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Celebrant Bishop John M. D’Arcy welcomed the two groups to the congregation.

Catechumens, candidates state their intention to join the faith

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

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Churches rally to support unemployed

BY KAY COZAD

As the country experiences the extensive ripple effect of the recent economic downturn, unemployment figures around the country are skyrocketing. Recent numbers from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show the national unemployment rate rose to a staggering 7.6 percent this month. Indiana has shouldered it’s own burden as factories close and faithful employees are terminated.

Many of the Catholic churches of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend are rallying in an effort to support those who are currently struggling to make ends meet. Several parishes have food pantries open to parishioners in need of food resources, as well as St. Vincent de Paul Society programs offering counseling and referrals for assistance. Others are investigating innovative ways to meet the needs of job-seeking individuals head on.

St. Vincent de Paul Church of Fort Wayne provides a “Job Opportunities” spot in their weekly bulletin, where parishioners can place a mini-resume ad for employment. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, also in Fort Wayne, is following suit with their weekly bulletin’s full-page “Job Corner.”

Jim Kitchens, pastoral minister at St. Elizabeth says, “It’s a little step. We’re trying to help everyone in the community... to keep hope.”

He adds that he and others are assisting the unemployed of the parish with resume building and counseling, as well as brainstorming ideas for future ministries such as a monthly business person’s breakfast for employment networking purposes.

In Elkhart County where the unemployment rate, recorded in December of 2008, was an astounding 15.3 percent, due to the recreational vehicle industry collapse, St. Vincent de Paul Parish and St. Thomas the Apostle have combined efforts to encourage the ongoing collection of food items as well as essential household products to be distributed through the food pantries. Assistance with utilities is also available through their St. Vincent de Paul Societies.

People seeking work register for the Employment Guide job fair in Westminster, Colo., Feb. 18. A piece of the $787 billion stimulus package will fund the extension of unemployment benefits through the end of 2009, and raise the payments by $25 a week.

TELLING OUR FAITH STORY

I love the Catholic Church, as a convert, because it is the pillar and foundation of truth. It is Jesus’ body. It is so physical and beautiful — the Eucharist, its art and architecture. She, our good mother, profoundly understands human nature — our glory and misery — and her remedy deeply heals.

Dave McClow
St. Joseph, Garrett
TODAY’S CATHOLIC

MARCH 8, 2009

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Spiral reading, an old practice to be cherished

Ralph McInerny of Notre Dame — who also wrote a preface; “Edith Stein, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross” by Maria Ruiz Scapera; and the master’s thesis by Sister Marie Morgan, OSF.

Many years after her conversion, and after much prayer and meditation on the Cross of Christ, Edith became a Carmelite. She was sent from Germany to Holland to live in a Carmelite convent there, in the hope that she would be saved from the gas chambers. It was not to be.

St. John of the Cross is one of the three Carmelite spiritual masters, along with St. Teresa of Avila and St. Therese of Lisieux, both of whom are doctors of the church. Last summer, a good friend gave me a copy of a book by an Irish writer, which is a commentary or interpretation of the writings of St. John of the Cross. “The Impact of God; Sounds and Noises of St. John of the Cross” by Iain Matthew is properly described as a “guide into the mystery of God’s love.”

As you know, this Carmelite tradition of the Two Sisters — St. John and St. John of the Cross, greatly influenced Pope John Paul II, who as a young man, thought about becoming a Carmelite, until the legendary Cardinal Sapiela told him to stay on the road to be a diocesan priest, advice which certainly became a blessing for the world. I think I probably stayed away from St. John of the Cross, because of the foreboding titles of his works, like “The Dark Night of the Soul,” but this author brings home the beauty of his teaching. This is a book to read a page or two at a time.

The audience talks

Pope Benedict XVI — or Joseph Ratzinger — as we knew him, as a theologian is a prolific writer. I have enjoyed many of his works over the years, especially “Introduction To Christianity,” which I used over 30 years ago in a course I gave on faith at Saint John’s Seminary in Brighton.

I have two articles, which he wrote on the priesthood, which I have used many times in giving retreats, and which I passed on this year to the distinguished patristic theologian and sometime baseball umpire, Father Michael Heintz, which he found helpful in a super sermon he gave on the priesthood at Notre Dame.

The apostles and ‘The Fathers’

Always a teacher, the pope’s Wednesday talks at his general audience have become books. The first series was on the Twelve Apostles. A second volume coming from his audience talks was on the Fathers of the Church. This includes four talks on St. Augustine, whom the Holy Father is an expert. This book is entitled “The Fathers,” and I sent it to my priests this past Christmas. The book on the apostles, also by Our Sunday Visitor, contains some beautiful art.

‘Milestones’

The pope tells his own story

You might want to read “Milestones,” in which the gracious humanity of Joseph Ratzinger comes through. He tells about his childhood in Bavaria, through the Nazi years, his education, his experience of Vatican II where he was a peritus, or expert, right up until the time he was assigned to Rome. An easy book to read and a joy.

A book on the priesthood

One of the results of the theological and pastoral renewal of the Second Vatican Council has been an improved understanding of the ministerial priesthood. It took awhile. After Vatican II, with its emphasis on the role of the bishop and the enriching role of the laity, there came a difficult period as the truth in church music, and also in catechetics. But through the efforts of Pope John Paul II, there has come a now great strengthening and deepening of the ordained priesthood — its relationship to the priesthood of Christ and to the priesthood of the baptized. One of our candidates for the priesthood gave me a helpful book, and I may send it to our priests at Easter time. It is a doctoral dissertation from Saint Thomas University in Rome, where I also studied, and it is a fine book for priests — “Reclaiming Our Priestly Character” by Father David E. Toups, STD.

The question of rights

One of the great warriors for truth in the Catholic Church is Janet Smith, Ph.D. on matters such as Catholic teaching on sexuality, marriage and the dignity of the human person. She is constantly writing and speaking throughout the country. Currently a professor at the Detroit seminary, I ran across a little book she wrote entitled “The Right to Privacy.” It is a great book for lawyers or law students, and shows how we got saddled with Roe v. Wade and all the harm that it has done over the years.

A commercial

By the way, all these books can be obtained at our Cathedral Bookstore. If they do not have it, they will get it for you. The Cathedral Bookstore is at our new Archbishop Noll Catholic Center, and if you have not been there — you are in for a treat. You can also contact the bookstore through our Web site: www.diocesefw.org.

That is my style. I have a number of books at hand. Some I leave in the chapel, for spiritual reading, and others in my living room. It is my hope and prayer to read more during Lent, and you should, too. More on this subject later.

The baseball games have started

Opening day draws near. Still no requests from the Red Sox to pitch batting practice. I live in hope. See you all next week.

BISHOP JOHN M. D’ARCY

When do you read, Bishop?

That was a question put to me recently. I answered with two responses.

First, I do not read enough; and I read in the evening. Spiritual reading, an old practice in the church, is to be cherished, and today there are so many good things to read. Ever year at Christmas, and again at Easter, I send to all my priests a spiritual book. I usually have several books going. That gives you a chance to dip into the one that you enjoy the most, or fits the particular need. I especially want to endorse spiritual reading as a Lenten practice. It gets us away from television and the computer.

Here is what I have been reading: “Mother Teresa’s Secret Fire.” This is a book by Father Joseph Langford, published by Our Sunday Visitor. Father Langford, who has a brother in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, founded with Mother Teresa the congregation of priests who are part of the Missionaries of Charity.

She had an extraordinary experience of Christ while still a teacher, an experience which brought her to the streets, and alleys and gutters of Calcutta. It was something revealed to her on a small train in the mountains of India. The day it happened is still celebrated by her sisters as Inspiration Day. It seems she learned in prayer what the Lord meant by the words, “I thirst.” It is a yearning that he has for a relationship with humanity, with each one of us. That yearning for souls is not just for Mother Teresa, but all of us are called to find our own Calcutta and bring Christ’s love there.

In reading it, I thought of the traditional devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in which Christ’s love, both human and divine, is portrayed through the symbol of the heart.

Edith Stein

This extraordinary woman, a philosopher, teacher, and artist, was a feminist, now a canonized saint and a martyr, was killed at Auschwitz, because she was Jewish. Her conversion to the Catholic Church came about after a career of teaching and association with the great philosophical minds of Germany.

It is encouraging that some of the young women at Notre Dame, in order to respond to the sad and harmful play, “Vagina Monologues,” prepared a seminar, which has now become an annual event in honor of this saint and philosopher, the true dignity of the Christian woman.

The books I have been reading about her include “The Conversion of Edith Stein,” by Florent Gaboriau, translated by our own
Physicians take legal, educational steps to defend conscience rights

BY NANCY FRAZIER O'BRIEN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — To combat what they see as threats to the conscience rights of health care professionals who oppose abortion, the Catholic Medical Association and other organizations are taking both legal and educational steps.

The Philadelphia-based Catholic Medical Association, which has some 1,100 members nationwide, has joined with the Christian Medical Association and the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists in an effort to intervene legally against lawsuits filed by the attorneys general of eight states, Planned Parenthood of America and the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association.

The suits launched a Department of Health and Human Services regulation that codifies several existing federal statutes prohibiting discrimination against health professionals who decline to participate in abortions or other medical procedures because of their religious or other moral objections.

On Feb. 27, the Obama administration announced it was reviewing a proposal to rescind the regulation, which took effect two days before the inauguration of President Barack Obama.

After the review by the Office of Management and Budget, the proposal is to be published in the Federal Register, opening a 30-day period for public comment.

Without the regulation, members of the groups taking steps to keep it in place would be subject to “the imminent threat of being forced … to perform abortions, assist in abortions, train for abortions and refer individuals for abortions despite their religious, moral and ethical objections to the practice of abortion,” said court papers filed with the U.S. District Court in Hartford, Conn.

Candidates must be able to generate activity when seeking employment. “I recommend they set a goal of how many resumes they call, networking and companies they will contact. They should be able to visit 10 different companies a day. The activity keeps you from despair,” says Robertson.

Interview training assists the candidates with “focusing on the conversation” rather than anticipating the next question and the all-important practice before the actual interview takes place. And reference checks are paramount in setting the candidate apart from the competition.

In the job search Robertson has worked in the job search field, he says he has never seen the extent of the current need. “Pop-up” groups, where men and women meet sometimes on a weekly basis, are emerging within parish and secular communities as a practical networking tool. And Robertson is confident that workshops and staffing businesses like his, in conjunction with parish support, are viable resources for those seeking employment.

The need is great in these troubled economic times, but church communities want parishioners to know that they are not alone. Traditional assistance, as well as innovative job search and networking venues, are being offered in the spirit of hope and support.

For information on the Bishop Dwenger resume site visit www.bishopdenger.com. Click on “alumni” and then “seeking employment.” For information on job search resources e-mail Norm.Robertson@expresspros.com.

