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## Archdiocese honors a pioneer on a night marked by memories, joy and emotion

By John Shaughnessy

On the night she received one of the archdiocese's highest honors, Franciscan Sister Shirley Gerth thought of her father—a man who had both legs amputated after a train accident, a man who spent the next 30 years of his life making 40,000 rosaries to help missionaries share the Catholic faith around the world.

On the night when she received a standing ovation from more than 1,000 people during the archdiocese's Legacy Gala at the JW Marriott in Indianapolis on Feb. 9, 80-year-old Sister Shirley thought of her mother—a homemaker who gave birth to nine children and created a home where God and the Blessed Mother were at its center.

On the night that Archbishop Charles C. Thompson presented Sister Shirley with the Legacy Award, this pioneer in the archdiocese also thought of the children she taught, the parish members she counseled, the shut-ins and prisoners she visited, and her fellow Franciscan sisters who always have given her a sense of community.

See GALA, page 8

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson poses with Franciscan Sister Shirley Gerth after she received the archdiocese's Legacy Award at the Legacy Gala at the JW Marriott in Indianapolis on Feb. 9. (Photo by Rob Banayote)



## Legislation is advancing to protect children from online pornography

By Victoria Arthur

At the halfway point of the 2024 legislative session, a bill aimed at restricting minors from accessing online pornography is among the measures

gaining momentum at the Statehouse.



Sen. Mike Bohacek

Senate Bill 17, authored by Sen. Mike Bohacek (R-Michiana Shores), passed the Senate in a near-unanimous vote and is now under consideration in the House. If the measure ultimately becomes

law, Indiana would join eight other states in requiring pornography sites to use a robust age verification system to operate in the state.

"Today, kids carry the Internet in their pocket," Bohacek said. "We've got kids who are seeing extremely graphic sexual content before they even go to their first eighth-grade dance."

Similar to legislation now under review in nine additional states, Senate Bill 17



would require age checks to ensure users on adult sites are at least 18 years old—typically

using a driver's license or other form of identification.

"This is about regulating a new space, but it's not a new idea," Bohacek said. "You can't go and buy a pack of cigarettes without showing an ID. You can't go into a strip bar without showing an ID. And yet anyone can access almost anything online. It's desensitizing people, and it's extremely damaging to children."

Among the advocates supporting Senate Bill 17 is the Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC), the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana. Its executive director, Angela Espada, can

See ICC, page 19

## Day of prayer for priestly vocations asks God for 'shower' of 'many holy priests'

By Sean Gallagher

On Feb. 9, 1818, St. John Vianney made his way on foot to the small southern French town of Ars.

A young boy herding sheep helped the town's new pastor find his way there. When they arrived at the parish church, Vianney turned to the boy and said, "Thank you for showing me the way to Ars. I will show you the way to heaven."

Vianney spent the rest of his life in Ars doing the same for all of

See PRAYER, page 3

Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director, preaches a homily at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis during a Feb. 9 Mass that was part of the archdiocesan vocations office's third annual Day of Prayer with St. John Vianney for Priestly Vocations. A relic of the patron saint of priests is displayed in front of the ambo. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



# NEC rep visits Indy



Jaime Reyna, who heads up the multicultural and inclusivity team for the National Eucharistic Congress (NEC), talks with Jan Stetzel of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis during a visit to her parish on the weekend of Jan. 27-28. Reyna is currently visiting parishes throughout the archdiocese to share more information about the NEC, which is taking place in Indianapolis on July 17-21. As the host archdiocese, we have been provided with a discount code—Indy24—which reduces the cost of individual passes for the July 17-21 gathering from \$375 to \$274. This discount code will only work on individual passes purchased in the amount of 1-14. For more information on NEC or to register for the once-in-a-lifetime gathering, go to [www.eucharisticcongress.org](http://www.eucharisticcongress.org). (Submitted photo)



## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

February 16–March 1, 2024

<p><b>February 16-18</b> Los Angeles Religious Education Congress at Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles</p> <p><b>February 21-23</b> The Way Forward Ecclesial Gathering, San Diego</p> <p><b>February 26 – 1 p.m.</b> Virtual USCCB Subcommittee on the Catechism meeting</p>	<p><b>February 26-28</b> Symposium on The Place of Episcopal Discernment in the Synodal Journey at University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind.</p> <p><b>February 28-March 1</b> Leadership Roundtable 2024 Catholic Partnership Summit in Arlington, Va.</p>
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# Prayer can change people’s hearts, pope says at canonization Mass

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—St. María Antonia de Paz Figueroa, known as Mama Antula, devoted herself completely to helping others experience God’s closeness and compassion, Pope Francis said after he declared the 18th-century consecrated laywoman a saint.

By letting her heart and life be “touched” and “healed” by Christ, he said, “she proclaimed him tirelessly her whole life long, for she was convinced, as she loved to repeat: ‘Patience is good, but perseverance is better.’”

“May her example and her intercession help us to grow, according to the heart of God, in charity,” the pope said in his homily after proclaiming her a saint during a Mass on Feb. 11 in St. Peter’s Basilica.

St. María Antonia de Paz Figueroa is Argentina’s first female saint. She was closely tied to the Jesuits and continued to lead Ignatian spiritual exercises in Argentina after the expulsion of the order.

Argentine President Javier Milei was present at the Mass and had a private meeting with the pope on Feb. 12. At the end of the Mass, the two shook hands, spoke briefly, smiled and laughed. The president, who has made disparaging remarks about the pope in the past, leaned down and gave a big hug to the pope, who was seated in a wheelchair.

Claudio Perusini, whose unexplained recovery from a severe stroke became the second miracle attributed to the new saint, also was present. He has known the pope since he was 17 and he, his wife and two adult children brought the offertory gifts to the pope during the Mass.

Sickness and healing were the key themes in Pope Francis’ homily during the Mass on Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and the World Day of the Sick.

Reflecting on the day’s readings, which included St. Mark’s account of Jesus’ “cleansing of a leper,” the pope spoke

about other forms of “leprosy” that lead some people, even Christians, to ostracize and scorn others.

Those who were afflicted with Hansen’s disease during Jesus’ time were further wounded by ostracism and rejection because of fear, prejudice and a false religiosity, the pope said.

People were afraid of contracting the disease and they were prejudiced by believing those who were ill were being punished by God for some sin they had committed and, therefore, deserving of their fate, the pope said.

Also, the belief that even slight contact with someone with leprosy made one “impure” is an example of false or “distorted religiosity,” which “erects barriers and buries pity,” he said.

Fear, prejudice and false religiosity represent “three ‘leproses of the soul’ that cause the weak to suffer and then be discarded like refuse,” he said.

Many people suffering today also are scorned and discarded because of so many “fears, prejudices and inconsistencies even among those who are believers and call themselves Christians,” he said.

The way to tear down those barriers and cure new forms of “leprosy,” he said, is with the same style as Jesus, which is to draw near to those who are shunned to touch and heal them.

Jesus responds to the leper’s cry for help “knowing full well that in doing so he will in turn become a ‘pariah,’” the pope said.

“Oddly enough, the roles are now reversed: once healed, the sick person will be able to go to the priests and be readmitted to the community; Jesus, on the other hand, will no longer be able to enter any town,” he said.

Jesus could have avoided touching the man and instead perform “a distance healing,” he said. “Yet that is not the way of Christ. His way is that of a love that draws near to those who suffer, enters into contact with them and touches their wounds.”

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

# Sign up for National Eucharistic Congress afternoon sessions now before they fill up

Criterion staff report

During the afternoons of July 18-20 of the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, many of the most popular and trusted Catholic voices in America will be featured in breakout sessions in English and Spanish on a variety of impactful and timely topics. Each session has limited space, and some have already sold out.

Just a few examples of breakout topics include:

- “I Object: Answering Fundamentalist Attacks on the Eucharist,” by Catholic apologist, podcaster and author Trent Horn;
- “A Biblical Walk Through the Mass: Understanding the Liturgy,” by Catholic theologian, author and speaker Edward Sri;
- “Taste, See, Live the Eucharist: Incarnating the Eucharist,” by Father Leo Patalinghug;
- “Healing Community: Encountering Brokenness in the Body of Christ,” by Holy Family of Nazareth Sister Josephine Garrett.

For more information on the daily session opportunities and speakers, go to [www.eucharisticcongress.org/schedule](http://www.eucharisticcongress.org/schedule).

To register for the congress, go to [www.eucharisticcongress.org/register](http://www.eucharisticcongress.org/register). †



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# PRAYER

continued from page 1

its villagers. But before his death in 1859, the patron saint of priests became so well-known far and wide for his pastoral wisdom and sharing God's mercy in the sacrament of penance that thousands of people every year made their way to Ars to go to confession to him.

More than 200 years later, archdiocesan Catholics gathered to pray for priestly vocations in central and southern Indiana on the anniversary of Vianney's arrival in Ars.

The archdiocesan vocations office's third annual Day of Prayer with St. John Vianney for Priestly Vocations took place this year on Feb. 9 at St. John the Evangelist Church in downtown Indianapolis.

It included several hours of eucharistic adoration, Benediction, the opportunity for the sacrament of penance and the presence of a relic of St. John Vianney for veneration. The day ended with a midday Mass celebrated by Father Michael Keucher, archdiocesan vocations director.

Father Keucher, who also serves as pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County, described in his homily what Ars was like when Vianney arrived there in 1818.

"There were four taverns that were full every night," Father Keucher said. "And all sorts of godless behavior went on there. People actually travelled to Ars to be part of the godless behavior that took place there."

Vianney's first response to the situation he faced in Ars was to pray.

"He went to the tabernacle, which had cobwebs in front of it," Father Keucher said. "He laid down prostrate and said, 'Lord, change their hearts.' ... He constantly prayed for the conversion of the hearts of his people."

And, over time and through God's grace, those conversions occurred. People began to travel to Ars not for its party atmosphere, but because of God's grace that flowed through the ministry of its pastor.

"John Vianney taught his people the love of God," Father Keucher said. "And, as a priest, he gave them the means to love God. He gave them the sacraments. He gave them confession, holy Communion, the anointing of the sick. He gave them what they needed."

What was true in the priestly life and ministry of St. John Vianney 200 years ago is true today in the archdiocese, Father Keucher said.

"God gives us priests to show us that he loves us, to teach us how we can love him and to give us the means to love him well," he said. "We are thankful for the priesthood."

"John Vianney said that every good priest goes to heaven with thousands and thousands of souls behind him. We pray today in a special way that God will continue to shower our archdiocese with many holy priests, and that he will continue to sanctify each day those of us who are already priests."

One of those listening to Father Keucher preach about St. John Vianney was Art Berkemeier, a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis and of the Serra Club of Indianapolis, which helps promote



Robert Roller, a member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, venerates a relic of St. John Vianney on Feb. 9 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The relic was displayed at the church during the archdiocesan vocations office's third annual Day of Prayer with St. John Vianney for Priestly Vocations held at St. John that day. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

In speaking about why he attended the liturgy, Berkemeier noted the unseasonably warm weather of the day.

"Yes, it's a Friday," he said. "There's a lot going on. It's a beautiful day. But it's even more important that I come and support our vocations director and young people who are discerning vocations, to make this a priority in my life."

Praying for priestly vocations is important to Berkemeier in part because he had an uncle who was an archdiocesan

priest, Father Charles Berkemeier, who died in 1998.

"He chose to be a priest as his vocation," Berkemeier recalled. "But he was still a man. He had other interests. He loved to fish and play cards with his friends. Yet, he chose God first."

"Praying for vocations reminds me that we should always choose God first, regardless of the other things that go on in our lives."

(For more information on a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit [HearGodsCall.com](http://HearGodsCall.com).) †

## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Christians must reflect whether they, like Jesus, are able to draw near and be a gift to others, the pope said. The faithful should ask if they "withdraw from others and think only of ourselves" or believe "the problem is always and only other people."

This "leprosy of the soul," he said, is "a sickness that blinds us to love and compassion, one that destroys us by the 'cankers' of selfishness, prejudice, indifference and intolerance."

"Once we let ourselves be touched by Jesus, we start to heal within, in our hearts. If we let ourselves be touched by him in prayer and adoration, if we permit him to act in us through his word and his sacraments, that contact truly changes us," he said.

"Thanks to the love of Christ, we rediscover the joy of giving ourselves

to others, without fears and prejudices, leaving behind a dull and disembodied religiosity and experiencing a renewed ability to love others in a generous and disinterested way," he said.



Pope Francis

Later, after reciting the *Angelus* prayer with visitors in St. Peter's Square, the pope recalled the day's celebration of Our Lady of Lourdes and World Day of the Sick.

"The first thing we need when we are sick is the closeness of loved ones, health care workers and, in our hearts, the closeness of God," he said. "We are all called to be close to those who suffer, to visit the sick" the same way Jesus did with "closeness, compassion and tenderness."

"We cannot be silent about the fact that there are so many people today who are denied the right to care, and, therefore, the right to life!" he said.

In those places where people live in extreme poverty or war zones, he said, "fundamental human rights are violated there every day! It

is intolerable. Let us pray for the tormented Ukraine, for Palestine and Israel, let us pray for Myanmar and for all war-torn peoples." †

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## Editorial



# NATIONAL Eucharistic Congress

## An invitation to draw closer to Christ and be a powerful witness of our faith

We have planted seeds for several months now, and we will continue to share reminders that we pray will bear fruit in central and southern Indiana this summer and beyond.

We also hope and pray that fruit will grow across the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the state of Indiana, throughout our nation and across the globe as Catholics focus on the greatest gift of our faith here in mid-July.

The 10th National Eucharistic Congress (NEC)—the first national congress in 83 years—is being held on July 17-21 in Indianapolis, and tens of thousands of Catholics from throughout the U.S. are expected to attend. As members of the 126 parishes that make up the Church in central and southern Indiana, each of you is invited. We believe it's a once-in-a-lifetime experience that should span generations—children, teens, parents, single adults and our seniors—who make up our family of faith.

This summer's congress is the culminating event of the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year initiative that the U.S. bishops launched in 2022 to renew and strengthen Catholics' understanding of, and love for, Jesus in the Eucharist. The revival's first year focused on diocesan life and its second year on parish life; the final year focuses on missionary discipleship.

Bishop William D. Byrne of Springfield, Mass., spoke about the NEC at the 19th annual National Catholic Prayer Breakfast on Feb. 8 in Washington.

He said St. Pius X, known as the "Pope of the Eucharist," knew the sacrament is "a means of helping us, not a prize for those who are already there," calling it an "error" that the sacrament is treated as a "reward rather than a remedy."

Pope Francis has also said as much. "When we receive the Eucharist, Jesus does the same with us: he knows us; he knows we are sinners; he knows we make many mistakes, but he does not give up on joining his life to ours," the pope said in his homily during a Mass on June 6, 2021, to mark the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

"He knows that we need it, because the Eucharist is not the reward of saints, but the bread of sinners. This is why he exhorts us: 'Do not be afraid! Take and eat.'"

Bishop Byrne, in his Feb. 8 address, added that, in order for there to be a eucharistic revival, there also must

be a revival of the sacrament of reconciliation, exhorting change in parishes where confession is limited to brief timeframes that are largely inaccessible to most Catholics.

"My experience is like the *Field of Dreams*," he said in reference to the 1989 film. "If you build it, they will come."

The revival also includes a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, in which pilgrims will walk with the Eucharist across the country along four designated pilgrimage routes, which converge in Indianapolis for the congress.

Among the activities during the gathering will be a eucharistic procession on July 20 that will engulf the streets of downtown Indianapolis, offering a powerful witness of faith by the thousands who will take part. It will offer a chance for us to radiate Jesus to our neighbors of all faith traditions, allowing them to see firsthand how much we love Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

As the host archdiocese, we have been provided with a discount code—Indy24—which reduces the cost of individual passes for the five-day gathering from \$375 to \$274. This discount code will only work on individual passes purchased in the amount of 1-14. Each participant will receive credentials that provide admission to general sessions, but there is no assigned seating or group seating at the NEC. Passes are offered at the congress' website, [www.eucharisticcongress.org](http://www.eucharisticcongress.org). The website also includes the congress' general daily schedule and speaker lineup.

There are also single-day passes available. A weekend pass (for Saturday and Sunday) is available for \$125, or day passes are available for \$49-\$95. Kids ages 12 and younger are free.

Through the generosity of donors, organizers have also created a "Solidarity Fund" with almost \$1 million of scholarship money available for those who would like to attend. More information is available at [cutt.ly/NECSolidarityFund](http://cutt.ly/NECSolidarityFund) (case sensitive).

We encourage you to give prayerful consideration to being a part of this witness of faith and opportunity to grow in love of the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Whether for five days, a few days, or even a day, gather with us and help us shine a bright light in our community—the light of Christ which our world desperately needs.

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/Stephen O'Neil

## A heinous doctor, his 2,411 victims, and what it means about our human race

It was February 2020 in South Bend—cold and gray with scattered remains of a recent snow. I navigated my way off the beaten path, using phone directions to find the cemetery tucked away and known only to locals. It was my first trip there despite having spent most of my life traveling to the University of Notre Dame. A dread welled up from deep inside.

Meandering along the small Southlawn Cemetery road, I eventually saw the group of a few dozen fellow mourners leaving their cars and walking toward our common destination.

I had been to dozens of funerals and gravesite services through the years to celebrate the lives of family members and friends—most of them older people who had lived long lives, some who had succumbed to illness and others tragically ripped away too early.

But this was different. This was not the celebration of a life well lived or the tearful mourning of a friend gone in his prime.

This was a memorial service for 2,411 nameless individuals buried in a mass grave, the victims of Dr. Ulrich "George" Klopfer, the infamous South Bend abortionist who kept thousands of the bodies of his victims in his Illinois home and car in boxes and jars. They were discovered following his death and subsequently brought back to Indiana for burial.

