



The

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**'They're heroic'**

Catechetical leaders keep parishioners connected during pandemic, page 3.



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*'You just try to ease their fears'*



A Cathedral High School graduate and a longtime member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, Anne Maguire volunteers about 25 hours a week as a nurse practitioner on a COVID unit in a New York City hospital while also working a full-time job caring for HIV-positive patients there. (Submitted photo)

## Faith guides woman as she cares for people whose lives are threatened by two pandemics

By John Shaughnessy

It was a touch of humanity amid the heartbreak. When Anne Maguire noticed the elderly man struggling with his oxygen mask, the former Indianapolis resident was in her first few days of volunteering on a hospital's COVID-19 unit in New York City, where more than 13,000 people—and counting—have died of the disease.

Seeing that all the staff nurses were busy—caring for several patients at a time in a stressful, high-risk setting—Maguire approached the elderly man. “The patients are all alone on the COVID unit, as no visitors are allowed,” she says. “He was restless and pulling at the mask. I saw he needed some extra comfort.” So the 31-year-old nurse practitioner removed his mask for a moment, gently wiped his face with a warm cloth,

soaked a sponge with water and placed it against his lips so he could draw the moisture into his parched mouth. His expression of appreciation showed her just how much her touches of caring meant. “It really reminded me of the reason I was there,” says Maguire, who volunteers at Mount Sinai West hospital in Manhattan for about 25 hours a week, in addition to her regular 40-hour

See FAITH, page 11

## A letter from Archbishop Thompson: Moving forward from pandemic

(Editor's note: This statement first appeared on the archdiocese's website on May 1. Archbishop Charles C. Thompson and the other Catholic bishops in Indiana are working on a plan for the resumption of public Masses. More details will be coming soon.)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Easter greetings in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ! Despite the ongoing challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic and staying in place, we continue to celebrate the Easter Season that culminates in the Solemnity of Pentecost, 50 days after Easter. For many, the peace and joy of this great season has been put to the test. Practically everyone is anxious to get back to some sense of “normalcy,” whenever that may be possible.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

While I do not have many answers at this point, please be assured that I am engaged in ongoing conversations with the Indiana bishops, Council of Priests, College of Deans, Indiana Catholic Conference leaders, Archdiocesan Leadership Team and others on determining how best to move forward in the reopening of churches, celebration of sacraments and resuming public Masses. While care of souls is always the pivotal focus, we must also act in a manner that is both safe and responsible. We do not want to be reckless about endangering lives, especially the elderly and vulnerable, nor do we want to have to start all over in the fight against the virus. I am grateful for the many people, both clergy and laity, who are assisting in the discernment process rooted in prayer throughout this ordeal and looking toward the future.

Although we do not yet know the exact protocols for moving forward, as much

See PANDEMIC, page 2

## The other front line of the times

### Feeding the hungry as unemployment rates soar

By Natalie Hoefler

The numbers are unprecedented. Between March 14 and April 18, the United States Department of Labor announced there were 515,000 new applications for unemployment insurance benefits in Indiana due to the coronavirus pandemic. Just one week during that time frame saw nearly 75,500 new claims, whereas only 2,700 initial claims were submitted during the comparable week the year prior. But there are faces behind those numbers. Faces like the father of a middle class family in Seymour who never imagined having to stand in line for food to feed his family. Faces like one food pantry client in

Indianapolis who gave his milk to a woman because “you have a kid and you need it more than me.” And faces like a woman near Tell City who was furloughed for three weeks before admitting she could no longer afford food. “The number of people we’ve never seen before is way more than our regulars,” says Deacon John Cord, who serves on the board of faith-based Waymaker Ministries in Seymour. “We told our [volunteers] to plan for 150 meals a night, and we thought we were exaggerating. We had 105 guests the first night, 178 the second and 188 the third.” The same situation is occurring throughout the archdiocese.

See HUNGER, page 6

(Photo by Wikimedia Commons)





# PANDEMIC

continued from page 1

of this depends upon the handling of the pandemic, it is important that we maintain a clear understanding of our identity as Catholics.

Some have complained about churches remaining closed while various stores or businesses remain open. The Church is not about a few individuals wandering around in the aisles of a building, but the gathering as community of believers in prayer, worship, catechesis and service. Christ-centered moral responsibility

and the understanding of the Church as community, the Body of Christ, are key components that drive our discernment process and decision-making.

Most, if not all, of us are growing a bit impatient. Let us not let fear or frustration get the best of us. Through the inspiration and intercession of St. Joseph, may we continue to remain open in mind and heart to the voice and will of God amid this time of chaos and hardship.

I am looking so forward to the opportunity to gather again with the entire People of God—clergy, religious and laity—in our churches throughout



## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

No public events scheduled at this time.

central and southern Indiana. That time cannot come fast enough for my liking, but it will come. All in God's time. In the meantime, I ask for your continued prayers and understanding.

With assurance of my prayers and best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+ Charles C. Thompson*

**+Charles C. Thompson**  
Archbishop of Indianapolis

# Arzobispo Thompson: Avanzando desde la pandemia

(Nota del editor: Esta declaración apareció por primera vez en el sitio web de la Arquidiócesis el 1 de mayo. El arzobispo Charles C. Thompson y otros obispos católicos de Indiana están diseñando un plan para reanudar las misas públicas. Pronto publicaremos más detalles.)

## Queridos hermanas y hermanos en Cristo:

¡Saludos pascuales en Jesucristo resucitado! A pesar del desafío constante que representa la pandemia de la COVID-19 y quedarnos en la casa, continuamos celebrando la temporada pascual que culmina con la Solemnidad de Pentecostés, 50 días después de la Pascua. Para muchos, esta situación ha puesto a prueba la paz y la alegría de este maravilloso tiempo. Prácticamente todos están ansiosos de recuperar algún sentido de "normalidad" en cuanto sea posible.

Y aunque en este momento no tengo muchas respuestas, les aseguro que

participo activamente en conversaciones con los obispos de Indiana, el Consejo de Sacerdotes, el Colegio de Decanos, líderes de la Conferencia Católica de Indiana, el Equipo de Líderes Arquidiocesanos y otros, para determinar la mejor forma de avanzar en la reapertura de iglesias, la celebración de los sacramentos y retomar la celebración pública de la misa. Si bien el enfoque fundamental es siempre el cuidado de las almas, también debemos actuar de una forma que sea segura y responsable.

No deseamos ser irresponsables y poner vidas en peligro, especialmente la de los ancianos y los más vulnerables, ni tampoco deseamos tener que empezar desde cero otra vez en la lucha contra el virus. Me siento muy agradecido con todas aquellas personas, tanto del clero como del sector laico, que colaboran en el proceso de discernimiento fundamentado en la oración a lo largo de toda esta experiencia tan difícil y con miras hacia el futuro.

Si bien todavía no sabemos exactamente cuáles serán los protocolos de ahora en adelante ya que mucho de ello depende de cómo se maneje la pandemia, es importante que mantengamos una conciencia clara de nuestra identidad como católicos. Algunos se han quejado de que las iglesias continúan cerradas en tanto que muchas tiendas o negocios siguen abiertos. La iglesia no se define como un lugar donde algunas personas deambulan por los pasillos de un edificio, sino la reunión de una comunidad de creyentes en la oración, la adoración, la catequesis y el servicio.

La responsabilidad moral centrada en Cristo y la noción de la Iglesia como comunidad (el cuerpo de Cristo), son los elementos clave que motivan nuestro proceso de discernimiento y toma de decisiones.

La mayoría de nosotros, si no todos, nos estamos impacientando, pero no debemos permitir que el temor o la

frustración se apoderen de nosotros. Que a través de la inspiración y la intercesión de san José continuemos manteniéndonos abiertos en mente y corazón a la voz y la voluntad de Dios en medio de este momento de caos y penurias.

Estoy deseoso de tener la oportunidad de reunirme otra vez con todo el Pueblo de Dios, el clero, los religiosos y los laicos, en nuestras iglesias de todo el centro y el sur de Indiana. Es algo que no va a suceder tan rápido como me gustaría, pero sucederá. Todo en el tiempo de Dios. Mientras tanto, les pido que se mantengan firmes en la oración y el entendimiento.

Con la certeza de mis oraciones y mis mejores deseos, quedo de ustedes en Cristo,

*+ Charles C. Thompson*

**+Charles C. Thompson**  
Arzobispo de Indianápolis

# Emergency multitasking: Vatican says keep all vulnerable in mind

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Internally displaced people—those forced to flee their homes, but who do not cross into another country—still often need protection and special assistance, including from the Church, said a new Vatican document.

"People in situations of protracted displacement may be forced to live away from their homes for many years, or even decades, and lack access to education, property, employment and the support they need for sustainable livelihoods and hope for their future," said the document.

The Migrants and Refugees Section of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development released "Pastoral Orientations on Internally Displaced People" (IDP) on May 5 with an online news conference.

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, at the end of 2018 there were 41.3 million people internally displaced worldwide, "the highest number in recorded history," the document noted.

Cardinal Michael Czerny and Scalabrinian Father Fabio Baggio, undersecretaries of the Migrants and Refugees Section, told reporters that while many people are rightly focused on the COVID-19 pandemic, long-standing emergencies like forced displacement still require the Church's attention.

"In this time of pandemic, the virus

does not distinguish between those who are important and those who are invisible, those who are settled and those who are displaced: everyone is vulnerable, and each infection is a danger to everyone," Cardinal Czerny said.

Father Fabio said he hoped people would not overlook problems that existed long before the virus and will exist long after it is over.

"Multitasking is not optional," he said. The virus has shown society that systemic weaknesses are "real weaknesses, the vulnerabilities are real vulnerabilities and that the fragilities are real fragilities, and that sometimes living our secure and peaceful lives, we overlook those near us who are suffering or are not well or are generally overlooked."

Cardinal Czerny also said he hoped the COVID-19 pandemic would stop the "hollow and shallow attacks of a xenophobic nature" and political positioning against "foreigners" now that people have discovered just how essential migrants and refugees are for "essential services," including health care, agriculture and food production and home care.

"Far from being intruders, they are very much needed," and the pandemic has demonstrated that, he said. "My hope is that experience will help people

become resistant to these cheap and most regrettable attacks."

Because internally displaced people have not crossed a national border, the document noted, they are not considered migrants or refugees and do not enjoy international protection but must rely on their national governments.

The "triggers" that force people to suddenly leave their homes and move include natural disasters and even large infrastructure projects like new dams, but also the same threats that force migrants and refugees to seek safety outside their countries: violence and human rights violations, the document noted.

And, unfortunately, it said, "increasingly, most IDPs live in situations of protracted displacement or face chronic displacement risk."

For example, in Colombia, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, almost 5.6 million people are internally displaced and many of them have been for decades because of the country's civil conflict going all the way to the 1960s.