Justin Hoeppner, parishioner, places the ashes for distribution before Ash Wednesday noon Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

Mark Beier

ESPY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Father Bill Sullivan, pastor of St. Thomas, says, first and foremost, “We pray daily for the unemployed.”

In addition to prayer support he adds that a new men’s group is forming to meet for prayer and networking as well.

“St. John the Evangelist in Goshen offers support through their food pantry and Father Bob VanKempen, pastor of St. Mary of the Annunciation in Bristol, reports that in addition to the job posting bulletin board within the church and regular collections taken up to assist parish families with food and gift cards for essentials, there is assistance for resume building as well.

“We are connecting folks,” he says. “It’s networking. I’m always asking for connections.”

In addition to parish support, Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne has joined the ranks that assist families with the job search. Recently a Web page was created for current parents who are unemployed to post resumes in hopes that local employers will visit the site.

Dwenger parent Tom Pentenburg, owner of Spheron staffing firm offers assistance from the site.

And Norma Robertson, parishioner of St. Pius X in Granger, in cooperation with pastor Father Bill Schooler, has hosted a workshop for the unemployed titled, “Searching for Employment.” Feb. 26 and March 1. Robertson, owner of Express Employment Professionals, a staffing firm located in Mishawaka, says, “This type ministry (outreach to unemployed) needs people to support both the spiritual side and the secular side. The priest and others support the spiritual through their pastoral ministry. I’m here for the new job search.”

Workshop participants received training in several areas including how to build a resume, the activity needed to find the right job, interviewing techniques and acquiring reference checks.

“The workshop offers a different perspective on how to get your arms around a job search and how to make it work. … Following some simple guidelines bring some hope and shows the light at the end of the tunnel. It positions them higher than their competitors,” says Robertson, who reports panning the pavement in a suit and tie from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. five days a week to make connections and deliver resumes when he himself was jobless.

“Setting goals for yourself with different contacts to make gives a person focus,” he says. And for Robertson and the workshop participants, keeping God in the job search is “a natural part of who we are,” he says, adding that prayer opened and closed the workshop.

“I hoped the workshop would help give people some insights and add a little hope to their search.”

The workshop training was marked by Robertson’s experience and vision. Robertson, he says, are built with a core body of information, but with a skill set section that is changed in accordance with the job the candidate seeks. “In truth you need as many resumes as companies you send to,” he reports.

Candidates and their spouses were called up to the altar to enter into the next step of the catechumenate. Bishop D’Arcy addressed the congregation: “These catechumens are to be initiated into the sacred mystery,” he said. “Let us all welcome these holy catechumens to be received into the Catholic Church.”

ASH WEDNESDAY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

came the faithful to the liturgy held at 2:30 p.m. March 1 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Aspiring Catholics came from parishes across the entire half of the diocese, from St. Mary in Huntington to St. Anthony, Angola. The support of the Catholic community was astounding. There were even more full of family and friends.

In the opening prayer, Bishop D’Arcy noted this ceremony “confirms that choice of Jesus Christ, your savior.”

He said the liturgy’s central theme is that Jesus Christ has chosen the catechumens to live in the life of Christ.”

Following the word of God, Bishop D’Arcy called the catechumens, or “the elect,” forward to affirm their interest in joining the Catholic Church. He reminded the group of baptism’s life-changing power.

The catechumens, with the support of their godparents, expressed their sincere intent to enter into baptismal covenant.

In the homily, Bishop D’Arcy said God allows us to choose good or evil and the choice to be baptized means more fully sharing in the life of Christ.

“You wish to fully enter
BY KAREN CLIFFORD

GRANGER — It’s not every day that a teenager from Granger, Ind., receives a phone call from the Chicago Bears co-owner Patrick McCaskey. But for Gavin Provost, a senior at Saint Joseph’s High School in South Bend and parishioner of St. Pius X Church in Granger, it is a call that will live in his memory forever.

McCaskey called Provost to congratulate him on his selection as this year’s recipient of Sports Faith International’s Spirit of Saint Paul Award. The award, given to a high school student, is based upon the 12 virtues of St. Paul and the Catholic faith.

According to its mission statement, Sports Faith International is a “media initiative working through the world of sports to positively change our culture.” In addition, the organization “spotlights and encourages values, positive role models, and life-learning consistent with Judeo-Christian values and the teachings of the Christian/Catholic faith.”

St. Pius X parishioner Dick Dornbos states Sports Faith International is a collaborative effort, which includes Chicago Bears co-owner Patrick McCaskey, Archdiocese of Chicago’s Francis Cardinal George, Catholic Knights, Catholic Athletes for Christ, Serra International USA Council Region 7, Relevant Radio, 5th Media and Sirango.

Thirteen Sports Faith International awards were presented on Feb. 21 in a ceremony at Halas Hall in Lake Forest, Ill. Thirteen professional athletes were inducted in the Sports Faith Hall of Fame, as well as 10 High School Hall of Fame winners. Provost was one of the 10 High School Hall of Fame winners.

Dornbos is a member of Sports Faith International’s advisory board. He notes the criterion for the High School Hall of Fame is excellence in athletics, academics, community service and Catholic faith. In addition, each nominee submitted a personal story of challenges encountered in athletics and their everyday lives.

“This is an opportunity for Catholic high school student athletes to be recognized for achievements on and off the field or court including community service,” Dornbos says. “And Gavin is an inspiration to all of us to always do our best.”

Provost was born with spina bifida, which causes paralysis of the legs and other neurological challenges. He has had 11 surgeries and years of speech, occupational and physical therapy.

Despite his disability, Provost does not consider himself different from any of his peers. He says, “If there is something that I want to do, I just do it.”

Swimming proved to be an enjoyable venue for Provost from an early age. “Ever since I was a young boy, I always loved the water, even swimming from one end of the bathtub to the other. When I was nine years old, my mom asked me if I wanted to join a local swim team, and I eagerly accepted the invitation,” Provost recalls.

By the end of his first year with a local swim team, Provost received the Most Inspirational Swimmer Award at the team banquet. He later realized his aptitude for dips and I decided to not worry about winning,“ Provost says, “I am still not winning races, but my times have decreased and my technique has improved.”

Another team experience for Provost at Saint Joseph’s was being the team manager of the football team. Football coach Kevin Downey invited Provost to a parallel bar dip competition with the football team. “It was then I realized my aptitude for dips and I won the competition!”

Provost, who is a St. Pius X parishioner, explains that through his faith journey, he was inspired to persevere and do what he loves, despite the obstacles he faced.

When Provost was born with spina bifida, his parents were told that he would never walk. “That was terrifying but it gave me motivation to work hard and become the best person I could be,” Provost explained.

“Gavin is not defined by his difficulties; he is defined by his successful attempts to encourage others around him by action as well as encouraging words. He is a leader of our school because of his relentless pursuit of excellence in celebrating life.”

Besides his passion for sports, Provost credits his love of the Catholic faith as a major influence in his life. At the St. Pius X Easter vigil of 2006, Provost was baptized and confirmed into the Catholic faith.

Provost concludes that through athletics and faith, he does not worry about future challenges. “My faith helps me persevere against any obstacles I may encounter due to my disability, and athletics help me to be strong physically to meet and beat any of those obstacles I may encounter.”

Gavin Provost awarded for courage and commitment

The transition to a team that had 14- to 18-year-old able-bodied swimmers and intense swimming practices was daunting for Provost. “I came very close to quitting my junior year because I was getting frustrated with myself,” he remembers. But with his parents’ and coach’s encouragement, Provost decided not to worry about winning meets, rather improving his personal best.

“So I started racing against myself,” Provost says. “I am still not winning races, but my times have decreased and my technique has improved.”

Now Provost is proud of his experience for Provost at Saint Joseph’s was being the team manager of the football team. Football coach Kevin Downey invited Provost to a parallel bar dip competition with the football team. “It was then I realized my aptitude for dips and I won the competition!”

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Penalties, civil damages for terminating life of unborn increase under proposed laws

INDIANAPOLIS — Is terminating the life of an unborn baby a crime? The answer to this question all depends on which part of the Indiana Code a person refers. In one section, terminating an unborn baby’s life through abortion is legal, but in another section, terminating the life of an unborn baby is a crime called feticide.

Despite this paradox in the law, state lawmakers voted overwhelmingly in support of two measures recognizing greater rights of unborn children. One measure increases criminal penalties for persons committing feticide and the other expands wrongful death civil suits allowing parents to collect damages when the life of their unborn child is cut short.

Senate Bill 236 authored by Sen. James Merritt (R-Indianapolis) increases penalty for feticide from a Class C felony to a Class B felony. Similar to the crime of homicide, if a person kills another child while committing or attempting to commit murder or another crime commits feticide. A person found guilty of causing the death of a child in utero may be sentenced to an additional term of imprisonment of six to 20 years. In criminal actions, the state prosecutes on behalf of the victim for crimes committed.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, currently, at least 36 states have fetal homicide laws. Indiana would join at least 19 states that have feticide laws that apply to the earliest stages of pregnancy including the following definitions of life: “any state of gestation,” “conception,” “fertilization” or “post-fertilization.” For the purposes of feticide, SB 236 defines an unborn baby as “child in utero at any stage.” Senate Bill 236 passed the Senate 40-9.

Penalties for killing an unborn child in criminal suits would be increased under SB 236. Wrongful death laws in civil suits would be expanded under another proposal, the wrongful death or injury of a child bill, SB 341, authored by Sen. Brent Steele (R-Bedford). The bill expands wrongful death to include an unborn baby that had reached viability. Under the bill, viability is defined as a fetus that could survive outside the womb, which is about seven month gestational age. The bill passed the Senate 47-2.

The proposed legislation addressing fetal death was prompted by an incident that occurred in Indianapolis in April 2008 where a bank teller who was pregnant with twins was shot during an attempted bank robbery. She survived the gunshot wound, her twins did not. The woman was five months pregnant. Marion County prosecutors were unable to prosecute for manslaughter, a criminal charge, because the babies needed to be seven months old under criminal law. The couple was unable to collect damages under Indiana’s wrongful death statute because the children were unborn.

Under Senate Bill 341, they would still be unable to file a wrongful death civil lawsuit because the bill would only allow this for viable fetuses. However, in a criminal action, the perpetrator could have received a stiffer sentence under Senate Bill 236.

By definition in Black Law’s dictionary, wrongful death is a claim in common law jurisdictions against a person who can be held liable for a death. The claim is brought in a civil action, usually by close relatives. Under common law, a dead person cannot bring a suit, and this created a legal hole in which activities that resulted in a person’s injury would result in civil sanction but activities that resulted in a person’s death would not.

The Indiana Catholic Conference, the church’s official representative on public policy matters supports the bills. “The church is supportive of legislation that provides greater recognition, value and respect for the unborn human person,” said Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference.