The strangers assembled had no specific connection to any of the buried, but all shared the common bond of being human and questioning the enormity of what had brought us there.

In front of us and below the ground were the remains of more than 2,000 people, none of whom ever had the chance to be born.

The epitaph we stood before read, "In memory of the 2,411 precious unborn buried here on February 12, 2020."

None of these souls had the chance to strike out and find their way, love,

succeed and fail. Each represented an unrepeatable individual whose life, whose potential would never be realized, and who would never be afforded the opportunity to partake of joy, sadness, warmth, happiness and love. They would never see the light of day—even one like that day, gloomy and overcast.

A local priest led the group in prayer for the protection of life and the repose of the little souls. Everyone who wished placed a red rose on the grave and drifted back to their cars and lives. There was no lunch prepared back at a parish hall, nor any get-together at the family home where those left behind would regale themselves of stories of their loved one. For there were no stories, only the abrupt and violent end to life before birth. Those buried there were alone and unknown with no family to grieve them.

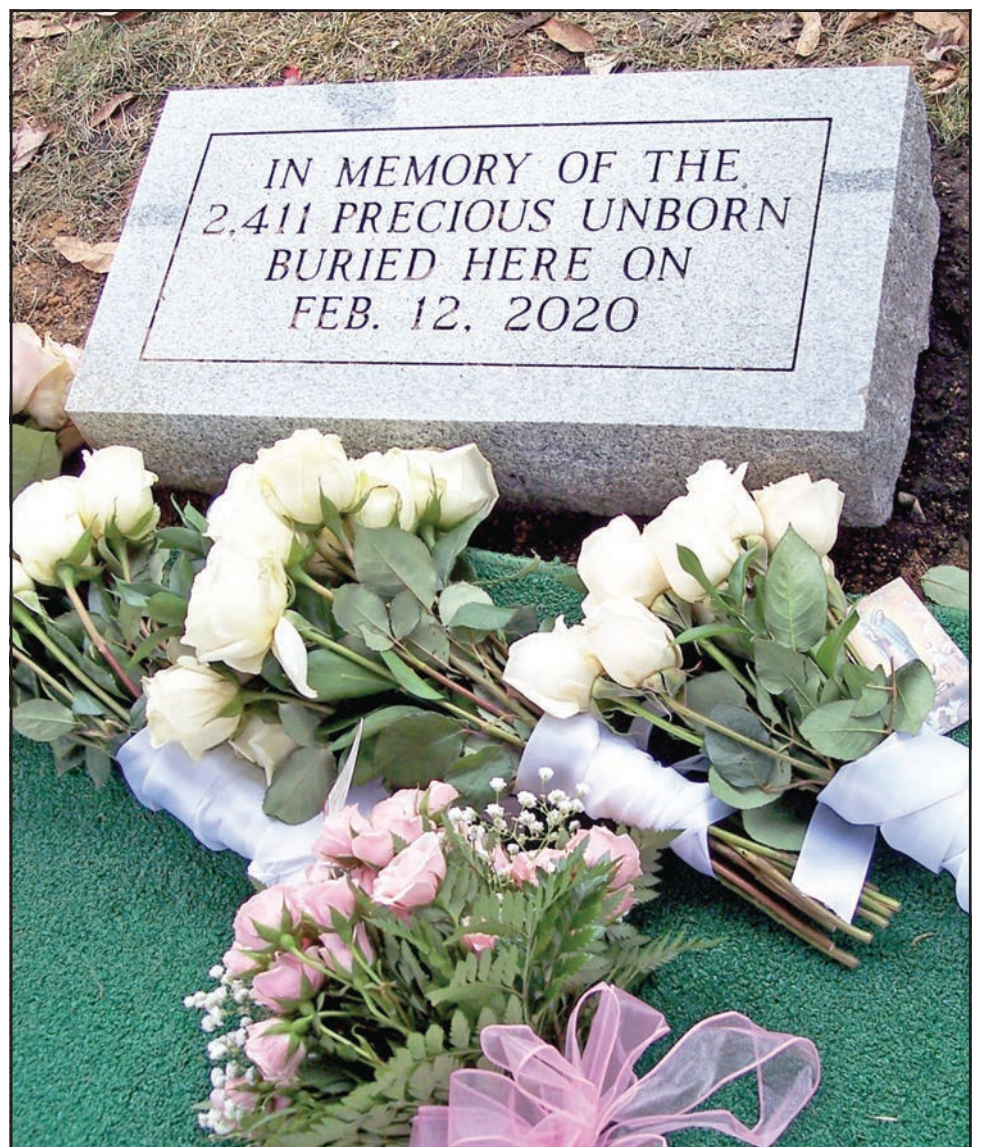
The emptiness was palpable and the scene surreal. How does one return to normalcy after attending a memorial at a mass grave of anonymous innocents never given the chance to live? This wasn't a war zone or a Holocaust death camp halfway around the world. It wasn't Rwanda or Serbia—it was Indiana.

The two-hour car ride home was strange as I re-entered my life. Those in Southlawn Cemetery would remain confined in their shared entombment. Their potential destinies would never be realized, and their identities known only to God—outcasts either unwanted, inconvenient or imperfect.

What has happened to the human race? Have our individual needs become so paramount that we turn away from the needs of others to merely exist?

Heading back down U.S. Highway 31 toward Indianapolis, I thought to myself, "Life goes on"—if you are wanted.

(Stephen O'Neil is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis.) †



A memorial stone is seen at the burial site of 2,411 aborted babies, whose remains were interred on Feb. 12, 2020, at Southlawn Cemetery in South Bend, Ind. The babies had been aborted between 2000 and 2003 by the late Dr. Ulrich "George" Klopfer, who operated abortion clinics in Indiana since the 1970s and committed an estimated 30,000 abortions before having his license revoked in 2016.

(CNS photo/Indiana Office of the Attorney General)

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO CHARLES C. THOMPSON



# Christ the Cornerstone

## God's word gives us meaning, calls us to action this Lent

*"The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for 40 days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him"* (Mk 1:12-13).

Feb. 18 is the first Sunday of Lent. This penitential season comes early this year because, of course, Easter is earlier than usual—on March 31—and we need the six weeks of Lent to prepare spiritually for the high point of our Church's liturgical year, the Solemnity of Easter.

The Gospel reading for this Sunday is taken from St. Mark's abbreviated account of Jesus' temptation by Satan in the desert (Mk 1:12-15). We're so familiar with the more detailed accounts given by St. Matthew (Mt 4:1-11) and St. Luke (Lk 4:2-14) that we can be taken off guard by the abrupt simplicity of St. Mark's account. When you look closely at it, all St. Mark tells us is that Jesus was among wild beasts, tempted by the devil, and ministered to by angels.

This simple account of our Lord's experience in the desert—immediately following his baptism by John in the Jordan River—tells us much more than we realize initially.

First of all, we are told that the Holy Spirit was the force that "drove Jesus out into the desert" (Mk 1:12). Immediately following, the Lord is publicly recognized as God's beloved Son, the long-awaited Redeemer, and he is put to the test. Jesus does not shy away from this testing. Driven by the Spirit, he boldly goes where Satan is sure to find him. Confident in his identity and mission, the Lord refuses to be manipulated by Satan. He stands firm in the face of temptation.

St. Mark adds that Jesus was "among wild beasts and the angels ministered to him" (Mk 1:13). We can read this statement in various ways, but what is clear is that Jesus is at peace with all God's creatures—material and spiritual. Wild beasts do not threaten him, and the holy angels minister to him. This is God's Son, and he is at home in all regions of the created world and among all God's creatures.

Following the initial statement about the Lord's temptation by Satan in the desert, St. Mark's Gospel continues:

*After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment.*

*The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel"* (Mk 1:14-15).

Many theologians and Scripture scholars say that this is the essential proclamation of Jesus, the heart of the *kerygma* or fundamental message of the good news preached by Jesus Christ.

With the coming of Jesus into the world as God's Word incarnate, the time of waiting is past. *Now* is the time of fulfillment; the reign of God is in our midst here and now. What's demanded of each of us is concrete action: Repent and believe in Jesus Christ who is himself the Good News.

In the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, we are told that Jesus rejected Satan's offer of unimaginable wealth and power by saying, "One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God" (Mt 4:4; Lk 4:4).

God's word is what gives us life and meaning. That's why we are invited, and challenged, to repent, to give up our preoccupation with selfish things, and to believe in "every word that comes from the mouth of God," the good news that is proclaimed by Jesus through his holy Church.

The six weeks of Lent that are before us now give us plenty of time as well as concrete opportunities to reflect on God's word and to take action. The traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving (generous sharing) are intended to help us respond to Jesus' call to repent and believe in the Gospel. By practicing self-denial, and by going out of our way to help others, we discover the joy that is at the heart of missionary discipleship.

Jesus was at peace with all of God's creation (symbolized in St. Mark's Gospel by the wild animals and the holy angels) because he did not live for himself ("by bread alone"). He surrendered himself to the will of his Father and ultimately gave himself up as a ransom for sinners like us who struggle to repent and believe in him fully.

Let's use this time of Lent to discipline ourselves spiritually and physically. Let's spend more time listening prayerfully to God's word. Let's take advantage of the sacraments, especially penance and the holy Eucharist, so that we can encounter the Lord and grow in our understanding of his good news.

A blessed and productive Lent to all! †



# Cristo, la piedra angular

## La Palabra de Dios nos da sentido, nos llama a la acción en esta Cuaresma

*"Enseguida, el Espíritu llevó a Jesús al desierto, y allí fue puesto a prueba por Satanás durante cuarenta días. Estaba con las fieras y los ángeles le servían"* (Mc 1:12-13).

El 18 de febrero es el primer domingo de Cuaresma que marca el inicio de la temporada penitencial, el cual se adelanta este año ya que, por supuesto, la Pascua es antes de lo habitual (el 31 de marzo) y necesitamos las seis semanas de Cuaresma para prepararnos espiritualmente para el punto culminante del año litúrgico de nuestra Iglesia, la Solemnidad de Pascua.

La lectura del Evangelio de este domingo está tomada del relato abreviado de san Marcos sobre la tentación de Jesús en el desierto (Mc 1:12-15). Estamos tan familiarizados con los relatos más detallados de san Mateo (Mt 4:1-11) y san Lucas (Lc 4:2-14) que quizá nos sorprenda la pasmosa sencillez del relato de san Marcos. Si lo examinamos detenidamente, lo único que nos dice san Marcos es que Jesús estuvo entre fieras, fue tentado por el diablo y atendido por ángeles.

Este sencillo relato de la experiencia de nuestro Señor en el desierto— inmediatamente después de que Juan lo bautizara en el río Jordán—nos dice

mucho más de lo que podría resultar evidente en un principio.

En primer lugar, se nos dice que el Espíritu Santo fue la fuerza que "llevó a Jesús al desierto" (Mc 1:12). Inmediatamente después, el Señor es reconocido públicamente como el Hijo amado de Dios, el Redentor largamente esperado, y puesto a prueba. Sin embargo, Jesús no le teme a la prueba; guiado por el Espíritu, va audazmente allí donde Satanás sabe que lo encontrará. Seguro de su identidad y de su misión, el Señor se niega a dejarse manipular por el demonio y se mantiene firme ante la tentación.

San Marcos añade que Jesús estaba "entre las fieras y los ángeles lo servían" (Mc 1:13). Podemos leer esta afirmación de varias maneras, pero lo que está claro es que Jesús está en paz con todas las criaturas de Dios, materiales y espirituales. Las fieras salvajes no lo amenazan y los ángeles se ocupan de él. Es el Hijo de Dios y, por tanto, está en casa en todos los rincones del mundo creado y entre todas las criaturas de Dios.

Tras la declaración inicial sobre la tentación del Señor por Satanás en el desierto, el Evangelio de san Marcos continúa:

*Después de que Juan fue encarcelado, Jesús fue a Galilea para proclamar el evangelio del reino*

*de Dios. Decía: "El tiempo se ha cumplido, y el reino de Dios se ha acercado. ¡Arrepiéntanse, y crean en el evangelio!"* (Mc 1:14-15).

Muchos teólogos y estudiosos de las Escrituras afirman que esta es la proclamación esencial de Jesús, el corazón del kerigma o mensaje fundamental de la buena nueva predicada por Jesucristo.

Con la venida de Jesús al mundo como el Verbo hecho carne, el tiempo de espera ha concluido. *Ahora* es el momento de que se cumpla; el reino de Dios está entre nosotros aquí y ahora. Lo que se exige de cada uno de nosotros es una acción concreta: Arrepiéntanse y crean en Jesucristo, que es en sí mismo la Buena Nueva.

En los Evangelios de san Mateo y san Lucas, se nos dice que Jesús rechazó el ofrecimiento de Satanás de una riqueza y poder inimaginables diciendo: "No sólo de pan vive el hombre, sino de toda palabra que sale de la boca de Dios" (Mt 4:4; Lc 4:4).

La palabra de Dios es lo que nos da vida y propósito; por eso se nos invita, y se nos desafía, a arrepentirnos, a abandonar nuestras preocupaciones egoístas y a creer en "todo lo que emana de la boca de Dios," la Buena Nueva que proclama Jesús a través de su santa Iglesia.

Las seis semanas de Cuaresma

que tenemos ahora por delante nos ofrecen mucho tiempo y oportunidades concretas para reflexionar sobre la Palabra de Dios y pasar a la acción. Las prácticas cuaresmales tradicionales de oración, ayuno y limosna (compartir generosamente) pretenden ayudarnos a responder a la llamada de Jesús a arrepentirnos y creer en el Evangelio. Al practicar la abnegación y desviarnos de nuestro camino para ayudar a los demás, descubrimos la alegría que habita en el corazón del discipulado misionero.

Jesús estaba en paz con toda la creación de Dios (simbolizada en el Evangelio de san Marcos por los animales salvajes y los ángeles) porque no vivía para sí mismo ("sólo de pan"). Se entregó a la voluntad de su Padre y, en última instancia, se entregó como rescate por los pecadores como nosotros que luchamos por arrepentirnos y creer plenamente en él.

Aprovechemos este tiempo de Cuaresma para disciplinarnos espiritual y físicamente. Dedicemos más tiempo a escuchar en oración la Palabra de Dios. Aprovechemos los sacramentos, especialmente la penitencia y la santa Eucaristía, para encontrarnos con el Señor y ampliar nuestra comprensión de la Buena Nueva.

¡Que tengan una Cuaresma bendecida y llena de esperanza! †

# Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/events](http://www.archindy.org/events).

## FISH FRIES

(For a complete list, go to [www.archindy.org/fishfries](http://www.archindy.org/fishfries).)

### February 23

St. Thomas More Parish, 1200 N. Indiana St., Mooresville. **Stations of the Cross and Fish Fry**, fish fry 5:30-7:30 p.m. in social hall, Stations of the Cross 6:30 p.m. in church, dinner \$11. Information: 317-831-4142, [pweber@stm-church.org](mailto:pweber@stm-church.org).

St. Michael Parish, 101 St. Michael Dr., Charlestown. **Fish Fry**, 5:30-7 p.m., fried/baked fish and shrimp, \$15 dinner, \$10 fish with side. Information: 812-256-3200, [malia.edmonds@gmail.com](mailto:malia.edmonds@gmail.com).

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, gymnasium, 1842 E. 8th St., Jeffersonville. **Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., hand-battered fried or baked fish, cheese pizza, fresh cut onion rings, coleslaw, mac and cheese, green beans, fries, dessert, drinks, cost TBD. Information: 812-987-6204, [tammidauby@gmail.com](mailto:tammidauby@gmail.com).

St. Simon the Apostle Parish, 8155 Oaklondon Rd., Indianapolis. **Fish Fry**, 5:30-8 p.m., baked cod and salmon, fried cod, green beans, mac and cheese, French fries, peel-and-eat shrimp, bounce houses, beer, wine, sodas, \$15 adult, \$45 family. Information: 317-826-6000, [saintsimonmensclub@gmail.com](mailto:saintsimonmensclub@gmail.com).

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi Parish, St. Clare Hall, Door #10, 5901 Olive Branch Road, Greenwood. **Fish Dinner Fundraiser**, 5:30-7:30 p.m., \$12 adult meal: choice of two pieces fried fish, one piece baked fish, or one grilled cheese sandwich, choice of three sides, salad or coleslaw; \$10 child meal: one piece fish (baked or fried) or grilled cheese sandwich, two sides, salad or coleslaw; extra piece of fish \$1, meals include tea, lemonade or water. Information: 317-859-4673, [parish@ss-fc.org](mailto:parish@ss-fc.org).

St. Anthony of Padua Parish, 316 N. Sherwood Ave., Clarksville. **Men's Club Annual Fish Fry**, 5-7:30 p.m., dine-in and take-out, baked fish, fried fish, oysters, shrimp, two sides, adult dinners \$12-\$13, small dinners: \$3-\$9. Information: 812-282-2290, [communications@stanthony-clarksville.com](mailto:communications@stanthony-clarksville.com).

Seton High School, Father Hillman Hall, 233 S. 5th St., Richmond. **St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish Lenten Fish Fry**, 4-7 p.m., fried or baked cod, grilled salmon, French fries, mac and cheese, coleslaw, cheese pizza, dessert, drinks, \$12 adults, \$6 children, ages 5 and younger free. Information: 765-962-3902, [lmiller@setonatholics.org](mailto:lmiller@setonatholics.org).

St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School, 1401 N. Bosart Ave., Indianapolis. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 4:30-7 p.m., fried and baked fish, shrimp, potato soup, cheese pizza, sides, desserts, drinks, cost TBD. Information: 317-357-8352, [amackell@littleflowerparish.org](mailto:amackell@littleflowerparish.org).

St. John Paul II Parish, 2605 W. St. Joe Road., Sellersburg. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., fish (baked or fried) or shrimp dinners, choice of fries or baked potato and two sides (baked beans, mac and cheese, or coleslaw), dessert and drinks, cheese pizza by the slice, dine-in, carry-out or drive-thru, \$14. Information: 812-246-2512, [gstrom@stjohnpaulparish.org](mailto:gstrom@stjohnpaulparish.org).

