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 recommended 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.
Event stresses Catholic teaching on womanhood, sexuality, vocation

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 him in the 1980s 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. Teresa 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 more. I met Anna Maria Scaerlanda 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 spring-time 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 Hominum,” 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 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, OSPF, 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 recover 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 look 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 practice all three, but especially the third. Every day we meet someone out of work and another who has lost health insurance. Parishes are especially positioned to respond to those 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 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 population 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 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.

POPE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

governments are announcing multi-billion-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 Cordero and Sheeran agreed that the financial crisis 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 Cordero 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 is 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 specifically 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_service/Es/Es_bulletin/news/25311.php?index=23311A=en.

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

L ast 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 conclude 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 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 60 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 at a minimum of 50 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
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 (iND), 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 Emiliani 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 unborn, 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.

“Responsibility,’ and the dignity of the human person. Then I heard Pakaluk advised her audience. “Think of yourself in the service of others?” and summed up the conference, “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?”

“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 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.

“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, but it was a lot about girls say it’s not a big deal or a problem. But in Caroline Lashuk’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 counter-cultural.”

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. 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?”

Promoting an understanding of the dignity of both men and women

Genders, sexuality issues addressed at Edith Stein Conference 2009
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.

Feg 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.”

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Principal Stephen Hoffman interacts with Christine Nemeth and her third-grade class at Christ the King School in South Bend.
BISHOP D’ARCY BLESSES REFUGEE RESOURCE CENTER

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. That’s emergency room physician is providing treatment for problems that 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 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 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 mental health impact; six require ultrasound sound 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.
Seven young men welcomed into St. Augustine Church

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, Keysawn 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 of things you can get into out here. But church seems to be the place where you 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 boys 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 reasons I became D’Xavier’s sponsor,” says sponsor Kevin Irvin. “It was a great experience 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 Keysawn 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

BY MAY LEE JOHNSON

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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 Keysawn 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 said. 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 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 “utterly irrelevant within the big, international geopolitical strategies,” he said. But precisely because the Holy See is truly such a dependent 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 missionary priest who cared for 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 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 1898 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 focus on high profile cases” that have drawn attention to cases involving abuse of minors. “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.”

Authorities release Chinese bishop after 30-month detention

XIWARNZI, 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 participate in large-scale church activities. Bishop Yao was detained in part for consecrating a large new church in Guanyuan county in 2006, the Asian church news agency UCA News reported Feb. 13. Sources who visited the 85-year-old bishop upon his release from 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, forbade them to hold any welcome gathering. The source quoted Bishop Yao as saying officials 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 regards as a “wise official,” 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, whose husband died in the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, was planning to take part in a weekend celebration in Buffalo, N.Y., for an event hosted by Providence College to benefit charter schools. The plane crashed into a home on Feb. 9. 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.

Fresco shows multiplication of loaves and fishes

FRESCO SHOWS MULTIPLICATION OF LOAVES AND FISHES

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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 the total population saying 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 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.”
FORT WAYNE — Bishop Luers High School has announced its Sterling Sentinel nominees, who 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 Alphilp for drama, nominated by Karlene Krouse; Kara Baumgartner for English/literature, nominated by Roger Bubb; Cody Miller for business, nominated by Matt Lazzaro; Rachael Ansphach for athletics, nominated by Matt Lindsay; Jesse Ansphach for science, nominated by Jason Draper and Alicia Hostetter; Talitha Frecker for math, nominated by Nicholas Vickery; Jeffrey Andrews for foreign language, nominated by Mark Niemoeiller; Robert Slocum for music/instrumental, nominated by Scott Newman; Jimmy Mitchell for vocal nominated by Karlene Krouse and Lauren Helling for journalism, nominated by Eileen Brodmerek.

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,” said Stephen Goldsmith, vice chair of the board of directors, who oversees the honor roll.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities and fosters civic engagement. 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 in 4,903 credit hours 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 5,951, 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 13.2 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 nontraditional 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.”

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. Tie Yankel and Dylan Bradburn from Christ the King were the top two finishers overall.

Pack 451 Hosts Pinewood Derby

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 teams, 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 Maggard.

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

Attorney coaches for the Marian teams are Dan Tytonovich, 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 Newly Consecrated,” 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.
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 everyday 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, compassionately, 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.

**FREE BOOK about “The Passion”**

You have seen the movie, now read what Jesus says about the meaning of His Passion as dictated to stigmatist, Catalina Rivas.

This 48 page book has the “Imprimatur” and is recommended for meditation. Mrs. Rivas was featured in the recent FOX-TV special, “Signs from God”, that was broadcast worldwide.

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T. 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 with his straightforward and often 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 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. 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 as the necessary condition for our salvation. Jesus teaches in simple, clear and basic ways throughout the Gospels. St. Paul's teachings are more abstract and complex, indicating his 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 writings 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 mind 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 the grace which was given me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” — 1 Cor 15:10

St. Paul yearns for acceptance as an “apostle” following his conversion. However, the followers of the way would not readily overrule Paul’s teaching in Christian persecutions as a faithful Jewish Pharisee. We first meet St. Paul, then known as Saul, in the Roman Empire. The Acts of the Apostles, in the context of St. Stephen’s martyrdom. Acts 8:3 confesses, “Saul, meanwhile, was trying to bring up the church under which he taught and wrote. 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.