Senate bills 236 and 341 move to the House for further consideration.
U.S. archbishop expresses grave concerns about Legionaries of Christ

Baltimore (CNS) — Concerned that the Legionaries of Christ order stifles the free will of its members and lacks transparency, Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien of Baltimore told its director general in Rome that he cannot in good conscience recommend that anyone join the Legionaries or Regnum Christi, its affiliated lay movement. In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Legionaries of Christ are affiliated with Woodmont Academy in the Baltimore suburb of Cooksville. Regnum Christi is also active in several parishes. The archbishop's action came in the wake of revelations that the late Father Marcial Maciel Degollado, founder of the Legionaries of Christ, fathered a daughter while serving as leader of the international religious order. Pope Benedict XVI had previously removed the Mexican priest from public ministry in 2006, asking him to lead a life of prayer and penance after Father Maciel faced allegations of sexual abuse of seminarians and financial irregularities. “It seems to me and many others that this was a man with an entrepreneurial genius who, by systematic deception and duplicity, used our faith to manipulate others for his own selfish ends.” Archdiocese O'Brien told The Catholic Review, Baltimore archdiocesan newspaper, in a telephone interview following his Feb. 20 Rome meeting with Father Alvaro Corcuera, director general of the Legionaries. Father Maciel died in 2008. Jim Fair, a U.S. spokesman for the order, told the Register that reports about Father Maciel have been a “great shock” and “great disappointment” to members, but that the order has “achieved very positive things” for the church.

Vatican: Recent apologies from traditionalist bishop aren’t enough

Vatican City (CNS) — The Vatican said Bishop Richard Williamson’s statement of regret for denying the extent of the Holocaust does not meet the Vatican’s demand that he publicly recant his position. “The declaration of the bishop does not seem to respect the conditions established in the note of the Secretariat of State of Feb. 4, 2009, where it is stated that he must distance himself in an absolutely unequivocal and public way from his positions regarding the Shoah.” Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, said Feb. 27. The Vatican had said Bishop Williamson would not be allowed to function as a bishop in the church unless he disavowed his remarks about the Holocaust and publicly apologized. He is one of four traditionalist bishops whose excommunication was lifted in January by Pope Benedict XVI. On Feb. 26, Bishop Williamson released a statement in London saying that his superior, Bishop Bernard Fellay, and the pope “have requested that I reconsider the remarks I made on Swedish television four months ago because their consequences have been so heavy.”

Man pleads guilty to setting fire that destroyed Indiana church

NEW CASTLE, Ind. (CNS) — St. Anne parishioners in New Castle are thankful that William S. Abbott finally told the truth Feb. 19 about starting the late-night fire which gutted their historic Henry County church nearly two years ago. Abbott, a 34-year-old New Castle resident who has a history of criminal offenses, admitted to Henry County prosecutor Kit Crane and staff prosecutors that he broke into the church April 7, 2007, a day before Easter, and set the building on fire. He pleaded guilty to arson, a Class A felony, and will receive a reduced prison sentence as part of his plea agreement. Fingerprints and other evidence collected by investigators at and near the fire scene led authorities to arrest Abbott on arson charges May 10, 2007.

Traditionalist order not ready to accept Vatican II, superior says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The head of the traditionalist Society of St. Pius X said his order is not ready to accept the Second Vatican Council, which the Vatican has set as a condition for full reintegration in the church. Bishop Bernard Fellay, superior general of the Swiss-based society, said Vatican II has brought “only losses” among Catholic priests and the faithful. He made the remarks in an interview with the Swiss newspaper Le Courrier published Feb. 26. Pope Benedict XVI recently lifted the excommunications of Bishop Fellay and three other bishops, who were ordained against papal orders in 1988, as a step toward dialogue and reconciliation. The Vatican later said the society would have to recognize the teachings of Vatican II and of post-conciliar popes to be in full communion. In the interview, Bishop Fellay was asked if the society was ready to meet the condition of accepting the council. “No. The Vatican has recognized the need for preliminary discussions in order to take up fundamental questions that arise precisely from the Second Vatican Council. To make recognition of the council a preliminary condition is to put the cart before the horse,” Bishop Fellay responded.

Bishop in Bangladesh announces sainthood cause of Canadian Holy Cross missionary

CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh (CNS) — Bishop Patrick D’Rozario of Chittagong announced the opening of the sainthood cause of Canadian Holy Cross Brother Flavian Laplante, founder of a popular Marian shrine in Bangladesh. Bishop D’Rozario also said that the shrine in Diang, which Brother Laplante started in 1976, has been elevated to a parish dedicated to Mary, reported the Asian church news agency UCA News. A diocesan tribunal has been formed to evaluate Brother Laplante’s holiness and his work, Bishop D’Rozario said. About 7,000 devotees from all over Bangladesh visited the shrine during the pilgrimage period in mid-February, UCA News reported Feb. 26. Many welcomed the bishop’s announcement and told UCA News that Brother Laplante deserved to be a saint. “Brother Flavian used to interact with fishermen so cordially and even stayed with them at sea overnight to protect them from pirates,” recalled 80-year-old Holy Cross Brother Jarlath D’Suza. Brother Laplante was born in Quebec in 1907. He entered the Holy Cross novitiate in 1923 and made his final profession in 1932. In 1933 the French-Canadian province of his order served in Bangladesh, where he worked in various places of the Chittagong Diocese before arriving in Diang in 1945. He died in 1981.

After 150 years, evolution debate continues among people of faith

WASHINGTON (CNS) — When scientists, theologians and philosophers gather March 3-7 in Rome for a Vatican-sponsored congress marking the 150th anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin’s theory on evolution, they hope to help Catholic Church officials better understand some of the current thought and research related to evolutionary biology. “The program is to reorient the conversation between the Catholic Church and modern natural science, to get a new kind of conversation going,” explained Philip Sloan, professor of liberal studies at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana and a congress planner. “It’s establishing a dialogue on science and theology because of the great challenges that modern sciences are presenting to traditional theological understanding,” he said. Sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Culture under its Science, Technology and the Ontological Quest project, the University of Notre Dame and several of Rome’s pontifical universities, the gathering of international scholars and Vatican officials is one of a series of events surrounding the publication of Darwin’s landmark work.

House failure to consider abortion-related amendments draws protest

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A Catholic congressman is protesting a decision of the House leadership to block consideration of two abortion-related amendments to the $410 billion omnibus spending bill for fiscal 2009. Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., had sought to bar the use of taxpayer money to fund organizations that promote or perform abortion in other countries or organizations that support or participate in the management of funding for organizations that promote or perform abortion. The House Rules Committee voted Feb. 24 to restrict debate on the bill funding 12 federal agencies to one hour and one hour against and to prohibit any amendments. The legislation passed the House Feb. 25 by a 398-24 vote. Smith, co-chairman of the House Pro-Life Caucus, said in a statement that surveys have shown most Americans do not want federal tax dollars being used to promote or provide abortions overseas. “Why not let the American people be heard on this issue?” he asked.

Pope Benedict XVI meets priests from Diocese of Rome during an audience at the Vatican Feb. 26. At the meeting with more than 400 priests, the pope said his encyclical has been delayed in order for it to address the current global economic crisis.

[Image: CNS/L’OSSERVATORE ROMANO VIA REUTERS]
Bishop Luers Future Business Leaders of America compete at state

FORT WAYNE — With doughnuts in hand, Bishop Luers’ students in the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) can be found at any early Thursday morning meetings. Though doughnuts are an incentive, they are not the only factor that defines FBLA. Students join this popular club because of friends, the love of business, and, of course, the state competition held in Indianapolis.

Junior Tim Stein could not agree more. “I decided to join FBLA because I wanted to learn more about business and take a trip to state to hang out with friends.”

“I joined FBLA last year and it was one of the best experiences,” said sophomore Kelsey Norris.

Moderator Matthew Lazarro will take the FBLA students down to Indianapolis for state competition on March 13, 14 and 15 to be held in the Sheraton Hotel. Students from across Indiana will compete in business-related events, all with the hopes of advancing to nationals.

“I am participating in Public Speaking II because it is challenging and an adrenaline rush,” said senior Sheila Hite.

As for junior Erin Conroy, she chose events that she can easily relate to and that will help her prepare for her future. “I am doing accounting because I have already taken the class. I am also doing interview as practice for the real world,” she said.

Many of the members of FBLA have gone to state competition before. Therefore, there is pressure to come out strong and do well. As for junior Patricia Skordos, she is not letting the stress get to her. “I have been to state before, so I am not nervous. There is just nothing to be nervous about.”

Though state is a challenging competition, students are using their time away to have fun, create memories and make lasting friendships. Freshman Samantha Eckrich has high hopes for her three-day state trip. “I am most looking forward to a fun and enjoyable experience, as well as getting to know more people at Little Sisters of the Poor.”

Members of the Bishop Luers FBLA team are Erin Conroy, Samantha Eckrich, Sheila Hite, Emily Hayes, Isaac Larson, Bill McManus, Molly Goodwin, Trevor Galloway, Kelsey Norris, Bridgette Doole, Anne Wyatt, Stephanie Wyatt, Josh Ware, Jacob Ware, Jonathan Warble, Jeff Teeters, Tim Stein, Patricia Skordos, Tyler Post and Matt Lazzaro. — Mary Carrier

Sisters of Providence host “Come and See” weekend for women who are interested in living a life as a vowed member of the congregation.

The weekend will be held Friday, April 3, through Sunday, April 5. Participants will have an opportunity to visit with sisters and learn more about their life and mission, ministries in education, eco-justice and outreach to others through additional ministry opportunities.

“Come and See” weekend is open to Catholic women, ages 18-42, who are seeking ways to faithfully live out the Gospel message of Jesus. There is no charge for the weekend. Housing and meals are provided.

To register contact Sister Bernice Kuper, Vocations Office, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind., 47876; or call (812) 535-2895, or e-mail bkuper@spsmw.org.

USF performs “Dead Man Walking” March 20-29

FORT WAYNE — The School of Creative Arts at the University of Saint Francis will perform Tim Robbins’ play, “Dead Man Walking,” on March 20, 21, 27 and 28 at 8 p.m. and March 22 and 29 at 2 p.m. in the North Campus Auditorium (2702 Spring St.). Tickets can be purchased at the door for $10. Doors will open 30 minutes before show time for general seating.

In this gripping tale, a convicted murderer on death row is befriended by an empathetic Catholic sister. As the hours tick away to the condemned man’s execution, powerful emotions are unleashed. Scenes from the brutal crime reveal the truth about what transpired.

After the March 22 performance, a panel from the Indiana Information Center on the Abolition of Capital Punishment (ICACP) and Journey of Hope will share their ideas about capital punishment. The ICACP will provide information on capital punishment in the state of Indiana, and speakers from Journey of Hope will talk about coping with the murders of their loved ones while protesting capital punishment.