All Saints Parish, St. Martin Campus, 8044 Yorkridge Rd., Guilford. **All Saints Lenten Fish Fry**, 4:30-7 p.m., hand-breaded and baked fish, fries, green beans, coleslaw, mac and cheese, cheese pizza, homemade dessert, drinks, carry-out or dine-in, adult meals \$12, children's meals \$6. Information: 812-576-4302, [emilyalig.asp@gmail.com](mailto:emilyalig.asp@gmail.com).

St. John the Baptist Parish, 8310 St. John Road, Floyds

Knobs. **Fish Fry**, 5 p.m., price TBD. Information: 812-923-5785, [parish.navstar@gmail.com](mailto:parish.navstar@gmail.com).

St. Mary Parish, 212 Washington St., North Vernon. **Knights of Columbus Fish Fry Buffet**, 4:30-7 p.m., \$15 for meal and drink, desserts freewill donation. Information: 812-346-3604, [parishsecretary@stmarysnv.com](mailto:parishsecretary@stmarysnv.com).

Our Lady of the Greenwood School Cafeteria, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., salmon, tilapia, fish sandwiches, cheese pizza, grilled cheese, sides, desserts, prices vary. Information: 317-888-2861, [olgreenwood.org](mailto:olgreenwood.org), [info@olgreenwood.org](mailto:info@olgreenwood.org).

St. Rose of Lima Parish, 114 Lancelot Dr., Franklin. **Knights of Columbus Council #10460 Fish Fry**, 4:30-7 p.m., \$10 meal includes fish, mac and cheese, fries, coleslaw, applesauce, drink, \$5 fish sandwich, children's meals available. Information: 317-738-3929, [yburgener@stroselions.net](mailto:yburgener@stroselions.net).

St. Malachy School gymnasium, 9833 E. County Road 750 N., Brownsburg. **Knights of Columbus Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., \$12 basic dinner (entree, two sides, roll), \$13 full-meal deal (entree, two sides, roll, drink), \$22 all you can eat. Information: 317-852-3195.

St. Francis Xavier Parish, church basement, 101 N. Ferguson St., Henryville. **Lenten Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., fried fish, shrimp, fries, coleslaw, dessert table, dine-in, carry-out, \$12 dinner, \$8 fish sandwich, \$8 (8-piece) shrimp order. Information: 812-294-4682, [arharbeson@yahoo.com](mailto:arharbeson@yahoo.com).

Holy Angels Parish, 2822 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., St., Indianapolis. **Lenten Fish Fry**,

4-7 p.m., catfish and perch dinner with two sides \$15; kids' meal: one fish, one side, one treat, one drink \$7; fries, spaghetti or cole slaw \$2; soda \$1.50; water or big pickle \$1. Information: 317-926-3324, [holyangelsbulletin1@hotmail.com](mailto:holyangelsbulletin1@hotmail.com).

Our Lady of Lourdes School cafeteria, 5333 E. Washington St., Indianapolis. **Men's Club Lenten Fish Fry**, 5-7 p.m., parking behind school, cost TBD. Information: 317-356-7291, [parishsecretary@ollindy.org](mailto:parishsecretary@ollindy.org).

St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, 4100 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Fish Fry**, 5-7:30 p.m., \$10 basic meal, \$45 family meal, *a la carte* options available. Information: 317-257-4297, ext. 2216, [sulka@saintmatt.org](mailto:sulka@saintmatt.org).

St. Michael Parish, 11400 Farmers Lane NE, Greenville. **Fish Fry**, 4:30-7 p.m., buffet dinner includes fried or baked fish, two hushpuppies, coleslaw, baked beans, macaroni and cheese, dessert, beverage, \$13 adults, \$6 children 11 and younger. Information: 812-364-6646 ext. 5, [saintmichaelschurch.net/fish-fry](mailto:saintmichaelschurch.net/fish-fry), [johnjacobi1970@gmail.com](mailto:johnjacobi1970@gmail.com).

St. Nicholas Parish, 6461 E. St. Nicholas Dr., Sunman. **St. Nicholas and St. Anthony Faith Formation Fish Fry**, 4:30-7:30 p.m., fish, bread, mac and cheese, fries, green beans, coleslaw, cookie, \$15. Information: 812-623-2964, [cludwig@etczone.com](mailto:cludwig@etczone.com).

St. Barnabas School Cafeteria, 8300 Rahke Road, Indianapolis. **PTO Fish Fry**, 5:30-7:30 p.m., \$9 dinner includes fried fish, hush puppies, green beans, roll and beverage, cheese pizza option \$5, drive up and pick up available in back lot by kitchen doors, all profits

support school programs. Information: 317-882-7422, [pto@stbindy.org](mailto:pto@stbindy.org).

Christ the King Parish, 5884 N. Crittenden Ave., Indianapolis. **Fish Fry**, 6-8 p.m. (5:30 p.m. open for seniors). Menu and prices: [ctk-indy.org/ctk-indy.org](http://ctk-indy.org/ctk-indy.org). Information: 317-255-3666, [checkerich@ctk-indy.org](mailto:checkerich@ctk-indy.org).

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, 333 W. Maple St., Cambridge City. **Knights of Columbus Fish Fry**, 4-7 p.m., \$15. Information: 765-529-0933, [stelizchurchcc@hotmail.com](mailto:stelizchurchcc@hotmail.com).

## EVENTS

### February 21

All Saints Parish, St. Joseph Campus, 7536 Church Lane, West Harrison. **Double Feature with noted Theology of the Body speaker Jason Evert**, 6-9:30 p.m., for adults and youths ages 13-17 accompanied by an adult, "Purified: A Life-changing Event for Families" 6-7 p.m., "Gender and the Theology of Your Body" 7-9 p.m., adoration and confession 9-9:30 p.m., \$25, \$10 discount for registered parishioners of All Saints in Dearborn County, St. Lawrence in Lawrenceburg, St. Mary in Greensburg and St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross in Bright by using code DCC at checkout. Information, registration: [kimsprague@dccatholics.com](mailto:kimsprague@dccatholics.com), [bit.ly/3PJ7RID](http://bit.ly/3PJ7RID).

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439, [catholiccemeteries.cc](http://catholiccemeteries.cc).

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School, 5901 Olive Branch Road,

Greenwood. **Open House**, 3-7 p.m., offering Early Childhood Ministry for infants six weeks old and older plus preschool and grades K-8. Information: 317-859-4673, [admissions@ss-fc.org](mailto:admissions@ss-fc.org).

### February 22

St. Joan of Arc Parish, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Cor Jesu**, 7-8 p.m., night of communal prayer, adoration, Benediction and fellowship, free. Information: [megt2014@gmail.com](mailto:megt2014@gmail.com).

St. Monica Parish, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. **Healing Prayer Service for Grief and Trauma**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., adoration, songs of praise, speaker, opportunities for group and individual prayer, free. Information: 317-253-2193, [cbush@archindy.org](mailto:cbush@archindy.org).

White Violet Center for Eco-Justice, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Sourdough Bread Workshop**, 6-8 p.m., virtual option available, \$45, includes materials and starter, which can also be shipped to registrant. Information, registration: 812-535-2932, [Events.SistersofProvidence.org](http://Events.SistersofProvidence.org), [wvc@spsmw.org](mailto:wvc@spsmw.org).

### February 27

St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 East 17th St., Bloomington. **Day of Formation for Lay Ecclesial Ministers**, 8:30 a.m. eucharistic adoration, 9:15 a.m.-3 p.m. program, Diocese of Lincoln, Neb., Father Sean Kilcawley presenting on pornography addiction, includes breakfast and lunch, \$30 (check with your parish about cost coverage), sponsored by archdiocesan offices of catechesis, youth and young adult ministry. Information, registration: [tinyurl.com/DoFSPCC24](http://tinyurl.com/DoFSPCC24). †

## Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/retreats](http://www.archindy.org/retreats).

### March 1-3

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Finding Peace in the Chaos of Life—a Silent Guided Retreat**, 6 p.m. Fri.-noon Sun., Father Jeffrey Godecker and spiritual director Mary Shaffner presenting, \$220, includes accommodations, program materials, breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. Registration: [archindy.org/fatima](http://archindy.org/fatima), 317-545-7681, [lcoons@archindy.org](mailto:lcoons@archindy.org).

### March 2

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Lenten Letting Go**, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. \$60, includes materials and lunch. Information, registration: [retreatcommunications@mountsaintfrancis.org](mailto:retreatcommunications@mountsaintfrancis.org), 812-923-8817, [mountsaintfrancis.org/letten-letting-go](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/letten-letting-go).

### March 6

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Created in the Image of God: A Woman's Day of Reflection**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Dr. Kimberly Baker presenting, \$55. Registration: 812-357-6611, [saintmeinrad.org/retreats](http://saintmeinrad.org/retreats).

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Contemplative Prayer**, in person or via Zoom, 2-3 p.m., Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind presenting, freewill donation. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, [center@oldenburgosf.com](mailto:center@oldenburgosf.com), [oldenburgfranciscancenter.org](http://oldenburgfranciscancenter.org).

### March 8

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **A Day of Quiet Renewal**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$20, \$80 with spiritual

direction. Information, registration: 812-933-6437, [oldenburgfranciscancenter.org](http://oldenburgfranciscancenter.org).

### March 8-10

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Unpacking the Vocation of Marriage through Scripture and Married Saints**, Angie and Josh Greulich presenting, for married couples, \$425 double. Registration: 812-357-6611, [saintmeinrad.org/retreats](http://saintmeinrad.org/retreats).

### March 11

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Come to the Cross: Evening of Reflection**, 5-9 p.m., Father Keith Hosey and program manager Jennifer Burger presenting, \$45, includes light supper and Mass. Registration: [archindy.org/fatima](http://archindy.org/fatima), 317-545-7681, [lcoons@archindy.org](mailto:lcoons@archindy.org). †

## Wedding Anniversaries

**BOB AND ANN (SNYDER) BARGERHUFF**, members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary on Feb. 20.

The couple was married in St. Peter Church in Chicago, Ill., on Feb. 20, 1954.

They have four children: Julie, Bruce, John and the late Tom Bargerhuff.

The couple also has two grandchildren.



**KENNY AND PEGGY (HAGEDORN) SLATER**, members of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Terre Haute, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Feb. 22.

The couple was married in Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Terre Haute on Feb. 22, 1964.

They have two children: Paula Bratcher and Kenneth Slater.

The couple also has two grandchildren.

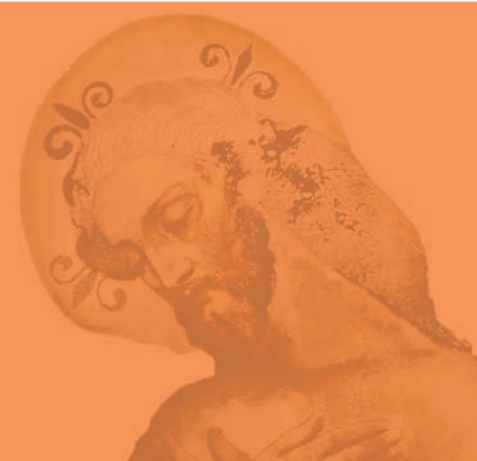


Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to [cutt.ly/anniversaries](http://cutt.ly/anniversaries) or call 317-236-1585.



# The Face of Mercy

By Daniel Conway



## Trying to live as a Christian at the edge of struggle and temptation

During the past 10 years of his pontificate, Pope Francis has covered a wide range of topics in his reflections for the general audiences on Wednesdays. Starting in 2024, the pope is offering a series of weekly reflections on the topic of “virtues and vices.”

For his first general audience in the Vatican’s Paul VI Auditorium on Jan. 3, Pope Francis spoke about the spiritual struggles that all Christians face:

*Indeed, the spiritual life of the Christian is not peaceful, linear and without challenges; on the contrary, Christian life demands constant struggle: the Christian struggle to preserve the faith, to enrich the gifts of faith in us. It is no coincidence that the first anointing that every Christian receives in the sacrament of baptism—the catechumenal anointing—is without any aroma and symbolically announces that life is a struggle. In fact, in ancient times, wrestlers were fully anointed before a competition, both to tone their muscles and to make their bodies elusive to their opponent’s grasp. The anointing of catechumens immediately makes it clear that Christians are not spared the*

*struggle, that Christians must struggle: their existence, like everyone else’s, will have to descend into the arena, because life is a succession of trials and temptations.*

We don’t normally think of Christian life as a battle or a wrestling match. It’s more comforting to think of the Church as a “haven” or resting place where we can retreat from the struggles of daily life. And yet, Pope Francis reminds us that “being comfortable” is not the primary goal of Christian discipleship.

As the pope teaches, “Life is a succession of trials and temptations.” None of us can escape the confrontation with evil that is built into our hearts and minds as a consequence of sin.

“All of us, all of us are tempted, and we must strive not to give in to these temptations,” the Holy Father says. “If any of you have no temptations, say so, because that would be an extraordinary thing! We all have temptations, and we all have to learn how to behave in these situations.”

The great story of Jesus’ temptations by Satan in the desert is meant to inspire us and to show us how to respond when—inevitably—we are tempted.

The Gospels tell us that immediately after his baptism by John in the Jordan River—an action not taken because of Jesus’ sins, but because of his desire to accompany us and show us the way—our Lord was driven into the desert by the Holy Spirit where he was tempted by Satan:

*In this case too, we ask ourselves: why does the Son of God have to know temptation? Here too, Jesus reveals himself to be in solidarity with our frail human nature and becomes our great exemplum: the temptations he faces and overcomes among the arid stones of the desert are the first instruction he gives to our life as disciples. He experienced what we too must prepare ourselves to confront: life is made up of challenges, tests, crossroads, opposing views, hidden seductions, contradictory voices. Some voices are even persuasive, so much so that Satan tempts Jesus by resorting to the words of the Scripture. We must preserve our inner clarity in order to choose the path that truly leads to happiness, and then strive not to stop along the way.*

To “preserve our inner clarity”

requires discipline and the ability to say “no” to our desire for comfort, security and social status. It means that we must stand firm—always by the help of God’s grace—refusing to give in to the temptations that are offered to us constantly in the daily struggles of our lives.

“Let us remember,” the Holy Father says, “that we are always torn between opposite extremes: arrogance challenges humility; hatred opposes charity; sadness hinders the true joy of the Spirit; the hardening of the heart rejects mercy.” We who seek to follow Jesus and to serve as his missionary disciples “continually walk along these edges.”

Reflection on the vices and virtues that are part of our common human experience “helps us to defeat the nihilistic culture in which the boundaries between good and evil become blurred.” At the same time, the pope says, “it reminds us that the human being, unlike any other creature, can always transcend itself, opening up to God and journeying toward holiness.”

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee.) †

“Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.”

—Pope Francis, “*Misericordiae Vultus*” (“The Face of Mercy”)

“Jesús de Nazaret con su palabra, con sus gestos y con toda su persona revela la misericordia de Dios.”

—Papa Francisco, “*Misericordiae Vultus*” (“El rostro de la misericordia”)

El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway

## Intentar vivir como cristianos pese a la lucha y la tentación

Durante los últimos 10 años de su pontificado, el papa Francisco ha abordado una amplia gama de temas en sus reflexiones de las audiencias generales de los miércoles. A partir de 2024, el Papa ofrecerá una serie de reflexiones semanales sobre el tema “vicios y virtudes.”

En su primera audiencia general celebrada el 3 de enero en el Auditorio Pablo VI del Vaticano, el Santo Padre habló sobre las luchas espirituales a las que se enfrentan todos los cristianos:

*De hecho, la vida espiritual del cristiano no es pacífica, lineal y sin desafíos, al contrario, la vida cristiana exige un continuo combate: el combate cristiano para conservar la fe, para enriquecer los dones de la fe en nosotros. No es casualidad que la primera unción que cada cristiano recibe en el sacramento del bautismo—la unción catecumenal—sea sin perfume y anuncie simbólicamente que la vida es una lucha. De hecho, en la antigüedad, los luchadores se ungían completamente antes de la competición, tanto para tonificar sus músculos, como para hacer sus cuerpos escurridizos a las garras del adversario. La unción de los catecúmenos pone inmediatamente en claro que al cristiano no se salva de la lucha, que un cristiano debe luchar: su*

*existencia, como la de todos los demás, tendrá también que bajar a la arena, porque la vida es una sucesión de pruebas y tentaciones.*

Normalmente no pensamos en la vida cristiana como una batalla o un combate de lucha libre. Es más reconfortante pensar en la Iglesia como un “refugio” o lugar de descanso donde podemos retirarnos de las luchas de la vida cotidiana. Y sin embargo, el Papa Francisco nos recuerda que la comodidad no es el objetivo principal del discipulado cristiano.

Como nos enseña el Papa, «la vida es una sucesión de pruebas y tentaciones». Ninguno de nosotros puede escapar a la confrontación con el mal que se construye en nuestros corazones y mentes como consecuencia del pecado.

“Todos, todos tenemos tentaciones, y tenemos que luchar para no caer en esas tentaciones. Si alguno de ustedes no tiene tentaciones, que lo diga, ¡porque sería algo extraordinario! Todos tenemos tentaciones, y todos tenemos que aprender a comportarnos en esas situaciones.”

La gran historia de las tentaciones de Jesús por Satanás en el desierto pretende inspirarnos y mostrarnos cómo responder cuando, inevitablemente, seamos tentados.