As of Dec. 31, 2019, Congo had almost as many displaced people—5.5 million—because of ongoing armed conflict and ethnic tensions.

In both countries, and in many others around the world where there are large

numbers of displaced people, the document noted, "communities that host IDPs are often underprivileged and living in precarious situations themselves. They often do not have the resources and infrastructure necessary to welcome large numbers of newcomers."


And, especially if the displaced people receive special government assistance, but poor members of the host community do not, "unnecessary tensions" often follow, the document said.

In response, the Migrants and Refugees Section asks local churches and Catholic relief and development agencies to work both with the displaced people and members of the host community to survey real needs, bring people together, educate newcomers about local customs and advocate for assistance that helps both groups live better.

The Church, it said, is called to "work for reconciliation, mutual acceptance and respect between ethnic or tribal groups, promoting a healing of memory, relearning communication and adopting a nonviolent lifestyle." †

## Correction

Stephanie Jackson is not the author of two books, as listed in the May 1 issue of *The Criterion*. †



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# Catechetical leaders keep parishioners connected during pandemic

By **Katie Rutter**  
Special to *The Criterion*

Anita Bardo's world came screeching to a halt on March 17. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis announced that all public liturgies would be suspended as a response to the spread of the coronavirus. All group gatherings in parishes were also cancelled.



Anita Bardo

Bardo is the director of faith formation and youth director at St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis. She relied on in-person meetings to help the children and adults of her parish grow spiritually.

"It just made me feel like my hands were tied. I didn't know what to do," Bardo admitted.

With prayer and consultation, she began to navigate the new waters of long-distance catechesis. Like her, parish staff members across central and southern Indiana are going above and beyond to keep Catholics connected and growing in the faith during the crisis.

"Parish catechetical leaders [PCL], they're heroic on an average day. I think they're going above and beyond the call

of duty throughout these challenging times," said Ken Ogorek, the archdiocesan director of catechesis.

"In a lot of our parishes, it's the PCL who is the main point of contact between a



Ken Ogorek

lot of the families and the parish, whether it's about catechesis in general, or sacramental preparation," Ogorek described during a phone interview on April 24.

When the doors of the churches closed, these leaders had to keep the parishioners informed of cancellations to previously scheduled sacraments. They also had to navigate the more pressing need of continuing catechesis in spite of the closures.

Bardo bridged the gap using technology. Since the children could not come to religious education classes, she began sending out all Sunday school resources via e-mail. Every week, she also holds a video conference call with the teenagers of the parish and tries to re-create their youth group meetings digitally.

"It's the face to face and the interaction that they miss. The activities, because our parish is pretty active with youth ministry; I keep them busy. They miss that action

with each other every Sunday," she told *The Criterion* in a phone interview on April 27.

Bardo also started weekly conference calls with those preparing to enter into full communion with the Church through her parish's Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program. That group was especially hard hit by the news that they would not be able to be receiving the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil Mass.

"They are waiting, but they have a great attitude. Their attitude is, you know, we're in this together and we are staying connected and going to class every week just like we were still preparing," Bardo said.

In the New Albany Deanery, Francine Gettelfinger also dove into technology



Francine Gettelfinger

for the sake of her community. Gettelfinger is the coordinator of religious education at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County.

"I've had to sit down and research what I can do," she described in a phone interview on April 28.

"There's so much information out there, and all the publishing companies are releasing their information for free, their videos and all-digital books and things, so it's a blessing," Gettelfinger said.

St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish had recently begun using a digital communication platform, Flocknote, to send updates to members. Gettelfinger capitalized on that connection to send catechetical resources to parishioners and families. She also set up video conferencing for group meetings like RCIA, confirmation preparation for teens, and parishioner-led virtual studies.

"I've met with our first Eucharist children," she said, "I just met with them and prayed with them and told them how they have to wait, and that it's OK to wait, and how we anticipate our birthdays and Christmas and how it makes us hunger more the closer we get and they feel that for the Eucharist as well."

In addition to missing the sacraments, Gettelfinger said, parishioners are "missing community ... especially our older people, our retired people of the parish."

So she and a small group of parish members called every single household to check in and offer help should it be needed.

As if by instinct, Bardo described that

the members of St. Rita Parish took the same action: calling each parish family to check in. It is an action that she hopes continues even when the crisis has ended.

"When you just reach out, give a call or send cards in the mail, did we do that before? Probably not as much, but we're doing it more now," Bardo said.

"If we can do it this way, we can do it this way even if we're back to normal," she said.

Archdiocesan leaders have not yet indicated when the public celebration of the Mass and other sacraments will resume. However, a priority for Ogorek is to prepare these parish catechetical leaders for that moment so that, once restrictions are lifted, the leaders are ready to guide their communities through the transition.

"A big priority for me is to continue to communicate with them and work with them so we're supporting them in the service they're providing right now, and we're helping them be prepared in every way for the ministry that they will be called to on the other side of this," he noted.

Ogorek's team, the staff of the Office of Catechesis, personally reached out to the leaders and hosted virtual group conversations for mutual encouragement and support.

The office also sends out regular e-mails to the leaders with information on both the practical and spiritual sides of ministry. Topics include weekly reflections on the Sunday Scriptures, mental health tips, and "Ways God Speaks" or suggestions on how to help parishioners grow in faith.

"We're trying to encourage the faithful to not only acknowledge their hunger for the sacraments," Ogorek said, "but enhance their understanding of what's really happening to them personally and directly in their relationship with Jesus when they celebrate sacraments."

Gettelfinger believes that the efforts are making a difference. She said that more parishioners are opening and reading the e-mails from the parish, and some have reached out to thank her for her ministry.

"They're hungry, they're seeing that there is a void, something that we've always had, whether it be Mass or a Bible study, it's gone," she said.

"My prayer is that they hunger for it and our first time that we get together, we will be at capacity in our 1,000-seat church at all the Masses. Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

(Katie Rutter is a freelance writer and member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington.) †

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**Earl and Carol (Adler) Huffman**, members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on March 25.

The couple was married in St. Rose of Lima Church in Layton, Utah (Diocese of Salt Lake City), on March 25, 1955.

They have three children: Earla Imel and the late Kimberly and Glenn Huffman.

The couple also has three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. †



**Edward and Katherine (Schwegman) Stenger**, members of St. Michael Parish in Brookville, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 18.

The couple was married in St. Michael Church in Brookville on April 18, 1970.

They have six children: Susan AlDulijan, Jennifer Kent, Mary Katherine Nobbe, James, Steven and the late Joseph Stenger.

They couple also has six grandchildren. †

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## Editorial



Pope Francis celebrates Mass on April 30 in the chapel of his Vatican residence, the Domus Sanctae Marthae. At the start of the Mass, the pope prayed for the unknown victims who died from the coronavirus and were buried in common graves. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

## No time for second-guessing

“*Omnis virtus moralis debet esse prudens.*” (“All virtue is necessarily prudent.”) St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Virtue*, 12 ad 23.

On April 27, an article appeared in *First Things* by the publication’s editor, R. R. Reno, that is severely critical of the actions taken by religious and secular leaders in response to COVID-19. To summarize, and oversimplify, Reno’s argument, here is a quote from the opening paragraph:

“The coronavirus pandemic is not and never was a threat to society. COVID-19 poses a danger to the elderly and the medically compromised. Otherwise, for most who present symptoms, it can be nasty and persistent, but is not life-threatening. A majority of those infected do not notice that they have the disease. Coronavirus presents us with a medical challenge, not a crisis. The crisis has been of our own making.”

In a similar article in *First Things*, on April 17, concerning the decision of Las Cruces, New Mexico, Bishop Peter Baldacchino to authorize the resumption of public celebrations of Mass in his diocese—but with only five people in attendance—Reno suggests that Las Cruces has the only courageous bishop in the United States. You can respect Bishop Baldacchino’s decision without agreeing with it. In fact, as St. Thomas Aquinas teaches, courage exercised without prudence is not a virtue.

Benedictine Father Mark O’Keefe, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, has written an insightful book titled, *Virtues Abounding: St. Thomas Aquinas on the Cardinal and Related Virtues*. Father Mark writes, “A courageous choice must also be a prudent choice. Some dangers are too great to be met head-on. Sometimes retreat is the right response. The virtue of courage not only moderates fear, it also moderates the urge to be daring and engage in impulsive efforts to confront threats.” From this perspective, a strong case can be made that those religious and secular leaders—here in Indiana and throughout the world—who “retreated” in the face of the deadly coronavirus pandemic were exercising the virtue of courage.

With the benefit of hindsight, it’s probably true that our society, and our Church, has placed too much trust in one-size-fits-all strategies at the expense of targeted protection strategies for the elderly and vulnerable. If more had been

done from the beginning to protect those who are at the greatest risk, we might have avoided the serious problems that many residents of nursing homes and retirement communities are experiencing.

At the same, as Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb and Indianapolis Archbishop Charles C. Thompson have repeatedly stated, what was done was “out of an abundance of caution” considering all the unknowns and the dire predictions which, thanks be to God, have for the most part, in most places, not come to pass. Would this still be true if the extreme social distancing and closures not been mandated? There’s no way to know this for certain.

Certainly, we should proceed—with all due caution—to reopen our churches and our economy while paying special attention to those whom the evidence shows are most vulnerable. As Pope Francis has said, there is a virus that is infinitely worse than COVID-19. That is “selfish indifference” (sin). We need to treat this spiritual pandemic even more aggressively than the coronavirus by the traditional “cures” of repentance and conversion.

How do we know whether our personal attitudes and/or public policies represent “selfish indifference”? Pope Francis has given us a clear measure. As our Holy Father explains, attitudes or policies that are selfishly indifferent can be characterized as: “A virus spread by the thought that life is better if it is better for me, and that everything will be fine if it is fine for me.” This is the reality of sin which Pope Francis says “begins with selfishness and ends up selecting one person over another, discarding the poor, and sacrificing those left behind on the altar of progress.”

Responsible people should beware of extreme positions on any side of a controversial issue. Prudence, which is a cardinal virtue, requires that we consider carefully all points of view and then make decisions—especially risky ones—with a healthy mix of caution, courage and trust in the power of God’s grace. Let’s pray that our bishops and government leaders are blessed with the right mix!

Clearly mistakes have been made. Our leaders are not perfect. But they deserve our wholehearted gratitude and support, as they continue to lead us in this unprecedented time of economic, social and religious uncertainty.

—Daniel Conway

## Reflection/John Shaughnessy

### God’s grace, and the gift of helping to make someone’s dream come true

The story is one of my all-time favorites about a dream that comes true. So is the quote that sums up the story.



The story involves Jameer Nelson who had a long and successful career as a player in the National Basketball Association (NBA).

An NBA all-star during his time, the talented Nelson was known even more for his hardworking, team-first, attention-to-detail approach to the game. Yet perhaps his most defining moment in sports came off the court, when he played for St. Joseph’s College in Philadelphia.