This play is produced by special arrangement with Tim Robbins and the Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project and is based on the book “Dead Man Walking” by Sister Helen Prejean.

For more information, call (260) 399-7700 ext. 8001.
Fort Wayne's own Catholic Radio Station, Redeemer Radio, seeks a talented Executive Director to lead and manage our ministry. This position is responsible for the day-to-day operations, programming, staff development, financial management, marketing, and fund development for our apostolate. Qualified candidates will not only share Redeemer Radio's mission but also be resourceful and have excellent interpersonal skills. Leadership experience in the non-profit sector and familiarity with fund development is beneficial.

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Katie Burns, Search Committee
4705 Illinois Road, Suite 104,
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Diocese hosts high school retreat

NORTH WEBSTER — “Come Hungry, Be Satisfied” was the theme for the diocesan winter retreat for high school students held at Epworth Forest in North Webster. The retreat welcomed participation from 88 teens and 20 adults from 20 parishes across the diocese on the last weekend of February.

The weekend included a session by Father Bob Lengerich, associate pastor of St. Pius X Parish, Granger, who discussed sin and reconciliation. Father Mark Gurtner, pastor of Our Lady of Good Hope Parish, Fort Wayne, discussed “how we become what we eat in the Eucharist.” The retreat included Mass and adoration.

Response from the youths was positive. Retreatant Kaytlyn Troyer, of St. Joseph Parish, Mishawaka, commented: “I had an amazing time. I especially liked your spiritual pyramid. It put a lot of things into perspective for me and got me thinking about how little it would take to incorporate more aspects of spiritual life into my daily life.”

Jaxon Burkins of St. Dominic Parish, Bremen, added: “I just really wanted to thank you guys for giving me the opportunity to give my witness at the retreat. Every time that I give a witness, I feel so much closer to God. I’m not sure what it is, maybe the research or thought needed to be put into it, or whatever it is, every talk I give I always feel closer to God. I’m not sure what I thought needed to be put into it, it is, maybe the research or wherever it is, every talk I give I always feel closer to him.”

And Caty Long, of St. Bavo, Mishawaka, said, “This retreat was, wow, absolutely amazing, and that’s just the tip of the iceberg. But Saturday night was especially amazing. Everyone just blew me away.”

Joan Derbiszewski, from St. Pius X, Granger, commented: “This past weekend was the Winter Retreat, which I must say was beyond amazing. There were so many people filled with the fire of Christ that even a stranger would be able to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit among us.”

Teen girls are praying over teen boys for purity and righteousness at the “Come Hungry, Be Satisfied” diocesan winter retreat for high school students.

In this photo, Casey Ryan gives a teaching for the boys’ cabin at the “Come Hungry, Be Satisfied” diocesan winter retreat for high school students.
**Philippians** while he is in prison

Community in Europe. Scholars say
travels: beatings, stoning, ship-
to distant lands and preaching the
persevering as “to persist in a state,
have the strength for everything
abundance and of being in need. I
and of going hungry, of living in
learned the secret of being well fed
cumstances; I know also how to
duely learns to put his trust in
myself to be self-sufficient. I know
indeed how to live in humble cir-
— Phil 4: 10-13

The Webster Dictionary defines
persevering as “to persist in a state,
everything, and something in spite of
counterinfluences, opposition or
disapproval.” If anyone ever
personified the word “persever-
ing,” it would be the Apostle Paul.
Paul is remembered for traveling
to distant lands and preaching the
Gospel of Christ. He fervently
shares Christ’s love, despite expe-
riencing much adversity during his
travels: beatings, stoning, ship-
wracks, desertion, imprisonment,
and, ultimately, execution.

It was in Philippi where Paul
establishes the first Christian
community in Europe. Scholars say
that Paul writes the letter to the
Philippians while he is in prison
for the grace of Christ gave to him.
It can be easy to trust and glorify
God when things are going well,
but perhaps it is more difficult to
rely on God when there is hard-
ship. When there are hardships,
our spiritual life may suffer as well.
In fact, within the spiritual life many
people encounter periods of intense
dryness and little or no
consolation.

Recently, Mother Teresa
expressed in her writings how she
endured many years where she did
not perceive God’s presence. Yet,
through the grace of God, she per-
severed in efforts to serve the poor
in Calcutta and shared the message
of Christ’s love all over the world.

In a letter written to Archbishop
Perier, Mother Teresa wrote: “Please
pray for me — the longing for God is
terribly painful and yet
the darkness is becoming greater.
What contradiction there is in my
— The pain within is so
... — Mother Teresa: 
Come Be My Light.”

Both Mother Teresa and St. Paul
are models of perseverance in the
spiritual life and of the importance
of maintaining focus on Christ, no
matter what the circumstances.

**How do you define perseverance?
How does perseverance influence
a person’s spiritual life?
How have you experienced the
presence of God in good times and
in bad?

**Encountering obstacles**

“...For I am already being poured
out like a libation, and the time of
my departure is at hand. I have
kept the faith...”

“Be strong and take heart, all you
who are in the Lord.” Ps 119:25
Action: Pray for those who
are unemployed.

“Simon, son of John,
the Zealot, do you love me?
Simon, do you love me?” Jn 21:15
Action: Read the passage
about love and forgiveness.

Third Week of Lent

**BY KAY LODAD**

In preparation for the third week of Lent, beginning March 15, it is a time to continue to
go even deeper into the mystery of Christ’s passion, death and resurrection through sus-
tained prayer, fasting and service. Use these Scriptures and action suggestions to receive
the grace that the discipline of Lent offers to stay the course this week. (Scripture taken
from the New American Bible Catholic edition.)

**Third Sunday of Lent**

**Monday**

“Be strong and take
heart, all you
who are in the Lord.” Ps 119:25
Action: Pray for those who
are unemployed.

**Tuesday**

“Be strong and take
heart, all you
who are in the Lord.” Ps 119:25
Action: Pray for those who
are unemployed.

**Wednesday**

“...Everything
should be done for
God...” 1 Cor 14:26;
Action: Compliment a
teacher today.

**Thursday**

“...Everything
should be done for
God...” 1 Cor 14:26;
Action: Compliment a
teacher today.

**Compliment a
teacher today.**

**Friday**

“With all prayer
and supplication, pray at every
opportunity in the Spirit.” Eph 6:18
Action: Attend the
Station of the Cross.
Reflect on your Lenten journey so
far.

**Saturday**

“When they had
finished breakfast, Jesus
said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John,
do you love me more than these?” He said
to him, “Yes, Lord. You know that I love you.” He said to him,
“My Lord, you know my love for you.” And he said to him,
“Feed my lambs.” John 21:15
Action: Bake a treat
and take it to a shut-
in, neighbor or friend.
Seniors make selfless giving, sacrifices a lifetime commitment

Holy Cross resident marks 104 years

BY SISTER MARGIE LAVONIS, CSC

NOTRE DAME — When you meet Isabelle “Isy” Seymour for the first time it is hard to guess that she turned 104 years young on Jan. 28. She is a bright, cheerful, tiny woman with a twinkle in her eyes.

“She is an amazing person,” says Renee Settles, nursing assistant at the Sanctuary of Holy Cross. “She is faithful to her daily prayers and devotions. She attends her own needs, not waiting on others to serve her.”

Isy, as she is fondly called, was born in Mishawaka in 1905. A member of St. Joseph Parish, Mishawaka, she attended school there. She was one of six children. “I had three brothers and two sisters but they are all gone. I am the oldest one but I am still here.” She reflects a lot about being the only living member of her immediate family. “I guess I need to keep praying for them.”

Some of her hobbies included crocheting and knitting. She also was an avid reader, but poor eyesight keeps her from currently doing any of these things.

Isabelle was married for over 60 years. She met her beloved husband James at the Ball Band Company where she worked as a stenographer. After they were married they farmed 20 acres of land on the south end of South Bend. There they tended chickens and cows.

“I just loved being on the farm,” she says.

Isy also did her fair share of volunteering. One activity she frequently participated in was the Saint Joseph Hospital “Tag Days.” Volunteers collected money to help support the hospital. Those who contributed received a tag of recognition.

One of the loves shared by both Isy and her husband was traveling. They took driving trips every spring and fall after they retired. “We usually went to the East,” she said. Once they visited the West and decided that it wasn’t the “dream world” she expected, so they never returned. Six years ago, after her husband died, Isy moved to the Sanctuary of Holy Cross, formerly called Holy Cross Care and Rehabilitation Center. It was a big transition, but she has managed to keep busy by praying and going to exercise class each day, which, says activity assistant Catherine Foreman, contributes to her longevity.

According to the community life director, Marcia Dills, “She never misses a Catholic Mass or rosary service.”

Sister Margaret Anne Nowacki, one of the Sisters of the Holy Cross who brings the Eucharist to the Catholic residents at Holy Cross, characterizes her as a delightful, holy lady.

When asked her formula for living a long life, Isy declares, “Don’t worry too much. Take things as they come.”

She is also quick to say that her faith has been her stronghold throughout her life.

Commenting on the recent inauguration of Barack Obama, Isy says, “I just wish him luck. It is a big job, a responsible job. I don’t know why anyone would want to take that over. It is a burden to try to satisfy everyone.”

Isy ponders why she has had such a long life. In response to being told that God must still have a plan for her, she says, “I am waiting for him to tell me.”

In the meantime she continues to pray, especially for her family and the needs of the world.
What are you giving up for Lent this year

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SPIRITUALITY OF MATURING ADULTS
SISTER ANGELITA FENKER

YEARS ago, at wonderful St. Andrew’s School, we kids would ask one another this question after sister and Msgr. Hoerstman gave us a strong “sermon” on the “shoulds” of Lent. The response to this was usually the droll out safe response of “sooandy,” followed by a heavy sigh, anticipating six long weeks of deprivation.

We counted the days until noon on Holy Saturday when the fast officially ended. Near noon, all the Catholic kids would gather in a nearby makeshift ball field and eagerly await the noon church bell to toll out the end of Lent. With one whoop, bats, balls and jump ropes were flung into the air to let fall at will. Eager kids scrambled home to haul out shoe boxes of loot accumulated during Lent. The annual candy fest was on!

This seems amusing now, and maybe we missed the point, but it was okay for our age and times in which we lived. In the Depression of the ’30s and early ’40s, candy was scarce anyway. Sometimes, though, it seemed that a similar simplistic response is still given by maturing adults.

Maybe it’s time we rephrased the question from: “What are you giving up for Lent?” to “What are you giving for Lent?” Christ doesn’t really care whether or not we eat sweets during Lent, or whether we enjoy a glass of wine. In the big picture these won’t matter.

What will matter is whether or not we give someone something of ourselves with all the unconditional love we can muster — not expecting anything in return.

If we tell others what we’re “giving up” during Lent (especially when they’re relishing that very thing) they’ll feel “less holy” for enjoying it. It’s better to thank the cook and enjoy what’s there; there’s much less self-satisfaction.