Los Evangelios nos cuentan que

inmediatamente después de que Juan lo bautizara en el Jordán—un acto llevado a cabo no por los pecados de Jesús, sino por su deseo de acompañarnos y mostrarnos el camino—el Espíritu Santo condujo a nuestro Señor al desierto donde fue tentado por Satanás:

*También en este caso surge la pregunta: ¿por qué razón el Hijo de Dios debe conocer la tentación? También aquí Jesús se muestra solidario con nuestra frágil naturaleza humana y se convierte en nuestro gran exemplum: las tentaciones que atraviesa y que supera en medio de las áridas piedras del desierto son la primera enseñanza que imparte a nuestra vida de discípulos. Él experimentó lo que nosotros también debemos prepararnos siempre para afrontar: la vida está hecha de desafíos, pruebas, encrucijadas, visiones opuestas, seducciones ocultas, voces contradictorias. Algunas voces son incluso persuasivas, tanto que Satanás tentó a Jesús recurriendo a las palabras de la Escritura. Es necesario custodiar la claridad interior para elegir el camino que conduce verdaderamente a la felicidad, y luego esforzarse para no pararse en el camino.*

Para “custodiar la claridad interior” se requiere disciplina y la capacidad de

decir “no” a nuestro deseo de comodidad, seguridad y estatus social. Significa que debemos mantenernos firmes—siempre con la ayuda de la gracia de Dios—negándonos a ceder a las tentaciones que se nos presentan constantemente en las luchas cotidianas de la vida.

“Recordemos que siempre estamos divididos y luchamos entre extremos opuestos: el orgullo desafía a la humildad; el odio se opone a la caridad; la tristeza impide la verdadera alegría del Espíritu; el endurecimiento del corazón rechaza la misericordia,” afirma el Santo Padre. Nosotros, que buscamos seguir a Jesús y servir como sus discípulos misioneros, “caminamos constantemente sobre estas crestas.”

La reflexión sobre los vicios y las virtudes que forman parte de nuestra experiencia humana común “reflexionar sobre los vicios y las virtudes: nos ayuda a superar la cultura nihilista en la que los contornos entre el bien y el mal permanecen borrosos y, al mismo tiempo”—asegura el Papa—, “nos recuerda que el ser humano, a diferencia de cualquier otra criatura, siempre puede trascenderse a sí mismo, abriéndose a Dios y caminando hacia la santidad.”

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.) †

# GALA

continued from page 1

"I'm very proud of being a Sister of St. Francis and having loved that life now for 62 years. I am proud of the accomplishments, but I am who I am because of all the people who blessed my life," Sister Shirley said in a video during the Gala. "That's why I say in accepting this honor, I accept it in the name of everyone who has been a part of my journey in life and who have helped me in my ministry."

That sentiment echoed her earlier comments when she said that all her different families have "helped me to see glimpses of God's beauty, love, compassion and goodness. They've welcomed me into their presence and into their lives. It's a sacred thing, I think, to be invited into someone's life."

Her words and memories reflect the heart, the humility and the faith that have guided her life, that have made her such a natural choice for this honor.

In its fourth year, the archdiocese's Legacy Gala is a dual celebration. It's a fundraising celebration of the gifts that the archdiocese shares with many people across central and southern Indiana—through its 67 Catholic schools, its extensive outreach of Catholic Charities agencies, and its formation of seminarians at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, young men destined to become the next generation of priests.

In its Legacy Award, the archdiocese's gala also celebrates people who have made outstanding contributions to living the faith and sharing the faith in a way that has touched the lives of so many.

Beyond her 12 years as an educator in Catholic schools—"I loved teaching, I loved the children"—Sister Shirley made her impact as a pioneer in the archdiocese, becoming only the second person to hold the position of parish life coordinator in the history of the archdiocese. While the first person did it for a year, Sister Shirley served in that capacity for 32 years, before retiring in July of 2023.

Her successful tenure paved the way for the deacons, religious sisters and lay people who have served as parish life coordinators for parishes across the

archdiocese.

At the same time, her tenure as a parish life coordinator included moments of heartbreak, including when an arsonist set fire to St. Anne Church in New Castle.

"It was April of 2007, Holy Saturday morning, when I discovered the burning of St. Anne Church. How can you forget a day like that? We watched the church burn all day," she recalled about that time with parishioners. "We cried together."

She later celebrated with them when a new church was built, a time when the depth of her faith also rose to new heights, including offering forgiveness to the arsonist.

"Once the building started, I realized I'd seen instances of God's beauty in many good moments, but I began to realize that God's beauty is also in pain and suffering and forgiveness," she noted. "That's when I used the phrase, 'Out of the ashes, beauty will come forth.' In God, who is the source of my strength, I have strength for everything. And I truly believe that, that our strength comes from God."

Now, she views every day as "a precious gift," part of "a life of gratitude."

In presenting the Legacy Award to Sister Shirley, Archbishop Thompson drew from that perspective of gratitude.

"The term 'Eucharist' originates from the Greek word *eucharistia*, meaning thanksgiving, and thanksgiving is an appropriate word to use for the person we recognize this evening, Franciscan Sister Shirley Gerth, a wonderful pioneer in faith," the archbishop said in saluting her. "Ask people at parishes where Sister Shirley served, and they cite her unwavering faith and leadership."

"Sister Shirley, in honor of your extraordinary service to the people of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis as a parish life coordinator and teacher during these 50-plus years, we present you this token of our heartfelt appreciation and admiration."

In his remarks, Archbishop Thompson also focused on the way that the archdiocese's Catholic schools, Catholic Charities agencies and Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary serve the people of central and southern Indiana.

"One thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to carrying out the mission of Jesus Christ," he told the audience,



Seminarians of Bishop Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis sing "Salve Regina" during the Legacy Gala at the JW Marriott in Indianapolis on Feb. 9. (Photo by Rob Banayote)

noting that Catholic Charities in the archdiocese served more than 400,000 people in the most recent fiscal year. "Our faith calls us to enhance the sacredness of life and recognize the dignity of every person we encounter."

In talking about the 67 Catholic schools in the archdiocese, Archbishop Thompson stressed their mission "to educate and form our children, not just the mind but the heart, not just the body but the soul."

And when he noted that there are 32 seminarians in the archdiocese—"the most we've had in many years"—and that three are scheduled to be ordained priests in June, the applause and cheers from the audience filled the ballroom.

Amid the Gala celebration, the archbishop also talked briefly about another joyous gathering that will be held in Indianapolis this summer.

"We are in the midst of a National Eucharistic Revival and continue to focus on the National Eucharistic Congress, which will take place here in Indianapolis on July 17-21," he noted. "This, by the way, is the first National Eucharistic Congress in over 80 years."

After inviting people to "this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, literally in our backyard," the archbishop later led the audience in a prayer for the Eucharistic Revival in the archdiocese.

That moment of shared faith was one of many in an evening filled with joy, emotion, humor and humanity.

There was the touching tribute of Neil Ramsey to his father, Guy Neil Ramsey, the gala's honorary chairperson and a member of St. Paul Parish in Tell City who was unable to attend the event.

There was the easy banter and comfortable camaraderie in the unscripted moments between Archbishop Thompson and the gala's emcee, Rafael Sanchez.

And the audience listened in awe as the seminarians from Bishop Bruté beautifully sang "Salve Regina" in tribute to the Blessed Mother.

Then came the thunderous standing ovation for Sister Shirley as she received the Legacy Award.

When the gala ended, the waves of family, friends and former parishioners who wanted to congratulate her kept flowing to her table.

Amid all the hugs, smiles and the thank-yous that she received in those moments, Sister Shirley beamed and held hands with people, giving each person her time and the sense of her deep appreciation.

The scene called to mind the words she shared about receiving the Legacy Award, words that revealed the way she has lived her life in tribute to God, her Catholic faith and all the families she has created along the way in the 62 years of her ministry:

"They've welcomed me into their presence and into their lives. It's a sacred thing, I think, to be invited into someone's life." †

## Gala supports three ministries that do the work of Christ in changing lives

By John Shaughnessy

As the oldest of 11 children—with his youngest sibling just a few months old—21-year-old Randall Schneider has long known the power and reach of a family.

He credits his parents for instilling prayer as an important part of his life, and he also values the moments of joy and the lessons in perseverance that he has shared with them and his siblings.

At the same time, Schneider was the youngest seminarian when he entered Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis, a place that has given him another sense of family, albeit from a different end-of-the-spectrum perspective.

"Bruté has a home-away-from-home feel to it," he says. "I've always found a lot of comfort in coming here. It's almost as if I was given the opportunity to experience what it was like to be the youngest, and all of that helped me to know how to be a good leader. One of the ways I've gotten the most benefit here is through formation for my brother seminarians."

It's all part of his desire to serve God as a priest in the archdiocese.

"I've wanted to be a priest for a long time, since a pretty young age," he says. "Something drew me to the saints who, at some point in their life, made a promise or a vow to God like, 'I'm going to do this.' That kind of determination really kind of attracted

me. And so, I wanted to kind of do that myself."

He especially enjoys pursuing that path with his fellow seminarians.

"We're all praying in communion, and I'll be in the back of the chapel, and I'll just think often that if they all become priests, I will know so many good and holy and saintly priests."

Schneider offered these insights in a video that was shared during the archdiocese's Legacy Gala at the JW Marriott in Indianapolis on Feb. 9—an evening that highlighted the powerful impact that the college seminary, Catholic Charities and Catholic schools have on the lives of many people in central and southern Indiana.

The Gala is the archdiocese's annual fundraising event to support these three ministries.

"At Bishop Simon Bruté, we educate and support our seminarians as they discern a call to the priesthood," Father Joseph Moriarty, rector of the college seminary, told the Gala audience. "I live and work in an environment every day that allows me to see the open hearts and minds of these young men who are saying yes to God's call. And for that, I am so grateful. Your support enables us to continue our mission and grow the next generation of priests."

That support also helps to fund Catholic Charities agencies across the archdiocese, which have served more than 400,000 people in need in central and southern Indiana in the most recent fiscal year.

"At Catholic Charities, we stand as a beacon for those facing despair and uncertainty by providing food, shelter, clothing, counseling services, adoption services and more," said David Bethuram, executive director of

Catholic Charities for the archdiocese. "We bring help and hope to those in need of our love and support."

The impact of the 67 Catholic schools in the archdiocese has a similar powerful impact, according to Brian Disney, the superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese. They share the faith and a quality, Christ-centered education with about 22,000 students through the dedicated efforts of nearly 2,300 staff members.

"In our Catholic schools, we believe in the transformative power of education of the whole person," Disney said. "We strive to provide an academically rigorous and excellent education—and a culture infused with Catholic values and teachings. Your generosity can help us to provide scholarships, educational materials and a pathway to a brighter future."

On behalf of these three ministries, Father Moriarty offered his gratitude to the Gala audience.

"Thank you for your generosity. And may the blessings of giving be showered upon each and every one of you," he said. "Let us continue to be the light that brightens the lives of others. God bless you."

(Anyone wanting to make a donation to support the archdiocese's Catholic schools, Catholic Charities agencies and Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary can do so by connecting to the following link: [bit.ly/49eCKoV](https://bit.ly/49eCKoV). Checks can also be sent to Legacy Gala, c/o Office of Stewardship and Development, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. Make checks out to "Archdiocese of Indianapolis" and note "Legacy Gala" on the memo line.) †

## Would you like to nominate someone for the 2025 Legacy Award? Do so by March 31

The archdiocese is currently accepting nominations for a faith-filled individual or couple to receive the Legacy Award at the 2025 Legacy Gala.

There are three ways to nominate someone for the honor in 2025: share

your nomination on the website, [www.archindy.org/LegacyGalaNomination](http://www.archindy.org/LegacyGalaNomination); send your nomination by e-mail to [LegacyGala@archindy.org](mailto:LegacyGala@archindy.org), or send it in the mail to Legacy Gala, c/o Office of Stewardship and Development, 1400

N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.

The following information is needed for your nomination to be considered:

- 1) name of nominee and their parish;
- 2) address, e-mail address and phone number of nominee;
- 3) your name, parish

name, address, e-mail address and phone number; 4) a narrative of 250-500 words explaining why you are nominating this individual(s).

The deadline for nominations is March 31. †



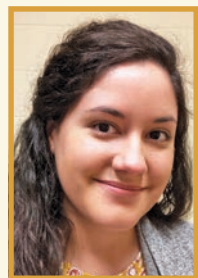
# Spring Marriage Supplement

A special section of The Criterion celebrating Christian marriage

## Be transformed: Church offers opportunity for marriage accompaniment

By Gabriela Ross

One of the most popular readings at weddings is 1 Cor 13: “Love is patient, love is kind . . . .” A lesser known but favorite reading of mine is



Rom 12:1-2, 9-18: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds. . . . Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.”

I love this reading because it reminds married couples of the source of their love, the meaning of their vocation and the core of their mission toward one another and for the world.

Whether a couple is preparing for their vocation of marriage, embracing the joy of newly married love or perfecting their love through the joys and trials of life, this Scripture passage provides an opportunity to get back to the basics, remember the power of God’s love and grace in our relationships, and be encouraged for the work of charity in the world, which is the vocation of all the laity.

While this reading calls married couples back to the source of their vocation, the Church envisions that couples will be supported in their married vocation.

Pope Francis explains: “The goal is to walk an important stretch of road together with couples in the journey of life, even after the wedding, especially during moments of crisis or discouragement” (preface to *Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life*, Dicastery of Laity, Family and Life, 2022).

The pope is painting a vision of accompaniment for married life. Indeed, in 2022, the universal Church was called to reflect on pastoral ministry to married couples before and in the years after their wedding. The Church envisions that “couples need to be invited to become part of the ordinary family ministry in their parish or the Church community with which they have established some connection” (*Catechumenal Pathways*, #84).

What does this mean? As a Church, we should not only be preparing couples for marriage, but also supporting them in their married life, at the local parish level. This is a form of pastoral accompaniment and truly a moment of ongoing evangelization and catechesis.

In the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, we partner with pastors and parish leaders to create a vision for marriage ministry at the local parish level. Through our website and monthly newsletter, we spread the word about great events and opportunities for married couples to grow in their vocation. We also invite couples celebrating a milestone anniversary to participate in the annual Archdiocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass, to be renewed in their joy and commitment to their wedding vows.

In this issue of *The Criterion*, I invite you to learn about the apostolates and conferences available in central and southern Indiana to support the married couples in your community.

If your parish is interested in supporting the evangelization, catechesis and pastoral accompaniment of married couples, we would love to connect with you and have a conversation.

(Gabriela Ross serves as director of the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The Office of Marriage and Family Life exists to promote the vocation, restoration and mission of the family. Learn more about this ministry at [marriageandfamily.archindy.org](http://marriageandfamily.archindy.org).) †



Aaron and Ava Pfeiffer, members of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis, pose with their 1-year-old son Ezra. (Submitted photo)

## Two upcoming retreats give opportunities for married couples to reconnect

By Natalie Hoefer

Unless couples devote intentional time to communicate, pray and have fun, marriage can become a stagnant, unfulfilling routine of tasks repeated day in and day out. Spouses can become disconnected or even become strangers to each other.

A conference or weekend retreat focused on spouses reconnecting can not only break the routine cycle but pave the way for a healthier, more fulfilling, Christ-centered marriage.

Two such opportunities will be available to married couples in the archdiocese this spring.

The first to take place is a Together in Holiness (TIH) marriage enrichment conference at St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis on April 27. This event is an offering of the national St. John Paul II Foundation and offers an additional opportunity for couples to grow in holiness through an optional TIH Formation Series with other couples after the retreat.

The second opportunity is a Celebrate Marriage Getaway Weekend at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis on May 31-June 2. Organized by Celebrate Marriage, a local ministry founded by members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, the weekend will offer opportunities to celebrate fellowship, fun and community with other married couples.

### ‘The domestic Church is made for community’

As a father of 10 (and “husband of one”), Ryan Hanning is familiar with the different directions in which family life can pull spouses.

“So many things compete for our attention,” says

Hanning, the presenter for the upcoming TIH conference at St. Jude. “It’s essential that we make time to come together in prayer and refocus on the most important first things in family life—and specifically in the life of the Church, to be reminded of the mission God has given them and that the Church has entrusted them with.”

The theme for the April 27 conference is “Family: a Seedbed of Vocations.”

“It’s about the eucharistic mission of families and how families can develop vocations by virtue of being a family,” says Hanning, a professor of Church history and theology and fellow of the non-profit San Juan Diego Institute based in Phoenix. “The family is the perfect and preferred setting to be able to hear that call.”

Hanning will offer two talks during the 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. conference, which begins with Mass. Archdiocesan director of vocations Father Michael Keucher will also speak at the event. Opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation, adoration and Benediction will be available during the lunch break.

“Family life is messy and full of challenges,” Hanning notes. “To be able to walk and navigate those challenges with other parents who know the real-life struggle and challenging call to raise our children as saints is something we ought to do more of.”

To help in that goal, the TIH experience includes an optional opportunity for couples to form TIH Formation Series groups.

The seven-part series for small groups offers “year-round marriage enrichment for Catholic spouses [through] a community of accompaniment with other like-minded couples, equipping them with the formation, encouragement, support and practical tools to grow together in holiness

See **RETREAT**, page 12

### Editor’s Note:

Twice a year, The Criterion produces Marriage Supplements celebrating recent and upcoming Catholic marriages while also sharing the works of the archdiocese’s Office of Marriage and Family Life.

This current supplement features 43 couples who submitted their wedding announcement to The Criterion.

It also features an article on two marriage enrichment opportunities and an article on two marriage apostolates. The supplement also provides a schedule of upcoming marriage preparation programs and information on how to submit marriage announcements for our next Marriage Supplement in August 2024.)

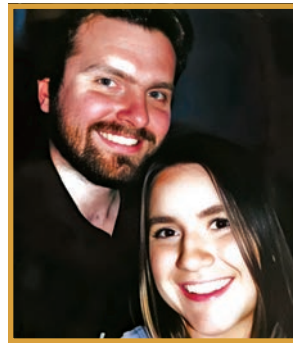
# Wedding Announcements

## Altenberger-Collins



Allison Mary Altenberger and Sean Patrick Collins will be married on May 10 at Resurrection Church in Miramar Beach, Fla. The bride is the daughter of Pete and Jackie Altenberger. The groom is the son of Charlie and Debbie Collins.