It happened before the beginning of a season when Nelson would become the national college player of the year.

During pre-season practices, a few non-scholarship players tried out for the team. One of the players—Andrew Koefer—caught Nelson’s attention and admiration because of his hard work, hustle and unselfishness. Still, head coach Phil Martelli was planning to cut Koefer, ending his dream.

That’s when Nelson quietly interceded, telling his coach that the freshman was just the kind of player who could help their team during practices. Martelli listened to Nelson’s plea—a rare one from the star player—and kept Koefer on the team.

Later, when a *Sports Illustrated* writer asked Nelson why he made the extra effort for Koefer, Nelson said: “A lot of dreams don’t come true in life. If you can make someone’s dream come true, you should.”

In the journey of pursuing our dreams, there’s a tendency to believe that all we need to make them come true is a laser-like focus and a complete commitment of faith and energy. One person alone can will a dream to life—or so the myth suggests. Yet that is rarely the reality.

At different turning points and at potential roadblocks, other people often help and guide the dreamer. Then there are the moments that can only be explained by God’s grace. That point leads to another one of my favorite “dream” stories.

It involves the dream that Marc and Jen Konesco shared. The couple took their three young children on an amazing adventure a few years ago—a 17-month ocean journey in their family’s boat. After planning and saving for their dream trip for years, it verged on becoming a nightmare one day.

In an interview with Marc, he told

me, “We were at a remote island—a two-day trip from civilization. I couldn’t start the engine, and our water-maker on the boat stopped working. So here we are, in a remote place, with no engine and no water. I said a prayer, ‘Lord, I’m hurting.’ Then I ended up getting on the radio, asking for help. The radio could reach up to 60 miles, but I didn’t think anyone was around. I was really anxious.”

Marc then shared that less than five minutes later, a small boat with two men aboard appeared around a curve of the island, heading toward the family’s boat. Marc said, “They were brothers. The one brother installed water-makers for a living, and the second brother owned a shop where they worked on engines. They were like two angels that came out of the air. After about four hours of working on the boat, we were ready to go.”

Marc paused before adding, “It shows you how God works.”

I’ve been thinking of these stories of Nelson and the Konescos because we’re in that time of year when certain dreams are traditionally fulfilled and celebrated, especially in the lives of young people. College acceptances. High school and college graduations. New jobs and opportunities.

Yet this year, the perennial spring celebrations of these achievements have been minimized and even lost amid the uncertainty and devastation surrounding the coronavirus. As schools and families try to find innovative ways to celebrate the accomplishments of their seniors, I also hope that another major part of their success stories endures through the disappointment of how their senior year has ended.

It’s the part where the seniors find the time and a way to say thank you to the people who have been there for them through it all—the people who love them, the people who support their dreams and try to help them come true, the people who show them the power of God’s grace in their lives.

And considering the overriding uncertainty of life these days, maybe that’s an approach we could all embrace this spring—expressing our thanks in some way to the people who have made such a difference in our lives.

Who would be on your list?

(John Shaughnessy is the assistant editor of *The Criterion*. This reflection has been adapted from his latest book, *Then Something Wondrous Happened: Unlikely encounters and unexpected graces in search of a friendship with God.*) †

## Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God” (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to

edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to [critterion@archindy.org](mailto:critterion@archindy.org). †





# Christ the Cornerstone

## Jesus reassures troubled hearts in uncertain times

*“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone”* (1 Pt 2:7).

The Gospel reading for the Fifth Sunday of Easter has a comforting message for us during these uncertain times: “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (Jn 14:1), Jesus tells his disciples who, like many of us today, are anxious and afraid.

It’s an indication of their human weakness that these witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus, who have seen with their own eyes the power of God to overcome death, are still troubled. Jesus has to reassure them saying, “You have faith in God; have faith also in me” (Jn 14:1).

“Christ the Cornerstone” is my episcopal motto. It’s also the title of this weekly column in *The Criterion*. St. Peter uses this expression, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone” (1 Pt 2:7), in this Sunday’s second reading from his first letter to the Gentile converts in Asia Minor. He is quoting Psalm 118, verse 22. “The stone which the builders rejected,” which may originally have meant the foundation

stone or capstone of the Temple, signifies that what is insignificant to human beings has become great through divine election.

St. Peter and other New Testament writers interpreted this verse as referring to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the one who was rejected by the political and religious leaders of his time but is now the foundation on which our lives are built.

Jesus admonishes his disciples, and all of us, to have faith in him. He has returned to his heavenly homeland to prepare a place for us. “In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places” (Jn 14:2), Jesus says.

“If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where I am going you know the way” (Jn 14:2-4). What are we worried about? Jesus cares about us. He will take care of us—no matter what our troubles may be.

These are comforting words at a time when there is a lot of uncertainty

in our daily lives. Because we are human, we worry about many things—our health, our economic security, family members and friends who are suffering and, above all, our fear of the unknown.

Jesus tells us that “In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places” (Jn 14:2). That’s not simply a description of what heaven is like. It’s Jesus’ way of letting us know that the place he has prepared for us will take care of our individual needs. We shouldn’t worry. If we place our trust in Christ the Cornerstone, he will become the foundation for full and happy lives—both now and in eternity.

St. Thomas, the disciple who always gives voice to his doubts, says to Jesus, “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” (Jn 14:5) And Jesus’ response is vitally important to Thomas and to each of us. “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him” (Jn 14:6-7).

To the extent that we know Jesus, and are close to him, we “have seen

the Father” and have no reason to be afraid of anything.

Pope Francis tells us that Jesus is the face of the Father. When we encounter the risen Christ, we see God. “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (Jn 14:1), Jesus tells us. We are in God’s hands, and there is a place for each and every one of us in God’s house.

Once again, because of our human weakness, we are slow to believe. “Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?” (Jn 14:10) Jesus asks us. “The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father” (Jn 14:10-12).

Jesus reassures our troubled hearts. If we stay close to him, and do the good works that he asks us to do, there will be no room for doubt or fear. Christ the Cornerstone is our firm foundation, the reason for our Easter joy. †



## Cristo, la piedra angular

### Jesús calma los corazones turbados en tiempos de incertidumbre

*“La piedra que desecharon los constructores, Esa, en piedra angular se ha convertido”* (1 Pe 2:7).

La lectura del Evangelio del quinto domingo de Pascua nos brinda un mensaje reconfortante durante esta época llena de incertidumbre: “No se turbe su corazón” (Jn 14:1), les dice Jesús a sus discípulos quienes, al igual que muchos de nosotros hoy, se sentían temerosos y nerviosos.

Es un signo de la debilidad humana que estos testigos de la resurrección de Jesús quienes vieron con sus propios ojos el poder de Dios para superar la muerte, todavía estuvieran atribulados. Jesús los tranquiliza diciéndoles “crean en Dios, crean también en Mí” (Jn 14:1).

“Cristo, la piedra angular” es mi lema episcopal y también el título de esta columna semanal en *The Criterion*. San Pedro utiliza la expresión “a piedra que desecharon los constructores, Esa, en piedra angular se ha convertido” (1 Pe 2:7) en la segunda lectura de este domingo de su primera carta a los gentiles conversos en Asia Menor. Citó el salmo 118, versículo 122: “La piedra que desecharon los constructores” que posiblemente

haya significado originalmente la piedra de fundación o la primera piedra del templo, se traduce en que aquello que es insignificante para los seres humanos se ha convertido en algo formidable por elección divina.

San Pedro y otros escritores del Nuevo Testamento interpretaron este versículo como una alusión a la muerte y la resurrección de Jesucristo, aquel que fue rechazado por líderes políticos y religiosos de su tiempo pero que ahora es la fundación sobre la cual se erigen nuestras vidas.

Jesús exhorta a sus discípulos y a todos nosotros a que tengamos fe en él. Ha regresado a su hogar celestial para prepararnos un lugar. “En la casa de Mi Padre hay muchas moradas” (Jn 14:2), afirma Jesús.

“Si no fuera así, se lo hubiera dicho; porque voy a preparar un lugar para ustedes. Y si me voy y les preparo un lugar, vendré otra vez y los tomaré adonde Yo voy; para que donde Yo esté, allí estén ustedes también. Y conocen el camino adonde voy” (Jn 14:2-4). ¿Qué nos preocupa? Jesús nos cuida y lo hará independientemente de cuáles sean las dificultades que enfrentemos.

Estas son palabras reconfortantes en una época en la que existe gran

incertidumbre en nuestras vidas cotidianas. Puesto que somos humanos, nos preocupamos de muchas cosas: la salud, la seguridad económica, nuestros parientes y amigos que sufren y, por encima de todo, tememos a lo desconocido.

Jesús nos dice que “en la casa de Mi Padre hay muchas moradas” (Jn 14:2). Esta no es sencillamente una descripción de lo que es el cielo sino la forma de Jesús de decirnos que el lugar que nos ha preparado atenderá nuestras necesidades individuales y que no debemos preocuparnos. Si depositamos nuestra confianza en Jesucristo, la piedra angular, él se convertirá en la fundación de vidas plenas y felices, tanto ahora como en la eternidad.

Santo Tomás, el discípulo que siempre expresaba dudas, le dijo a Jesús: “Señor, si no sabemos adónde vas, ¿cómo vamos a conocer el camino?” (Jn 14:5) y la respuesta de Jesús es de vital importancia para Tomás y para todos nosotros: “Yo soy el camino, la verdad y la vida; nadie viene al Padre sino por Mí. Si ustedes me hubieran conocido, también hubieran conocido a Mi Padre; desde ahora lo conocen y lo han visto” (Jn 14:6-7). En la medida en que conozcamos a Jesús y nos

mantengamos cerca de él, habremos visto al Padre y no tendremos razón para temer a nada.

El papa Francisco nos dice que Jesús es el rostro del Padre. Cuando encontramos a Jesucristo resucitado, vemos a Dios. “No se turbe su corazón” (Jn 14:1), nos dice Jesús. Estamos en las manos de Dios y en Su casa hay un lugar para cada uno de nosotros; pero una vez más, debido a nuestra debilidad humana, tardamos en creer. “¿No crees que Yo estoy en el Padre y el Padre en Mí?” (Jn 14:10), nos pregunta Jesús. “Las palabras que Yo les digo, no las hablo por Mi propia cuenta, sino que el Padre que mora en Mí es el que hace las obras. Créame que Yo estoy en el Padre y el Padre en Mí; y si no, crean por las obras mismas. En verdad les digo: el que cree en Mí, las obras que Yo hago, él las hará también; y aún mayores que estas hará, porque Yo voy al Padre” (Jn 14:10-12).