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are our traditional Lenten practices but are often interpreted too narrowly. In our maturing spirituality, we need to look for more meaningful ways to apply these to our adult- hood.

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are part of our everyday life anyway. Let’s be creative in sharpening our awareness of them in order to create new expressions for these in our life. In all three, we need to give up in order to give of ourselves to others for a greater good. We redirect our focus in order to discover fresh purpose for them in our life.

We can combine these three into unique love-gifts. We do this during Lent to live more fully in an “attitude of gratitude” to Christ for his love-gift to us. By creatively giving these as love-gifts, we’ll not simply endure the inconveniences of Lent.

In prayer, we give some quality time to Christ in order to develop a more meaningful friendship with him. Spiritual reading enriches our prayer-time. When we pray, we speak to God; when we read, God speaks to us. We do whatever deepens this relationship.

In fasting, we give up something, but not necessarily food or drink. There are more important things to fast from than food or drink. We can fast from gossip, too much TV and other electronic media; from being critical, from self-righteousness, from procrastination, from excessive shopping, from complaining, etc. We each need to decide what’s the most meaningful for us to give up so that we can give to our spiritual maturing something which will benefit ourselves and others. This is a significant Lenten love-gift.

In almsgiving we give of our time, talent and treasure to someone who needs what we are able to give. Here too, we’ll have to give up something for this to happen, but the focus is on the love-gift, not the deprivation.

Simply put, these three practices of “Lenten-love” with our focus on giving, rather than on giving up will provide a Lent blessed with energizing spiritual maturing, which will have dynam ic results the rest of the year. Then, when this Lent is over and the Risen Christ greets us anew on Easter Sunday, we’ll really experience the “abundant life” he promised to bring. All we need do is to concentrate on his dynamic love-gift, and let his Risen Presence flow through us as we give his love, light, life and presence to our world.
Octogenarian still growing in faith

BY DEB WAGNER

FORT WAYNE — Marie Rorick still has such vitality to her spirit that it takes more than a few back. The mother to 11 children, 25 grandchildren and soon to be a baker’s dozen of great-grand-children, has also found time to vol-unteer in her parish as well as for the community.

Rorick is a longtime member of St. Joseph Parish on Brooklyn Avenue in Fort Wayne. She is also an extraordinary minister to the sick, member of the Rosary Sodality Society and a member of Our Lady of Fatima, formerly called the Blue Army. In addition, she makes sure that the altar linen in the chapel of St. Joseph’s Hospital are always kept clean and helps those who can no longer drive run errands. Marie herself is 87.

What does she say about all of this fuss as to what she does with herself is 87.

It was her ability to drive her-self that made it possible for her to continue to exercise. She went to Lutheran Hospital’s Heart Center to exercise until it closed. Rorick’s exercise now occurs on a treadmill that she requested to be moved to clear the exercise on her treadmill for the day. “The Lord has been so good to me to be this age and so healthy,” Rorick says.

Prayer and the rosary have always been important Rorick and her late husband, Dave, who died nine years ago. Dave and Marie used to pray the rosary together every night and involved the children until the children grew older and responsibilities drew them elsewhere. Rorick recalls that the rosary was prayed at the dinner table when the children were smaller, after dinner and before the dishes were cleared to the sink.

Prayer is what saw them through. The Roricks married right before World War II at St. Joseph Church and had their two oldest girls, while Dave was serv-ing in the military. They began building the family homestead in southwest Fort Wayne.

Their third child, a son, was born while they were living in a garage that had been renovated to temporary housing until their home was built.

Do the economic times of yesteryear compare to those of today? In the past, Rorick canned and sewed to help ends meet. “You had to watch, but it wasn’t that it was a hardship at all,” she recalls.

Rorick does not recall, though, that raising a large family was hectic, because only one child was born at a time and the older children helped with the younger children.

Mary Lou Orn, Rorick’s old-est, remembers wearing spring coats with a sweater underneath all winter one year because they did not have winter coats to wear.

Rorick says that they did not have “a huge amount of material things because we were loved. We always had enough love.”

The girls sometimes wore feed sack dresses, yet the family was always fortunate to have plenty of food on the table. Dave was able to secure a job at Peter Eckrich Meats after the war where he could buy meat for a discounted price.

Rorick, who had two older brothers and only one grandpar-tner who was still living during her childhood, considered herself to be a loner. So, when it came time to have children of her own, Rorick had to learn as she lived each day. She says her children taught her as they learned to share, care and watch out for one another.

Today, the children of Dave and Marie Rorick are doing well as a former shoe store owner, beautician, day care owner, sales-person or in factory maintenance and the like. One son was even in the seminary for a while. Tragically one daughter passed away. All of the children with the exception of one, who lives on the East Coast, live in the Fort Wayne-South Bend area and are involved in their own parishes in the diocese.

Rorick says she has time to pray now and to participate in the Mass as it is being celebrated. She says she has really grown in her faith by watching Mother Angelica on EWTN television and her ongoing devotion to the Blessed Mother. Rorick reflects on what she has learned through-out her years and says, “Now that I look back on my life, the Lord was moving me, putting me where I needed me and faith in his Blessed Mother was very important.”

Former teacher celebrates 102nd birthday

BY DENISE FEDOROW

GOSHEN — Not everyone gets to live to see 100 but St. John the Evangelist parishioner Regina Gaffer has, and she feels very grateful. In fact, Gaffer celebrated her 102nd birthday on Jan. 30, and a party was held in her honor on the Jan. 31.

Gaffer and her husband Larry, who passed away a few years ago at 100 years of age, were long-time parishioners of St. John the Evangelist Church in Goshen. She recited the names of the priests who served the parish during the years she was active in the church. It’s become difficult for her to attend Mass, so she receives Communion at home. It’s become difficult for her to attend Mass, so she receives Communion at home and said she prays and recites the rosary daily.

So when Father Chris Smith, pastor of St. John’s, arrived at her birthday celebration with a bou-quet of flowers, Gaffer was very touched and hugged him tightly.

“Oh, you made my day!” she said.

Gaffer and her husband were originally from Nebraska. Gaffer started teaching in 1926 at the age of 19. She taught in a rural school with grades 1-6 for 12 years. The couple moved to Goshen in the 1940s.

Gaffer’s son, Steve, said his parents came to work in a restaur-ant owned by his father’s brother and sister-in-law that was located where the former Kline’s used to be on Main Street.

The couple had two sons, Steve and Jack. Gaffer now lives with Steve and his wife Jean in their Goshen home. Jack and his wife Bev live in Cincinnati.

A celebration was held in honor of St. John parishioner Regina Gaffer’s 102nd birthday. Father Chris Smith delivered a blessing and a live bouquet of flowers, while St. John’s School sixth-grader represented his school-mates in delivering a spiritual bouquet. From left are John Piechuck, representing the eucharistic caregivers at St. John Parish, Father Chris Smith, Regina Gaffer and T.J. Longacre.

Gaffer shared what she most enjoyed about teaching. “I loved the children. I loved working with the schoolchildren,” she said.

Steve said his mother was often given the most difficult stu-dents, some of whom would be in special education classes today, but they didn’t have such classes then. Jean said several of Gaffer’s former students attended the open house on her 100th birthday and said her mother-in-law “knows everybody.” When she could get out and about more, she would recognize her former students.

“She may not have always known them by name but she rec-ognized them,” Jean said.

Gaffer also taught the class at St. John’s that prepared children for making their first Communion for many years. A special surprise for Gaffer on Jan. 31 was from St. John students. The entire stu-dent body made Regina a spiritual bouquet. The preschool stu-dents made paper flowers and each student in grades kinder-garten through sixth grade created an card for the person believed to be the oldest member of the parish.

Sixth-grader T.J. Longacre delivered the greetings and birth-day award from the students.

“Please tell all the children all my blessings are with them for remembering me,” Gaffer told Father Smith and T.J. “This means so much to me.”

Gaffer said she was most excited about being able to spend her birthday with family and is thankful for all her family, friends, church and God.

Gaffer attributes her long life to God’s blessing. “I’m thankful to God for everything he’s done for me,” she said. “He sure has been good to me.”
People are important to the last moment of their lives

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Wittes retire after 32 years at Life Care Center

BY DEB WAGNER

FORT WAYNE — Paul and Patty Witte have faithfully distributed Communion to some of the Catholic residents at the Life Care Center in Fort Wayne for quite some time. After 32 years of ministry, the married couple has decided to retire for health reasons.

The Wittes alternated their weekend eucharistic minister duties with a few others. They shared the responsibility with Carol and Jim Didier for over 20 years until Jim’s passing in 2000. Then the Wittes made the weekly visits by themselves for a while before Carol Gerardot began alternating weekends with them. The ministry team missed only one scheduled appearance at the Life Care Center when floodwaters made it impossible to reach the facility.

After so many years of service there is bound to be some stories to share. Patty tells of when she was to carry the lit candles for their prayer services. The smoke from the flames of the candles apparently set off the fire alarms and the fire trucks came with sirens blaring.

After a chuckle at the memory, Patty says, “So we don’t light candles any more. Patty reflects on the ministry by saying, “We like to do it. It’s nice to do it and we thought that if we did something like this, we wouldn’t end up in a nursing home ourselves.” So far, this has proven to hold true.

Paul and Patty used three pix in the beginning to hold the body of Christ while it was in transit to the baptismal font is currently. The priests in those days gave eucharistic ministers permission to leave early in order to avoid conversation with other parishioners while they had Christ in their pix.

Paul and Patty used three pix in the beginning to hold the body of Christ while it was in transit to the 36 Catholic residents at the nursing home. Today, they take Communion to three residents.

Bringing Christ to Life Care Center residents in the form of the holy Eucharist was very important to Paul and Patty, especially Paul. As a former postal carrier, he worked odd hours for many years and became closer to the Eucharist “primarily from taking the Eucharist to the nursing home,” he says.

Paul continues with his thought, “You come to realize that nursing homes are great facilities. But, at the same time you hope you never get there.”

Patty and Paul Witte, with the pix in their hands, are retiring as eucharistic ministers to Life Care Center residents after 32 years of service.
The ‘no excuses’ guide to confession

S

in ... it’s everywhere. From sins of omission to sins of commission, very few of us are filled with enough grace to fight off every temptation and keep the devil at bay.

Just turning on the evening news, we realize that sins of dishonesty, unethical business practices, greed and taking advantage of our fellow countrymen are some of the things that has slid us into these tough economic times.

It seems as if we need God’s mercy more than ever. One of our parish priests once said, “Confession is the path to holiness.” Still, why are so few of us benefitting from the sacrament of reconciliation? There are excuses and more excuses. Here are some and a few rebuttals:

- I don’t know what to say or what to do in the confessional. Start by making an examination of conscience. Review the greatest commandments: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind”; and love your neighbor as yourself. Review the Ten Commandments. Review the Beatitudes. Many missleets offer examination of conscience guides. If you go to a penitential service, the parish often provides guidelines. As far as the actual reconciliation process, the priest will assist you, especially if it’s been a long time.