## Confer-Cyzon



Caroline Morrell Confer and Ethan Gregory Cyzon will be married on May 10 at St. Matthew the Apostle Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Hans and Linda Confer. The groom is the son of Jeffery and Renee Cyzon.

## Gerstbauer-Myers



Monica Kay Gerstbauer and Tyler Jacob Myers were married on Oct. 28, 2023, at St. Louis Church in Batesville. The bride is the daughter of Mike and Cindy Gerstbauer. The groom is the son of Donald and Susan Myers.

## Huffine-Boudreau



Holly Huffine and Justin Boudreau will be married on April 12 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Cheryl and the late Brian Huffine. The groom is the son of Donald and Joi Boudreau.

## Leon-Stalf



Mary Letha Leon-Stalf and Ralph Harold Stalf, Jr., had their marriage convalidated on Oct. 26, 2023, at St. Martin Church, a campus of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County.

## Padgett-Rivelli



Grace Elizabeth Padgett and Nicholas Don Rivelli were married on Jan. 27 at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Kevin Padgett and Shannon McGinnis. The groom is the son of Joe and Melinda Rivelli.

## Amberger-Deal



Rachel Lynn Amberger and Nicholas Isaiah Deal will be married on May 11 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Enochsburg, a campus of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Decatur County. The bride is the daughter of Kurt and Becky Amberger. The groom is the son of Brayton and Jeneen Deal.

## Dewes-Castle



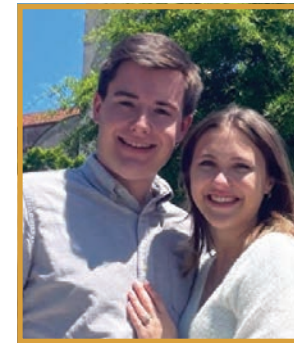
Elizabeth Dewes and Tyler Castle were married on Feb. 10 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of James and Rita Dewes. The groom is the son of Roger and Marlene Castle.

## Ginn-Schuman



Rebecca Elizabeth Ginn and Mitchell Kenneth Schuman will be married on June 15 at St. Joseph Church, a campus of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County. The bride is the daughter of Daniel and Deborah Ginn. The groom is the son of Kenneth and Cathy Schuman.

## Jewell-Lewis



Ashley Lauren Jewell and Andrew Christopher Lewis will be married on May 18 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Steve and Elizabeth Jewell. The groom is the son of Christopher Lewis and Sandy Quinlivan.

## Lorentz-Slovacek



Sydney Kate Lorentz and Brendan Alexander Slovacek will be married on July 5 at St. Barnabas Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of John and Tasha Lorentz. The groom is the son of the Mark and Cynthia Slovacek.

## Quinn-Romero



Lisa Courtney Quinn and Marcelo Avila Romero will be married on March 9 at St. Thomas More Church in Mooresville.

## Awada-Burt



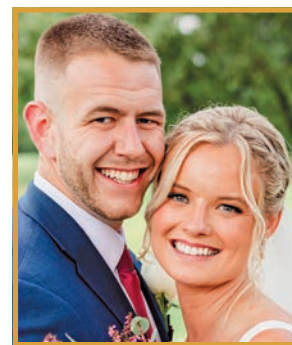
Christina Odile Awada and Alexander George Burt were married on Sept. 8, 2023, at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Ed and Marie Awada. The groom is the son of Kenneth and Paula Burt.

## Duncan-Murphy



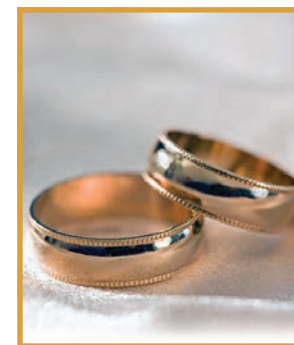
Erin Brooke Duncan and Joey Martin Murphy will be married on June 15 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Jerry and Elaine Duncan. The groom is the son of Jim and Shirley Murphy.

## Gray-Martini



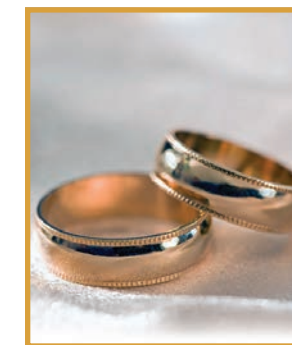
Meghan Elizabeth Gray and Michael Jerome Martini were married on July 8, 2023, at St. Martin Church, a campus of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County. The bride is the daughter of Steve Gray and Laurie Fisher. The groom is the son of Bill and Cathy Martini.

## Kay-Callaghan



Erin Margaret Kay and Nicholas Vincent Callaghan will be married on April 13 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Michael Kay and Laurie Sirene. The groom is the son of Jerome and Anne Callaghan.

## Lucchese-Brooks



Grace Genevieve Antonella Lucchese and Carson Robert Brooks were married on July 7, 2023, at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Matthew Lucchese and Mary Habiby-Lucchese. The groom is the son of Martin and Jennifer Brooks.

## Rake-Irving



Olivia Grace Rake and James William Irving will be married on May 4 at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Theresa and the late Thomas Rake. The groom is the son of Paul and Therese Irving.

## Bennett-O'Connor



Emily Ann Bennett and Nicholas Daniel O'Connor will be married on June 7 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Craig and Mary Jane Bennett. The groom is the son of John and Jane O'Connor.

## Fey-Dill



Laura Anne Fey and Michael Grant Dill will be married on June 21 at St. Jude Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Steve and Marnie Fey. The groom is the son of Joe and Joelle Dill.

## Haase-Hooker



Stella Maria Hooker-Haase and Mark Troy Hooker had their marriage convalidated on July 31, 2023, at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Bloomington.

## Keller-Weiler



Sophia Keller and Joe Weiler will be married on July 5 at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Bloomington. The bride is the daughter of Joe and Amy Keller. The groom is the son of Don and Lisa Weiler.

## Matchett-LaCoursiere



Roarke O'Shea Matchett and Chase LaCoursiere will be married on June 29 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Ashley and Teresa Matchett. The groom is the son of Darin and Laurie LaCoursiere.

## Reams-Wright



Sarah Lee Reams and Ethan Lee Wright will be married on June 22 at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Bloomington. The bride is the daughter of Stephen and Anne Reams. The groom is the son of Aaron Wright and Melissa White.

## Bopp-Crowder



Lydia Grace Bopp and Seth Adam Crowder will be married on April 20 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of James, Jr., and Christine Bopp. The groom is the son of Rick and Sarah Bender.

## Ferguson-Mohr



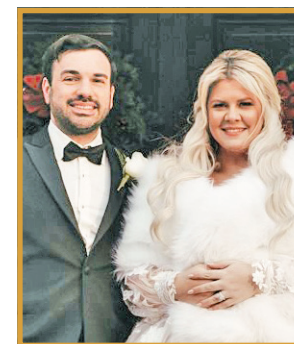
Lexi Ferguson and Drew Mohr were married on Aug. 19, 2023, at St. Matthew the Apostle Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Tom and Terri Ferguson. The groom is the son of Andy and Lorna Mohr.

## Halloran-Hernick



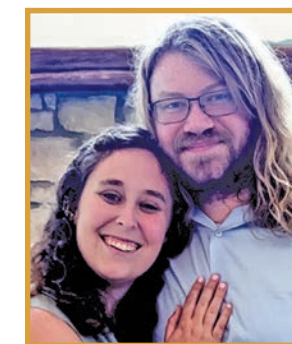
Delaney Terese Halloran and Michael Thomas Hernick were married on Nov. 11, 2023, at Christ the King Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Kevin and Jennifer Halloran. The groom is the son of Donald and Deborah Hernick.

## Kerby-Dickinson



Kelsey Ann Kerby and Andrew Douglas Dickinson were married on Dec. 30, 2023, at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Richard and Mary Ann Kerby. The groom is the son of Douglas and Karen Dickinson.

## McConkey-Albers



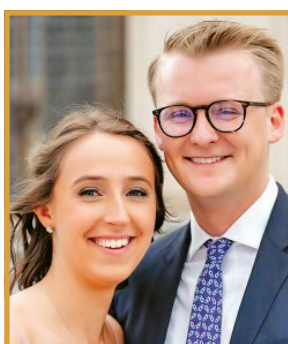
Sarah Anne McConkey and Zachary Thomas Albers will be married on May 11 at St. Agnes Church in Nashville. The bride is the daughter of Terry and Joan McConkey. The groom is the son of George and Denise Albers.

## Robinson-Rutter



Briana Brooke Robinson and Evan Robert Rutter will be married on June 8 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Ron Hart and Robin Robinson. The groom is the son of Robert and Dawn Rutter.

## Burger-Anderson



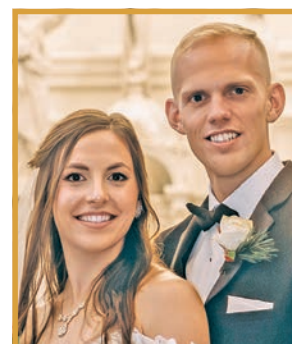
Laura Rita Burger and Carl Eugene Anderson will be married on March 23 at St. Mary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Paul and Jennifer Burger. The groom is the son of Chris and the late Dawn Anderson.

## Flynn-Lutz



Helen Eileen Flynn and Daniel Kerry Lutz were married on Dec. 31, 2023, at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Joseph and Kathleen Flynn. The groom is the son of Kerry and Gail Bogordos Lutz.

## Hornak-Cope



Sarah Elizabeth Hornak and Dylan David Cope were married on Dec. 30, 2023, at St. Mary Church, a campus of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond. The bride is the daughter of Steve and Angela Hornak. The groom is the son of David Cope and Dianna Cope-Steinbrunner.

## Landini-Sanders



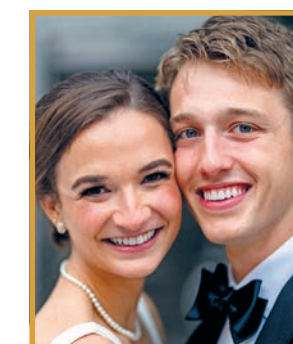
Abbey Lynn Landini and Anthony Christian Sanders will be married on June 21 at St. Agnes Church in Nashville. The bride is the daughter of Bruce and Amber Landini. The groom is the son of Anthony and Christine Sanders.

## Orme-Leising



Macey Claire Orme and Adam Christopher Leising were married on Oct. 6, 2023, at St. Mary Church in Rushville. The bride is the daughter of Gregory and Michelle Orme. The groom is the son of Allen and Kristina Leising.

## Sasso-Schmahl



Willa Ruth Sasso and Andrew Douglas Schmahl were married on Oct. 28, 2023, at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Rick and April Sasso. The groom is the son of Jeffrey and Donna Schmahl.

# Wedding Announcements

## Schultz-Knight



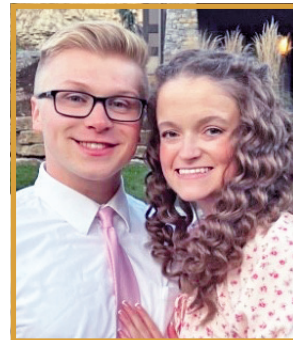
Valerie Alyson Schultz and Joseph Henry Knight will be married on March 23 at Christ the King Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of Robert and Diane Schultz. The groom is the son of Dale and Maria Knight.

## Shepler-Gatto



Allison Kathleen Shepler and Thomas Vincent Gatto will be married on April 13 at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of David and Kathleen Shepler. The groom is the son of Anthony and Cynthia Gatto.

## Tuttle-Hudepohl



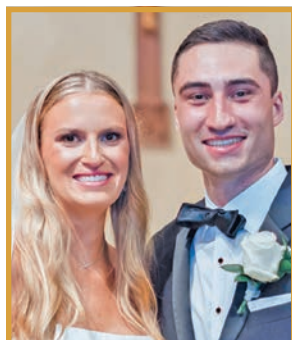
Lindsey Renee Tuttle and Gabriel Walter Hudepohl will be married on July 6 at St. Nicholas Church in Ripley County. The bride is the daughter of Tim and Theresa Tuttle. The groom is the son of Anthony and Rita Hudepohl.

## Shafer-Cozzens



Olivia Ann Shafer and Paul Anthony Cozzens will be married on April 13 at SS. Mary and John Church in Evansville (Diocese of Evansville). The bride is the daughter of Matt and Cheryl Shafer. The groom is the son of Chris and Charlene Cozzens.

## Shishman-Mangas



Megan Marie Shishman and Jacob Owen Mangas were married on July 15, 2023, at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Bloomington. The bride is the daughter of Scott and Deb Shishman. The groom is the son of Tim and Ann Mangas.

## Vasil-Skelly



Mary Therese Vasil and Thomas James Skelly will be married on July 6 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis. The bride is the daughter of David and Anne Marie Vasil. The groom is the son of Jerome and Lydia Skelly.

## RETREAT

continued from page 9

as spouses and parents and to form their children in the Catholic faith," according to the TIH website.

Aaron Pfeiffer, who with his wife Ava took part in a group last year, says the series helped the couple understand that "the domestic Church is made for community."

As a young couple—the members of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis were married in September 2022 and have a 1-year-old son—the Pfeiffers appreciated having "other couples to talk to and bounce ideas off of."

The Formation Series consists of seven meetings through the course of a year. Each meeting centers on a topic that applies to an overall theme that changes each year. After sharing a meal, couples read Scripture and discuss the topic laid out in the TIH material.

"My favorite part of the meeting is the 'Bring It Home' section where they give practical things for you and your spouse to discuss and implement at home," says Aaron. "It forces us to communicate about what we learned in the previous session and helps you get more out of [the series]."

The Pfeiffers plan to participate in the next TIH formation series.

"You have to put your spouse before your kids," says Ava. "Your kids need so much, you can lose sight of your marriage. You have to keep in mind that your marriage is still the big piece of that foundation, keeping that first. Then the family flows from there. Your children learn from your example."

### A getaway to 'connect, have fun'

In 2010, Marcy and Tom Renken attended a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Retreat eight years into their marriage.

"We came out of it on fire for each other and for marriage being a covenant calling," Tom told *The Criterion* in a July 15, 2016, article.

The Renkens, members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, founded Celebrate Marriage in 2011. The ministry's mission is to help Catholic couples of all ages "live your marriage by God's design, reconnect, and have fun" by offering Christ-centered enrichment, says Marcy.

Those opportunities cover four areas: Celebrate Romance, a February dinner and dance; Celebrate Fun, an evening of games and competitions; Celebrate Marriage, an annual day-long conference focused on improving relationships and keeping God at the center of marriage; and an overarching theme of Celebrate Community.

That last theme is to help couples understand "your marriage is bigger than you are," Tom explains. "It's not just for the two of you but also for your children, your friends, your family, your Church."

Joy is another overarching aspect of Celebrate Marriage.

"We hear all the time, 'Marriage is work.' Yes, marriage can have challenges," says Tom. "But we believe that, with God and the right attitude, it's meant to be joyful, not all work."

That joy will shine through as the ministry offers its first Celebrate Marriage Getaway Weekend at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis on May 31-June 2.

"It's going to hit on all four areas of what our ministry offers," says Marcy.

"The theme of the weekend will be 'Connection'—connection to each other as a couple, to our family, to our community and to our faith."

The event will include talks offering tools for "a stronger, more connected marriage," she says.

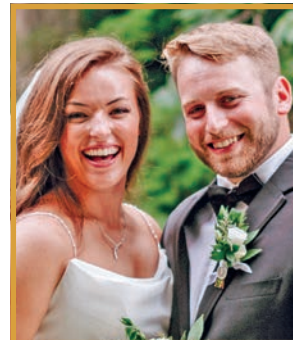
Throughout the weekend, Marcy adds, participants will have the opportunity to connect with other couples "to share experiences, build friendships and grow together—with lots of fun activities, too!"

She says she and Tom are "very excited" about the weekend getaway.

"We've been wanting to do some sort of weekend experience for some time now," she says. "It gives couples the opportunity to experience all our events in a single weekend and come away with new energy in their marriage and keep the spark alive in their marriage."

The retreat came about through Jennifer Burger, program manager of Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, contacting the Renkens.

## Weiss-Fritchley



Allyson M. Weiss and Eric R. Fritchley were married on July 8, 2023, at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg. The bride is the daughter of Bryan and Kathy Weiss. The groom is the son of William and Karen Fritchley.

"Knowing how meaningful our Tobit marriage prep weekends are for couples getting ready to receive the sacrament of marriage, we wanted to offer a program that would bring couples from newly married to many years of marriage together to hear a speaker and offer an opportunity to reflect and celebrate the bond each shares as husband and wife," says Burger.

Her idea and the Renkens' vision for a weekend retreat meshed. When the weekend of May 31 through June 2 suddenly became free, Burger says she knew the event "was meant to be, and we're delighted to partner with Celebrate Marriage to sponsor the inaugural Celebrate Marriage Getaway Weekend here at Fatima this year."

The Renkens are passionate about strengthening and growing Christ-centered marriages. They've helped couples start Celebrate Marriage at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ and St. Joan of Arc parishes in Indianapolis. They've also helped establish a Celebrate Romance dinner/dance at St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville.

"Marriage is the foundation of our families, which is the foundation of the Church, the foundation of communities and the world around us," says Marcy. "Without strong marriages, everything starts to crumble."