Jesús reconforta nuestros corazones turbados. Si nos mantenemos cerca de él y hacemos las buenas obras que nos pide, no habrá lugar para dudas o temores. Cristo, la piedra angular, es nuestra fundación firme, la razón de nuestra alegría pascual. †



# Amid increased need, St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry sees ‘display of community’

By Natalie Hoefler

Amid the stress of continuing to meet the needs of an ever-growing number of clients at the Indianapolis Society of St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry (SVdP), executive director Peter Zublar hones in on one incident.

“One lady walked up and was hoping for milk, but we’d run out,” he recalls.

“This other [client] was packing up items to go on his bike. He said, ‘You can have mine. I’m OK, and I probably have too much on my bike. You have a kid and you need it more than me.’

“That really stuck with me,” says Zublar.

It’s one example of generosity flowing both ways as the food pantry seeks to meet a nearly 25 percent increase in demand as businesses furloughed or fired workers after the state called for the closing of all but essential businesses in March to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

What had been a challenge to feed 3,000 households a week is now a struggle to feed nearly 4,000 households per week.

And with many of their volunteers falling into the high-risk category of contracting COVID-19, “every day is an adventure, because we don’t know who will show up each morning to volunteer,” says Zublar.

But he sees positive signs in the midst of the challenges. Like the man with the milk.

“The level of stress and anxiety everyone is under are just very great,” he says. “But there’s really a neat display of community that you see taking place on a daily basis.”

## ‘Instability in their financial situation’

The majority of the roughly 2,500 new people being served per week at the pantry are “people laid off work who have always been able to manage with income from

a job,” says Zublar. “Now there’s great instability in their financial situation.”

The food pantry has also taken on providing food for another demographic: those transitioning from living on the streets.

“We still deliver to about 360 to 370 homebound or disabled and elderly [people] three days a week,” Zublar notes.

“On top of that, during the COVID crisis we’re feeding about 250 individuals every day who live at Blue Triangle Apartments,” transitional housing for those previously homeless.

“What they’ve run into is a lot of smaller [food] pantries folks may have gone to near the apartments have closed down, and most of them can’t afford public transportation,” he says.

## ‘Move more people faster and safer’

To meet the needs of the increased number arriving at the SVdP Food Pantry for help due to the pandemic, the coordinators had to rethink the way the food pantry operates.

“We are a client-choice food pantry—we operate like a grocery store where people come in and choose items,” Zublar explains.

“Because of the need to move more people through in a faster and safer fashion,” he says, they developed two outdoor staging areas, one for those arriving by car and one for those coming by foot or on bike.

Under large tents, volunteers now place prepared boxes of non-perishable food items—plus milk and choices of produce—in car trunks and in baskets or luggage used by those walking or riding a bike.

Other safety measures are now in place as well. Volunteers must wear masks, and sanitation stations are set up inside and outside of pantry. Safe-



Volunteers place food in the trunk of a car on March 28 as part of the temporary drive-through process the Indianapolis Society of St. Vincent de Paul’s leadership devised for its Food Pantry to adapt to guidelines during the COVID-19 outbreak. (Submitted photo by SunShine Rucker)

distance lines mark the bike/walk waiting line outside and work areas inside the pantry.

“It’s hard sometimes because of the hustle and bustle, but we make every effort to keep everyone 6 feet apart,” Zublar says.

## ‘An uptick in non-traditional volunteers’

Whether it’s one of the food pantry’s three distribution days or not, the pantry still needs 40-50 volunteers every day, says Zublar.

“We have to fold and pre-package over 1,000 boxes every day we’re not open for distribution,” he says.

“To distribute food in a four-hour window requires people to bring food into pantry, stage outside, direct traffic, work at the tents to distribute the food, then bring all those items back in.”

Yet many of the those whom Zublar calls “traditional” volunteers, those in the high-risk category of contracting the coronavirus due to health conditions or age, “have had to scale back their volunteer time or not come at all until this passes,” he says.

But on a positive note, he says the food pantry has seen “a real uptick in non-traditional volunteers.”

“We have seen volunteers who are working from home now take a couple hours a day or week to help. Some bring their college-, high school- and middle school-age kids.

“Plus we’ve been very fortunate to have the [Indiana Army] National Guard consistently send out two teams of five to help with distributing, packing boxes—just whatever it takes,” Zublar notes. “They have been just fantastic.”

## ‘People are happy to see each other’

Still, there is the pressure on the SVdP staff and volunteers to meet the increased

demand. And there is the concern of those not used to worrying about feeding themselves or their families.

“We’re all under a lot of stress and anxiety,” says Zublar.

But rather than bring out the worst in people, he has seen the situation do the opposite.

“People are just happy to see each other and happy to receive or lend support,” he says. “In that sense, it’s a stress release. You see it from the volunteers’ point of view and from those in need, to get out and to interact with others.”

He notes how often clients thank the volunteers for their help, how grateful they are that the pantry has remained open.

## ‘Barely able to get us where we need to be’

The need for volunteer support is “huge,” says Zublar. But it is matched by the need for “funds to make this place operate,” he adds.

“We’ve been blessed to receive generous donations that come in daily. But it’s still barely able to get us where we need to be for the current need plus the new need. Food, tents, equipment—those are all costs.”

Every day, pandemic or no pandemic, “We rely on the generosity of neighbors and supporters, and that comes in the form of volunteers and donations,” Zublar says. “We literally won’t exist without that generosity.”

“And we need it now more than ever.”

*(The Indianapolis Society of St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry’s hours of distribution during the increased time of need are 8 a.m.-noon on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. For more information on how to volunteer or donate, go to [svdpindy.org](http://svdpindy.org).) †*



Members of the Indiana Army National Guard assist loading cars with food on March 28 at the Indianapolis Society of St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry. (Submitted photo by SunShine Rucker)

## Some of the programs feeding central and southern Indiana

Compiled by Natalie Hoefler

Below is a partial list of parishes that shared information with *The Criterion* on new or continued programs to feed the hungry in this time of increased need during the COVID-19 outbreak. More listings will follow in the May 15 and 22 issues.

- St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County joined with Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville to donate food to St. Elizabeth Catholic Charities in New Albany, which is providing all meals to residents in its three shelter programs. Normally, food is the responsibility of the residents.

- The Knights of Columbus of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Franklin recently cooked enough fish, French fries and macaroni and cheese for 220 free meals served at Richard’s Brick Oven Pizza, also in Franklin. The restaurant is owned by St. Rose of Lima parishioner Richard Goss, who, with the help of other local groups and restaurants during this time of need, is serving more than 200 free meals from 6-7 p.m. every day to those in need.

- St. Monica School in Indianapolis is providing free breakfast and lunch to about 80 children ages 17 and younger Monday-Friday while its school is closed.

- St. John the Baptist Parish in Osgood and St. Maurice Parish in Napoleon donate to the Batesville Area Ministerial Association, which operates the Batesville Food Pantry.

- The Our Lady of the Greenwood Food Pantry in Greenwood, run in partnership with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, continues to serve more than 200 families a week, and during the coronavirus is also partnering with Oak Street Health to serve 20 additional families per week; picking up food donations from eight restaurants in the local area with the help of the local Knight of Columbus Council; and joined the Gleaners Mobile Pantry and the Indiana Army National Guard one week to serve more than 250 additional families.

- St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute continues offering its soup kitchen Mon.-Fri. from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., with a recent increase from 3,600 people per month to 5,750 people in April. †

## HUNGER

continued from page 1

Starting this week, *The Criterion* will run a three-part series of articles. They will tell the story of just three of the parishes and Catholic organizations in central and southern Indiana that are heeding Christ’s call to feed the hungry as the need reaches staggering proportions due to the pandemic.

This week’s article will focus on the Indianapolis Society of St. Vincent de Paul’s Food Pantry, which has seen a nearly 25 percent spike in clients. (See article above.)

The other upcoming articles will look at a new effort supported by Deacon Cord and St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour, and Martin’s Cloak, a ministry in Perry County supported by three parishes.

Along the way, we’ll list other parishes and organizations who have stepped up their efforts to feed the hungry in their communities.

Together they form another contingent of the “front line” of those saving lives, sharing mercy and offering hope during the coronavirus crisis. †



# Faith *Alive!*

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## Mothers can lean on strength of God to love children unconditionally

By Anna Jones

“Lord, give me strength.”

This has been my mantra of late, every morning when I start to hear the first whines and cries from my 17-month-old around 5:20 a.m.

“Lord, give me strength.”

My swollen body aches, my hips annoyed at the extra strain of a pregnant-again belly. Slowly, I find a way to roll over and push out of bed to start the day.

“Lord, give me strength.”

It’s the prayer I pray at 2 a.m. when my teething toddler can’t sleep and needs to snuggle on my shoulder. Not Daddy’s ... just mine.

I always said I admired the strength of mothers before I was blessed with my firstborn. I knew that motherhood was going to be hard work, that it must take a special kind of energy to run around after little humans and also manage to somehow take care of yourself.

And then, after the “rugrats” become self-sufficient, to be able to have the stability to stand by and let them grow into themselves and one day become adults.

The Book of Proverbs says, “She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come” (Prv 31:25).

I have been blessed to witness this type of resilience in my own mother. While I don’t remember much about those early years of chasing my siblings and me around, I do know what a heart swollen with pride looks like as a mom watches her child accept a diploma, walk down the aisle or hold her firstborn.

My mother—boxes of tissues in hand—once drove overnight from Chicago to New York so she wouldn’t miss either graduation of me or my brother who happened to be receiving degrees the same weekend.

To reference Proverbs above, it’s been six years and while she’s laughed about other memories, I’m not sure she’s at the laughing stage yet for the graduation debacle.



A mother comforts her infant daughter at home. Mother’s Day this year is on May 10. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

It wasn’t until after Brendan was born that I came to fully recognize how much that motherly strength came from God. Perhaps it’s because, as mothers, we get to experience a God-like love for our children. God loves us, each and every one, for who we are.

He accepts our faults, celebrates our successes and is there to meet us when we fail. I know that the same goes for me and my two children, and any other children with whom I may be blessed. I will always love them unconditionally, as

God has and always will love me.

Praying for strength each day may sound like a pathetic plea for help. But it’s where I have found my spiritual life to be most days.

I admit at times in the last year and a half I’ve been so wrapped up in life—in overnight nursing sessions, in endless laundry, meal planning, diaper bags—that I have not turned to God for more than just to simply ask for a little boost to help me survive the day.

Before motherhood, my prayer life certainly looked different. It was a bit

more outwardly focused and more often went beyond myself and the care of my son. Now that I have a mobile child, I can’t say that I’m always as focused during Sunday Mass as I used to be or should be.

The Book of Deuteronomy says, “Be on your guard and be very careful not to forget the things your own eyes have seen, nor let them slip from your heart as long as you live, but make them known to your children” (Dt 4:9).

Despite the struggles and times when I plead for strength, there are even more moments when I can smile and laugh in awe and wonder at the life God has created for me.