- What if somebody hears me? Is it really private? Do priests go back and talk about my sins? Priests adhere to a sacramental seal of confession — that they will not divulge anything confessed and, chances are, anything you tell him will not be the first time he has heard it. Parishes are very cautious to make sure others cannot hear what is being confessed. As a courtesy, certainly the other penitents should make it a point to stay out of ear shot of the confessional area.

- I had a bad experience with confession. This is unfortunate, but perhaps the priest hearing the confession was having a bad day, felt rushed, etc. They are human too. And they have to confess their sins, just as you do.

- I’ve been away too long. I have too many sins to confess. I feel guilty for not having been to confession for such a long time. I’m not worthy to go to confession. The mercy of God is greater than any one person’s sins. In fact it overwhelms the amount of sins that we could confess.

- Will the priest be understanding with me? The priest may offer counsel to help you deal with a sin, especially if you ask for counsel. A psychologist once noted that when Catholics stopped confessing as often, he noticed an increase in the number of Catholic patients he saw. Confession is good for your soul and psychological well being.

- I don’t want to go face-to-face. I want to be anonymous. Most parishes offer anonymity as well as face-to-face reconciliation.

- I don’t have mortal sins, do I have to go? The Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 494, states, “One who desires to obtain reconciliation with God and with the church, must confess to a priest all the unconfessed grave sins he remembers after having carefully examined his conscience. The confession of venial faults, without being necessary in itself, is nevertheless strongly recommended by the church.”

Confession has spiritual benefits. The catechism notes we are reconciled with God and recover grace. We are reconciled with the church. Other spiritual effects are the remission of the eternal punishment incurred by mortal sins; remission, at least in part, of temporal punishments resulting from sin; peace and serenity of conscience and spiritual consolation; and an increase of spiritual strength.

Jesus gave us the sacrament of reconciliation, shortly after he rose from the dead. John, chapter 20, tells us Jesus showed himself to his apostles: “He breathed on them, and said to them: ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’”

This sacrament has been passed to us from the apostles. Lent is a time of repentance and examination of our consciences. Don’t let fear, pride or vanity get in the way of the grace and mercy that God wishes for us all.

Many parishes will be having penance services. Some of these were posted, as well as an examination of conscience, in the Feb. 22 issue of Today’s Catholic. Check bulletins or call other parishes for times when reconciliation is offered. If the times do not work, many priests offer reconciliation by appointment.

Pope John Paul II recommended monthly confession of sins.

Artificial conception use

In response to inquiries and comments which Today’s Catholic has received regarding the answer we provided to the question concerning the ethical use of artificial contraception in the recent Women’s Care Center issue, we would like to refer readers to the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services promulgated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2001: “Companionate and understanding care should be given to a person who is the victim of sexual assault. Health care providers should cooperate with law enforcement officials and offer the person psychological and spiritual support as well as accurate medical information. A female who has been raped should be able to defend herself against a potential conception from the sexual assault. After appropriate testing, there is no evidence that conception has occurred already, she may be treated with medications that would prevent ovulation, sperm capacitation or fertilization. It is not permissible, however, to initiate or to recommend treatment that have the purpose or direct effect the removal, destruction, or interference with the implantation of a fertilized ovum” (No. 36).

Fred and Lisa Everett Co-Directors, Office of Family Life Diocese of Fort Wayne–South Bend

Appreciation for Women’s Care Center support

I’d like to take this opportunity to especially thank our Catholic community for their cooperation and support as well as the assistance given to the Women’s Care Center these last few months. Your article on our wonderful partners, the Christ Child Society, encouraged me to offer our sincere appreciation as well.

We welcomed 169 new babies in 2008 and we are expecting over 300 in the next few months. The downturn in the economy has certainly impacted our clients and their needs and worries are heartbreaking. Sadly, their financial struggles can also mean abortion more of a consideration.

We have tried to personally thank all who have helped with baby showers and have given free tree projects. If we have missed anyone it’s certainly unintentional and we are truly sorry. Please know that your gifts have been gratefully received and have given great hope and encouragement to many moms and babies.

Annie Koehl
Allen County Director Women’s Care Center

Concern for human life good start for health care plan

I read with interest the letter in the Feb. 8 commentary regarding sending the postcards to our representa tives to make sure they urge President Obama to reconsider his position on abortion. I had often wondered about the thinking of Catholics who enthusiastically sup port proponents of abortion.

President Obama did not support legislation that would have allowed a baby who survived an abortion to be given palliative care, but rather required the attending medical workers to bring the baby to a shell in a laundry room until it died. A nurse who held one of these children during its last minutes placed her job in jeopardy. This seems to me to be an extreme view regarding abortion.

The letter-writer seems to be concerned about social justice, job creation and health insurance. I am unsure of specific plans to create jobs, other than government hiring, and the goal of health insurance for all is far in the future.

Plans for health insurance for all are also sketchy, with no proposals about how to pay for this program. It seems to me that a concern and regard for human life, particularly when it is helpless and completely innocent, would be a good beginning for health care. If President Obama’s philosophy extends itself, perhaps our access to his universal health care will depend upon whether we are useful and our continued existence is convenient for others.

Patricia Hudson Roanoke

Obligation to stand up for Christ, church teachings

I am writing this letter in response to Ann Britzke’s letter highlighting varied reactions to her previous letter justifying her vote for Obama.

First, I sympathize over her concerns regarding some readers’ reactions that opened fear and pain in her. I fully agree that it is unchristian to cause such emotions/feelings to a fellow Christian. Being Christians, and nowhere did I find a place where I agreed, is our obligation to stand up for Christ’s and his church’s teachings in a civilized way.

Second, she states that one must understand that issuing a letter justifying her vote for Obama who supports abortion and gay marriage caused an uproar because this was against the Catholic Church’s stand to support pro-life candidates.

Third, how can she equate death caused by sin of abortion with death caused by sin of war. Abortion equals death of defenseless innocent babies. War equals death of soldiers in battlefields who can defend themselves.

Fourth, policies to advance the poor and the downtrodden are definitely significant. But we should know that policies that support abortion and gay marriage are the worst evils of society. In the final summation, who will become the poor and the downtrodden when babies are killed by millions and same-sex marriages prevail in our society?

We have to live our lives for the love of Christ.

Celo Dagas Plymouth

A wake-up call

Abortion kills 4,000 babies every day in the United States. Many Catholics who believe that the right to life is an inalienable right seem to have selective hearing. Catholic teaching never allows for placing any issue before abortion when it comes to voting. The only time it is permissible to vote for a pro-abortion candidate is when all candidates are pro-abortion.

I did some research after reading the March 1 edition of Today’s Catholic. The war in Iraq began six years ago and has been responsible for the deaths of approximately 4,000 men and women in our armed forces. The war is tragic in it’s own right. Yet these brave soldiers signed up to serve our country. They chose to risk their lives. How many of the 840,000 babies murdered during the same six years chose their fate?

Shame on anyone who resorted to hate mail in response to our disillusionsed sister in Goshen. This type of action is contrary to our goal in the pro-life cause. I checked my Bible and nowhere did I find a place where Jesus or his apostles used such tactics to win souls. Our beloved church is full of misinformed children who are way off target on the issue of voting for pro-death candidates. Senders of hate mail and authors of hate speech owe it much to blame for this as any one. “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.” — Jn 8:7.

We are nearing 50 million Americans killed by abortion since Roe v. Wade. Between 11 and 15 babies are murdered every Thursday right here in Fort Wayne. Is your health care plan a part of this atrocity of abortion in our country?

Ultimately, we are all responsible for the atrocity of abortion in our country. May God have mercy on us all.

Marti Lopshire Fort Wayne

Today’s Catholic welcomes letters from readers. All letters must be signed and include a phone number and address for verification.

Today’s Catholic reserves the right to edit for clarity and length. Address letters to: Today’s Catholic • P.O. Box 11169 • Fort Wayne, IN • 46856-1169 or e-mail to: editor@wvdioceseweb.org
The Christian exodus from Middle East

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The need to find ways to stop the slow, yet steady departure of Christians from the Middle East has come into greater focus recently.

Pope Benedict XVI urged the dwindling Arab Christian minority to patiently persist in its struggle to survive and hold onto its religious and cultural identity when he met with bishops from Iraq, Iran and Turkey who were in Rome to report on their dioceses early this year.

And he will have many public occasions to reach out and appeal directly to Christians with his proposed visit to the Holy Land May 8-15.

The Christian exodus has become so severe that Iraqi bishops called on the pope to convene a regional synod to address the problem.

In the meantime, conferences were held in Detroit, Lebanon and Rome in February to underline the important role Christians play in Muslim-majority nations.

The Rome gathering organized by the Sant’Egidio Community brought together Christian and Muslim scholars and religious leaders from the Middle East to discuss the value and contribution of the Eastern Christian churches in Arab nations.

One element that emerged from the meeting is that Christians don’t belong in the Middle East simply because they’ve been there since the time of Jesus and are legitimate citizens of Arab nations. Many said they must stay because they possess a unique culture and mindset that help contribute to the building of a more peaceful, democratic nation.

Some said a strong Christian presence could help moderate Muslims counter the rising wave of Islamic extremism sweeping across the region.

Mohammed Sanaamk, political adviser to Lebanon’s grand mufti and a conference participant, said, “The fewer Christians there are, the more (Islamic) fundamentalism rises,” fills the void and gains the upper hand: “that is why as a Muslim, I am opposed” to Christians emigrating.

Another danger, he said, is that if Muslim-majority nations do nothing to protect and encourage their Christian minorities to stay, then North American and European countries will think that Islam does not accept or respect Christianity.

If people living abroad see Muslims are unable to live with Christians even when they share the same culture, language and cit—

God’s love sustains us during Lent

2nd Sunday in Lent
Mk 9:2-10

A

braham was a very important figure in the process by which Jews reach a sense of ethnic and national identity. He is regarded as the father of the Hebrew people.

Genetic links, however remote, between Jews of any age and Abraham are not the only consideration. He is seen as the great example of faith in God and of obedience to God.

For this reason, Abraham is a person whom Christians venerate. Scholars believe that Abraham, who is revered also by Muslims, actually lived at one time, albeit the fact that he lived thousands of years ago.

In this reading, God promises divine protection to all of Abraham’s descendants. Seventy years ago, Pope Pius XI said that Christians fall within the category of children of Abraham, since Christians descend from him as a spiritual father.

St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans furnishes the second reading. It was written amid a context similar to the context surrounding each of the other Pauline letters.

While Christians certainly were increasing in number in the last quarter of the first century A.D., they still at this time formed only a tiny minority in the population of the Roman Empire.