*(The April 27 Together in Holiness conference at St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$54 per couple and \$35 per individual through May 11, after which the price is \$64 per couple and \$40 per individual. Childcare for children ages 2-12 is \$5 per child. Scholarships for couples and individuals are available. For more information or to register, go to [forlifeandfamily.org/events/th24-inin](http://forlifeandfamily.org/events/th24-inin) or contact Heather Grimes at 832-779-1070 or [heather@forlifeandfamily.org](mailto:heather@forlifeandfamily.org). The Celebrate Marriage Getaway Weekend will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis on May 31-June 2. The event starts with check-in at 6 p.m. on Friday and ends after 11 a.m. Mass on Sunday. The cost per couple is \$450 through May 17, and \$500 after. The cost includes one room for two nights, three meals on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. To register, go to [bit.ly/CMGetaway2024](http://bit.ly/CMGetaway2024) or contact Lisa Coons at 317-545-7681 or [lcoons@archindy.org](mailto:lcoons@archindy.org). For questions on the event, contact Jennifer Burger at 317-545-7681, ext. 106, or [jburger@archindy.org](mailto:jburger@archindy.org). For more information about Celebrate Marriage, go to [celebratemarriageministry.com](http://celebratemarriageministry.com).) †*



Couples pose during a Celebrate Fun event, sponsored by the Celebrate Marriage ministry, at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood in 2019. (Submitted photo)

# Apostolates help married couples grow in faith, develop supportive community

By Natalie Hoefler

Pope Francis recently commented on the importance of marriage and the family.

Marriage is “an extraordinary good, a good of extraordinary value for everyone—for the spouses themselves, for their children, for all families with whom they form relationships, for the entire Church, for all of humanity,” he told members of the Roman Rota, the Vatican-based marriage tribunal, on Jan. 27.

But marriage can pose challenges. Perhaps its learning to find balance, as Kathy and Victor Lara of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis experienced. Or it could be communications, as was the case for Kevin and Judy Killigrew of St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington.

To improve their marriage and grow in holiness, each couple became involved in a Catholic apostolate—the Christian Family Movement for the Laras and Teams of Our Lady for the Killigrews.

Such apostolates help Catholic couples live out their sacramental marriage in fellowship with other Catholic couples. The result is the growth in holiness, as Pope Francis said, “for the spouses themselves, for their children, for all families with whom they form relationships, for the entire Church, for all of humanity.”

## CFM is like ‘a school for marriage’

Kathy and Victor Lara had struggled for a good part of their 18-year marriage.

“I took care of the children, and he did work, and we couldn’t find a way to balance everything and how to work as a team,” says Kathy. “For years, we struggled with that and were considering divorce.”

Joining the Christian Family Movement (CFM) at their home parish of St. Gabriel the Archangel in Indianapolis turned their marriage around.

“It made a great impact on us, a 180-degree change,” she says.

Victor is quick to agree, noting that CFM helped the couple realize “we have to invite God to live with us, otherwise

we can’t find that perfect balance.”

CFM, which began in Chicago in the 1940s, is listed in the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ Directory of Lay Movements, Organizations and Professional Associations.

According to its website, CFM “strives to equip families to intentionally address the concerns facing families in modern society, to help them discover ways to grow in holiness themselves and as families, and, ultimately, to bring the light of Christ into their environments.”

Members of the movement meet every two weeks in small groups of couples, allowing time for prayer, reflection on Scripture and social time.

During the meetings, they also use CFM books to discuss questions on topics affecting families and society, employing a method of “observe, judge, act.” This method allows couples “to see the facts of their everyday lives, to judge them in the light of the Gospel and Catholic social teaching, and to act on their new insights and change and transform their immediate [lives] as well as the larger society,” the website explains.

“We act by making a commitment,” says Kathy. “Like, if we see we’re not communicating well, we focus on each couple and what they need to work on for two weeks and then see how it went two weeks later. It’s like accompanying couples throughout marriage.”

Each small group—and a few times a year, all the groups together—also gather as families for picnics, game nights and other fun gatherings. By couples living out their faith, she says, “We believe children will see their example and live out their faith, too.”

Priests play a large role in CFM. As a local coordinating couple, the Laras meet with a priest who “guides us and tells us more about the topic [of an upcoming meeting]. Then we go talk to the families with more understanding. It’s important for them to share their knowledge with us.”

While Hispanics comprise the majority of local participants—CFM is also active at St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis—the movement is for all Catholics, regardless of race, ethnicity or language.

“To me, this is a school for marriage,” says Victor. “We’re in love with the Christian Family Movement because it helps our families, it helps our kids, and it helps others.”

## TOOL is ‘a blessing for our marriage’

After more than 35 years of marriage and raising three children, Kevin and Judy Killigrew were seeking a change.

“We were just looking for more spirituality in our marriage,” says Kevin.

“Something to help build our faith as a married couple,” Judy adds. “To work to have God as the center of our marriage and just to grow stronger in our marriage.”

They learned about Teams of Our Lady (TOOL) through their home parish, St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington, and joined six years ago.

“It’s been a blessing for our marriage,” says Judy, noting she and Kevin celebrated their 43rd anniversary on Jan. 17.

The TOOL movement began in France in 1938. In 2002, it received official recognition from the Vatican as a movement.

TOOL is “an international lay movement in the Catholic Church designed to enrich marriage spirituality and make good marriages better,” explains the apostolate’s website.

Through monthly meetings of small groups of couples (called Teams) from a local area (Teams are not parish-based), it says, TOOL provides “a proven method of increasing and improving prayer life, which will help couples grow closer to God and each other. At the same time, their family will reap the benefits as well.”

The Killigrews have found this to be true for their own Team, one of seven in the Bloomington area. Eight Teams are also active on the west side of Indianapolis.

While the Killigrews appreciate their group of longer-married couples, Judy says she wishes she and Kevin had known about TOOL when they were young and starting a family.

“The benefit of Teams of Our Lady with younger married couples starting life together and having children is they have a wonderful support group to bounce off questions,” says Judy. “I see such a neat bond developing between

those mothers and the husbands that I would’ve given anything to have when I was their age.”

During the monthly gatherings rotated among Team members’ homes, couples enjoy a meal, sharing their highs and lows of the prior month. The group then moves into a time of Gospel reading, prayer intentions and discussion based on TOOL reading material.

Each Team also has a priest as a spiritual advisor who serves as a guide, joins their meetings and offers Team retreats.

TOOL “keeps couples praying as a couple,” says Dominican Father Dennis Woerter, spiritual advisor for the Killigrew’s group and a parochial vicar at St. Paul Catholic Center. “That’s basic, but that’s something that is really important.”

Prayer is lived out in each couple’s marriage through TOOL’s “Endeavors”: regular Scripture reading, daily individual prayer, daily couple and family prayer, a monthly meeting of the spouse to discern God’s movement in their marriage, a private endeavor for improvement, and participation in an annual Team retreat.

“It’s a good way to mix socially and spiritually together,” says Kevin. “We support each other through health challenges, raising kids, kids growing up and moving out on their own.”

“That’s kind of what Teams is all about—creating a spiritual component in your life and sharing it with other couples.”

(For more information on the Christian Family Movement [CFM], go to [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org). To inquire about bringing CFM to your parish, contact Giovanni and Norma Chavez, 915-803-5840.

For more information on Teams of Our Lady in the Bloomington area, contact Kevin and Judy Killigrew at [jkilligrew@gmail.com](mailto:jkilligrew@gmail.com) or [kevinkilligrew@hotmail.com](mailto:kevinkilligrew@hotmail.com). For information about Teams in Indianapolis or elsewhere in the archdiocese, contact Rick and Andrea Rader at [lakemi-rc@teamsofourlady.org](mailto:lakemi-rc@teamsofourlady.org). For more information on Teams of Our Lady in general, go to [www.teamsofourlady.org](http://www.teamsofourlady.org).) †



Teams of Our Lady “Sector couples”—couples who coordinate smaller teams within a geographical area in the U.S.—pose for a photo in Our Lady of Loretto Church in Foxfield, Colo., during a training weekend in July of 2023. (Submitted photo)

# El Movimiento Familiar Cristiano es como ‘una escuela para el matrimonio’

Por Natalie Hoefler

Kathy y Víctor Lara habían enfrentado dificultades durante buena parte de sus 18 años de matrimonio.

“Yo cuidaba a los niños y él trabajaba, y no encontrábamos la manera de equilibrarlo todo y de trabajar en equipo”—recuerda Kathy—. “Durante años, tuvimos dificultades por eso y estuvimos considerando divorciarnos.”

Unirse al Movimiento Familiar Cristiano de su parroquia San Gabriel Arcángel de Indianápolis hizo que su matrimonio diera un vuelco.

“Causó un gran impacto en nuestro matrimonio, un cambio de 180 grados,” afirma.

Víctor se apresura a estar de acuerdo, señalando que el Movimiento Familiar ayudó a la pareja a darse cuenta de que “tenemos que invitar a Dios a vivir con nosotros; de lo contrario, no podremos encontrar ese equilibrio perfecto.”

El Movimiento Familiar Cristiano, que comenzó en Chicago en la década de 1940, figura en el Directorio de movimientos laicos, organizaciones y asociaciones profesionales de los obispos católicos de Estados Unidos.

Según su página web, el Movimiento Familiar “se esfuerza por equipar a las familias para abordar intencionadamente las preocupaciones a las que se enfrentan en la sociedad moderna, para ayudarles a descubrir formas de crecer en santidad ellos mismos y como familias y, en última instancia, para llevar la luz de Cristo a sus entornos.”

Los miembros del movimiento se reúnen cada dos semanas en pequeños grupos de parejas, dejando tiempo para la oración, la reflexión sobre las Escrituras y tiempo para socializar.

Durante las reuniones, también utilizan los libros del Movimiento Familiar para analizar temas que afectan a las familias y a la sociedad, empleando un método de “observar, juzgar, actuar,” mediante el cual las parejas pueden “ver los hechos de su vida cotidiana, juzgarlos a la luz del Evangelio y de la doctrina social católica, actuar a partir de sus nuevas percepciones y cambiar y transformar sus [vidas] inmediatas, así como la sociedad en general,” explica la página web.

“Actuamos al hacer un compromiso”—afirma Kathy—. “Por ejemplo, si vemos que no nos comunicamos bien, nos enfocamos en cada pareja y en lo que necesitan trabajar durante dos semanas y luego vemos cómo les ha ido dos semanas después. Es como un acompañamiento de la pareja durante el matrimonio.”

Cada pequeño grupo y algunas veces al año, todos los



Norma y Giovani Chávez, coordinadores del Movimiento Familiar Cristiano para Indiana y Ohio, se toman una selfie con los líderes y coordinadores de Indiana en la parroquia St. Patrick en Indianápolis el 29 de julio de 2023. (Foto enviada)

grupos juntos se reúnen también como familias para hacer picnics, noches de juegos y otras reuniones divertidas. Asegura que cuando la pareja vive su fe “creemos que los niños verán su ejemplo y vivirán también su fe.”

Los sacerdotes desempeñan un papel importante en el Movimiento Familiar. Como pareja coordinadora local, los Lara se reúnen con un sacerdote que “nos orienta y nos cuenta más sobre el tema [de la próxima reunión]. Así vamos a hablar con las familias equipados con una comprensión más amplia; por eso es importante que nos compartan sus conocimientos.”

Aunque los hispanos constituyen la mayoría de los participantes locales (el Movimiento Familiar

también tiene presencia en la parroquia de San Patricio de Indianápolis), es para todos los católicos, independientemente de su raza, etnia o idioma.

“Para mí, esta es una escuela para el matrimonio” declara Víctor. “Estamos enamorados del Movimiento Familiar Cristiano porque ayuda a nuestras familias, ayuda a nuestros hijos y ayuda a los demás.”

(Para obtener más información sobre el Movimiento Familiar Cristiano, visite [www.cfm.org](http://www.cfm.org). Para informarse sobre cómo llevar el Movimiento Familiar a su parroquia, comuníquese con Giovani y Norma Chávez al 915-803-5840.) †

## Pre-Cana Retreats, Tobit Weekend and One in Christ program prepare engaged couples for marriage

Criterion staff report

Three marriage preparation programs offered in the archdiocese—the Pre-Cana Retreat, Tobit Weekend and One in Christ—help prepare engaged couples for the sacrament of marriage as well as the challenges of married life.

Early registration is recommended for all programs, as each fills up quickly.

**Pre-Cana Retreats** cover skills for marriage, a catechesis on the sacrament of marriage and an introduction to the science and morals behind natural family planning. They are offered in English in Indianapolis and New Albany, and in Spanish in Columbus. The upcoming Pre-Cana Retreats are as follows:

Indianapolis—April 20-21 and Sept. 21-22 at Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. each day, \$200 per couple. More information and registration available at [cutt.ly/IndyPreCana2024](http://cutt.ly/IndyPreCana2024).

New Albany: The next one-day Pre-Cana Retreat in New Albany will take place in the fall; the date is still to be determined. For more information, call 812-923-8355, ext. 201, or go to [catalystcatholic.org/precana](http://catalystcatholic.org/precana).

**Tobit Weekend** retreats take place at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, and are offered in English. The cost is \$298, which includes program materials,

meals, snacks and two rooms for two nights.

The next retreats will take place on April 26-28 and June 28-30.

To register, go to [www.archindy.org/fatima/calendar/tobit.html](http://www.archindy.org/fatima/calendar/tobit.html). For registration questions, contact Lisa Coons at [lcoons@archindy.org](mailto:lcoons@archindy.org) or 317-545-7681. For more information about the program and its contents, contact Jennifer Burger at [jburger@archindy.org](mailto:jburger@archindy.org) or 317-545-7681, ext. 106.

**One in Christ** marriage preparation, which includes a medical panel to address questions on reproduction and fertility, is a three-day program spanning a weekend and the following Saturday. On Saturdays, the program runs from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., and on Sunday it runs from 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. The cost is \$399 per couple, which covers meals and materials. Scholarships are available for those with financial difficulty.

There are two upcoming One in Christ opportunities:

—April 6, 7 and 20 and June 1, 2 and 22 at St. Elizabeth Seton Parish, 10655 Haverstick Road, in Carmel, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese).

To register, go to [oicmarriage.org/seminar-info](http://oicmarriage.org/seminar-info). For more information call 317-600-5629, e-mail [info@OICIndy.com](mailto:info@OICIndy.com) or go to [oicmarriage.org](http://oicmarriage.org).

Live retreats offer an invaluable experience for engaged couples and are the expected formation option.

However, for couples who

## Archbishop Thompson to celebrate Wedding Anniversary Mass on Aug. 25

The archdiocesan Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass, to be celebrated by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson, will take place at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis, at 2 p.m. on Aug. 25. A reception will follow across the street at the Archbishop Edward T. O’Meara Catholic Center.

The Mass and reception, sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, are for couples of the archdiocese married

sacramentally in the Catholic Church and celebrating an anniversary ending in 0 or 5.

All couples celebrating an anniversary ending in 0 or 5 who register will receive a certificate.

The event is free, but registration is required and will open in May at [tinyurl.com/AnniversaryMass2024](http://tinyurl.com/AnniversaryMass2024) (case sensitive).

For additional questions, contact Claudia Corona at 317-236-7310 or [ccorona@archindy.org](mailto:ccorona@archindy.org). †

## Couples may announce engagement or marriage in *The Criterion* in August

Engagement announcements will be published in an August issue of *The Criterion* for couples planning to marry between Aug. 9, 2024, and Jan. 31, 2025, in a marriage that is recognized by the Church as a valid sacramental or valid natural marriage.

Submissions may also be sent by couples who wed in a marriage as described above between Feb. 1 and Aug. 8 if they did not publish their engagement in *The Criterion*.

The wedding announcement

form is available online at [cutt.ly/CriterionWeddings](http://cutt.ly/CriterionWeddings).

An engagement or wedding photo may be sent to [alewis@archindy.org](mailto:alewis@archindy.org). Digital photos must be clear, high-resolution images with the couple close together. Photos can also be mailed to Ann Lewis, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN, 46202. To receive the photo back, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Due to print quality, Xerox copies of photos will not be accepted. †

experience significant difficulties attending a live retreat, including but not limited to preparing for marriage while out of state or country, being deployed in the armed forces or inflexible shift work at a hospital or factory, the online and self-paced

Joy-Filled Marriage course ensures that no one misses out on valuable and comprehensive marriage formation. It is available in English and Spanish, and the cost is \$105.

For more information or to register, go to [cutt.ly/IndyPreCana2024](http://cutt.ly/IndyPreCana2024). †

# SIMPLY CATHOLIC

## Mercy in marriage is ‘oil that keeps its many parts running smoothly’

By Bill Dodds

(OSV News)—On their wedding day, a bride and groom may have stars in their eyes. But they have rocks in their heads if they think their partner isn’t going to:

—Drive them nuts. Sometimes.

—Take them for granted. On occasion.

—Do something that truly hurts them. Once in a while.

Husband does it to wife. Wife does it to husband.

There are moments—there can be periods—when those wedding-day stars are replaced with long-time-married sparks of anger. Even in a happy marriage. Even in a marriage filled with joy and grace, because:

A marriage is made up of two imperfect people. (Yes, yes, your betrothed was perfect! But how he or she has changed! Or more correctly, how your perception has improved.) That’s why each person, at times, needs to seek forgiveness. Why each, at times, needs to offer it.

Enter mercy. Wedding homilists and marriage vows speak of love, honor and cherish, but mercy pops up again and again as the marriage progresses. And with mercy, that relationship does make progress. It broadens, deepens, intensifies.

If love is the engine that drives a marriage, mercy is the oil that keeps its many parts running smoothly.

What’s in this amazing fluid that goes such a long way on cutting down friction? The glossary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* puts it this way: Mercy is “the loving kindness, compassion, or forbearance shown to one who offends [e.g., the mercy of God to us sinners].”

No couple gets very far down the road of life together without one person offending the other. And the other person offending the one. Those unpleasant mileposts can demand loving kindness, compassion and forbearance (that is, patience and leniency).

Wonderful in theory. Pretty darned tough sometimes in the real world. And marriage is no honeymoon. It’s as real as real can get.