Benedict XVI writes regarding the account of St. Paul’s conversion in the Acts of the Apostles: “St. Paul was not transformed by a sudden thought or an event, by the irreversible presence of the Risen One whom subsequently he never would 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 by his encounter with St. Peter in Damascus around the year A.D. 35 and his journey to Jerusalem. In this city, Saul and his brothers, Cephas and the Hellenistic Jewish church, entered house after house and dragging out men and women, he handed them over for imprisonment.

Benedict XVI writes, “It is a matter of faith to doubt, so powerful had been the evidence of the Risen One whom subsequently he never would 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).

Around A.D. 38 Paul meets with Peter and James in the city of Jerusalem. 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, Crete, Melita, Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and more.

Paul eventually develops Gentile Christian communities in Ephesus, Antioch, Thessalonica and Rome, and “to the ends of the earth.” — Acts 18

Setting the world on fire

Paul faces the challenge of making the message 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, learn of his passionate faith in Jesus Christ and his desire to bring the teachings of Jesus and the followers of Jesus Christ. The Letters to Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon are the undisputed letters attributed to St. Paul. Other letters often attributed to Paul, such as Ephesians, Colossians and Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are disputed by various Scripture scholars.

Dr. Vincent Brannick, Ph.D., S.S.D., writes, “By reading these letters we can see how the whole of mankind came into the 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 Jesus Christ 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, called to be holy and beloved of God. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” — 1 Cor 1:3

With modern technology the notion of letter writing has fallen. However, this is the method of communication that spreads the message of Christ to the Gentiles. Paul is a tireless evangelizer. From A.D. 38-59, 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. All of these books are letters. Letter writing, used mostly by the highly educated, was a totally acceptable and easy way for the time to express their faith and to teach others about Jesus. Paul’s letters are the earliest Christian letters found to us. Through Paul’s letters, the teachings of Jesus were no longer transmitted by oral tradition but are now written down to address the questions and concerns of a particular group of people. Through his letters, Paul begins to formulate a written theology that would be read by his contemporaries, future generations and the followers of Jesus Christ. The Letters to Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon are the undisputed letters attributed to St. Paul. Other letters often attributed to Paul, such as Ephesians, Colossians and Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are debated by various Scripture scholars.

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Today, how do you communicate your belief in Christ?

Jesus and Paul

“I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, not 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

Paul’s teachings 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. The style of the four evangelists. However, through the apostles and the early followers of Christ, Paul shared about the significant events in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Paul never knew Jesus in a physical sense, 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 history. “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.” — Stephen Harris, Stephen Harris, page 471.

Throughout Paul’s letters there appears to be a tension between the historical Jesus and the immanent Jesus who is intimately encountered by faithful followers. His encounter with the risen Christ convinces the next 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 personal conduct, divorce, celibacy and moral conduct. Paul believes that this present time of sin and evil would soon be absorbed by the victory of Christ and the 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, 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, and 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 knew that Jesus is the one who reconciles all of humanity to God. Pope Benedict XVI writes in his homily on the feast of St. Paul 2008: “St. Paul sacrificed his own life, devoting himself without reserve to the ministry of reconciliation, entering thereby into God’s power. We must all live each day on this path: 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 of the cross, which is our 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 live each day on this path: 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’.

For the complete six-week series visit www.dioceseofwab.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 Father Daniel Groody.
• Mary the Mother of Jesus: A Closer and More Intense Look at What Was Written in the Christian Scriptures on March 4 by Holy Cross Father Nicholas Ayo.
• Deeper Understanding of the meaning of Jesus’ Death on March 11 by Holy Cross Father Kenneth Grabner.
• Globalization, Christian Spirituality and Social Justice on March 18 by Holy Cross Father Andrew Gawrych.
• Our Lenten Project: Allowing God to Incarnate Christ in our Lives on March 25 by Dr. Anne Luther.
• Spring Is Here! Awakening Your Potential on April 1 by Holy Cross Father Kenneth Grabner.

For information contact Pat Rowan, director of Spiritual Care at (574) 251-3267.

Parish missions, enrichments during Lent
The diocesan Office of Spiritual Development will offer the following:
• St. Louis-Besanon, 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, Rounoke, 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
AS the soulful season of Lent approaches Cathol”ics 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 Lent: Meditative Living with Thomas Merton,” edited by Jonathon Montaldo and Robert Toth, provides a meditative source for small 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

“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 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.littlelambmusic.com, or by calling (800) 231-1207.

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Join us for a bowl of Ash Wednesday Soup
Your free 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
at SS Peter and Paul - Huntington
Lent: Our Baptismal Retreat
Featuring: Fr. Tom Richstatter, OFM
March 1, 2, 3, at 7:00 each night
Fr. Tom is a Franciscan priest and Professor of Liturgy and Sacramental Theology at St. Meinrad School of Theology. He is a parish priest, lecturer, and author.
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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. and 6:30 p.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 3:45-9:45 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 3-4:45 p.m.
  - Holy Thursday, April 9, Mass at 7 p.m. will be followed by confection and adoration until 9 p.m.
  - Good Friday, April 10, Passion service at 2:30 p.m. will be followed by confection.