Furthermore, these early Christians, because of their total commitment to the Gospel of love, seemed either foolish or threatening to the great majority of their contemporaries. Indeed, before the first century ended, the law itself turned against Christianity.

So, many Christians surely were uneasy. Paul reassured them. In this reading, he called them to faithfulness regardless of the “hardships” that easily, even likely, would come their way.

He said that their knowledge of God was their advantage and privilege. God was their strength.

Christ had defeated death, and the Lord would prevail over every adversary, despite the force behind any adversary.

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew is the third lesson. It tells the story of the Transfiguration, a story found in the other Synoptics as well.

In the Transfiguration, the Lord’s identity as Son of God is magnificently displayed. Rich symbols abound. Each has unmistakable roots in the Old Testament. Jesus is atop a high mountain. Each makes clear the fact of Christ’s divine identity.

As marvelous as this message is the fact that God shares with humans the very essence of being within the Holy Trinity. The purpose is that we may know God.

Reflection

This weekend, we observe the second Sunday of Lent. Lent is well underway, now over two weeks along in its progress. If Lent is to mean anything to us personally, we must dedicate ourselves to Lent, to sincere dedication to prayer and penance.

Is it worth it? Through the words of Paul, the church reminds us of life amid hardships. It is true that Americans do not have to hide from hostile police, as the Roman Christians long ago had to hide. But, we have our hardships, that greatest hardships come from within ourselves. Fears, doubts, and our own smugness confound our ability to see things clearly and to act in what truly is our best interests.

In these readings from Genesis and Matthew, the church details the message of Roman way. Christ sustains us, and that regard- less of everything and anything, we have nothing to fear.

God’s care for us, in Christ, is the product of God’s love for us. God loves us. The wondrous revelation to the apostles of the Lord’s divinity, seen in the Transfiguration, tell us of God’s love. Loving us, God promised us life.

He is with us in Jesus, the Son of God. Although almighty, Jesus overwhelmed no one. Lent is the process by which individually and voluntarily we turn to the Lord.

READINGS

Monday: Dn 9:4b-10 Ps 79:8-9, 11, 13 Lk 6:36-38
Tuesday: Is 1:10, 16-20 Ps 50:8-9, 16b-c, 17-21, 23 Mt 23:1-12
Wednesday: Jer 18:18-20 Ps 31:5-6, 14-16 Mt 20:17-28
Thursday: Jer 17:5-10 Ps 1:1-4, 6 Lk 16:19-31
Friday: Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a Ps 105:16-21 Mt 21:32-43, 45-46
Saturday: Mi 7:14-15, 18-20 Ps 103:1-4, 9-12 Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

ANSWERS:

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

CATEQUIZEM

By Dominic Camplisson

Recalling Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, this quiz is perhaps pertinent.

1. According to the Old Testament, nothing happened peradventure but was rather because events (such as Pharaoh’s heart hardening) were
   a. driven by God’s will.
   b. conducted by free will.
   c. incomprehensible.

2. Jesus and his followers likely perambulated a fancy way of saying they traveled
   a. by horse.
   b. by boat.
   c. by foot.

3. Jesus was not laid in a perambulator but in a manger. What is it?
   a. A type of ambulance
   b. A trough for animal fodder
   c. A type of boat

4. Cloaks may be made nowadays of percale, Jesus’ was considered unusual because it was
   a. red or purple, a sign of royalty
   b. silk or at least made of webs
   c. of one piece, not sewn

5. According to Catholic sacramentology this is real but not perceivable even with a microscope
   a. Transubstantiation
   b. bacteria
   c. Charon the Boatman

6. This disciple wanted to perceive Jesus’ wounds personally before he would accept the Resurrection
   a. Paul
   b. Judas
   c. Thomas

7. Several of the disciples would have been familiar with a perch, or rather its Asian cousins, because they were
   a. fishermen
   b. Jews
   c. Pharisees

8. Jesus was, before being crucified, persecuted by Roman soldiers or in other words
   a. stricken
   b. crowned
   c. anointed

9. This popular Christmas carol features a diminutive percussionist
   a. Tom Thumb
   b. The Little Drummer Boy
   c. The Cherubim of Yuletide

10. This is the fate of those who chose serious sin over virtue:
    a. Per Ardua ad Astra
    b. perdition
    c. penitential

11. According to Scripture, St. Thomas’s peregrinations led him here where he started a Christian community now called Mar Thomas
    a. Indonesia
    b. Cambodia
    c. India

12. Perestroika was a failed attempt to keep the Soviet Union alive. One of the beneficiaries of its collapse was a renewed
    a. Patriarchy of Constantinople
    b. Polish National Catholic Church
    c. Russian Orthodox Church

13. Jesus admonished his followers to be this as the father is
    a. perfect
    b. peripatetic
    c. persitict

14. The disciples had human weaknesses, but this was perfidious:
    a. Matthias
    b. Thomas
    c. Judas

15. If there is a pericope in church, the best idea is to
    a. listen to it being read.
    b. run and call 9-1-1.
    c. pour mayonnaise on it and toss it with dill and anchovies.

ANSWERS:

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

My dad recalls with fondness childhood memories of climbing in the car with his family to visit friends... and together they all would recite the rosary. He remembers waking up before dawn, saying his prayers with his family and facing the day with faith and hope. He knows that the Lord has been a constant presence in his life, guiding him through the good times and the bad.

In our quest for inner stillness, we must make the effort to quiet our minds and hearts. The Lord, who created us in his image, desires that we come to know him, to love him, and to be transformed by his grace.

The “why” of our quest for inner stillness is contained in the second part of this commandment: “...and know that I am God.” So much of our spiritual life revolves around our relationship with God. Yet sometimes we seem to make the word “God” an abstraction — overlooking the personal and relational. If we do not cultivate an inner stillness, our meetings with God will resemble something more like brushing up against him in a crowd rather than a deep personal encounter. And we must remember that he desires our entire attention.

In trying to give precision to our concept of God, we might begin with the word “Father” as St. Catherine of Siena saw it in her writings. She noted that God has a passionate love for each of us. The word passion is powerful. It connotes the idea of union of hearts and minds. It conveys the idea of God’s intense (and burning) desire for us.

Perhaps because of my own training in speculative theology, I have always been wary of allowing ideas, even the idea about God, to lapse into abstractions. Fire was seen as being a key to mankind’s progress, so as we reflect upon the attributes or characteristics of God, we are called in every age to discover fire again — to set the world aflame with the redemptive fire of God’s love.

It is the passionate love of God which compelled him to attach himself to us. He is truly, through baptism, Emmanuel — God with us (and in us). He walks with each of us on our journey to our heavenly home, ready to support us and guide us.

It is also this passionate love which led God to shed his lifeblood — through his Son’s death on the cross for us, and through the Eucharist to provide redemptive transfigurations for our own beings.

Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb?

Even should she forget, I will never forget you. See, upon the palm of my hand I have written your name. — Is 49:15-16.

His is also a protective love — if we ask for it:

Fear not, I am with you: be not dismayed I am your God. I will strengthen you and hold you, and uphold you with my right hand. — Is 41:10

We will in the course of these reflections touch upon many other characteristics of God’s love. But it is always possible to have an image before us, we might take the time to sit quietly before the cross and reflect upon the heart of Christ, pierced with a lance, which remains infinitely open and paradoxically inclusive — holding ourselves within.

Mary, mother of Christ, you are the mirror of God’s love. May we see his face in you and in each other. May we be eager to share the gift of his love with others, and may we be open to receiving it.

May the Lord bless you and keep you safe in his love. Amen.
**Sports**

**Holy Cross, St. Joe Mishawaka win Junior Varsity titles**

*BY JOE KOZINSKI*

SOUTH BEND — The Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) junior varsity finals were held at St. Monica on Saturday, Feb. 21, before a packed house. Both the A League and B League championship games were tightly-fought contests that came down to the last minute before the outcomes were decided.

Holy Cross from South Bend completed an outstanding 14-1 season by winning the A League title over St. Pius X from Granger. The powerhouse St. Joe Mishawaka program won their fifth junior varsity title in five years and also completed the trifecta in 2009 by earlier winning the varsity and Colors boys titles. St. Pius X from Granger made a strong showing by getting three of their four teams into the finals.

**Consolation game**

In the B League consolation game, Christ the King B2 came from five points down to start the fourth quarter, 22-17, and scored 15 fourth-quarter points to win the consolation title over St. Pius B1, 32-24. The Kings were led by Joe Stroud, Connor Cohl and Isaac Terry with 8 points each. Pat Sandor had a strong game and led St. Pius with 8 points.

St. Bavo won the A League consolation championship over the St. Michael team from Plymouth, 35-28. St. Bavo was coached by Tom Hunsberger who has been coaching in the ICCL for 27 years in both the boys and girls programs. Paul Saros pumped in 10 points and Joe Mosinar scored 9 points to lead the Panthers. St. Michael was led by fourth-grade standouts Nick Felke who scored 13 points, and Sam Stone who scored 6 points.

**Championship games**

In the B League championship game, St. Joe, Mishawaka, broke away from a tie game with less than a minute left to beat St. Pius B2, 28-25. In the last 25 seconds, Nick Thurin sank two key free throws, and Joe Ravotto sank one free throw to seal the three-point victory. Thurin and Ravotto led the Wildcats with 8 points each in the tightly contested game.

St. Joe is coached by Dennis Chandler, who has been coaching 22 years in the ICCL. Sammy Quinn, as he has all year, led St. Pius with 7 points. Holy Cross and St. Pius A2 went into the last minute tied in the back and forth contest. Caleb Bourbon got loose for two key baskets in the last 45 seconds and Connor Futa sank a key basket with eight seconds left to win the title for Holy Cross, 36-32. Jacob Jobe was a force inside for Holy Cross the entire game and finished with 10 points, while Brendan Chappell and Mark Maddern each scored 7 points for the Crusaders.

In the second game, St. Bavo went into the last minute tied in the back and forth contest. Caleb Bourbon got loose for two key baskets in the last 45 seconds and Connor Futa sank a key basket with eight seconds left to win the title for Holy Cross, 36-32. Jacob Jobe was a force inside for Holy Cross the entire game and finished with 10 points, while Brendan Chappell and Mark Maddern each scored 7 points for the Crusaders.

Sullivan finished with 13 points, and Starks chipped in 12 apiece. In the second game, South Bend sent Christ the King to play Holy Cross’s small school champs, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel. The Squires, sparked by their offensive core, Wil Knappke and his 15 first half points, had a tight battle against Christ the King leading by just two at the midpoint, 27-25. Conner Edmonds paced the Kings with 18 in the first two quarters. The Squires eventually pulled away leading, 43-32, at the end of three periods and finished with a final score of 55-41. Brian Teeters added 14 points and 9 rebounds for the victors in the school’s first official diocesan championship.