In the early weeks of motherhood, when Brendan slept almost all the time, daily Mass was a refuge. I could go and sit in the chapel with a small babe sleeping soundly on my chest and pray. I could close my eyes, silently cry and marvel at this little life God had blessed me with.

That marveling continues, though usually there are fewer tears involved. Recently, I came home late from work and heard a commotion in our basement. I went downstairs and found my husband lifting weights while my son danced along to the workout music.

It was one of the most beautiful and happy moments of my marriage. I just sat and watched for a few minutes as the two of them enjoyed their evening together in our warm and comfortable home.

This, by the way, is what I need all that strength for. So I can, as Deuteronomy says, teach my children about the wonders of God’s love. So, I can teach them to relish even in the small moments of life and appreciate that they are all gifts from God.

Every time we laugh together or go for a walk in the woods or find ourselves dancing in the basement, these are treasured memories and gifts. I just hope God keeps granting me the strength to be able to enjoy them too.

(Anna Jones is a freelance writer.) †



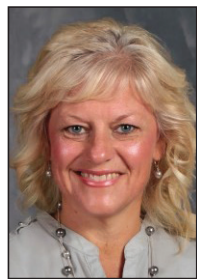
Maureen Antwan is pictured with her sons, Anthony, left, and Kris, at Mar Abraham Chaldean Catholic Church in Scottsdale, Ariz., on March 26, 2017. Kris was 4 when the family fled Iraq because of war and persecution. Anthony was born in Jordan, where the family first sought refuge. God gives mothers strength to care for their children in all their challenges. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)



Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

## Thank a teacher for making your future possible

I remember the moment my vocation in life took shape. I was seated in Mrs. Dumont's sixth-grade English class, and she announced she would be reading a chapter book to us—a detective novel written by a local author. The mystery unraveled as she read one chapter at the culmination of each week—no doubt a reward for good behavior. I sat spellbound each week as more and more of the story unfolded.



Inspired by her recitation of this story, I began to read more on my own. Unfortunately, it wasn't a habit up to that point. Mrs. Dumont also instilled in me a passion for writing, especially creative writing. I found that I had a gift for storytelling, and she heartily encouraged my efforts. These two endeavors went hand in hand. The more I read, the more my vocabulary increased and the better a writer I became.

In high school, I continued writing by serving for four years on the high school newspaper and yearbook staff. Sister Benedicta Mahoney was our newspaper and yearbook advisor. She further encouraged my talent and turned my direction toward pursuing journalism. I studied communication arts in college, concentrating in journalism and public

relations, while also serving another four years on a newspaper staff. Countless professors continued in the process of honing my skills.

I was always going to become a journalist, but following college, I found I was burned out on the fast pace of producing a newspaper. Writing was still important to me, but I decided to find another avenue to use my skill. I stumbled into the world of educational institutional advancement (otherwise known as development). I remember my father being perplexed at my about-face, expressing, "What are you going to do with your communications degree then? PR for God?" Well, as a matter of fact, Dad, yes.

Over the past 30 years, I have held communications and fundraising positions at a Catholic high school, two Catholic universities, several Catholic parishes and elementary schools. Now I work for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. I have found my writing and storytelling ability to be an asset in every position. What's more, I have found throughout my career that we all owe our vocations and careers to teachers.

The best of teachers identify, ignite and fan the flames of a student's passion. Every teacher provides the foundation and tools their students need to succeed in the future.

This month, my youngest son, Ben, will graduate from high school where he has, for the past four years, participated in his school's architecture drafting program. I can see how he too has been held

spellbound by the influence of a teacher.

Mr. Ratliff has imparted not only his architectural knowledge and experience, he has instilled a love for the work. There is no other subject for which Ben would stay after school for hours on end to complete an assignment. And now as he embarks on his college education, there is no other career choice for him (he wouldn't even enter a second or third choice of majors on his college applications).

Graduation season is typically a time when we think about and/or recognize teachers for their contributions to our graduates. That gratitude is only heightened in this strange time of COVID-19 social distancing. I imagine we have all seen examples in the news or on social media of extraordinary efforts by teachers from quickly converting to online education, to finding creative ways to teach under challenging circumstances, to organizing parades by student houses. I am continually amazed by and grateful for folks who choose teaching as their vocation.

One of my favorite bumper sticker phrases is, "If you can read this, thank a teacher."

So, Mrs. Dumont, Sister Benedicta, Mr. Ratliff, and each and every teacher who has influenced my family and me, thank you for making our futures possible.

*(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of mission advancement for Archdiocesan Education Initiatives.) †*

Twenty Something/

Christina Capecci

## 'Keep that hope machine running strong'

It started with the Italians, whose arias rose from the balconies. They were on lockdown, but their voices rang out down



empty moonlit streets. Ballads, the national anthem, improvised ditties over the barking of dogs.

Cellphone footage of the singing went viral, offering hope amid the horror.

"Italians are like their opera characters:

when they suffer, they sing instead of crying," one YouTube viewer quipped.

As the coronavirus traveled the globe, pictures of other music makers emerged. A man playing an accordion on his balcony in Hungary. A husband-wife duet on their balcony in Brazil, breathing their prayers for humanity through a flute and a bassoon—woodwinds for the weary. In New York City, a group of nuns in habits singing "Lean On Me," a brunette on the end clanging two spoons in syncopation.

"Spoon Nun's on my apocalypse team," one New Yorker tweeted.

In the face of a pandemic, people of every color and creed have responded the same way: by adding to the beauty. They perched teddy bears in windows, hung Christmas lights and colored driveways. They drew images that felt like an antidote to all the masks and morgues: hearts, butterflies, rainbows. They tried to tilt the scales of the universe with tempera paint and sidewalk chalk.

Mo Willems, creator of the award-winning *Elephant & Piggie* series of children's books, offered Lunch Doodles, free online drawing lessons for kids in quarantine.

"You might be isolated, but you're not alone," Mo wrote. "You are an art maker. Let's make some together."

Meanwhile, The Okee Dokee Brothers, a family-friendly, Grammy-winning bluegrass duo, released an album early to help put a spring into social distancing. The first track, "Hope Machine," was written a year ago, but feels tailored to our strange new reality: "Plan what you can plan, dance when you can-can. ... Keep that hope machine running strong."

"Songs go where they are needed," said guitarist Joe Mailander. "Families need a hopeful message about getting up and trying to find some light right now."

Quarantine has been a productive time for the award-winning artist Brother Mickey O'Neill McGrath, a 63-year-old Oblate of St. Francis de Sales who has been drawing in the second-story studio of a rowhouse in Camden, N.J.

"I haven't spent so much time here in years," he said.

The sought-after speaker had developed the habit of drawing a faith-based coloring page and sharing it in his e-newsletter once a week. But the pandemic has compelled him to do so on a daily basis.

The response has been overwhelming. Newsletter subscribers say it is calming to color each image and reflect on its meaning. "You're keeping me sane," one woman told the religious.

Brother Mickey understands the impact of an artistic ministry. "When we're in the presence of beauty, we're in the presence of God, so we pray best before beauty," he said. "It goes to a place deeper than words."

The Catholic Church has always led with beauty, drawing people in by building the world's greatest cathedrals, using gold leaf and stained glass to convey majesty and mystery. Historically, we were patrons of the arts and teachers of the faith—two functions that were intricately connected. The coronavirus has

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Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

## Month of May is time to share family's healing journey

Each year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition, as one in five U.S. adults will experience a mental health concern in their lifetime. However, the impact of mental health issues is also felt by family and friends of those who suffer:



Throughout May, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Catholic Charities and other participants across the country are raising awareness for mental health. Below is a story of a young family—whose names have been changed—who needed help after a life-changing event.

Little Mia giggled in delight watching her sundress twirl around her legs on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. As she spun in circles on the café sidewalk, her mother told the story of how they got to this spot, and how far they've come on their journey toward healing.

It came like a lightning bolt from nowhere, the stroke

that nearly killed Mia's dad and Jessica's love of a lifetime, Matthew, in April of 2019. Mia was there when it happened. She brought her daddy a trash can when he said he was feeling sick. Jessica was at work at her new job, not knowing that she had a cell phone full of missed texts and calls.

Matt survived and is making great progress. But their old lives, the way things used to be, ended that day to be replaced by months in an ICU, emergency surgeries, scary procedures, a blur of white coats, rehabilitation and care plans.

"It's been a long road," said Jessica as she watched her daughter play. Mia worked with a Catholic Charities therapist who utilized play therapy.

Play therapy is a developmentally appropriate therapeutic service provided by a trained mental health professional. Children have not yet developed the language or mental skills to talk about what impacts them, so play is their language! Therapy is therefore conducted through play itself as the therapist helps a child to

See BETHURAM, page 10

Our Global Family/Carolyn Woo

## For front-line workers, 'thank you' is currently not enough

One of my routines in the early pandemic lockdown was to shop at a big box retailer at 6 a.m. Along with food, a key purchase was fabric and supplies that allowed me to make face masks with my very rudimentary sewing skills.



Through the weeks, I struck up rapport with the fabric lady Lilly (not her real name) and probed a bit about her situation and concerns. Hesitantly, she opened up.

Lilly did not yet have a mask then, and customers did not always respect social distancing guidelines. She volunteered for extra work because her husband could no longer work because he suffered a stroke. Lilly was quite concerned about bringing the coronavirus home.

Going to work was a daily worry. Exhausted, Lilly contemplated vacation days, but did not want to deplete precious days off if disaster would hit later.

Lilly's employment placed her in a slightly better-protected position than many essential workers. She at least has a full-time position that comes with benefits including vacation and insurance. Many essential workers, particularly those in the lower wage

brackets, are not so well protected.

Of the 30-plus million workers in "front-line industries" (grocery, convenience and drugstores, public transit, trucking, warehouse and postal service, building cleaning services, health care, child care and social services), one out of four holds only part-time status.

Compensation of 30 percent of all front-line workers falls into the near-poor (less than twice poverty level wages) and poverty categories. Eleven percent do not receive health insurance. Of these industries, building and cleaning services scored the lowest with 37 percent in part-time employment, 58 percent earning near-poor and poverty wages and 29 percent without insurance. These individuals carry the responsibility of decontaminating our facilities.

COVID-19 presents a whole different set and level of risks and hardships to these workers: their own infection, increased exposure of family members, insufficient and subpar protective equipment, need for child care as schools are no longer physically open.

Policy recommendations for protection and fairness have called for proper safety standards relating to infectious diseases, additional or hazard pay, paid medical leave, access to free health care and testing, child care subsidies, accountability for implementation and access to unions

to have a voice toward the design and enactment of these provisions.

I am sure all of us have made extra efforts to thank our front-line workers. But it is not enough to just say "thank you." In gratitude, fairness and obligation to these workers who take the risks to protect us and enable us to do what we do, our response must be vocal and active.

