Reservations are needed by Feb. 27 to (574) 261-0123.

Parish mission

Monroeville — St. Louis and St. Rose Parishes will have a joint mission March 1-4 at 7 p.m. The theme is: "If I but Call Your Name ... the Summons." The mission begins with a potluck dinner on Sunday, March 1, at 5:30 p.m. at Besancon Hall (St. Louis) followed by the evening reflection on 'Faith.' The Monday session on 'Prayer' is at St. Rose. Bishop John M. D'Arcy will present on Tuesday the topic 'Reconciliation' which will be followed by a penance service, at St. Louis. The mission ends Wednesday at St. Rose with Mass. Everyone is invited.

Parish mission

New Haven — St. John the Baptist Parish will have a mission Feb. 22-25 at 7 p.m. Senior presentations will be at 10 a.m. Feb. 23, 24.

Monte Carlo night

South Bend — St. Anthony de Padua Parish, 2310 E. Jefferson Blvd., will host a Monte Carlo night Saturday, Feb. 21, from 6 p.m. to midnight. Tickets are \$25 and include Polish dinner, beverages and gaming tables. Proceeds benefit the athletic program and gym maintenance.

Card party

South Bend — The St. Hedwig Rosary Society will have a card

party Sunday, March 8, at 1 p.m. in the Hedwig Memorial Center. Lunch served. Advance tickets only by Feb. 22 for \$5. Call (574) 287-5534.

FISH FRIES

Fish fries announced

Angola — The Knights of Columbus Council 7053 will have fish fries on Fridays, March 6-20, from 5-7 p.m. in the St. Anthony de Padua Parish hall, 700 W. Maumee St. The council will also host breakfast on the first Sunday of the month March 1-June 7 after Masses in the parish hall.

Knights plan fish fry

South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a fish fry on Friday, Feb. 27, from 5-7 p.m. Adults \$7.50, children (5-12) \$3. Chicken strips for \$7.50 and shrimp for \$8.50 will be available. Fish fries will continue each Friday during Lent.

Fish fry

South Bend — Our Lady of Hungary School, 735 W. Calvert St., will have a fish fry Friday, Feb. 27, from 5-7 p.m. Tickets are \$7.50 day of sale, \$7 presale,

\$4.50 for children 6-12 and children under 6 free. Presale tickets may be purchased at the rectory and before and after Sunday Masses.

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. in 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, March 6 and March 27, from 5-8 p.m. at the St. Vincent School cafeteria. Adults \$7.50, children 6-11 \$3.

Correction

In the obituary listed for Dr. Graciela Beecher, in the Feb. 15, 2009 issue of *Today's Catholic*, the Mass scheduled at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 21, is not a memorial service, but rather the regularly scheduled Saturday 5 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

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Vera L. Sessler, 87, Sacred Heart

Alberta M. Brueggemann, 93, St. Jude

Marie E. Cochrane, 74, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Vincent J. Masbaum, 84, St. Charles

Audrey D. Fabini, St. Anne Home Chapel

Granger

Nicolina Kratzmeyer, 89, St. Pius X

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Arnold George Benson, 88, St. Matthew Cathedral

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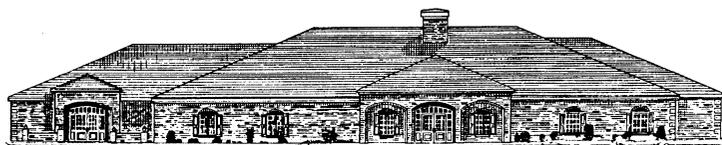
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