With all that in mind, here are a few points to consider:

To grow in love is to grow in mercy. God, all merciful, is love (1 Jn 4:8), and—thanks be to God!—a husband and wife were created in his image. But that growth in love and mercy isn’t like some beautiful piece of furniture delivered to your front door and placed in your home.

No, no, no. When it comes to virtues, God can be more like ... IKEA. Here’s a box crammed with parts. Here are the instructions. Now, put it together! (Yes, his helpline is always open.)

How do you do that? The good news: He gives each of us a lot of opportunities to get better at loving and being merciful. The bad news: He gives each of us a lot of opportunities to get better at loving and being merciful. Practice won’t make you perfect, but it will make you much, much better.



A couple walk along Gillson Beach holding hands as the sun sets in Wilmette, Ill. While no marriage—or spouse—is perfect, you can transform your union by striving to be kind, compassionate, patient and lenient. (OSV News photo/Jim Young, Reuters)

Mercy talks, and mercy listens. It’s no secret that one of the cornerstones of a happy and healthy marriage is communication. But not all talking is created equal. Sometimes it’s so easy. (“That coat looks good on you.”) Other times, not so much. Other times, it’s saying things that are hard to say or hearing things that are hard to hear. (“Over the last couple of months your drinking has ...”)

It’s a wonderful, heady feeling to realize that someone who knows you better than anyone else on Earth still loves you. Someone who, despite his or her awareness of your many faults and shortcomings, still truly loves you.

But that also means your spouse is the one who can tell you when you’ve started to go off course. Started to slip here or there. Started to become less like the person God created you to be.

Not that you or your loved one will ever reach that goal in this lifetime, but moving forward in that direction matters. To you. To him or her. To your marriage.

There’s a big—and important—difference between being merciful and being a doormat. A misguided sense of mercy can lead to a host of problems in a marriage. Mercy doesn’t overlook, ignore or simply dismiss an action or pattern that needs to be addressed.

At times, it can rightfully and wisely call for professional help. A case of the sniffles? Maybe a nice bowl of chicken soup. A ruptured appendix? Much more sophisticated and professional care.

A series of spats or a developing pattern of underappreciating each other? Perhaps a date night or setting up those evenings on a regular schedule. A larger and more complex problem—infidelity, addiction or abuse? Assistance from those educated and trained to help couples and individuals.

Mercy is always a choice—an action based on free will. Just as God will never force someone to be merciful, neither can one spouse force the other to act that way. Yes, over time, being merciful can seem like an automatic response, but that’s only because—as the years have passed—a person learns to offer mercy with grace and speed.

It may appear effortless, but each time, whether for a small misdeed or large offense, mercy demands an action. Or, rather, four actions.

Being merciful is making the decision to be kind, compassionate, patient and lenient.

In “*Misericordiae Vultus*,” Pope Francis’ 2015 message announcing the Jubilee of Mercy, the Holy Father wrote:

*As we can see in sacred Scripture, mercy is a key word that indicates God’s action toward us. He does not limit himself merely to affirming his love, but makes it visible and tangible.*

*Love, after all, can never be just an abstraction. By its very nature, it indicates something concrete: intentions, attitudes and behaviors that are shown in daily living. The mercy of God is his loving concern for each one of us. He feels responsible; that is, he desires our well-being and he wants to see us happy, full of joy and peaceful.*

*This is the path which the merciful love of Christians must also travel. As the Father loves, so do his children. Just as he is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other (#10).*

So, you are called to be merciful to that wonderful, amazing, loving—and imperfect—person you married.

(Bill Dodds writes from Washington.) †



A pair of wedding bands symbolizing the sacrament of marriage is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Isabel Church in Sanibel, Fla. God helps married couples build up the virtues of mercy and forgiveness in their relationship by giving them many opportunities to practice them. (OSV News photo/CNS filer, Gregory A. Shemitz)

## Journey of the Heart/Jennifer Burger

## May we have the courage to heal, to forgive, to love—to truly be human

We tend to think of winter as a time of hibernation. And on a recent walk with our dog in my neighborhood, there was evidence of this all around me.



I saw very few people outside. Passing by the houses of those we've come to be acquainted with on our frequent summer walks, I wondered how they were doing. I noticed the yards and trees barren of color. I became aware that "life" exists within these homes and in nature this time of the year—we just don't see it.

There is wonder and mystery in what is hidden—and within this, we have opportunities to find discovery and revelation.

One needs only to look at the life of Jesus to understand this. We find no record of his "hidden life" between the ages of 12 and 30, but we understand this was a part of his life during which he grew and developed in stature and knowledge.

His human nature was shaped by his holy parents to be worthy of his divine nature, so that all would come to believe and be eternally united with the Father.

All that is hidden in the life of Jesus, and his nature

as fully God and fully human is revealed in the paschal mystery. I think of this often when I'm in eucharistic adoration. Jesus holds nothing back!

But what about us? Do we hold back? Do we keep pieces of our lives to ourselves, hidden from others? And in particular, hidden from God?

We all have some kind of "hidden life," whether it be a deep-rooted trauma or some part of our sinful human nature. We may prefer to keep these parts of our lives to ourselves.

Our wounds may be too painful to share. We are embarrassed or ashamed of our mistakes. We fear rejection or admonishment in admitting our weakness and our failings.

Perhaps we find ways to redeem ourselves, proving our worthiness of being accepted and loved. In all our efforts to hide or disguise ourselves, what we truly desire is *to be known*.

With our hearts heavy in this contradiction, it is easy to forget that to be fully known is to be fully human. Our humanity can be messy, complicated and difficult to piece together. In admitting and sharing this brokenness, we can be made complete—or at least the process can begin.

God sees and knows every piece of our lives. More importantly, he knows our worthiness and loves us so

much that he gave us his son Jesus so that we would be saved. When we can let go of our self-redeeming ways and surrender them to the Redeemer, our journey can become one of both wholeness and holiness. Not only does this enrich our relationship with God, but also with others.

In his book *The Ignatian Adventure*, Jesuit Father Kevin O'Brien says this well in the "second week" of this guide to the *Spiritual Exercises*: "The path to divinity is through our humanity and not around it. ... The more we express our humanity in loving, healing, forgiving, serving and rejoicing, the more our divinity or holiness is revealed."

As we begin this Lenten season, may we have the courage to be human. May we reveal our hearts more intimately with God and share our lives more fully with each other. Let us ask for the grace to honor the "humanness" of each other.

May we walk together the path of salvation with our Lord—He who gave all and does not hold back!

(Jennifer Burger is program manager at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis and a member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis. She is also a spiritual director.) †

## Evangelization Outreach/Meagan Morrissey

## College moments show how God's word can transform young adults

Going to college marks many "firsts" for young adults—your first time living away from home, your first college class, your first serious boyfriend or girlfriend.

For me, freshman year marked my first-ever Bible study. As a new member in my sorority, all I wanted was to fit in.



So when Catherine, a popular and influential senior, invited me to her house for Bible study, I jumped at the chance.

Bible study wasn't what I thought it would be. It wasn't like my religion class, and it wasn't like other small groups. My sorority sisters were shockingly real about what was going on in their lives. They were eager to dive deeply into Scripture and to share how it challenged them as college students. And it was clear that authentic friendships had formed between these women. I was hooked.

Ten years later, I'm even more convicted about the power of a small-group Bible study. I've led more than 70 women through the Scriptures, and time and again, I've seen God's word transform the hearts and lives of young adults.

Why? Because we know that "the word of God is living and effective, sharper than a two-edged sword" (Heb 4:12). When you read the Bible or hear the Scriptures proclaimed at Mass, you are not hearing a nice reflection or story about God. You are encountering the living God, the person of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is alive, and he wants to encounter us in his word. Although we are blessed to live in a digital age, with amazing books and podcasts and videos at our fingertips, these are all pointless if we do not know what Jesus speaks to us in the Scriptures. The best way to get to know someone is to talk to them, to ask questions and to listen. The same is true for our sweet savior, Jesus Christ.

"When I found your words, I devoured them; your words were my joy, the happiness of my heart ..." (Jer 15:16).

One of my favorite Bible study memories was with a group of sophomore college women. We were studying salvation history, and that week we were diving into the story of Abraham and Isaac. I asked one woman—we'll say her name was Sarah—to read a section from the Book of Genesis when God asks Abraham to sacrifice "your son Isaac, your only son, whom you love ..." (Gn 22:2).

Sarah stopped reading and threw her Bible across the room in a rage: "What is wrong with God? What kind of God asks that?" The room went silent, and all eyes stared wide-open at me, waiting for a response.

I remember smiling and saying, "Finally, you are encountering God!" While I didn't leave Sarah's question unanswered that night, I was thrilled to see she was open and ready to wrestle with God. These are the moments that make Bible study so powerful! It's not a place to pretend like we have all the answers, it's a place to ask hard questions and contemplate what God may be asking of us.

God is not the God of the dead, he is the God of the living (Mt 22:32). This Lent, you too can allow yourself to be transformed by the power of God's word.

You don't need to be a Scripture scholar to pray with the Bible. If you don't know where to start, begin with the Gospels. Find a quiet place and invite Jesus to reveal himself to you. Read a few verses, then "pause at what gives you pause." Ask Jesus what he is trying to say to you.

I know that Jesus wants to speak to you and encounter you deeply. During Lent, let us pray that we will be transformed by God's word. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God" (Col 3:16).

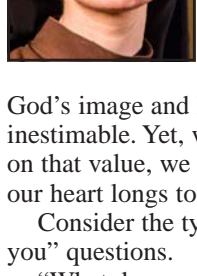
(Meagan Morrissey is the director of the Office of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry within the archdiocesan department of Parish Leadership. She can be reached at [mmorrissey@archindy.org](mailto:mmorrissey@archindy.org).) †

## Guest Column/Sr. Alicia Torres

## Seeking to find your true identity and know that you are loved? Turn to Jesus

Who am I?

This question lurks at the core of every human heart. So often the real answer is blurred by responses we so readily grasp after, and yet time and again fail to satisfy. One response in particular, I think, gnaws at so many of us today: "I am important."



Of course, human beings have inherent value. Created in

God's image and likeness, our value is inestimable. Yet, when we focus too much on that value, we miss the big picture that our heart longs to see.

Consider the typical "getting to know you" questions.

"What do you do?"

"Where did you go to school?"

"Where do you live now?"

"What do you do for fun?"

Such questions can fill an awkward silence and help us learn about a person, but they can also help evaluate that person's place in the social hierarchy.

Last year, I was invited to a networking event. As I waited to check in, the man standing behind me began to make conversation with me. He was kind and eager to meet people and make connections. But once I revealed by my

answers to his questions that I wasn't in the "in crowd," he politely stepped away from the conversation.

It was a fascinating experience for me. I wasn't offended, and I understood how

eager the people at the event were to make the most of their experience and make as many connections as possible.

But it raised the question for me: "With whom are we ultimately trying to connect?"

A dear friend of mine was recently describing a piece of art that had really moved him. It was an image of Jesus, sitting in the midst of a schoolroom surrounded by children. Some were close to Jesus, affectionate and intimate, while others were gathered round that inner circle, gazing with desire. Still others were far off, yet not outside the room. What he loved about the artwork was that

he could identify with one little boy in particular, and how that child so evidently longed to be near Jesus.

I am important, but that means nothing unless I know I am loved.

**Our identity in Christ makes our accomplishments meaningful, our relationships enjoyable and our wildest dreams at least fun to think about, if not completely possible!**

The only way to confirm we are loved is if we know we are children of God. Because of this relationship, everything else in our world becomes true, good and beautiful.

Our identity in Christ makes our accomplishments meaningful, our relationships enjoyable and our wildest dreams at least fun to think about, if not completely possible!

Our identity as children of God is confirmed and

nourished above all in our celebration of the Eucharist. At the moment we make the sign of the cross, not only does the Mass begin, but as I sign myself, I am reminded of my identity—that I am made in the image of God, a trinity of persons bound in a relationship of self-giving

love. As the Mass continues, I am drawn into deeper communion with the God who loves me, hearing his word, spoken for me, witnessing his offering, prepared for me at the hands of the priest, and gazing upon his hidden presence in a tiny white host, given, completely, for me.

He gives himself to me, and I, in turn, can give myself to him. In the end, I don't really want to know if I am important, and neither does anyone else. What I want to know is if I am loved. And if it is true—that love is at the core of my identity—then all truly shall be well.

And what about that big picture? The image that I see in my mind's eye, and that my heart is drawn to contemplate, is of a little girl smiling—cheerful, with rosy cheeks and a tiny brown teddy bear—being held tenderly in the arms of Jesus, her head resting upon his heart. And that little girl is me. And when I can truly see that little girl, I know the answer to the question, "Who am I?" The answer is, "I am loved."

(Sister Alicia Torres is an executive team member for the National Eucharistic Revival, editor of the Heart of the Revival e-newsletter and a member of the Franciscans of the Eucharist of Chicago, a religious community that carries out the mission of the Church through service to the poor, evangelization and teaching.) †

First Sunday of Lent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, February 18, 2024

- Genesis 9:8-15
- 1 Peter 3:18-22
- Mark 1:12-15

The first reading for Mass this weekend, from the Book of Genesis, presents the familiar story of Noah. It is a story of a contrast and its consequences. Noah was faithful to God. The world, on the other hand, was almost universally unfaithful. God protected Noah from the doom to which the sinful world succumbed.



Warned by God, Noah took his family and couples of the various animals onto the ark, or ship, that Noah constructed at God's command. As the floodwaters ebbed, the ark settled on dry land. By God's help, all aboard Noah's ark survived.

God assured Noah, and all people, that never again would a flood destroy the Earth. God promised a covenant with Noah's people. Under this covenant, or solemn agreement, the people obeyed God's law. In turn, God protected them from peril.

It is the foundational story of all that would be revealed in the long history of salvation. Sin unfaithfully destroys, but God protects the truly faithful.

The second reading is from the First Epistle of St. Peter. The letter states that it was composed in Babylon, a symbol of Rome, the mighty, magnificent to behold imperial capital and the center of paganism and of a most impious culture.

Roman Christians at the time very much required encouragement. This epistle provided such encouragement by recalling the faithfulness of Noah, insisting that God protects and saves the faithful who, in baptism and in holiness, are bonded to Jesus through divine grace.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is brief, only a few verses. But its brevity gives it drama and directness in its message.

Use of the number 40 is revealing, suggesting the 40 days spent by Moses in the desert before God gave him the law on Sinai. Jesus spent 40 days in the desert. He was the bearer of God's holy word, as was Moses. Forty was code for

that which is perfectly fulfilled.

After 40 days of prayer, Jesus undertook the mission of redemption and reconciliation.

Wild beasts were a threat in the Judean wilderness, but angels protected Jesus. Mark does not lose the chance again to assert that Jesus is the Son of God.

At last, after John's arrest and removal from the scene, the culmination of salvation awaits in Jesus. He steps forward, proclaiming that God's majesty literally will be seen.

The Lord calls upon the people to repent. "The time of fulfillment" is at hand. God will be vindicated (Mk 1:15). Jesus has come to set everything in balance. The sinful will be laid low. The good will endure.

## Reflection

The Church has begun Lent, the most intense period in the year of enabling union with God. While Ash Wednesday was the first day of Lent, many Catholics will begin the Lenten process with this weekend's Mass.

The readings call us to face the realities of our lives as humans, capable of good or evil, according to what we choose.

Regardless of the exact details of the flood described in Genesis, so often discussed in many circles, the religious message of Noah and his ark supplies a fitting beginning for reflection for Lent. Sin, the willful rejection of God, leads necessarily and always to destruction. Jesus saves us from peril.

His salvation is total and available to us if we sincerely turn to him. Jesus offers eternal life and peace to us now. God is always forgiving and merciful. No sin is too evil to be forgiven, no distance from God too wide to bridge.

Essential to asking for forgiveness is honestly to admit personal sin by delving deeply into our hearts and minds and scrutinizing what we have done or not done.

This process requires humility, courage and a frank, maybe uncomfortable, analysis of ourselves. The Church gives us Lent as an aide to this grace-inspired task. †

## Daily Readings

### Monday, February 19

Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18  
Psalm 19:8-10, 15  
Matthew 25:31-46

### Tuesday, February 20

Isaiah 55:10-11  
Psalm 34:4-7, 16-19  
Matthew 6:7-15

### Wednesday, February 21

St. Peter Damian, bishop and doctor of the Church  
Jonah 3:1-10  
Psalm 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19  
Luke 11:29-32

### Thursday, February 22

The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle  
1 Peter 5:1-4  
Psalm 23:1-6  
Matthew 16:13-19

### Friday, February 23

St. Polycarp, bishop and martyr  
Ezekiel 18:21-28  
Psalm 130:1-8  
Matthew 5:20-26

### Saturday, February 24

Deuteronomy 26:16-19  
Psalm 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8  
Matthew 5:43-48

### Sunday, February 25

Second Sunday of Lent  
Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18  
Psalm 116:10, 15-19  
Romans 8:31b-34  
Mark 9:2-10

## Question Corner/Jenna Marie Cooper

### Various circumstances can release Catholics from 'Sunday obligation'

**Q**In the past few weeks, due to extreme weather, I've missed Mass a couple of times. My parish has a Facebook channel, so I watched the Mass there instead.

I wasn't able to receive Communion. In talking to the priest, though, he said that in such situations, a person can receive invisibly or symbolically and either way still be fed. Could you comment? (Indiana)

**A**Watching a livestream or pre-recorded Mass is not the same as attending Mass in person and receiving Communion.



But, given the circumstances you describe, it sounds like watching Mass online was still a good way to be spiritually nourished in that particular instance.

Most Catholics are aware of our "Sunday obligation," that is, the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and certain major feast days that might fall on other days of the week. Canon 1247 of the *Code of Canon Law* states that "on Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass."