We must express our outrage when workers are terminated for speaking out on hazardous working conditions and making demands for their well-being. We can call our elected representatives to highlight the priority and necessity of these policies and their rightful claim on the almost \$3 trillion rescue package. We can support groups that advocate for the workers. The placards we hold can say "protect our workers" in addition to "thank you."

Without such action, we are accountable to James as he questions, "If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,' but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it?" (Jas 2:15-16)

*(Carolyn Woo is distinguished president's fellow for global development at Purdue University and served as the CEO and president of Catholic Relief Services from 2012 to 2016.) †*



Fifth Sunday of Easter/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, May 10, 2020

- Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7
- 1 Peter 2:4-9
- John 14:1-12

The Acts of the Apostles once more is the source of the first reading for Mass this weekend. The early chapters of Acts marvelously reveal to us the lives led by the early Christians. In this glimpse into events so long ago, the Apostles hold an obviously critical place. And, among them, St. Peter was at the center.

The Apostles led the early Church. The early Christians recognized their leadership and listened to them. Indeed, reverence for the Apostles was so deep that the people placed their possessions at the Apostles' feet, allowing them to control even the material assets of the Church's faithful.

Peter was the leader whom the Apostles and the people acknowledged.

In Acts, the early Church was situated in Jerusalem. Although the very heart of Jewish life and a city extraordinarily unique in meaning for Jews, Jerusalem was not Corinth or Antioch. It most certainly was not Rome. In the total scheme of things in Roman culture, it was not a very important city.

Actually, the Romans maintained as their capital for Palestine the city of Caesarea, a seaport on the Mediterranean Sea. (The ruins of this city now are in the suburbs of modern Tel Aviv. It is interesting, incidentally, that the only relic of the administration of Pontius Pilate as governor, aside from mention in the Gospels, is a stone carved with his name, a stone discovered in the ruins of Caesarea.)

The vast Roman empire, under one system of laws, allowed for movement from place to place. Thus, nationalities mixed. So, Acts refers to Jews, but also to "Greeks" as Jews at the time called foreigners.

Care of the needy and widows was urgent. The Romans had no social safety net as modern societies have now. The Apostles responded to this fact by reminding Christians that their task was to both teach the Gospel and to care for the needy. Such was the example of Jesus.

The Apostles chose seven holy men to be deacons to help serve those in need. Their action revealed not just a move to organize the Christian community, but it showed that the Apostles had the right to innovate in the name of Jesus.

First Peter provides the second reading, centering Jesus as essential in salvation. The reading urges Christians to be true to Jesus.

St. John's Gospel supplies the last lesson that recalls the Lord's discourse with the Apostles, alerting them as to what they should expect in the future.

Trouble will come, but Jesus was with them, "the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6).

## Reflection

Almost a month has passed since Easter. For weeks, the Church joyfully has told us of the resurrection. He lives! Alleluia!

Before long, the season will end. We will return to life in 2020, with all its burdens and uncertainty, especially in economics and physical health.

The Church tells us not to lose heart. Jesus still is with us. He is our rock and our shield. He lives in the Church, the same as the community of the faithful described in Acts.

Applying Acts to the present is most interesting. Which Christian community truly resembles the gathering of Christians in Jerusalem long ago, precisely in their reliance upon the Apostles with St. Peter at their head? Bluntly speaking, it is the Catholic Church.

This modern community must profoundly be dedicated to the Lord by caring for the sick and the needy. Actively loving others is no charming optional item for Christians. It is at the essence of the Gospel.

The Church tells us, as the Easter season concludes, that Christ is with us. He lives. We must draw ourselves into this community that the Lord created by replicating the faith and compassion of the Lord, in fact, not just as an ideal.

Being in the Church is infinitely more than joining a club. †



## Daily Readings

### Monday, May 11

Acts 14:5-18  
Psalm 115:1-4, 15-16  
John 14:21-26

### Tuesday, May 12

St. Nereus, martyr  
St. Achilleus, martyr  
St. Pancras, martyr  
Acts 14:19-28  
Psalm 145:10-13b, 21  
John 14:27-31a

### Wednesday, May 13

Our Lady of Fatima  
Acts 15:1-6  
Psalm 122:1-5  
John 15:1-8

### Thursday, May 14

St. Matthias, Apostle  
Acts 1:15-17, 20-26

Psalm 113:1-8  
John 15:9-17

### Friday, May 15

St. Isidore  
Acts 15:22-31  
Psalm 57:8-12  
John 15:12-17

### Saturday, May 16

Acts 16:1-10  
Psalm 100:1b-2, 3, 5  
John 15:18-21

### Sunday, May 17

Sixth Sunday of Easter  
Acts 8:5-8, 14-17  
Psalm 66:1-7, 16, 20  
1 Peter 3:15-18  
John 14:15-21

## Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

### Prayers can be offered to people not officially declared as saints

Q I have always had great admiration for Mother Angelica. Would it be wrong of me to talk to her and ask her prayers if she has not yet been declared blessed by the Church? (Arizona)



A Mother Angelica died in 2016 at the age of 92. In 1981, she founded the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) and turned it into a vast religious media operation, which today transmits programs to more than 200 million homes in nearly 150 countries.

At her death, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, then-president of the U.S. bishops' conference, praised Mother Angelica for spreading the Gospel of Jesus, saying that "like the best evangelists, she used the communications tools of her time to make this happen."

There are many who share our writer's confidence that Mother Angelica is now enjoying the peace of God's presence; in fact, just three days after her death, Pope Francis spoke to members of the EWTN staff in Rome and, pointing to the sky, said of Mother Angelica, "She is in heaven," although it seems clear that he was not intending to invoke and conclude the formal process for canonization by what he said.

In any case, as to whether it's OK for you to ask her prayers, I'd say that the answer is a resounding "Yes." It strikes me, too, that if you could only pray to canonized saints, there might never be any saints—since it takes miracles, gained through the prayers of the faithful, for canonization to occur.

The vast majority of those who make it into heaven will never, of course, be formally canonized by the Church, but there are people we have all known—including family members—who have

lived good lives and who, we are quite sure, now enjoy the company of the Lord in heaven.

I think about some of these people often, talk with them and pray for their help. But to be on the safe side, I continue to pray "for" them as well as "to" them—just in case they still need a boost!

Q When I was going through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults to be received into the Church, the presenter said that there are some sins that can be absolved only by the pope. I didn't have the presence of mind at the time to ask, but now I am wondering: What sort of sins are they? (Arkansas)

A There are, in fact, certain sins that are also crimes in the Church—named specifically in the Church's Code of Canon Law—that are so egregious they can be pardoned only by the pope. Probably the reason you might not know what they are is that (thankfully) these offenses do not happen very often.

Some examples are: a person who throws away, or otherwise desecrates, the consecrated bread or wine of the Eucharist; a priest who breaks the seal of confession by revealing the nature of the sin and the identity of the person who confessed it; someone who uses physical force against the pope; or, a priest who has sex with a penitent and then offers that penitent sacramental absolution for that very sin.

It should be noted that if a penitent were in danger of death, any priest could absolve that person from any sin, including those listed above. This would apply even if that priest had been deprived of his faculties to hear confessions.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at [askfatherdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:askfatherdoyle@gmail.com) and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †

## My Journey to God

### Be Bold

By Sandy Bierly

It has been told  
That we must be bold  
To share the Good News  
That Jesus has risen from the dead.

He became a man,  
To save us from sin,  
So that we can live  
Forever in Heaven with him.

Let us be bold  
And share the Good News,  
That Jesus loves us,  
And this love will never end.

(Sandy Bierly is a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany. Photo: A stained-glass window features the Resurrection of Christ on March 26, 2016, at St. Paul Church in Wilmington, Del.)

(CNS photo/Octavio Duran)



## Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to [nhoefer@archindy.org](mailto:nhoefer@archindy.org) or by mail to "My Journey to God," The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. †



# Laudato Si' at five: Dioceses embrace pope's call for care of the Earth

CLEVELAND (CNS)—The Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is “greening.”

So are the dioceses of Stockton, Calif.; Joliet, Ill.; and others across the United States.

Participants in diocesan environmental ministries credit Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical, “*Laudato Si'*,” on Care for Our Common Home,” for raising awareness and motivating Catholics and others to act in countless ways to protect creation.

“The pope's encyclical lays out the scene very well and is something we can have an impact with,” said John Mundell, an environmental consultant and a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis, who is a leader in the archdiocese's creation care ministry.



John Mundell

“Besides the environment being part of our faith, there's a resurrection [in the encyclical] of some of the core values we should have. It is living the Gospel, living simply, loving your neighbor. It's all part of Catholic social teaching.

That's the core,” he told Catholic News Service (CNS) as the encyclical's fifth anniversary neared.

A weeklong Church-wide observance is planned to mark Pope Francis' signing of the encyclical on May 24, 2015. *Laudato Si'* Week, set for May 16-24, will include a number of online workshops. The week, sponsored by the Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development, ends with a day of prayer on May 24, a Sunday, at noon local time.

“It's a time for Catholics around the world to pray, reflect and prepare to build a better world together,” said Anna Wagner, director of network engagement for the Global Catholic Climate Movement, which is working with RENOVA+, an Argentine Catholic organization promoting the encyclical, to facilitate the week with the dicastery.

A website—[laudatosiweek.org](http://laudatosiweek.org)—includes a video message from the pope and other resources for observing the week.

Diocesan environmental ministries have been key to bringing the encyclical's core messages to the faithful.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis already was forming a creation care commission as the encyclical was being finalized at the Vatican. Mundell said a core group of people, including attorney Rosemary Spalding, Benedictine Sister Sheila Fitzpatrick, and Andy Pike and Sharon Horvath, who led a creation care ministry at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis, were eager to move forward once the pope's landmark document was released.

Early work included quarterly articles in *The Criterion*, the archdiocesan newspaper, Lenten programs, educational sessions during the National Catholic Youth Conference and social media posts. But the commission wanted to do more.

“We couldn't just be satisfied with ‘Let's just change a few light bulbs in the church,’ but actually how are we going to undergo this ecological conversion the pope asks for in ‘*Laudato Si'*,’” Mundell explained.

In 2018, the commission presented a more thorough action plan for the ministry to Archbishop Charles C. Thompson. He embraced it, allowing commission members to move into new programming last year, Mundell said.

That effort focused on four parishes and one high school. It led educational workshops about Catholic social teaching and climate science, coordinated energy audits in collaboration with the local electricity utility company and guided self-assessments of water usage, waste, landscaping and transportation to see where improvements could be made.

The ministry also introduced a five-week Season of Creation program from Sept. 1 to Oct. 4. The program included a week-by-week guide with daily actions, reflections and background science information, weekly messages from Archbishop Thompson, the planting of 200 trees by 12 parishes, the launch of a new website at [www.OurCommonHome.org](http://www.OurCommonHome.org), parish bulletin information and joining a community organization to show environment-themed films.