**CYO Eagles, Squires and ICCL Wildcats take diocesan tourney**

*BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN*

FORT WAYNE — Clawing their way to the top from a fifth-place seed in the Catholic Youth League (CYO) tournament, the St. John, Fort Wayne Eagles started getting at just the right time this season, earning the coveted honor of representing Fort Wayne in the CYO vs. ICCL (Inner-City Catholic League) 2009 showdown.

Tom Stark’s Eagles faced the ICCL’s first place team in the Colors Division, St. Pius X, in the afternoon’s first game on Sunday, March 1, at St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel in Fort Wayne.

“Our team really came together and were playing their best basketball of the season at tourney time,” explained assistant coach John Shank.

The Eagles won their sixth straight game downing the Granger group by a score of 61-37, despite three treys from Greenan Sullivan in the final quarter. Sullivan finished with 13 points in the loss. St. John’s Matt Williamson also had 13, while Braxton Randolph and Thomas Starks chipped in 12 apiece.

In the second game, South Bend sent Christ the King to play Holy Cross’s small school champs, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel. The Squires, sparked by their offensive core, Wil Knappke and his 15 first half points, had a tight battle against Christ the King leading by just two at the midpoint, 27-25. Conner Edmonds paced the Kings with 18 in the first two quarters. The Squires eventually pulled away leading, 43-32, at the end of three periods and finished with a final score of 55-41. Brian Teeters added 14 points and 9 rebounds for the victors in the school’s first official diocesan championship.

Game 3 saw Fort Wayne’s Gold League runner-up, St. Jude, matching up against ICCL powerhouse, St. Joseph, Mishawaka. St. Joe completed their mission on a quest for a diocesan championship with a 49-28 victory over St. Jude. Jumping out to a 16-0 lead, the Wildcats never looked back. The ICCL’s St. Martin DePorres East Division Varsity champs and overall post-season combined tournament champs finished 15-0 and went undefeated in regular season play all four years of their ICCL careers.

A pleased Coach Steve Ravotto explained, “This was a great group of boys who are set apart by their work ethic and determination. Besides being very good athletes they are also very good students and people. Each of these boys has made the honor roll and are leaders in the school.” He added, “St. Jude fought hard.”

Balanced scoring for the champs was led by Michael Whitfield with 18 points. Noah Deitchley 13 and Vince Ravotto 9. Andrew Spencer chalked up 10 points for his St. Jude Eagles. Ravotto further noted, “Our fifth, seventh- and eighth-grade teams all won their championships this season — a pretty big feat for a school our size.”

**Vince Ravotto of the undefeated St. Joe Mishawaka team steps to the charity stripe during the diocesan championship game played against Fort Wayne St. Jude at Fort Wayne’s St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel Msgr. Contant Gymnasium on Sunday, March 1.**
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 46865; or e-mail: fhogan@fw.diocesefwsb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

Fish Fries

Fish Fry

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

Kingfish plan fish fry

South Bend — The Knights of Columbus 5521, 6153 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a fish fry on Friday, March 6, from 5-7:30 p.m. Adults $7.50, children (5-12) $3. Chicken strips for $7.50 and shrimp for $8.50 will be available. Fish fries will continue each Friday during Lent.

Queen of Angels fish fry

Fort Wayne — Queen of Angels Parish will have a family-style fish fry Friday, March 6, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. Drive-through and carry-out service available. Adults $7.50, children 6-10 $3 and children five and under free.

Fish fry

Fort Wayne — St. Therese Parish will have a fish fry Friday, March 6, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. The proceeds will benefit the athletic department. The menu includes Dan’s fish, scalloped potatoes, macaroni and cheese, coleslaw, applesauce and choice of dessert. Adults $8, children (5-12) $4.50 and children under five eat free.

Angela Knights’ fish fries announced

Angola — The Knights of Columbus 7053 will have fish fries on Fridays, March 6 and 20, from 5-7:30 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 1-6 at 7 a.m. in the parish hall.

Queen of Peace fish fry

Mishawaka — The Knights of Columbus 8617 will host a fish fry from 5-7 p.m. on March 6 and 27 at Queen of Peace Hall, corner of Vistula and Bittersweet. Tickets are $7 per sale at the parish office or $8 at the door for adults. $4 for children 6-12. Drive-thru available until 6:30 p.m. Refreshments and sides included. Dessert available for donation. Call (574) 255-9674 for information.

MISC. Happenings

Preschool roundup scheduled

Yoder — St. Aloysius School will have a kindergarten roundup March 11 and a preschool roundup March 12 in the school from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Meet the principal, teachers and tour the school. Full-day kindergarten and preschool programs are offered. Call (260) 622-7151 for more information or visit www.saintalosiuscatholicchurch.org

Preschool roundup slated

Elkhart — St. Vincent de Paul School, 1114 S. Main St., will have a kindergarten and preschool roundups on Thursday, March 12, at 6:30 p.m. in the school library. Tours of the classrooms and information will be available. For information, call (574) 293-8451.

Spaghetti dinner planned

South Bend — The Knights of Columbus 5570 will have a spaghetti dinner Thursday, March 12, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Adults $7, children ages 5-12 $2.50. The council is located at 502 Linden Ave., one block east of Mayflower Road.

Organ recital at Ancilla Domini Chapel

Donaldson — An organ recital by Marijim Thoene will be Friday, March 13, at 7 p.m. in the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ Ancilla Domini Chapel. The recital will feature compositions by J.S. Bach, Charles Tournemire, Jean Langlais, Johan Alain and Alan Hovhaness.

Victory Noll Center presents self-care workshop

Huntington — Victory Noll Center is sponsoring a workshop designed by Cheri Kruckenberg allowing people to learn to care for themselves. With “B-B-E-A-T-H-E: Practices for Self-Care,” Saturday, March 14, from 9 a.m. to noon at Victory Noll Center, located at 1900 W. Park Dr.

Attendees will learn about and experience the practices of mindfulness meditation, gentle yoga and breath awareness. Physical limitations should not prevent anyone from attending, as modifications for each person’s ability will be made. Wear loose-fitting clothes and bring a mat, blanket or beach towel. The cost is $15, and is due by March 6.

Catholic Networking offered

Fort Wayne — The Catholic Business Network will have a Mass followed by a meeting Friday, March 6, at 6:30 a.m. at St. John the Baptist Parish, 4500 Fairfield Ave. Bring your business cards. For information visit www.catholicbusinessnetwork.com.

Theology of the body presented

Rome City — Cindy Black, director of the Office of Youth Ministry, will present “Sex in Rome City,” a study of the theology of the body on Sunday, March 22, at noon for teens and young adults. Registration is required before March 16 by contacting Mary Arend at (260) 854-2106.

Scrapbooking day planned

Avilla — St. Mary School, 232 N. Main St., will have a scrapbooking day Saturday, March 14, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Cost is $25 in advance or $30 at the door. Two meals, snack and door prizes offered. Contact Sandy Berendt at (260) 242-0215.

Casino night and hog roast

Monroeville — St. Joseph School HASA will have a casino night and hog roast Saturday, March 14, at the Monroeville Park Pavilion, 421 Monroe St. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. A Texas Hold ’em tournament will be at 7 p.m. Call (260) 403-6429 to pre-register. Must be 21.

Card party and deluxe salad bar

Monroeville — St. Joseph School HASA will have a card party and deluxe salad bar Sunday, March 22, at 11:30 a.m. Tickets are $5 and must be purchased in advance. Call (574) 654-3364 for tickets. Proceeds purchase church items.
Windsong Pictures brings Abraham Lincoln to life

BY KAY COZAD

FORT WAYNE — Windsong Pictures is proud to present the feature-length film, “The Boyhood of Abraham Lincoln: The making of a Man,” free to the public at Indiana University-Purdue University (IPFW) at Fort Wayne. Premiere showings will be held March 9, 13 and 14 at 6:30 p.m. and March 15 at 2 p.m. in Neff Hall theater, room 101, before being released across the country.

This compelling film was produced as part of the national celebration of Abraham Lincoln’s 200th birthday and explores the life and legacy of the 16th president of the United States. With a cast and crew of 10,000 men, women and children, the two-hour motion picture celebrates Lincoln’s boyhood years in Kentucky and Indiana and takes the viewer through his politically formative years in Illinois all the way to the White House.

Michael Floyd, executive producer says, “It is the most monumental film we’ve ever done!” Floyd, who teaches communication skills at Elmhurst High School, is a longtime parishioner of St. Mary Parish in Fort Wayne and believes strongly in Windsong’s mission, “To reach out, touch others and make a difference.”

All films produced by the nonprofit organization, operating solely on donations, are family friendly and are produced entirely by volunteer cast and crew.

Windsong Pictures began innocently 34 years ago when two young men, Floyd and student Bob Parsons produced an innovative film using an 8 mm camera borrowed from the football team. By 1991 Dave Habig joined the team and Windsong began in earnest to work with students, parents and community members of all ages to “explore the limitless potential that exists in the creative and integrated learning process of film production.”

The independent film production organization uses the same techniques and processes that Hollywood filmmakers use. And in the past 34 years it has worked with over 40,000 students and 20,000 adults across 38 states to produce award-winning short and feature films as well as documentaries.

Screen tests, advertised on TV, radio, newspaper and by word of mouth, draw both young and old community members in, who start as extras in front of the camera. Many stay on and become part of the volunteer crew. There is never a fee to participate in Windsong Picture activities, workshops or seminars.

“Young people come to us from dysfunctional or economically deprived homes. We didn’t want money in the way. So all are welcome,” says Floyd, who adds, “The wonderful people who work with us are like family.”

The organization welcomes all ages, those with disabilities, including hearing impairments, and is nondenominational with volunteers coming from all religious backgrounds.

“The Boyhood of Abraham Lincoln,” took two years to complete with hours of brainstorming, research, collaborative writing, casting, filming and editing. The cast was shaped by professional and amateur actors, one boy flying in from California for the filming of his scenes.

Scenes were filmed on location at Fort Wayne’s Lincoln Museum, and in Kentucky, southern Indiana and five other states. The musical score was composed by Indiana native Arvel Bird.

During the editing phase, the heart of the family that binds the organization shown brightly when Floyd’s mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and the crew of volunteers moved to her home in an effort to allow Floyd to support and care for her.

The heartwarming film honoring the spirit of Abraham Lincoln will premiere at the 10th annual International Windsong Film Festival cosponsored by IPFW University Student Life and Windsong Pictures and was produced in association with the National Park Service, Fort Wayne Lincoln Museum, Illinois State Historical Parks, Kentucky and Illinois Lincoln Museums, Bicentennial Commissions, Federal Judiciary Education Branch and IPFW University Student Life.

Other Windsong Picture films being shown this month are companion films, “The Spirit of Abraham Lincoln,” and “Little Snow White.”

For more information or to make a donation to Windsong Pictures visit www.windsongpictures.com.