**St. Catherine**

- Reconciliation will be Monday, April 6, 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.

**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 at 5:30 p.m. 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.

**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.
  - 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 Monday, March 24, at 7 a.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 Tuesday, 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 community? Honor, or material possession?
  - Do I carry on conversations at the table?
  - 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?

**Personal life**

- **Can I accept God’s blessing?**
  - 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?**

**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 do I volunteer, is it done out of love or personal gain?

**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?**
  - Do I get 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 marriage? Do I begin and end my day with prayer? Do I turn to God in gratitude for all my blessings?**
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-factily. 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 hurry to eat as the food and rudest 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 unkink 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 the 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 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 for the reason of the unhospitality 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.

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

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 legislative laws that were designed to prevent illegal abortions. (See W. Smith, “Mortality and Morality.”) 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 legislative process, how- ever eradicating from the language those matters that people prefer not to deal with directly. A healthy legislative process, however, will abstrain 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 such as sexual morality, bioethics and the protection of human life.

TODAY’S CATHOLIC welcomes letters from readers. All letters must be signed and include a phone number and address for verification.

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Verbal engineering and the swaying of public conscience

BY FATHER TAD PACOHOLCZYK

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 reasct as a “mass of tissue” or a “grouping of cells.” The abortion procedure itself was reascted 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 such as sexual morality, bioethics and the protection of human life.

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Father Tadzue 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

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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

Jesus rescues us from our exile

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

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 Golan, 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 it 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 present week’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 were divided 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 reafirms 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 paralyzed man had sinned. Perhaps his ancestors had sinned. But, in any case, all physical illness 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 marvelous, 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; 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 5:13-6a, 12-14, 17, 22
Cor 5:20-62 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

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

This quiz serves up some servile questions.

1. Joshua reminded the Israelites that before Abraham they served a
   a. other gods
   b. Pharaoh
   c. pies

2. Jeremiah reminded the people that God said that all men must serve this Babylonian King:
   a. Oedipus
   b. Pharaoh
   c. Nebuchadnezzar

3. 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

4. Jacob served Laban for 14 years to earn these:
   a. Two golden status of cattle
   b. Two sisters as wives
   c. Two turtle doves

5. Mary told the server at the wedding at Cana to do whatever Jesus said. In doing so she started this:
   a. a not over who got what wine
   b. Jesus’ public ministry
   c. the custom of doing the chicken dance at weddings.

6. Who was upset that she was left to serve while her sister listened to Jesus?
   a. Martha
   b. Mary
   c. Tabitha

7. In the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) article 337, what beings are described as being sent forth to serve?
   a. Demons
   b. Angels
   c. Men

8. 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

9. “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

10. 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)

11. These are often found at Roman Catholic and Eastern liturgies:
    a. altar servers
    b. tax servers
    c. mainframe servers

12. 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 vary differences serve its unity and mission.
    c. The role of the clergy is as servants of the pope.

13. 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

14. 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. Halku

15. According to the CCC part 4, one who prays must battle in order to decide whether 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.b, 12.b, 13.b, 14.a, 15.c
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.
FORT WAYNE — The brackets for the 73rd running of the Catholic Youth League (CYO) tournament will have a different look from past years. 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 CYO basketball (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 school boys, to field a CYO team.

In the final week of regular season play, all games played on Saturday, Feb. 14, were no count for 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.

Wildcats take ICCL championship

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 thumped 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.
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 when they come together to save the cheese factory,” Hogan said.

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

“SNL” creator Lorne Michaels was executive producer of the movie. “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 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 LeMoyne College in Syracuse, then got a master’s degree from 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 on ‘SNL’ back then. Most of the time we were the backup,” Hogan said.

Hogan earned her 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.

“Baby Mama” role. Hogan had 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.

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, Hogan had no regrets on those. No — I have no regrets on those. No — I have no regrets on things I did not do,” she said.

In her role in “New in Town,” 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.”

The movie was executive produced by “SNL” creator Lorne Michaels. “Baby Mama,” Hogan said.

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What’s Happening?

**What’s Happening** carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. Send in your announcement at least two weeks prior to the event. Mail to: Today’s Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or e-mail: fhogan@fw.dioecesefwsb.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. Registrations 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. Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Feb. 23, 24.

**Baptist Parish will have a 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. Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Feb. 23, 24.

**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. 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.

Fish Fry
Sponsored by
Granger Knights of Columbus 4263
February 27, and March 13 & 27, 2009
at St. Pius X Church, 52553 Fir Road, Granger
4 - 7 p.m. ALL YOU CAN EAT!
Adults: $7.50 • Children 4 up $3.75
CARRY-OUTS AVAILABLE!

**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.

**Children under 6 free. Presale tickets may be purchased at the rectory and before and after Sunday Masses.**

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