Sometimes this word "participate" is translated from the original Latin "*participandi*" as "assist at Mass," which underscores the idea that the lay faithful are meant to have a "fully conscious and active participation" in liturgical celebrations (see the Second Vatican Council's "*Sacrosanctum Concilium*," #14).

A true fully conscious and active participation in the Mass is understood to require our literal, physical presence at the liturgy. Because of this, watching Mass on a screen would not fulfill the Sunday obligation.

That being said, the Church intends for all of our obligations to be rooted in common sense, and a foundational principle of the law in general is that nobody can be bound to do what is impossible. Therefore, if you are truly unable to attend Mass in person—whether that be due to inclement weather, illness, being at a great geographical distance from a Catholic church, etc.—then you are not bound by

the Sunday obligation as long as these circumstances persist.

Yet even if you are unable, and thus not required, to attend Mass, the commandment to "keep holy the Sabbath day" still applies, and in that case we should still do what we can to keep Sunday as an especially restful and prayerful day. In fact, canon 1248, paragraph 2, tells us: "If participation in the eucharistic celebration becomes impossible because of the absence of a sacred minister or for another grave cause, it is strongly recommended that the faithful take part in a liturgy of the word ... or that they devote themselves to prayer for a suitable time alone, as a family, or, as the occasion permits, in groups of families."

My own thought is that attentively watching a broadcast Mass and devoutly following the readings and prayers would be very much in line with the personal prayer time canon 1248 recommends for circumstances where in-person Mass attendance is not possible.

Similarly, the graces attached to receiving the real presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in holy Communion is not something that can be replaced by an online broadcast. But there are many beautiful prayers in our Catholic tradition for a spiritual communion, where we express our longing to receive Jesus at least spiritually, even if we cannot receive him physically in the Eucharist.

It should also be noted that Catholics are, strictly speaking, only formally required to receive holy Communion once per year during the Easter season (See canon 920). It is perfectly legitimate to attend Mass and refrain from receiving Communion. And there are some circumstances when a Catholic should attend Mass to fulfill the Sunday obligation but not receive the Eucharist, such as when they have committed a serious sin but have not yet received absolution in the sacrament of penance, or when they have not kept the required one-hour fast before Communion.

(Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at *OSV News*. Send your questions to [CatholicQA@osv.com](mailto:CatholicQA@osv.com).) †

## Batesville's best



Jill Hollins, the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) teacher for St. Louis School in Batesville, poses with the 2024 Educator of the Year award she received from the Batesville Chamber of Commerce on Jan. 25. School principal Patty Mauer says that Hollins "has touched the lives of many, not only in what she does in the classroom, but also through her coaching of the school's robotics team and working with Genesis: Pathways for Success during the summer to provide STEM summer camps throughout Ripley County. We are so proud of her and grateful for the giving spirit she shares with her students, the St. Louis School staff and the community." (Submitted photo)



# Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

## Lenten penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Lent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

### Batesville Deanery

Feb. 20, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville  
 Feb. 27, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville  
 Feb. 27, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg  
 Feb. 27, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg  
 Feb. 28, 6:30 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County  
 March 1, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Aurora  
 March 1, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at All Saints Parish, Dearborn County, St. Martin campus  
 March 5, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville  
 March 8, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2:30-6:30 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville  
 March 16, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville  
 March 16, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville  
 March 19, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Brookville  
 March 19, 6:30 p.m. at St. Catherine of Siena, Decatur County, St. John the Evangelist campus  
 March 20, 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter, Franklin County  
 March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville

### Bloomington Deanery

Feb. 21, 6:30 p.m. at St. Jude the Apostle, Spencer  
 March 12, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Mitchell, and St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, at St. Vincent de Paul  
 March 13, 6 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville  
 March 14, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville  
 March 27, 6 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington

### Connersville Deanery

Feb. 23, 5:30 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Holy Family campus  
 March 5, 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville  
 March 10, noon-2 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City  
 March 13, 6:30 p.m. at St. Bridget of Ireland, Liberty  
 March 17, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at St. Anne, New Castle

### Indianapolis East Deanery

Feb. 26, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) at Little Flower  
 March 12, 6 p.m. at St. Rita  
 March 19, 7 p.m. at Holy Spirit  
 March 25, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. "Leave the Light On" at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

*Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the East Deanery are as follows:*

Second and fourth Sundays after 10 a.m. Mass, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral  
 Sundays during Lent, 9-9:30 a.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes

### Indianapolis North Deanery

March 10, 2 p.m. at St. Simon the Apostle  
 March 11, 7 p.m. at Christ the King  
 March 12, 7 p.m. at St. Pius X

### Indianapolis South Deanery

Feb. 28, 7 p.m. for St. Jude and St. Mark the Evangelist at St. Mark the Evangelist



A woman goes to confession in a makeshift confessional outside the Steppe Arena before Pope Francis celebrates Mass in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on Sept. 3, 2023. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

Feb. 29, 6:30 p.m. for Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, and Good Shepherd at Holy Name of Jesus  
 March 1, 6:30-7:30 p.m. for St. Ann and St. Thomas More, Mooresville (Indianapolis West Deanery), at St. Ann  
 March 5, 7 a.m.-7 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
 March 7, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood  
 March 8, 6:30-7:30 p.m. for St. Ann and St. Thomas More (Indianapolis West Deanery), Mooresville, at St. Thomas More  
 March 16, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi, Greenwood

### Indianapolis West Deanery

March 1, 6:30-7:30 p.m. for St. Ann (Indianapolis South Deanery) and St. Thomas More, Mooresville, at St. Ann  
 March 8, 6:30-7:30 p.m. for St. Ann (Indianapolis South Deanery) and St. Thomas More, Mooresville, at St. Thomas More  
 March 13, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Holy Angels  
 March 21, 6:30 p.m. for St. Gabriel the Archangel, St. Michael the Archangel and St. Monica at St. Monica

*Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the West Deanery are as follows:*

Tuesdays of Lent, 5-6 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg  
 Wednesdays of Lent (excluding Holy Week), 6-7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville  
 Thursdays of Lent (excluding Holy Thursday), 5-6 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg  
 Fridays of Lent (excluding Good Friday): 4-5 p.m. at St. Christopher; 5-6 p.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg, and St. Monica; 5:30-6:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel the Archangel

Saturdays of Lent (excluding Holy Saturday), 9-10 a.m. at St. Malachy, Brownsburg

### New Albany Deanery

Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m. at St. John Paul II, Sellersburg  
 Feb. 27, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville  
 Feb. 29, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany  
 March 5, 6:30 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford  
 March 13, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany  
 March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown  
 March 20, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyd County  
 March 21, 6:30 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier, Henryville  
 March 21, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville

### Seymour Deanery

Feb. 28, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus  
 March 7, 6 p.m. for Most Sorrowful Mother of God, Vevay, and Prince of Peace, Madison, at Prince of Peace  
 March 10, 9 a.m. at St. Patrick, Salem  
 March 13, 6:30 p.m. at St. Ambrose, Seymour  
 March 17, 3 p.m. at American Martyrs, Scottsburg

### Tell City Deanery

Feb. 21, 6:30 p.m. at St. Boniface, Fulda  
 March 10, 2 p.m. at St. Paul, Tell City

### Terre Haute Deanery

March 15, noon-7 p.m. at St. Benedict, Terre Haute

*Additionally, recurring opportunities for reconciliation in the Terre Haute Deanery are as follows:*

Thursdays 6:30-8 p.m. and Saturdays 3:30-5 p.m. (excluding Holy Week) at St. Joseph University, Terre Haute †

## 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)



## 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 Victim Assistance Coordinator**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis  
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410  
**317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548**  
[victimassistance@archindy.org](mailto:victimassistance@archindy.org)

# Saint Meinrad Archabbey receives new novice

In a recent ceremony at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, a new novice was received by the monastic community.

Benedictine Novice Joshua Brahm was clothed in the Benedictine habit on Jan. 19. He now begins a year of monastic formation, including study of the *Rule for Monks* of St. Benedict and monastic history.

Novice Joshua, 36, is a native of Ferdinand, Ind., where he was a member of Christ the King Parish in the Evansville Diocese. He attended Forest Park High School in Ferdinand.



Nov. Joshua Brahm, O.S.B.

Before entering the monastery, he worked at Kimball Electronics in Jasper, Ind., for the last five years. He most recently served as utility, lower management/production support.

As a novice, he takes a year off from formal studies and trades. The novitiate is a time of prayer and learning intended to help a novice discern his vocation as a monk. At the end of this year, a novice may be permitted to profess temporary vows of obedience, fidelity to the monastic way of life and stability in the community of Saint Meinrad. †

## ICC

continued from page 1

attest to the harm that easy access to online pornography can inflict on young people.

In a prior role as a deputy prosecutor in the Marion County Prosecutor sex crimes division, Espada saw numerous instances in which pornography was used as a tool to desensitize young victims.



Angela Espada

“We know that grooming can occur in a variety of different ways,” Espada said. “It can begin with an individual—often a trusted individual—saying or doing things that are inappropriate. I prosecuted many cases where children had been victimized, and especially in situations involving a trusted

individual, one of the devices used was exposing them to drugs, alcohol and pornography.”

Espada noted that in states where robust age verification systems are already in place, pornography sites have shut down access to their services.

The Indiana General Assembly recently reached what is known as crossover—the midway point of the session—when bills that are still active move from one legislative chamber to the other. With its 44-1 vote on the Senate floor, Senate Bill 17 moved to the House and now awaits further action under the sponsorship of Rep. Joanna King (R-Middlebury).

“We’re expecting that there’s going to be a lot of support in the House,” said Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC. “It’s heartening to see this and other efforts across the country, and it being a truly bipartisan priority.”

These legislative efforts at the state level coincide

with the U.S. Congress considering federal action to better protect children online. They also come at a time when the Catholic Church and society as a whole grapple with the harm caused by the ready availability of online pornography for children as well as adults.

In a letter to Congress last summer, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) urged lawmakers to take stronger measures to protect young people online. The bishops cited a study revealing that 15% of children report having first viewed online pornography—either accidentally or intentionally—when they were 10 or younger. By the time they are 13, a majority report having been exposed to it.

“Young people born in the digital age have grown up immersed in media and the Internet, and often are savvier at navigating this world than their parents,” the bishops wrote. “Being exposed to pornography can be traumatic for children and youth. Seeing it steals their innocence and gives them a distorted image of sexuality, relationships, and men and women, which may then affect their behavior, including addiction to pornography.”

The USCCB also called on Congress to take steps to protect children from the harms of social media. Just weeks ago, big tech leaders including Meta’s Mark Zuckerberg faced lawmakers on Capitol Hill in a hearing focused on online child exploitation.

In Indiana, numerous bills aimed at protecting children online and from the harms of social media were introduced in this legislative session, but only Senate Bill 17 is moving forward.

Children’s widespread use of social media platforms and other technology poses countless dangers, according to Theresa Chamblee, director of social concerns for the office of Catholic Charities in the archdiocese.

“Pornography is readily available on social media sites,” Chamblee said. “This is not a matter of children

searching for pornography. It’s a matter of pornography finding them through pop-up advertisements, videos and pictures shared via social messaging sites and misleading tactics used by groomers to lure someone to a pornographic video or image.”

Two years ago, Chamblee’s office added an anti-trafficking ministry. In numerous presentations to parents and schools, Chamblee educates her audiences about the linkage between pornography and human trafficking.

“Trafficking happens everywhere, and it’s happening in plain sight,” Chamblee said. “Traffickers will use pornography to normalize violent sexual behavior, to promote hyper-sexuality and to encourage addictions to porn. Because of the incredibly easy access to pornography via social media and gaming apps, porn has become the readily available sex education for our youth that can be accessed at any time.”

Senate Bill 17 could potentially see additions that address social media, Bohacek said. The northern Indiana lawmaker expressed hope that the measure will move forward with bipartisan support in the House.

“I feel very confident,” said Bohacek, a member of Notre Dame Parish in Michigan City, Ind., in the Gary Diocese. “I’ve got a great sponsor, and there are a lot of folks really engaged in this effort.”

To follow priority legislation of the ICC, visit [www.indianacc.org](http://www.indianacc.org). This website includes access to ICAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church’s position on key issues. Those who sign up for ICAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus [Little Flower] Parish in Indianapolis, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

## ‘Feeling omnipotent’ is at root of clerical abuse, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—All forms of clerical abuse begin with a priest thinking he is better than others and somehow over them, Pope Francis said.

“We can live our priestly ministry well only immersed in the priestly people from whom we come,” the pope told about 1,000 priests and bishops from some 60 countries on Feb. 8 during a conference on the continuing education and formation of priests.

“This belonging to the people—do not ever let us feel separate from the journey of the holy, faithful people of God—protects us, sustains us in our struggles, accompanies us in our pastoral concerns and saves us from the risk of becoming detached from reality and feeling omnipotent,” the pope said. “Watch out because this is also the root of every form of abuse.”

The conference on Feb. 6-10 was sponsored by the dicasteries for Clergy, for Evangelization and for the Eastern Churches, which each have some responsibility for the training and ongoing support of priests.

Meeting participants in the Vatican audience hall, Pope Francis said the keys to a happy and healthy priesthood are holding fast to the joy of the Gospel,

belonging to a people and experiencing “the generativity of service.”

Echoing a call from the October assembly of the synod on synodality, which requested that “seminaries and other programs of priestly formation remain connected to the daily life of the community,” Pope Francis said the education of priests “should not be conceived as somehow ‘set apart.’ Rather, it should draw upon the contribution of the people of God: priests and lay faithful, men and women, celibates and married couples, the elderly and the young, without neglecting the poor and suffering who have so much to teach us.

“Especially today, priests are called to exercise a spirit of synodality,” walking with their people, the pope said.

“Remember your roots, your history, the history of your family, and the history of your people,” he said. “A priest is not born by spontaneous generation; either he is of God’s people, or he is an aristocrat who ends up neurotic.”

A priest is called to serve, Pope Francis insisted.

“Seen in this light, formation in service is not simply the transmission of a body of teachings, but also the art of

concentrating on others, bringing out all their beauty and all the good that they carry within, shedding light on their gifts but also on their shadows, their wounds and their desires,” he said.

But, the pope said, seminarians and priests also need that same kind of service, “encouraging their journey, assisting them in discernment, accompanying them in their difficulties and supporting them amid pastoral challenges.”

As he often does when meeting priests, Pope Francis asked them to always be merciful.

“Always forgive,” he said. “When people come to confession, they come to ask for forgiveness and not to hear a lecture on theology. Please be merciful. Always forgive, because forgiveness has this grace of embracing, of welcoming. I urge you: always forgive.” †

### Employment

#### Coordinator of Elementary Religious Education

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church is seeking a full-time Coordinator of Elementary Religious Education. This position will work as part of an experienced faith formation team. The goal of the Coordinator of Elementary Religious Education is to grow one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church in the parish and in Noblesville, Indiana.

Some responsibilities of this position include: coordinating weekly religious education sessions for pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, coordinating a two-year First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion preparation program for the parish and school, facilitating intermediate sacramental preparation program, forming catechists, and communicating regularly with families.

The ideal candidate for this position is familiar with Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and can lead a team as we implement this program of religious education. This person would also possess outstanding communication skills. He/she would be seeking a flexible schedule but is willing to work some nights and weekends. The candidate would be a role model for living the Catholic faith. Previous ministry experience or a Bachelor’s degree in related field is preferred.

To apply, please submit your resume and cover letter to Larry Kunkel at [lkunkel@parish.dol-in.org](mailto:lkunkel@parish.dol-in.org) or to 9900 E 191st St, Noblesville, IN 46060.

Applications will be accepted until March 24th, 2024.

## Classified Directory

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### Employment

#### Coordinator of High School Youth Ministry

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church is seeking a full-time Coordinator of High School Youth Ministry. This position will work as part of an experienced and skilled Youth and Young Adult Ministry team of three to coordinate high school youth ministry and preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Youth Minister will have the opportunity to work with people in a variety of ways: as a guide and mentor for teens, as a partner with parents/families, and as a leader for a dedicated group of volunteers. The goal of the Youth Minister is to grow one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church in the parish and in Noblesville, Indiana. Some responsibilities of this position include: coordinating weekly youth ministry sessions for high school youth, organizing retreats and special events, coordinating a two-year Confirmation preparation program, and regularly communicating with teens, volunteers, and families. An excellent candidate for this position would be gifted at relational ministry and possess outstanding communication skills. He/she would be seeking a flexible schedule but a willingness to work some nights and weekends. The candidate would be a role model for living the Catholic faith. Previous youth ministry experience or a Bachelor’s degree in related field is preferred.

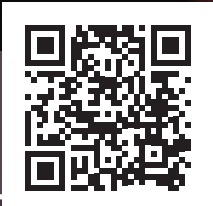
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We are... *United*  
in the Eucharist

As a Church, we are stronger together. The impact of your gift is essential to the people of our archdiocese and the mission given to us by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!



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## UNITED CATHOLIC APPEAL DONOR SPOTLIGHT - PART 2

We have all heard the parable of the widow's mite. What made her gift so beautiful was her faith, as it was fully centered on God. She gave all she had that day to the cause she loved so dear, believing that her heavenly Father would not overlook her great need.

In this second donor spotlight with Ginny and Pat Maher, Pat talks about how the coins shown above hung on the wall in his office for many years. As he passed by those each day, it reminded him to ask himself, *"Am I giving all that I can give? Am I giving out of my wants, or am I giving out of my need?"*

Take a moment and scan the QR code above to watch part 2 of their story. And as you watch, may it remind you of the widow's act of perfect love and sacrifice. If you are moved to give, you can do so by scanning the QR code below to make your gift safely and securely online, or visit [www.unitedcatholicappeal.org/donate](http://www.unitedcatholicappeal.org/donate).

**THANK YOU** to those who have already given in support of these vital ministries. This year's United Catholic Appeal goal is \$6.3 million. We are currently at \$4.64 million.