The work is “part of the kind of Church we want to build,” Mundell said as awareness grew of pragmatic and faith-based environmentally friendly practices that can be taken in parish and personal life.

The novel coronavirus pandemic, however, has slowed progress in raising awareness of the encyclical and expanding parish environmental action. Even so, Mundell remains optimistic.

“What we're getting now is people are getting this visceral understanding of what it means to live at home and live without things and change their lifestyle a bit,” he said.

Despite the stay-at-home orders and social-distancing guidelines around the world, the pandemic has not halted plans to celebrate the encyclical's anniversary.

*Laudato Si'* Week is perhaps the highest-profile Church-sponsored event. The week “launches a yearlong journey of transformation, as we grow through the crisis of the current moment by praying, reflecting and preparing together for a better world to come tomorrow,” the dicastery said.

The May 24 day of prayer will allow Catholics around the globe to be united in spirit, said Wagner of the Global Catholic Climate Movement. “That's a really special opportunity to pray together for a more just future, to pray for our shared home and be united in a wave of prayer,” she said.

The daily online workshops will discuss ecological spirituality, sustainability and social justice advocacy.

“We hope this moment can be a time for reflection and remembering what's important, which is our humanity and our common home, and that we can be a part of creating a more just future and creating more care for our common home coming out of *Laudato Si'* Week.”

Joining the effort is the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the Catholic Climate Covenant.

Dan Misleh, the covenant's executive director, told CNS the week offers people of faith a time to reflect on the gift of the Earth “and realize it is under threat.” The world's response to the pandemic also can show the way forward on addressing climate change, he said.

“It is also a global crisis,” Misleh said of climate change. “The world is going to have to get its act together to address it. . . . The challenge for the Church and other people of faith is to remember that these crises are not separate. We still have people who are, particularly in poor countries, looking for a better life. This virus made their lives a whole lot more tenuous. We have to be mindful of that.”

The USCCB's environmental justice program has developed a variety of resources, including a prayer, for ongoing engagement with the encyclical. Materials are online at [bit.ly/2RYBXU1](http://bit.ly/2RYBXU1) (case sensitive).

Environmental ministry related to the pope's



Children plant trees on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi in October 2019 in Indianapolis. Dioceses and other organizations around the world are planning to mark the fifth anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical on care for creation with online events and prayers during *Laudato Si'* Week on May 16-24. (CNS photo/Archdiocese of Indianapolis Creation Care Commission)

encyclical has taken many forms.

The environmental justice program in the Diocese of Stockton, Calif., began in 2005. Advocacy on public policy, a component of the encyclical, has taken on an increasingly important role in the ministry, said Jonathan Pruitt, environmental justice program coordinator for the diocese.

“We're pretty much bringing the Catholic perspective to these policies and bringing Catholic parishioners to the table,” he explained. “We're understanding we can get involved in this sort of thing. We've been able to see that Catholics are able to speak in this case, that environmental justice is not a partisan issue. It involves transparency for all. It involves inclusion of everyone.”

Pruitt and Veronica Tovar, program manager for the diocesan ministry, also have involved students at schools in advocacy. Tovar said emphasis has been on making connections between a simple practice such as recycling to setting policies that, for example, reduce the need to recycle in the first place through state laws and regulations that require wider availability of reusable containers.

Since October, Kayla Jacobs, director of programs for the *Laudato Si'* ministry in the Diocese of Joliet, Ill., has expanded environmental ministry to more parishes. Previously she worked in the diocesan justice and peace ministry, but when funding became available specifically to address environmental concerns, she jumped at the opportunity.

Jacobs has visited parishes and schools to share the pope's encyclical. She has helped expand recycling programs and introduced energy audits so entities can understand where to conserve on energy consumption. Her goal is to build parish-based environment committees to carry on the work.

“The response has been one of excitement,” Jacobs said. “People have been really excited about this.”

Such outreach, with the encyclical as a building block, is what the Church is called to in unsettling times, said Mundell in the Indianapolis Archdiocese.

“We're trying to show,” he said, “that this work is not a separate thing from our faith.”

(For more information about the Creation Care Commission of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit [ourcommonhome.org](http://ourcommonhome.org).) †

## Online Lay Ministry Formation

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

- Earn certificate in Lay Ministry
- Complete 12 courses online with ND STEP program
- CDU offers classes on Catechism of the Catholic Church
- 20% discount for all employees, volunteers, and parishioners

For more information, please log on to [www.archindy.org/layministry](http://www.archindy.org/layministry)



## BETHURAM

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address and resolve their concerns.

Jessica said, “I was so focused on my inner turmoil that I didn't really catch on right away that she [Mia] was hurting, too. Play Therapy was a tremendous help.”

During a period of nine months, Catholic Charities addressed Mia's mental health challenges. A therapist met weekly with Jessica and Mia and provided counseling to the young family, helping with Mia's behavior issues and assisting Jessica on what to be aware of and how to best address them. The counseling alleviated guilt and provided guidance for how to keep the family together.

Before the stroke, they were a two-income family just trying to stay healthy waiting for Jessica's benefits at her new job to kick in. After the stroke, Matt was unable to work. With all her new caretaking responsibilities, Jessica had to leave her job, too. Since Catholic Charities

provides comprehensive services, they received the help they needed.

Matt is much more independent now, and Jessica has been able to go back to work. With the skills gained in her work with the Catholic Charities therapist, Jessica has been empowered to lead her family to continued growth and healing. And little Mia is eagerly looking forward to starting kindergarten this fall.

Catholic Charities has enlightened Jessica's way on this “long road” her family travels together. Despair has been replaced with hope. Sadness and anger have been quieted and tamed, making way for laughter and joy. Feelings of guilt and blame have been cleared away making room for new family memories—catching lightning bugs with dad, swimming at grandma's, dreaming new dreams—going faithfully forward to where the road leads.

(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. E-mail him at [dbethuram@archindy.org](mailto:dbethuram@archindy.org).) †

## CAPECCHI

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given that old approach new meaning.

Pope Francis expressed it on Palm Sunday, offering a message for Holy Week that continues to resonate: “This is what we need today: the creativity of love.”

The words struck Brother Mickey, who lettered them in neon green against a crimson red, drawing palm branches in the center.

“It's a human drive to create and to bring joy,” he said. “That's how I see art. We're co-creating with God.”

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †

## REPORT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOW

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

- 1 Ethics Point Confidential, Online Reporting**  
[www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com](http://www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com) or 888-393-6810
- 2 Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator**  
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410  
**317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548**  
[carlahill@archindy.org](mailto:carlahill@archindy.org)



## FAITH

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workweek of caring for people who are HIV-positive.

"This is someone alone and dying and suffering. And that is the tragedy of this crisis. Like all the other nurses, you're trying to let them know that someone is there who cares."

Maguire was at the man's bedside a few nights later when he died, giving him morphine to calm him and adding her prayers to those of the patient care technician who was also caring for him.

"He had such a peaceful death," says the longtime former member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. "It was sad, but it was also so wonderful."

Those same words—sad and wonderful—also fit the story of Maguire's experiences in the epicenter of the coronavirus crisis in the United States.

It's also the story of why the 2007 graduate of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis and the 2011 graduate of Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Ind., has chosen to help care for people whose lives are, and have been, threatened by two of the worst pandemics in modern history—the coronavirus and HIV/AIDS pandemics.

### Living her Catholic values

Maguire starts with the short answer as to why she volunteers in the COVID unit three nights a week while she also works five days a week helping and caring for people who are HIV-positive.

"My Catholic faith has instilled in me the value of service," she says. "I knew the nurses and patients were struggling, and I wanted to be there to help support them."

The longer answer takes her back to 2013-14 when she spent 10 months in the African country of Uganda, volunteering there as a nurse in a program run by the Sisters of Holy Cross.

"I did a lot of work in their HIV clinic," Maguire recalls about her time in that country that has been hit hard by the AIDS pandemic through the years. "That's where my passion started for working with HIV patients."

After she became a nurse practitioner, that passion eventually led her to relocate last year to New York City—a city that has a significant number of people who are HIV-positive, a

city whose department of health is considered a leader in HIV care.

"It's been great to be in a place that has the highest standard of HIV care," she says.

Working with HIV-positive patients in a clinic connected to Mount Sinai West, Maguire has found her 16 months there to be rewarding and challenging.

Another challenge has been added since the coronavirus began to overwhelm New York. During the lockdown there, she has been working to stay in touch with patients through video or phone visits.

"It's been difficult as many of our patients are older and/or of lower socioeconomic status. They may not own a phone or be able to use it.

"Our patients living with HIV have been very scared during this time as they have already lived through one deadly pandemic, and are immune-suppressed. Many of our patients have lost friends and family members to COVID-19."

Maguire says the clinic's mental health team has stepped up even more to provide "tremendous support" for patients during this time. She also felt the need to do more during the coronavirus crisis. So she signed up to volunteer on the hospital's COVID unit, which led to a haunting and humbling first shift.

### 'You just try to ease their fears'

"I was assigned to a unit where their nurse manager had just died the night before to COVID-19," she recalls. "The staff, which remarkably still showed up to work in those circumstances, held a moment of silence in honor of him.

"A staff member pulled me aside and told me about how their manager had showed kindness and compassion to her. This was a humbling night for me."

That first night, she distributed personal protective equipment to the staff. Now, she has an up-close view of the crisis on a COVID unit. She has witnessed the "remarkable" resilience, dedication and teamwork of her fellow health care workers. She has also seen their fatigue. Mostly, she has noticed the fear the patients have.

"The patients are very sick and have shared how horrible the virus has left them feeling," she says. "The patients frequently express fear that they will die, as many of their family members have died from COVID. Many of the patients are now on end-of-life or hospice care, and their family members are unable to visit them.



**'My faith has allowed me to see the goodness and beauty of humanity in the midst of such a highly politicized crisis. In every moment from the beginning, I've seen the kindness of people toward me—and the patients have been so thankful for our care.'**

*Anne Maguire*

"A patient the other night had survived lung cancer, a limb amputation and sepsis. He shared with me, 'Now I have this virus. I've never felt so miserable.'

"An elderly Hispanic woman was admitted. When I was finally able to get a staff member to translate for me, she was saying, 'I'm dying.'

"Fear is what you see across the board. They're scared. You just try to ease their fears and provide some empathy and compassion."

She strives to be that source of care and comfort on days that start with an 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. work shift, followed by a volunteer stint that extends from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m.

"Once I get there, it's great," she says about arriving on the COVID unit. "When I get home, it's hard to wind down. It's hard to get to sleep."

In such moments, her thoughts often turn to her large extended family in Indianapolis.

"It's been very difficult being away from my family during this time," says the daughter of Joe and Rita Maguire of Indianapolis, who are also members of St. John the Evangelist Parish. "I live alone, so the isolation has been difficult.

"I'm exhausted mentally and physically. I'm not scared of having COVID, as likely I've already been exposed. My biggest concern is that my family stays safe. What I think about most often is how long it will be until I can come home to Indianapolis to see my friends and family."

Right now, she doesn't anticipate that return until late summer at the earliest. In the meantime, she draws strength from the love she receives from her family and friends in Indianapolis and the support of the family she is building in New York.

### 'There are moments of hope'

"My co-workers have been extremely supportive, which has been such a blessing," she says. "My HIV patients

have sent so many messages with kind words. And every visit I have with a patient, they have asked how I am doing, and thank me for working."

She has also received extra doses of hope and faith at just the right times.

"There are moments of hope when you see patients go home from the hospital," she says. "A doctor came to the unit to thank the nurses for caring for him. He had been hospitalized at the beginning of the crisis, and was back to work."

There was also the uplifting interaction she had with one of her HIV-positive patients who had been infected with the coronavirus.

"He lived alone and was understandably very scared. I guided him through the illness with daily video or telephone visits. He is well now, and I saw him in clinic last week. He was so grateful to be alive, and appreciative of his care."

Another special moment came on Easter Sunday morning when she felt especially connected to her parents. As Father Rick Nagel celebrated a livestream Mass from St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis, she watched from New York, knowing that her parents were watching from their home in Indianapolis.

"That was very comforting, especially as I had just finished a night shift at the hospital."

She says she has drawn closer to God during this crisis. She has also relied upon her faith.

"My faith has allowed me to see the goodness and beauty of humanity in the midst of such a highly politicized crisis," she says. "In every moment from the beginning, I've seen the kindness of people toward me—and the patients have been so thankful for our care.

"Every interaction I've had with people has been good. It's just been wonderful." †

## Bishops urge closer look at COVID deaths in black communities

WASHINGTON (CNS)—A group of U.S. bishops expressed sorrow over disparities in infection and death rates among African-Americans in U.S. communities.

"Our hearts are wounded for the many souls mourned as African-American communities across the nation are being disproportionately infected with and dying from the virus that causes COVID-19. We raise our voices to urge state and national leaders to examine the generational and systemic structural conditions that make the new coronavirus especially deadly to African-American communities," said the statement issued on May 4.

The statement, on behalf of four U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committees, was issued by Bishop Shelton J. Fabre of Houma-Thibodaux, chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism; Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Archbishop Nelson J. Perez of Philadelphia, chairman of the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church; and Bishop Joseph N. Perry, auxiliary bishop of Chicago, chairman of Subcommittee on African-American Affairs.

Though an accurate rate of infections and deaths among African-Americans at the national level is not yet clear, some communities are reporting high and alarming levels among their respective populations.

In St. Louis, in early April, for example, statistics showed that African-Americans accounted for 64 percent of coronavirus cases even though blacks make up 45 percent of the population. At around the same time in New York, African-Americans were 28 percent of deaths, although they're 22 percent of the population, and in the District of Columbia, African-Americans account for almost half of the COVID-19 cases and 79 percent of deaths, according to May 4 figures. But some say it's hard to get an accurate picture of the situation among ethnic communities because some members may be dying at home or not seeking health care for the disease for a variety of reasons.

Figures from the nation's capital for the same date also showed high rates among its Latino population, saying they account for 19 percent of Washington's total COVID-19 cases though they're only 9.1 percent of the population mirroring similar figures in other parts of the U.S. †

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# Bishops around country consecrate U.S. to Mary amid COVID-19 pandemic

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Bishops throughout the United States reconsecrated the country to Mary as the nation continues to struggle in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

Bishops in Canada also used May 1 to rededicate their country to the Blessed Mother.

Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S.



Archbishop Jose H. Gomez

in Los Angeles was livestreamed on Facebook, YouTube and the websites of the Los Angeles Archdiocese and the USCCB.

Alternating between English and Spanish, Archbishop Gomez said: "In this difficult time, we turn to the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of the Church. She intercedes with her Son for all are affected in this way by the pandemic. ... We implore her maternal care for her children."

Archbishop Gomez noted Mary's history in the United States. "The first missionaries came to this country under the mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Later, the bishops consecrated her as patroness of the United States of America," he said. "The Virgin Mary has accompanied this great nation since our beginnings," he added. "Now in this difficult hour, we renew our consecration to her."

The United States has been hit harder than any other nation in deaths connected to COVID-19, with more than 69,000

known coronavirus fatalities as of May 4, with about 2,000 more people dying each day. Although federal and state health officials have been advocating strict measures to "flatten the curve" of infections and fatalities, none have said that deaths have yet reached their peak. Some Americans have loudly grumbled about the slow pace of "reopening" states to travel and commerce, while health officials fear a second wave of infections.

"Mary was the first person to consecrate herself to Jesus, the first to offer her whole heart to do his will, to set his beautiful plan of redemption," Archbishop Gomez said. "We ask God to give us that same faith, that same courage ... the strength to follow Jesus, to seek his holiness and his kingdom."

The ceremony featured Marian hymns, including "Regina Coeli," "Hail, Holy Queen" and a contemporary English-Latin setting of the *Magnificat*. It also featured the recitation of two decades of the rosary: the fifth Sorrowful Mystery, the crucifixion and death of Jesus, followed by the fifth Glorious Mystery, the coronation of Mary as queen of heaven.

At its conclusion, Archbishop Gomez said, "Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, is encouraging us to rediscover the beauty of praying the rosary at home in the month of May. We are still in quarantine in our homes." He noted that "one of the many saints in Los Angeles was the venerable [Father] Patrick Peyton, who coined the 'family rosary' and the phrase 'The family that prays together stays together.'"

"Maybe we can dedicate ourselves," Archbishop Gomez said, "to find time to come together as a family to pray the rosary in our homes."

A similar liturgy of consecration took place at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on May 1, led by Archbishop



Washington Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory leads a special liturgy in renewing the consecration of the U.S. to the care of our Blessed Mother at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on May 1 during the coronavirus pandemic. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

Wilton D. Gregory of Washington, who prayed: "In this time of pandemic, we come to you, our sign of sure hope and comfort. Today we renew the act of consecration and entrustment carried out by those who have gone before us."

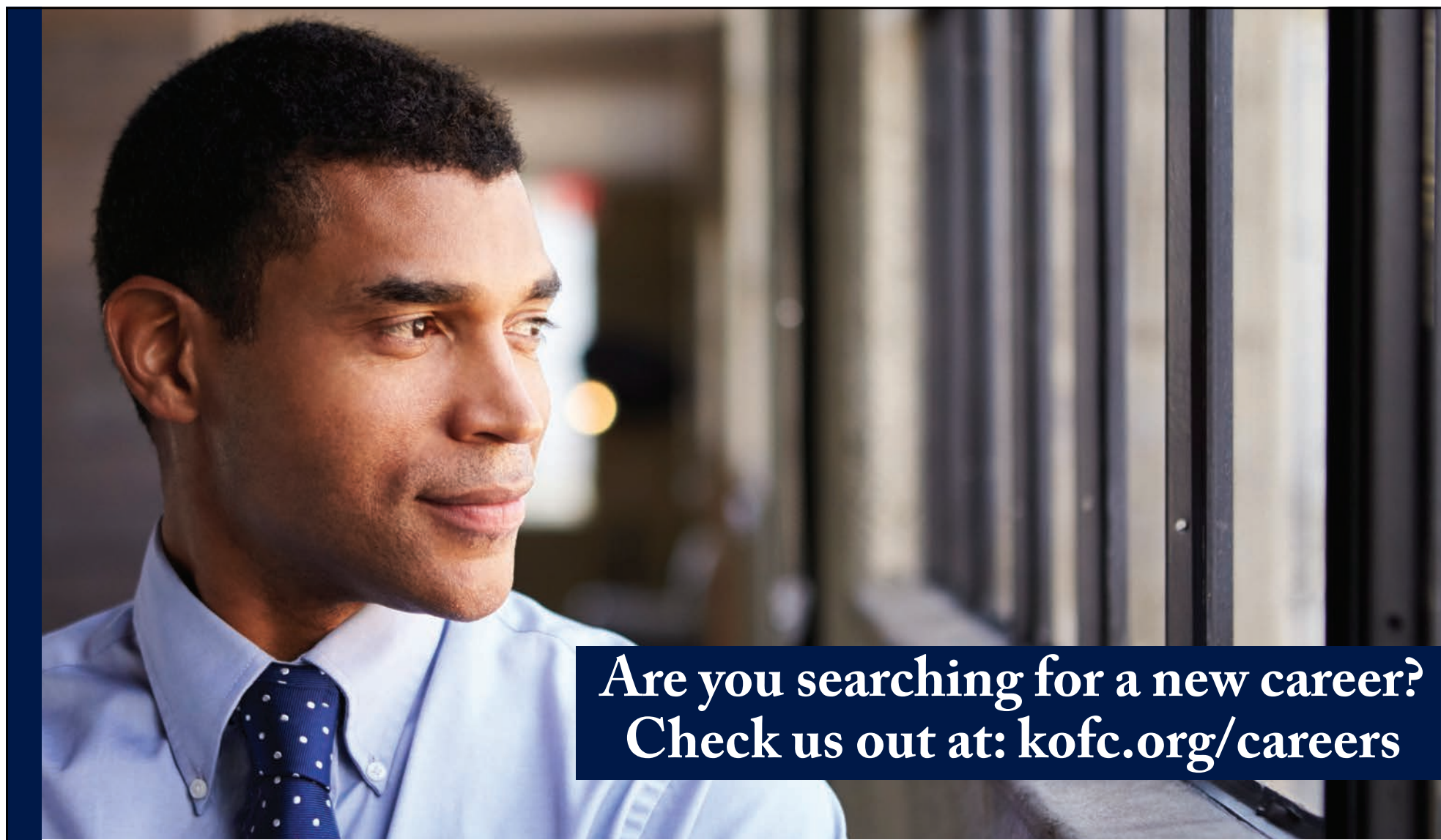
Because of local and federal social distancing and self-isolation mandates in an effort to halt the spread of COVID-19, the rededication liturgy at the basilica was not open to the public, but livestreamed on social media platforms.

This consecration reaffirms the bishops' previous consecrations of the United States to Mary. In 1792, the first bishop of the United States, Bishop John Carroll, consecrated the nation to Mary under the title Immaculate Conception, and in 1846, the bishops unanimously chose Mary under

that title as the patroness of the nation.

In 1959, Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle of Washington again consecrated the United States to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This was the year when construction of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington was completed. The national shrine was elevated to minor basilica status by St. John Paul II on Oct. 12, 1990. This was renewed by the U.S. bishops on Nov. 11, 2006.

Archbishop Gregory prayed for Mary's "intercession for the needs of our country, that every desire for good may be blessed and strengthened, that faith may be revived and nourished, hope sustained and enlightened, charity awakened and animated." †



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